

## Cut It Out, and a Few Other Events

In a recent sermon you were encouraged to clip out Ephesians 4:25—5:2 from your bulletin and tape it up somewhere where you would see it all the time. Have you done it yet? I have taped mine to my car dashboard, which seems to be a great place to be reminded to “let no evil talk come out of your mouths.”

Too often we seem to let other people take the blame for our sinfulness. “If they had not shared that gossip with me, I wouldn’t have been tempted to repeat it.” True, but we need to take the responsibility to have it stop with us. It really doesn’t matter if “everybody else is doing it” or not. We are asked to take personal responsibility.

We also are encouraged in this passage to “speak the truth to our neighbors.” In other words, we firmly but politely call them on it when other members of the body let evil talk come out of their mouths. We *cut the verse out* in order that we are reminded to *cut the evil talk out*. We accomplish it only by God’s help, but when we do it we give the gift of grace when we speak.

Eph. 4:29 Let no evil talk come out of your mouths, but only what is useful for building up, as there is need, so that your words may give grace to those who hear.

In other news, the youth had a safe and excellent time at Jesus, Justice and Jazz in New Orleans. We took advantage of many worship opportunities, heard excellent speakers that taught about various social justice issues, and spent our servant day working on a Habitat for Humanity jobsite. And, of course, a little sight-seeing. They will soon schedule a Thank You meal so that they can share their experiences with you.

Finally, please see Bishop Mauney’s letter in this newsletter. He gives a good overview of the things that were on the agenda at the ELCA Churchwide Convention held in August. As I write this it has not yet happened, but we pray that God will have moved among the assembly in mighty ways, and that the Spirit will have anointed them with wisdom and discernment.

Peace,  
Pastor Chris