LENT

Lent is a jarring season haunted by the organ's minor key. To gathered worshipers, Lent's descent from Epiphany's joyous major chords is precipitous and sudden. What happened? Why the solemnity? We were ambling through town on a crisp, sunny day until seeing the flags at half-staff. Death. You know it instantly. Somebody died. Lent's minor key is the church's way of communicating death. Somebody died. "Who?" is the question we must ask, but it is always one we ask with measured caution, lest we be surprised by the answer.

So we ask in Lent, "Who died?" and Lent simply points us to a cross. A man labors painfully for breath. He's been beaten, flogged, and pierced. People stand at his feet. Some jeer. Some weep. Some stare in dreadful silence as the sky darkens. Heaven itself appears to be dying. The man speaks… to his Father in heaven, "Forgive them… they don't know what they're doing." He's forgiving his tormentors. Now he speaks to a criminal dying next to him, "Today, you will be with me in Paradise." Who is this man who forgives tormentors, whose Father is in heaven, who grants access to Paradise?

The sun's light fails in midday… darkness reigns… he gasps… death is near. He speaks again, "It is finished!" What is finished? And then, "Father, into your hands I commit my spirit!" The organ sounds its minor key. Death. Who can sing "Alleluia" now? Who can echo joy in a major key now? A man has died.

Do we dare ask his name? Do we dare ask why he died? These are the questions the church asks in Lent. Isaiah spoke of this man as "a man of sorrows," as one "acquainted with grief." He calls him "despised." Yet he tells us that "he has borne our griefs," that he has "carried our sorrows" and we rejected him. "But," Isaiah says, "he was wounded for our transgressions; he was crushed for our iniquities; upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace, and with his stripes we are healed." He dies because of me? Because of you? We are indicted in his cross? Surely a season of deep soul searching is in order. Lent is that season. The hymn "Alleluia, Song of Gladness" acknowledges that Lent is the church's solemn season:

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.

Now is the season of solemn tears. Christ is wounded for our transgressions. Christ is crushed for our iniquities. Lent makes us see it and hear it. We cannot avoid the cross. Many would simply skip to Easter, but without the cross, there is no empty tomb. Without Good Friday there is no Easter. Without death there is no resurrection.

Good Friday requires a season of sober reflection. Our sins have necessitated Jesus' death. We can no longer dismiss them as insignificant. Our sins must be put away, left behind. This is repentance. Further, our prayers must be intensified and our devotion deepened. This is why we need Lent. This is why we need its minor chords. They make us see Christ's death and hear the call to repent, but they also deepen our longing for life and the exultant major chords of Easter. Then our hearts will soar. Then our standards will be lifted high. Then our flags will fly at full height with joy. Then we will celebrate death's defeat and life's triumph. Then we will rejoice that our sins have been put away and we have been made new. But first, the minor chords. First, death. First, repentance. First, Lent.

- Pastor Conner

Ministry Apps

Applying the Gospel to Hearts and Homes (March 2019): Zion and Trinity Lutheran

Blessed in the Journey

In 1989, DCE Paula Weiss, youth leader, Bary Kienast, and I traveled to Denver for the LCMS National Youth Gathering. The theme of the gathering was "Blessed in the Journey." We were blessed in that journey with the message of Jesus' journey for us and the relationships and experiences of our journey together. Through the decades there have been many significant journeys at Zion. I invite you to be part of a significant journey this Lenten season. May God bless our journey to the cross together.

Blessed in the Lenten Season Journey

Mid-week Lenten services (Wednesday at 10:30 a.m. and 5:45 p.m.) will be based on the Book of Exodus. The journey from Egypt to the Promised Land was prophetic of the greater journey from the slavery of sin to freedom now and eternally in Christ. The lessons with the children will review Jesus' journey to the cross. Bring the family, friends, and neighbors. A special newsletter insert summarizes the Lenten journey opportunities. A Monday morning Bible study (9:30 a.m.) offers a more in-depth exploration of Exodus. The season also provides the opportunity for fellowship together with the morning "coffees" and the evening fellowship meals hosted by the youth group.

Blessed in our Journey as the Zion Family

The February Fellowship Club vocation journey was canceled due to the weather. The journey resumes on Monday, March 11, at 7 p.m. Guests welcome.

Blessed as We Journey into the Community

"Powerful Tools for Caregivers" training has been a blessing for 9 congregation and community participants. The information and skills will not only bless the class members but will be shared with others in various contexts in the years ahead. The partnership with Lutheran Family Service is appreciated.

Zion continues to be a key C3 partner. Thanks for your support of the Food Pantry and your support of the upcoming "Wolfpack for Hunger" event (April 3). Volunteers are needed for the packaging. Financial donations are welcomed to meet the financial goal of $12,000 to package 50,000 meals.

Recently Zion children journeyed into the community. Preschool and Kindergarten Sunday school students shared songs of God's love with the Plaza residents. 7th and 8th grade students delivered a Sunday meal to congregation shut-ins.

