Zion Lutheran VBS set for June 2nd – 6th

This summer send your kids to Zion Lutheran's International Spy Academy where they will be trained to be agents for the One true God. Throughout the week they will learn how to uncover counterfeits, find fingerprints, crack codes, collect clues, and stay hot on the trail of truth. Register below (additional forms are available in the church office).

Child's name _____

Grade completed _____ Birthday _____Age ___

Parents' names _____

Home address _____

Home phone _____Alternate phone_____

Emergency contact person _____ Relationship to student _____

Home phone _____Alternate phone _____

Food allergies Y___ N ___ (List:) _____

Medical concerns Y ___ N ___ (Explain:)_____

Family doctor _____Doctor's phone _____

Siblings attending VBS (names and ages) _____

_____

Church affiliation _____Church membership at _____

People who may pick up the child _____

Transportation needed? Y____ N _____ Circle Planned Attendance June 2, 3, 4, 5, 6

VBS leaders have permission to photograph/film the minor(s) designated above in any manner or form for any lawful purpose associated with this VBS program.

Parent's signature _____

MINISTRY APPS—Zion Lutheran
Applying the Gospel to Hearts and Home—May 2014

Sharing the Story of Jesus in Sunday School

Weekly Sunday school classes will meet through **Sunday, May 18**. Thank you to the dedicated Sunday school teachers who have shared the Gospel with our children. While Sunday school classes will take a summer break, Christian families never take a break from nurturing the baptismal faith of their children. Daily family devotions are encouraged. If you are looking for family devotion resources, please feel free to contact the pastors for suggestions. Sunday school classes will resume again in late August. Additional Sunday school teachers and assistants are always welcomed. If you'd like to assist this fall, please share your interest with Christian education chairperson Margaret Backhaus or Sunday school superintendent Shelly Gruhn.

VBS Spies Investigate Salvation Truths

Zion VBS 2014 has adopted the spy theme of the Answers in Genesis VBS curriculum. Children will investigate the Scripture and discover the Truth about the Savior and their salvation. Children ages 4 through grade 7 will meet the mornings of June 2-6. A registration form is included with this newsletter. Additional registration forms are available in the fellowship hall or by calling the church office. Zion members are encouraged to invite grandchildren and neighborhood children. Numerous volunteers will be needed to celebrate with an anticipated enrollment of 100 children. A volunteer sign-up sheet is in the fellowship hall (spy guides, craft assistants, recreation, refreshments, and decorations).

Donations at the annual Memorial Day Brunch hosted at Zion will again support the VBS mission. The brunch will be held on Monday, May 26. Be watching for opportunities to donate food items and to assist in serving the brunch.

Celebrating Christ with the Community: C-3 Events

Zion is privileged to be an active partner in the C-3 initiatives. Upcoming events include

+Wednesday, May 7: Aaron Addresses Adversity. Aaron Thomas, son of legendary football coach Ed Thomas, will present a program for youth (elementary and up) and adults on how the Christian faith helped his family and community address the adversity of a tornado and a tragic death. A soup supper will precede the program from 5:45 to 6:45 in the school cafeteria. The presentation will begin at 7 p.m. Anyone wishing to donate food items for the meal should contact Rhonda Grimm. Free will donations for the meal and presentation are appreciated.

+Sunday, June 8: C3 The annual summer concert will be expanded this year with a program for children featuring a Christian balloon ministry; a youth praise band from Shepherd of the Valley Lutheran Church, West Des Moines; and Christian vocalist Holly Starr. Gates will open at 4 p.m. with concerts to follow. Free food will again be available. Children and youth will receive a free t-shirt. More details will be shared in the upcoming weeks.

Donations through C-3 ministry can be shared with your weekly offering or given in the special containers in the fellowship hall. Checks can be made out to "Zion Lutheran—Summer Concert." The generous support of Zion members and the community is appreciated.

Jesus' resurrection "app"lies to everyone! Rejoice!
Pastor Riggert (bob.riggert@idwlcms.org)

NOAH

On March 28, Darren Aronofsky and Ari Handel launched their imagination onto the big screen in their dramatic-thriller *Noah.* Reactions have been varied and diverse. Among Christians some are lambasting the film as "environmentalism propaganda," "paganism," and "blasphemy," while others are lauding its "Biblical faithfulness." Some are urging Christians to make a statement by watching it; others are calling them to make their statement by avoiding it. Whether people have seen it or not, they're talking about it. And since, as Christians, we're called to be discerning, it's important that we are informed in our conversations.

I haven't seen the movie (I have read numerous reviews of the movie), so I can't give an eye-witness review. If you're interested in a movie review, visit with me and I'll happily share a couple with you. So, instead of a full-fledged movie review, we're going to do three things: 1) place the film in the producers' intended context, 2) review what the Bible teaches about Noah, and 3) highlight some of the helpful thoughts from other reviewers. Our goal is to equip ourselves to offer a reasoned, Biblically informed response to this culture-shaping movie.

