Holy Week Worship

Holy Week Helps

Holy Week this year will be unlike any Holy Week we have ever experienced. As of the printing of this newsletter, we are not sure whether we'll be able to gather together to observe and celebrate this special week (stay tuned for updates on this!) If we are, great! If not, we most certainly will, as inviduals and families, observe and celebrate Holy Week. Whether the Church gathers coporately (as a body) or whether we gather individually in homes and families, we remain the Church and we will worship! In order to help you, Zion's elders, secretary, tech experts, and I have prepared the following resources.

- Brief descriptions of the days of Holy Week (special thanks to lcms.org and the resources available there) (included – page 2)
- Orders of worship for Palm Sunday, Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, and Easter Sunday. These will be mailed to each household for individual and family use.
- Selected hymns to sing, speak, and meditate on. These will be included in the mailing
- An order of worship for Palm Sunday for our live stream / drive-up service.
- A meditation for Easter Sunday. This is included in this newsletter on page 3.
- Live streamed services on the appointed holy days. You can find these on Zion's Facebook page. You can access this by logging on to Facebook and searching for Zion Lutheran Church, Manning, Iowa or through the Zion app (Download "The Church App" and choose "Zion") and click on "links/blog" on the bottom and then click on "Zion's Facebook Page." You may also find Zion's Facebook page through the links tab of our website (www.zionmanning.com). Or, call for help!

Whether we get to gather in person or not, we will celebrate our Lord's work for us!

Why do we celebrate Lent for 40 days?

Don't forget what Lent is all about! It is a time when we are reminded of what Jesus gave up for us, and a time when we look forward to and prepare for His death and resurrection!

We celebrate Lent for six weeks, or 40 days, as we remember Christ's temptation in the wilderness in the Gospel of Matthew. There **Jesus was without food** for 40 days.

We remember the temptation of **the Israelites in the desert** after the Lord had delivered them from Egypt. This lasted 40 years.

Finally, we can remember the story of **Noah and his family.** After 40 days and 40 nights of rain, the Lord delivered them as He promised.

During these 40 days of Lent, we remember God's faithfulness to His people and how His faithfulness is complete in Jesus, our Savior. Jesus remains faithful to us, always being where He promises to be: in His Word and Sacraments. Wow! What a Savior!

Why do we celebrate "Palm Sunday"?

The Sunday before Jesus was crucified by the people, they honored and adored Him as their Lord and king with palm branches. We remember this as the beginning of Christ's bitter walk to the cross.

Why did the people honor and adore Jesus on Palm Sunday and then kill Him on Good Friday?

When Jesus rode into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday, the people began to praise and honor Him as their king. They believed Him to be a powerful leader who would overthrow the Roman government and restore Israel. When Jesus did not do this, the people wanted Him crucified. You and I know what kind of a king He is. He's a king who came to die for the sins of His people. Wow! What a king!

If all Jesus had to do was die, then why is Easter such a big deal?

Easter is a very important day. Easter is the day that we celebrate Jesus' resurrection from the dead.

After Jesus was crucified, His disciples were very sad. It seemed like their God and friend had been defeated and killed. They had forgotten that Jesus told them that He would rise from the dead. They must have thought Mary Magdelene was crazy when she told them that Jesus had appeared to her at the tomb where He was buried. But her story was true! Jesus was alive! He had risen from the dead!

Later, Jesus appeared to His disciples many times to prove it. And that's just what He did, *He proved it!* By His resurrection, He proved to the world that He was victorious over death and paid for our sins completely. Now, the first words you hear in church on Easter Sunday are: "The Lord is risen. He is risen indeed! Alleluia!"

Why do we have a week called "Holy Week"?

Why would we refer to a week as being holy? The word "holy" means that it is from God. That's why we call the Bible "holy." It isn't just any book. It is God's living Word given to us for our salvation! The same goes for Holy Week. This is "God's Week." This is the week in the Church Year when Jesus actually paid for our sins and won our salvation!

Which days are in Holy Week?

There are particular days during Holy Week that are extra special. During Holy Week we celebrate **Palm Sunday,** when Jesus went to Jerusalem and people celebrated His arrival; **Maundy Thursday,** when Jesus instituted the Lord's Supper; **Good Friday,** when Jesus died on the cross; and **Holy Saturday,** when we await His resurrection on Easter Sunday!

Changed

Changed. This word has captivated my mind for years. Paul uses it in his masterful treatment of the resurrection in 1 Corinthians 15. Here's what he writes:

> Behold! I tell you a mystery. We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be ***changed***, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we shall be ***changed*** (15:51-52).

Let's consider for a moment the magnitude of the mystery and of the hope that are smashed into this one word. In Greek it's one ridiculously long word ("we shall all be changed" is the translation of one word!) that is rendered in the passive tense. In other words, it's something that we are going to experience, something that is going to happen to us – not something that we will intitiate or expedite. In the resurrection we are going to be changed. Yes, we will still be ourselves, but we will be ourselves *changed*. We will retain our identity, but something is going to be different and better. And this difference is what has captivated me and filled me with hope.

