The Light Shines at Zion and Trinity

The pictures above showcase the light of Zion and Trinity. The top picture was taken on a majestic, crisp, and icy January morning when the trees were glistening the glory of God and the skies were beaming His beauty. In it you can see the radiant sun illuminating Zion's steeple, highlighting the cross of Jesus, whose light illumines our hearts with salvation joy.

The second picture showcases members of Zion and Trinity reflecting that salvation joy. On January 22, the day when Zion celebrated in church the generations of God (both those present and our homebound members), these loving servants gathered after worship to deliver meals to many of Zion's and Trinity's homebound members in order to share with them the love of Jesus and the love of their congregation.

Have an idea about how you can let this light shine in your neighborhood? Let's hear it!

Ministry Apps

Applying the Gospel to Hearts and Homes (February 2017): Zion and Trinity Lutheran

"So we have come to know and to believe the love that God has for us. God is love, and whoever abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him" (1 John 4:16).

There are apps to purchase candy, flowers, or other expressions of love. There are apps to dating and friendship sites to explore love. There are no apps that guarantee love. Earthly apps are often superficial and disappointing. There is one source of constant and eternal love. 1 John 4 states, "God is love." The epistle (1 John 3:16-18) declares that God's love is demonstrated in the sacrifice of Jesus. God loved us enough to send His only Son. Jesus loved us enough to die for us. Having received God's love in Christ, we apply that love in the contexts in which God places us.

God's Love Expressed Through Prayer
Prayer is God's love language. The Wednesday morning Bible Study (9:30 a.m.) continues to explore God's invitation to pray using the Lord's Prayer.

The Zion Fellowship club topics in 2017 will explore "Great Prayers of the Bible." Listen to the prayers of Mary, Solomon, Abraham, Hezekiah, and other "Great Prayers." The February gathering will be a potluck Valentine's meal on Monday evening, February 13 at 6 p.m. Interested members of Zion (and friends) are invited to this monthly fellowship group.

God's Love Shared with the Family
God puts us in families to learn of His love and live in His love (Ephesians 5 and 6:1-4). Christian education at Zion involves the family and strengthens the family. The Christian Education Committee is coordinating A Family Fun Time, Sunday Feb. 26, from 2-4 p.m. Bring a favorite family game and join others in fun, food, and fellowship. If your family has not yet completed the family information form (emergency numbers, etc.) please contact the church office and do so immediately so we can readily contact parents in emergency situations.

God's Love DISCOVERed at Camp Okoboji
Construction continues on the new DISCOVER building at Camp Okoboji. God-willing a dedication will take place by Memorial Day. Thanks to Zion for the special tithe gift from the "Generations" campaign. Individual gifts to the campaign continue to be welcomed. Visit www.campokoboj.org for more information. Consider a camp program (Cub Weeks, Junior High Week, Youth Week, Family Weeks) as part of your summer family activities.

God's Love Meets us at the Crossroads of Life
What do you do when you come to a crossroads? Peter, Pilate, Judas, John, and Malchus found themselves at a life crossroads with Jesus. The 2017 "At The Crossroads" Lenten series finds us at the crossroads with them. Ash Wednesday is March 1. Services will be held at 2 p.m. at Trinity and 5:45 at Zion. More information will be shared in the March newsletter.

Abiding in God's Love!
Pastor Riggert

Choice Dollars: from 2016 expire March 31st. Please call 1-800-847-4836 & ask for choice dollars, or log onto your Thrivent.com account to direct. (Call Janet Smith or Diane for assistance: 655-9411). Every dollar adds up!!!

2016 choice dollars received:
Zion= $4,821
Zion Preschool=$3,274 Trinity=$4,216
Manning Community Foundation/Trinity=$247

Action Teams: Remember Thrivent Action Teams are available with $250 of seed money to assist volunteer teams serving others. It's easy. Log into your Thrivent.com site & apply. Call Janet Smith or Diane for questions or assistance.

Continuing the Conversation on Tithing

Last month we raised the question of tithing. Did you think about it? Did you do your personal audit? Did you discover where your money is going, what's restricting your giving? Did you study Jesus' words in Matthew 6:19-21?

We didn't have space last month to explore this text, so we turn our attention there this month. Jesus is in the middle of His extended sermon (the Sermon on the Mount) on Kingdom living (what life in Heaven's reign looks like) and He says this:

> Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal, but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

Let's consider what Jesus is saying. He has just finished teaching on charity, prayer, and fasting, and now He turns to possessions and He makes it very clear that people in the reign of God don't stockpile treasures on earth for themselves. It's vital that we hear His words, but first consider who His first hearers were. From what we know, most of Jesus' disciples didn't possess great wealth. Further, the crowds who gathered to hear Him were most likely Palestinian peasants, farmers, and tradesmen. If they, who likely had few possessions, needed to be warned against the lure of possessions, how much more do we, the wealthiest people ever to exist, need such warning?

