JOINING JESUS ON HIS MISSION
How to Be an Everyday Missionary
Generations in mission

Our Mission Mindset
Continuing the Adventure

Over the course of the year, we, with Pastor Finke's help, have been working to reorient our thinking around the Kingdom of God. He encouraged us:

> Jesus is inviting us to completely reorient our minds and lives *around* this new reality of the kingdom being redemptively present and active around us. He is saying, 'Reorient your thinking and presumptions around it. Reorient your values and priorities around it. Reorient how you interpret what you are seeing and hearing around it. Reorient how you interpret what you are seeing and hearing around it. And believe this good news I am telling you.'

Jesus is getting His Father's world back! And He isn't sending us out into the world to do the work for Him – as if we could! – He's inviting us to journey with Him in His mission to redeem and restore all things. This isn't what we have to do *for* Jesus; it's what we, as disciples of Jesus, get to do *with* Jesus! What an amazing privilege! And what a mission adventure!

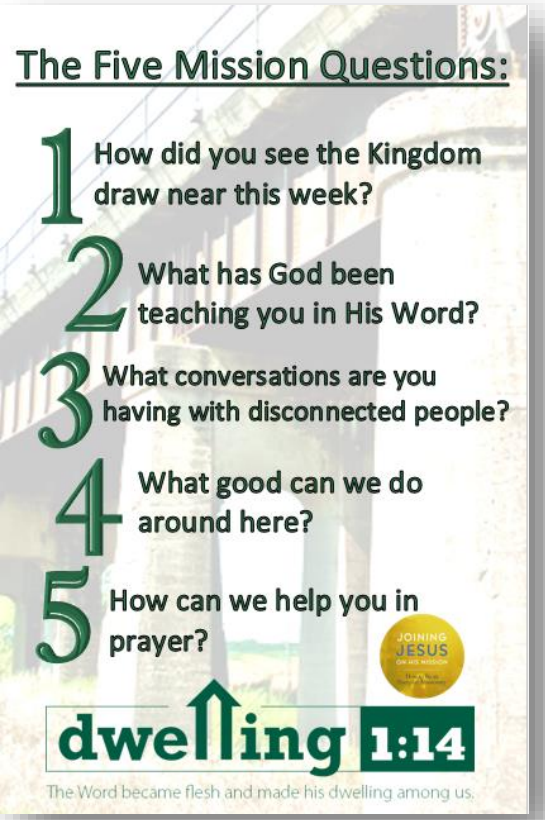
Think about it: Jesus is already one step ahead of us preparing conversation opportunities for us. All we need to do is seek, recognize, and respond to what Jesus is already doing.

In order to help us accomplish this, Pastor Finke invited us to ask individually and in our missional communities these five mission questions:

1. How did I see God at work this week (How did I see the Kingdom draw near)?
2. What has God been teaching me in His Word?
3. What kind of conversations am I having?
4. What good can I do around here?
5. How can I minister through prayer?

These questions, especially if discussed among fellow followers of Jesus in missional communities, have the power to provide "the encouragement, insights, and accountability we need to stay inspired and intentional for our long term mission adventure with Jesus."

Still not connected to a missional community? Want help getting one started? Come visit with me. Together we can inspire one another to be in mission *with* Jesus!



Ministry Apps

Applying the Gospel to Hearts and Homes (December 2016): Zion and Trinity Lutheran

Treemendous Heritage

Martin Luther is credited with the very first Christmas tree. The story tells of his wandering through a forest one evening and noting how the stars sparkled through the limbs of an evergreen, making it appear as though the tree was bejeweled with light. Inspired by the sight, Martin cut down a small first tree, took it home, and decked it with tiny candles so that he could share it with his children. We don't know if the story is indeed factual. We do know that Martin Luther indeed saw the Light of Jesus and shared His Light to a church and culture in darkness. May the light-dotted Christmas trees of the season remind us of the significance of the Light of Jesus in our hearts and homes.

Treemendous Message

Adam and Eve saw the tree of life in the garden; Elijah slept under a broom tree; the Psalmist compared spiritual growth to a tree by a stream; Isaiah prophesied hope in the tree of Jesse; Zacchaeus climbed a sycamore tree to see Jesus. All the trees of Scripture pale in comparison to the tree of the cross. Join us in the Biblical forest to see the Tree of Love, Tree of Hope, and Tree of Joy. Midweek services will be held on **Wednesdays—Nov. 30, Dec. 7, and Dec. 14**. Services will be held at **Trinity, Manilla at 2 p.m. and at Zion, Manning at 5:45 p.m.** with the fellowship meal to follow. Bring the children! Bring your friends and neighbors. Children will receive a special tree decoration to enjoy with their family in their home.

Candlelight Christmas Eve services will be held on Saturday evening, December 24. The **Trinity, Manilla service will be held at 4:00 p.m. and the service at Zion at 7:00 p.m.** Bring the whole family. Invite your friends and neighbors.

The Christmas Day celebration on Sunday, December 25 will again include the more informal family brunch in the fellowship hall at **10:00 a.m.** This service of carols has become a welcomed tradition at Zion. Bring a favorite dish to add to the table of treats.

New Year's Eve services will include the **4:00 p.m.** Saturday service at Trinity and a **6:00 p.m.** service at Zion.