Blessed as we Journey into the World

Shaarkan lives in Kyrgyzstan. Disabled since childhood, she can only walk with the help of crutches. The crutches she received from Orphan Grain Train five years ago had been repaired many times and could hardly be used. The dear lady took a 170 mile bus trip to get a new pair of crutches from the recent Orphan Grain Train shipment. In December, Women of Justice in the Republic of Georgia delivered toys, clothing, and copies of the Christmas story to children of the region. Zion Fellowship Club is an Orphan Grain Train partner. The next local clothing collection for OGT will be March 31. New or good, clean used clothing is welcome—all sizes, all seasons, children, men and women.

"Be with us through this season Lord, and all our earthly days; That when the final Easter dawns, we join in heaven's praise." (LSB#418, vs. 4)

Blessed in the journey! Pastor Bob

I wanted to write a follow-up piece to what I wrote last month. In the midst of our darkest moments, Jesus shines in the darkness. I believe that. I've experienced that.

I've been highly humbled by your responses to my article on panic and anxiety. Many people have demonstrated their care and concern to me, and I've been overwhelmed by the support.

One thing that readers have expressed to me is their appreciation for my frankness. One thing I've appreciated in readers' responses is the outpouring of care. And throughout this experience I've been wondering, why doesn't this happen more often in the church? Confession and listening and caring.

I move forward cautiously, because I'm not encouraging an air-out-all-your-dirty-laundry approach to our fellow Christian brothers and sisters. But I don't think it's unreasonable to say that within the community of believers we are more prone to build barriers than to express the hurt that pierces our lives – whether that hurt is generated by us or to us.

Why don't we share?

I'm sure that there are many reasons as to why we put on our mask in church. Weirdly, the church has become a place where we demonstrate that we have *it* all together. Our families are functioning, dressed well, practicing piety. It's the make-up we put on, even though underneath we had just witnessed the rage of a teenager who attempted a *coup* in order to avoid worship; we hid the stain under the cardigan after we tossed on the nearest clothing from the floor just to make it to church on time. We're sitting in the pew checking out mentally, but we don't talk to someone about why we're checking out in the first place because that would appear unholy or something like that. And of course there are the realities that come with aging. Hiding limps, catheters, and mental scars takes up all our energy.

We assert that we live in a fallen world, and yet we want to do our very best to pretend that we're living above it. That fallen world stuff lives in *that* family, not mine.

William Krueger depicts in his novel, *Ordinary Grace*, the revelation of a young boy. Frank, a teenager, is at a family funeral lunch-in when he spots one of his friends, Peter, to whom Frank had shown pity earlier in the story because of Peter's abusive father.

> I remembered the day I'd stood in the doorway of the Klements' barn and had been amazed by all the disassembled machinery inside and had seen the bruises on Peter's face and on his mother's, and I recalled how I'd felt sorry and was afraid for them as a family. I realized that although I hadn't acknowledged it I'd thought that my own family was better, special somehow, and that we were indestructible. That day seemed to be on the far side of forever ago and now I saw on Peter's face the same look I'd probably given him back then and I understood that he was afraid for me and for my family and I knew he was right to be.

Frank convinced himself that by not admitting fault, brokenness, disease, or sin that he and his family were living above the cut. But a major funeral forced him to come to grips with reality.

Why don't we share our sin, struggles, and strains with other Christians? Only a book could provide a thorough response, but I'd imagine that our hesitation is in large part due to fear.

Fear of seeing our sin

Jesus' follower John wrote in a letter, "If we say we have not sinned we make him a liar, and his word is not in us." Three of the most difficult words to say out loud to people are, "I was wrong." Three simple words, which make a major point. To admit sin is to admit that we're not God. That may sound ridiculous to think that we see ourselves as God, but isn't it true? If I went around and asked people to agree or disagree with the statement that *the biggest problem in the world is that people try to play the part of God*, I don't think I'd get a lot of pushback. To admit sin, is to say that there is a standard, I haven't met it, and I need desperate help.

Fear of judgement

We thought we had escaped the drama of high school, but we really haven't. Admitting faults, blemishes, and even sins puts us in the courtroom of another person. They're the judge, and we're biting our nails as we wait for their sentence. But when we believe the good news of Jesus and we're either sharing or listening to, the truth that there's only one Judge and it's only His opinion that matters – that can radically shape us. John wrote again, "By this is love perfected with us, so that we may have confidence for the Day of Judgment, because as he is so also are we in this world. There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear. For fear has to do with punishment, and whoever fears has not been perfected in love."

What's John saying? There's only one Judge. Jesus. And for His people, we know the ruling already – "there is therefore now no condemnation [punishment] for those who are in Christ Jesus" (Romans 8:1). Why are we worried about the judgements of others when God tells us how He feels about us?

Now What?