Before we discuss the difference, though, let's back up and talk about why it is necessary that we are changed. In verse 50 Paul writes, "Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable." This is a vital point. Paul is not – repeat, IS NOT – saying that we have to get rid of our physicality to enter God's Kingdom. He's not dissing creation. You have to read the rest of the letter to see this, but Paul is addressing flesh and blood in its fallen nature. He's saying, *as things are now, as people infected through and through with sin and the stink of death, we are not fitted for God's eternal and glorious kingdom.* We need to be changed.

This is a little like feeling the need to change for church after chores or after a particularly dirty task. Something in you tells you to change, to clean up as best you can to be in God's house. But we all know this sort of change is merely cosmetic. A shower and a change of clothes can improve our outward appearance (and our smell!), but they can do nothing for our sin. The stain is too deep, the stink is too strong. We can't get them out. And how many of us have tried desperately to get them out! We punish ourselves. We berate ourselves. We seek relief in busyness or distraction or even in sin itself. As we are – stained by sin – we cannot enter the kingdom. We need to be changed.

And that's what Scripture promises! In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet, we are going to be changed! We are going to be fitted for the kingdom! This will be done to us and for us.

But what will it be like? Does Scripture give us any idea? Yes! It gives us quite a bit. It doesn't give us everything – Paul still calls it a *mystery* – but it does smash great hope into our coming change. In verses 42-44 Paul describes a few characteristics of this coming change. He writes,

> So is it with the resurrection of the dead. What is sown is perishable; what is raised is

> imperishable. It is sown in dishonor; it is raised in glory. It is sown in weakness; it is raised in power. It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body.

Let's take each descriptor in turn. Notice how Paul is using a farming analogy. He's characterizing the body as a seed. Farmers place perishable seeds in the ground and then they wait for life to spring from it. Paul is saying that the perishable bodies we bury in the ground will be raised as imperishable bodies. They will be changed! Our bodies will be immune to death!

I can scarcely imagine a greater promise. We live daily in death's shadow. It lingers over our goodbyes. It lurks behind our diagnoses. It creeps closer as the years pass us by. It tears families apart, divides property and possessions, and leaves us lost and wounded. But won't always be this way because we will be changed! We will be raised in imperishable bodies, immune to death!

Second, Paul describes the body placed into the ground as being "sown in dishonor." What does he mean? He means that death dishonors the body. Death steals dignity and nobleness and life from our bodies. We've all mourned beside the casket of someone we love and we've all seen what death does to us. Funeral directors go to great lengths to honor our dead loved ones' bodies, but they cannot make the body look alive. A dead body is different. It lacks life and no makeup can change that. Death dishonors the body. But the resurrection is going to change that!

Paul says that God will raise our dead and dishonored bodies in glory. I struggle to communicate the immensity of this promise. *Glory* is the overwhelming effect of God's presence, what I've called "the *wow* of God." In the Old Testament, Israel saw God's glory descend of Mt. Sinai and they shivered in fear and awe. Isaiah encountered God's glory and fell to his face in terrified amazement. Peter, James, and John experienced God's glory in Christ's transfiguration and they struggled for words. And, Paul says, our bodies are going to be raised in this glory. We are going to shine with the glory of God. In man's fallen state, God's glory is too much to bear. This is why fear was always connected to man's experience of God's glory. We're not fitted to live in God's glory yet. We need to be changed. And that's what Scripture promises! We are going to be changed. We are going to be fitted for God's glory because we're going to be shot through with it.

WE ARE GOING TO BE FITTED FOR GOD'S GLORY BECAUSE WE'RE GOING TO BE SHOT THROUGH WITH IT.

Third, Paul describes the dead body as being sown in weakness. This is a weakness that we experience already in our daily living. We get tired. As our bodies age, they slow down. Things we used to do with ease – bounding up two and three stairs at a time, contact sports, sledding, skating, etc. – now are impossible or require great effort. Death steadily steals power from us until it leaves us unable even to open our eyes or take a breath. Utterly weak.

But, Paul says that we're going to be raised in power! I can scarcely imagine this! I've grown so accustomed to my own weaknesses and to the weaknesses many of you experience that to imagine having God's power pulsing through my veins is almost beyond my ability to comprehend. Malachi describes this power with the image of calves bursting out of their stalls with great leaping and jumping (4:2). Leaping and jumping in the power of God! What a promise!

Finally, Paul says that the natural body will be raised a spiritual body. This spiritual body isn't what most people think. In our culture, *spiritual* is the opposite of *physical*. Such was not the case for Paul. So, he's not saying that the phsyical body will be raised as a non-physical body. For Paul, the opposite of *spiritual* was *natural*. So, Paul writes earlier in 1 Corinthians, "The natural person does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are folly to him, and he is not able to understand them because they are spiritually discerned" (2:14).

Do you see how Paul contrasts the spiritual person with the natural person? So, when Paul talks about the natural body being raised as a spiritual body, he's contrasting what has animated or empowered the body. As things are now, we are empowered by the human spirit, and this spirit is fallen and attracted to sin. In the resurrection, however, we will be fully empowered and animated by the Holy Spirit. We will be changed.

This is cause for great hope. Think through your life. You have your regular sins, the sins you return to over and over again. Maybe it's anger. Maybe it's lust. Maybe it's apathy. Maybe it's gluttony Maybe it's a loose tongue. When you're stressed, you turn to your sin. When you're anxious, you turn to your sin. When you're upset, you turn to your sin. When you're afraid, you turn to your sin. It's shameful and you feel it deeply.

