Will You be You in the Resurrection? What if Your Loved One isn't There?

Do you ever wonder about Heaven? What will it be like? What will we do? Who will be there? What will *we* be like? Will we even be ourselves? And what if someone we love isn't there? How can there be happiness in Heaven without our loved one?

What does the Bible say? In brief, it says enough, but not everything. In other words, God reveals enough for us to see Jesus and His saving work for us, but He doesn't tell us everything. So, Scripture is sufficient for salvation, but it's not exhaustive in content.

With that acknowledged, let's answer what we can. Space obviously prevents us from answering all the above questions, so we will focus on two: Will we be ourselves in Heaven? And what if someone we love isn't there?

Right away we need to acknowledge that the Bible doesn't address these questions directly. So we aren't able to answer these questions like we are with questions like *Who is Jesus?* And *What has He done for us?* But that doesn't mean the Bible is silent on our questions. Let's look at a few verses and see what God's Word is assuming about identity and the resurrection.

- Beloved, *we* are God's children now, and what *we* will be has not yet appeared; but *we* know that when he appears *we* shall be like him, because *we* shall see him as he is (1 John 3:2).

- According to his great mercy, he has caused *us* to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for *you*… (1 Peter 1:3-4).

- Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on." "Blessed indeed," says the Spirit, "that they may rest from their labors, for *their* deeds follow *them*!" (Revelation 14:13).

- For *this* perishable body must put on the imperishable, and *this* mortal body must put on immortality (1 Corinthians 15:53).

- For I know that my Redeemer lives, and at the last he will stand upon the earth. And after my skin has been thus destroyed, yet in my flesh *I* shall see God… (Job 19:25)

- For the Lord himself will descend from heaven with a cry of command, with the voice of an archangel, and with the sound of the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive, who are left, will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we will always be with the Lord (1 Thessalonians 4:16-17).

Notice the language: *we* will be like Jesus, an inheritance is kept for *you*, the deeds of the dead follow *them*, *this* mortal body will put on immorality, and *I* shall see God. Scripture

assumes that we will be ourselves in the resurrection. You won't lose your identity, as in world religions like Buddhism; you will be you forever. And that would seem to imply that your story will be your story forever. So, your experiences from earth won't be wiped from your memory since they are integral in your identity and your story.

How we will relate to each other – will spouses interact as spouses?, siblings as siblings?, etc.? – isn't addressed in Scripture (Jesus does say that we will not enter new marriages in the resurrection, but He doesn't address the way people who were married on earth with interact). But if our stories are preserved, if our identities carry over, it would stand to reason that we will remember our earthly relationships.

But what if someone we love isn't there? Can Heaven be happy without our loved one? These are piercing questions that require careful thought to reason through. First, we must ask what the ultimate hope of Heaven is. Being with those we love is held up in Scripture as something to look forward to, but not as the ultimate hope. The ultimate hope of Heaven is being with our God. Paul speaks about God being "all in all" (1 Corinthians 15:28). Martin Luther commented on this saying, "Everybody will find all wants that are now satisfied by all things satisfied in God Himself. When He will reveal Himself, we will be satisfied in body and soul and will no longer stand in need of so many things as we now do here on earth" (AE 28:141-42). Heaven will not be defined by lack, but by the fullness of God.

This means that happiness in Heaven will not be dependent upon ignorance of earth. So God won't have to make us ignorant to make us happy. God won't have to wipe our memories of those we loved to fill our hearts.

Consider a deeper truth. What is it that you treasured about your loved one? Tenderness, compassion, humor, wit, thoughtfulness, commitment? Ask yourself, *from where do these qualities ultimately come? What is their source?* Your loved one was created in the image of God, and as such, reflected these divine qualities to you (even if he didn't trust Christ for salvation). If the reflection of these divine qualities brought you joy on earth, how much more will the source of these qualities, God Himself, bring you joy in the resurrection? If God's wonders in creation – the splendor of the morning's colored canvas, the intricacies of the gossamer web, the might of the tempest's voice – can reflect truths of God's nature, cannot our loved ones do likewise?

Considering eternity without a loved one is immediately terrifying, but God will not need to empty your memory to fill your heart in Heaven. He has been your heart's true desire all along, whether you realized it or not.

Want to talk more about Heaven and the resurrection? Drop me a line or stop in to visit. Let's let Scripture answer our questions and guide our imaginations! – Pastor Conner

Ghosts, Angels & Demons, and the BIG Hope

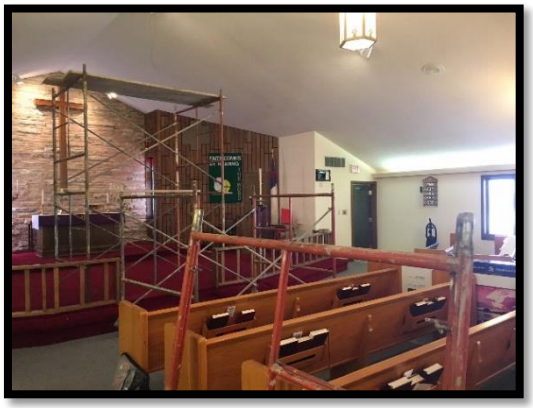
In the time and place we find ourselves – the United States; an enlightened/rational culture – the prospect of ghosts and the paranormal has always been intriguing and challenging. Our favorite stories, or at the very least the stories we were forced to read in high school, like Macbeth or the Christmas Carol, have their fair share of ghosts. Point being, we find ourselves dismissing the big sound coming from the dark basement. On the other hand, we're a people saturated in stories in which ghosts show up. So we're intellectually trained to disbelieve in paranormal stuff, and yet the stories, movies, and shows that we love rely on ghosts to move a story forward. We can't make up our minds when it comes to ghost stuff.