Imaginative Midrash

To begin our reasoned response to *Noah*, it's important to understand what the producers were aiming for and what they weren't. Despite featuring the Biblical character Noah, his ark, and the global flood, the movie was not produced to faithfully represent the Biblical account. *Noah* the movie is the producers' midrash of the Biblical account. The "Midrash" is a collection of Jewish stories that were told by venerated rabbis to explain and expand upon difficult passages and the un-narrated details in Biblical narratives. In other words, the Midrash represents the Jewish attempt to read between the lines and imagine the rest of the story as it *could* have been. Mr. Aronofsky and Mr. Handel are attempting to stand in that tradition as they flesh out the narrative gaps in the Biblical account. With their big screen adaptation, they're asking us, "Could it have been like this?" According to Mr. Aronofksy,

> Within our tradition, being Jews—a long tradition of thousands of years of people writing commentary on the biblical story—there isn't anything we're doing that's out of line or out of sync, but within that, you don't want to contradict what's there. In all the midrash tradition, the text is what the text is. The text exists and is truth and the word and the final authority. But how you decide to interpret it, you can open up your imagination to be inspired by it.

We'll address Mr. Aronofsky's claim that his film doesn't contradict the Biblical text in a moment. For now, we simply need to see what philosophy guided him as he fleshed out the world and characters around Noah. Most of what we know about Noah and his world can be found in Genesis 5-9 (which we'll discuss below), but it's not extensive. For example, we're not told the name of Noah's wife. We're not told whether it rained in the pre-flood world or not. We're not told whether Noah and family built the ark alone or whether he hired help. We're not told how such a cataclysmic event affected Noah emotionally. The precise identity of the Nephilim (Gen. 6:4) isn't explained. Further, we're not told about the conversations Noah might have had with his father (Lamech) and his grandfather (Methuselah). And we don't know how the animals existed on the ark.

There are simply a lot of things the Biblical narrative doesn't tell us. In the midrash tradition these un-revealed details are an invitation to let your imagination run free. And that's precisely what Mr. Aronofsky and Mr. Handel do. They give Mrs. Noah a name. They imagine what the Nephilim might have

been (They are huge, rock-like fallen angels called Watchers in the movie). They imagine the conversations Noah shared with his grandfather (and they imagine Methuselah to have sorcerer-like powers). They imagine Noah putting the animals into a sort of hibernation with a certain leaf-based incense. They even imagine a possible scenario to account for Adam and Eve's sin in Eden (Adam, as they imagine it, was distracted by Satan's newly-shed serpent skin, and while he was investigating it, Satan deceived Eve; the serpent skin was preserved, and used by Noah in a semi-magical way).

To build drama and provide an antagonist to Noah, Mr. Aronofsky and Mr. Handel imagine Tubal-Cain (mentioned briefly in Gen. 4:22) chopping his way into Noah's ark. Further, they wrestle with how Noah would have handled the reality of a global cataclysm in which all people on earth (save his family), along with most the animals on the planet, would be destroyed. Viewers are even forced to hear the screams of people drowning and to see the agony of Noah's family as they watch men, women, and children perish. As a result, Noah is depicted as a psychologically tortured man.

To stoke their imagination, the producers consulted not only the Bible, but also extra-biblical books such as 1 Enoch. They also imported themes from other Biblical stories into the Noah story to flesh out human-interest details. What does all this mean? It means that *Noah* the movie is a film based largely on two men's imaginations. It's as if Mr. Aronofsky and Mr. Handel have stolen characters from *Star Wars, Iron Man, Captain America,* and *The Lord of the Rings* and dropped them into Noah's world and asked us, "Could it have been like this?"

As an imaginative film in the genre of one of the above-named superhero action movies, *Noah* succeeds. As a film that sticks to the Biblical presentation of Noah and to the key themes emphasized by the text, *Noah* the movie (as we'll see below) is an abysmal failure.

The Biblical Noah

As mentioned before, most of what we know about Noah can be found in Genesis 5-9. In Genesis 5:28 we learn that Noah's father was Lamech, who lived "595 years" after Noah was born "and had other sons and daughters" (5:30). At the end of chapter 5 we're told that Noah had three sons: Shem, Ham, and Japeth.

In chapter 6 the Bible tells us that "Noah was a righteous man, blameless in his generation" and that "Noah walked with God" (6:9). We also learn about Noah from other Biblical writers. The prophet Ezekiel describes Noah as "righteous" (14:14, 20). St. Peter refers to Noah as "a herald of righteousness" (2 Peter 2:5). And the author of Hebrews commends Noah in his faith hall of fame:

> By faith Noah, being warned by God concerning events as yet unseen, in reverent fear constructed an ark for the saving of his household. By this he condemned the world and became an heir of the righteousness that comes by faith (11:7).

Noah, despite being a righteous man, also struggled with sin (as did all the righteous men and women in Scripture). Genesis 9 narrates a particularly unflattering episode of drunkenness and nakedness of Noah that left him unconscious and exposed before his family. Having said that, Noah is still described as standing in stark contrast to his fellow man whose "wickedness… was great in the earth" (6:5). So great was his fellow man's wickedness that "the Lord was sorry that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him to his heart" (6:6). The text goes on to tell us that God's disappointment over man moved Him to "blot out man… from the face of the land" (6:7).

As you can see, the Biblical text doesn't give us many details on the ins and outs of Noah's life. These missing details, then, have been filled by Mr. Afronofsky's and Mr. Handel 's imaginations. In their headlong pursuit of what *could* have been, however, they have overlooked and missed a several themes

that *are* clearly portrayed in the Noah narrative. Several reviewers have helpfully highlighted these.