But imagine waking up tomorrow totally free from sin's lure! Totally! Imagine if it didn't even tempt you. Imagine that freedom! That's what Paul is saying. We are going to be fully and completely empowered by the Holy Spirit and sin will not tempt us anymore. We are going to be changed!

We are going to be fully and completely empowered by the Holy Spirit and sin will not tempt us anymore. We are going to be changed!

And, Paul says, it's going to happen "in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye…" It's going to be instantaneous, almost faster than we can perceive. We will be changed. And when this happens, Paul says that we're going to taunt death! He writes,

> When the perishable puts on the imperishable, and the mortal puts on immortality, then shall come to pass the saying that is written:
>
> "Death is swallowed up in victory."
> "O death, where is your victory?
> O death, where is your sting?" (15:54-55).

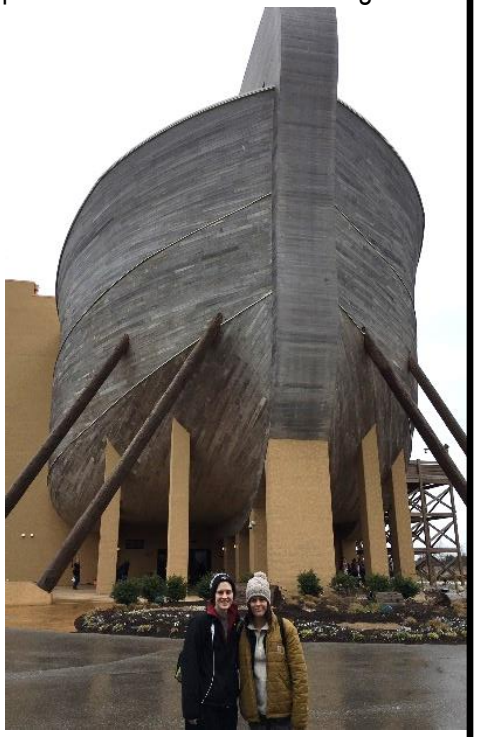
When this change happens, when we stand in imperishable, glorified, powerful, Spirit-empowered bodies, we will taunt death: "Where's your victory now? Where's your sting now? Where's all your boasting now? You've got nothing now!"

This is why Paul is moved to praise: "Thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ" (15:57). This victory is more than Jesus' resurrection from the dead; it means our resurrection; it means our change. All of this is wrapped up in the church's Easter celebration. And, whether we're able to celebrate Easter in person, or whether we must maintain our distance for yet a while longer, Christ's victory is ours! We will be changed! – Pastor Conner

ARK ENCOUNTER® CREATION MUSEUM. Prepare to believe.

"Reinforced the fact that creation/Biblical worldview is the only truth that can explain our existence." – Jeff Hargens

37 people from Manning, Manilla, Arcadia, Westside, Vail, and Center Point. We visited the Ark Encounter & Creation Museum in Kentucky. The Ark Encounter has a 500+ ft. long replica of Noah's Ark.



Speaking Truth Into Anxiety

For the last couple weeks, I've been streaming a morning prayer at 7:30 a.m. on Zion's Facebok page. On March 25, I offered a prayer for those suffering with anxiety. In 36 hours, it had been viewed over 800 times. Clearly it struck a cord with many people. For all people, but especially for some, anxiety is a powerfully gripping emotion. While all experience it at different points in their lives, some endure it daily. It can tie stomachs in knots, aggrivate blood pressure, imprison thoughts, interrupt sleep, or just lurk meanacingly in the shadows waiting to pounce. It's an ugly, mean thing.

Somewhere in the emotional mayhem is this thought: *I'm not in control*. And this thought/fear/disquieting realization is stoked by a litany of unsettling questions, questions that have been exacerbated and intensified by COVID-19:

- *What if I lose my job?*
- *What if I/my loved one gets sick?*
- *What if I mess up?*
- *What if I forget something?*
- *What if I do something stupid?*
- *What if I/my loved one dies?*
- *What if I never get better?*

No doubt, you can add your unsettling questions to the list. We'll address them momentarily. First, though, let's address the control. If there's any lie that has deceived our age, it's this one: we are in control. After all, there is so much we are seemingly able to control:

- We can set the temperature to our personal comfort level through our thermastat.
- We can adjust the oven to the precise baking temperature.
- We can nearly effortlessly direct 2,000 lb+ vehicles with the turn of a wheel.
- We can send messages around the world instantaneously.
- We can order anything from nearly anywhere with a few clicks online.

We control it all.

But it's illusory. The book of Ecclesiastes, as we shared a few months ago, conveys the truth about reality (as it puts it, "life under the sun"). The English renders it *vanity*, but the Hebrew word, *hevel*, means *vapor* or *breath*. Like vapor/breath, life is enigmatic and illusive. The moment you try to wrap your fingers around it, it escapes you. We are not in control of life. As Ecclesiastes teaches, time, chance, or death ***will*** rend control from us… all of us. There are no exceptions.

We are not in control.

We are finite. We are mortal. We are limited. Part of this is the nature of being a creature and not the Creator (something the wisdom literature of Scripture – Ecclesiastes, Job, and Proverbs – emphasizes repeatedly). Part, however, is due to the fallen condition of the world. "Life under the sun" is beset by sin and its curse and we cannot free ourselves from it. We need a liberator. And that's what we have in Jesus. And praise God for our liberator!

