

The Zion Bell

February/March, 2009

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

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Re-Orientation of Priorities

Yup. The markets were brutal in 2008. Home values shrank; stock portfolios tanked; jobs have been and are still being lost; folks are stuck in **houses they can't sell even while being forced to move elsewhere.** . . . In short, the times they are a-tryin'. **So we hear a lot about shifting priorities.** I actually heard a young woman on the radio last fall **exclaim that she learned, "You can't just buy everything you want; you have to just buy the things you need."** **Wow. Such wisdom for our day and age.**

The church will soon enter the season of LENT. During this season we examine the differences between our wants and needs. We want to be a part of this world with all its shiny trifles; we need to be a part of the world to come through our faith in Jesus Christ. **We want to have the fame this world offers; we need to find favor in God's eyes through Christ's sacrifice alone. We want to make our own rules; we need to see the end of such a path leads only to our destruction.**

So we take this time to jar ourselves out of spiritual complacency by setting aside the wants of this world to focus on the needs of the Spiritual world. Especially this year, I strongly encourage each and every one of you to make the Divine Service a priority in your lives. Set aside time to attend the midweek dinners and services as well to grow in fellowship with other members of Zion and in faith **toward our Lord Jesus Christ. Lent is not "Feel Sorry for Jesus" time; Lent is a time for us to re-orient ourselves toward a life that is devoted in faith toward Christ and in love toward one another.**

One of the terrible consequences of this economic downturn is the number of people that have taken their own lives. While some high-profile cases have made news, I worry about others who have so oriented themselves toward amassing earthly wealth

that the wealth of heavenly treasure is of no consequence to them. All earthly things will disappoint; only God will constantly delight us.

So how do we go about this re-orientation? When we were in Scouts, we learned that this term **comes from the word for "East."** **So once you find East with the rising sun, you're good to go, knowing where you're going. If you've got a compass, you're even better off as you can find your direction regardless of the time of day.** But even with a compass, there are local magnetic variations that can mislead you without a good magnetic map. Better yet is the North Star, which always directs us due north when all around is dark.

Where do you find your "East" Spiritually?

You find it in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. You find it in the life He led, the teachings He taught, and the promises He gave to us. We see in the cross the power in our lives to crucify all earthly passions, lusts and greed. We see in the resurrection a promise that regardless of the wealth we shall all one day leave to heirs and the IRS, we shall all be equally rich in the bliss of eternal life forevermore.

If you don't think this orientation toward Christ's life, death and resurrection are going to "do it" for you in terms of enriching your life this year, I would encourage you all the more to attend our services this Lenten season to re-vitalize your faith, to fix your eyes once more on Jesus, to set your heart where true joys are to be found. Let us look "to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God." (Hebrews 12:2) Pretty good return on that investment, huh?

*Facing the Storms of Life:
A Study of St. Paul's Shipwreck on Malta*

From the many minor problems we face each day to the major tragedies of life, we all suffer hardship. Even one of the most faithful servants of God, St. Paul, suffered sickness, financial problems, persecution, and a harrowing shipwreck on a Mediterranean island where he lost everything but the clothes on his back. Come and join us for a lively discussion and study on the last few chapters of the Book of Acts where we will examine the life struggles of St. Paul's as he served the Lord and how we can use his example as we face our own storms of life. This study, presented by Bob Vandervort, will begin on February 1 at 9:30 AM in the Lakeview Room.

CHRISTIANITY 101

Beginning February 1 and running for nine weeks, there will be a "Christianity 101" class led by Pastor Schmitt during the Bible Class hour. This class will be held in the Sanctuary. We will be covering the very basics of the faith from the existence of God to the nature of the Bible to the basic teachings of salvation by grace alone, through faith alone, on account of Christ alone. This is structured for those new to the faith, but is useful also as a refresher to those long in the faith. All are welcome; questions are encouraged. This class will also serve as our "New Member" class during this time.

