

The Zion Bell

October-November, 2009



Come, Gain a View for Eternity
from Zion's Holy Hill

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All Saints Day and Beyond

Last year at this time, our family was saying a long, slow good-bye to my father. That year on All Saints Day, we read his name along with many others, praising God for the life He gave them in this world and in the great beyond.

This year, **we'll read more** names during services that first weekend in November. **We'll praise** God for their lives and hear the wondrous beatitudes that speak of our great reward in heaven. **More likely than not, we'll sing "For All the Saints, Who From Their Labors Rest,"** and I'll either be too choked up to sing the final alleluias or not able to sing **them forcefully enough, depending on what I'm going through at the moment. Then we'll shake hands, head home, and get on with life.**

Lord willing, we'll take more than just the moments we're in church to contemplate our place in life, our vocations, and our hope of the life to come. All too often, we reserve such pondering for Memorial Day, All Saints Day, or the anniversaries of our loved ones' deaths. **Not that we should constantly dwell on** our own mortality (that can very easily lead to depression), **but there is a certain wisdom in finding our lives'** direction by writing our obituary and working backwards.

When my father died, it was amazing to hear the kinds of things folks had to say about him. As his

son, I knew a lot of the stories our friends shared. Then the co-workers came with a lot of new stories **that opened my eyes to a side of his life I didn't see** very often at home. Then some of the people who had worked under him for Ma Bell came and shared still more. Amazing.

Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.
Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted.
Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth.
Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied.
Blessed are the merciful, for they shall receive mercy.
Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.
Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God.
Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.
Blessed are you when others revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

All together, those stories made for quite an obituary, one that I doubt I could ever live up to. Then again, who ever said I had to? Are our callings the same? Do we all have the same interests, friends, and occupations? Hardly. So the **obituaries we'll** never see will be as different as our likes, dislikes, families, jobs, hobbies, and so on.

Ideally, the thing that will be constant in the stories of our lives will be a deep and abiding love of our God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Hopefully, that love will be played out in love and service for one another. Finally, I pray that story will end with a confident walk through whatever final steps our lives will take, giving a powerful witness to those who walk with us of what a solid faith does for a person.

Come this year's All Saints Day (Observed Oct. 31-Nov. 1), we'll be reminded of just how confident and joyful and blessed our life in Christ can be. I pray that the blessings will carry far beyond the Divine Service and into your everyday lives. The peace of the Lord be with you always!

Pastor Schmitt's Top Ten List

I've had more weddings this summer than any year I've been in the ministry! Must be something in the air these days, I guess. Most weddings go very smoothly, apart from the nerves of the Bride and Groom. Most couples manage to plan a dignified, reverent wedding. But every once in a while, things happen that just make a pastor want to cringe:

10. *All the groomsmen defiantly don cowboy hats at the same time in the middle of the ceremony, having been asked to not wear them while in church.*
9. *Twittering during the service—not from inconsiderate guests, but from the birds in the canary cages that went so well with the bridesmaids' yellow dresses!*
8. *Wedding processional request: Send in the Clowns.*
7. *Any of a number of funny sayings painted onto the soles of the grooms shoes, visible when he kneels to receive the Lord's blessing.*
6. *My own half-hearted request to have my dog Moses come bounding down the aisle at the appropriate time in the ceremony with Mary's ring tied around his neck. I wouldn't have done it inside a church, but I could see it being done outside...*
5. *One guest got up during the message and walked down the main aisle, taking pictures of each pewful of people there. (Come on, Mister... I'm trying to preach here!)*
4. *Introducing the couple by the bride's maiden name. (This actually happened to me at the first wedding Mary ever saw me perform—and she still married me!)*
3. *Gratuity-in-kind at one wedding: the leftover plastic forks from the reception and a Bible. (Did I do such a poor job that the couple thought I hadn't read it yet?)*
2. *The video paparazzi guy who felt it was necessary to jump back and forth over the communion rail during the vows to get the "he said/they said" angles. I hope my frowny face in the couples' video brings chuckles, not embarrassment over the years—he did it on his own...*
1. *(This one didn't happen to me, but I've heard it told a number of times) The minister opened his book to the funeral service by mistake and absent-mindedly began reading, "Dearly beloved, Man that is born of woman is of few days and full of trouble. He may come forth as with flowers, but he is soon cut down; he flees as a shadow and continues not."*

What is "Rake It Out"? For sure, it is on Nov. 8!