But what about our questions? Are we to ignore them (as if such a thing was even possible!)? No. We cannot ignore them. Nor can we allow them to take up residence in our minds. They are unwelcome houseguests making mayhem in the living spaces of our mind. So, what do we do? Say them out loud, either to yourself so that you can hear them, or to a trusted, mature Christian. You

need to bring them out into the open. Bringing them out into the open will allow you to speak truth into them. Don't just think them; say them out loud.[1]

So, what if you lose your job? What if you or your loved one gets sick? What if you mess up? What if…? Ask the question out loud. What if…?

Now, let's answer: You could lose property and/or money. You might look bad. You could lose friends. Your spouse might die. You could lose control. It would be bad. It would be hard. It would be devasting. It would be sad. You wouldn't like it. Your life could be changed for the rest of your years in this age.

And…

God's promises would still be true. Jesus would still be resurrected and reigning. And Jesus would still be our Savior. Scripture declares,

> Neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord (Rom. 8:38-39).
>
> [We know] that he who raised the Lord Jesus will raise us also with Jesus and bring us with you into his presence (2 Cor. 4:14).
>
> But our citizenship is in heaven, and ***from*** it we await a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, who will transform our lowly body to be like his glorious body, by the power that enables him even to subject all things to himself (Phil. 3:20-21).
>
> And he who was seated on the throne said, "Behold, I am making all things new" (Rev. 21:5).

Speak these into your anxiety. Don't just think them. Say them out loud. Hear the promises. These are true. These are real. These are permanent. These are ***yours*** in Jesus. Everything else can and will be taken away from you through time, chance, and/or death. This isn't meant to be a downer. Yes, it's a sobering reality, but it's one we absolutely must acknowledge daily.[2] This is the nature of life under the sun in a world cursed by sin and death. And this is why God sent a Savior! This is why God established a Church. He is specifically gathering a people to hear His promises, to hear what is real, to hear what is permanent.

Does this mean your anxiety will go away? Not necessarily. You still live in a sin-cursed world, don't you? Life's uncertainties aren't going to go away and you aren't going to get control as things are now. You may find it helpful to visit with a medical professional or a counselor as we journey through this fallen age. Anxiety will be with us so long as this age of sin and death remain… but only that long. When Christ, the Savior we're awaiting from Heaven, comes, we will be free! This is real. This is true. Speak this truth into your anxiety and eagerly watch for your Savior. He's coming here. Come, Lord Jesus! – Pastor Conner

[1] This is one of the reasons it's so valuable to read Scripture out loud, and why it exhorts us to dedicate ourselves to the public reading of Scripture (1 Tim. 4:13). The Word is not meant simply to be read (although this is good!); it's meant to be heard out loud.

[2] This doesn't mean we should become nihilists despairing of meaning in life. Instead, acknowledging this reality helps us accept and enjoy the good gifts of God while we have them, knowing that the permanence we desire is found nowhere but God alone.

Continued from last month…

A new battalion of Allied soldiers come up to the farmstead. Two soldiers and an officer help Schofield move Blake's body. Blake is laid to rest unceremoniously by a shed. Interestingly, Blake like Christ does not have a grave. Blake must borrow the land of this abandoned farm as a resting place; Christ borrowed Joseph of Arimathea's tomb. Sadly, great sacrifice deserving of an honorable sendoff is missing for both Blake and Christ. The world little notes an unassuming corporal's sacrifice, and the world is still to a great degree indifferent to Jesus' ultimate sacrifice. The 12 Disciples miss the significance of Jesus' death until after the Resurrection.

Traveling with this new battalion, Schofield manages to enter a bombed-out city occupied by the Germans. Being chased by Germans, Schofield manages to hide in the humble house of a French refugee. She has found an abandoned baby and finds herself unable to feed the child. She vitally needs milk in order to give the baby life. Fascinatingly, Schofield had retrieved milk from the abandoned farm just earlier. He hands his canteen over; the baby will live. What's so striking is the comparisons you can make between this scene and Jesus at the well and the Samaritan woman (John 4). Jesus claims that He alone has the water that can give true life; this Samaritan woman needs to "drink" the water Jesus has to offer -- that alone will restore her. Only milk will nourish the baby, and Schofield has it.

Leaving the young French refugee, Schofield runs into the early morning light. Germans sprint after him from left and right. Bullets whiz past Schofield's head. Bombed out buildings burn in the background. For all intents and purposes this is Schofield's hell. But this isn't the worst of it, because Schofield jumps into a raging river in order to flee from his pursuers. In the Bible, water is a chaotic, destructive force (e.g. the Flood). The choppy water flings Schofield to and fro; it's destroying him. He's a dead man. This is symbolized by the fact that his river journey ends at a log which has served as a dam of sorts, catching other lifeless bodies. Schofield literally climbs over bodies in order to get out of the water. While the water has claimed the lives of other refugees and soldiers, Schofield lives in spite of his "death"; in the same way, death has claimed countless lives, including Christ's. However, the Father raised Him back to life. Jesus' mission continued after His Resurrection from the dead, and the same holds true for Schofield.