Consider the reasons *why* Jesus exhorts His disciples not to lay up treasures for themselves on earth. The first reason should be obvious to anyone who has been listening to God speak in Scripture (it should even be obvious to anyone who has been paying attention to the nature of reality): because this is the place where things wither, rot, and are stolen! How foolish to keep our treasure in such a place! How imprudent to invest our life's energy in something that will corrode and vanish!

The second reason is more personal and, no doubt, more difficult to come to grips with: because where our treasure is, there is our heart. In other words, our outward behavior with our treasure reveals the true disposition and love of our heart – and there's a real concern that our first love isn't Jesus and His Kingdom. There's no use arguing otherwise because the tree is known by its fruits.

This is why a personal audit is so valuable for you as a disciple of Jesus. You need to make sure your heart isn't being misled by earthly treasure, because, as Jesus points out, your heart will be led by your treasure. If you are investing in treasure that rots, your heart will follow – and how great will be your loss!

So what does Jesus exhort His disciples to do? Invest in Heaven! Invest in Heaven's reign, in God's coming Kingdom among us! How do we do that? Give to Kingdom work. Invest your life's energy in justice and mercy. Put your treasure in Gospel proclamation. Direct your efforts toward creating beauty (in music, art, and relationships). Tithing to your local congregation is a great place to start. It doesn't have to end there, but it's a great place to start.

But understand, you're not sending a check to Heaven; you're giving to support the work of bringing Heaven among us on earth! The point here isn't that we'll become so Heavenly-minded that we are no earthly good; the point is that we will become so Kingdom-minded that we will truly bring good to earth. Tithing will get you started. Want to talk more about it? Come visit with me. – Pastor Conner

ON THAT NOTE

Treasuring our Musical Treasure

Last month we began a new series designed to highlight the rich, faith-bolstering treasure preserved in our hymnody, a treasure spanning 1700 years and multiple continents. We kicked things off with one of the marquee hymns of the Epiphany season, "Songs of Thankfulness and Praise" (*LSB* 394) This month we continue our series by highlighting a key hymn in the transition from Epiphany to Lent, "Alleluia, Song of Gladness" (*LSB* 417) This hymn has been edifying the Church since the 11th century as it masterfully juxtaposes the joy-filled song of Heaven with the song of sorrow that too often echoes here on earth, a sorrowful song brought on by our own sinfulness. But! It ends with a soaring prayer of hopeful joy as it anchors our faith in the deathless joy of Easter. We will sing this song on Transfiguration Sunday (February 26th). Let's take a look.

Alleluia, song of gladness,
Voice of joy that cannot die;
Alleluia is the anthem
Ever raised by choirs on high;
In the house of God abiding
Thus they sing eternally.

The song leads off with a joyful call to praise the Lord with Scripture's praise word: *Alleluia!* (simply translated "praise the Lord!"). But no sooner is the song raised than it becomes apparent that it cannot be a reference to earth's song because our earthbound alleluia is often soberly silenced by our great enemy: Death.

This glad song and deathless voice of joy must be a reference to Heaven's song, a suspicion made certain in the next line where we are directed to the anthem echoing among the choirs on high who eternally abide and sing in the house of God. Scripture references these choirs in Revelation 19 where John records great multitudes of saints and angels raising mighty *hallelujahs* (the Hebrew rendering of "praise the Lord") to the Lord.

So in this first verse our eyes have been directed heavenward to the glad song of deathless joy that echoes there.

On That Note

Alleluia, thou resoundest,
True Jerusalem and free;
Alleluia, joyful mother,
All thy children sing with thee,
But by Babylon's sad waters
Mourning exiles now are we.

Verse two begins where verse one left off – in Heaven. "True Jerusalem" and "joyful mother" are references to the Church triumphant, to those saints in Heaven who have been welcomed into Heaven's great Alleluia song. So the song calls these saints "free," as in free from sin (for one who has died has been freed from sin), and "thy children," to reference their rebirth (through baptism) into the Body of Christ, i.e. the Church, thereby making the Church a joyful mother of sorts.

But! Then the song sinks suddenly back to earth, back to our condition as "mourning exiles" by "Babylon's sad waters." This is an allusion to Israel's homesick exile in Babylon. Psalm 137 recounts their experience as they sat on the Babylonian river shores longing for their native land. The song parallels their experience with our longing for our native land, Heaven.

Alleluia cannot always
Be our song while here below;
Alleluia, our transgressions
Make us for a while forgo;
For the solemn time is coming
When our tears for sin must flow.

Verse three painfully acknowledges that our earthly experience cannot and will not always allow us to echo our alleluias. Our sins sadden us. Our transgressions distress us. We look into the perfect mirror of God's law and we see a sinner.

