The Heart of Christmas

Christmas means a lot of things today. For some it's a season of lights, parties, and presents. For others it's a time of loneliness, sorrow, and even despair. For still others it's a flurry of financial recklessness and debt. At the heart of Christmas, though, are these magnificent words from St. John, "And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth" (John 1:14). These words give the lights, parties, and presents a cause. These words give the lonely, sorrowful, and despairing a hope. And these words give the financially reckless pause to consider the wisdom of their decisions.

But have we fully appreciated the immensity of John's words? We rightly appreciate Luke's marvelous story of Mary, Joseph, the shepherds, and the angels, but it's John's words that succinctly capture the essence of the Christmas story. And it's John's words, especially, that set Christmas apart from every other religion on the planet. No other religion speaks of God Himself taking on flesh to live among man. Islam looks at Christmas and asserts, "God does not have a son!" Jehovah Witnesses derisively say, "We don't worship a baby." Hinduism and Buddhism see nothing remarkable about Jesus' birth. Judaism rejects Christ. And Mormonism, despite its extraordinary tabernacle choir, guts John's words of their Biblical meaning, leaving us with the façade of Christmas but not its heart.

John's words stand unparalleled in history. Christian thinkers moved by his words have penned beautiful poems and hymns to express their marvel, many of which we sing today. Consider the words of the 17th century hymn writer Paul Gerhardt's masterful hymn "O Jesus Christ, Thy Manger Is" (*LSB* 372):

O Jesus Christ,
Thy manger is
My paradise at which my soul reclineth.
For there, O Lord,
Doth lie the Word
Made flesh for us; herein Thy grace forth shineth.

He whom the sea
And wind obey
Doth come to serve the sinner in great meekness.
Thou, God's own Son,
With us art one,
Dost join us and our children in our weakness.

Thy light and grace
Our guilt efface,
Thy heav'nly riches all our loss retrieving.
Immanuel,
Thy birth doth quell
The pow'r of hell and Satan's bold deceiving.

Thou Christian heart,
Whoe'er thou art,
Be of good cheer and let no sorrow move thee!
For God's own Child,
In mercy mild,
Joins thee to Him; how greatly God must love thee!

Remember thou
What glory now
The Lord prepared thee for all earthly sadness.
The angel host
Can never boast
Of greater glory, greater bliss or gladness.

The world may hold
Her wealth and gold;
But thou, my heart, keep Christ as thy true treasure.
To Him hold fast
Until at last
A crown be thine and honor in full measure.

Meditate deeply upon these words, for they are the true heart of Christmas.

Contentment in a COVID World[1]

For last few months, with the help of Paul's letter to the Philippians, we've been discussing contentment. We heard Paul announce, "For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain." Before Paul considered his dismal circumstances – a Roman prison! – he recited this: "For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain."

We considered the blazing center of Philippians, Paul's rich Christological poem that extols the nature of Christ as equal to Yahweh even as it calls us to emulate Him. We talked about the upside-down nature of our world that encourages us to see everybody as somebody in our way, somebody impeding our contentment, and we discovered that God's kingdom is actually right side up and that all our striving to get ahead, to reach the top ahead of everyone else, is actually just taking us closer to hell. So, contentment isn't found in self-advancement, but in self-emptying.

We talked about the soundtracks of our lives. We've grown too accustomed to playing the "Ain't it Bad" soundtrack and listening to it over and over and over. So we talked about stopping that song and learning to sing the "Isn't God Good" soundtrack. And we heard Paul call us to develop holy habits through thinking about and practicing whatever is true, honorable, just, pure, lovely, commendable, excellent, worthy of praise. Further, we talked about how saying the Apostles' Creed out loud every day will help us to do this. It will help us to sing the "Isn't God Good" song and to develop these holy habits that help produce contentment.

This month, we come to this… and I love these words:

> I have learned in whatever situation I am to be content. I know how to be brought low, and I know how to abound. In any and every circumstance, I have learned the secret of facing plenty and hunger, abundance and need. I can do all things through him who strengthens me. Philippians 4:11-13

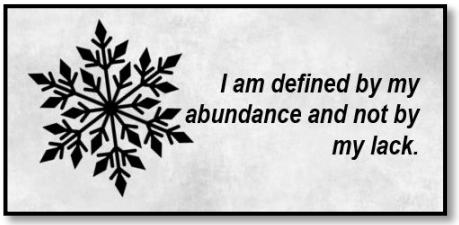
Okay, let's reflect on this. Now that we've spent a few months with Paul, we're in a good position to appreciate what he's saying here. And here's how we're going to express it: Paul has learned, through His deep reflection on what God has done for Him in Christ, to define himself and his life by His abundance in Christ and not by his lack in his temporal circumstances.

So there's something Paul writes in the book of Romans that I want to bring in here. He's reflecting on all the ways that God is for us, on all the ways that God has revealed His love for us in Jesus, and he asks, "He who did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all, how will he not also with him graciously give us all things?" Romans 8:32

In other words: if God has given His Son to you and for you, what's He going to keep from you? Nothing! Nothing! The kingdom is yours. Forgiveness is yours. Inclusion in God's family is yours. You may experience temporal difficulties here. You may have to struggle through a Covid world. There may be all kinds of inconveniences. Covid may steal from you. But it can't take Christ from you. It can't take the kingdom from you. It can't take grace and mercy and forgiveness from you.

[1] Adapted from a series on contentment from Morning Prayer 8/19 – 8/25.

So, Paul is in prison and he's had to go without a lot of things, a *lot* of things. And he's content. Why? Because he is defining himself by his abundance in Christ and not by any temporal lack. So here's the simple phrase we want to zero in on this month: *I am defined by my abundance and not by my lack.*



And we mean this in two ways. We can see our temporal abundance and give thanks to God for it and realize that we don't have to have everything our neighbor has in order to be content. That's a good practice. *I am defined by my abundance and not by my lack*. I actually say this out loud. Just ask my kids. Every time we're tempted to complain about something we don't have or somebody who got more, *I am defined by my abundance and not by my lack*.

This is helpful even for things like instrument practice and homework. I am defined by my abundant opportunities to learn an instrument and to gain wisdom and knowledge.

But we also need to go deeper, to see our eternal abundance in Christ. Even if our temporal situation isn't the greatest, we are not defined by our lack but by our abundance in Christ. So this is a conscious choice to see your life a certain way, to conceptualize your life in a certain way. Paul says it brings contentment. And he's right!

This isn't just optimism; this is learning how to view our lives through our abundance in Jesus. This is how Paul could find contentment even in a Roman prison. Even when it would have been really easy to define himself by his lack, Paul defined himself by his abundance. So, again, our simple point and simple phrase for this month that we really want stick in our minds, even to say out loud: *I am defined by my abundance and not by my lack.* Or, more simply, *I am defined by my abundance in Christ*.