For the next couple of newsletters I'd like to jump into the Bible to see how God's people have thought about ghosts and angels and demons. I have to warn you, though, that this is one of those "buzzkill" investigations of the Bible. To skip ahead a bit, if you're looking for validation that it's Great-great-great-great Aunt Thelma rocking in the chair every morning around 2:30, the Christian witness is going to be upsetting or at the very least lacking (but you can't say I didn't warn you).

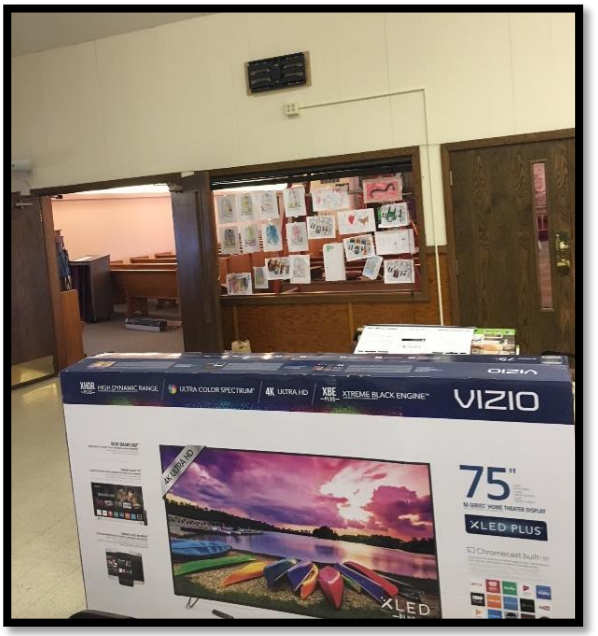
On the other hand, the Bible's witness will also prevent you from dismissing the paranormal. If you do a little word surgery on the word *paranormal*, what you'll do is take a knife and cut after the second *a* and before the *n* so that you end up with *para* and *normal*. Para just means alongside, and normal means…well, normal. Ordinary. Typical. Expected. So when you stitch back together the word paranormal you have something like "alongside the ordinary." There is stuff going on that works alongside the stuff we see and experience on an everyday basis. The Bible actually affirms this. Christians confess this all the time when we say God made everything including "things visible and *invisible*." So it's not so simple to dismiss everything as just being the wind playing tricks on our senses.

My pastor hope is that we live as mature Christ followers; that we play a balancing game where we don't get so psyched about ghosts that it prevents us from focusing on the real important thing (One) that is worthy of our focus AND we don't get so cynical that anything that we can't taste, touch, see, and so on, is outside the realm of belief and reality.

In order to do this in the coming months, I need you to bring your imagination and a desire to fear, love, and trust God above all things. If you can do that, we'll have fun! In the meantime, I will be praying for you that the Spirit makes the end of Lent and the beginning of the Easter season meaningful by providing a renewed sense of how big, beautiful, and bold the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus really is! – Pastor Johnson



New equipment is coming to Trinity. We are having four new monitors installed to add to our worship space. The largest monitor will be placed in the Fellowship Hall for worship (in case someone needs to slip out), funerals, Bible study, and our upcoming movie and conversation nights. Stop in and check it out!



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Ministry Apps

Applying the Gospel to Hearts and Homes (April 2018): Zion and Trinity Lutheran

Easter Sign: "End Construction"

Thank you for traveling the road of Lent and Holy Week and seeing the signs along the road. The transition to the Easter season, reveals a new sign: "End Construction." "End Construction" implies the slow, cautious travel gives way to relief and the joy of the journey. Since the first promise of the Savior, God was constructing the road of salvation. The Easter proclamation removed the "Dead End" sign and allowed the church to travel on from the tomb to life in Christ here and eternally. There is no more work to be done on the road to an eternity with Jesus. The proclamation, "*Christ has been raised from the dead, the first fruits of those who have fallen asleep (1 Cor. 15:20),* assures us of our destination. The Easter season church travels in the freedom of the Gospel and the joy of the resurrection.

Thank you to the youth and youth families of the congregation for blessing our Lenten travel together with great nourishment.

The avalanches of life sometimes block our roadways. Because the stone that blocked the entrance to the tomb is moved, God continues to move the stones that block the roadways of our life. Join us for a 5 week THURSDAY MORNING STUDY, "Jesus Moves Stones" at 9:30 a.m., beginning Thursday, April 12. Stones of doubt, legalism, guilt, and more are removed. Guests welcome!

Easter Sign: Generosity through Orphan Grain Train

The Zion Fellowship Club is supporting the international care ministry of Orphan Grain Train (www.ogt.org) by coordinating a CLOTHING DRIVE. Gently used or new men's, women's, children's, and infants clothing is welcomed. This includes pants, shirts, sweatshirts, jackets, coats, night gowns, pajamas, robes, suits, skirts, dresses, hats, caps, scarves, gloves, belts, and shoes (in good shape; women's heeled shoes shouldn't be any higher than the length of the thumb). **Underwear and socks have to be NEW.** Thank you for our generous response to this opportunity.