Further, as the transitional piece between Epiphany's ebullient joy over divine revelation and Lent's sober sorrow over human transgression, the song acknowledges that "the solemn season" (Lent) is coming, "When our tears for sin must flow." It then marks the end of our alleluias as we bury them throughout Lent in hopeful anticipation of singing them again at Easter, a hope the next verse picks up.

On That Note

Therefore in our hymns we pray Thee,
Grant us, blessèd Trinity,
At the last to keep Thine Easter
With Thy faithful saints on high;
There to Thee forever singing
Alleluia joyfully.

"Therefore," as the hymn turns from confession of biblical truth into a prayer built on that confession, we implore our Triune God to grant that we would not only be able to echo our alleluias in our earthly Easter celebration, but especially that we would be able to celebrate our Easter joy with the saints in Heaven, the very saints who are privileged to echo their alleluias eternally.

Thus the hymn has masterfully moved from heaven's joys to the reality of earth's sorrows (due to sin) and back again to the hope of being united with heaven's sin-free joyful alleluias.

Bring a game to share!

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

Sunday, February 26th

6:00 – 8:00 p.m.

Zion Lutheran Church

(Manning)

Sponsored by Zion's Board of Education

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

Finishing Well

From life's first cry to final breath
*Jesus commands my destiny**

A Christian Approach to Life's End

Last month we raised the question of life's end through the stories of Brittany Maynard and Maggie Karner. Both faced a nightmare diagnosis: terminal brain cancer. Mrs. Maynard, in an effort to seize control of her life's end, committed suicide by taking doctor-prescribed drugs; Mrs. Karner yielded control to God, confessing His Lordship over her life, knowing that cancer, not her own hand, would take her life. Both died. Mrs. Maynard died proclaiming her choice; Mrs. Karner died proclaiming her God. Mrs. Karner showed us how to finish well.

This month we continue our discussion of a Christian's approach to life's end, focusing our attention on the caregiver. How do we, as caregivers, provide care that will help a loved one finish well? Before we delve into our discussion, we need to highlight two helpful resources that may prove beneficial to caregivers and those receiving care.

The first, available in Zion's resource center, is entitled *Ventilators, Feeding Tubes, and Other End-of-Life Questions* and it succinctly addresses a bevy of thorny end-of-life questions. The second, available from Concordia Publishing House and Amazon.com, is entitled *Final Victory: Contemplating the Death and Funeral of a Christian* (a copy is available in Pastor Conner's study for review). This booklet reviews death's cause, the hope mourners have in Christ, and the final victory in Christ. Further, this booklet walks readers through the Christian burial rite and then provides helpful resources for funeral planning. Both are highly recommended.

As caregivers see life's end nearing for their loved one, it's important for them keep the following realities in mind. First, as we mentioned last month, we are created and redeemed beings. As such, we are not sovereign over our lives. God is in control. As we care for loved ones, it's important that we entrust them to the Lord and leave life's end in His hands. Yes, this could involve suffering for our loved one, but we need to remember that our goal is not simply to minimize suffering; our goal is to maximize care. Ending suffering through physician-directed suicide is not an option because killing is not caring. Yes, suffering is gut-wrenchingly horrible, but it is not the worst thing that can happen to a Christian. As Mrs. Karner confessed,

> Circumstances out of my control are not the worst thing that can happen to me. The worst thing would be losing faith, refusing to trust in God's purpose in my life and trying to grab that control myself.

So helpful truth number one is that God grants life's first and last breath. As such, we don't pursue death as the solution to suffering, nor, on the flip side, do we cling to life as if it is God. So we don't aim for death, on the one hand, and we don't prop up life as the only or highest good, on the other. We need to remember that death is not defeated through our choice; it is defeated through Christ. And life is not a second god; there is only One God and He is Lord over life. Our goal is to confess Christ until our last breath even as we help our loved one do the same, and to care for our loved one until Christ recalls his or her breath.

Now, having established who grants and ends life's breath and that our goal is to care, not to kill, let's turn to some important distinctions.[1]

Treatment may be refused; care should never be denied

[1] These distinctions are discussed in greater detail in *Mercy at Life's End* by John T. Pless.

*Lyrics from "In Christ Alone" by Keith Getty and Stuart Townend

As life nears its end, it may become appropriate to refuse certain extraordinary or excessive treatments. Our Church body has produced a document entitled *Christian Care at Life's End* that details four factors that we should consider regarding such treatments:

1. Has irreversibility been determined by more than one physician (is the individual in the process of dying, are bodily functions ceasing)?
2. Has the dying individual reached a point when medical knowledge and science has nothing left to offer but palliative care?
3. Are remaining treatments gravely burdensome?
4. Have all reasonable means to relieve pain and to bring about recovery been exhausted?

