



But What About...? VBS Remembered

During the first week of June, Zion was privileged to welcome over 125 kids to our International Spy Academy VBS. It was an outstanding week of singing, playing, crafting, eating, and gathering around God's Word. Many thanks to the over 50 volunteers who made the week a success! Special thanks to Pastor and Diane Riggert, Margret Backhaus, Susie Ulrickson, Shelly Gruhn and so many more who shared the love of Jesus in word and deed with children.

I (Pastor Conner) had the privilege of sharing God's Word with grades 1 -8 in our lesson times. Over the course of the week we discussed The One True God (vs. counterfeits), The Tri-Unity of God (One God, three Persons), God's Nature (eternal, perfect, all-powerful/present/knowing), God's Solution for Sin and Death (the cross and resurrection of Jesus and coming New Earth), and God's love for us in Christ and His Church (in His Word and Sacraments).

One of the joys of teaching children is having the opportunity to hear and answer their questions. Included below are some of the questions that they asked me throughout the week:

- Who made God? (Look on page 13 for the answer!)
- What if a baby dies and isn't baptized?
- Do people who don't believe in Jesus go to hell?
- Will Satan punish people in hell?
- What happens to people when they die?
- When you die do you just black out?
- Does God know the number I'm thinking right now?

- What would happen if God disappeared?
- What about dinosaurs?
- Will Satan be on the New Earth?
- How do regular people become saints?
- Does God rule the universe? And what about people in other galaxies?

Children have important questions, questions that deserve thoughtful answers. I praise God for the opportunity VBS provided to answer these questions and many more. I also thank God for the children God brought to Zion during VBS. Whether they are in church every Sunday, attend periodically, or only experience the church through VBS, they heard the Word of God taught, saw it lived, and rejoiced to sing it exuberantly during the first week of June.

I wish every member of Zion had the privilege of seeing the joy in their hearts, the curiosity in their eyes, the hopefulness in their questions, even the fears and apprehensions that they shared in person with me throughout the week. What a holy opportunity to share Christ's love and truth with children! And what a good reminder for all of us to dig in and to beef up on God's Word. Not only will we discover answers to our questions, but we will equip ourselves to answer children's questions – answers that could make an eternal difference in our lives and theirs. Want equipping resources? Visit with Pastor Conner. Want answers? Come to church. Questions are encouraged and answers are offered weekly.





MINISTRY APPS—Zion Lutheran – July 2014 Applying the Gospel to Family, Community, and into the World

Ministry apps for CHILDREN

Zion Lutheran facilities became the training center of the “International Spy Academy”, June 2-6, as 136 children were trained to be agents of the One True God. The daily average attendance was 125. Half the attendees were children of Zion families; the other half were children from the community. The annual VBS program also becomes a mission center as unchurched families and children are involved each year. The child and family friendly morning schedule is possible only because of the many (over 50) willing volunteers. The VBS program was primarily financed through the free-will offerings at the Memorial Day lunch. Children donated \$150 for the mission projects—Bibles for Mongolia.

Sunday school classes will begin as the school year begins. Be watching the newsletter and church calendar for specific dates. Midweek classes will begin in early September. Sunday school teachers and assistants will be needed for fall classes. Contact Margaret Backhaus, Shelli Gruhn, or the pastors if you'd like to be part of the Sunday school training team.

Ministry apps for COMMUNITY

The Pentecost witnesses were first of all called to be resurrection witnesses to “Jerusalem” (the local community; Acts 1:8). We are privileged to share the Gospel with our friends and neighbors. Thank you to the many Zion members who so generously supported the recent C-3 concert with their financial gifts and leadership roles. It is important that the Christian heritage and values of our community are passed on to present and future generations.

Members of the community expressed their thanks to Zion for offering the VBS program. The Zion

facility will be host to a special program for children on Tuesday, July 15. The program will be presented by the University of Northern Iowa in partnership with the Manning Public Library. Children will build and test a solar car. Families should contact the Manning library to register. Cost is \$5 a child.

Zion facilities will also be the host site for the community Bloodmobile on July 31. It is our privilege to serve and witness to the community in which God has placed us. The community is invited to join Zion members at the “Gifted Generations” services at Trinity Church on July 24 and August 28. The special services begin at 7 p.m.

Ministry apps for STEWARDS

We are stewards of time and talents. Thanks to the many volunteers who assisted with pew and floor removal on June 9. Several volunteers will assist the Gunder Church Furniture Company with pew installation the week of July 7. + We are stewards of treasure. The generous response to the “Generations” campaign will make it possible to complete all the initial sanctuary improvements without seeking a construction loan. Our continuing “Generations” gifts will be used for the fellowship hall and education wing improvements in the near future. Members continue to support the mission and ministry of Zion with their weekly offerings. We have the privilege of being generous givers because of God's generous grace.

Families have the opportunity to teach children to share and save. The Lutheran Church Extension Fund “Young Investor” Club invites families to start savings accounts for children. Youth investors earn additional dollars for church and community service. See Warren Puck or Pastor Riggert for more information on the Y.I. Club.