Dietrich Bonhoeffer, a German Pastor who rallied against Hitler during WWII, wrote, "The first service that one owes to others in the fellowship [church] consists in listening to them. Just as love to God begins with listening to His Word, so the beginning of love for the brethren is learning to listen to them." He goes on by stating that in conversations, especially significant conversations, we feel like we need to speak – like something we're going to say will make everything alright. He writes though, "Many people are looking for an ear that will listen." How can we change our church culture? It's a lot of things, but at the very least it probably begins with trusting that Jesus is the (merciful) judge and our ears are surprisingly just as powerful as our speaking. – Pastor Johnson

Prayer: An Answering Response

Prayer is often spoken of as a conversation: we pray and then listen for God to speak. Such counsel sounds sensible, but it's wrong – wrong for where it begins and wrong for where it leads.

Wrong for where it begins

Despite what many have and continue to claim, prayer does not begin with our speaking. Sadly, this is typically where so much of American-influenced Christianity begins: the individual. Prayer that begins with the individual, begins with my desires, my feelings, and my perspective, and assumes their correctness. Make sure you appreciate this point: prayer that begins with the individual's desires, feelings, and perspectives assumes their correctness.[1] This is not only a foolhardly assumption, but it overlooks a foundational truth: God precedes us. Scripture declares: *In the beginning God…* as it details God's speaking/creating work.

There is much to appreciate here, but for our purposes in this article, we need to acknowledge the previousness of God's speech. His Word precedes us. His Word defines us. His Word enlightenes and enlivens us. His Word corrects our perspective and rightly orders our desires and feelings.[2] Any words, therefore, that we offer in prayer are, in fact, an answering response to God's previous Word.

As an illustration, consider a toddler learning to speak. How does this happen? He must receive the words from his parents or grandparents. He cannot learn in isolation. Eugene Peterson (an author I appreciate, but with whom I do not agree in certain significant areas), rightly observes, "All speech is answering speech. We were all spoken to before we spoke." Little by little, syllable by syllable, phrase by phrase, we piece language together as it is spoken to us.

Timothy Keller, in his book on prayer, observes:

> Studies have shown that children's ability to understand and commuicate is profoundly affected by the number of words and the breadth of vocabulary to which they are exposed as infants and toddlers.[3]

And then he adds this profound insight: "We speak only to the degree we are spoken to." This insight applies to prayer. In order to pray, we must first receive the language from God. We'll have opportunity to reflect more on this in a minute, but for now we must acknowledge that God provides

[1] This is where so much of evangelicalism goes wrong today. It begins with the individual, assuming his heart to be right, and then shapes his theology accordingly.

[2] Instead of assuming the correctness of our desires, we must evaluate them against what the Creator has called *good*. If we find they differ, it is not the Creator's will that is wrong, but our desires that are out of order.

[3] This, by the way, is why professionals who specialize in child development are continually imploring parents to put their phones down and speak to their children, to read to their children, to narrate along with what their young children are doing. Parents who neglect speaking to their children, rob their children of the ability to communicate effectively.

that lanuage in His Word. His Word precedes our prayer.

Pastor Keller offers:

> God acts through his words, the Word is 'alive and active' (Heb 4:12), and therefore the way to have God dynamically active in our lives is through the Bible. To understand that Scripture is not simply to get information about God. If attended to with trust and faith, the Bible is the way to actually hear God speaking and also to meet God himself.

Prayer that begins with our speaking forgets this and the previousness of God's Word in our lives and, therefore, begins in the wrong place.

Wrong for where it leads

Returning to our opening observation, many consider prayer a conversation in which we speak and wait for God to speak. We discussed how this begins in the wrong place (ourselves!); now, let's examine the wrong place to which it leads. If you believe prayer requires you to speak and then to wait for God to speak back, you will inevitably begin straining to discern God's speaking, wondering if an intution is from God, if your own thoughts are God's voice, if a weather event is a sign from God or whether an illness or some life event is from God. What you won't do, however – and this is the problem – is listen to Scripture.

Timothy Keller, pointedly asks, "If we leave the Bible out, we may plumb our impressions and feelings and imagine God saying various things to us, but how can we be sure we are not self-deceived?" That's an insightful and soul-searing question! If we do not acknowledge the peviousness of God's speaking, if we do not understand prayer as our response to God's previous speech, how can we be sure that we have not deified our desires?

We should not rush to leave this question too quickly. Prayer, just like our desires, must be rightly ordered. How can we rightly order our desires? We must hear God speak. We must hear Him teach us what is good, what is rightly ordered. How can we rightly order our prayers? We must acknowledge the previousness of God's speaking and the locus of his speaking: His Word!