Reviewers' Observations

No mercy

According to multiple reviewers, Mr. Afronofsky and Mr. Handel depict what they imagine ubiquitous violence, abuse, and bloodshed would have looked like (a valid use of midrash). Some describe being physically moved and emotionally disturbed by the violent scenes (many of which are suggested rather than vividly depicted). Pushing the limits of midrash, they imagine Noah being plagued by a show-no-mercy sense of justice as he is increasingly angered by man's evil. He apparently has internalized God's grief and anger over violence and has completely missed His mercy and love for mankind in His ark of salvation.

As the movie progresses, they imagine Noah becoming increasingly violent toward man. According to reviewers, Noah's main concern isn't that man has sinned against a holy God, but that he has done violence to the "innocents," which are the animals. At one point in the film, Noah apparently believes God has told him to kill his granddaughters (which Noah fails to do). Here Afronofsky and Handel clearly go beyond midrash as their vivid imaginations cause them to miss the message of Scripture. The message is not merely that man has failed to steward creation well (which is a lamentable evil), but that his sin has offended and angered the holy God and deserves His just wrath. God, however, preserves a remnant through an ark of salvation. St. Peter, who clearly sees God's mercy in Noah's ark, draws the parallel between Noah's ark of salvation and Holy Baptism (1 Pt. 3). *Noah* the movie misses all this.

No Covenant

Further, *Noah* the movie misses God's covenant with Noah. In Genesis 6 (before the flood hit) and in Genesis 9 (after Noah et al. disembarked) God assures Noah of His covenant of grace with him. Further, God's covenant with Noah extends beyond Noah to all his descendants (which includes you and me). To remind Noah and us of His covenant, God placed the rainbow in the sky to assure us that He will never again flood the earth with water. Mr. Afronofsky and Mr. Handel apparently miss this entirely.

Noah isn't the main character

In the movie, Noah is clearly the main character. In the Bible, however, he's not. The main speaker in the Biblical narrative isn't Noah; it's God (Noah doesn't speak until well after the flood is past). In the movie, however, God doesn't speak. On the one hand, we can appreciate why Mr. Afronofsky and Mr. Handel avoided having God speak – who wants to hear Morgan Freeman being God again? On the other, by depriving God of His voice, Mr. Afronofsky and Mr. Handel have elevated Noah to the position of main character that the Bible doesn't give him (an all too easy move for self-focused humans to make). Further, because Noah receives God's revelation through dreams and portents, he's never truly sure he's aligned with the Creator's will and this leaves Noah in knots throughout the movie.

In the Bible God speaks clearly and He does it a lot. He clearly explains His intentions to destroy the earth, instructs Noah to build the ark (even giving specific dimensions), announces His plan to make a covenant with Noah, and His plan to send the representative animal kinds on board. God even tells Noah when to get on board the ark and when to get off. Then, once off, God blesses Noah and tells his family to "be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth" (9:1) and then God spreads His rainbow in the sky and explains its covenantal significance to Noah. Nothing in God's speaking is unclear. God speaks; Noah obeys.

Whether you watch the movie or not is up to you. When you enter a conversation about Noah, now you're equipped to offer a reasoned response.

Holding Your Family Together

Three months ago we introduced five simple steps to help you hold your family together (listed below) (from Dr. Rich Melhein's *Holding Your Family Together*). So far we've explored Step 1 (Sharing), and Step 2 (Reading) in depth. This month we come to Step 3: Talking.

Imagine the ocean, not just the Atlantic or the Pacific sections; but the world ocean. It's big, 139 million square miles of big. Now go deep. The world ocean is 310 cubic miles of deep. You would need 352,670,000,000,000,000,000 gallon milk jugs to hold that much water! That's a lot of deep. Nearly half of the world ocean is over 9,800 feet deep and in one spot it plummets nearly 7 miles (that's almost 36,000 feet – over a mile deeper than Mt. Everest is high!). Most of us who see or sail the ocean will know nothing of its depths and the beauties contained beneath the surface.

Why are we talking about the ocean in an article about holding the family together? Because most families settle for the surface in their talking when there's an entire world of discovery awaiting those who are willing to go deep. With that in mind, we turn to our third Faith Five step: talking.

Share the highs and lows of your day.

Read a Bible verse or story.

Talk about how the Bible reading relates to your highs and lows.

Pray for one another's highs and lows.

Bless one another.

Family Faith Practice 3: Talk

Dr. Rich describes talking as "a technology" that can, as with all technologies, "change our brains and our lives." He describes how technology has done precisely this over time:

> When stories and oral tradition were the main delivery systems of people's culture and identity, their brains grew a greater capacity in the areas of linguistics, phonics, memory, imagination and meaning. When print technology showed up and was embraced, people's brains developed more capacity in connecting the eyes to sound and meaning. When radio showed up, people's ears were gain more attached to the imagination centers of the brain. When TV appeared, this changed yet again. TV feeds us… images and sounds.

And now our brains are being affected through internet technology streaming through tablets, phones, and soon Google glasses. Dr. Rich references a piece by a *New York Times* reporter who writes that we are "skimming over the surface of life on a speed jet, bouncing from wave to wave at breathtaking speeds. It's a rush, and the areas of our brain that adjust quickly are growing in speed and efficiency. What we're losing is our capacity to go deep… to go under the wave, to slow down and make meaning of it all."