Consider the Ant

On July 4th, millions of Americans will celebrate the 238th birthday of the United States by picnicking with their friends. They will not celebrate alone; hundreds of billions of ants will join them.¹

While ants are often considered a nuisance, they are, in reality, quite fascinating. Did you know ants have the ability to carry food up to seven times their own body weight? That would be like a 150 lb. person hoisting 1,000 lbs. over his head and carrying it several miles to his home.

Ants have two sets of jaws: one for carrying food and digging and one for chewing. Ants establish and maintain the shortest possible line to food by laying down a trail of pheromone (a chemical to which the other ants are highly sensitive). The ants detect the scent and follow it even as they lay more down, making the trail even stronger.

While to the casual onlooker, each ant seems to have its own agenda, to the astute observer it becomes apparent that ants are highly organized into complex colonies, with each ant having a specific role to play in the survival of the entire colony. Some ants gather food, some defend the colony, and some are responsible for the reproduction and expansions of the colony.

No ant lives for himself or envies the position of another; each ant exists for the well-being of the entire colony. In fact, if ants did live for themselves, not only would they die, but the entire colony would perish.

Working as one, ants not only survive, they thrive. So, consider the ant. Is not the body of Christ similar?

Each of us has been given unique gifts and called to different, but necessary vocations. As St. Paul says, "in Christ we who are many form one body, and each member belongs to all the others. We have different gifts, according to the grace given us" (Rom. 12:5-6). And in 1 Corinthians Paul assures us, "Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it" (12:27).

Some of us are called to highly visible vocations like pastor, congregation chairman, elder, or teacher. Some of us are called to less visible, but equally essential vocations such as keeping the kitchen clean and stocked, mowing the church lawn, weeding the landscaping, or quilting.

When we faithfully fulfill our vocations, the body of Christ thrives (like a well-ordered ant colony). When, however, members of the body live for themselves or envy the calling of another, the entire body suffers and languishes in ineffectiveness.

The body of Christ depends on *every* member. To be more direct, the body of Christ depends on *you*. As Paul says, "But... God has arranged the parts in the body, every one of them, just as he wanted them to be" (1 Cor. 12:19).

So, where has God called you? Are you ready to work for the well-being of the body and the glory of Christ? Not sure you're needed? Consider the ant.

¹ Some scientists estimate there are 16 million ants for every one person on the planet!





Defeating Fear and Becoming Manly Men

Last month we began our discussion of manliness with the help of Dr. Larry Crabb's profound work *The Silence of Adam*. We learned that God has wired "a natural momentum within the heart of every man, a power and an urge to move into life in a particular way." We also learned that "men are manly only when they live in the power of released masculine energy."

Men can rarely put this urge into words, but they feel it in the core of their being. When this pulsating urge is stifled by uncertainty and fear, when they don't know what to do, men often resort to destructive and unmanly behaviors. We saw how the angry and aggressive man compensates for deep feelings of powerlessness by seeking to control something in his life. We also saw how the abusive man is driven by rage at perceived injustices that lead him to believe himself justified in vengeful behaviors. Finally, we saw how the addicted man is haunted by the fear of being exposed as incompetent and thus seeks escape and relief through addictive behaviors.

These move men away from true manliness and away from God's specific design for men. In order to move toward manliness, men must first acknowledge the deep and painful feelings of impotence, incompetence, and inadequacy that often drive their destructive and unmanly behaviors. Dr. Crabb instructs, "a godly man's journey begins... with facing failure, not achieving success. It begins with an honest evaluation of what is wrong." Men must call the unmanly monster out of the shadows and expose him to the light of God's truth. With their sin and failures named, men can begin to turn from them and pursue true manliness.

This month we begin moving toward manliness by examining the specific calling God has given to men, the ways He has called men to be manly. Dr. Crabb points the way:

The beginning point for understanding manhood and for being transformed into spiritual, manly

men is not a recipe for developing masculinity nor a list of ingredients to stir together. We must begin with God's unique call to men. How have men been designed to be like God in ways that women have not? What is our special transcendent call?

To discover this call, Dr. Crabb directs our attention to God's created order in Genesis 1. There, as he explains, the Bible "tells us explicitly that God created man and woman 'in his own image.'" But then Dr. Crabb explains that "the word *man* is translated from the Hebrew word *zakar*, which means 'the remembering one.'" As such, "Men are called to remember God by faithfully telling others who he is and what he has done." Men are manly when they tell God's story with their lives. Dr. Crabb writes, "Men are called to pass on something important to future generations: not just a passing on of history but a passing on of the memory of God in our lives."

We see the record of men doing this in Psalm 44 where the psalmist writes, "O God, we have heard with our ears, our fathers have told us, what deeds you performed in their days, in the days of old..." When men keep silent and fail to pass on the memory of God, they fail to be manly. In fact, it was this silence that allowed sin to enter the world as Adam, the man God had created to preserve the memory of God and His deeds, stood silently by Eve as she was deceived by Satan. He did not speak to Satan. He did not speak with Eve. He did not preserve God's remembrance. He stood silently, allowed Satan's word to stand, and chose to forget God.