If the answer to these questions is *yes*, refusing life-prolonging treatments (to keep vital processes artificially functioning) may be appropriate. But! While treatments may be refused, care should never be denied. For example, some people may require feeding tubes to survive. This, just like spoon feeding a baby, is a form of care, not futile treatment. Another round of chemo, however, may be a futile treatment if the individual's body is shutting down and the expectancy of recovery is past. We need to remember that while certain treatments may be futile, care is never futile. The dying individual bears the image of God and deserves to receive care until natural death.

Irretrievably dying is different from being terminally ill

Recalling our discussion from last month on Brittany Maynard and Maggie Karner, both were terminally ill. When Mrs. Maynard committed suicide, though, she was not irretrievably dying. Yes, her life's end was growing closer (but then so are all of ours), but her body was not in the process of dying. So, when we consider how best to care for individuals, we would do well to consider whether they are terminally ill or irretrievably dying. The treatments we offer to the terminally ill may differ from those we offer to the irretrievably dying, but the care should not change.

Bearing burdensome treatment is different from bearing life's burdens

Life in a fallen world brings burdens with it, including aging, loneliness, depression, accidents, illnesses, and the like. Care requires that we bear such burdens with the sufferer even as we encourage them to bear them in hope of their deliverance in Christ (whether in this life or in the next). Supporting an individual's decision to take his own life so as to help him avoid the burdens of life in a fallen world, is not care. Supporting an individual's decision to refuse heroic or futile treatments when death is imminent is different. Care allows someone to refuse the undue burden of treatment while also seeking to help them bear the burdens of life that accompany life in a fallen world.

The aim of an action is different from the result of an action

Sometimes caregivers face knotty dilemmas, which make it difficult to discern how best to care for a sufferer. For example, in some circumstances a treatment is offered to relieve pain or with the hope of healing, but it results in the shortening of life. The goal, as detailed before, is to care and not to kill. A treatment may prove to have a bad effect, but the bad effect must never be the goal; the goal must always be the good of providing care through pain relief or healing.

Life in a fallen world is marred by suffering and scarred by sorrow. It's often painful and disheartening. But it will not always be so. Christ's resurrection is the down payment on God's renewal of all things, including our very bodies. It is with confident faith in this promise that we approach life's end unafraid, despite the potential for great suffering. Suffering and death will not have the last word; Christ will, and His Word is life. It is our privilege to confess this and our calling to help those for whom we care confess this until their final breath. In so doing, we will finish well.

Feasting on Forgiveness – and Sharing!

In the name of space, we're beginning this article on marriage with an assertion that shouldn't need defending: conflict happens in every marriage. This shouldn't surprise confessing Christians who accept the Biblical account of the Fall. We are sinful people and we marry sinful people. Conflict *will* happen.

Are we helpless in the face of this conflict? By no means! We have been gifted with forgiveness and we are blessed to gift it to our spouse. Any marriage that hopes to thrive will be one blessed by the free exchange of forgiveness. Couples who cling to grudges and withhold forgiveness, however, are poisoning their marriage. It's difficult to admit, but as Gary Thomas, author of *Sacred Marriage,* writes, "Behind virtually every case of marital dissatisfaction lies unrepented sin. Couples don't fall out of love so much as they fall out of repentance."

That's hard to hear, but it's true. Couples may like to think that they "fell out of love," but the Bible never defines love as something you helplessly fall into and out of. In fact, it always connects love to a person and to an intentional action (see John 3:16; Romans 5:8; 1 John 3:16; 1 John 4:10 for the personal love God shows in Christ). So St. Paul says that love is patient and kind (see 1 Cor. 13). No one has ever fallen into patience or kindness! These habits of the heart take work! They require a conscious decision to think and act certain ways. Love is no different.

So Gary Thomas writes,

> *A good marriage is not something you find, it's something you work for.* It takes struggle. You must crucify your selfishness. You must at times confront, and at other times confess. The practice of forgiveness is essential.

Is it any wonder that couples who regularly feast on Christ's forgiveness together in worship tend to have healthier and happier marriages? There's power in hearing Christ, the Groom, say to His Bride, the Church, "Your sins are forgiven." How could we turn and withhold what we have just freely received – and from God at that!

But feelings run deep and sometimes (most times!) we don't *feel* like forgiving. This is an incredibly important point: *forgiveness isn't motivated by feelings*. In fact, feelings usually motivate us to withhold forgiveness. If you're waiting on your feelings to forgive, you probably will never forgive because it's exceedingly difficult to want to release someone from the punishment that we feel they ought to receive for their transgression against us.

How critical is it then for spouses to feast frequently on the undeserved forgiveness of Jesus? Our refusal to forgive is both a failure to appreciate the forgiveness offered to us in Christ and a refusal to acknowledge that that forgiveness is for our spouse, too. When we withhold forgiveness, we're saying, "Jesus paid for my sins, but not for yours. *I'm* going to make you pay for your sins." So the first step in extending forgiveness in marriage is to appreciate the forgiveness we have first received. We need to feast on forgiveness.