This is why we need Family Faith Practice 3: Talking. We need to teach our children to go deep with the help of the technology of talk. Specifically, we need to teach our children to talk the Scriptures into their lives so that they can make meaning of their lives.

You can do this in a variety of ways. Get a devotional book (talk to Pastor Conner if you need a suggestion) and relate the nightly devotion to each family member's high and low. Or choose a Biblical story to focus on throughout the week. Go deep in discussing it and applying it to one another's highs

and lows. Sign-up to receive the sermon via email and read and re-read it throughout the week. Let it guide your talking and your praying. Let it take you deeper in conversation.

What if my children don't want to?

Becoming a parent was one of the most joyful and painful things I've ever experienced. Joyful because of the delight children brought into my life. Painful because my imaginations about cheerful, compliant children were dashed on the rocks of reality. Rarely do children readily agree that my ideas are as good as I believe them to be. So what do you do if your children give you flak when you try to get them to talk?

Dr. Rich answers, "A wise adult doesn't let the child run the family. Period." He goes on,

> A responsible adult does not let the teen decide whether or not to get up in the morning and go to school. That's a given. A thoughtful adult who knows the dangers of adolescence today does not let the child decide whether or not to check in, participate in the family, or keep the communication lines open.

Further, Dr. Rich adds, "As far as I concerned, any faithful parent with half a brain doesn't let his or her children decide whether or not they will go to church with the family either." The fact of the matter is that children don't know what's best for them. They certainly know what they desire most, but, because their pre-frontal cortexes (the brain's judgment and discernment center) aren't fully developed until their mid-twenties, they don't know what's most desirable. You do. Give it to them.

Dr. Rich records his advice to one father who was getting pushback from his adolescent son over implementing the Family Faith Practices. He counseled, "Just tell him, 'If you won't talk to your dad every night – if you won't give me five minutes – I will not give you five cents when it comes time to pay for your car insurance." Dr. Rich's advice worked.

Turn off the tech

In order to take your talking deep, you will need to turn off the distracting technology around you. Dr. Rich reminds us,

> A teen with a cell phone is a teen tempted to tune out. Disengage these weapons of mass distraction on a regular basis to teach your children that there is more to the ocean of life than the constantly frenetic bouncing from site to site, from text to text, and from wave to electronic wave.

And then he offers these sage words, "Your children need to know that talking to people is more valuable and important to the survival of their brains, bodies and spirits than texting and tech." For this reason he advises installing tech-fasts throughout the day, especially during breakfast, supper, and bedtime. These are times to hone the technology of talking as a family.

What if your children refuse? Dr. Rich says, "Remember the Gold Rule: he or she who has the gold makes the rules. Simply stop paying for their phones and cable. They will quickly start to see things your way." "I suggest," Dr. Rich continues, "you give your children this centering and depth-building enrichual every night of their lives that they live under your care."

The neurology of talking: An ocean of possibility

Since we're discussing technology, it's important that we highlight the greatest piece of technology ever discovered in the history of mankind: the human brain. People often compare the human brain to a computer, but that's a little bit like comparing a big box to an active beehive. Boxes, no matter how big, eventually get full. The same goes for computers; eventually the hard drive gets full. But the human

brain is living and active. Dr. Rich explains, "Memories are alive, active, rewiring and re-firing whenever we retrieve them – sometimes at will and sometimes at random." He compares it to the beehive:

> The human memory apparatus is… like a beehive, where the bees are constantly in motion, bringing in new sweet stuff, getting rid of old unused stuff, protecting the collective and collected valuable stuff, and feeding new, unformed baby ideas that haven't had a chance to hatch so that they can one day emerge and benefit the whole hive.

According to Dr. Rich, the brain is mind-boggling complex and seemingly limitless in its memory-matrixing ability:

> Each and every nerve cell in your brain is connected to anywhere between 1,000 and 100,000 other nerves. That makes for 10,000 trillion possible unique connections. Multiply the number of connections times the number of possible connections, and you get a 10 followed by a million zero's worth of possible thoughts and creative combinations!

In case you were counting, that's more than the estimated atoms in the universe! Now imagine the number of connections you can help your children make by talking the Scriptures into their brains! Imagine the web of connection that you can weave if you make talking about the Scriptures a routine part of your family life. Dr. Rich says,

> The act of recalling and remembering the highs and lows of the day, and then turning and returning to God's Word, will create and reinforce memories and grooved pathways in the brain that will follow your children on through life.

If you remain silent, the world will not. It will continue to urge your children to move at an ever faster rate across the ocean of life and your child will never know the joys of going deep and the blessing of connecting God's Word to every aspect of their lives. Dr. Rich says it well,

> Your responsibility as a Christian parent is to make sure and certain that your children not only know God's story and know their place in that story, but also that they know the very Storyteller who loves them more than life itself.

That's a reason to start talking to your children and connecting the Scriptures to their lives tonight!