In fact, forgetting God lies at the heart of all sin. This forgetting, as Dr. Crabb points out, isn't of the absentminded variety; "It is an active and willful choice – a refusal to remember." When we sin we choose to forget God. St. Paul describes such willful forgetting in Romans 1. There men and women were engaging in all variety of sexual perversions, perversions that required them to forget God and His will. Paul revealingly writes, "since they did not see fit to acknowledge God, God gave them up to a debased mind to do what ought not to be done." Because they chose not to remember God, God turned them over to their sinful passions.

The choice to forget God and pursue sin is driven by a deep-seated belief that God isn't enough. Men practicing unmanly and destructive behaviors, (which we reviewed above), are driven by the belief that:

This life I'm living is not working. God is not treating me the way I deserve. Life just doesn't feel good. I want something or someone that either makes me feel good or places me in control. Trusting God is not producing the results I want. Therefore I must put him aside. I must choose to forget God for a time and to replace him with something more pleasurable.

If men hope to become manly (i.e. godly), they must "face their stubborn delight in forgetting and their commitment to passions stronger than their desires for God." This means turning from them and finding sufficiency in God and His grace in Christ.

Further, they must realize that the "life is supposed to work" assumption is false. Because of Adam's chosen silence and active disobedience, the world has been broken by sin and doesn't yield willingly to our direction. Therefore, men should not be surprised to encounter a world and relationships that don't naturally "work." Men, like God who spoke into the darkness and chaos and brought order in creation, are to enter into the chaos of this world as God's image-bearers to bring order.

But, as Dr. Crabb warns, this doesn't mean simply solving problems or managing responsibilities. It's bigger than that. Men consumed by fixing or managing will either despair over their inability to do it well or become puffed with pride over their perceived ability to master it. Men, however, are more than managers of God's creation (the dominion is bigger than management); they are living image-bearers of God to His creation. That requires a deep fellowship with God and the wisdom to know God's nature and work, which comes from consistently hearing the Word of Christ preached and taught.

We can learn something of God's nature and work in His creative act as recorded in Genesis 1. Dr. Crabb points out:

Ten times [God] spoke: the first four times, God gave shape to an unformed world; he established *order* (Genesis 1:3, 6, 9, 11). The next four times, God filled the emptiness with the *beauty of life* (Genesis 1:14, 20, 24, 26). The final two times, God revealed his heart toward the people he created, by *blessing* them with meaningful work to honor their dignity (Genesis 1:28) and with generous provision for their physical needs (Genesis 1:29-30).

Then in chapter 2 God brought the living creatures to Adam for him to name. "Like God," Dr. Crabb points out, "man was called to speak into darkness, to move into the confusion of a completely unnamed animal kingdom of animals, and to assign every one a name." "Could it be," asks Dr. Crabb, "that God intended men to behave like him by courageously moving into whatever spheres of mystery they encounter and speaking with imagination and life-giving power into the confusion they face?"

This means that as God's image-bearers man does more than tell God's story; he lives it by moving into life as God's image-imitator. Dr. Crabb says, "Men are called to pass something important to future generations: not just passing on of history but a passing on of the memory of God in our lives." Manly men remember God in their lives and it drives and directs everything they do – and it shows in their relationships. It doesn't mean that they will always know what to do in every situation. It does, however, mean that as men actively remembering God they will move into life's uncertainties without fear. In the coming months we'll continue our journey toward manliness even as we continue to warn of additional pitfalls that await us along the way.



Holding Your Family Together

Several months ago we embarked on our journey through five simple steps to help you hold your family together (listed below) from Dr. Rich Melheim's *Holding Your Family Together*. Thus far we've explored Step 1 (Sharing), Step 2 (Reading), Step 3 (Talking), Step 4 (Praying). This month we arrive at Step 5: Blessing.

The Bible teems with blessings. In the first chapter God blesses the animals along with Adam and Eve with fertility and the call to fill the earth. In chapter 12 God blesses Abraham with the promise of offspring through whom all people would be blessed.

Rebekah's family, when she left to become Isaac's wife, blessed her with this marvelous blessing: "may you become thousands of ten thousands, and may your offspring possess the gate of those who hate him!" And Isaac blessed Jacob with these words:

May God give you of the dew of heaven and of the fatness of the earth and plenty of grain and wine. Let peoples serve you, and nations bow down to you. Be lord over your brothers, and may your mother's sons bow down to you. Cursed be everyone who curses you, and blessed be everyone who blesses you!



Share the highs and lows of your day.



Read a Bible verse or story.



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



Pray for one another's highs and lows.



Bless one another.

Perhaps the most famous Biblical blessing, which we still speak in the Divine Service, was spoken by God through Aaron:

The Lord bless you and keep you; the Lord make his face to shine upon you and be gracious to you; the Lord lift up his countenance upon you and give you peace.

Paul records numerous blessings in his letters, many as simple as "May the God of peace be with you all" (Rom 15:33) and "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you brothers" (Gal 6:18).

A blessing, as Dr. Rich explains, "is more than mere wishful thinking. Words have the power to change realities and usher in new realities. When a blessing from God is spoken in faith and received in faith, it has the power to transform lives and invent a future of hope, power, and joy." Further, "In blessing, we are claimed and named as part of something larger than ourselves." What parent wouldn't want to give that gift to his or her child?