Word-driven prayer

As mentioned before, we speak only to the degree we are spoken to. Prayer is our answering response to the God who has spoken to us in His Word. Again, Timothy Keller provides insight:

> Our prayers should arise out of immersion in the Scripture. We should 'plunge ourselves into the sea' of God's language, the Bible. We should listen, study, think, reflect, and ponder the Scriptures until there is an answering response in our hearts and minds. It may be one of shame or of joy or of confusion or of appeal – but response to God's speech is then truly *prayer* and should be given to God.

It's no accident that our weekly Divine Service is Word-heavy. Before we turn to the prayer of the Church, we must receive not only the revelation of God's identity, but we must also receive the very vocabulary to use in prayer. This we receive from Scripture. Space prohibits further exploration of this subject. If you'd like to delve deeper into prayer, join our Family Bible Study on prayer after worship on Sundays. If you want to ask questions or if you want to pray, come talk to me. – Pastor Conner

Safety and Security at Zion

Following a 2018 Church Safety and Security Conference held at Zion, the Council decided to organize a Safety and Security Team to take a proactive look at safety and security at Zion. The educational material and workbook our committee utilizes were presented by Brotherhood Mutual. Since September our group (Kyle Arp, Shelly Gruhn, David Bohlman, Stan Musfeldt, Gary Witt, and Jen Morris) have met monthly.

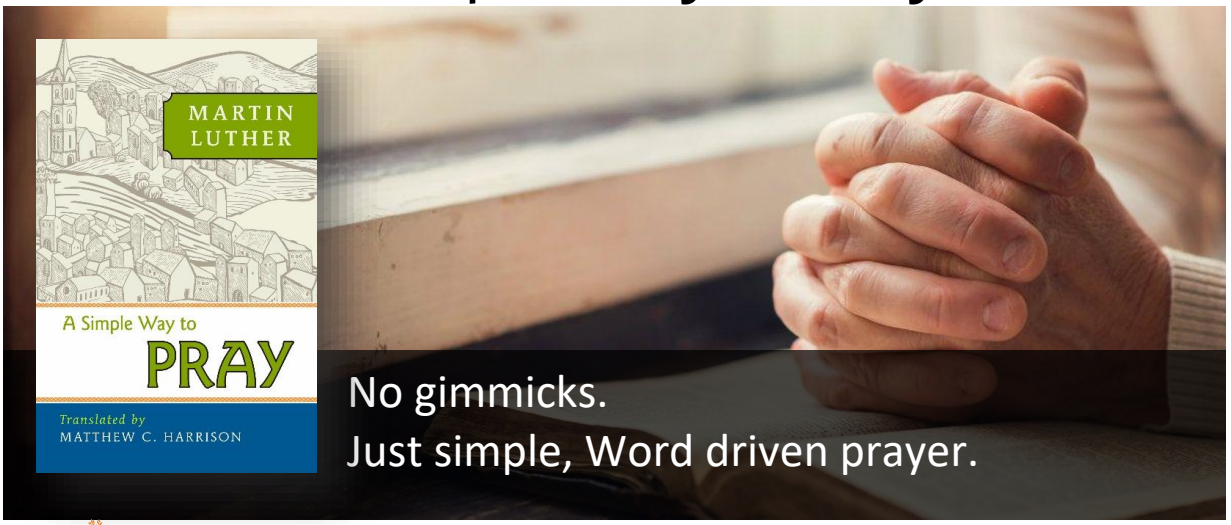
Initially, we worked through the assessments provided in the workbook to identify areas where safety and security are being done well or need improvement. Then in January we invited the Fire, Ambulance, Utility, and Police Departments to do a walkthrough of Zion. They were able to provide feedback to our group to help congregation members stay safe both on a regular basis and in an emergency. In the months ahead our team plans to work through the results of the safety assessments, prioritizing areas of improvement, and developing a plan for action.

One of most informative pieces of education we learned as we work through the guidebook is that although horrific active shooter situations are often what we think of in terms of Church emergencies, it is actually medical and weather emergencies that most often require a safety plan.

Developing action plans for many of those medical and weather emergencies are among the top of our priority list. We look forward to continuing our mission to make Zion a safe, prepared place to work and worship!

Jen Morris

A Simple Way to Pray



Family Bible Class

Journey through Lent

Journey through Exodus

Journey to the Cross

Journey as Disciples

In worship: Wednesdays beginning March 6

10:30 a.m. Devotional Service

5:45 p.m. Family Service

In Fellowship:

10:00 a.m. coffee and refreshments

6:30 p.m. Meal hosted by youth

In the Word: Mondays beginning March 11

9:30 a.m. Exodus Bible Study

Zion Lutheran Church, Manning, IA

Bring family, friends, and neighbors!

Family Game Day

Bring a game and a friend to the 2019 Zion and Trinity Family and Friends Game Day!

Enjoy learning a new game or sharing a favorite.

March 17th from 3:00 – 5:00 p.m. at Zion

Pizza at 5:00!

E-giving: Ever thought about giving to Zion electronically? Need to change your current e-giving level? Pick up a form at the resource center and drop it in the church office and we'll make it happen!