Thanks to the many musicians who shared their talents with us at Christmastime: Katie Elder, Tori Klaus, Sarah Lindau, Danielle Rayman, Ryan Smelser, and Vicky Vandervort, who all added so much with their instruments; and to the many singers - soloists, ensemble, and choir - who proclaimed the Word of God through their voices! You helped make the services very special. It was my great pleasure and delight to work with all of you!

~ Lynne Eifert ~

INSTALLATION—OFFICERS AND BOARDS

New and Carry-over officers and board members will be installed into their respective offices at all services Jan. 31-Feb. 1. Our thanks to all whose terms are closing and to all to whom their torches are passed.

INFORMATION UPDATE

If you have had a change of address or phone number in the past year, please call the church office so we may keep our database current and ready for the next membership directory. 493-1744 ~ Thank you!

Pastor Schmitt's

Top Ten List

On February 17, 2009, TV changes from Analog to Digital. If you are unaware of this, good for you, because that must mean you haven't watched a second of television for the last year. I'm finally old enough to regale the young un's with stories about my family's first TV (at least that I remember):

10. *Channels 2-12 ONLY. Why would you need more?*
9. *It was full color, as long as the colors you wanted were black, white, light gray, medium gray, darker gray...*
8. *Rabbit ears the size of Montana.*
7. *Lots of pretty glowing tubes in the back that smelled funny. Dad changed the dead ones regularly with new ones we'd buy at the TV or hardware store.*
6. *It weighed three thousand pounds and stood four feet high and five feet wide, but the screen itself was only about a foot wide. After we got a new TV, Dad turned the old cabinet into a storage cabinet downstairs for a while.*
5. *The middle of the channel knob was metal and would shock you if you touched it. Looking back, I'm pretty sure that this was not the way it was designed.*
4. *In Kansas City, Channel 4 was NBC; 5 CBS, 9 ABC. As far as we knew, there were no other stations; we felt sorry for relatives out in the country who couldn't get ALL THREE stations!*
3. *I had heard of a wonderful program called "Sesame Street" but you had to have a special TV to see it on channel 19, so I don't think I knew who Bert and Ernie were until I was almost in High School.*
2. *Back then, Dad had a great remote: He told us kids to change the channel, and it got changed.*

And the number 1 thing I seem to remember about that old TV:
 1. *The shows on it were a lot funnier and less bloody; Pastors and Priests were always the good guys and never the bad guys; Normal families went to church and that was a good thing; People on that old TV didn't swear or make bathroom jokes or talk about what went on behind bedroom doors; You could trust what the people said on the news and Johnny Carson was always on at 10:30. I miss those things, especially Johnny.*

Student Ministry Events

VIDEO GAME NIGHT

Sunday, Feb 8

5-7:30 PM

6th-12th Grade



Join us for an evening of video games and pizza. You may bring games for a Wii or PS2 or bring another gaming system plus games. (Games should be in good taste, Rock Band = bring, Halo = leave at home)

We will have free pizza and other activities. Bring friends.

Sign up in the youth room!

LOCK-IN

March 6-7

7 PMish -7 AMish

6th-12th Grade

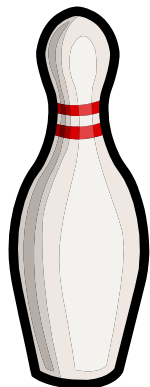
\$20

Join us for our annual city wide lock-in with the other area Lutheran churches on Friday night, March 6th.

Throughout the night we will be out in Omaha - ice skating, playing broomball, bowling, watching a movie, going to a live concert, Bible study and much, much more.

We don't have all the details just yet, but you will need a permission slip (located in youth room) & \$20 turned in by Feb 22nd. Friends are welcome to attend.

More details to follow!



SERVANT EVENT

INFORMATIONAL MEETING

Sunday, Feb 22nd

11:45 AM - Lakeview Room

6th Grade - Adult

This year's Servant Event will be in Omaha. We will stay at the church and do servant activities for both the church and other community organizations of Omaha. We will also have Bible studies and fun activities during the evenings.



At this short meeting we will decide the dates for this event. Bring your schedule!

SAVE THE DATE!

