Come and sit a spell and share a story

Your story....
God’s story...
Our story...

About our speaker Rev. Jake Jacobson

Rev. Jacobson is currently the Director for Evangelical Mission in the Northwest PA Synod and serves part time with his wife, Rev. Deborah Jacobson, as one of the pastors at Grace Lutheran Church, Clarion, PA. He is the author of *Holy Talk: An Introduction to Scripture for the Occasionally Biblically Embarrassed* and creator of the Front Porchin’ workshop and workbook.

Saturday, March 14
10 am - 3 pm
St. Mark’s Lutheran Church
2840 Cold Spring Road
Baldwinsville, NY

Registration Opens
January 15
Evangelism is...

...sharing a story. It is your story and God’s story shared with another. Evangelism is sharing what God in Christ has done in your life. We don't even have to go out looking to evangelize...God provides us with all the places to do this sharing without ever having to go knock on a stranger’s door. God gives us natural front porches where we live, work and play. There, God introduces us to, and sits with us, as we share our lives, our stories and the Christ within us with those who regularly gather there with us.

How do we best utilize the front porches God calls us into or onto? What is our role in this process? How do we repair our damaged or dis-used porches? Front Porchin’ is a simple process that helps congregations and individuals reassess their gifts and sharpen their skills for sharing the good news with others (both inside and outside the community of faith). Here is a look at the process...

My Story

Spoken or unspoken we bring to any sharing of stories our own story. Our hopes and dreams, anxieties and fears, the events of our lives and the world we have lived in have shaped who we are and more importantly how we see ourselves. What is your story?

God’s Story

It is not just any story that we are called to share as evangelists but rather we have been called to share the Good News of God’s faithful revelation in Christ Jesus. Do we know that story? I believe that our fear of evangelism grows out of our conception that one needs an “expert” to understand Scripture. If we as Lutherans truly believe that we cannot come to Christ by our own reason or strength but only through the gift of the Holy Spirit then at some point we need to start relying on that gift instead of settling for our own inabilities. Note: it is only after the Pentecost in the Book of the Acts of the Apostles that the apostles (those sent ones) are in fact empowered to share the good news. That said we must be diligent in our study of scripture and avail ourselves to this saving Word.

God’s Story/My Story

The critical failure of much of what we call Bible Study (present ELCA offerings withstanding) is that it becomes a head trip. We learn about the Bible. The Bible is sacramental in that it points beyond itself to God. The purpose of having scripture is not that we come to know it but rather that we are invited into a deeper relationship with God. So often the prophets were called to “eat” the Word of God before going to proclaim it. How do we eat and digest this Word, sweeter than honey, that we have been given in such a way that we begin to see our life story within the context of God’s good news?

My Story/Your Story

One of the problems with “program evangelism” is that it cares little for the nature of who it is that you are called to share the good news with apart from sense of target audience. If we affirm in our theology the dignity of each human being as one created in the image of God (Genesis 1:26) then we are called to treat those to whom we are sent with that dignity. This means that we enter into relationship with them. We come to know their story and share our story. How else can we possibly know in what way to share God’s story with them to that it becomes truly good news?

My Story/God’s Story/Your Story

Finally we reach the subject of our journey as those who have been sent – where two or three are gathered in Christ’s name he is there among us. Did I tell you that this work of evangelization is not a quick fix? I will offer two tried and true models of evangelization: spiritual direction and the catechumenate. Both of these processes offer us insights how to approach the integral task of evangelization or perhaps better said, making disciples and forming faith.