Schofield enters a clearing where a single soldier serenades a company which is preparing to debark for battle. Schofield comes to find out that these are some of the soldiers he was sent to save. There is an urgency in Schofield to find the field commander before these men head out to fight; maybe the order to attack can be countermanded and these men can live. Either way, the urgency to save these men is palpable and there is no time to waste.

Schofield dashes through lines and lines of men in order to deliver the stand-down orders to the commander in charge. At one point, Schofield recklessly puts his life in harm's way by crossing over the trenches. Again, he is willing to sacrifice his life for the sake of these men in the trenches. Reaching the commander, Schofield delivers the news and the attack is canceled. Interestingly, the

commander is not all that appreciative for the orders Schofield delivers. He most of all should appreciate Schofield and Blake's sacrifice, since he is aware of the life that is on the line, but he's indifferent at best (perhaps even angry). The Pharisees should have understood what Jesus was accomplishing; they were the religious elite, but they hated Jesus and what He stood for. When Jesus died the only one who "got it" so to speak was a Roman Centurion -- a religious outsider. While the commanding officer dismisses Schofield without praise, a lower ranking officer congratulates Schofield (he "gets" it).

There is even more to say about this film like the fact that throughout the early part of the movie Blake chastises Schofield for trading a war medal for a bottle of wine. This harkens yet again to Philippians 2 and the idea that Christ traded in his status and privilege as the Son of GOD in order to take on flesh to be a servant. We take this for granted, but it is mind-boggling to think that GOD became man (that's offensive in some religions). We could also say more about Schofield and Blake's brother's encounter.

Suffice it to say though, this film can, if you let it, enhance how you see Jesus. Did the writer intend to flesh out Christian overtones? Probably not. But the fact that this story mirrors the story of Jesus so well goes to show that we internally want the story of a Savior giving up His life for many to be true, and that the best stories are great only because they borrow from the greatest, true story ever lived out (and is currently being lived out). -- Pastor Johnson

Supporting the Mission and Ministry of Zion!

Zion's Endowment Fund

Started over 25 years ago, this fund has supported and continues to support special yearly projects at Zion

Zion's Legacy Fund

Started recently, this fund allows givers to perpetuate their gift to Zion's operating budget.

Zion Preschool's Endowment Fund

Started recently, this fund ensures Zion preschool will be a Christ-centered, loving preschool in Manning for years to come.

You can perpetuate mission and ministry Zion by giving the following:

House	Checking/savings
Gov. Bonds	Life Insurance
Annuities	Securities
Mutual Funds	IRA
Bank CDs	Machinery
Farmland	Rental Property
401K	403b
Grain/livestock	

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

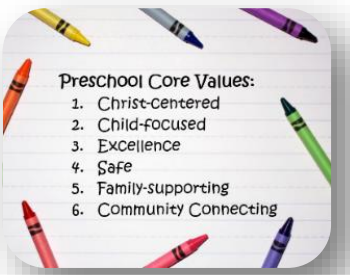
Preschool Praises for March

March has been full of surprises, but we did manage to get some learning and fun mixed into it!

The first week we focused on Dr. Seuss, rhyming, and Dad. The children enjoyed making invitations for Dad's night, learning that the letter D is for dinosaur and beginning the number 1 for their number books. On Thursday the children had a special treat of getting to watch a Green Eggs and Ham cartoon! During Jesus Time we discussed when Jesus healed 10 men who had Leprosy. This was a terrible disease that caused people to be kicked out of town (social distancing) even away from their families! Huh...seems like we can sympathize a little with how they must have felt, minus the pain of sores on our bodies! Jesus was not afraid of them and healed them. One man came back and worshiped Jesus in thanksgiving. We talked about what we are thankful to Jesus for. Pastor spoke to the children about Nicodemus' secret meeting with Jesus. Jesus explained that "God so loved the world that he gave his son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life".

Dad's night was a success and the children had fun making and painting bird houses and playing games with their Dad's. They finished the night by enjoying cupcakes and ice cream! We are so thankful for and proud of our family outreach when we have Mom's Night, Grandparent's Day, and Dad's Night.

The second week we learned about the rainbow, letter R, counting and shapes. The children also got to enjoy painting big pictures of whatever they wanted; horses, mom, onion houses and the like! The children had a special treat of getting to watch a short episode of Cat in the Hat about Rainbows and learned the Rainbow song that goes through the colors of the rainbow in order. For Jesus Time we discussed how Jesus loved children and rebuked the apostles when they wouldn't let the children come to him. Jesus wants everyone to trust in him as children trust in their parents to care for their every need, we too should trust in Him to care for our needs. Pastor taught the children about when Jesus healed the blind man by making mud with his spit and dust and then smeared it on the man's eyes. He then told him to wash his face in a pool and when he did, he could see! The Pharisees didn't believe that Jesus had healed the man and kicked him out of the temple! Jesus had not only opened this man's physical eyes, but also his spiritual ones as he found him and reviled who He was to the man. The Pharisees may have been physically able to see, but were spiritually blind.



Unfortunately, we didn't have the final two weeks of class due to Corona Virus and schools being closed. We had to put our Parent/Teacher Conferences on hold until we know when we will be coming back to school. It is hard not being able to see their smiling faces in class, but we sent out an email with ideas of activities to do at home and a card to each child including a coloring page and some stickers. We are praying that we will be able to return to school the week following Easter, but everything is up in the air at the moment. Thank you for your support and prayers!