Treemendous Children

The Spirit's working in and through our children will be enjoyed at the annual Children's Service on Sunday evening, **December 18 at 6:30 p.m.** Thanks to the special efforts of Jill Arp, Susie Ulrickson, and the Sunday school staff, the message of the Savior's birth will be shared through Christmas musicals. This service is a blessing to families and the whole family of Zion.

The children of Zion Preschool and their families will join us for the December 14 Advent celebration. We welcome their joyous songs.

Treemendous Blessings

As the year concludes and we consider God's blessings, we respond generously supporting various charities. Remember the blessings you receive from your church. With the sacrificial support of every member we again have the opportunity to meet our home budget needs and support our mission commitments. Please consider a special year end gift of thanksgiving.

Read this poem slowly. Sip it like gourmet coffee. Contemplate it like good wine. Pause, consider, swish, savor, swallow.

Gloria in Profundis

There has fallen on earth for a token
A god too great for the sky.
He has burst out of all things and broken
The bounds of eternity:
Into time and the terminal land
He has strayed like a thief or a lover,
For the wine of the world brims over,
Its splendour is spilt on the sand.

Who is proud when the heavens are humble,
Who mounts if the mountains fall,
If the fixed stars topple and tumble
And a deluge of love drowns all-
Who rears up his head for a crown,
Who holds up his will for a warrant,
Who strives with the starry torrent,
When all that is good goes down?

For in dread of such falling and failing
The fallen angels fell
Inverted in insolence, scaling
The hanging mountain of hell:
But unmeasured of plummet and rod
Too deep for their sight to scan,
Outrushing the fall of man
Is the height of the fall of God.

Glory to God in the Lowest
The spout of the stars in spate-
Where thunderbolt thinks to be slowest
And the lightning fears to be late:
As men dive for sunken gem
Pursuing, we hunt and hound it,
The fallen star has found it
In the cavern of Bethlehem.

- *By* G.K. Chesterton

Glory in the Depths

Genuine poetry can communicate before it is understood. – T.S. Eliot

This poem, Gloria in Profundis (*Glory in the Depths*), written by one of the greatest Christian writers and thinkers in modern history, G.K. Chesterton, invites us to consider perhaps the greatest confession ever uttered: *And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth* (John 1:14).

God's eternal glory has incarnated itself here – on earth, among us! How could eternity break its own bounds and enter our time and terminal land? How could glory wear human flesh? Thief, lover, wine - all analogies for Christ – unexpected as a thief, unappreciated as a lover, and unacknowledged as fine wine and so dumped onto the sand. Thus our handling of Heaven's glory!

But if God (the heavens) is humble, what place is there for pride among us? If the mountains fall and the stars tumble (images for God's highness coming low), if God's selfless love deluges us in Christ, what place is there for human boasting, preening, or posturing? How can we insist on self? If God is diving down, why are we striving upwards toward individual dominance?

The fallen angels fell because they feared such humility, such lowering of self. They couldn't fathom such descent so they (in their inverted insolence where *up* was *down*) scaled (unwittingly) the hanging mountain of hell, diving deeper into hell's pit the "higher" they climbed. Christ, however, saw man's headlong fall toward hell and He outrushed him so as to rescue him and raise him up.

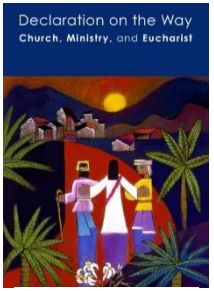
So Chesterton sings, "Glory to God in the lowest!" He imagines the very heavens themselves rushing rash and reckless as men dive for a sunken gem, fearing to be the last to find it. But there, in the Bethlehem cavern, the low-diving star has found God's glory. Chesterton leaves the glory unnamed. He would have us turn to Scripture to hear the news: "For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord." God's glory has come to our depths and that makes Christmas merry.

On Sunday, November 13, Zion was privileged to host Iowa District West President Steve Turner, along with our executive assistant for Missions, Human Care, and Stewardship, Rev. Mark Gerken, as our District welcomed and installed Rhonda Mohr to be the executive assistant for Education, Youth, and Family Life.

What a privilege and well done people of Zion! You continue to be a model of leadership and service in our District.

ZION LUTHERAN CHURCH
MANNING, IOWA
Celebrating and Sharing Christ's Redeeming Love

IOWA DISTRICT WEST



Picture of Declaration on the Way: Church, Ministry, and Eucharist

Are Lutherans and Catholics Really "On the Way" to Agreement?

A spate of articles peppered the papers and dotted the internet in November with suggestive titles like "Lutherans and Catholics Reach Agreement" and "U.S. Lutherans Approve Document Recognizing Agreement with Catholic Church."

The titles sounded hopeful, but experience has taught me to be wary of media slant and of uninformed reporting. The articles referenced a joint document (*Declaration on the Way: Church, Ministry, and Eucharist*) signed by the theologically left Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) and the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops' Committee on Ecumenical and Interreligious Affairs. The document is 120 pages long, and judging by the brevity of the articles and the dearth of actual quotes from the document, I suspected few reporters had actually read it.

So, because I know many members have seen the articles (some sharing them with me), I decided that I needed to read all 120 pages and find out for myself what it actually said. So I did. The following paragraphs will summarize ever so briefly what I found (If you want to discuss the specific theological minutiae contained in the document, drop in and visit with me).