The second step is built on the first. Because God has chosen to forgive us in Christ, we make certain choices (choices not based on feelings, but on the objective work of Christ). Ken Sande writes in *The Peacemaker*, his excellent book on forgiveness and reconciliation, about four specific choices connected to forgiveness:

1. I will not dwell on this incident.
2. I will not bring up this incident again and use it against you.
3. I will not talk to others about this incident.
4. I will not let this incident stand between us or hinder our personal relationship.

First, forgiveness involves the conscious choice not to dwell on your spouse's sin. It means promising not to ruminate over it or stew on it. This doesn't mean

you'll be able to keep it from coming to your mind. It means you won't give your spouse's sin against you its own room in your mind. Martin Luther is alleged to have made a similar point: "You can't keep the birds from flying over your head, but you can keep them from building a nest." So, the first promise involves assuring your spouse that you will not give his or her sin free rent in your mind. If it comes to your mind, you will replace it with thoughts of Christ's cross and His forgiveness.

Second, forgiveness means promising not to wield your spouse's sin as a club when you want a weapon to defeat your spouse in an argument (a misguided goal to begin with!). I once read the account of a counselor who recorded this interaction with a distressed husband:

Husband:	Every time my wife and I argue, she gets historical.
Counselor:	You mean *hysterical*?
Husband:	No. I mean *historical*. She always brings up stuff from the past. She uses history against me.

Now, to be fair, men tend to equate the passage of time with the resolution of conflict (a false belief in marriage!) and if women feel a former conflict hasn't been resolved, they are tempted to bring it up again as evidence in their complaint against their husband. But that is different from our point we're making here. Here we are specifically talking about when forgiveness has been sought and given. If such is the case, then old sins should not be resurrected to be used against a spouse. Yes, it may be true that a sin has been repeated, and it may call into question the original request for forgiveness (something that may need to be discussed), but resurrecting old sins for weapons against a spouse only reveals that the forgiveness initially granted wasn't genuine.

An important point needs to be made here: forgiveness doesn't automatically remove the consequences of a spouse's sin. Even God's forgiveness doesn't automatically remove earthly consequences. If you rob a bank, God will forgive you, but you may still go to jail. So forgiving your spouse doesn't automatically mean that there aren't earthly consequences for their sin. But! Forgiveness does necessitate that you remove any personal relational walls that might prevent the forgiven from having the opportunity to demonstrate repentance. What forgiveness in marriage does is make room for the work of reconciliation to begin (an important topic for another article!).

Third, forgiveness means promising not to publicize your spouse's sin. This is incredibly important. We are not free to complain in public (or online!) about our spouse. Your spouse's reputation is sacred to God and you are not free to malign it. This doesn't mean you can't talk to your pastor or mature Christian friend about how best to respond to a particular sin; this is specifically aimed at public badmouthing. Forgiveness means washing your lips free from public complaints about your spouse. You are not free to drag your spouse's sin before other people.

Fourth, and perhaps most difficult, if forgiveness has been given, then the sin has effectively died and it no longer hinders the relationship; the slate has been wiped clean for the rebuilding of trust. Please note this: forgiveness is about releasing someone from the punishment we think the sin deserves; it's not about the instant restoration of trust. But it does establish a clean platform upon which trust can be rebuilt. So forgiveness doesn't mean that your emotions will immediately snap into line and be on board, but forgiveness will put your emotions on the right path toward healing. Withholding forgiveness and clinging to a grudge will never get your emotions in line. Making these intentional promises, however, will move your emotions in the right way and strengthen your marriage!

But it all begins by feasting on Christ's forgiveness and then eagerly sharing it! Want to talk more? Come visit with me. – Pastor Conner

Highlights
Ladies Guild of Zion
January, 11 2017

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

Pastor Conner referred to Matthew chapter 6 where Jesus taught about laying up treasures in heaven rather than on earth. He encouraged us to tithe from our gross income and to envision what could happen if we actually did so as a church. The LWML pledge was recited, then Margaret Backhaus read a devotion entitled "Bread of Life". She reminded us that Jesus is our bread of life and asked the question what kind of bread are you? The mite box prayer followed and the mite box was passed.

President Buhr opened the business meeting in the name of the Triune God. Roll call found 15 members present and recalling a most unusual Christmas gift. The secretary read the minutes of the previous meeting which were approved. Correspondence was read from Pastor Conner, Pastor Riggert, Carolyn Kerkhoff, Timothy Conner, Pre-school board chairman Diane Riggert, LCMS Relief and Human Care, Camp Okoboji, Pastor Ferry, Pastor Oliver, and Pastor Gauthier. Treasurer Mary Grimm handed out the 2016 mission projects list. A total of $3,750.00 was dispersed. President Buhr announced that the Harvest Magazine can be read by using the email idw-mail@idwlcms.org.

Committee reports: Human Care Chair said 6 quilts had been tied. Circle #2 will serve the next funeral.