Clothing can be brought to the quilting room (southeast corner of fellowship hall) between April 22 and 29. Fellowship Club members (and interested guests) will deliver the clothing and assist with sorting at the Ida Grove warehouse in early May. Volunteers have sent nearly 3,000 semi-loads of supplies to needy people to storm damaged and crises areas in the United States and to more than 65 countries. Orphan grain train also serves 90 orphanages, 3 hospitals, and 7 prisons in Russia and the former Soviet Republics. Sharon Irwin, manager of the Iowa West Orphan Grain Train Branch at Ida Grove was the guest presenter at the March Fellowship Club meeting.

Easter Sign: Compassion to Prisoners: Fellowship Club (April 9)

Vocation: VOLUNTEER! Thanks to the many volunteers who assisted with the Lenten season, Holy Week worship and Easter services.

The April Fellowship Club meeting will celebrate another volunteer ministry. Dennis and Candy Booth (parents of Zion member and IKM-Manning teacher, Ben Booth) will share their volunteer ministry to prisoners in the Rockwell City and Fort Dodge prisons. The Booths have made weekly visits to the prisons for decades and have mentored many prisoners upon their release. *"I was in prison and you came to me" (Matthew 25:37)* The Fellowship Club invites Zion members and friends to this special presentation at 7:30 p.m. on Monday, April 9.

Easter Sign: Anticipation

VBS Dates:	June 4-8, 2018
VBS theme:	"Splash Canyon: God's Promises of Life's Wild Ride"
VBS needs:	Many volunteers and prayers!

ON THAT NOTE

Treasuring our Musical Treasure

Carl Ferdinand Wilhelm Walther (C.F.W. Walther), author of this month's Easter hymn "He's Risen, He's Risen," was born in 1811 in the Kingdom of Saxony, in modern day Germany. While attending college in Leipzig, Walther contracted a near-fatal lung disease that forced him to delay his studies for six months. During his hiatus, Walther studied Martin Luther's writings and became convinced that they accurately communicated the truth of Scripture. Upon completion of his studies, then, Walther was ordained into the public ministry where he served as a Lutheran pastor and school teacher, but ministry was not easy for Walther. The neighboring kingdom of Prussia had earlier (1817) forced the merger of the Reformed and Lutheran Churches, effectively suppressing the Lutheran confession. And Saxony, which operated the state Church (of Lutheran confession) and had power over ecclesiastical matters, was influenced by the Prussian union and started to suppress distinctive Lutheran teachings in Saxony. Walther was unwilling to compromise the truth and decided to emigrate to America. He joined several hundred Lutherans who made their way through New Orleans, up the Mississippi River, to Perry County Missouri (near St. Louis). From there his story took many surprising and gut-wrenching turns, but he eventually ended up founding a log cabin college, which would become Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, serving as president of the seminary, becoming the president of the newly formed Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod, and writing several influential books that are still utilized in the LCMS today. We will sing his hymn on Easter Sunday.

He's risen, He's risen, Christ Jesus, the Lord;
He opened death's prison, the_incarnate, true Word.
Break forth, hosts of heaven, in jubilant song
And earth, sea, and mountain their praises prolong.

The foe was triumphant when on Calvary
The Lord of creation was nailed to the tree.
In Satan's domain did the hosts shout and jeer,
For Jesus was slain, whom the evil ones fear.

Walther begins with the bold Easter announcement: He's risen! He then immediately moves into the implications of Christ's resurrection: the doors of death's prison now hang open, broken by the very enfleshed Word of God. Notice, then, that creation is invited to join in the celebration. Christ's resurrection and death's defeat is good news not merely for mankind; it is good news for all creation because all creation is languishing in death's prison and longing for release. And Jesus' resurrection is the announcement that death's grip has been broken and will one day be banished altogether.

In verse two, Walther returns us briefly to Good Friday and to Satan's apparent victory over Jesus. There, without the bold declaration of Easter, that Friday was anything but good. It seemed all was lost and Satan had prevailed.

But short was their triumph; the Savior arose,
And death, hell, and Satan He vanquished, His foes.
The conquering Lord lifts His banner on high;
He lives, yes, He lives, and will nevermore die.

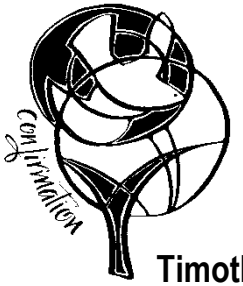
Then, with the simple conjunction *but*, Walther joyful announces Satan's undoing. Jesus rose. The triumph was, in fact, His. His apparent defeat was now His emphatic victory, an emphatic victory *for us*. Death, hell, and Satan were vanquished *for us*. And He stands today holding the banner of life for all who believe. He stands today alive and impervious to death. He stands today *for us*.

O, where is your sting, death? We fear you no more;
Christ rose, and now open is fair Eden's door.
For all our transgressions His blood does atone;
Redeemed and forgiven, we now are His own.

Because Jesus lives, because He has defeated death, Walther encourages us to echo St. Paul's words in 1 Corinthians 15 in our defiant victory proclamation to death: *We're not afraid of you anymore! Your sting has been undone! Jesus lives and has opened the door to Paradise for us. You do not own us anymore; Jesus does! He bought us with His own blood!*

Then sing your hosannas and raise your glad voice;
Proclaim the blest tidings that all may rejoice.
Laud, honor, and praise to the Lamb that was slain:
With Father and Spirit He ever shall reign.

So what's our response? Joyful praise *and* proclamation, glad hosannas *and* blest tidings so that *all* may rejoice. The news of Easter is too good to keep to ourselves. It is the news that outshines all other news, news all people need to hear. Walther then concludes, as do so many of our hymns, by turning our attention to our Triune God, to the Lamb (Jesus) who was slain, who because He lives will reign forever with the Father and the Spirit.