Dr. Rich asks us to imagine raising a child who is able to look back as an adult and say, "We always... shared highs and lows, we read God's Word, we talked, we prayed, and we blessed each other. In fact, in my home *no one went* to sleep without a blessing." What parent doesn't want his or her child to be able say that?

And, as if that weren't enough, blessing has a neurological benefit, too. Dr. Rich explains that in the Bible when blessings were given in person, they usually involved loving touch. And, as he details,

Touch releases serotonin, a natural pain-killing and mood-elevating endorphin, into the body. Touch also reduces cortisol, the stress hormone that kills baby nerve cells, ages existing nerve cells, and tells the body to hold onto fat cells...

Imagine the gift you can give to your child or grandchild before bed! Dr. Rich says,

All of this blessing business leads to better sleep and, thus, better mental, emotional and physical health. A good night's sleep washes the brain and

body with growth hormones; renews the skin and bones; bolsters the immune system; regenerates the kidneys, lungs and heart; lowers the risk of heart attack, stroke and cancer; regulates hormone levels; and tells our bodies to burn fat away.

But the benefits continue! Blessing also gives parents the opportunity

To return, refocus and remember who we are, whose we are, and who we are called to be. It brings Christ into the midst of where two or three are gathered in His name. It calls down the name, the power and the presence of God into flesh. Blessing brings joy, warmth and love. It firms, confirms and reaffirms.

Ready to start blessing yet? Want to know how? Let's begin with Baptism. When your child or grandchild was baptized, he received the sign of the cross on his forehead and heart "to mark him as one redeemed by Christ the crucified." The Scriptures say that in baptism he was joined to a death like Christ so that he could be joined to a resurrection like Christ's (Rom. 6). It says that he was saved by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit who was poured out on Him in Baptism (Titus 3). It says Baptism forgives sins (Acts 2) and Baptism saves you (1 Peter 3). When you bless your child or grandchild with the sign of the cross, you recall all of these magnificent promises and remind your child or grandchild that he lives in these promises every day.

Dr. Rich says,

Mark your children as Christ's every night, whether they are awake or asleep. Tell them loudly, clearly and repeatedly that no matter where they go, they belong to Christ. No matter where they go, they have been marked with His brand and His seal.

Further, choose a Bible verse to speak over your child or grandchild as you lovingly place your hand on his head. Imagine if your child hears this Bible verse (or a variety of Bible verses) every night from

you while experiencing it with your loving touch! Combining the Word of God with loving touch allows God to communicate His love in Christ for your child or grandchild through you. Further, you give your child or grandchild, as Dr. Rich points out, the gift of Time, Touch, and Attention. Below are a few verses with which you may wish to bless your child or grandchild.

Numbers 6:24-26: The Lord bless you and keep you; the Lord make his face to shine upon you and be gracious to you; the Lord lift up his countenance upon you and give you peace.

Psalms 121:7-8: The Lord will keep you from all evil; he will keep your life. The Lord will keep your going out and your coming in from this time forth and forevermore.

2 Corinthians 13:14: The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

Romans 15:13: May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that by the power of the Holy Spirit you may abound in hope.

2 Thessalonians 2:16-17: Now may our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and God our Father, who loved us and gave us eternal comfort and good hope through grace, comfort your hearts and establish them in every good work and word.

Hebrews 13:20-21: Now may the God of peace who brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, the great shepherd of the sheep, by the blood of the eternal covenant, equip you with everything good that you may do his will, working in us that which is pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen.

1 Thessalonians 3:11-13: Now may our God and Father himself, and our Lord Jesus, direct our way to you, and may the Lord make you increase and abound in love for one another and for all, as we do for you, so that he may establish your hearts blameless in holiness before our God and Father, at the coming of our Lord Jesus with all his saints.

Counterpoint

Countering falsehoods with facts for the sake of life



In this month's *Counterpoint* we're addressing a truly thorny issue. At some point this year, especially since it's an election year, you will hear a claim something like this:

Claim: I'm opposed to abortion except in the cases of incest and rape.

Incest and rape are two of the most insidious evils in our world. Who could hear of someone being victimized by such evils and not be outraged and grieved? So when someone says that abortion is acceptable in the cases of incest and rape, it sounds reasonable at first. Reason, however, is what we're *not* using in such a statement. In the cases of incest and rape, emotions often rule the day. Emotions, however, are not always conducive to clear thinking. In order to offer a well-reasoned response to the incest/rape exception clause many offer for abortion, we're going to need to ensure that we don't obscure clear thinking with visceral emotions and that we don't let the evil of these sins devalue the life of the unborn.

So let's think through the issue. Are rape and incest evil? Without question, yes. Should the individuals who commit these evils face justice, and should the laws against rape and incest be robust with severe penalties? Again, without question, yes. But is the child conceived through these sins evil? No. Should the child conceived through rape or incest be punished for the sin of his father? No. Should the innocent be punished for the crime of the guilty? No.