Practical Guidelines on Getting Started from Dr. Rich:

- Designate a special place to have your time together. Remove all tech devices and distractions.
- Share your highs and lows. Repeat whatever your children say are their highs and lows to make sure you heard it right.
- Read a key verse or a story from God's Word.
- Pause and ask, "What is God trying to say to us tonight with these words?" or "How does this verse connect to the highs and lows you just shared?"
- Listen.

Counterpoint

Countering falsehoods with facts for the sake of life

At various times in this article series and others, we have referenced Planned Parenthood, the nation's largest abortion provider. This month in our *Counterpoint* series we're investigating some of the claims made on Planned Parenthood's website.

Claim #1: *Care. No matter what.*

The first thing you see when you log on to Planned Parenthood's website is their large blue banner across the top of the page. It reads "Care. No matter what." It's a startlingly deceptive motto when you consider that "care," at the very least, has to do with protection, concern, and seeing to the wellbeing of another, and in 2012 (the most recent year for which we have information) Planned Parenthood killed over 327,000 unborn babies and dispensed over 1,590,000 morning after pills (many of which resulted in chemical abortions). Surgical abortion involves the dismembering, suctioning, and disposing of babies piece by piece as medical waste. How can Planned Parenthood call this "care"? Regardless of any of the other services they might provide, their major income comes from killing unborn babies. Providing discounted medical services that have been subsidized by dead babies is a lot of things, none of which rises to the level of "care."

Counterpoint:

Care involves protection, concern, and seeing to the wellbeing of another (mother, father, and child). Abortion does not care for the unborn child (or the mother and father). Any institution that subsidizes its care by killing babies is not one practicing true care.

Claims #2 and #3: In-clinic abortion procedures end pregnancy and are safe and effective.

Once on the Planned Parenthood website, you can click on a variety of topics. When you click on "abortion," you are given the option to read about "in-clinic" abortions and "the abortion pill." We'll focus on the "in-clinic" abortions this month. When you come to this page you get this "at a glance" overview of the abortion procedure:

- Medical procedures that end pregnancy
- Safe and effective
- Available from many Planned Parenthood health centers
- Costs about $300–$950 in the first trimester

The last two bullet points reflect reality. The first two are an obfuscation and a lie. Let's see why.

First, while it is true that abortion ends pregnancy, Planned Parenthood is careful not to acknowledge that abortion ends a baby's life. In fact, in the detailed explanation of "What Happens During an In-Clinic Abortion?" Planned Parenthood never mentions the baby at all! They discuss two procedures: Aspiration Abortion and Dilation & Evacuation Abortion. Under the Aspiration Abortion section they describe the procedure that prepares the woman for the abortion and then they describe the actual abortion with these words:

> Either a hand-held suction device or a suction machine gently empties your uterus.
>
> Sometimes, an instrument called a curette is used to remove any remaining tissue that lines the uterus.

They acknowledge that the uterus is emptied and that there may be remaining "tissue" that needs to be removed from the uterus, but never do they acknowledge *what* has been emptied from the uterus and *to whom* the remaining tissue belonged. Why? If they claim to "Care. No matter what." Shouldn't their "No matter what" promise entail speaking truth to women? Or are they afraid that women who knew the truth might choose life, reducing their profits?

Under the Dilation and Evacuation Abortion they again describe the procedure that prepares the

woman for the abortion and then describe the actual abortion with these words:

> In later second-trimester procedures, you may also need a shot through your abdomen to make sure that the fetus's heart stops before the procedure begins.
>
> Medical instruments and a suction machine gently empty your uterus.

As before, they never mention the baby. They do acknowledge that "the fetus's heart stops," but that's as close as they get to acknowledging the life that abortion is ending. While the information they provide may be factually accurate, it has been carefully worded to obscure the truth that abortion kills an unborn baby.

Second, Planned Parenthood claims abortion is "safe and effective." They assert, "In-clinic abortion procedures are very safe," but warn that, as with any "medical procedure," there are risks. Here are the risks they list:

- an allergic reaction
- blood clots in the uterus
- incomplete abortion — part of the pregnancy is left inside the uterus
- failure to end the pregnancy
- infection
- injury to the cervix or other organs
- undetected ectopic pregnancy
- very heavy bleeding

Then they promise, "Most often, these complications are simple to treat with medicine or other treatments."

Several things need to be said here. First, abortion is not simply another "medical procedure." Medical procedures are designed to mend something that is broken. Abortion aims to break (i.e. kill) something (i.e. a baby) that isn't broken. Second, it is disingenuous of Planned Parenthood to describe an "incomplete abortion" as leaving "part of the pregnancy… inside the uterus." What's inside the uterus isn't a pregnancy; what's inside the uterus is a baby. Third, their promise that "these complications are simple to treat" is misleading at best. In the November 2013 newsletter we detailed some of the after-effects of abortion. A few paragraphs are reprinted here:

> Among the most frequent difficulties reported by post-abortive women are: depression, loss of self-worth, self-destructive behavior, sleep disorders, memory loss, sexual dysfunction, chronic relationship problems, dramatic personality changes, anxiety attacks, guilt, difficulty grieving, increased tendency toward violence, chronic crying, difficulty concentrating, flashbacks, loss of interest in activities and people she once enjoyed, and difficulties bonding with later children. Many women turn to drugs or alcohol to numb their pain. A large percentage also report thoughts of suicide; many women attempt it.
>
> In addition to the dead babies and emotional pain for women who abort, abortion brings with it numerous unmentioned risks. Studies of post-abortive women have found that, compared to women who carried their babies to term, women who chose abortion in the year previous to their death were 60% more likely to die of natural causes, 7 times more likely to die from suicide, 4 times more likely to die from injuries received in accidents, and 14 times more likely to die from homicide. Many of these are attributable to the emotional pain that post-abortive women are unable to endure that drives them to life-risking behaviors.
>
> Abortion can also cause serious medical problems. Abortion increases the risk of ectopic pregnancy. In fact, research shows that since *Roe v. Wade* the rate of ectopic pregnancies has increased by 300%! Pelvic Inflammatory Disease is another common effect of abortion. Women who suffer from this post-abortive infection have

> significantly higher rates of spontaneous abortions in subsequent pregnancies, infertility, dyspareunia (pain during or after sexual intercourse), and chronic pelvic pain. Abortion also increases the risk of placenta previa in subsequent pregnancies (This is a condition in which the placenta covers the cervix and prevents Baby from passing through the birth canal). Among other medical problems produced by abortion are: increased risk of tubal infertility, increased risk of premature birth, low birth weight, and malformations in subsequent children, increased risk of breast cancer, increased risk of death due to complications caused by abortion.

Planned Parenthood's claim that abortion is "safe" simply rings hollow. If they truly cared, as they claim, they would tell women the true risks of abortion.

A little further down on their webpage they admit that the mother's death is a potential complication of abortion, but they assuage women of these fears by telling them that abortions within the first 20 weeks are 11 times less likely to result in the mother's death than childbirth. And for abortions after 20 weeks gestation, the risks are about the same. The message is clear: "You're safer having an abortion than giving birth."

As for the "effective" promise of "safe and effective," they promise this:

> You can feel confident in knowing that these abortion methods are very effective. They work almost every time they are done. You'll follow up with your health care provider after your abortion so you can be sure that it worked and that you are well.

Notice once again that the unborn baby is never mentioned. The effectiveness being touted is the killing of the unborn and women are encouraged to feel "confident" in this killing.

Counterpoint:

> *Abortion does more than end pregnancy; it also ends an unborn baby's life and exposes the mother to untold health risks. This is not "safe" for the unborn baby or the mother.*

Planned Parenthood's promise to "Care. No matter what." simply isn't true. Care doesn't involve lies, obfuscation, and killing. On the contrary, care requires truth, honesty, and the defense of life, and it is this kind of care that we, as the church of Jesus, are called to extend. Such care may require great effort and cost for us, but we worship a Savior who went to great efforts and spared no cost in His care for us.

First, it involves creating a culture of life in the church where God's gift of sex is rightly esteemed and placed in the proper context of marriage. That means we need to be sexually pure in all that we say and do so that sex is celebrated as God's great gift to marriage that bonds husband and wife in one flesh and brings forth children to be raised in the fear and instruction of the Lord.

Second, it means understanding that in a broken world people will use, abuse, and deceive one another. Satan would have them see abortion as their savior. We see it in Planned Parenthood's promise to "care." We must expose such harmful and deadly care as a lie even as we offer the grace, forgiveness, and healing of Christ.

Third, we need to practice what we preach about care. People deceived by Satan's lies aren't helped when we turn our back on them. Yes, we need to help them see Satan's lie so that they can turn from it and not be deceived again, but we also need to walk with them and show them how to live differently. True care will build them up and bring them to their real Savior Jesus.

At the center of it all will be Jesus' church where we receive the care of Christ who forgives our sins, heals our brokenness, and surrounds us with a community of care givers. May we care like this.

April Highlights

Ladies Guild

The Zion Guild met on April 9th for its regular meeting, hosted by Audrey Roe and Sue Puck. Fifteen members were in attendance.

Pastor Conner used a Palm Sunday theme having Jesus riding joyfully into Jerusalem, then later in the week going willingly to his crucifixion. Christian Life Chairman, Margaret Backhaus read a devotion entitled "Easter Is" which reminded us that Christ has been raised from the dead.

President Schilling opened the business meeting with the League Pledge followed by the mite box prayer. The minutes of the previous meeting were approved as read and correspondence from Susan Lamb, Marion Ream, and Gary Thies were read as well. The treasurer gave her report. Human Care Chairman, Audrey Roe, reported giving 90 quilts to Orphan Grain Train and said the last quilting date will be on the 24th of April. Quilts will be packed to send on the 1st of May and will be sent to Sac City on May 5th. Sunshine Chairman Bev Grundmeier said no cards were sent this month.

Circle reports:

Circle 2 served April coffees.
Circle 3 will do May.
The next funeral luncheon will be served by Circle 2.

Old Business:

The Spring Rally was held in Carroll on April 5th. Seven ladies from Manning's Guild were counted among the 64 who attended. Ellie Mentz from Jefferson was the speaker.

There are no delegates from Manning who will be attending the District Convention in June at Camp Okoboji. There will be a box put in Manning's fellowship hall, however, to collect for Phil's Friends and to be sent to the convention. There will be a label put on the box to let people know what is being collected. There was some confusion about which ink cartridges were being recycled. Audrey Roe volunteered to sort them and save the correct ones.