Saved to Serve,
Mrs. Gore & Mrs. Nemitz

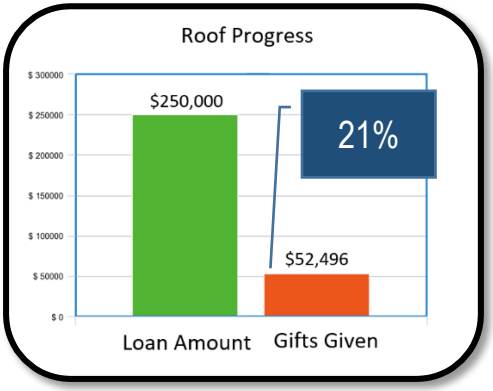
What a joy to see dads playing with their children! Thanks, Zion Preschool for hosting Dad's Night!

VBS Rainforest Exploration

Journey to a Rainforest—VBS, June 1-5

Do you have summer travel plans? Children of the congregation and community are encouraged to explore a RAINFOREST. With the theme "Jesus Leads the Way," several of the VBS Biblical explorations will have rain/water contexts: the flood; Jesus calling fishermen as disciples; the resurrected Jesus appearing to the disciples on the seashore.

Put the exploration on your family calendar. Begin to invite grandchildren and neighborhood children. Sessions will again be held each morning. Many volunteers (crafts, snacks, recreation, guides) will again be needed to assist with the exploration. If you can help, share you availability and interest with Pastor or Diane Riggert or Pastor Andrew Johnson. See you in the rainforest!



Feeling separated from Zion and/or Trinity? If you have internet, watch us through our Facebook page where you'll find daily prayers, Bible studies, worship services, and more.

Don't have the internet? We can mail you copies of the sermon and/or DVDs of the services. Call for details (Zion: 655-2352 / Trinity: 654-3031).

Ladies Guild of Zion
March 11, 2020

Pastor Conner spoke about the public reading of scripture and the importance hearing it regularly. That is why when we gather together in a worship setting we hear words read from the Old Testament, the epistles and words selected from the four gospels. Christian Life Chairman, Margaret Backhaus turned our attention to "Time Management". We were encouraged to "manage ourselves" by tackling the most critical tasks first.

President Roe called the meeting to order in the name of the Triune God. The League Pledge was recited. Roll call was answered by 15 members with something that gave them simple pleasure. The secretary read the minutes of the previous meeting. They were approved as read. Correspondence included notes from the families of Lucille Ranniger, Donna Schmarzo, and Marlene Radtke. The mite box was passed and the mite box prayer recited. Treasurer Mary Grimm reported a balance of $561.63. Kitchen treasurer Darlene Vollstedt reported a balance of $2,039.63.

Old business: President Roe gave the guild information about the costs of catering funerals. There was discussion about a written guideline to be presented to the funeral home about what the guild would serve. No action was taken. Camp Okoboji sent requests for support by our redeeming cans for camp, or providing a theme basket to be auctioned, or supporting a grocery shower. It was moved by Cynthia Genzen that we send $50.00 to be used as camp chooses. The motion was seconded and carried.

New business: We sent $25.00 to the church library in memory of former member Donna Schmarzo. Quilts for the quilt auction to be held at Camp Okoboji will be sent with Pastor Conner. There will be no bingo held at Accura in March. The spring rally will be held on April 24th at Coon Rapids beginning at 9:30. Gary Thies will be the speaker. Graduates breakfast is due to be held on May 17th. Plans are underway.

President Roe gave a report on the zone board meeting held on March 5th. Much of it concerned the LWML convention. A written report was given to each member. The names of the two delegates and alternates are to be in by May 1st. The meeting at Mission Central is scheduled for September 19th. The fall zone rally is in Arcadia on September 27th at 3:00 P.M.

The meeting was adjourned with the Lord's Prayer and the Table Prayer. Hostesses for the day were Nancy Opperman and Audrey Roe. Serving for April will be Connie Ahrendsen and Susan Schilling.
Sue Puck, secretary

Monthly Afternoon Communion Service at Zion

Is 9:00 a.m. on Sundays too early for you? Does your body cooperate better in the afternoon? Zion now offers a Thursday afternoon Communion service every month especially for you, but any and all are invited. Our next service is scheduled for **Thursday, April 19 at 1:30 p.m.** We'll gather in the nave and then welcome worshipers to remain afterwards for a time of fellowship.

SERVING THE LORD

ALL OVER ASIA

NEWS FROM THE FERRY FAMILY

Lent 2020

The current struggles with the Novel Coronavirus are not so novel to us… Asia has been dealing with this since late 2019, when it originated just across the Taiwan Strait from where we live. But because it's gotten so much more universal lately, things have certainly taken on a whole different flavor in the last few weeks. We are joining so many of you in limiting our exposure, and our gatherings with others.

Of course, we who live deployed are no strangers to working from home. Remote meetings over Skype, Zoom, or the like are commonplace for us, and are sometimes the only connection we have with our LCMS colleagues. Our temperatures are constantly being screened in airports and public places, and people wearing surgical masks are commonplace: it's simply considered polite if you have a cough or cold. After all, people in this part of the world learned some difficult lessons from the SARS epidemic some years ago.