There was no old business except to remind members of items being collected.

New business: Sue Puck motioned that Guild send its annual activity fund money of $100.00 to the Carroll Zone along with $25.00 for the transportation fund. The motion was seconded and passed. Plaza bingo on January 27th will have Joene Bohlman as chairman, Bev Grundmeier, Connie Ahrendsen, and Margaret Kuchel as helpers. A discussion on the fellowship coffees followed. Ideas are to be ready for the next meeting. The next meeting is February 8th with hostesses Audrey Roe and Margaret Kuchel.

The meeting adjourned with the table prayer followed by the Lord's Prayer. Refreshments were served by Cynthia Genzen and Sue Puck

Respectfully submitted,
Sue Puck, secretary

In an effort to best serve the members of Trinity, the Ladies Guild has updated its funeral guidelines. For a copy of the updated guidelines, speak with Cathie Segebart or stop by the church office.

Ladies Guild
TRINITY
LUTHERAN CHURCH
MANILLA, IOWA
PROCLAIMING PEACE IN CHRIST'S CROSS

Preschool Praises January 2016

January was an icy month outside and inside the classroom! Even though we missed a couple days of class, we fit a lot of learning into them!

The first week we focused on snowflakes and the letter "F". The children really enjoyed practicing writing the letter "F" in shaving cream on the table top. We also played a matching game with gloves and mittens. We talked about why we love Jesus and wrote them down on snowballs for the new bulletin board in the church. John the Baptist was our bible topic and the kids thought it was gross that he ate locusts and honey.

Ironically the second week we focused on ice and the letter "I". This was after our first big ice storm, so the idea was fresh in their minds! Our sensory table had big hunks of ice for the kids to play with and they enjoyed using eye droppers to melt little holes into the ice. They painted with ice (frozen paint on popsicle sticks) and did an experiment with ice to see which additive would make it melt faster: water, salt, brown sugar, or nothing. Once they saw that the salt melted it fastest, I explained that that was what was used on the roads to help melt the ice so that it is safer to drive. We focused on Jesus' baptism and how the Holy Spirit descended onto Jesus and God the Father spoke from above and how amazing this was!

The third week we learned about penguins and the letter "M" (for Martin Luther King, Jr.). The kids loved the science experiment where we put little beads into water and watched them expand. The beads kept getting bigger as the day went on and I asked if they thought that the beads would fill the room by the next day when they came to class! I got a lot of giggles with that one! The Jelly Beadz were a fun addition to our sensory table along with some plastic penguins and other fish. We matched colors, worked on shapes, and did some more ice painting on the letter "M". We read about Jesus' temptation in the wilderness after his baptism and how he didn't make the same mistake as Adam and Eve when they believed the devil's lies. Jesus is our Savior and he is stronger than the devil!

The fourth week we focused on polar animals and the letter "B". The kids enjoyed watching a short video about polar animals. We also cut and made patterns with polar animal pictures and worked on identifying the letter "B". The sensory table still had the Jelly Beadz in it, but I added a few different plastic polar animals to it to make it "new" again. We read about Jesus gathering His disciples this week and how He didn't choose rich, important people to follow him, but simple fishermen. We are already important to God because we are His children. We don't have to do anything fancy for Him to choose us, we just need to trust in Him and follow Him!

I wanted to mention that we have moved up the date for the Preschool Fall Registration to February 22nd from 4-6 pm. Please help spread the word to anyone with children that will be 3-4 years old by September of 2017. Thank you!

Blessings,
Mrs. Gore & Mrs. Nemitz

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

Missionaries to Indonesia

How many baptisms?

We had returned safely to Asia after being on Home Service for several months. We got off the plane in Medan, and instantly were hit by the change in environment and weather. We were still glowing, thinking of all the incredible memories we had made in the US during our time with you. And we were anticipating returning to our familiar surroundings... and desperately trying to remember the words to use in the local language again.

Not long after returning to our home and beginning the unpacking process, we were contacted by a good friend from the Indonesian Christian Lutheran Church, who was excited to come over and spend some time with us. He and his wife came to visit, and we had some good conversation. He even invited us to church with him the next day, where his congregation was hosting a baptism and a confirmation. Seeing as how we had been helping his church with education and resources, this was an opportunity not to be missed.

We arrived at the church on the outskirts of Medan, and began meeting people. They were all curious, but very friendly; and extremely surprised when we could speak to them in Indonesian. During the Service, we sang along, and did our best to follow what was happening. But when the time came for the baptism, we were confused: the water was there, and the pastor was ready. But there was a line forming down the center aisle of the nave.

As we watched, we were gratefully amazed: there wasn't just one baptism, but ten baptisms that day. They all came in turn, parents bringing their little ones to be washed by the water and the Word. Thanks be to God for His work through His chosen Means of Grace.