Zion's 2018 Confirmands
Congratulations!

Timothy David Conner
Birthday: May 16, 2004
Baptismal Date: June 6, 2004
Son of Pastor and Rebecca Conner
Godparents: Jeremy and Katie Albers
Behold, God is my salvation;
I will trust, and will not be afraid;
for the Lord God is my strength and my song,
and he has become my salvation. Isaiah 12:2

Tanner Ryan Crawford
Birthday: September 26, 2003
Baptismal Date: October 26, 2003
Son of Ryan and Heidi Crawford
Godparents: Regina Henscher, David Bald, and Jeremy Crawford
I can do all things through him who strengthens me. Philippians 4:13

Macie Jean Doyel
Birthday: November 17, 2003
Baptismal Date: April 18, 2004
Daughter of Ryan and Bobby Doyel
Godparents: Sean and Melissa Clines
Delight yourself in the LORD,
and he will give you the desires of your heart.
Psalm 37:4

Congratulations

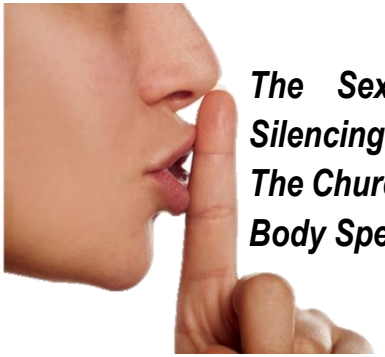
Luke Robert Ramsey
Birthday: June 11, 2003
Baptismal Date: August 9, 2003
Son of Eric and Jodi Ramsey
Godparents: Jen Drees and Ryan Mohr
Fear not, for I am with you; be not dismayed, for I am your God; I will strengthen you, I will help you, I will uphold you with my righteous right hand. Isaiah 41:10

Nolan Dennis Ramsey
Birthday: June 11, 2003
Baptismal Date: August 9, 2003
Son of Eric and Jodi Ramsey
Godparents: Julie Hergenrader and Jeanna Clayburg
For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them. Ephesians 2:8-10

Emma Rose Reese
Birthday: August 15, 2003
Baptismal Date: September 28, 2003
Daughter of Glen and Shaunda Martin
Godparents: Michel Krajicek Jr, Barbara Plagge Krajicek, Rose Mitchell, Ty and Natalie Rosburg
God is in the midst of her; she shall not be moved; God will help her when morning dawns. Psalm 46:5

Hosanna!

50 children carried palms and jubilantly sang *hosanna* on Palm Sunday, helping to make the day a truly joyful and meaningful celebration. Enjoy their smiling faces!



The Sexual Revolution's Silencing of the Body and The Church's Call to Let the Body Speak

The Fruits of the Sexual Revolution

The fruits of the sexual revolution surround us. Non-married cohabitation and no-fault divorce are ubiquitous (and nearly unquestioned despite their ruinous effect on marriage and the family). Homosexual behavior, same-sex unions, and transgender ideology are celebrated in media (as anyone who watched the Olympics witnessed) and normalized in education curriculum (as evidenced by the influence of SEICUS on American sex education curriculum and the widespread use of "The Gender Unicorn" in school districts throughout the U.S.),[1] and endorsed in law (*Obergefell* being but the tip of the iceberg as legislatures and courts across the country open restrooms and sports to gender identity and business owners are penalized for declining to marry their craft and voice to immorality).

Sadly, large segments of the American church are celebrating these fruits (the ELCA is hosting LGBT youth camps, blessing same-sex marriages, and hosting a "renaming service" to celebrate the gender transition of one of its pastors).

Porn culture pervades our lives as children now have uninhibited access to it through their smart phones (and they *are* accessing it) and studies continue to reveal how these images ruinously rewire the brain and shatter children's expectations for relationships and their ability to relate appropriately. 50 million babies are dead as the right to choose continues to be extolled and the government continues to subsidize the slaughter under the banner of "reproductive rights." The CDC estimates that sexually transmitted infections affect 20 million people every year in America (with chlamydia, gonorrhea, and syphilis sharply on the rise), costing us nearly $16 billion annually!

Children raised in fatherless homes continue to impact communities with study after study detailing its deleterious effects: increased behavioral, emotional, and health related problems, increased risk for crime, depression, suicide, poverty, unmarried pregnancy, struggles in school, and drug and alcohol abuse.

And contraception has not delivered on its promise to liberate women. Instead, it has facilitated a hook-up culture and contributed to women's objectification and availability for supposedly consequence free sex. All told, the sexual revolution has left us in a world of sex without strings and relationships without rings.

But these fruits are easy to spot. The roots are much harder to identify. If you dig down deep enough, though, you'll discover this disconcerting truth undergirding the sexual revolution: the silencing of the body and the rejection of creation.

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[1] SEICUS (Sexuality Information and Education Council of the United States), which influences virtually all U.S. sex education curriculum makes this pronouncement: "Gender identity refers to a person's internal sense of being male, female, or a combination of these" and "people's understanding of their gender may change over the course of their lifetimes." The Gender Unicorn is designed for young children to teach them that gender is not connected to biological sex and that the body doesn't inform sexual behavior.

The sexual revolution has robbed the body and the creation of their moral voice.

Appreciating Teleology

There was a time when people viewed the body as informative for identity and morality, when mankind's created nature as male and female was understood to inform identity (both individual and familial) and sexual morality. In other words, people saw the sexual complementarity of male and female and understood that they were designed (especially sexually) for each other. Out of this fact of creation grew marriage and the family (God intentionally connected them).