That's the secret of contentment. – Pastor Conner

Let's pray.
Lord God, we give You thanks and praise for our abundance, both for the abundance of opportunities and pleasures and good things that You provide in our lives and for the abundance that You provide for us in Jesus – life, salvation, the very Kingdom itself! Because if You have not spared Your own Son for us, but given Him up for us all, how will You not with Him graciously give us all things? If You have given us Your Son, what will You keep from us? Yes, Lord, we understand that we may have to go without some temporal pleasures. Even the apostle Paul was required to go without certain pleasures as he endured hardship and imprisonment for confessing the Gospel. Help us not slide into discontentment or complaining; instead, help us to define ourselves by our abundance in Christ. Further, help us to see all the good temporal gifts and opportunities that we receive from Your gracious hand each day. Teach us contentment by equipping us to define ourselves by our abundance in Jesus. We are bold to pray this in Jesus' Name, Amen.

Gloria in Excelsis

P Glory be to God on high:

C and on earth peace, goodwill toward men. We praise Thee, we bless Thee, we worship Thee, we glorify Thee, we give thanks to Thee, for Thy great glory. O Lord God, heav'nly King, God the Father Almighty. O Lord, the only-begotten Son, Jesus Christ; O Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father, that takest away the sin of the world, have mercy upon us. Thou that takest away the sin of the world, receive our prayer. Thou that sittest at the right hand of God the Father, have mercy upon us. For Thou only art holy; Thou only art the Lord. Thou only, O Christ, with the Holy Ghost, art most high in the glory of God the Father. Amen.

———

When you pick up a burgundy hymnal in the sanctuary in Manilla or Manning you'll see that the Bible matters. When it comes to the Gloria in Excelsis – Latin for *Glory to God in the Highest* – you get another song saturated in the story of God and Holy Scripture. How? This song is taken from the words the angels sang to the shepherds at Christmas.

Now there is peace and goodwill between God and man. Again, how? Because of the arrival of Jesus at Christmas, and you've personally experienced that peace and goodwill moments earlier in Confession and Absolution, because God extended peace and goodwill to you through forgiveness.

Because we've received God's goodwill we praise. People, places, and things that change you or move you at your core, well, you praise whatever it happens to be. You see an incredible football play, you talk about it the next day at work with your coworkers. What are you doing? You're praising that play. As Christians, we identify Christ's crucifixion and resurrection as the ultimate play that won the game for humanity – and our response is praise.

And then we get specific by identifying how God won the game. It wasn't an I-formation, but the Father put the Lamb of God on the field; the one capable of dealing with sin at great expense to Himself. Jesus didn't score a touchdown, but He did "takest away the sin of the world."

And we end the song by adoring God as King. When Stefon Diggs scored the touchdown which became the Minneapolis Miracle – people went nuts! I mean you can still watch that play and get shivers down your spine. Seeing something so inconceivable like a touchdown when you're sixty yards away on 4th down with 10 seconds left in the game, moves you.

The angels praised because God made that which was inconceivable reality – that is, the Son of God abandoning His authority and safety for less than thankful humanity. – Pastor Johnson

A Conversation on Mental Health *Part 3*

During the first week in September, I (Pastor Conner) addressed the question of mental health in our morning prayer sessions. Over the last two months I have included a lightly edited text from those sessions. We continue the conversation this month utilizing those morning devotions. You can view them on Zion's Facebook page by searching for the teachings/prayers from September 1 – 3 or by going to Zion's website (zionmanning.com) and clicking on "Worship/Study/Pray" and selecting "Morning Prayers."[2]

…

Over the last couple months we've emphasized an important truth: *what you think affects what you feel affects what you do*. What you believe about reality – what you believe to be true – affects how you feel, and those feelings influence the way you act or react.

Last month, we made a very brief reference to getting our disappointment with God out into the open. We're coming back to that this month and we need to say up front, this is difficult. If you're looking for neat and tidy answers, I'm not going to be able to provide them here. Really, we're just opening a conversation. To be honest, it's a conversation we need to be having as Christians. Too many of us lock up these feelings – to say nothing of leaving the foundational thoughts unspoken.

We mentioned last month that some of us have experienced disappointment with God, but we pointed out that this probably isn't really the foundational thought. The foundational thought is probably harder. It's probably something like this: *God let me down*. That's hard to say out loud, isn't it?

Sometimes it shows up in a question: "Why did God do this to me? Why did God give me this hard thing? Why did God take this person away from me?" We're going to interact with these ideas today and we're going to do it under the statement *God let me down*.

And we need to say up front – and this is going to be hard to come to grips with; I know I struggle with it – but we need to be really careful that we don't hold God to promises He didn't make. I hear preachers sometimes making it sound like if you have enough faith or if you just speak the right words of faith, that you can unlock God's blessings (health, success, happiness, and more), that God's just waiting to open the flood gates of temporal blessings if you respond with enough faith (often code for enough of a donation to their ministry!).

But when I look at the texts they're using to support their preaching, I realize they're ripping verses out of context and making God say things

[2] During those sessions, I recommended William Backus' book *Telling Yourself the Truth*. I continue to recommend it as an excellent source for learning to stop listening to yourself (specifically, the negative and destructive thoughts that try to take up residence in your mind) and to begin speaking the truth to yourself (specifically what God says about you).

He didn't say. And when these things fall through, when God doesn't "come through" for them, you have people devastated and disillusioned with God, throwing their hands up in despair.

So, we can't hold God to promises He didn't make because it's a set-up job. People give and pray and worship thinking God's going to "come through" for them and He doesn't and they're tempted to give up on God.

But, it's not that easy. I wish it was, but it isn't, because Scripture says things like this:

- "Honor your father and mother" (this is the first commandment with a promise), "that it may go well with you and that you may live long in the land" (Ephesians 6:2-3).
- "You do not have, because you do not ask" (James 4:2).
- "The prayer of faith will save the one who is sick, and the Lord will raise him up" (James 5:15).

Sometimes people who honor their parents die young. Sometimes we ask with pure and righteous motives and we don't receive. Sometimes we pray in faith and the sick die. And I don't know what to say.

It would be a lot easier either to jump in with the "health and wealth" preachers or with the "Don't make promises God didn't make" preachers and be done with it, but I can't help tying myself in (Gordian) knots because I know things aren't that simple.

So here's what I see. God makes promises – not all the ones health and wealth preachers claim – but God does make promises. And He calls us to believe Him. But He remains God. His ways are still higher than our ways. He governs this inconceivably complex universe in wisdom – just ask Job! He knows the stars by name. He knows the number of hairs on your head. Not even a sparrow falls to the ground apart from Him. He remains God.

So we have to hold these promises in tension with these realities. It's not contradiction; it's tension.

I think of Job. He offered sacrifices continually for his children. He thought, "It may be that that my children have sinned, and cursed God in their hearts." So, he offered sacrifices – the text says continually! – for his children. And God took them all! All of them! And Job asked, "Shall we receive good from the Lord and not evil?"

Paul pleaded with God to remove the thorn in his flesh – whatever it was – and God said, "No. My grace is sufficient for you."