SELAMAT

This is the work that you're doing in Indonesia and in Southeast Asia, through your partnership with the Ferry Family. You're having a direct impact in the lives of these people, allowing them to be built up in faith, in the knowledge of the Word of God, and in their identity as forgiven, redeemed saints. This is allowing them to go out into their vocations and interact as Christians, faithfully fulfilling the purposes for which our Lord places each of us. Thank you for allowing us to be here in this place, working as your hands and feet in the lives of these real people.

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 13, Issue 2, February 2017

Christmas Joy in Denison

The Manuel and Maria Perez family are a wonderful example of the families God has brought to our country and to Denison to join us as citizens of our nation. The Perez family is originally from Mexico. Manuel came first and found work at the Farmland pork plant in Denison. Maria and the children came later. I first met Maria as she came to our English classes and later as we worked together at Tyson. The family also studied in our class for preparing to take the citizenship exam. Through our classes, the entire family has become U.S. citizens. The youth are all working and studying: Mayra studies at Creighton Univ. in Omaha; Claudia studies at Iowa Western in Council Bluffs; Luis studies at Iowa State. The others are hard workers, Alma at a Council Bluffs nursing home and Christian and Maricela work at Farmland in Denison with Manuel. Elbert was the first baby baptized in our church and attended our Zion School for many years. Great family!

Christmas Babies

On Christmas Eve we celebrated the Baby Jesus with three babies of our member families: Natalie and her mother Maricela Perez; Yaretzy and her mother Adriana Mendoza; and Liam and his mother Azucena Gonzales with husband, Merlin. Yaretzy was born on Wednesday of that week and was in church on Saturday. These young parents are also a wonderful gift for our Hispanic ministry, and for our churches in Iowa District West. We celebrate our young bilingual families that see the importance of their faith and family. Our challenge is to develop them into leaders that will prepare our children and our churches to meet the multicultural need to serve with the Gospel all the diverse groups that God is bringing to our communities.