When we make an exception for abortion in the cases of incest and rape, we allow the evils of incest and rape to obscure the inherent worth in the newly conceived life. The truth is that a child is a child with inherent worth regardless of the circumstances of his conception. In his book, *Pro-Life Answers to Pro-Choice Arguments*, Randy Alcorn points out that, "The point is not *how* [the child] was conceived but

that he was conceived. He is not a despicable 'product of rape,' but a unique and wonderful creation of God."

Some argue that aborting a child conceived through incest or rape will bring healing to the mother by removing the potential for painful memories associated with the evil act committed against her. But will creating a second innocent victim through abortion bring healing to the first innocent victim who suffered incest or rape? How does creating a new victim bring healing?

The truth is that many women who have sought healing through abortion haven't found it. They find themselves haunted by two evils; one committed against them, and one against their baby. Surprisingly, many women who have given birth to a child conceived through incest or rape have found the innocence of the child to be healing. Some women have chosen to raise their child and have been able to delight in the beauty of the child. Others have found a loving adoptive family and have rejoiced to know their child is loved and cared for.

Another matter worth considering in the case of the incest/rape exception clause for abortion is the message it communicates to already-born people who have been conceived through one of these two evils. Do they not deserve to live? Is their life of less value than those conceived through loving marital relations? Further, if we knew someone conceived through incest or rape, would we love them or value them less? If not, why would we devalue an unborn child conceived in a similar way?

Incest and rape are evil and should be roundly condemned and punished (even as we acknowledge that God's grace is available in Christ), but no innocent child should bear the punishment for the sin of another.

Counterpoint: I'm opposed to incest and rape and I'm opposed to punishing the child for the sin of his father. I'm in favor of caring for the victim of rape/incest and of the child conceived through it.

June Highlights

Ladies Guild Zion Guild met on June 11th for its regular meeting, hosted by Judy Bald and Joene Bohlmann with 15 members in attendance.

Pastor Riggert provided devotions from LWML Quarterly entitled "Hope and a Future". Margaret Backhaus provided our Christian Life message entitled "Living in Green Pastures".

President Susan Schilling led the business meeting. Acting secretary read the minutes from the May meeting and also read correspondence.

Circle Reports were as follows:

- Circle 4 serving June fellowship coffee
- Fellowship Club will serve July fellowship coffee
- Circle 1 will serve August fellowship coffee
- Circle 3 will serve the next funeral lunch

President Schilling reported Zion served the Memorial Day brunch to 220. She also reported Vacation Bible School was attended by large numbers from our congregation and the community with an average of 125 per day. Guild members assisted with Bible School and also provided cookies.

Guild members and other church members served brunch to approximately 45 workers of the demolition crew on June 9th when work began on the Nave.

The Quilt Auction will be held at Camp Okoboji, June 14, 2014. Three quilts from this Guild are among 159 to be donated for the Auxiliary Quilt Auction.

Joni Kienast requested our help in providing cookies and snack packs for Kinderfest Cookie Walk on June 14th.

Members were reminded that Zion summer service will be held at Trinity Church at 7 PM., on June 26th.

Plaza Bingo will be June 27th with Barb Anderson, Janet Gruhn, Shelly Gruhn and Charlene Hickman as hostesses.

Our next Guild meeting will be July 9th at 1 PM with Margaret Backhaus and Charlene Hickman as hostesses.

The meeting closed with the Table Prayer and the Lord's Prayer.

Cheral Buhr,
Acting Secretary



SELAMAT

We take great comfort in knowing we are part of God's great community which He has gathered to Himself around the Word and Sacraments of Jesus Christ. In Him, we are all one even though separated by so many miles/kilometers!

Watch for our next newsletter coming soon!
Your servants and partners in Christ,
The Ferry Family

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



On the Ground in Indonesia!

Your favorite Ferrys have finally landed... thanks to you!

We were only supposed to be in Singapore for four days, but ended up being there for nearly a week. As soon as we got off the plane (right after the last update), all of us got sick in one way or another. In fact, Caleb and Cassie actually had to go to the doctor during our time in Singapore. The blessing there, though, was that now we have relationships with good doctors in that country, which is only a short flight from us.

We left Singapore on Thursday, 22 May, and flew into the city of Bandung in West Java, Indonesia. After a [thankfully] smooth trek through Immigration and Customs, we were met by our Business Manager Tim and were on our way to our quarters in Bandung. This will be our home for the next six months.

During the last few days, we've:

- Moved two times
- Begun daily language training
- Set up a house with most of the basics
- Hired a local neighbor to assist with security
- Made lots of contacts with the people in our kampung or local subdivision/neighborhood

The people around us have proven to be very friendly and even patient as we practice our rudimentary skills in Bahasa Indonesia. They seem to enjoy the fact that we're learning, and they're teaching. The kids have been extremely flexible and patient as well, even with the cold showers, blackouts, and very different foods.

Thank you for your continued prayers. In the next day or so we should have some other things posted online so you can share in our joys and challenges here (our current internet connection makes it difficult to stay in touch).

Cassie does her part to make new friends in our neighborhood. Somehow, people seem to like her even though she doesn't speak a word! She's been carried in more arms lately than any of us can count. What a great little ambassador!



The kids pose at our first stop in Bandung: the Hotel Concordia! What a blast of home even this far from St. Louis!



