

TAPIOLA APOSTOLIC LUTHERAN CHURCH

JANUARY – 2026

SCHEDULE

Sunday Bible Study and
Sunday School: 9:45 a.m.

Sunday Service: 11: a.m.

Wed. Bible Study: 7:00 p.m.

SPEAKERS

January 4: Ivan Niemela,
Holy Communion

January 11: Ivan Niemela

January 18: Ivan Niemela

January 25: Paul
Coponen, *Potluck meal
following the service*

CONTACTS

Website:
www.tapiolachurch.org

Mailing: P.O. Box 531
Houghton, MI 49931

Location:
17602 N. Lake Ave.
Tapiola, MI 49916
(906) 334-2766

Contact:
Pastor Ivan Niemela
(906) 231-0945

Truth Without Compromise

“And it came to pass... that Hananiah the son of Azur the prophet... spake unto me in the house of the LORD, in the presence of the priests and of all the people” - Jeremiah 28:1-2 (KJV)

Throughout the ages, believers have faced significant opposition when sharing the Word of God. A notable example of this ongoing struggle is the confrontation between Hananiah and Jeremiah during a worship service in the Temple. Jeremiah, guided by God, advised the Judeans to surrender to Babylon rather than resist its military advances. (Babylon had already attacked Judah twice in the past ten years, capturing many Judeans and plundering their cities each time.) To symbolize submission to Babylon's rule, Jeremiah wore a yoke around his neck (Jeremiah 27:2), much like an animal under the control of its master. His message angered the people, especially his prophecy that Judah would be held captive for seventy years unless they sought forgiveness for their sins (Jeremiah 25:11; 4:4). Jeremiah's sermons were unwelcome in the Temple.

Hananiah stood in stark contrast to Jeremiah, delivering a prophecy filled with optimism and hope. And like Jeremiah, he also claimed to speak on behalf of God (Jeremiah 28:2), declaring that Babylon's power would be broken within two years. To reinforce his message, he removed the yoke from Jeremiah's neck and broke it, persuading the people to trust his message instead. Jeremiah did not respond immediately, choosing instead to wait for God's instruction before returning to declare, *“The Lord hath not sent thee; but thou makest this people to trust in a lie”* (Jeremiah 28:15). He prophesied that Hananiah would die within the year, a prediction that came true in the seventh month of that year (Jeremiah 28:17). Hananiah's premature death should have been undeniable proof of Jeremiah's true prophecy and acted as a warning against Hananiah's false prophecy. Instead, Jeremiah continued to face significant opposition from his own people. His ministry was marked by great hardship—imprisonment, persecution, and even being thrown into a muddy cistern and left to die—all because he refused to compromise God's truth. Despite the rejection he endured, his prophecies proved true, and his unwavering obedience stands as a powerful testimony for believers today—reminding us to uphold God's truth even in the face of opposition.

Jeremiah's confrontation with Hananiah reveals how people often reject difficult truths in favor of reassuring falsehoods. Hananiah's prophecy appealed to the people's desires, while Jeremiah's message called for repentance and submission to God's plan—even when that plan involved prolonged suffering. Unsurprisingly, the people gravitated toward Hananiah's words, reflecting a deeper religious issue. Hananiah's promise of swift deliverance from Babylon was exactly what they wanted to hear—reassuring, convenient, and requiring no repentance. Just as Israel had gradually abandoned public confession at the Tabernacle (Leviticus 1:3) to hidden sacrifices (Leviticus 17:3-4), today's religious practices often prioritize personal comfort over genuine transformation. Many seek private reassurance instead of open repentance and confession, echoing Paul's warning in 2 Timothy 4:3-4 about turning away from sound doctrine in favor of teachings that satisfy personal desires.

This account also demonstrates how both Hananiah and Jeremiah were confident in their convictions. Hananiah likely believed he was offering hope to Judah, yet his prophecy was based on popular expectations rather than divine revelation. His dramatic act of breaking the yoke from Jeremiah's neck symbolized his determination to make his message sound true. In contrast, Jeremiah remained steadfast, faithfully conveying God's words, even when his message was unpopular. While agreement from others can be comforting, truth must be sought through prayer and thorough study of Scripture. No matter how appealing a message may sound, it is crucial to verify it against God's Word while praying for His discernment (1 John 4:1).

When ideology supersedes truth, God's message can become distorted—just as it did in the time of Jeremiah. Today, believers are called to proclaim the gospel message of repentance and forgiveness to those burdened by sin and seeking eternal salvation (Luke 24:47). Jesus entrusted His followers with the responsibility of extending God's forgiveness to these individuals: *"Whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them"* (John 20:23). As with Jeremiah, we are not called to change hearts but to bear witness that Christ has saved us from our sins (Mark 5:19). This mission may be challenging, but it is also a liberating truth. Like Jeremiah, we must stand firm, even when the truth is inconvenient, trusting that God's word prevails.

God's Peace,
Charles Korhonen