And do you know how Job and Paul responded? Job said, "Though He slay me, I will hope in Him" (Job 13:15). And Paul, "I will boast all the more gladly of my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may rest upon me" (2 Corinthians 12:9).

Somehow Job and Paul were able to hold these things in tension. They were able to hear God's promises and experience loss and hardship and still bless the Lord. How?

Well, here's what I think we're missing. It's what I know I miss all the time. I want to put a period at the end of the sentence: *God let me down*. But that's not right. It's not biblically faithful because it's not complete. The sentence doesn't end like that. There's a comma after "God let me down." So it goes like this: *God let me down, but God is not done.*

You see, God is eternal. Sometimes we forget that. He is not limited to our lifetime. His actions for us are not limited to our lifetime.

So what's your hurt? Say it out loud. *I've been wronged. I've been cheated. I've been abused. I've lost my loved ones.* On the one hand, we need to be careful we're not holding God to promises He didn't make. On the other, God has made promises. And from our limited perspective – and that's the part we always need to remember – from our limited perspective, it can look like God has let us down, *but God's not done*.

We talked about His steadfast love last month. God is a God of steadfast love, a steadfast love that we see clearly in the cross and empty tomb of Jesus, because God has an always-and-forever, never-giving-up, love-you-to-the-cross, into-the-grave-and-out kind of love. And that love isn't done yet. That love is coming back and that love in Christ is going to resurrect the dead, renew the earth, reunite the redeemed, and fill us forever. God is not done yet.

Until we get there, though, we may walk wounded. In fact, we probably will. But I want to leave you with this today: *We hobble in hope, because God's not done yet.* – Pastor Conner

Let's pray:
Lord God, we are feeble and weary creatures. We see only to the horizon and think we see all. We live for 90 years and believe Your working must be completed and perfected within that span. But You, You see beyond the horizon; You are not limited to our lifetime. You are eternal. Help us never to forget that. And help us daily to find comfort in Your eternality because it means that Your steadfast love is eternal and Your steadfast love has gone with Christ onto the cross, into the grave, and out again for us. And Your steadfast love has promised to return for us and to renew all things. So, Lord, when the belief *God has let me down* seeps into our soul, keep us from placing a period at the end. Instead, help us in faith to place a comma so that we can finish the sentence in the confident and hopeful confession of Your eternal, steadfast love, *but God is not done.* And help us to rise each day with that confession in our hearts, in our minds, and on our lips. We are bold to pray this in Jesus' Name, Amen.

Running Commentary

2 John verse 8

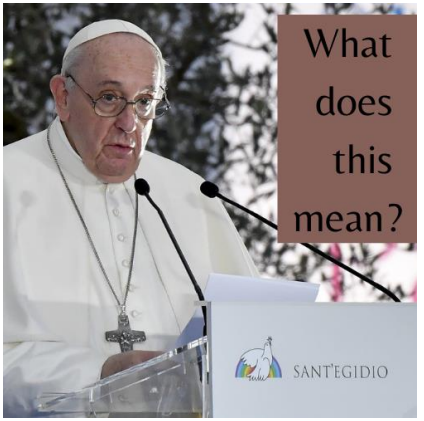
"Watch yourselves, so that you may not lose what we have worked for, but may win a full reward."

When you farm, there's a lot of work – planting seeds, nourishing seeds, harvesting seeds that grew into plants, and prepping the ground for new seeds. You don't just plant and then sit back. You have to evaluate the plants' water intake among other stuff. You get the point.

The same goes for the Christian faith. It requires intentional care. Paul wrote to his student Timothy: "guard the good deposit entrusted to you." In other words, guard the faith you've received. Timothy's grandmother and mother had planted and nourished the seed (2 Tim. 1:5), and the result was faith was passed down to Timothy.

John and Paul make it clear that Christianity is far deeper than just getting kids baptized. In fact, ***just*** having children baptized and confirmed is probably the equivalent of a farmer planting and then avoiding the field until it's time to harvest in October. What would you expect to find if you never paid attention to water intake or fertilization?

The Christian faith requires care and attention, and without those qualities there can be, according to John, a losing or even the loss of the "full reward."



Shockwaves spread in October when Roman Catholic Pope Francis reportedly stated, "What we have to create is a civil union law. That way they [same-sex couples] are legally covered." The quote comes from the documentary *Francesco*. There was a great amount of confusion concerning the statement, considering the Roman Catholic's biblical stance on same-sex marriage. It even caused confusion for the archdiocese to which Manning and Manilla belong: "Unfortunately, as of now, no clarifications on these comments have come forth from the Vatican and the comments have caused many people to question whether Church teaching has changed."[3]

Since then the Vatican has claimed the quote was the result of intentional splicing on behalf of the documentarian and the quote fails to appreciate the context in which it was originally spoken. The Vatican claims Pope Francis made the statements in connection to his former post in Argentina.[4]

So what do the Pope's words mean in terms of Roman Catholic teaching? Functionally, nothing. None of his comments altered Church teaching.

What's our response to all of this as Lutherans? We're pro! We're prolife, which in this situation means that the 5th Commandment moves us to love our neighbors as ourselves. No one should be hated or harmed no matter their life claims – even if their claims differ from our own. Christ died for people with different life claims, and the only natural response is to die for the sake of others however that might look like in any given situation.

We're also for life in the sense that we desire kids to know both their parents. As an adopted child myself, there's always a curiosity about my biological past that lingers. Of course, I can hunt down information – for a price – but there will always be a part of me that has questions about my ancestry, and time can never be recouped even if I do find answers. My hope is for kids to know who and where they come from. One of my concerns with same sex relationships is depriving kids from that information and story. Who was Mom or who was Dad? Kids won't necessarily get answers to those questions, or at the very least they will miss out on together-time from half of their biological input.

In any case, while nothing changes with the Pope's remarks, the reality is we need to change. We have a long way to go when it comes to what God classifies as good in relationship to the 6th Commandment. We need to:

- STOP treating people like disposable objects when it comes to sex (e.g. hooking up or porn)
- TAKE MARRIAGE SERIOUSLY because it's a reflection of how Jesus cares for the Church (check out Ephesians 5)
- REMEMBER sex is more than pleasure. It's a scientifically proven way to procreate, and we forget that as we become pleasure junkies.