SELAMAT

Continued

Selamat datang di Bandung! (Indonesian for “Welcome to Bandung!”)

The Muslim Call to Prayer is sounding just outside my wide-open door. The temperature is in the high 80’s F. And for people in the US, it’s the middle of the night. That’s right: the Ferry Family has landed in Indonesia!

The kids endured 22 hours in the air, arriving in Singapore to sort out visa documents. While we were there, the whole family got sick and we needed to find doctors for Caleb and Cassandra. But on 22 May, we landed at the one-runway airport in Bandung, West Java, Indonesia. This will be home for us during the next six months while we attend language training and get adjusted to living in this society.

Thanks to friends at our language school, and the hard work of our Regional Business Manager, we were able to move into a house near the school which was large enough for our family. This house is located in a wonderful maze-like neighborhood called a *kampung*, and we love our neighbors. There are lots of kids for our kids to play with, and the adults enjoy having people around who are learning the language. They’re more than willing to help us practice, and endure our frequent mispronunciations and lack of vocabulary.

School is not easy; it’s four hours every day where the instructors teach in primarily all *Bahasa Indonesia*, and they constantly push us to use what we’ve learned and not revert to English. We get home and are just exhausted. But that’s the story for this whole transition. It’s been tough to be in a place where the language barrier is a wall between us and those around us. Everything is more difficult, even just getting groceries at the store or getting some towels for the house!

But our God is gracious and merciful, and He is faithful to His promises. He provides strength for each day, and forgiveness for when we fall. We have begun to recount our blessings each day at the dinner table, with each of us telling the others the one that meant the most that day.

As we settle in, please continue to pray for us. We miss our family, friends, and church terribly, and we still feel very isolated in this new culture, even as we take great joy in what our God is doing in our lives. Your partnership means even more at this time, knowing we’re not alone but part of a wonderful team, knit together by our Lord Jesus Himself.

Caleb (8 yrs old) continues to be a great help as we make this transition. He was a wonderful assistant during our airport travels in Hong Kong and Singapore, taking care of a whole cart of luggage. He was the first one to make a friend in the neighborhood.

Caitlin (4 yrs old) has been quite popular with her red hair, which makes her stand out in Indonesia. She’s always quick with a smile and hug, and seems to be picking up *Bahasa Indonesia* faster than anyone.

Carissa (nearly 2 yrs old) is also popular with her blonde hair, and outgoing personality. Her vocabulary continues to develop by leaps and bounds, and has become quite the singer. Now if we could only understand her songs!

Cassie (4 months old) is often our bridge into relationships. The Indonesian people are quite family-friendly, and love the fact that Cassie is carried around everywhere. There’s never a shortage of hands to hold her, and we’re starting to get used to complete strangers wanting to carry her around.

Prayers, Praises, and Thanksgiving

- * Thanksgiving for safe travels during our deployment!
- * Thanksgiving for all our supporters who have made this work possible!
- * For *ongoing* pledged support, that we might continue serving overseas according to our Lord’s will
- * That our gracious Lord Jesus would grant His wisdom and grace, that many would be blessed by the work we’re doing in Indonesia



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

Iowa District West, LCMS
Year 10, Issue 7, July 2014

Pastor Eric is Coming: Last month we received the wonderful news from Pastor Eric Moeller of Selma, Alabama that he has accepted our Call to serve as Pastor/Missionary to the Hispanic ministry in Storm Lake. Pastor Eric began his work in Storm Lake, both as Chaplain at the Tyson pork plant and in our Hispanic ministry, on June 30. He and his family came to Storm Lake on May 27-30 to search for a house to rent. It was so good for our congregation to meet the whole family, especially the children: Erika (18), Jennifer (4) and Jonathan (1). Because housing is so difficult to find in the fast growing town of Storm Lake, they decided to buy a home. And that was difficult too as the house they chose had only been on the market a short time and already had multiple offers. The problem is, they may not be able to move in until sometime in July. Pastor Eric will begin his work; and we will have his installation service in July when his family will be able to join us. We are planning the special bilingual installation at Grace Lutheran in Storm Lake. We hope to have a date soon. All are invited for this historic service of the celebration of our Hispanic ministry. Please pray for Pastor Eric and his family as they move across the country and for our Hispanic ministry during this exciting time of change

Walk for Life: Last month in Denison our Hispanic church participated in the Crawford County Right to Life "Life Chain," protesting the abortion of children in our country. We stood with out 40-50 fellow pro-life protestors including members of our Hispanic church. The signs we held said: "El Aborto Mata Ninos," "Abortion kills children." We are also working to organize a Hispanic Pro-Life group.

Summer Activities: We began our summer in Denison with our first summer tradition, a Garage Sale. Once again we were overwhelmed with donations of "treasures" and also by those who came to support and buy. As of this writing we raised more than \$850 with \$600 matched by Thrivent Financial, for a total of \$1,400. The funds will be used for scholarships for Hispanic children to attend Zion School and for our annual Hispanic retreat at Camp Okoboji in August. Thanks to all who helped and especially the Zion youth group who packed everything up after it was all over.