First, the title of the document was carefully chosen: *On the Way*. Presiding ELCA Bishop Elizabeth Eaton acknowledged,

> Though we have not yet arrived, we have claimed that we are, in fact, on the way to unity. … This 'Declaration on the Way' helps us to realize more fully our unity in Christ with our Catholic partners, but it also serves to embolden our commitment to unity with all Christians…"

So, while agreement hasn't been reached, I think it right and good that we applaud any progress that can be made toward agreement. Our own church body is in constant dialog with other bodies in our constant drive toward unity. Unfortunately (and permit me a brief aside here), my optimism was greatly tempered by the document's high regard for an ecumenical agreement from the 90s entitled *Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification* (*JDDJ*) in which the ELCA, in concert with The Lutheran World Federation,[1] signed an agreement with the Catholic Church's Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity which declared that Lutherans and Catholics now share "a common understanding of our justification by God's grace through faith in Christ."

Again, it sounds promising, until you read the document. The document claims that a consensus on justification has been reached with only three types of differences remaining: differences of language, of theological elaboration, and of emphasis in the understanding of justification. Ask yourself: How can true consensus be claimed when differences in theological language, elaboration, and emphasis remain? If words mean anything, and the *JDDJ* gives little acknowledgement that they do, then the "consensus" celebrated in the *JDDJ* is truly vacuous. The document carefully crafts ambiguous statements to which both sides agree and then claims consensus. Then it attempts to write off the differing definitions of the theological words as differences in emphasis.

It leaves us to ask, "Is justification, as Lutherans confess, God's declaration of 'not guilty' and 'righteous' pronounced by God on the sinner solely

[1] The Lutheran World Federation (LWF) is a global communion of national and regional Lutheran churches. Our church body, the Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod is not a member of the LWF. We are a member of The International Lutheran Council (ILC), which is a worldwide association of confessional Lutheran Churches (confessional means adhering carefully to our Lutheran Confessions).

because of Christ and His work?" Or "Is it, as the Roman Catholic Church claims, an internal process by which a believer, through his cooperation with God's grace, becomes more and more righteous?" These aren't matters of emphasis. These are disagreements. And is grace God's undeserved favor toward us (as Lutherans confess) or a spiritual power infused into the soul that enables a person to love God and merit salvation (as Roman Catholics confess)? The *JDDJ* doesn't resolve these questions. So when I saw that this latest ecumenical "agreement" extolled the *JDDJ* as a paragon of ecumenical excellence, I was discouraged.

Turning to the latest document, then. What did I see? The document consists of three sections focused on Church, Ministry, and the Eucharist. The first two sections list and document 32 areas of claimed consensus and the last section details remaining differences and suggestions for reconciling them.

Obviously, space will prevent us from addressing all 32 areas of claimed consensus and the 15 areas of remaining differences and suggestions for reconciling them. So, my comments will, by necessity, be summary in nature.

CHURCH

In the Church section, I was initially encouraged to see unity to celebrate. *On the Way* acknowledges that Lutherans and Catholics agree that the Triune God has assembled the church on earth, that Jesus is the sole foundation of the church, that the church is gathered by the proclamation of the gospel, that the church is apostolic, in addition to several more points of genuine agreement. *On the Way* does well to highlight these.

And yet, it glosses over one glaring historical question: Does the Roman Catholic Church acknowledge The Lutheran Church to be the Church? Their confessional documents do not. In fact, one passing reference is made in the "agreement" section to "separated communities." The Roman Catholic Church acknowledges that "elements of sanctification and truth" are found in these Lutheran "separated communities" and that Jesus has even brought salvation to people in these "separated communities," but it never clearly acknowledges the Lutheran Church to be Church.

What does this mean? It means that the points of agreement previously enumerated aren't really points of agreement. The Roman Catholic Church is saying, "We believe that the Triune God has assembled the Church on earth, but the Lutheran Church isn't the Church. We believe that Jesus is the sole foundation of the Church, but the Lutheran Church isn't the Church. We believe that the Church is gathered by the proclamation of the gospel, that the church is apostolic, and so forth, but the Lutheran Church isn't the Church." So while both sides can agree to many of the statements enumerated in the document, true agreement is illusory until the Roman Catholic acknowledges that the Lutheran Church is the Church.

MINISTRY

The section on Ministry (i.e. the pastoral office) continues in the same vein. It offers several points of agreement, touching on the divine origin of the Ministry (pastoral office), on proclamation as foremost among the Ministry's tasks, on ordination as the entry into the apostolic and God-given Ministry, on the one ministerial office, and so forth. As before, though, it glosses over the Roman Catholic Church's refusal to acknowledge the pastorate in the Lutheran Church as belonging to the apostolic ministry. Rome terms the Office of the Ministry in the Lutheran Church "defective," as in lacking the genuine apostolic nature of the Ministry. In other words, no rites performed by Lutheran pastors are valid because they are not in the apostolic ministry.

On the Way acknowledges this in the "suggestions for reconciliation section" and then suggests that, because Rome has acknowledged that Christ's Spirit still works and saves in the Ministry-less Lutheran Church, that this should be enough to claim

consensus. Lutherans should not be deceived. The Roman Catholic Church rejects the validity of the pastoral office in the Lutheran Church. They will happily sign on to vague statements regarding the apostolic nature of the Ministry, but they have remained unchanged in their insistence that only *they* preserve the apostolic ministry. All statements of agreement that gloss over this are not actually agreements; they are word games.