Assisting the elderly and shut-ins with the fall task of leaf raking will be the kick-off activity for Walking Together Lutheran Ministries. This new joint ministry of outreach and human care will provide a way for LCMS Lutherans throughout the metro to join together and work together in service to the Lord and to people.

On Sunday afternoon, November 8, about 500 Lutherans are anticipated to rake around 100 yards throughout the metro. The event will run from 1 p.m. to approximately 4 p.m. Adults and youth are welcome to participate. All that is needed are volunteers with lawn rakes. Names will come both from the city of Omaha and from our congregations of individuals who can benefit from this event. Watch for more information with details on how you can become involved.

Walking Together Lutheran Ministries has been in the planning stages for over a year and was recently incorporated. A Ministry Plan Task Force has been meeting to establish and prioritize joint activities that Lutherans from all our congregations in the metro can participate in. Bryan Stoltenberg from Zion has been serving on this task force. Two Zion members are serving on the Board of Directors for Walking Together Lutheran Ministries, Doug Wilshusen and Pastor Steve Bartelt.

The details of this "Rake It Out" program are still being finalized. But for now, please put Sunday afternoon, November 8, on your calendar and plan to join many other LCMS Lutherans from all over the city in this fun event.

Zion's Annual Uth Pie Auction & Pie in the Face Contest Sunday, September 27, 11:45 AM

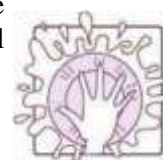


It's that time again when we get to leave the church with wonderful homemade pies, a full belly, and one very lucky individual gets to go home sticky.

This year's Pie Auction is being hosted by Zion's Youth Group. All funds raised will go towards their operating costs (activities, the national youth gathering which is this coming July, servant events, supplies, pizza) so that they can remain a non-budgeted item on the church budget for yet another year.

Lunch will be a potluck, with brats and hotdogs being provided, followed by the pie auction.

All those wishing to see a special someone hit in the face with a pie this year, should see Andrea Roettger to start a vote jar. All votes are \$1.



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clergy appreciation month



Simple acts that feed a shepherd...

10 Ways to Encourage Your Pastor

1. Pray for your pastor.

Ask God to shower your pastor with an abundance of love, hope, joy, faith, peace, power, wisdom, and courage. Pray for maturity and growth in the faith, and that his work among you will be a source of joy for him.

2. Express appreciation verbally.

Your pastor appreciates words of encouragement. Consider sharing complimentary remarks to others about the gifts of your pastor, occasionally in his presence.

3. Express appreciation in writing.

A spoken compliment is always welcome, but a written one can be read over and over again for years. So, when you hear or see something you like from your minister, write an appreciative note.

4. Celebrate with a special meal.

Host a special celebration at which your pastor and his family are the honored guests, or provide a private dinner for him and his family.

5. Use your skills to share a blessing with your pastor.

Are you gifted at lawn care? Are you a mechanic...a wonderful cook? Offer a free service or at a reduced rate.

6. Live in peace.

Appreciation is more than cards and gifts, it's an attitude. Do not get pulled into petty diversions that unnecessarily bring strife and discord. If you hear a negative comment, respond with a positive one. If misinformation is being spread, correct it with the accurate information. Or, if people are gossiping, just

walk away. Not only do you honor your pastor in this way, but you give a practical testimony to God's grace and mercy.

7. Offer to meet a need.

If you're aware of a need in the congregation, approach your pastor saying, "I'd like to help by..." If you see an area that can be improved, take responsibility for contacting the appropriate board or committee, and suggest a plan before you begin working on it. Get involved by teaching a class, leading a workshop, singing in the choir, feeding the hungry. Ask your pastor where and how you can employ your gifts.

8. Lovingly insist on "time off".

Your pastor will need to take time for renewal and rest, but may feel as though there is too much work to get done before he can take a "day off". Help him know that he not only has permission to get appropriate rest and relaxation, but that it will benefit his ministry and provides a good model for the members.

9. Support a strategy for continuing education.

Your pastor desires to be the best he can be in serving you, and will need to remain current with continuing education. Your financial and emotional support in this regard is vital.

10. Identify a "Mutual Ministry" committee.

This is a group of people in your congregation with the gift for caring. This group is completely separate from the elders, church council, or other governing board of the congregation. They represent, serve, and advocate for the needs of the pastor and his family.

Student Ministry Events

NATIONAL YOUTH GATHERING

NEW ORLEANS
JULY 17-21, 2010

DEADLINE: OCT 18TH, \$100

Every 3 years 35,000 High School Lutheran youth from all over the world gather for a 5 day gathering. Next summer it is happening in New Orleans. Check it out at www.lcmgathering.com.