This came from the Christian worldview that taught that God, as the Creator, had hardwired purpose into His creation. In academic speak, this has been called a teleological view of the cosmos (from the Greek word *telos* meaning *end, goal*, or *purpose*). So, the cosmos is not founded on chaos (as modern evolutionists insist), but on the order programmed in it by the mind of God (order scientists continue to discover and before which they repeatedly stand in awe).

So male and female are complementary biological sexes clearly designed for each other. Through their sexual union, a man and a woman (as husband and wife) unite in an exclusive, monogamous, life-long union aimed toward procreation and the family. Our bodies teach us this. God's creation instructs us. And these are good. St. Paul said as much in Romans 1 when he wrote about the order of creation revealing the will of the Creator.

The Sexual Revolution Reject Teleology

The sexual revolution rejects this, claiming creation is irrelevant, that the body is irrelevant to ethics and identity. This is a profoundly disrespectful and low view of the body and an outright rejection of the teleological view of the cosmos. It not only reduces the body to a mere pleasure bot, but it gives the desires of the human heart the power to determine identity (both individual and familial) and sexual morality. The body is irrelevant; it has not *telos*, no God-given design or purpose. Creation, specifically, the will of the Creator revealed in His creation, is rejected. Human desires are crowned king.

This is catastrophic. The Creator is rejected; human desires are affirmed. But it was Jesus Himself who warned us against the desires of the human heart: "For out of the heart come evil thoughts, murder, adultery, sexual immorality, theft, false witness, slander" (Matthew 15:19). To turn the reigns of identity and morality over to these is catastrophic indeed (refer back to the opening paragraphs!).

The world would have us, in the name of love, affirm people's sexual orientation and gender identity even if they are not in line with their body. But this is not loving. Love does not require us to reject creation or to demote the body to irrelevance. And love does not force people to live fragmented lives in which their desires and perceived identity are at war with the biological reality of their bodies (nor does it support surgically altering a body to align with feelings).[2] Love helps people appreciate their God-given

[2] It is no more loving to affirm a person who identifies as transgender in his or her desire to surgically alter his or her body to align with his or her feelings than it is to affirm a person who identifies as transabled in his desire to surgically alter his body (through amputation or severing the spinal cord or optic nerve) to align with his desires. The problem isn't with the body; the problem is in the beliefs and desires of the mind and heart, which Scripture teaches are fallen.

body and hear creation speak of God's will for His creation. Love helps people align their lives with what God calls good.

A True Story

Consider a real life example: Sean Doherty is sexually attracted to men.[3] He writes, "I determined that the only course open to me was to remain celibate. I accepted the biblical teaching that God had created marriage for a man and a woman, and because I was gay, my only ethical option was to embrace a life of being single." He then offers, "As a man, God's original intention for me in creation was to be able to relate sexually to a woman." Notice how he accepted creation. He continues, "I came to think that in fact my feelings were what were relatively superficial, in comparison to my physical identity." Note how he grounded his identity in his body and rightly saw his feelings as potentially misleading.

Once he gave the biological reality of his body its full weight, he was able to ground his identity in his created nature. "Without denying or ignoring my sexual feelings, I stopped regarding them as being who I was, sexually, and started regarding my physical body as who I was… Rather than trying to change my feelings so that I could change my label, I changed my label and my feelings started to follow suit."

Mr. Doherty goes on to explain how "liberating and helpful" it was to realize that "my sexual identity as a man was already fixed and secure – because sexuality (in the sense of the sexual differences between men and women) is a gift of God to humanity in creation." By appreciating and accepting the biological identity given to him by God, Mr. Doherty was able to see his identity as a man as a good thing. He was able to appreciate the *telos* (the design) of his body, as being complementary to a woman, as a good thing.

Mr. Doherty found himself tempted by one of the fruits of the sexual revolution, but thanks to the faithful and consistent teaching of the church, he was able to see its poisoned roots and refuse the fruit. By turning instead to the good roots in God's creation, he was able to ground his identity in his body and to align his life with what God called good, and thereby enjoy the good fruits of God.

The Church's Call

The church is often painted as simply being against the sexual revolution and its fruits, and while we are against these (because they hurt people and do damage to what God calls good), we are first *for* the good of God. We are *for* creation. We are *for* the body. We believe these are good creations of God that inform what it means to a person, a married couple, and a family. Identity and morality are rooted in creation, in God's creation. And when we appreciate these roots, we will enjoy their fruits.

Our call, then, as the church is really quite simple: let the body speak. – Pastor Conner

[3] Nancy Pearcey shares this account in her fantastic book *Love Thy Body*, a must-read for anyone wishing to understand the biblical worldview on matters pertaining to human sexuality and how it provides a beautiful alternative to the ways of the world.

Preschool Praises for March 2018

This month has gone so quickly and we are looking forward to being done with snow days and finally enjoying warm, sunny days again! The first week of March we learned about Dr. Seuss and Dads and worked on our rhyming and letter D. They even got to watch a short video of Green Eggs and Ham which was really exciting! Jesus time covered the parable that Jesus taught on who is our neighbor and the children learned that everyone is our neighbor and that we should show love and caring for them. Pastor talked to the children about when Jesus met with Nicodemus and how God sent His son to save us and give us eternal life.

Dad's Night was held on March 1st in the evening and Dads came with their children and enjoyed pictures, building bird houses and painting them as well as playing with many toys. We finished the night off with red and white cupcakes and ice cream with all the fixins! Dads and children had a wonderful time as did we!