[3] Accessed 11/16 - https://d2y1pz2y630308.cloudfront.net/22386/documents/2020/11/Messagae%20about%20documentary.pdf

[4] Accessed 11/16 - https://apnews.com/article/pope-francis-vatican-civil-union-comment-8f53e237da41da9891564268f1a2e66a

- have FORTITUDE – which is to say we need to continually learn-to-relearn our spouse. There may not be sparks flying anymore, because maybe we stopped trying to learn who our spouse is.
- DUMP the image of falling in love. We're not doing ourselves any favors by telling ourselves or our kids that you *fall* in love. Of course, love can be intoxicating, but what happens to us when those feelings evaporate? What we probably need is the image of *committing* to love. We could in theory love anyone we meet without even looking at them if we stopped basing love on conditions.
- TAKE GOD SERIOUSLY. Sometimes following the God of the Bible feels like reading broken English-IKEA directions; He doesn't make sense. But the best thing we can do is order our lives around the Designers original order for life. – Pastor Johnson

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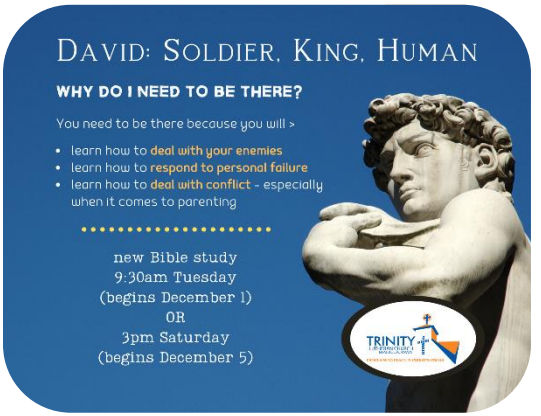
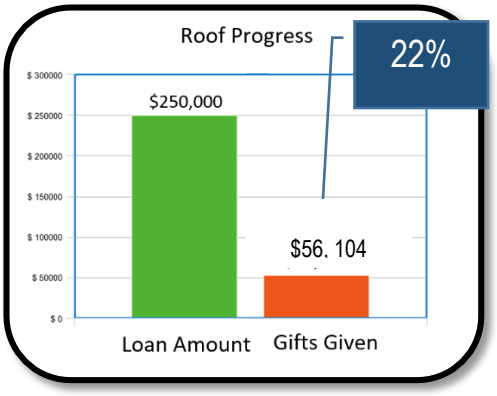




Please consider making a special gift to the roof or to other ongoing and upcoming mission and ministry expenses at Zion, including technology and facility needs. Ask in the office for a detailed list of giving opportunities. Thank you for your partnership!

Preschool Praises for November 2020

The first week of November we talked about what the president does and read a scholastic magazine titled "Election Countdown". The children practiced writing their names and filled out a paper about what they would do if they were president. We always get fun answers when we ask that! Jesus Time was about the fall and how Adam and Eve disobeyed God and had to leave the garden. Pastor spoke to the children about the Tower of Babel where God confused the languages since people were defying him and not spreading throughout the world, but rather thought they could build a tower up to heaven. When God confused the languages it forced people to spread out, and by doing so, different characteristics among people groups started becoming predominant based on the region that they settled. Although we may look different, we are all one race - the human race!

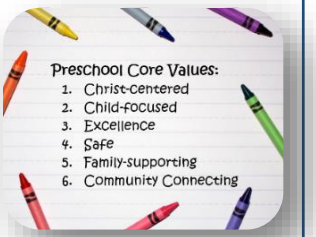
The second week of November we studied veterans and being thankful, the letter Z, writing our names and finding what is different in a group of objects. We watched a Scholastic video about veterans and talked about what veterans are and who has a veteran in their family. We used Spot-a-Dot pages to find the letter Z among other letters and used Dotters (like bingo markers) to mark them. The kids loved those! Finding what is different in a group of pictures can be tricky at this age, and we got to start learning this skill. Jesus Time was about Noah's Arc and how God saved Noah and his family from the flood as well as 2 of every kind of animal. We focused on how the rainbow is a sign of God's promise to never flood the world again. Pastor spoke to the children about Abraham and Sarah and the promise that God made to them for a child, even in their old age, and also that their offspring would outnumber the stars and bless the whole world. Abraham and Sarah's bloodline eventually lead to Jesus, which is how they blessed the whole world!

The third week of November was about Turkeys and the letter T. We listened to a story called "10 Fat Turkeys" on a CD and the kids enjoyed using their fingers to countdown from 10. We looked at a paper with many different objects on it and had to determine if that object started with the letter T and, if it did, we circled it. Listening for the letter sound in a word is a very important early literacy skill and making a circle (or scribble) with a marker is great for fine motor exercise. Jesus Time was about Abraham and Sarah and just reiterated what Pastor went over the week before. It is a good thing to go over important stories several times to ensure that they are remembered.

The preschool board met on Tuesday the 17th and made the decision to keep our classes on Tuesday and Friday for the remainder of the school year. This gives us a chance to disinfect the classroom and have time between classes in case anyone has a positive Covid test so we can contact everyone. We are also now requiring masks for all staff and students to follow DHS and state guidelines. As a precaution we canceled Grandparent's Day and the children singing in church for Christmas. We are hoping to do our songs in class and record them so we can share them in church and on Facebook.

If you are looking for a cause to donate to before the end of the year, please consider the preschool! Thank you to everyone for your prayerful and financial help.

Yours in Christ,
Mrs. Gore & Mrs. Nemitz



Zion Lutheran Preschool Endowment

Zion preschool has been an important part of the Manning Community and a piece of Zion for over 30 years. We celebrate the opportunity to share the love of Christ with generations of children and their families. The preschool has been an avenue for many families to begin a walk in faith and joy in Jesus.

For several years the Zion preschool board has brainstormed ways to take a forward looking approach to sustaining the mission of the preschool for decades to come. One of the strategies the board discussed was starting an endowment fund similar to that of Zion's to help support and perpetuate the funding for the preschool. Furthermore, many of our families are utilizing some tuition assistance from the state and we were looking for ways to support those families and the preschool budget if that funding source ever was eliminated.

In 2019 Zion helped kickstart the Zion Preschool Endowment. It was a wonderful blessing to the program in that it allowed us to open our endowment and begin adding to the principle, in hopes that as time passes, we will be able to utilize the interest to support the preschool. Our long-term goals include potentially adding tuition assistance of our own and buffering any fluctuations in enrollment from year to year.

Thank you Zion for your support! We appreciate all the prayers, financial support, pancake breakfast attendance, and volunteering that the congregation provides. If you have an interest in supporting the long term funding of our preschool through the endowment, feel free to mark a donation as such or contact one of the Zion preschool board members- Kari Ranniger, Janet Smith, Jamie England, Courtney Grabill, or Jen Morris.

Celebrating Jesus with children and families,

Jen Morris and the Zion Preschool Board

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

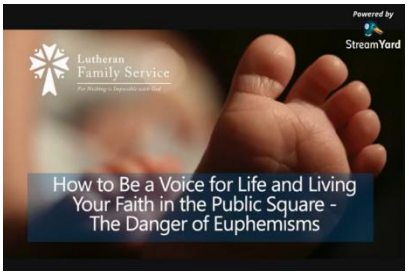
Equipping Event at Zion with LFS

Lutheran Family Service

For Nothing is Impossible with God

Dr. Jim Lamb

DCE Bethany Kuhlmann



TRINITY LUTHERAN CHURCH MANILLA, IOWA

PROCLAIMING PEACE IN CHRIST'S CROSS

On Sunday, November 15, Zion (in partnership with Trinity) was privileged to welcome DCE Bethany Kuhlmann and Rev. Dr. Jim Lamb from Lutheran Family Service to address youth and adults on two significant life issues.