My Tyson Chaplaincy at the Plants in Denison and Storm Lake: We are in need of more workers in both Denison and Storm Lake. The summer time is a challenging time for the plants to fill positions with the necessary workers they need to prepare the meat that feeds our communities. Summer is often when we lose workers to construction jobs, to extended vacations to home countries, and for other reasons. At the same time it takes lots of time to train our new workers and for them to adjust to the jobs. We have to work especially hard to help the new workers. New folks are applying, literally from all over the world. They are eager to work. It is a wonderful opportunity for me to minister to so many people.

Summer Family Retreat: Our 10th annual Hispanic Family Retreat at Camp Okoboji will be held the weekend of August 8-10. Please invite any Hispanic families in the District to join us for family fun in a spiritual atmosphere. This year we will hear presentations from all four Hispanic pastors.

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ASK THE PASTOR

Q: Who made God?

During our VBS in June more than one kid asked me “Who made God?” It’s a fascinating question with a surprisingly simple answer (albeit a mind-stretching explanation). Let’s begin with the surprisingly simple answer: No one made God. God is self-existent. That means God has ALWAYS existed; He had no beginning and He will have no end. The psalmist reflects this when he writes, “from everlasting to everlasting you are God” (Psalm 90:2).

Now let’s stretch our minds as we dig deeper into the question. What we’re going to find is that the most reasonable explanation for reality as we know it is an eternal, self-existent God. To find out why let’s begin with nothing. Imagine absolute nothingness, as in the stuff rocks dream about. Imagine no God, no universe, no thing – nothing. If ever there was a point when there was absolutely nothing, what would there be today? This isn’t a trick question. If ever there was nothing, there would be nothing today.

But when we look around we see that there isn’t “nothing,” but many things. Therefore, “nothing” has never been absolute. Something, by necessity, has *always* existed. This is such a basic point (even the first and second graders in my VBS class who asked me who made God understood it), but it is challenged by many influential thinkers today who are desperate to get God out of the universe’s beginning. One influential author, professor, and philosopher has famously put his atheistic belief this way: the universe came “from nothing, by nothing, for nothing.”

Such a position flies in the face of common sense and elementary reason. G.K. Chesterton nailed it when he observed, “When a man ceases to believe in God he does not believe in nothing, he believes in almost anything.”

Take another example: I just finished a book by Thomas Nagel, a prominent atheist philosopher. In the book he admitted that the standard Darwinian explanation for life and consciousness is inadequate. Let that sink in: he called the Darwinian hypothesis wrong. So what answer did he offer for our origin? He acknowledged that Theism (belief in God) would explain it, but he bluntly admitted that he didn’t prefer that option. So, he suggested that life and consciousness were somehow built into matter, and that’s how life evolved and we became conscious. By rejecting the God hypothesis, this man had basically embraced a conscious-dirt hypothesis. Chesterton’s point holds. When man rejects God, he doesn’t reject belief; he accepts belief in almost anything (and much of it is just plain silly).

So let’s get back to nothing. Believing that “nothing” created everything, even if this view is espoused by a respected philosopher, is simply nonsense. “Nothing,” by definition, cannot create anything. It has no creative properties. Nothing (i.e. “no thing”) cannot bring forth something. Period.

Since we’ve established that something has existed forever, we must now settle on what sort of thing has always existed. Two basic options present themselves: *something* or *someone*. Either something, as in matter, or someone, as in a personal agent, has always existed.

If we settle on matter as eternally existent, we must conclude that matter (we’ll call it “stuff”) transformed itself from non-organized stuff to organized stuff, from non-living stuff to living stuff, from non-conscious stuff to conscious stuff, from non-personal stuff to personal stuff (i.e. persons made out of matter), even from non-god stuff to believing-in-god-stuff. In other words, we end up believing that order came from non-order, life came from non-life, consciousness came from non-consciousness, information came from non-information, purpose came from non-purpose, and mind came from non-mind.

This is simply contrary to everything we observe in reality. In fact, every law science has ever discovered and described flies in the face of such assertions.

Further (and this gets a little deep), the scientific laws of thermodynamics argue against the eternity of matter. Basically, these laws recognize that energy runs down and order decreases. If the universe was eternal, it would be at energy equilibrium and life wouldn't be possible. For example, imagine throwing a rock into a perfectly still pond. The rock introduces energy into a condition at equilibrium. The waves ripple outward for a long ways, but eventually the pond returns to equilibrium and absolute stillness. If our universe was eternal, the waves would have settled by now and the universe would be flat and lifeless.

Further still, outer space bears evidence of the universe's non-eternality. In exceedingly simple terms, the universe is expanding. It's stretching outward. Imagine coloring dots on a balloon and blowing it up. The dots stretch as the balloon expands. Add another dimension and you've got a picture of our universe. If you rewind the clock, you eventually get to a beginning point (when the balloon began to expand). And things with beginnings aren't eternal.

Dr. William Lane Craig, a world-revered Christian philosopher and apologist (defender of the faith) has famously fine-tuned this observation into the following argument for the universe's beginning and non-eternality:

1. Everything that begins to exist has a cause.
2. The universe began to exist.
3. Therefore, the universe has a cause.

Since the universe has been shown to be non-eternal, we can rule "stuff" out as the cause of all things. If "stuff" had a beginning, it cannot be the creator. This means that whatever caused the universe cannot be composed of stuff. It must be non-material.