New Business:

Darlene Vollstedt will purchase the flowers for the 8 young people being confirmed. .

Joni Kienast will again be in charge of the cookie walk at Kinderfest. There was a shortage of cookies donated last year. Congregational members are asked to note and to help provide cookies.

Sandra Vahl will be in charge of the graduation breakfast again. She will put up a list of items that she needs to have donated.

The meeting was adjourned with the table prayer and the Lord's Prayer

Charles, Cheryl, Caleb, Caitlin, Carissa, and Cassie Ferry
Missionaries to Indonesia

April 2014
Issue #8

Selamat Paskah! (Indonesian for "Happy Easter!") The bags are packed, the tickets are in hand, and it's time for your team to head out to Indonesia! During the last few months we've been busily making final preparations so that when everything is in place, the Ferry Family is ready to deploy to make our home in Indonesia. Chuck was promoted to Captain in the US Air Force, and has been fulfilling the year's military commitments so the rest of the time can be spent making the transition overseas with the family. He traveled to Texas and Colorado on Air Force orders, and attended two military schools in Michigan.

The family traveled to Ohio, Georgia and South Carolina, where Chuck preached and led presentations on our upcoming work. We also traveled to Northern Illinois where we participated in a Zone Rally of the LWML, as well as preached for both Sunday services. While it's been a busy time, the real work is just about to begin. As of today, we have less than two weeks until we're on an airplane, heading for the other side of the world. It's only because of your support, prayers, and help, and the grace of our God, that we're ready to head out the door. Thank you for your partnership, and we'll keep you posted as we go... the next word to arrive will be from Indonesia! God bless you all with the peace of knowing our sins are forgiven in Jesus, the crucified, risen, and reigning Lord.

Family Update

The kids all enjoyed having their Oma (Cheryl's mom Ruth) at the house in Michigan twice during the last two months. What a wonderful blessing as we worked to make this transition and get used to Cassie's needs!

Caleb has been our little man during this time, doing great things to help out around the house. His class at school threw him a big goodbye party, and he's already packed his American football to use in teaching the Indonesian kids!

Caitlin also finished her school year and said goodbye to her classmates. She's a bright little girl with an ever-active imagination. As her toys have been given away for travel, she's gotten good at making use of everyday things around the house instead.

Carissa has been watching and imitating everything around the house, both good and not-so-good. She's been developing her vocabulary, and has been picking up nearly as much Indonesian as English. Now when she asks for a book, she points and says, "Buku" (Indonesian for book).

Cassie gave us quite a scare in mid-March as she was diagnosed with RSV (a respiratory virus) and had to be admitted to the hospital for several days. But she's healed well, and is actually sleeping through the night at a very young age!

Prayer Requests

- Thanksgiving for all our supporters who have made our deployment possible!
- For safe travels as we prepare for over 22 hours in airplanes with the kids
- For ongoing pledged support, that we might continue serving overseas according to our Lord's will
- That our gracious Lord Jesus would grant His wisdom and grace, that many would be blessed by the work we're going to do in Indonesia

!Amigos En Cristo!
News from IDW Hispanic Ministry
Missionary/Pastor Daniel Vogel

Iowa District West, LCMS
Year 10, Issue 5, May 2014

Jose is Confirmed in Storm Lake: On March 30 Jose Ibarra of Storm Lake was confirmed in our Sunday worship service. Jose and I have been studying over the past months as he commuted each week from his work at Verizon in Des Moines. Jose is the son of Reynaldo and Cati Ibarra, also members of our church. Jose was born in Mexico but came to the U.S. as a child and has become a successful bilingual manager for Verizon. He now lives in Storm Lake and is a manager of the local Verizon store. He is also studying to become a realtor.

A Visit with Pastor Eric Moeller & Miracelia in Storm Lake: On April 11-13 Rev. Eric Moeller and his wife Miracelia came to Storm Lake to consider working both as a chaplain at the Tyson plant and as our Hispanic pastor. Pastor Eric is currently teaching as a professor at Concordia College in Selma, Alabama. He is teaching Spanish, Sociology and Religion. He has also taught in other universities, pastored churches, and served as a missionary in Panama. He holds a Doctor's Degree in Sociology from the University of Chicago and is fluent in English, Spanish and Portuguese. He is married to Miracelia, a native of Brazil and they have three children, Erika (18), Jennifer (3) and Jonathan (1). While he was in Storm Lake he had a tour and an interview with the Tyson Pork plant in order to be considered as a chaplain of the plant. He and Miracelia visited with our Hispanic church group and attended our Sunday worship service.

My Tyson Chaplaincy at the Plants in Denison & Storm Lake: Paul Maychen is the other chaplain at Tyson in Storm Lake. He is a full time chaplain serving the Laotians and other Asian workers. He has worked at Tyson for three years. Paul is a Presbyterian pastor serving the Laotian population in the community. He was born in Laos and came to Storm Lake from California. In Laos his family were all Buddhists. He converted to Christianity in the U.S. and has helped his entire family to become Christians. I have enjoyed working with him. Together we give a weekly presentation of our Chaplaincy program to the new orientation class of workers. We visit with workers throughout the plant on both the morning and afternoon shifts.