To go you must be at least 14 by the start of the gathering. The cost is \$275, \$100 due on Oct 18, the rest due May 2. See Andrea for more details.



MARTY PARTY

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 1

3:30 PM

FUN FOR ALL AGES!

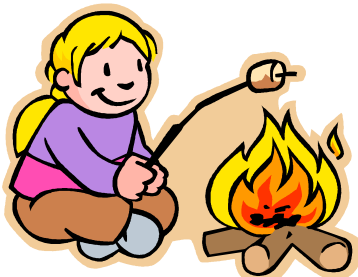
TERRY & VIOLET CHRISTENSEN'S FARM

So what is Marty Party? It is a family event where we celebrate Martin Luther who kicked off the Reformation on October 31, 1517.

This year Marty Party will be held at the Christensen Farm, where we will do fun activities such as hayrack rides, pumpkin crafts, roasting marshmallows and hotdogs around a bonfire, hot apple cider and hot chocolate, and fun games for all the family, maybe even Martin Luther will join us for a story!

Please bring seating for your family and dress to be outside.

The Christensen Farm is located at 11201 N 138th Street, Omaha.



CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS SERVICE

SAT, DEC 19TH @ 6 PM

REHEARSALS: SAT, DEC 5TH, 10:30-11:30 AM &

SAT, DEC 12, 1-2 PM

PK 2 - 8TH GRADE

All children are invited to participate in this year's Children's Christmas Service, "*Messengers for the Messiah*".

There are two practices; in addition the kids will work on their songs during the Sunday School openings at 9:15 AM.

There are parts for all participation levels. **Please sign up for a part on the board in the narthex (starting Nov 7th).**

HIGH SCHOOL YOUTH GROUP

SUNDAYS 6:30-8 PM

CHURCH BASEMENT

All High School youth and their friends are invited to Youth Group every Sunday. There is a devotion and different types of activities, which are picked by the youth the week before. Come join the fun!

MIDWEEK

WED @ 5:30-6:30 PM STARTING SEPT 9

PK4—5TH GRADE

Midweek is a fun filled evening of snacks, games, and crafts all while learning a Bible story.

CONFIRMATION CLASS

The Confirmation classes that will be offered Oct 14—Nov 11 will be: "Our Relationship with Others", "Apostle's Creed, 2nd Article", "Baptism", and "Guy Talk". All classes are on Wednesdays, from 5:30-6:30 PM.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Sept 27	11:45-1:30	Pie Auction
Oct 18		National Youth Gathering Deadline
Nov 1	3:30 - 5:30 PM	Marty Party
Dec 5	10:30-11:30 AM	Children's Christmas Rehearsal
Dec 12	1-2 PM	Children's Christmas Rehearsal
Dec 19	6 PM	Children's Christmas Service
July 17-21, 2010		National Youth Gathering

Rebekah Circle News

There were eight Rebekah members and Pastor Schmitt at the July meeting. Pastor led the devotions titled "The Son of God Goes to War". He also led the Bible study from the Leaguer which was called the "The Gates of Hell Shall Not Prevail".

Judy reported that she had sent a sympathy card to Lisa and Bob Crockett and a thinking of you card to Phil Rummel. She also read several correspondence pieces. Kathy told us the Global Gift Bag tree is up and Zion members are responding generously. Judy was hostess and served dessert pizza and iced tea.

On August 25th eight Rebekah members and their husbands and also Pastor and Mary attended our annual Family Night. We all enjoyed a delicious potluck meal. It happened to be Jerry and Judy's 30th anniversary so it was fun to celebrate with them. Joann then led the group in playing Bunco which we all enjoyed.

Judy sent several cards in August including "thinking of you cards" to Rachel Wandrey, Marlys VanPelt, Sarah Lindau, Susan White, Arlene Logeman, Barb Kruse. She also sent a get well card to Michael Vandervort.

Both circles welcome guests at any of their meetings. Our joint meeting will be on the 19th of September with a salad luncheon. The guest speaker will be Wilma Knapp who will speak about her mission trips. October 4th will be LWML Sunday and on October 11th the circles of the West Zone will meet at Trinity in Murdock for the Fall Rally.

Secretary, Carol Scebold

Lydia Circle News

Nine members, Pastor and one guest, Ruth Braun were present at our July 30th meeting. We opened with a Mite Dedication Prayer in which everyone participated.

A sympathy card was sent to the Bob Crockett family for the loss of Lisa's father, and thinking of you to Phil Rummel. A thank you was read from Bruce & Lois Costar for the photo album they received for their 50th Anniversary.