The second week of March we focused on weather and we read the story *Cloudy With a Chance of Meatballs*. The letter W for weather and some patterning was part of our work as well as the children got to be scientists and make predictions about different objects and if the wind could blow them or not. Using a little fan on a table we were able to test their hypotheses and chart which objects did and did not blow. Jesus Time was about Palm Sunday and how many people were excited about Jesus coming and they put palm branches on the road for him. Pastor also told the children of Jesus raising Lazarus from the dead and that Jesus is the master over death.

The third week of March we talked about rainbows, leprechauns and the letter R. We made a really neat rainbow book where the children glued pictures of items of different colors on the designated page. All those free seed magazines I get come in pretty handy for preschool! We also made rainbows with the letter R by scrunching up pieces of tissue paper and gluing them onto the R. It is amazing how much time some of the children will spend on covering every inch of the R! For Jesus Time we discussed the last supper and how Jesus taught us to love on another. Pastor spoke to the children about when Jesus healed the blind man by spiting on the ground and making mud to put on the blind man's eyes then telling him to wash his face.

The fourth week of March Mrs. Gore was gone the first two days because she was home with Influenza B. Thankfully Marlene Borkowski and Kristy Hugeback were able to come in and help! Thank you! The children learned about Spring and all that comes with it - mud, flowers, birds, baby animals, rain. They decorated cute eggs and made a great decoration that will be displayed on our bulletin board in the church for Easter. They worked on writing numbers one and two and matching two objects in a group. Jesus Time covered the Passion of Christ and how he was so badly hurt even though he didn't do anything wrong and that he died on the cross. Pastor spoke about when Jesus brought Jarius' daughter back from the dead.

The last week in March we only had one day of class where we talked about Easter and why we celebrate it - Jesus' resurrection! The children enjoyed a small Easter Egg hunt in the youth room and were able to take home a little Easter basket with a few goodies in it as well as an Easter book from the preschool. Thank you for your choice dollars and donations that make it possible to give these little gifts to the children! The last two days were parent/teacher conferences which gives Mrs. Nemitz and Mrs. Gore time to deep clean the preschool room and switch out toys in between the 24 conferences. A reminder that we do still have openings in our 3 and 4 year old classes and we would appreciate if you would spread the word about our excellent program!

Blessed Easter!
Mrs. Gore & Mrs. Nemitz

See pictures on page 14!

ZION Lutheran Preschool
Manning, Iowa
Christ Centered... Child Focused... Family Connecting

Ladies Guild of Zion
March 14, 2018

Pastor Conner had us ponder the words penned in the Lenten hymn "Christ the Life of All the Living." We meditated on the suffering of the Lord Jesus Christ finishing each verse with the refrain, "Thousand, thousand thanks shall be, dearest Jesus unto Thee."

President Buhr had us read the first verse of the LWML hymn. Margaret Backhaus, Christian Life, read "The Perfect Lamb." We are like black sheep carrying our sin until Jesus, the lamb that was slain for us, took our sin upon himself and made us clean. Following prayer, and passing the mite box, President Buhr called the meeting to order in the name of the Triune God.

Roll call was answered by 15 members with "something that makes me grouchy." The minutes from the January meeting were read and approved, as the February meeting had been cancelled. Correspondence read included thank you notes from Pastors Oliver, Ferry, Gauthier, and Grills. Also read were notes from Molly Ulrickson, Lutherans for Life, and Lutheran Family Service. Treasurer Mary Grimm distributed copies of her report. President Buhr told us that Camp Okoboji's quilt auction is scheduled for July 7th. Quilts and descriptions are to be delivered to the camp no later than May 28th. Spring rally will be at Lidderdale on April 21st.

Human Care chairman, Audrey Roe, said 145 quilts have already been tied. Circle #1 served theViola Ostebee and David Genzen funerasl; Circle # 2 the Scott Robinson and Ken Knudson funerals; Circle # 3 the Lyle Donnelson and Inez Mahnke funerals. President Buhr provided rolls and coffee for two Iowa District West meetings held at Zion. The Zone Pastors will be meeting at Zion on March 20th. Sue Puck will provide rolls and coffee for that.

There was no old business. New business: Sue Schilling and JoAnn Thomas audited the treasurer's books and found them to be in order. Camp Okoboji is holding a theme basket auction on April 7th. Cynthia Genzen moved that we send $30.00 to buy a set of twin sheets for the camp. The motion was seconded and passed.

Connie Ahrendsen will chair the committee for plaza bingo on March 23rd. Nancy Opperman, Susie Schilling, and Becki Ehlers will help her. The next guild meeting will be on April 11th with hostesses being JoAnn Thomas and Charlene Hickman. There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned with the Lord's Prayer and table prayer. Refreshments were served by Cynthia Genzen and Margaret Backhaus.

Respectfully submitted,
Sue Puck, secretary

If you have been around Zion on a Sunday night you have probably heard the loud teenagers downstairs having fun. This month we have been playing various board games, including *Imagine If*, *Sheriff of Nottingham*, and *Scattergories*. We have finished our series on the seven churches in Revelation, and we are moving on to our last series of the year, Explore: Taking a Look at Christianity.

In this series we will be exploring three main questions: Is the Bible True? How can a loving God still send people to Hell? and Why does God allow suffering? Pastor Johnson and I (Tiffany), believe that having the kids ask questions is a huge part of them learning about their faith and making it their own. So, we hope that with this series, the kids will not only be affirmed in their faith, but also have some answers for those that may ask them these questions.

