

CHRIST

EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

Sharing the message of forgiveness and new life in Christ

1 Corinthians 1:10-13 I appeal to you, brothers, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that all of you agree with one another so that there may be no divisions among you and that you may be perfectly united in mind and thought. My brothers, some from Chloe's household have informed me that there are quarrels among you. What I mean is this: One of you says, "I follow Paul"; another, "I follow Apollos"; another, "I follow Cephas"; still another, "I follow Christ." Is Christ divided? Was Paul crucified for you? Were you baptized into the name of Paul?

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ

Throughout these past few months multiple rulings from our government have changed our lives, not just our personal lives, but also our lives as a church. These various rulings have brought multiple different opinions and feelings. The decisions from our church council in response to these various rulings have also brought different opinions and feelings to the point that divisions are arising in our church.

Divisions in churches are not new. There were divisions in our congregation before all of this happened. There will be divisions in our congregation in the years to come. There were also divisions in the church of Corinth which the apostle founded. The congregation in Corinth had multiple issues for Paul to settle, but the first one he attacked was the issue of divisions. There were various groups supporting various leaders whom they said to follow. And even the group who said they followed Christ was wrong. This is why Paul asked if Christ was divided, if Paul was crucified for them, and if they were baptized into the name of Paul. The obvious answer to these questions is "no." Christ is not divided among us because he was the one who was crucified for us. Christ is not divided because we are all baptized into his name. It is Christ who unites us all, and if that is not our focus then we will be divided, and as Christ said, "If a house is divided against itself, that house cannot stand."

Christ Evangelical Lutheran Church
1204 N. Sales St.
Merrill, WI 54452

715-536-3313
www.christmerrill.com
www.facebook.com/christmerrill

A member congregation of the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod (WELS) www.wels.net

Therefore, my brothers and sisters in Christ, I am following Paul's example and I appeal to you to be united in mind and thought. I will admit to you that I and that church council are not perfect. The decisions we have made and the lack of communication may have caused hurt feelings. For that, I apologize to you and ask you to forgive me as your pastor. The decisions we are making now may frustrate you and you disagree with them. For that, I ask you to communicate with us so that we try to do what is best for everyone and to be patient with us.

If the decisions we are making are proven to be wrong or unwise, then please pray for our forgiveness. If other churches make different decisions and they are proven to be wrong or unwise, then don't condemn them but pray for their help. As we pray for one another, as we confess our sins together, as we work together, then we will be united in Christ.

It is Christ who unites us and he wants us to live in peace and harmony with one another. Therefore, with the guidelines we are providing as we move forward, let us not be frustrated with one another or too harsh with one another. Let us communicate and understand each other. Let us take the words and actions of our fellow brothers and sisters in Christ in the kindest possible way. Let us be united in Christ who unites us all to him.

Your shepherd in Christ

Pastor Behm