Special Presentations: Last month I had the privilege of giving presentations at First Lutheran, Mt. Ayr with members from Mt. Ayr and Creston, and at Zion Lutheran School in Paullina. I also helped organize the first Hispanic Pro Life Conference in Denison. If I can come to your church or group to share what God is doing in our Hispanic ministry in western Iowa please give me a call or Email.

Please Pray: + In thanksgiving for all the blessings from the visit with Pastor Eric and Celia Moeller and continued prayers for the calling process at our mission in Storm Lake. + For Jose in Storm Lake who was Confirmed last month to become an adult member. + For the blessing of a new church name in Denison and for our meetings with Voting members to elect leaders and to charter our mission. + For my temporary work as Chaplain at Tyson in Storm Lake and the opportunity there to meet many special people. + In thanksgiving for the mission hearts of the many individuals and congregations of Iowa District West who monthly support the Lord's work among Hispanic immigrants.

TO CONTACT ME:
Rev. Daniel Vogel
32678 Aspen Ave. Manning, Iowa, 51455
1-712-653-2354 or Cell: 712-309-1292 or E-mail me at: Dan.Vogel@idwlcms.org

May Birthdays and Anniversaries @ Zion

1. Becky Bruch
   Lynn Nulle
2. Rita Beck
3. Kendra Arp
6. Emily Albertsen
   Andrew Dreier
   Dustin Karsten
   Greg Sextro
7. Catherine Conner
   Lane Sams
8. Ryan Sandage
9. Daniel Dawson
10. Randy Kurth
    Rachel Ramsey
11. Robert Merriman
    Riley Willison
12. Nathan Bauer
    Jaime England
13. Lucy Borkowski
    John Ehrichs Jr.
    Kari Ranniger
14. Rodney Backhaus
    Irene Genzen
    Nathan Peters
    Todd Winter
15. Jan Henkelman
    Ella Langel
    JoAnn Thomas
16. Timothy Conner
    Nicholas Grimm
17. Emily Ceminsky
    David Genzen
    Jessica Kucik
    Kay Otto
    Mandi Sandage
18. Brad Kusel
    Gina Vollstedt
19. Brennen Morris
20. Karlee Arp
21. Kamaya Jacobsen
    Harper Morris
    Kelli Morrow
    Garry Puck
    Dereck Trimpe
22. Ty Greving
    Marlin Kahl
    Todd Ketcham
    Alexis Lesle
    Mya Sandage
    Lisa Steffes
23. Taya Vonnahme
24. Bryndon Rosener
26. Alan Grimm
27. Dennis Grimm
    Gene Lohrmann
    Joan Noelck
28. Jessica Sellner
29. Heidi Crawford
    Arlene Kusel

4. David & Lori Genzen
6. Michael & Bridget Gore
10. Steve & Barb Page
13. Dan & Jennifer Behrens
20. Janet & Rich Plumb
21. Nicholas & Dena Diersen
25. Russell & Cynthia Ranniger
28. Ben & Mckensie Bess
    Delton & Janet Gruhn
    Mark & Jessica Kucik

If we missed or misspelled your name, please inform the church office.

Congregational Servants

Council:
Curt Struve, President
Sam Musfeldt, Vice President
Donna Forman, Record. Sec.
Amber Neumann, Fin. Sec.
Karen Kienast, Treasurer
Jeff Hargens, CFO

Board of Elders:
Stan Baack, head elder
LaVern Bald, Stan Musfeldt
Dave Grundmeier
Tim Kienast, Lynn Kruse Don Lamb
Craig Musfeldt,

Board of Deacons:
David Bohlman, Bruce Grimm,
Ryan Crawford, Eric Ramsey
Paul Christensen, Richard Zinke,

Board of Trustees:
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Jason Kienast,
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Frank Mohr, Lynn Kruse,
Gary Schroeder, Warren Puck

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Joni Kienast, Laurene Meeves,
Kari Ranniger, Kathy Vollstedt

Preschool Board:
Dianne Riggert, Chair
Jean Ferneding, Diane Riggert,
Sandra Sextro, Heather Kusel,
Jen Morris
Elder: LaVern Bald

Altar Guild:
Monica Christensen, Director

Ladies Guild:
Susie Schilling, President

Stewardship Board:
Rick Lohrmann, Chair

Fellowship Club:
Russ Mohr, President

Choir:
Dr. Tom Ulrickson, director

Children's Choir:
Susie Ulrickson, Jill Arp

Hi Congregational Members,
It's hard to believe it is May! Where did the school year go? We have lived, loved, laughed, played, studied, learned and enriched our lives together. Please continue to pray for these precious children of God. Our closing program is on Wednesday, May 14 at 7:00p.m. You are invited. Our last day of preschool is Thursday, May 15.

April Highlights
We celebrated *The Week of the Young Child*. I hope you had a chance to see the flowers painted by the preschool children that were displayed in the Johnson & Woodhouse Building and also the beautiful butterflies displayed in the Manning Public Library window. If you see Renee Pfannkuch or Burke Johnson please tell them thanks for letting the preschoolers display their art work in their businesses. The children enjoyed many special visitors!
Blessings, Deb Fink and Janice Nemitz

Figure 1 Pastor Conner

Figure 2 Pastor Riggert

Figure 3 Audrey Roe

Figure 4 Carol Kahl