Bethany spoke with Zion and Trinity youth about mental health, depression, and suicide prevention. Afterwards, one youth shared with Deaconess Tiffany Johnson, "We should have her back again but on another topic. She was amazing."

Dr. Lamb, with the expert technological help of Pastor Johnson, was streamed in. He emphasized the need to be a voice for life and the dangerous euphemisms being used to cloud the harm being done to life behind the guise of pleasant sounding words. This presentation is available on Zion's Facebook page.

ZION LUTHERAN CHURCH BANNING, IOWA

Celebrating and Sharing Christ's Redeeming Love

Joys and Challenges: Stories from Everyday Life

I'm sure you know how it is: as you live your Christian life, you have victories, and you have, well… those days you feel less-than-golden. That's been the story of life on this side of the world, too. While we give thanks to have continued safety in Taiwan, and especially protection from protest and pandemic, life certainly continues to give us lots of ups and downs. Here are some glimpses of life for the Ferrys in Taiwan recently:

We continue to build up our presence and capacity here at the LCMS Asia headquarters in Chiayi (嘉義市), Taiwan. Just this month, we started announcing our presence to the rest of the city with the new sign on the front of our building. At the same time, our partner church added their own sign, announcing this facility as the their Southern Theology Center. And it comes just in time: we are hosting a weekly theology class for interested people from all over the city, taught by the church's mission department head. What a joy to see these things happening, even in the midst of the pandemic, and people coming to us to hear the Word proclaimed and taught.

We continue to attend weekly Divine Service at our local Taiwanese congregation, Salvation Lutheran Church. The pastor and his family have become good friends, and we are blessed by his willingness to reach the community and to teach the Word. The kids have even been attending the church's bi-lingual Sunday School, and have been singing with the congregation in Chinese.

It was, however, difficult to say goodbye recently to our friends the Sovitzky family. Rick has been serving as our Asia Regional Business Manager for the last two years, and we've been working closely together here in the building during that entire time. Our children had grown very close during those two years, and the walls between our homes grew porous! As life goes, the Sovitzky family decided it was time for a vocational change, and so we had to watch them board a bus out of town, leaving a large void in our professional team and in our personal lives. God bless them as they serve in new ways in the USA.

All of this, of course, is happening while we continue living our everyday lives. Charles is daily directing the work of your LCMS missionaries in Asia, and working hard to clear obstacles from the way so they can reach out in over 12 countries. We may be locked down, but we are completely content where we are, and consider ourselves blessed indeed to have your trust, support, and love as we labor where God has placed us through you, His holy Church.

SERVING THE LORD

ALL OVER ASIA

NEWS FROM THE FERRY FAMILY

Reformation 2020

Congratulations and Happy Birthday to two of our kiddos who celebrated birthdays in August and September…

Caitlin (left) turned eleven years old, and chose to bake her own cake this year for the celebration. It turned out delicious, and it was fun to watch her take charge of the kitchen. She got to watch a movie with her friends for her special day, just before our beloved Sovitzky family m

Caleb (right) turned fifteen years old, and his beautiful mother made him a cake in his honor. In typical teenage fashion, Caleb chose to enter a game tournament on his own for his birthday. He's become much more mature and independent lately, and his Chinese language skills have blossomed. We count on him quite a bit, and he's the primary translator for his father!

Weather for us here in southern Taiwan (台灣) has continued to be hot and muggy, right up until just this week. It has cooled off now with the changing of the seasons, and it's perhaps only 85°F for a high rather than the usual 95-100°F. That means we can enjoy some cool breezes on the roof of our building, as in this picture. Please note what looms large in the background: the pagan temple next door to us. Thank you for sending us to this place, and for your ongoing trust in allowing us to stay here in what has become our home.

God bless all of you for your continued friendship, support, and love. - Your Servants and partners in Asia, the Ferry Family Charles, Cheryl, Caleb, Caitlin, Carissa, Cassandra, Chloe, and Charlotte

PLEASE PRAY FOR: • The Sovitzky family as they return to the USA for the next chapter in their service to the Lord and His world. • Continued perseverance in language study; Chinese is hard! • The Lord to send the right people to us at the right time to accomplish His mission.

GIVE THANKS FOR: • Protection and health for your LCMS missionaries as they continue to live out their vocations where you have placed them. • Our healthy and growing children, who love where we live and know they're safe and secure.

Holiday Depression – Here We Go Again

Sometimes as we age, the holidays no longer seem as exciting and we don't feel like celebrating anymore. All of those things that used to bring us such joy now seem like such a chore – shopping, putting up the tree, wrapping gifts, cooking.

We think we are supposed to be happy this time of year, but that expectation alone can cause people of all ages to become sad or depressed. While the holidays may not be the same as they were when you were a child, there can still be plenty of reasons to celebrate. One of the most important things to remember is that it is okay to enjoy the holidays as they are now. Memories hold a special place in our hearts, but there is always enough room for new ones.

One of the biggest challenges for families is losing a loved one. The loss may have occurred a decade ago or it may have been in the last year; however the loss may still bring intense feelings of grief, loneliness, and emptiness. You may even feel guilty that you are letting yourself have a good time.

These feelings are normal. You may want to plan a family or personal tribute to your loved one such as place the person's picture in a prominent place in your home, light a memorial candle, make a photo album of previous holidays to focus on positive memories, or set aside time so that everyone who wants to can share a memory about the loved one.

It is important to not succumb to pressure from family or friends to continue holiday celebrations in the same way that they have been done in the past. To keep from feeling overwhelmed and out of control, focus on what you need instead of what others expect from you. It is okay to accept help when others offer it and, in turn, ask for help when you need it.

Not everyone grieves the same. You may become tearful at the drop of a hat while another person may be stoic and show little emotion. The holidays won't be the same as they used to be so it is important to recognize that the "new normal" can be fulfilling in other ways.

Janet Brus, RN
Psychiatric Medical Care
Manning Regional Healthcare Center
Program Director – Senior Life Solutions

Amigos en Cristo

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

December 2020

Worshiping in a pandemic: In the midst of the pandemic, with masks and social distancing, we worship the Lord. With nervous members and others not yet willing to come to public worship, we worship the Lord. Last month I had to cancel our two Sunday services due to my own illness. Paula and I were tested and were both Covid positive.

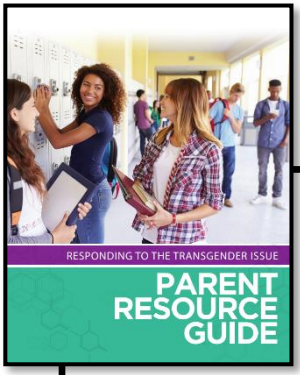
At Grace Hispanic in Storm Lake we are also struggling with members not yet ready to come back to church. At Zion in Denison where our Amigos en Cristo ministry meets they are struggling with the question of what to do with their damaged church building. They are meeting regularly to decide whether to rebuild, repair, or to build a new structure.