Further, whatever caused the universe must be incredibly powerful and incredibly intelligent to produce the exceedingly fine-tuned universe that we see. Dr. John Polkinghorne, theoretical physicist, theologian, writer, and Anglican priest, famously put it, the universe is so finely tuned "It would be like

taking aim at a one-square-inch object at the other end of the universe twenty billion light years away and hitting it bull's eye."

Even more, whatever caused the universe must have also caused the staggeringly specified and complex information that we see written on the genetic code, and scientists have only ever observed one thing capable of producing information: intelligence. So thus far we know that this agent is a non-material source of power and intelligence. And intelligence resides in minds. So this agent must be an intelligent, powerful, non-material mind.

In addition (and to make this as simple as we can), this agent must be living, personal, and conscious, because we find ourselves existing among living, personal, and conscious beings, which (as the laws of science reflect) could only have come from another living, personal, and conscious being.

To summarize, the agent that caused the universe must be an unimaginably powerful, intelligent, non-material, personal, conscious, living Mind. There aren't too many candidates who meet these requirements. In fact, we can only conceive of one. The Bible names Him in its very first verse: "In the beginning God created..."

The Bible begins where generations of human thought and research is finally arriving. Astronomer, physicist, and cosmologist Dr. Robert Jastrow describes the situation, "For the scientist who has lived by his faith in the power of reason, the story ends like a bad dream. He has scaled the mountain of ignorance; he is about to conquer the highest peak; as he pulls himself over the final rock, he is greeted by a band of theologians who have been sitting there for centuries."

Want to ask a follow-up question or have a new question? Visit with Pastor Conner.

July Birthdays and Anniversaries @ Zion

1. Heather Adams
Nathan Jensen
Delores Kuhn
Judith Lee
Walter Noelck
Samantha Smith
2. Becki Ehlers
Brenna Hodne
Jessica Soll
4. Paige Saunders
5. Chelsea Page
6. Diane Henkelman
Janet Smith
7. Leonard Dammann
Lisa Drier
Valda Lamp
8. Matthew Weith
11. Olivia Beck
Jason Kienast
Jessica Kurth
Jordan Weller
12. Casey Karsten
Scott Rosener
Trisha Rosener
Clark Tibben
13. Arlene Bald
Dereck Hilsabeck
14. Stephanie Ahrenholtz
Gregory Conner
Bary Kienast
Duane Monson

15. Bill Bruhn
Jesse Weith
16. Dean Genzen
18. Joni Kienast
19. Bob Genzen
Rebecca Genzen
Brad Otto
20. Isaiah Brenes
21. Louise Bruhn
Kaylee Martin
22. Alle Jacobsen
Christopher Smith
23. Denise Christensen
Jill Saunders
24. Sophie Alexander
25. Nancy Roe
26. Sharon Mohr
Susan Schilling
27. Kevin Brus
Luella Mahnke
Ron Soll
28. Rita Saunders
Adam Vollstedt
30. Dewayne Buhr
Kathy Lage
Howard Roe
Natasha Shrimpton
31. Markus Neumann
Lyle Ranniger

HAPPY
ANNIVERSARY

1. Randy & Crystal Dreher
3. Warren & Sue Puck
5. Dennis & Michaela Chapman
8. Brian & Kathy Lage
9. Dan & Cheryl Kerkoff
12. Craig & Debbie Musfeldt
14. Glen & Arlene Kusel
16. Doug & Kate Greving
Todd & Shelly Gruhn
24. Gale & Linda Vinke
25. Robert & Diane Riggert
Ron & Sue Soll
29. Eric & Jodi Ramsey
Pastor Jonathan & Rebecca
Conner
31. Steve & Holly Borkowski
Chris & Mary Greving

Happy
Birthday

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

Congregational Servants

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

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Elder: LaVern Bald

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Frank Mohr, Lynn Kruse,
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Monica Christensen, Director

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Ryan Crawford, Eric Ramsey
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Don Lamb

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Joni Kienast, Laurene Meeves,
Kari Ranniger, Kathy Vollstedt

Ladies Guild:

Susie Schilling, President

Fellowship Club:

Russ Mohr, President

Choir:

Dr. Tom Ulrickson,
director

Children's Choir:

Susie Ulrickson,
Jill Arp



Men, Read This (Women, read it in secret)

Admit it men, we want to be manly. We want to be seen as competent, capable, and strong. But let's be honest, we are often paralyzed by uncertainty. We don't know what to do.

Overcome your paralysis and move into true manliness. Read this book: *The Silence of Adam* by Dr. Larry Crabb. I know you're thinking: "Read? A book? No thanks." But let's be blunt: if nothing changes, nothing will change. You will not grow as a man, you will not become manly, and you will not understand God's specific call for you as a man if you dig your heels in and continue to loathe in self-chosen ignorance.

Read this book.

It's short, powerful, profound, and truly life-changing. And it's cheap. You can buy it online (or ask Pastor Conner to help you get a copy) for under \$5.