Mobile giving: Ever wondered if you can give to Zion through your phone? You can (any time or day of the week)! Either log onto zionmanning.com and click on "Giving" or download Zion's app (download "The Church App" and choose Zion) and give in just a few quick steps.

Thank you for supporting Zion's mission to celebrate Christ's redeeming love in our community, our country, and into the world!

Preschool Praises for February 2019

Although we have had our weeks interrupted due to weather, we managed to pack in lots of learning!

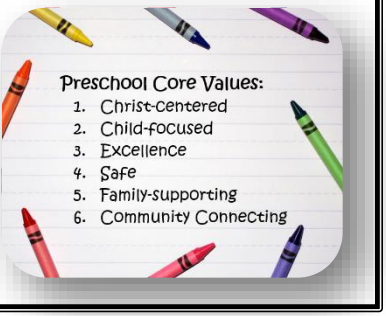
The first week in February we talked about hibernation and the letter Y. The children enjoyed decorating a Y with pieces of yarn as well as painting paper hearts using marbles. Their marble painting was on display this month on our bulletin board in the fellowship hall. They also got to act out the story *We're Going on a Bear Hunt.* We have to get creative with our large motor activities since it is too cold to go outside! Jesus Time and what Pastor spoke about in chapel were the same subject! We spoke to the children about when Jesus forgave the sins of a paralyzed man and then healed him! Everyone there was in awe that a man could say that another man's sins were forgiven. Well Jesus isn't just a man - He is God!

The second week was all about Valentine's day and the children enjoyed learning about the letter V, making gifts for their parents, and decorating their Valentine's boxes. They also got to practice their cutting skills. They have improved so much since the beginning of the year! The afternoon class had a visit from the Crawford County Conservation helper Michaela and she spoke to the children about owls.The Valentine's exchange was the highlight of their week and the children loved playing a game of "don't drop the balloon!" During Jesus Time and at Chapel we talked about when Jesus had spent all day teaching others about God and the Bible and was exhausted. He took a nap in a boat as his disciples sailed it across a big lake. As they were sailing a big wind storm arose and started causing big waves. The disciples were scared that they were all going to drown, so they woke Jesus up (how he wasn't already awake, I don't know!) and asked if he even cared that they were going to die. He spoke to the wind and waves and told them, "Peace! Be still!" After he spoke the storm stopped and everything was calm. The disciples were shocked, but we know that Jesus is the one who created the wind and waves, so of course they obey his command!

The children sang in church and we are so grateful for those who were able to make it even though the weather wasn't the nicest! They did a wonderful job and it is so much fun to share their hard work and love for Jesus with everyone!

The third week we studied President's and the children wrote what they would do if they were president. I had answers like "go shopping", "help everyone" and "sell my car"! You've got to love their creativity! We sorted coins and make Abe Lincoln masks. The children also got to do an experiment to see what would work best to clean a penny: soap and water, vinegar and salt, lemon juice and salt, Ketchup, or a pencil eraser. They all really enjoyed using toothbrushes to do this and we found that lemon juice and salt work the best! During Jesus Time I read about when Jesus healed Jairus' daughter by bringing her back from the dead! Even the children were saying, "Wow, he is powerful!"

Fall registration was held on the 20th and 21st and we had a great turn out! We have a total of 24 children signed up with a waiting list starting on the 3 year old program. Although I have room in the afternoon class, I am reserving it for 4 year olds and older 3 year olds. If you or anyone you know missed registration, please don't hesitate to call!

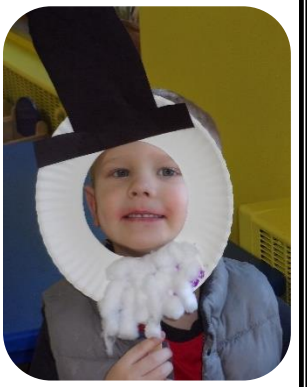


N.B. the radon mitigation system mentioned at the December voters' meeting was installed and is working properly.

The last week of the month was about dental health and how to take care of our teeth. The children got to "brush" yellow teeth white and hone their fine motor skills using a toothbrush, white paint and yellow paper with a tooth printed on it. They also did an experiment using hard boiled eggs, water, Coke a cola and grape juice to show why water is better for your teeth and brushing after drinking sugary drinks is so important. X is for x-ray and we made our own x-ray's using black construction paper and q-tips! We continued practicing number recognition 1-10 with the morning class and 1-20 with the afternoon class. Jesus time was about Jesus walking on water and how Peter wanted to join him but became scared and started to sink. Jesus saved him when Peter cried out to him for help. Sometimes we find it scary to do what Jesus is calling us to do, but we need to have faith in Him and trust that He will keep us safe.

Thank you to everyone for your support and prayers! We are so blessed to have this time with these children and to be able to share Jesus' love with them.