Challenges, challenges, challenges, still so many challenges to our ministries in these days and months. But we need to remember that throughout Scripture, from Deuteronomy to Hebrews we hear the Lord's promise quoted to aid us: "*I will never leave you or forsake you*". And so with many challenges, we will worship our Lord and Savior.

Call Update: We continue to partner with Iowa District West for support in the Call process of a permanent pastor. Last month the Iowa District West Board of Directors voted to call a bilingual pastor for western Iowa. We are now waiting to have interviews via Zoom with two bilingual pastors, one in the U.S. and the other in Mexico. It is an exciting time for our unique ministry and we pray that God would honor us with a dedicated bilingual pastor. Since we began this ministry in 1999 we have had 3 pastors serving in Denison and 4 serving in Storm Lake. Of course each community has greatly changed in those years and they will continue to do so after 2020. Please pray for the Call process for this important and unique ministry. Both Denison and Storm Lake are great mission fields that we pray with God's Word we will serve to His glory.

Rev. Daniel Vogel, 32678 Aspen Ave., Manning, Iowa, 51455
Home: 712-653-2354 / Cell: 712-309-1292
Email: daniel.vogel@ziondenison.org

The Perez Family Leading the Mission Way: The (below) is a historic picture revealing how our Hispanic ministry has transitioned over the years in Denison. Last month Maria Perez and family came to church. Her two daughters, Mayra and Alma who live in Omaha and Council Bluffs came as well. We were so pleased to see them as during these months of the pandemic we have not seen them. Even more exciting was to see Josh and to hear that he and Alma were married in October. Both Mayra and Alma and their siblings grew up in our Hispanic Lutheran church. Now Mayra and Alma are living and working on their own in other communities where they have continued in their Lutheran faith. Mayra goes to St. Paul's in Council Bluffs and Josh and Alma are members of St. Marks in Omaha. This is the future goal of our bilingual ministry as we bring Hispanic immigrants to faith that they will also bless our English ministries. We have one united work together, sharing the good news of Jesus as Lord and Savior.



Zion Cares for You!

RESOURCES

Transgender, gender identity, non-binary, gender fluidity, gender nonconforming. You've heard these words; do you know what they mean? Is it possible to have a female brain in a male body, or vice versa? Does Title IX require schools to allow students and staff to use opposite sex restrooms and locker rooms? Are there more than two sexes? Can you answer these questions?

The elders of Zion and I (Pastor Conner) want you and the youth of Zion equipped to respond to the transgender phenomenon sweeping through our culture. For this reason we are making the above resource (*Responding to the Transgender Issue: Parent Resource Guide*) available. This is a well-reasoned, evidence-based resource that we commend to you for study.

All families with 3rd grade children and above have received a copy in the mail, but we have more available for anyone who is interested. You can also download a PDF for free here: www.genderresourceguide.com.

Christian Care and Counseling at Zion!

Zion is excited to share the news: Lutheran Family Service is now providing Christian care and counseling at Zion through Zion's own Amy Hull! See the promotional piece for more!

Meet Your Lutheran Family Service, Christian Counselor!

Amy K. Hull, LISW

Amy is a dedicated Licensed Independent Social Worker providing her 19 years of mental health and marriage counseling expertise to the Manning, IA area. She is trained in Cognitive Behavioral Therapy, Motivational Interviewing, EMDR, DBT, Marriage Counseling, CISM debriefings and PCIT to help promote change and navigate difficult circumstances that life and relationships bring.

Clients appreciate Amy's ability to help them feel at-ease and confident in finding solutions during their difficult personal circumstance. Her Christian perspective offers a safe place to process difficult issues, and to incorporate faith into the healing process.

Areas of specialty include but not limited to:

- Adults and Adolescents 12+
- Couples and Marriage
- Anxiety and Depression
- Anger and Stress
- Grief and Loss
- Elderly and Life Transitions
- Bipolar and Mood Disorders

Enhanced areas of **training**:

- Cognitive Behavioral Therapy
- Motivational Interviewing
- Person-Centered Therapy
- EMDR Therapy
- Solution-Focused Therapy
- Pre-marital Counseling
- Marriage Counseling

Most insurance are accepted, and a sliding fee scale is available. People of all walks of life and faith are served through counseling services.

Refer to or contact Amy today:

- 515.573.3138
- ahull@lutheranfaimilyservice.org
- www.LutheranFamilyService.org

Lutheran Family Service

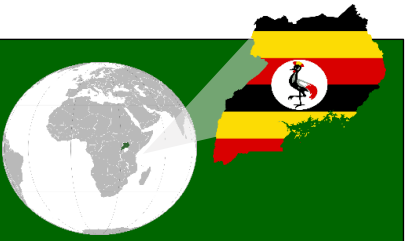
For Nothing is Impossible with God

Lutheran Family Service walks with those experiencing difficult times through mental health counseling, marriage counseling, pregnancy counseling, and adoption services. Learn more at www.LutheranFamilyService.org.

ZION LUTHERAN CHURCH MANNING, IOWA

Celebrating and Sharing Christ's Redeeming Love

Fall/Winter 2020



Introducing Rev. Mark and Megan Mantey
Serving in Uganda

The Lutheran Church of Uganda (LCU) has continued their work of training men for ministry, especially through the Lutheran Theological College Uganda (LTCU) these past several months. Even with the disturbances of COVID-19, the LTCU was able to finish the semester that was interrupted by the lockdown in March. So, the 2019-2020 school year finished in late October. For the past several months, there have been two training centers for the students to finish the semester: one was at the seminary in the eastern part of the country while other students gathered in Masindi, which is in the midwestern part of the country.

Newly commissioned vicars (year 3 seminary students) from the midwest and northern deaneries alongside Bishop Charles Bameka

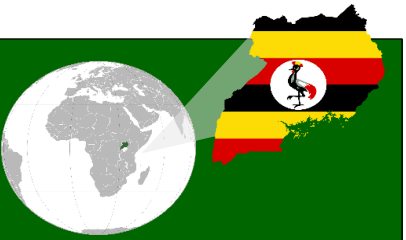
As the semester ended, twelve men from five different deaneries, were ready for their vicarage. Vicarage is an internship year that is completed during the third year of seminary training and is done in students home regions.

Because of health protocols in Uganda, the Lutheran Church of Uganda had two separate commissioning services, located in the same deaneries as the training took place. These twelve men will spend their internship year putting into practice what they have learned at seminary thus far. They will be supervised under the pastors and deans in their areas. These students are the third class of vicars since the seminary started in 2016, so we praise God for the continuation of this ministry.