EUCHARIST

The artfully vague language continues in the Eucharist section with differences being downplayed as matters of emphasis. So whereas the Roman Catholic Church confesses that in each celebration of the Eucharist (another name for Holy Communion) "the same Christ who offered himself once in a bloody manner on the altar of the cross is contained and is offered in an unbloody manner"[2] (i.e. re-sacrificed) and that the "Eucharistic sacrifice is also offered for *the faithful departed* who 'have died in Christ but are not yet wholly purified…'"[3] the Lutheran Church confesses that Christ is present and offered in the Holy Supper not to the Father, but to us. Further, we confess that the grace given in Holy Communion is only given to those who receive the bread and wine; it cannot be applied to any other, living or dead.

On the Way tries to claim consensus by suggesting that Lutherans accept "the sacrifice of the Mass" by acknowledging that our prayers are offered to the Father, but this isn't the issue. We fully acknowledge that our "sacrifice of praise" is offered to the Father in the Eucharist; what we reject is that we are re-sacrificing Christ in the Eucharist as our offering to God.

I have two other significant concerns with the Eucharist section. The first has to do with transubstantiation and the second with the adoration of the consecrated elements. Transubstantiation is the Roman Catholic's philosophical explanation of Christ's presence in the Holy Supper. They confess that the substance of the bread and wine are changed into Christ's body and blood. What remains is merely the shell of the bread and wine (the historical phrase is "the substance is changed; the accidents remain"). Lutherans don't deny this as a possibility, but have refrained from being dogmatic on it, choosing instead to confess in line with the plain words of Scripture that bread and wine, body and blood are present. The main issue here is that, in its Reformation response, the Roman Catholic Church condemned anyone who didn't fully confess transubstantiation. This is not a matter of emphasis; it's a condemnation of the Lutheran confession. True consensus would require the Roman Catholic Church to recant its condemnation.

Because the Roman Catholic Church believes Christ remains present in the consecrated elements after the Eucharist celebration has concluded, they welcome the adoration, even worship of the elements, believing them to be Christ. Lutherans object because Jesus instructed the elements to be consumed, not to be worshiped. We recognize that Scripture is silent on when Christ's presence ceases to be present in consecrated elements and, as such, we treat the elements that remain post-Communion with reverence, but we see no Biblical warrant for adoring or worshiping them. Again, this is not a mere difference in emphasis.

Being as charitable as possible, the news headlines are overblown. Real agreement hasn't been reached. In fact, I'm not even sure we're any farther "on the way" to agreement. The language is too vague, the "consensus" celebrated too generic, and the glosses too egregious. If you want to visit more about this, come talk to me. – Pastor Conner

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[2] Roman Catholic Catechism, 1367.

[3] Roman Catholic Catechism, 1371.

Ladies Guild

Highlights
Ladies Guild of Zion
November 9, 2016

Pastor Conner led us through the hymn "For All the Saints," calling our attention to the words that reminded us of All Saints' Day celebrated the Sunday before our meeting. Following prayer, the LWML pledge was recited. Margaret Backhuas as Christian Life Chairman then read to us "Reaping a Bountiful Harvest." The mite box was passed and a mite box prayer read.

President Buhr called the meeting to order in the name of the Triune God. Roll call showed 16 members present. The secretary read the minutes of the previous meeting. They were approved as read. An invitation to stop at the office of Lutheran Family Service for Christmas was offered. Mary Grimm, treasurer, and kitchen treasurer, Darlene Vollstedt gave their reports. Sunshine Chair, Becki Ehlers, sent 15 cards this month. Connie Ahrendsen reported that circle #3 served the Merlin Borkowski funeral.

Old Business: A group of circle ladies made and served lunch at the Hausbarn on the 31st of October. A total of $287.00 was raised for missions. Bev Grundmeier gave a final update on the Advent by Candlelight event being held the 4th of December. She indicated she only had 2 tickets remaining to be sold and still needed a table for the persons providing the entertainment. President Buhr had arranged for the praise band to entertain and had asked Sandra Vahl to serve as hostess for the evening. Darlene Vollstedt has the kitchen "under control." Audrey and Sue are in charge of seeing that the hall Christmas tree is decorated and will see that the rest of the decorations are in place.

New Business: Pastor Conner asked if someone from our group would be willing to purchase and serve breakfast snacks for the Carroll circuit Pastor's meeting on the 15th of November. Darlene will take charge of that. Rhonda Mohr will be installed as an Iowa District West officer at our church on November 13th at 2:00 p.m. Margaret and Sue volunteered to make coffee and put out the bars. The nominating committee put into nomination Cheral Buhr for president and Audrey Roe for Vice-President. There being no further nominations from the floor, Sue Puck moved that a unanimous ballot be cast for Cheral and Audrey. The motion was roundly seconded and passed.

Plaza Bingo will be played on November 25th. Joene Bohlman will chair with Janet Gruhn, Mary Grimm, and Audrey Roe as helpers. The next guild meeting will be on December 14th. It's a potluck at noon. Associate members are welcome as are any other ladies from the congregation.

