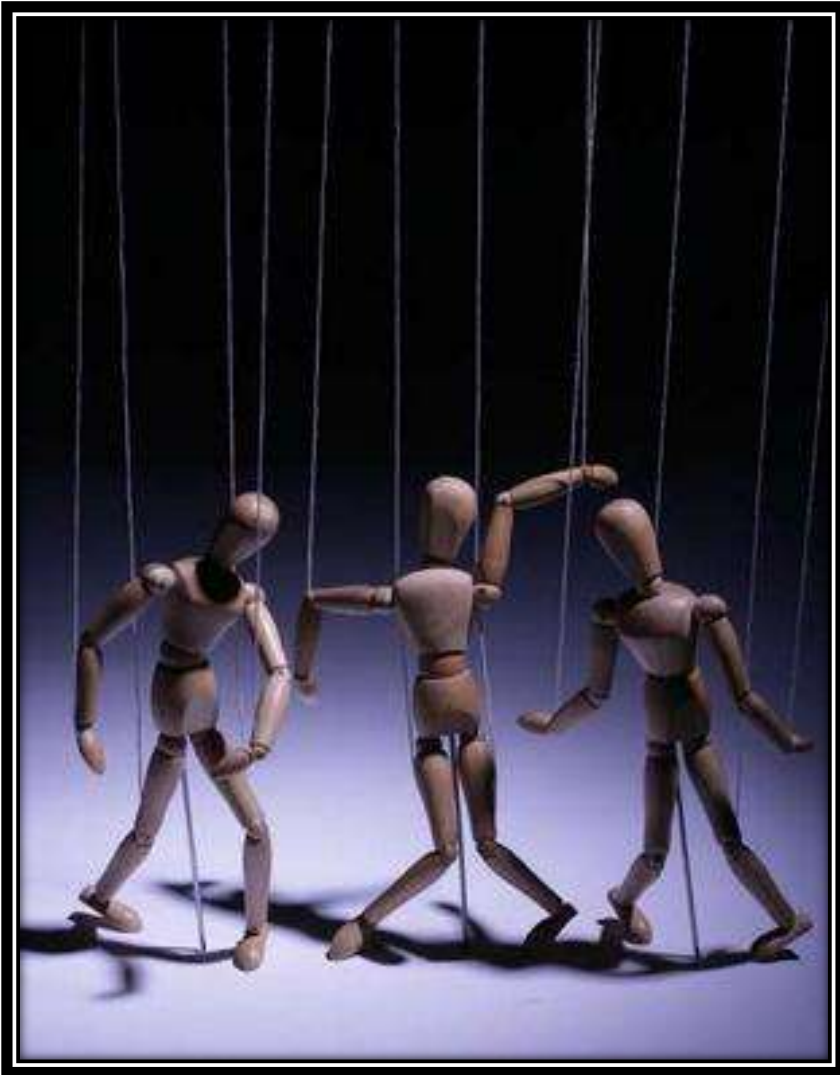


Zion Lutheran Church



*Service of Prayer and Preaching
April 13th 2016*



ANNOUNCEMENTS

REV. MARK JASA is coming to Zion April 30th. Who is Mark Jasa, and why should you care? Mark and I went to seminary together; he is a Pastor in the Los Angeles area and has a very enjoyable way of doing outreach and evangelism. He is going to give a presentation (and workshop) for us starting at 10:00 in the Fellowship Hall. All are welcome and lunch will be served.

CONFIRMATION. Coming this fall, we will be starting a new Confirmation class for kids 6-8th grade to learn the basics of the Christian faith and become communicant members of the congregation. Look for more information in upcoming newsletters and in this place as we get closer to the summer season!

2.10.66! We've done it twice; will the third time be the charm? Going through all 66 books of the Bible over 10 hours and 2 days. Look for a sign-up sheet in the narthex area as we look at the interest level and possible times for doing a 3rd 2.10.66!

ADD ME TO THE LIST! If you are not currently on our email prayer chain and would like to be added to the prayer chain please contact the church secretaries by phone or email (secretary@zlcg.org)!!

VICARAGE. At our last Voters' Meeting, we approved funding for the 2016-2017 Vicarage Program. Due to a decline in Seminary enrollment, there are a number of congregations who applied for Vicars who will not get them. Please pray that the Lord chooses to send Zion a Vicar to help with our ministry, and so that we can be blessed to help prepare a man for the Office of the Public Ministry!

Welcome to worship!

“If God is all-powerful, then we are nothing but puppets on a string!” This is the predictable come-back at some point during the debate between people arguing over predestination and free-will. Puppets on a string. Is this all we are? What a terrifying thought. Or is it?

This evening, we are going to take a look at 2 Corinthians 5:11-21, where Paul makes the bold claim that “the love of Christ controls us.” His claim is that he is a puppet on the strings of the gospel. His every thought, word, and deed controlled by the good news that (again, in his words), “one has died for all.” Paul is a puppet on a string, and he loves it because he knows that the one pulling the strings is the Lord Jesus Christ.