As the vicars prepare for their year of service and hands-on learning, the LTCU started the first semester of the 2020/2021 school year in November. Typically, this semester starts in August. So, as vicars were preparing to be sent out, new and returning students were preparing for seminary. For this school year, the first semester will go from November, 2020-February, 2021. The second semester of the 2020/2021 school year will resume in March, 2021. We praise God that the Holy Spirit continues to prepare men for ministry through the Lutheran Theological College Uganda.

In Christ,
Mark and Megan
Project Manager – Uganda
LCMS International Mission
The Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod
+256 787 025762 mark.mantey@lcms.org

Fall/Winter 2020



Introducing Rev. Mark and Megan Mantey
Serving in Uganda

After being at our home in Jinja, Uganda for most of the year, it was a joy to travel with the Lutheran Church of Uganda in November to celebrate life and ministry together. As the vicarage commissioning services were in two different locations this year, we were able to go and visit with people that we are not able to see as often. It is always a joy to be with the students as they prepare for this stage in ministry in their year of learning and practical application. We praise God that we have been able to walk alongside the three classes of vicars since we came to Uganda in 2017. When we travel to different areas, we praise God for the friendships we have in Christ Jesus as we serve Him together. Sharing a meal, worshipping together and learning about life and ministry since last together always brings big smiles and great joy, even when sharing about the trials and tribulations. Life together is always worth celebrating, especially when centered on Christ.

Megan receives a gift of papaya from Monica Kaija in midwestern Uganda

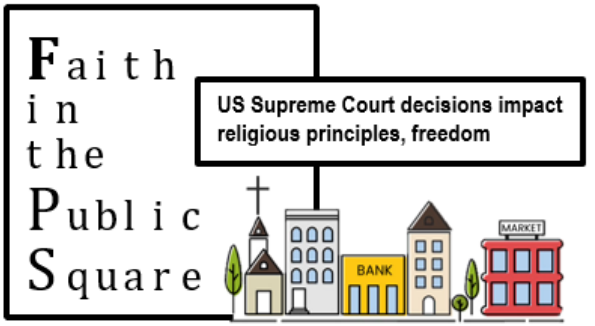
2020/2021 HOME SERVICE Every two years LCMS missionaries have the opportunity to return to the United States and share a ministry update with congregations and individual supporters. This December, January and February, we are happy to be able to visit some congregations and individual supporters in some parts of the US.

This home service we are limiting our travel, but we are thankful we are still able to connect via Zoom with many congregations. We are also thankful for time to connect with our family in North Carolina and New Mexico. We look forward to visiting in person with other regions at a future time. Please keep us in prayer as we travel and share ministry updates with congregations this winter.

PLEASE PRAY FOR: • Health and safety as we travel during home service • Health, safety and healing for God's people around the world • The LCU as they continue to plan, prepare and implement ministry nationwide • The LTCU students resuming seminary classes in October, November and December of 2020 • For the LCU pastors teaching at the seminary

GIVE THANKS FOR: • The twelve newly commissioned vicars in the Lutheran Church of Uganda • LCU congregations being able to worship in person since October 15 with safety protocols put in place • For graduating classes in Uganda being able to meet for both elementary, middle and high school students

PRAISE GOD FOR: • The individuals, families, and congregations that continue to support the Lord's work in Uganda through our hands with prayers, encouragement and financial support



Part 2

By Cheryl Magness[5]

Recent rulings from the U.S. Supreme Court, some supportive of religious freedom and some not, are drawing the attention of churches and other faith-based nonprofits, including The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS). Synod leaders have been closely following the rulings and their potential impact on Christians' free exercise of their religion.

Little Sisters of the Poor v. Pennsylvania

On July 8, in a 7-2 decision, the Court ruled that the federal government acted legally in creating exemptions to the 2010 Affordable Care Act's (ACA) contraception mandate for employers whose moral and religious principles preclude the providing of contraception. The ACA requires employers to provide cost-free coverage for contraceptives, sterilizations and "emergency birth control" in employee health plans.

In 2017, the Trump administration granted a religious and moral exemption to the mandate for employers that object to it on the basis of conscience, including the Little Sisters of the Poor, an international congregation of Roman Catholic women that serves the elderly poor in over 30 countries around the world. Several states filed lawsuits claiming that the administration had violated the Administrative Procedure Act in setting up the exemption, but the Court concluded that the administration had not acted improperly.

Justice Clarence Thomas wrote, in the majority opinion, "For over 150 years, the Little Sisters have engaged in faithful service and sacrifice, motivated by a religious calling to surrender all for the sake of their brother. … But for the past seven years, they — like many other religious objectors who have participated in the litigation and rulemakings leading up to today's decision — have had to fight for the ability to continue in their noble work without violating their sincerely held religious beliefs.

"After two decisions from this Court and multiple failed regulatory attempts, the Federal Government has arrived at a solution that exempts the Little Sisters from the source of their complicity-based concerns — the administratively imposed contraceptive mandate."

Justices Samuel Alito and Neil Gorsuch wrote a concurring opinion arguing that the court should have also ruled that the Religious Freedom Restoration Act (RFRA) requires the challenged religious exemption to the contraception mandate and that, by not doing so, the court "will prolong the legal battle in which the Little Sisters have now been engaged for seven years — even though during all this time no employee of the Little Sisters has come forward with an objection to the Little Sisters' conduct."

[5] This article was published by the official newspaper of The Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod, *The Reporter*. It's available here: blogs.lcms.org/2020/faith-in-the-public-square-us-supreme-court-decisions-impact-religious-principles-freedom/

Seltz applauded the ruling, calling it "mind-boggling" that the Little Sisters had to go through almost 10 years of litigation to be able to follow their conscience, "especially when it's a conscience built on serving, caring and a humility that we all could emulate."

Manor said she was thankful for the ruling, but added, "The concerning aspect … is that it allows for future presidents' administrations to revoke the exemptions currently granted. Christians will need to continue to be active in the public square, professing the faith clearly and winsomely."

Our Lady of Guadalupe School v. Agnes Morrissey-Berru and ***St. James School v. Darryl Biel***

On July 8, the Supreme Court ruled 7-2 in favor of two religious schools that had been sued by former teachers. The teachers claimed the schools had discriminated against them when their employment was terminated, but the schools held that the terminations were protected under the "ministerial exception" granted to religious employers.

In the majority opinion, Justice Samuel Alito wrote, "The religious education and formation of students is the very reason for the existence of most private religious schools, and therefore the selection and supervision of the teachers upon whom the schools rely to do this work lie at the core of their mission. Judicial review of the way in which religious schools discharge those responsibilities would undermine the independence of religious institutions in a way that the First Amendment does not tolerate."

Eric Rassbach, legal counsel for the schools and attorney for Becket, a religious liberty advocacy group, said, "Today is a huge win for religious schools of all faith traditions. … The last thing government officials should do is decide who is authorized to teach Catholicism to Catholics or Judaism to Jews. We are glad the Court has resoundingly reaffirmed that churches and synagogues, not government, control who teaches kids about God."