The meeting was adjourned with the Lord's Prayer and the table prayer. Laurene Meeves and Sue Puck served as hostesses.

Respectfully submitted,
Sue Puck, secretary

Preschool Praises October 2016

This month seemed fairly short as the children had a couple days off for Parent Teacher Conferences and then a couple days off for Thanksgiving. Although we didn't have as many days this month, we certainly kept busy! We had our own mini election the first day of November and each child had the chance to vote for their favorite animal and at the end of class we tallied to votes to see which pet won. It was pretty funny when all of the children in the afternoon voted for "dog"!

The next week we focused on Turkeys and the letter T. We watched a video about turkeys and colored several pictures of turkeys. David and Goliath was a fun Bible story to cover as I showed them how tall Goliath actually was (9 ft.) and showed them pictures of modern day "giants" to show them that Goliath wasn't a fictional character like in Jack and the Bean Stalk, he was a real person and all of the stories in the Bible are real. Pastor Conner also talked to the children about the tower of Babel and how we are all part of one race - the human race!

Thank you to Chuck and Nadine Ehlers for donating soybeans and corn for the children to play with! They loved shelling the corn and feeling the soybeans in their hands. The Blue jays and squirrels loved the corn that fell to the ground, too!

The third week we focused on Thanksgiving and what it means to be thankful. The children made cute turkeys to go on the church bulletin board that included what they said they were thankful for. Some of them are pretty amusing! We spoke about Moses and the Exodus and how the Israelites weren't always as thankful as they should have been! Pastor Conner spoke to the children about Abraham and Sarah and the promise that God made to them that eventually lead to our salvation.

Grandparent's Day was celebrated the week of Thanksgiving and the children had a blast making butter, place mats and memories with their Grandparent(s). They enjoyed playing bingo and "Build-a-Grandparent" together as well. The children got to show off their disco moves as we danced the Turkey Dance for the Grandparents and enjoyed a couple of fun stories about Grandparents that got a few giggles from everyone, especially with the answers the children gave me when I asked them questions. Thank you to Marlene Borkowski and Darlene Vollstedt for coming in and helping that day!

I am thankful for all of these children and the opportunity I have to share the love of Jesus with them!

Blessings, Mrs. Gore & Mrs. Nemitz

ZION
LUTHERAN CHURCH
MANNING, IOWA
Celebrating and Sharing Christ's Redeeming Love

Zion's spirit of volunteerism shines!

On Saturday, November 26th, members of the Zion family gathered to ready the nave and fellowship hall for Advent and Christmas. Well done good and faithful servants!

It takes teamwork to mount the star!

Paul and Monica loving tend to the nativity angel.

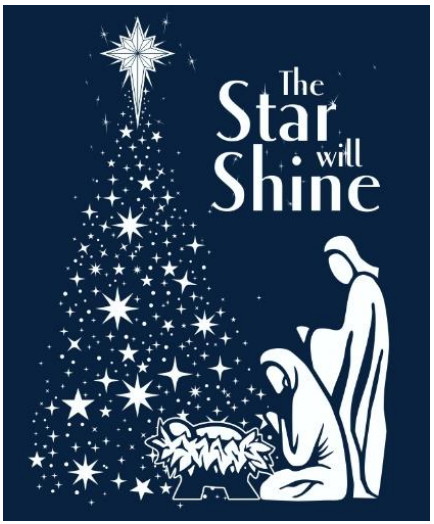
Cheral Buhr, Karen Kienast, and Bev Grundmeier beautify the fellowship hall Christmas tree.

The Conner children eagerly offer their assistance in assembling the Christmas tree.

The Star will Shine

Sunday, December 18th at 6:30 p.m.

Celebrate Christmas with the children of Zion as they present their Christmas programs (6:30 p.m. pre-k – through 1st grade; 7:00 p.m. 2nd – 8th grades).



What's up with re-baptism?

If you've had a child attend college, chances are they've encountered various Christian fellowship groups. Some are strictly denominational in nature – Presbyterian, Lutheran, etc. – and some, like SALT and YWAM claim to be non/inter-denominational. If your child has attended the non/inter-denominational meetings and events, they have probably been urged to be re-baptized. What should they do?

There's no such thing as re-baptism.

Let's start with a simple but oft-overlooked reality: there is no such thing as re-baptism. Yes, it may look like two baptisms, but there is no such thing as re-baptism. First, St. Paul emphatically emphasizes only "one Lord, one faith, *one baptism*…" (Eph. 4:5 and the Nicene Creed echoes Scripture in its confession of "*one baptism* for the remission of sins."

Groups who advocate "re-baptism" are guilty of false advertising. What they are actually advocating is "real" baptism. In other words, they are claiming that churches, like ours, who baptize babies are performing invalid baptisms. They don't count. They aren't real. Their confessions deny that grace is given in baptism (despite the clear teaching of Scripture) and affirm that baptism is 100% our work, effort, and show of "real" faith and commitment to Jesus. And, as such, they say that babies can't choose Jesus, thereby rendering their baptisms invalid.

Dead people don't make themselves alive.