Marybeth Cohrs will send invitations to the new members of the congregation informing them and inviting them to our afternoon or evening circle meetings.

Pastor led us in a very interesting Bible Study from our Summer Quarterly, "The Gates of Hell Shall Not Prevail." We closed our meeting with the Lord's Prayer and the table prayer.

Joan Graham served refreshments of peach & cherry pie & ice cream, nuts, candy & coffee.

Our August meeting, held on the 27th, began with a potluck brunch in the lower level at 11 a.m. Seven members, Pat and Andrea were present for the brunch.

Eunice Neuhaus, our President opened our meeting with a prayer. Thinking of you cards were sent to Malvin Witt and Marlys VanPelt. We were reminded of our joint meeting on Sept. 19th beginning with a salad luncheon at noon in the Lakeview Room. Wilma Knapp, sister to our member Joan Graham, will be our speaker. Wilma is from St. Luke's Lutheran Church in Madison, NE. She will speak on her Mission trip to Africa. August birthdays were Lois Costar and Dolores Bradley.

After closing with the Lord's Prayer the ladies worked very hard cleaning the kitchen in the lower level. We would really appreciate it if everyone who uses the kitchen would help to keep it clean by wiping up spills in ovens, on burners and in the fridge. Thanks so much!

Secretary, Aleta Neuhaus

PROJECT HOPE

A recent note from the director of Project Hope stated that this summer they were feeding many people who have never had to ask for help before. With unemployment going up, along with the prices of just about everything, even those who were comfortable before need a little extra help these days.

Project Hope also has a pantry site at Holy Cross Lutheran Church on 41st and Terrace Ave. They are serving those in need from Holy Cross the third Thursday of every month from 6:00-8:00p.m.

With these increased needs, Zion's donations become even more important. In these difficult times, it is harder to reach deeper, but every little item helps. If you can only donate one can or box of nonperishable food, it helps!

The featured items for October are canned soups and beans. For November, they are baking supplies such as flour, sugar, baking powder, chocolate chips, etc. and already made cookies. Always very much in need are canned vegetables, canned fruit, peanut butter, baked beans and bathroom tissue.

As always, watch for the sales and take advantage of them. Is there a great deal on something you would not purchase for yourself? Then consider picking it up for Project Hope! This helps you help Project Hope and those who are in great need.

You also can visit Project Hope at their website: www.projecthopeomaha.org. As always, thank you for the donations that are given to help the hungry and poor.

Kathy Rummel
Project Hope, Food Coordinator

GLOBAL GIFT BAGS

Once again, Zion has stepped up to the plate and hit a home run. Even with the late start of setting up the Global Gift Tree, we have nearly collected all the items that are needed for the Gift Bags. We are still short a few toys and about 9 coloring books. I am sure these will be brought in shortly.

We hope to have the Global Gift Bags packed and delivered to the Orphan Grain Train by the end of October so they may be shipped to the orphans in the countries where needed.

We are sorry to say that such a successful and worthwhile mission is ending as of Dec. 31,2009 because of a lack of funding. LHM is hoping to bring the program back or some program similar when funding does become available.

A BIG thank you to all of you who supported this mission not only this year but over the past 5 years that we have been participating. We started with doing 20 gift boxes that were sent to the women of Vietnam and this year we are doing 40 gift bags for orphaned children around the world. Thank you Zion for rising to the challenge.

Also a very Big Thank You to Denise Klaus who stepped in to help set up the tree and continued to see that tags were on the tree. It was greatly appreciated.

Kathy Rummel
Global Gift Tree Coordinator

PROJECT HOPE/OPEN DOOR MISSION

Once again in November we will have our "Christmas Tree" in the narthex that will need to be decorated with caps, mittens, gloves, and scarves for all ages and gender. This tree will remain up through February so we can continue to collect during the cold months.

Deliveries will be made monthly so we can get these to the people who need them. Hopefully there will be some good sales starting in mid fall. Ladies, do you crochet or knit? Perhaps you would like to consider making a hand knit or crocheted contribution to the tree?

We appreciate any and all donations for this local mission. Watch for updates in the bulletin.

The Rebekah & Lydia Circles

POP CAN TABS

Just a little reminder that we are continuing to collect pop can tabs for the Ronald McDonald House. We are now at a little over 28,000. Just bring in your tabs and put them on the counter (east side) of the Lakeview Room. Thank you to those of you who count the tabs and put that count on the bags.