You may notice the High schoolers wearing new Trizion youth group shirts. The kids were super excited to get these! Our youth group verse is on the back which is Philippians 3:10-11 "That I may know him and the power of his resurrection, and may share his sufferings, becoming like him in his death, that by any means possible I may attain the resurrection from the death." He is risen, He is risen, Indeed, Alleluia!

The kids are looking forward to a murder mystery scavenger hunt this month on the 29th around the town of Manilla. Should be lots of fun!!

Easter Sign: C-3 and COOPERATION

Thanks to Sunday school children and families (and many partners) for filling the special Basket of Blessings for our local food pantry. Thanks also to the grades 7-8 Sunday school class for their food pantry shopping expedition on Sunday, March 25. In 2017, 165 households with 397 individuals were served. If you know of a family in need, direct them to the Food Panty (Saturday mornings from 8 a.m. to 10 a.m.) or contact New Opportunities in Carroll. Zion hosts the Food Pantry every 5th Saturday. Thanks to our congregation volunteers. Food pantry donations are always accepted in the special container by the east entrance.

C-3 is hosting a special community event on Wednesday, April 18. Author and Speaker Aaron Davis from Lincoln, Nebraska will speak to students in grades 6-8 in an afternoon assembly. An evening assembly for the community will be held at the school auditorium beginning at 7 p.m. Prior to the evening event, C-3 will host a sloppy joes, salads, and bars meal at the school cafeteria beginning at 5:30 p.m. The freewill donations for the meal will be directed to the next (Spring 2019) Wolf Pack for Hunger event.

Nearly 50 people gathered on Sunday afternoon, March 11th for our Family and Friends Game Day with Pizza. The pictures tell the story better than words. For more pics, visit Zion's Facebook page.

SERVING THE LORD IN

PANAMA

NEWS FROM THE GAUTHIER FAMILY

March 2018
Vol. 3 Issue III

Greetings in Jesus! It is hard to imagine that Holy Week has already arrived. We pray that your Holy Week preparations, worship, and Easter celebration are a blessing to you all this year.

Much has been happening in Panamá since the last newsletter. Let me share a few highlights with you. At the end of February a friend and member of my former congregation volunteered in Sabanitas helped us prepare the pastor's apartment and the new sanctuary for the church plant. Pastor Carlos Mario Marín arrived March 1 and was installed as assistant pastor in Balboa on March 11. He will be moving to Sabanitas soon. We recently had the pleasure of a short-term team from Iowa City that served in Panamá with both CPTLN (Lutheran Hour) and the national church also helping to prepare the church plant building. Finally, in April a team from Texas will serve in Sabanitas helping to get it set for its dedication during the FORO on the first Sunday in May.

As you can see, the church plant remains our top priority. We are blessed in that the national church already owned a property in the area they desired to plant the church. The Lord has also provided a pastor to shepherd this new flock and various Lutheran organizations are already willing to help in our plan to get pastor into the community of Sabanitas and the community to pastor.

While great progress has been made on this project, there is still much to do. We ask for your continued prayers as we finish construction and preparations. Planting this church is a project of the entire church, therefore, we invite you to be a part of this process. In addition to your prayers, Sabanitas is in need of paraments and communion ware. There are also a number of construction/renovation projects on the to-do list that still need funding. If you or your mission group or your congregation is looking for the opportunity to help start a new church so that the cross of Jesus will be proclaimed, please get in touch with me. I can also translate and pass on any encouragement you would like to share with the Lutheran Church of Panamá. As always, thank you for your continued prayers for our Lord's work in Panamá. To God be the glory!

Home Service Update (August-October) Thank you to all who have reached out for a missionary visit. More than half of my Sundays are already booked. Pastors and congregational leaders: if you would like a visit from our family, please get in touch with me as soon as possible (brian.gauthier@lcmsintl.org). I am willing to preach and give a presentation update on the work that we are doing in Panamá. I also encourage you to think 'outside the box' for visits as well as there are only so many Sundays available. We could do a potluck supper presentation, a mission update BBQ, a midweek service presentation, a luncheon, etc. We hope to hear from you!

News from Amanda

Saludos! It has been a very busy beginning to the new year! Ezra and I began our homeschooling and are loving our special study/play time together. I treasure this time with him and love watching him grow and learn. He is my daily joy! We are in the midst of the dry season here so it's nice and sunny all day long. Ezra and I have been able to do some hiking to reinforce what we are reading in our books. This past week we spent a couple hours in a butterfly garden and were able to observe all the stages of metamorphosis! We love this beautiful creation and would be happy to share it with you anytime! On another note, please lift Brian up in your prayers as he continues serving in Panamá, works on his doctorate, and begins teaching courses for the seminary in the Dominican Republic. We also rejoice with my brother Andrew's family as their new baby is expected to arrive this week!

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

Missionaries to Indonesia

What is one topic requested frequently by our partner churches? They want our teaching on the service of women in the church. Our Asian brothers and sisters recognize that in the LCMS, we have an understanding of vocation and identity that allows us to live in such a way where we value each other for what God has given to us, and yet don't see men and women as interchangeable.

This month in Indonesia, we were able to fulfill a request by the Indonesian Christian Lutheran Church (GKLI) to host a workshop for the women of their church where they could explore topics that mattered especially to them. Because of your generosity and support, we brought together Indonesian women from four different provinces to a gathering in Medan, and provided them a chance to visit, learn, explore, and grow in their ability to serve those around them and to proclaim the Word of God in their vocations.