First, these groups give adults too much credit. Apart from the regenerative work of the Spirit (through His promised means of the Word and the Sacraments), man is incapable of choosing Jesus. Scripture teaches that man, apart from the Spirit's regenerative work, is "dead in… trespasses and sins" (Eph. 2:1), that "the things of the Spirit of God… are folly to [man]…" (1 Cor. 2:14), that "the mind that is set on the flesh is hostile to God, for it does not submit to God's law; indeed, it cannot" (Rom. 8:7).

God, however, is rich in mercy and chooses to act on our behalf. Scripture teaches: "But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ…" (Eph. 2:4-5). And: "You, who were dead in your trespasses… God made alive together with him…" (Col. 2:13).

Our Lutheran Confessions echo this point:

> Just as people who are bodily dead cannot on the basis of their own powers prepare themselves or dispose themselves to receive temporal life once again, so people who are spiritually dead in sins cannot on the basis of their own strength dispose themselves or turn themselves toward appropriate spiritual, heavenly righteousness and life, if the Son of God has not made them alive and freed them from the death of sin.

We were dead and dead people don't make themselves alive. God makes us alive. Through what means? Baptism! In the Colossians text referenced above, the context is baptism: we being connected to Christ's death in baptism and being welcomed into a new life in Christ. Romans 6 makes the explicit point:

> Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life. For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we shall certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his (Rom 6:3-5).

Consider what else Scripture says about baptism. Titus 3, speaking of baptism, says "[God] saved us…

by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit, whom he poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior…" (Titus 3:5-6). Galatians 3 says that baptism clothes us with Christ and connects us to the promise of blessing God made to Abraham (Gal. 3:26-29). And 1 Peter 3 plainly declares, "Baptism… now saves you…" (1 Pet. 3:21).

It's important that we all, especially our college youth who are encountering re-baptizers, appreciate the life-granting gift of baptism and the regenerative grace in baptism. It is not our work. It is not our show of commitment. It is God's work and His emphatic show of commitment to us.

Re-baptizers deny all this in the name of personal decision and commitment. To be more explicit, re-baptizers gut the gospel out of baptism and insert the law of personal commitment. And, despite being billed as a way to be certain of one's salvation because "you chose it," it ends up robbing us of the certainty God desires for us. Instead of being able to point to God's objective, regenerative work in baptism, the re-baptized are pointed to their decision, something they may later question and even doubt (as many do).

But God gives baptism as a source of confidence and comfort. Consider the classic Lutheran hymn by Paul Gerhardt *All Christians Who Have Been Baptized* (printed on the right) and how it presents the value of baptism. Read it slowly. Meditate on it. See how it extols the objective work of God in baptism. Re-baptizers would have us give this up so that we could find certainty in ourselves and our decision.

Re-dedicating ourselves to Jesus is good, which is at the heart of many of the re-baptizers' urgings, but this isn't done through re-baptism. It's done through repentance and re-claiming the benefits and new life given in baptism. Instead of falling for re-baptism, let's encourage our college youth to embrace repentance, the regular return to God's baptismal promises.

All Christians Who Have Been Baptized *LSB 596*

1 All Christians who have been baptized,
Who know the God of heaven,
And in whose daily life is prized
The name of Christ once given:
Consider now what God has done,
The gifts He gives to ev'ryone
Baptized into Christ Jesus!

2 You were before your day of birth,
Indeed, from your conception,
Condemned and lost with all the earth,
None good, without exception.
For like your parents' flesh and blood,
Turned inward from the highest good,
You constantly denied Him.

3 But all of that was washed away—
Immersed and drowned forever.
The water of your Baptism day
Restored again whatever
Old Adam and his sin destroyed
And all our sinful selves employed
According to our nature.

4 In Baptism we now put on Christ—
Our shame is fully covered
With all that He once sacrificed
And freely for us suffered.
For here the flood of His own blood
Now makes us holy, right, and good
Before our heav'nly Father.

5 O Christian, firmly hold this gift
And give God thanks forever!
It gives the power to uplift
In all that you endeavor.
When nothing else revives your soul,
Your Baptism stands and makes you whole
And then in death completes you.

6 So use it well! You are made new—
In Christ a new creation!
As faithful Christians, live and do
Within your own vocation,
Until that day when you possess
His glorious robe of righteousness
Bestowed on you forever!

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Charles, Cheryl, Caleb, Caitlin, Carissa, Cassie, and Chloe Ferry

Missionaries to Indonesia

SELAMAT

Syukur kepada Tuhan! (Indonesian for "Thanks be to the Lord!")

Happy Thanksgiving! What an incredible time this is for the Ferry Family as we gather with family and friends for the first time in several years to celebrate a "normal" Thanksgiving as we know it in the U.S. Since the last newsletter, we have continued to travel throughout these United States, visiting congregations and groups. It's been a wild ride, filled with wonderful opportunities to visit 13 different states, making memories we will take with us for ages to come.

We gathered with our brothers and sisters for Reformation Sunday in Tipton, Indiana. We gathered with the students of St. Paul Lutheran School in Millington, Michigan. We met with the ladies of the LWML in Macomb, Michigan. Then we boarded an airplane for a visit to the Beautiful Feet conference at Concordia University, Portland, Oregon.