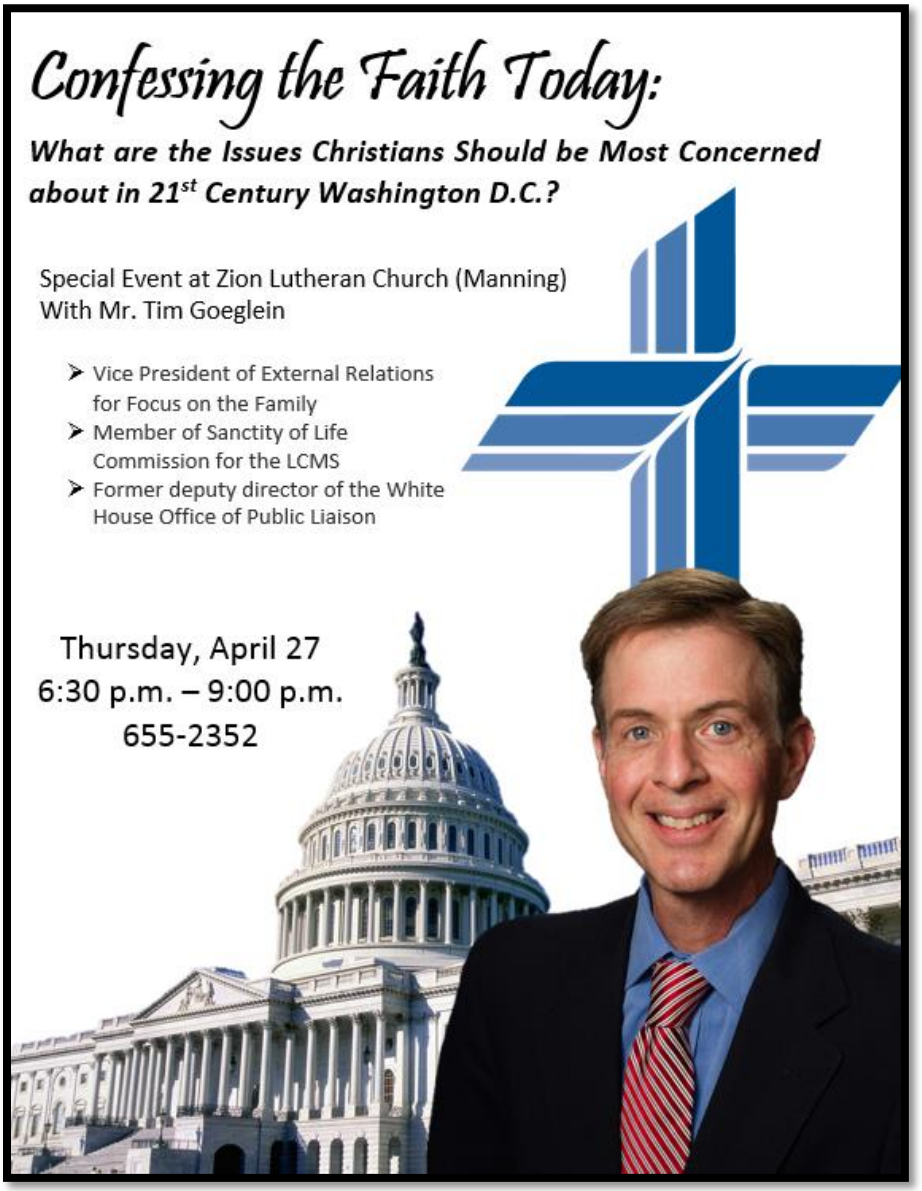
Christmas Joys in Storm Lake

Our Christmas Eve service at Grace was a blessing as our families came together to worship and to share their gifts in praise of the Christ Child. One of the highlights was the musicians who led our worship. They were: in front, Humberto Diaz, I played my trumpet, Mike Segebart came with me from Denison to play the piano, Denise Balandran played her flute and Matthew Marroquin played his violin. Not pictured is Briana Marroquin who also played the piano. God bless all of our families that share their talents to praise Baby Jesus. We especially thank our high school students for their willingness to serve and share. God is bringing new families to this ministry at Grace and we are blessed to have long time members committed to sharing the faith in the Storm Lake Hispanic community. At the same time this has been a difficult year of vacancy for the Grace Hispanic members.

As they seek to call a bilingual pastor, they have had to adjust to changing worship hours as myself and Pastor Henry Witte of Sioux City alternate the leading of the Sunday worship services. We thank Grace for their support and commitment to this ministry and pray that God will continue to guide this important work. We also thank the area Circuits and the District for their support and for their partnership in determining the future calling of a pastor for this important work in the Storm Lake area, one of the highest Hispanic minority communities in the state of Iowa.

***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



Tim Goeglein champions God's welcomed role in the public square. His years of public service and private initiative have been devoted to faith, freedom, and family.

Tim is the Senior Advisor to the President and Vice President for External Relations at Focus on the Family in Washington. He served in high-level government posts for the past two decades. He worked as Special Assistant to President George W. Bush, where he was the Deputy Director of the White House Office of Public Liaison from 2001 to 2008. He was the President's principal outreach contact for conservatives, think tanks, veterans' groups, faith-based groups, and some of America's leading cultural organizations. He was a member of the President's original 2000 campaign and White House staff, serving for nearly 8 years.

February Birthdays and Anniversaries @ Zion

Birthdays

Gerald Beck
Paige Mohr
2. Carl French
Brooklyn Riesberg
Kendra Walters
3. Ray Christensen
4. Todd Gruhn
Andrew Puck
5. Jean Hargens
6. Michaela Chapman
Curt Struve
7. Sasha Backhaus
Marlyn Fielweber
Ardith Lage
8. Dena Diersen
Russ Spies
Rexanne Struve
10. Joe Ewoldt
Devontay Hocken
Olivia Paska
Doug Ridgley
12. Tammi Powers
Donna Schmarzo
13. Jason Opperman
14. Ken Puck
15. Kristin Backhaus
16. Ryan Borkowski
17. Cory Beyer
Carol French
Adam Gruhn
Jeanne Gruhn
Jenna Rosener
18. Zach Dreier
Carolyn Kerkhoff
19. Shaunda Martin
Curtis Weems
Roger Wegner
20. Janice Monson
Jayde Rosener
21. Jean Ferneding
Sierra Ferry
Mike Powers
23. Tom Wegner
24. Scott Opperman
Barb Page
25. Kodilynn Rosener
26. Deanna Frank
27. Rylie-Shea Muhlbauer
Scott Stribe
Jeremy Wulf
28. Adam Albertsen
Gary Dammann
Katie Sextro
29. Karen Vollstedt

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

Anniversaries

2. Errol & Anna Belle Wegner
4. Joe & Becky Karsten
5. Paul & Monica Christensen
9. Lowell & Betty Schroeder
12. Lenus & Kristie Borkowski
13. Bill & Deb Ranniger
14. Dave & Bev Grundmeier
15. Bob & Gloria Ewoldt

Official Acts

Transferred In:
Brett Eddy from St. John Lutheran Church, Audubon, IA, January 16, 2017

Transferred Out:
Daniel Vogel to Zion Lutheran Church, Atlantic, IA, January 25, 2017

Funerals: *(services at Zion unless otherwise noted.)*
John Leslie Doyel; Died January 12, 2017; Funeral January 20, 2017 (Ohde funeral Home); Pastor Jonathan Conner

Margaret Marie (nee: Hammer) Bilsten; Died January 20, 2017; Funeral January 27, 2017; Pastor Jonathan Conner

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, Dorothy Larsen, Athena Bess, Delores Kuhn, Susan Lamb, Bruce Grimm, Ronald Claussen (Laurene Meeves brother), Bary Kienast, David Bohlmann, Myra Asmus, Ken Knudson