But with the recent escalation to pandemic status, things have begun to change for all of us, just like for you. Our LCMS leadership has placed a temporary moratorium on international travel. So the trips I had planned to visit our LCMS Asia team and partners are on hold indefinitely. The Ferry Family had been planning a trip back to the USA this summer to visit our congregational partners and supporters. But due to this current situation, that trip is also on indefinite hold. Gatherings and events are being cancelled all over. Thankfully, the Ferry Family and all our LCMS Asia colleagues are healthy and well. A few have returned to the US until things settle down, but most are sheltering in place. We await eagerly the day when things have abated, and we can resume life with a new version of "normal."

We are utterly confident, however, in the midst of these uncertain times. We know that this is nothing compared to the great storms the Christian Church has weathered in the past. And we have the sure and certain hope that Christ has died, Christ is risen, Christ will come again. We belong to Him because He has claimed us in the waters of our baptism, and nothing can take from us the victory He has won and given to us as a gift. And even in the midst of social distancing, He has come near to us, and brought us together with each other as fellow forgiven, redeemed children of the Father. To God be the Glory

Congratulations and Happy Birthday to two of our girlies who celebrated birthdays in February… Cassandra turned six years old, and helped Mom to make her own birthday cake and decorate it. "Cassie" has a personality that is barely contained by her little body, and enjoys learning to read. She takes Chinese classes every day during the week, and says she wants to learn how to play the harmonica someday. Charlotte turned two years old, and really didn't care how her cake was decorated… she just dove into it! She started joining her older sisters in Chinese classes, and has been building quite a vocabulary in various languages: English, Chinese, Indonesian (the language of her birth place!), and even some German her Opa was teaching her.

PANAMÁ NEWS

NEWS FROM THE GAUTHIER FAMILY

For the first time in two years, the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Panamá hosted a Luther Academy conference. Luther Academy provides continuing theological education courses in intensive formats to strengthen and assists pastors and leaders throughout churches in Latin America and around the world. Rev. Carlos Schumann taught the intensive on Ecclesiology helping the Panamanian church understand what the Church is, how she does what she does, and why that is important. 10 pastors and leaders from four of the congregations participated in the conference enjoying study and fellowship with each other. Pastor Dan McMiller, executive director for the Office of International Mission was also present for the conference. This was a special surprise as Pr. McMiller served as a LCMS missionary in Panamá from 1999-2003 helping plant the congregations in Los Andes and Sorá as well as training and ordaining Pastor Patricio Mora. In the coming months I will be teaching a more abbreviated version of this course in the various congregations.

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The roof of the parsonage and ministry center has been completely removed. This was a tedious process that took about 2.5 weeks because the terra cotta tiles that were in good shape (there were thousands) were carefully collected and stacked for resale. Then the plywood, treated lumber and trusses were removed which was also a slow process as many had rotted away over the last 80 years of enduring tropical weather and termites. Over the next few weeks, metal trusses will be installed to give the roof shape before being covered with zinc sheets with a terra cotta shape and color. Please continue to pray for a smooth progress of the project and no rain! In Christ, Brian, Amanda, Ezra & Aviva

Please Pray:

- Good progress on the roof project.
- Yisel (Sorá) had a baby, but is suffering complications.
- Mari, mother to Miguel (Balboa), who is having health issues.

Give Thanks for:

- A wonderful Luther Academy Conference (Feb 23-25)
- Good partnerships with congregations and organizations through the Panamá foro.

PANAMÁ NEWS

NEWS FROM THE GAUTHIER FAMILY

Friends in Christ,

No more than 12 hours after my last newsletter was sent to you saying that there were no confirmed cases of Covid-19 in Panamá, the first case was registered. In the last 10 days, 137 cases have been confirmed. Panamá has closed its borders to everyone except Panamanians and those with residency and last night the president signed an act suspending all international flights (departures and arrivals - beginning Sunday, March 22 at 11:59pm) for the next 30 days. Panamá has effectively closed itself off from the world. There is a country-wide curfew (9pm-5am), limits for how many people are allowed in grocery stores, schools have been "digital" since March 11, most gathering places have been closed, and beginning today there is a "sanitary fence" around the capital and surrounding provinces to prevent the further spread of the virus to the interior provinces as well as the mandatory closure of all business for the next 30 days (not including hospitals, supermarkets, and pharmacies). What many of you are beginning to see in your various corners of the United States is our reality.

That being said, we are healthy and are doing well. As far as I know, all of our church members are healthy and safe in their homes. I was at the supermarket yesterday and I am happy to report that there are no shortages of food (or toilet paper!). Many folks are heeding the government's "Quédate en casa" (stay in your home) warning to prevent further infection. I am working with our pastors and church leaders to provide spiritual care "digitally". While this is obviously not the ideal way to do ministry, it is our best option for the moment. We are recording sermons, devotions, and Bible studies. One of our pastors is playing and recording hymns to be shared by social media. So while we may be stuck in our homes, we have certainly not stopped working to share the Gospel of Jesus with the church and community.

I want to encourage you all in these uncertain times as well. Be informed, fact-check what you read before you share it, and listen to what your government and health officials advise. God gave us our governments for our care and protection. While we are to listen to them as the 4th commandment teaches us, we listen to them also for the love of our neighbor. Many have shared on the news that they did not know they had the virus but have tested positive (presumably having shared the infection unknowingly). Take care of yourselves and your families. Find joy in the opportunity to spend some time together, albeit necessitated by a crisis.