Yours in Christ,
Mrs. Gore &
Mrs. Nemitz



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

The weather has been tough to work with! Snow has prevented us from meeting regularly on Sunday evenings, but we're thankful that we were able to put on our Valentine's Dinner. There were about 75 in attendance from Manilla, Manning, Irwin, and even Schleswig. Our high schoolers will be gearing up for Lent as we look forward to the National Youth Gathering this summer in Minneapolis!

On February 3rd, our middle school students delivered meals to our home-restricted members, sharing delicious food and prayer. Special thanks to Tim Kienast and Holly Borkowski for coordinating the efforts (and Deb Knueven for making the meals!) and parents for assisting with the driving.
Back row: Brody Chapman, Leggy Thomson; Middle row: Haleigh Alexander, Brooke Booth, Tyler Heaton,

Above:
Back row: Brody Chapman, Leggy Thomson; Middle row: Haleigh Alexander, Brooke Booth, Tyler Heaton, Olivia Beck; Front row: Araya Hass, Eryn Ramsey

Right:
Haleigh Alexander, Eryn Ramsey, Janet Gruhn, and Araya Hass

Above: As a part of the confirmation requirement, confirmation students and their parents join our Board of Education meeting. Their presence brings enthusiasm, urgency, and great insights. Thank you confirmation families for see the value in this and for making it a priority!

Above: Brody Chapman and Leggy Thomson

Amigos en Cristo

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

March 2019

Celebrating the Presentation of Our Lord:
A wonderful tradition among our Hispanics is the celebration of the Presentation of the Lord, 40 days after Christmas. "*And when the time came for their purification according to the Law of Moses, they brought him up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord…" Luke 2:22*

This is a special time to bless, to pray for, and to teach our children how special the Lord is as the Son of God. It is also a special opportunity to teach them how special they are to the Lord, presented to Him through Holy Baptism. Our tradition has been to have a special bilingual children's lesson to share this message with the children and the youth of our churches.

In the photo above in Storm Lake I am with Annahi and her 3 children who were with some of the children and youth we prayed for there in our Sunday worship on February 3rd. In Denison, in the picture below, we not only had a special blessing time with the children around the Baptismal font, but we also had a piñata afterwards in the Zion gym and a special tamales dinner. The Hispanic dinner follows the celebration of the Epiphany visit of the Wise men on January 6th. As I wrote in last month's Newsletter on that Sunday we had a special "Rosca" cake with plastic babies in the cake. Whoever got a piece of cake with a baby is asked to bring tamales for this special dinner on the Presentation of the Lord. So we ate well with a variety of tamales and other treats. But most importantly, we shared in God's Word and in fellowship!

Please Pray: + Thanksgiving for 20 years of ministry among Hispanic immigrants in Iowa District West. + For Amigos en Cristo Lutheran in Denison and Grace Hispanic Lutheran in Storm Lake as together we pray for God's guidance during the pastoral vacancy, and that He would send us a permanent bilingual pastor for the ongoing ministry to these Hispanic communities. + For Kevin and Katherine that God would help their troubled family. + For new visiting families and inactive families that God will open their hearts to the hope in Jesus. + ***In thanksgiving for the mission hearts of the many individuals and congregations of the Iowa District West who support the Lord's work among Hispanic immigrants in Denison & Storm Lake and also in our other 2 missions in Sioux City and Des Moines. +++***

China Lutheran Seminary
Our Missionary in Taiwan
Dr. Stephen Oliver

中華信義神學院
China Lutheran Seminary

The Olivers: Gary, Ginny, Isaac, Stephen, Maggie

The China Evangelical Lutheran Church (CELC) held its annual meeting on January 21-22, with CLS President Samuel Liu as main speaker. It's a delight to work with our partner church in Taiwan as the mission goes forward!

Gary is Joseph, Ginny prepares to sing, Grandma happily attends, and Maggie directs the whole production as we reach out with the Gospel through the children's Christmas program. Thanks for your prayers! We pray for the Gospel to sink into Grandma's heart and all those who don't yet believe in Christ. It was a surprise blessing to have Grandma attend (she seems happy holding our German missionary friends' baby)!

Isaac joined me in his first mission trip with me to Cambodia to teach the Epistle to the Romans in December. He is worshipping here with the Cambodian pastors prior to starting class.

In December we made a trip to Southern Taiwan where we visited Chong-mei, our alumnus who has been diligently at work in a home for women recovering from substance abuse. We were really touched by her sharing and encouraged on in our work of preparing workers for the mission field.