After the west coast, we spent a wonderful week in Fort Wayne, Indiana. We took full advantage of the Good Shepherd Institute, and stayed for a new Hymn Translator's Workshop. Our two worlds collided when we welcomed two Indonesian guests here to the U.S. to participate in these Fort Wayne events. Pastors Aladin Sitio and Eben Ezer Aruan joined us in Indiana to build their skills in English and in Lutheran theology, and gave us a taste of our Asian home for several days. What a joy to welcome these two good brothers to America and show them a little hospitality for a change.

We visited Montana, joining with our friends at Trinity in Kalispell for the first time. Then it was back to Milwaukee to visit my childhood congregation in West Allis. We are so grateful for all of our friends and partners who have made our trips so memorable and enjoyable. Many thanks to all of you for your warm welcome and generosity in allowing us into your church, into your lives, and (in many cases) into your very home. We are blessed beyond our understanding, and we give thanks this Thanksgiving for YOU.

The Ferry kiddos have been learning to make themselves at home in many different situations and places. They're always welcomed with open arms, but it's been fun to see them fitting into different contexts and locations. The kids love being able to communicate with their new friends in the different places we've visited, and we've been taking advantage of every library we can find; that's quite a treat for them, as it's something Indonesians don't have. Even Chloe has been getting much better at traveling. As we see her turn six months old, she has now lived half her life in Asia, and half in the U.S. Oh, how the time flies by!

To support our work financially, send a tax-deductible gift to: The LCMS, P.O. Box 790089, St. Louis, MO 63179

Or: Mission Central, 40718 Highway E-16, Mapleton, IA 51034

Make checks payable to **The LCMS**, and mark them "Support of Charles Ferry." Gifts can also be given securely online through our online giving page at *www.lcms.org/ferry*.

!Amigos En Cristo!
News from ***La Iglesia Evangelica Luterana Amigos en Cristo:*** *Friends in Christ Evangelical Lutheran Church:* **Pastor Daniel Vogel**, Denison, Iowa

Iowa District West, LCMS
Year 12, Issue 12, December 2016

Grace Strom Lake Call Committee Begins to Interview Pastors: Last month the Grace Call Committee invited Pastor Michael Moreno to visit the congregation for an interview for the position as a bilingual pastor of the Hispanic ministry at Grace. Pastor Moreno and his wife Lisa are from Norfolk, Nebraska. Rev. Moreno is a Navy Reserve Chaplain and the former Synod leader of Operation Barnabas, which is a national organization that supports local veterans. Pastor Moreno grew up in a Hispanic home in Texas and speaks fluent Spanish. Grace's Call Committee consists of Grace Elders and representatives of the Hispanic ministry of the congregation. The Committee is also working with the reorganized Storm Lake Mission Network to promote and support the Hispanic ministry in the Storm Lake area in cooperation with the Storm Lake and Cherokee Circuits. Please pray for this important mission Call to a bilingual pastor.

Liam's Baptism in Denison: It's always a blessing to baptize a child. Liam is the son of Merlin and Azucena Gonzalez, a young couple from Denison. Azucena attended Zion Lutheran School and grew up and was confirmed in our Hispanic congregation. Her good friend, Adriana, also of our congregation is Liam's godmother. Both Merlin and Azucena are bilingual and work in Denison at a local restaurant. They met in high school and both of their families are friends of our congregation. They are committed to staying in Denison and are the future of our community and our congregations as they are comfortable speaking both English and Spanish. What a blessing to see our young adults grow in life and in their faith as they have their own families!

Visiting Zion, Manning: I was blessed to preach and teach the Bible Class at my former congregation. It's always a joy for Paula and me to visit Zion, Manning. We live near Manning but rarely get to attend services. Zion is a strong mission-minded partner with us and has supported our Hispanic ministry since its beginning in 2004 when I was first called by the District to serve part-time in this special ministry. I continued to serve at Zion until 2007 when I left to work fulltime in Hispanic ministry.

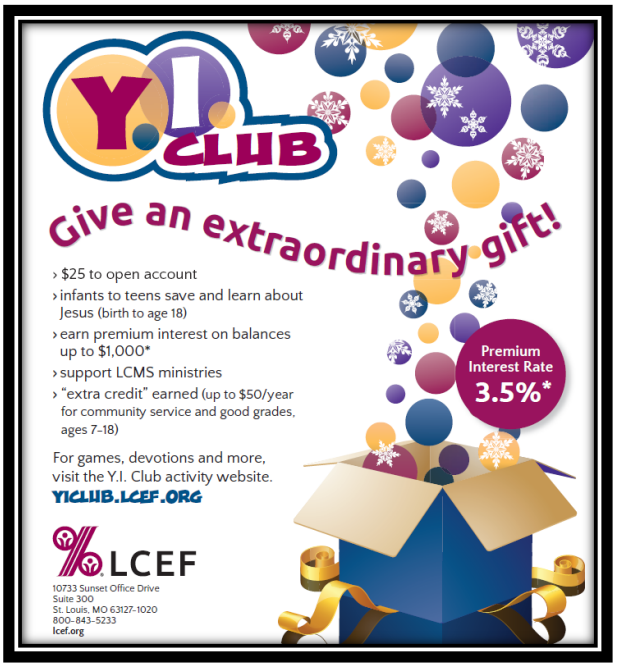
Please Pray: + For the Grace Hispanic church in Storm Lake as they interview possible Hispanic pastors and as they host the renewed Hispanic Mission Network to help guide the ministry in the Circuit and District. + For Rosa who is studying for adult membership at Grace. + For our upcoming annual joint Thanksgiving/Unity Service in Odebolt for our churches in Denison, Storm Lake, and Sioux City. + 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 in Denison and in our other three missions.