We were joined by Deaconess Grace Rao, the Director of Deaconess Ministries for the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod as she made her second trip to Indonesia. Through the translation and interpretation of one of the GKLI pastors, Dcs. Grace taught for four days on topics like Ministering to the Grieving, Women in the Bible, the Service of Deaconesses, and Teaching Sunday School. I was even able to assist by teaching the women in the area of Hymnody, Confession/Absolution, and the Church Year.

Deaconess Grace made the most of the time, truly coming alongside them as a sister in Christ. She gave them concrete Scriptural resources they could put into practice immediately, which they soaked up.

SELAMAT

Read more online at:
http://ferrys.asia

Some of the women enjoyed meeting one another for the first time, often commiserating among themselves and finding common ground in dealing with similar circumstances in different places.

The week went very quickly, and was well-received by the leadership and the women of the GKLI. When it was over, they had several women use the microphone to say how much they appreciated the opportunity to gather and learn. And of course, they were asking for more workshops just like this one.

Thank you so much for making this workshop happen, and for the other opportunities we have to work together to accomplish this work. Our Indonesian partners are much better equipped now to speak the truth of God's Word to this generation, the next generation, and to their neighbors!

Dcs. Grace with the bishop of the GKLI and his wife, a workshop participant

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*.

UPCOMING EVENTS @ ZION & TRINITY

April 1

Easter Sunday
6:45 a.m. Trinity Easter Sunrise Worship at Nishnabotna Cemetery
7:45 a.m. Trinity Easter Breakfast
9:00 a.m. Trinity Easter Worship
7:00 a.m. Zion Easter Sunrise Service with breakfast to follow
Children invited to participate in opening procession by carrying flags and lilies

April 23

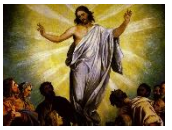
Church Safety and Security Workshop at Zion
Provided by Brotherhood Mutual and Iowa District West
9:00 – 4:15
All churches invited!
Inquire about registration costs

April 25

Confirmation Witness Night
6:30 p.m.

April 29

Confirmation Sunday



May 10

Ascension Service at Historic Trinity
Celebrate the power of Jesus and, more importantly, how an ascended Jesus shapes our lives.
Historic Trinity in Manning @ 7:00 p.m.
Everyone welcome.

June 4-8

VBS
Life is full of thrills and spills; we may not know what's around the bend, but God does! At *Splash Canyon*, kids discover that, on life's wild ride, Jesus is by our side.
8:45-11:30 a.m.

April Birthdays and Anniversaries @ Zion & Trinity

Birthdays (T = Trinity)

1. Gloria Boeck (T)
2. Connie Ahrendsen
Larry Hansen
3. Aaron Ahrendsen
Lillie Ceminksky
4. Dorothy Knudson
Duane Otto
Joleen Spies (T)
5. Bob Henkelman
Mason Boell (T)
Carson & Jackson Woebke (T)
6. Darla Neumann
Tom Saunders (T)
Dennis Tibben
7. Jeff Bradley
Amelia Hinners
Jesse Page
Hadley Wiig
8. Judy Bald
Mikasia Jacobsen
10. Stephen Grimm
Dorothy Larsen
11. Vicki Tibben
12. Cory Otto
Vila Ranniger
Kael Renze
Thomas Ulrickson
Nathan Vetter
13. Drew Greving
Deborah Ranniger
14. Katelyn Dreher
Brett Eddy
Larissa Hodne (T)
15. Jerry Backhaus
Natalie Bauer
Nancy Muhlbauer
Dan Peters
Karen Reinke
16. Marian Drake (T)
17. Tim Kienast
Sue Puck
Paislee Stoberl
18. Curt Janssen
Cheryl Kerkhoff
Susan Lamb
19. Saylor McManigal
Colton Otto
Diane Riggert
20. Tanner Bald
Franklin Mohr
21. Joene Bohlmann
22. Conrad Kurth
Merrick Stribe
Corey Gaskill (T)
23. Shauna Borkowski
Ashley Johnson
Roger Sinow
Daniel Vogel
Judith Wegner
Sara Lingle (T)
24. Collin Borkowski
Ericka Irlbeck
25. Jackie Hagedorn
Virginia Johnson
Becky Karsten
26. Ron Schilling
Lori Ferry (T)
27. David Gore
Georgia Lohrmann
Rylan Stoberl
28. Glen Ahrendsen
Eric Lage
29. Craig Wegner
30. Andy Booth
Emily Brus
Madison Grabill
Nancy Opperman
Sara Puck

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

Anniversaries

8. Todd & Tammy Winter
9. Mike and Bricy Lorenzen (T)
12. Ron & Susan Schilling
25. Brian & Diane Vetter
28. Greg & Sandra Sextro

Official Acts

Baptisms:

Brock Richard Jensen; Son of Chelsey and Nate Jensen; March 3, 2018; Pastor Jonathan Conner

Payton Nicole Vohhahme; daughter of Daniel and Taya (nee: Jacobsen) Vonnahme; March 11, 2018; Pastor Jonathan Conner

Funeral:

Arlo Howard Dammann; Died March 21, 2019; Funeral March 24, 2018; Pastor Robert Riggert

In Our Prayers

Walt Noelck, Dave Grundmeier, Heather Kusel, Sherri Steffes, Jim Deevers, Athena Bess, Diane Henkleman, Ron Claussen (Laurene Meeves' brother), Rick Spack, Don Lamb