Complicated Grief

Losing a loved one is very painful, causing many changes in our da
look at the grieving process, it is normal and expected that we ex
possibly guilt and anger. However, we expect that the feelings will ev
loss and are able to move forward. For some, the intense feelings of l
even after the passing of time. In complicated grief, these painful em
be able to resume their own lives. Some of the symptoms of complic

- Disbelief and inability to accept the death
- Preoccupation with the loved one or circumstances of the death.
- Intense, ongoing sorrow, bitterness or anger
- Inability to enjoy good memories of the loved one
- Blaming self for the death, wishing to die to be with the loved one
- Detachment from others, or distrustful of others since the death. Isolating.
- On-going feelings that life is meaningless or empty without the loved one

Many of us struggle with the question of how to help someone who is suffering with complicated grief. The following may be helpful:

Be available and listen. It's okay just to be present and not say anything; having someone near is very comforting. Offer to help with errands and be specific. "Tell me what I can do to help"

Avoid telling the person, "You're so strong." This may put pressure on them to hold in the feelings and act "strong." Be available in the months to follow.

If a grieving person begins to abuse alcohol or drugs, neglects personal hygiene, develops physical problems or talks about suicide, it may be a sign of complicated grief or depression and it's important to seek professional help.

If you'd like to visit with someone about complicated grief, your pastors are available. Further, they can connect you with a loving counselor or therapist to help.

American Cancer Society (2016). *Symptoms of major depression and complicated grief.* Retrieved 2/13/19 from: www.cancer.org.

Submitted by Manning Regional Healthcare's Senior Life Solutions program

Senior Life Solutions, an intensive outpatient group therapy program, is designed to meet the unique needs of older adults over the age of 65 struggling with depression and anxiety often related to aging. For more information, contact Carol Segebart MSN, RN-BC, Program Director, at 712-655-8262

Ladies Guild of Zion
February 13 , 2019

Pastor Conner led us through 1 Corinthians 15:12 and following verses where the resurrection of Jesus as the first fruits of the dead is preached. “For as in Adam all die, so in Christ Jesus all will be made alive. Each in his own turn: Christ, the first fruits; then, when he comes, those who belong to him.” Following prayer, Margaret Backhaus, read a piece entitled “Abounding in Love.” Romans 5:5b reads “God has poured out his love into our hearts by the Holy Spirit whom he has given us.” 1 Thessalonians 3:12 adds “May the Lord make your love increase and overflow for each other and for everyone else.”

President Roe called the meeting to order and led us in the League Pledge. Roll call was answered by 13 members with a contact we’d had in the past month with a neighbor or a prayer offered for a neighbor. The secretary read the minutes of the previous meeting which were approved as amended. Correspondence was read from Molly Ulrickson, Carolyn Kerkhoff, and Mission Central acknowledging the mission gifts to Pastors Ferry, Oliver, and Gauthier. Treasurer, Mary Grimm, gave her report. In the absence of the kitchen treasurer, Cynthia Genzen reported that the new stainless steel sinks have arrived as has the new counter top for the south wall of the kitchen. It is hoped to have them installed by March 6th. Kitchen cleaning will be finished after they are installed. There were no circle reports.

Old business: Cheryl Buhr said the last of the feed sacks were sold. Total raised was $1,223.01.

New business: President Roe said the Spring Rally will be held at St. Paul, Carroll on April 27th at 8:30 A.M. Sandra Vahl moved that Ladies Guild send $5.00 per member to the International LWML mites in order to help reach the 2017-2019 goal. The motion was seconded and carried. Treasurer Grimm will send $120.00 directly to International. Sandra also mentioned that the ladies who have been making hats will share their hat making skills with the Manning Plaza members on Tuesday at 2:00 P.M. They will also make black stocking caps for each of the Manning firemen.

Plaza Bingo will be held on February 22nd. Sandra Vahl will serve as chairman with Becki Ehlers, Sue Puck, and Nancy Opperman as helpers. The next Guild meeting will be March 13th with hostesses Cynthia Genzen and Cheral Buhr. The meeting was adjourned with the Lord’s Prayer and the table prayer. Lunch was served by Janet Gruhn and Susan Schilling.

Sue Puck, secretary

The generations collide! What fun it was to see our Ladies Guild overlap with our confirmation program!

Thank You

The people of Plaza say, "Thank you!" Every week a faithful fellowship of thankful residents (Lutheran and non-Lutheran) gather for Zion's Wednesday worship service. It is truly one of the highlights of their week. Thank you for supporting this ministry of Zion and ensuring that God's Word and Sacrament are delivered to our beloved Plaza residents!

CONCORDIA UNIVERSITY NEBRASKA

FREE Road Trip

Concordia University in Seward NE

High school students, parents and pastors are invited to a college visit on Friday, April 5, 2019. You will not be asked to make a commitment. This is just a visit. Check it out. See what Concordia has to offer.

We will be going to Seward the evening of Thursday, April 4. We plan to leave after school on Thursday and we will be staying at Cobblestone Inn at Seward.

The Friday schedule includes: campus and dorm tour, chapel, meet and greet professors and coaches, lunch, attend a student panel and before heading back to Iowa, we will have pizza and meet with current Iowa District West students!