The question for us, then, is not whether or not we are puppets, but rather, who is pulling the strings. Left to ourselves, the devil, the world, and our own sinful flesh control us, leading us down the path that leads to death and damnation. But we are not left to ourselves! Christ died and rose so that we would be taken from the poisonous tentacles of sin to his gentle yoke. He has become our puppeteer.

God bless your time in worship this evening!

-Pastor Duncan

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ZION EQUIPS, EDUCATES, AND ENCOURAGES BELIEVERS IN CHRIST, SENDING THEM INTO THE WORLD TO SHARE THE GOSPEL.

Zion Lutheran Church 3197 Washington Pike Bridgeville, PA 15017

The Service of Prayer and Preaching

Confession and Absolution

Pastor: In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

People: **Amen.**

Pastor: This evening we are going to be taking a look at the age-old debate between predestination and free-will. As we look at the Word of God, we will see that Scripture clearly teaches that we are not our own; we belong either to Christ or to the devil, the world and our own sinful flesh. Dependent on God's mercy in Christ to deliver us from the deadly consequences of our sinful condition, let us confess our sins.

People: **Lord Jesus Christ, we confess to you that we have sinned against you in every imaginable way. Please do not hold our sins against us. Lead us to greater faith and obedience. Make us more like you by any means necessary.**

Absolution

People: **Amen!**

The First Reading: Psalm 103

Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless his holy name!

Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits,

who forgives all your iniquity, who heals all your diseases,

who redeems your life from the pit, who crowns you with steadfast love and mercy,

who satisfies you with good so that your youth is renewed like the eagle's.

The Lord works righteousness and justice for all who are oppressed.

He made known his ways to Moses, his acts to the people of Israel.

The Lord is merciful and gracious, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love.

He will not always chide, nor will he keep his anger forever.

He does not deal with us according to our sins,

nor repay us according to our iniquities.
For as high as the heavens are above the earth,
so great is his steadfast love toward those who fear him;
as far as the east is from the west,
so far does he remove our transgressions from us.
As a father shows compassion to his children,
so the Lord shows compassion to those who fear him.
For he knows our frame; he remembers that we are dust.
As for man, his days are like grass; he flourishes like a flower of the field;
for the wind passes over it, and it is gone, and its place knows it no more.
But the steadfast love of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting on those who
fear him, and his righteousness to children's children,
to those who keep his covenant and remember to do his commandments.
The Lord has established his throne in the heavens, and his kingdom rules over all.
Bless the Lord, O you his angels, you mighty ones who do his word,
obeying the voice of his word!
Bless the Lord, all his hosts, his ministers, who do his will!
Bless the Lord, all his works, in all places of his dominion.
Bless the Lord, O my soul!

The Second Reading: 2 Corinthians 5:11-21

Therefore, knowing the fear of the Lord, we persuade others. But what we are is known to God, and I hope it is known also to your conscience. We are not commending ourselves to you again but giving you cause to boast about us, so that you may be able to answer those who boast about outward appearance and not about what is in the heart. For if we are beside ourselves, it is for God; if we are in our right mind, it is for you. For the love of Christ controls us, because we have concluded this: that one has died

for all, therefore all have died; and he died for all, that those who live might no longer live for themselves but for him who for their sake died and was raised.

From now on, therefore, we regard no one according to the flesh. Even though we once regarded Christ according to the flesh, we regard him thus no longer. Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come. All this is from God, who through Christ reconciled us to himself and gave us the ministry of reconciliation; that is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting to us the message of reconciliation. Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, God making his appeal through us. We implore you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

Sermon

(Please stand)

The Apostles' Creed

I believe in God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth.
And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord,
 who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary,
 suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died and buried.
 He descended into hell. The third day He rose again from the dead.
 He ascended into heaven
 and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty.
 From thence He will come to judge the living and the dead.
I believe in the Holy Spirit,
 the Holy Christian Church, the communion of saints,
 the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body,
 and the life everlasting. Amen.

The Prayers

Leader: Let my prayer rise before You as incense,
People: **and the lifting up of my hands as the evening sacrifice.**
People: **I thank You, my heavenly Father, through Jesus Christ, Your dear Son, that You have graciously kept me this day; and I pray that You would forgive me all my sins where I have done wrong, and graciously keep me this night. For into Your hands I commend myself, my body and soul, and all things. Let Your holy angel be with me, that the evil foe may have no power over me.**

Leader: Abide with us, Lord, for it is toward evening, and the day is far spent. Abide with us and with Your whole Church. Abide with us at the end of the day, at the end of our life, at the end of the whole world. Abide with us with Your grace and goodness, with Your holy Word and Sacrament, with Your strength and blessing. Abide with us when the night of affliction and temptation comes upon us, the night of fear and despair, the night when death draws near. Abide with us and with all the faithful, now and forever. Lord, in Your mercy;
People: **Hear our prayer.**

Leader: Lord, remember us in Your kingdom and teach us to pray:
People: **Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name, Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven; give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever and ever. Amen**

The Benedicamus and Benediction

Leader: The Lord bless us and keep us. The Lord make His face shine upon us and be gracious to us. The Lord lift up His countenance upon us and give us peace.
People: **Amen.**