But above all, take heart and do not lose hope. Our Lord is still in control (Ps 24:1). He does not abandon us in times of trials and tribulations. I am comforted by the words of the author to the Hebrews: *Since then we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God, let us hold fast to our confession. For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin. Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need* (4:14-16). Jesus came for you. Jesus suffered and died on the cross for you and to pay for your sin. Jesus forgives you. Jesus rose to new life for you. We do not need to live like Jesus is not in control. Even in these scary times, Jesus still abides with you, holds you in his hands, and sustains you with his mercy and grace. From afar we will continue to hold you and your loved ones in our prayers. The Lord's peace be with you and your families.

In Christ, Brian, Amanda, Ezra, and Aviva

Amigos en Cristo

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

April 2020

Our Hispanic ministry at Amigos en Cristo meets at Zion Lutheran in Denison. For 20 years we have had a wonderful partnership with this special mission minded church. Zion is a large congregation that supports a Lutheran school from Pre-School through 8th grade. The church also faithfully supports our Hispanic mission. Zion also allows their church to be used by a Sudanese group for worship on Sundays. Late last year Zion discovered severe damage to the structure of the Sanctuary. So worship services have been held in the school gym until a decision is made for the future of the sanctuary. And the congregation has worked with Iowa District West Assistant to the President for Missions, Rev. Keith Haney, to consider their 'vision' for the future. In the picture (right) we attended the 2nd congregational meeting with Rev. Haney and about 75 members of the church. The good news was that the consensus of the future needs of the church was the importance of reflecting the cultural diversity of the community. That means seeing more Hispanic, African and Asian faces in the pews each Sunday, an intentional mission outreach to other cultures. We pray God's blessings on Zion's study of God's mission for them in their Denison mission field.

PLEASE PRAY: +For the future at Zion, Denison and Amigos as we partner together. +For our plans and goals for 2020 both in Denison and Storm Lake: 1. Our goal of calling a bilingual pastor, 2. For our evangelistic visitations to the Hispanic community, 3. For leadership growth. 4. For our goal of meeting with area Mission Boards that are supporting our ministries. + For those who suffer from the effects of the Coronavirus. 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.

Our Lenten season began in Feb. with Ash Wednesday, which included ashes and Holy Communion. Adriana of Denison with her girls, Yamilet and Yaritzey attended. In all of our Spanish services I also have a message in English. Our children in school are bilingual and we have other folks who are bilingual. We know our Hispanic ministry will be more and more bilingual as the youth grow up in English and as we also see more blingual couples. Adriana is an example. She grew up in our church and her daughter Yamilet attends Zion's school. But we still will have many large Hispanic communities like Denison and Storm Lake. A visit to the local Walmart will quickly show how dominant this immigrant group is and will be for many years.

So what a blessing for us to share the story of Jesus' sacrifice, death, and resurrection in the English and Spanish languages each week of the Lenten season, through Holy Week and finally with Easter joy!

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UPCOMING EVENTS @ ZION & TRINITY

Please Note! All times and events are subject to change

April 1

Lent Midweek Series: The God Who Creates
Zion: 2:00 p.m. – on Facebook Live (viewable anytime)
Trinity: 6:30 p.m. on Facebook Live (viewable anytime)

April 5

Palm Sunday
Zion: 10:00 a.m. – Drive-in worship – Zion's parking lot, also Facebook Live
Trinity: 9:00 a.m. – on Facebook Live

April 6

Financial Peace University (10:00 a.m.)
Call Trinity Lutheran in Manilla (654-3031)

April 9

Maundy Thursday
Zion: Streamed on Facebook Live (Time TBD)

April 10

Good Friday
Zion: Streamed on Facebook Live (Time TBD)
Trinity: Streamed on Facebook Live (6:30 p.m.)

April 12

Easter Sunday
Zion: 7:00 a.m. (no breakfast) (If we're unable to gather, we'll stream through Facebook, time TBD)
Trinity: 9:00 a.m. at Manilla Bandshell

April 19

Thursday afternoon Communion Service at Zion (1:30 p.m.)
If gathering restrictions are lifted.

April 22

Confirmation Witness Night
6:30 p.m.

April 26

Confirmation Sunday

May 25

Memorial Day Lunch at Zion
10:30-1:00
Enjoy lunch at Zion and support Zion's VBS at the same time!

April Birthdays and Anniversaries @ Zion & Trinity

Birthdays (T = Trinity)

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

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

Anniversaries

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

Official Acts

Funeral:
Donna Schmarzo; Died March 2, 2020; Funeral March 6, 2020; Pastor Jonathan Conner

In Our Prayers

Patty Meeves (Laurene's daughter in law), Janice Monson, Ron Brus, Sherri Steffes, Jim Deevers, Rick Spack, Natalie Mason (Bruce and Mary Grimm's daughter), Gage Carlson (great grandson of Russ and Virginia Mohr), Maridee Bohlmann (David & Joene Bohlmann's daughter-in-law), Janet Smith, Lynn Kruse, Joyce Schroeder, Nancy Grimm, Arlene Mohr, Dewayne Buhr, Rosemary Stamm (John Erich's sister), Nancy Walters