Seltz noted that the case was undergirded by the 2012 Supreme Court case, *Hosanna-Tabor Evangelical Lutheran Church & School v. Equal Opportunity Employment Commission,* which involved an LCMS school in Detroit.

"One of the reasons we get involved in these kinds of issues is so that we can protect our voice in the culture," Seltz said. "We have to learn to speak the truth of God's Word in love, with humility and graciousness. That means we've got to study our Bibles more than ever.

"We have to be wise as serpents and harmless as doves. We can't keep walking into buzz saws. We have to use our First Amendment freedoms … so that we can boldly and joyfully proclaim the Good News of Jesus Christ without coercion and without fear."

Find out more about the LCRL at *lcrlfreedom.org,* and watch weekly live liberty updates at *facebook.com/lcrlfreedom*.

Subscribe to the Synod's *Free to Be Faithful* newsletter at *lcms.org/free-to-be-faithful.* Follow LCMS Life Ministry at *lcms.org/life*.
Posted July 21, 2020

Giving Opportunities

Zion Preschool Endowment
Perpetuate the mission of Zion's preschool by ensuring a steady revenue stream through the preschool endowment.

Zion Endowment and Legacy Funds
Perpetuate the mission and ministry of Zion by ensuring a steady revenue stream. The endowment may be used for non-budgetary items; the legacy supports the annual budget.

Technology Upgrades
Cameras. Computers. Projectors. Microphones. Cords. Adapters. Streaming devices. Security. And more. Your gift ensures Zion can continue sharing Jesus through technology.

Tools for Trustees
Zion trustees must currently transport their personal tools back and forth to complete projects at Zion. Your gift (or donation of tools) will allow them to work more efficiently in caring for our facility.

Roof
Zion's roof was replaced in 2019. See page 9 for our payment status. Remember: it's not about the roof; it's about what happens under the roof and what gets sent out beyond the roof!

UPCOMING EVENTS @ ZION & TRINITY

Please Note! All times and events are subject to change

Morning Prayer (M-F) via Facebook Live at 7:30 a.m. (viewable anytime)

TRIZION **TriZion Youth Group: Sundays at 6:00 p.m. Trinity Manilla Basement**

~~**Christmas Program Practice at Zion:**~~ **Canceled**

December 2, 9, 16 **Midweek Advent Services**
5:45 p.m. worship at Zion
5:30 p.m. supper / 6:30 worship at Trinity

December 5 **Cookie Walk Drive Thru at Trinity (9:00-11:00 a.m.)**

December 6 **Friendsgiving at Trinity (5:00 p.m.)**
HS and College Youth

December 6 **Door Offering for Manteys at Zion**

December 13 **Zion Annual Voters' Meeting**
Immediately following worship

December 17 **Thursday afternoon Communion Service at Zion (1:30 p.m.)**

~~**December 13**~~ **Children's Christmas Programs**
Canceled

December 24 **Trinity**
10:00 Carols and "O" Antiphons
1:00 Family Worship and craft
4:00 Worship with candlelight
Zion
3:00 Worship
7:00 Worship with candlelight

December 25

Trinity: 9:00 Worship
Zion: 10:00 Hymn-sing

December Birthdays and Anniversaries @ Zion & Trinity

Birthdays (T = Trinity)

1. Robert Ewoldt
   Takara Hoffmeier
   Debra Janssen
2. Melodie Boell (T)
   Renee Grimm
   Vera Hodne (T)
   Kamryn Ketcham
   Stephen Muhlbauer
   Emma Schwieso
4. Darlene Asmus
   Janet Gruhn
   Tracie Kurth
   Rozora Schroeder
5. Tiffani Beck
   Jase Hull
   Ross Kusel
   Brian Lage
6. Melissa Lesle
   JoAnn Petersen
   Eryn Ramsey
7. Mike Heaton
8. Annette Hilsabeck
   Brian Stoberl
9. Deb Birks (T)
   Piper Doyel
   Wade Ranniger
10. Athena Bess
    Breyton Johnson
    Keaton Otto
11. Michell Lile (T)
    Jaxen Vollstedt
12. Everlynn Bauer
    Mike Bruch
    Zoey Heaton
13. Tricia Beck
    Courtney Grabill
    Arlene Jahn (T)
    Carla Rodriquez
14. Rachel Hofbauer
    Neeka Jacobsen
15. Cheral Buhr
    Sam Hansen
    Miranda Lingle (T)
    Sheryl Zinke
16. Mabel Langel
17. Octavia Hodne (T)
    Lonnie Jahn (T)
    Derrick Janssen
    Taylor Roe
18. Zane Diersen
    Jay Miller
    Amanda Rosener
19. Gracelyn Pinney
20. Casie Eischeid
    Courtney Eischeid
    Kourtney Grimm
21. Leslee Gore
22. Kathy Vollstedt
23. Shane Boeck (T)
    Joyce Schroeder
    Gary Witt
24. Robert Christensen
    Brittany Page
25. Ben Booth
    Chris Greving
    Carol Joens (T)
26. Brody Chapman
    Larry Mahnke
    Laurene Meeves
27. Eric Ramsey
28. Blake Diersen
    Elissa Riesberg
    Billy Weitl
29. Caden Muhlbauer
30. Cody Eischeid
    Erica Lohrmann
    Ginger Wardrip
31. Larry Ahrendsen
    Amber Ehlers
    Ellie Ranniger

Anniversaries

3. Gene & Colene Lohrmann
4. Karl & Angela Albertsen
   Dennis & Margaret Backhaus
5. Steve & Nancy Muhlbauer
10. Wyatt & Sylvia Bandow (T)
12. Robert & Linnet Nissen
13. Greg & Amber Neumann
14. Bruce & Mary Grimm
23. Carl & Carol French
29. Glen & Shirley Ahrendsen
    Kent & Karen Vollstedt

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

Official Acts

Baptism:

Asher Jay Bauer, son of Rylan Hass & Natalie Bauer; November 14; Pastor Jonathan Conner

Lucy Vetter, daughter of Kiley & Kyle Vetter; November 8; Pastor Andrew Johnson

Funeral:

Phyllis Faye (Nee: Pieper) Lamp; Died November 13; Funeral November 16; Pastor Jonathan Conner & Pastor Robert Riggert

In Our Prayers

Gage Carlson (great grandson of Russ and Virginia Mohr), Maridee Bohlmann (David & Joene Bohlmann's daughter-in-law), Patty Meeves (Laurene's daughter in law), Carolyn Werner, Jeanne Gruhn, Luke England (Ben's brother), Nancy Grimm, Dewayne Buhr, Ron Schilling, Connie Sorbe (Annette Hilsabeck's mother), Nancy Walters, Ron Brus, Sherri Steffes, Jim Deevers, Rick Spack, Natalie Mason (Bruce and Mary Grimm's daughter), Leonard Damman, Gale Vinke, Margaret Backhaus, John Sonnichsen (Bobby Doyel's Brother in law), Rollin Kuhl