There is NO COST for transportation, main meals (bring own snacks) or lodging. (Compliments of Iowa District West) Carpooling will be arranged.

Please share this invitation with all high school students. To register for the college visit, contact: Ellie Menz 515-370-1159 ellie@iowadistrictwest.org

Please register by March 26, 2019
Participating adults include:
Pastor Tom Schlund, Algona
Rhonda Mohr, Fort Dodge
Ellie Menz, Jefferson

UPCOMING EVENTS @ ZION & TRINITY

January 27-March 10
New Member Opportunity at Zion
3:45 – 5:00 p.m.

January 28 – March 4
Powerful Tools for Caregivers (1:00-3:00 p.m.) at Zion

March
A Simple Way to Pray
Join the Family Bible Class for a study of Martin Luther's simple, but effective instruction on prayer, prayer driven and directed by the Word of God.

March 6
Ash Wednesday

Trinity:	Zion:
5:30 p.m. Supper	10:30 Worship (refreshments at 10:00)
6:30 p.m. Worship	5:45 Worship (meal to follow)

Begin the journey to the cross on Ash Wednesday at Zion or Trinity.
Midweek Lenten series continues on subsequent Wednesdays at the same times.

March 11
Fellowship Club @ 7:00 p.m.
Judy Jacobsen will be the featured presenter, sharing her vocation as a teacher in the IKM-Manning District. She will share her journey as well as introducing us to the world of educational technology.

March 21
Worship with the Trinity family on the second Thursday of the month at 11:00 a.m.

March 17
Family and Friends Game Day 3:00-5:00 p.m. at Zion. Pizza at 5:00 p.m.!
Join family and friends of Zion and Trinity for an afternoon of fun and pizza!
Bring a game and a friend!

March Birthdays and Anniversaries @ Zion & Trinity

Birthdays (T = Trinity)

2. Jennifer Behrens
   Kaleal Hass
   LeAnne Haubrich (T)
   Curtis Lingle (T)
   Marge Schnoor (T)
3. Lori Genzen
   LeeAnn Musfeldt (T)
4. Katelyn Crawford
   Marion Ream
   Rebecca Vollstedt (T)
5. Oliver Saunders (T)
6. Camden Alexander
   Josiah Conner
   Matthew Gore
   Paige Hinners
7. Larry Lesle
   Errol Wegner
   Zach Lorenzen (T)
8. Lenus Borkowski
   Beverly Bruhn
   Bonnie Lorenzen (T)
9. Lynna Miller
   Craig Musfeldt
10. Stan Baack
    Randahl Peters
    Joshua Sebring (T)
11. Cynthia Grau
    Curtis Grimm
    Jeff Hargens
12. Floyd Forman
13. Shannon Walters
14. Justice Cornelius
15. Dean Grau
    Kora Potthoff
    Tyler Saunders
16. Julie Lamp
    Chad Morrow
    Kelly Nissen
17. Nancy Grimm
    Dave Grundmeier
    Katherine Vogel

19. Julianna Stribe
    Anna Belle Wegner
20. Barbara Grove
    Cynthia Karsten
    Virgene Kroeger
    Abby Lapel
    Chloe Otto
21. Dustin Petersen
    Russell Ranniger
23. Robert Nissen
    Linda Vinke
24. Jonathon Asmus
    Travis Borkowski
    Nathanael Conner
    Claire Gore
    Alix Puck
25. Carla Backhaus
    Danielle Hargens
26. Lucas Kluver
    Marjorie Jurgensen (T)
27. Noah Gore
    Dwight Gruhn
    Ashley Lage
    Aaron Rutz
    David Tibben
28. Michael Alexander
    Rebecca Conner
    Rachel Stoberl
    Loren Ferry (T)
29. Beth Booth
    Judy Borkowski
    Brenda Ehlers
    Jo Lingle (T)
    Robert Lueth (T)
30. Lacey Hinners
31. Joelle Puck

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

Anniversaries

4. Thomas & Susie Ulrickson
8. William & Shona Weitl
   Nels & Stephany Olson (T)
29. Chad & Kelli Morrow
    Kenneth & Joelle Puck
30. Scott & Terri Rosener
31. Lorrell & Judy Borkowski

Official Acts

Baptism: Levi John Kirsch (Parents Paul & Brandi Kirsch); Pastor Andrew Johnson

Funeral: Vera Mesenbrink, Officiant: Pastor Johnson; 3/1/19

In Our Prayers

Dave Grundmeier, Heather Kusel, Sherri Steffes, Jim Deevers, Rick Spack, Susan Lamb, JoAnn Karsten (Georgia Lohrmann's sister), Natalie Mason (Bruce and Mary Grimm's daughter), Judy Reinke, Gage Carlson (great grandson of Russ and Virginia Mohr), Carol Kahl, Allen Stribe, Valda Lamp, Angelia Buhr (Dewayne & Cheral Buhr's Daughter-in-law), Connie Ahrendsen