***Please Continue to Support* our new church**: For our mission friends financial support checks should now be sent to: Amigos en Cristo Lutheran Church, 1004 1st Avenue South, Denison, Iowa, 51442

CONTACT ME:
Rev. Daniel Vogel
32678 Aspen Ave. Manning, Iowa, 51455
1-712-653-2354 or Cell: 712-309-1292
E-mail: daniel.vogel@ziondenison.org

On Saturday, November 26th, Trinity Lutheran Church in Manilla celebrated 130 years of Gospel proclamation in Manilla. The Rev. Dr. Steve Turner, President of Iowa District West, joined us for worship, shared the message of God's presence and working among us, and assisted with Holy Communion. After worship, we gathered for fellowship, a catered meal, and a small program celebrating Trinity's history. The pictures here included tell the story. Congratulations Trinity!

130th ANNIVERSARY
TRINITY
LUTHERAN CHURCH
MANILLA, IOWA
PROCLAIMING PEACE IN CHRIST'S CROSS



Need a Christmas gift for a child or grandchild? Want to give them something that will last longer than a plastic toy and benefit the ministry of Christ's Church? Open a Young Investor's account through Lutheran Church Extension Fund.

See the banner on the right for more information!

Y.I. CLUB

December Birthdays and Anniversaries @ Zion

Birthdays

1. Robert Ewoldt
Debra Janssen
2. Renee Grimm
Kamryn Ketcham
Stephen Muhlbauer
Emma Schwieso
4. Darlene Asmus
Janet Gruhn
Tracie Kurth
Rozora Schroeder
5. Tiffani Beck
Jase Hull
Ross Kusel
Brian Lage
6. Melissa Lesle
JoAnn Petersen
Eryn Ramsey
8. Annette Hilsabeck
Brian Stoberl
9. Piper Doyel
Wade Ranniger
10. Athena Bess
Breyton Johnson
Heather Kusel
Keaton Otto
Elizabeth Trost
11. Jaxen Vollstedt
12. Mike Bruch
13. Tricia Beck
Courtney Grabill
14. Rachel Hofbauer
Neeka Jacobsen
15. Cheral Buhr
Sam Hansen
Sheryl Zinke
16. Mabel Langel
17. Derrick Janssen
Taylor Roe
18. Zane Diersen
Jay Miller
Amanda Rosener
20. Kourtney Grimm
21. Leslee Gore
22. Kathy Vollstedt
23. Joyce Schroeder
Gary Witt
24. Robert Christensen
Brittany Page
25. Ben Booth
Chris Greving
26. Brody Chapman
Larry Mahnke
Laurene Meeves
27. Eric Ramsey
28. Blake Diersen
Elissa Riesberg
Billy Weitl
29. Caden Muhlbauer
Jade Sellner
30. Cody Eischeid
Erica Lohrmann
Ginger Wardrip
31. Larry Ahrendsen
Amber Ehlers
Austin Frank
Ellie Ranniger

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

Anniversaries

3. Gene & Colene Lohrmann
4. Karl & Angela Albertsen
Dennis & Margaret Backhaus
Rodney & Charlene Hickman
5. Steve & Nancy Muhlbauer
12. Robert & Linnet Nissen
13. Greg & Amber Neumann
14. Bruce & Mary Grimm
21. Glen & Shirley Ahrendsen
23. Carl & Carol French
29. Kent & Karen Vollstedt

Official Acts

Baptisms:
Kaien Courtney Stoeckel, daughter of Aharon Stoeckel and Allaetra Jacobsen, November 5, 2016; Pastor Conner

Wyatt Ridgeway Grabill, son of Isaac and Courtney (nee: Page) Grabill, November 6, 2016; Pastor Conner

Taylor Jade Lapel, daughter of Jonathan and Abby (nee: Genzen) Lapel. November 6, 2016; Pastor Riggert

Bennett Irvin Riesberg, son of Joe and Elissa (nee: Rutz) Riesberg, November 12, 2016; Pastor Conner

Madelyn Rebecca Dreher, daughter of Randy and Crystal (nee: Bruhn) Dreher, November 20, 2016; Pastor Conner

Weddings:
Kyle Cornelius & Katie Vollstedt; November 19, 2016; Pastor Conner

Brett Eddy & Diana Bruch; November 19, 2016; Pastor Riggert

Funerals:
Roger Heiman, Died November 6, 2016; Funeral: November 10, 2016; Pastor Riggert (Trinity, Manilla)

Gloria Hargens, Died November 22, 2016; Funeral: November 25, 2016; Pastor Conner (Trinity, Manilla)

Darrell Neitzke, Died November 23, 2016; Funeral: November 28, 2016; Pastor Riggert (Trinity, Manilla)

In Our Prayers

Walt Noelck, Dave Grundmeier, Heather Kusel, Sherri Steffes, Arlene Mohr, Jim Deevers, Duane Karsten, Joy Umland, Gabriel Albers (Pastor and Rebecca's nephew), Eric Lage, Justeen Schwieso, Vernon and Dorothy Larsen, Athena Bess