Vacation Bible School

June 7-11

6-8:20 PM



UPCOMING EVENTS

Feb 8	Video Game Night
Feb 15	Valentine's Dinner
Feb 22	Servant Event Meeting
March 6-7	Lock In
April 12	Easter Egg Hung
April 19	Dodge Ball
May 1	High School Scavenger Hunt
June 7-11	Vacation Bible School

Valentine Dinner

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 15, 2009

Serving from 5 ~ 7:30 PM

♥ Menu ♥

Choice of: **Chicken, Beef Tips, or Lasagna Rollatini**
Rice or Red Potatoes or Mashed Potatoes
Dinners includes: **salad, green beans, bread,**
angel food cake with strawberries, and
beverage

♥ Location ♥

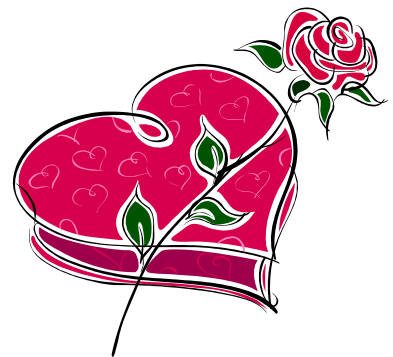
Zion Lutheran Church - Lakeview Room



♥ Price Per Person ♥

\$15.00 (Advance)

\$17.50 (At the Door)



♥ Services Available ♥

Live Music, Onsite Babysitting, Pictures,
Valet Parking, Coat Check, Open “Bar”

This dining experience is hosted by ZIGGY
(Zion’s Inspired Group of God’s Youth)

Tickets are available for sale before/after church and by phone 493-1744

DID YOU KNOW ZION HAS A LIBRARY?

Come and see what Zion's library has to offer you—with many books for family and personal devotions, children's stories, and much more. Can't find what you are looking for? Leave us a note and we can get the book for you.

The Library is located on the main level by the sanctuary in the MPR room, also known as the choir room.



EASTER CANDY NEEDED



Candy donations are needed for our Easter Egg Hunt on April 12th. Please drop off egg sized, individually wrapped candy to the church office no later than Sunday, April 5th.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!

Interested in heading up an area of Vacation Bible School? VBS has many areas that need you, such as: crafts, the opening, music, games, Bible stories, Bible challenge, and much more. See Andrea to see how you can help!



Chili & Chicken Noodle Soup Dinner

Mt. Calvary Lutheran School will have their Annual Chili & Chicken Noodle Soup Dinner on February 8, 2009 in the church social hall from 11:30—1:30. We will also serve bread, carrots & celery, beverage and desserts with our very tasty soups. Tickets will be available at the door: Adults—\$5, Seniors—\$4, Children 4-11—\$2.50, Children 3 and under eat free. Proceeds will benefit Mt. Calvary Lutheran School. We would love to have you join us!

Special Worship Times—LENT & EASTER

Feb. 25, Ash Wednesday	4:30 & 7:00 PM
Mar. 4, Midweek Service	4:30 & 7:00 PM
Mar. 11, Midweek Service	4:30 & 7:00 PM
Mar. 18, Midweek Service	4:30 & 7:00 PM
Mar. 25, Midweek Service	4:30 & 7:00 PM
April 1, Midweek Service	4:30 & 7:00 PM

Dinner served 5:15—7:00 PM (above dates)

April 9, Maundy Thursday	4:30 & 7:00 PM
April 10, Good Friday	1:00 & 7:00 PM
April 11, Easter Vigil	6:00 PM
April 12, Easter Sunday	8:00, 10:30 AM

CONCORDIA JR/SR HIGH SCHOOL

Concordia Lutheran Schools of Omaha has an opening for a Math/Physics teacher and a Spanish teacher. Interested applicants must have or can obtain a current NE teacher certificate, be willing to belong to one of the Concordia Omaha Assn. congregations, preferably a Lutheran college graduate. Interested applicants can send their resume to: Matt Korte, Principal, Concordia Jr/Sr High, 15656 Fort St., Omaha, NE, 68116. Resumes will be reviewed and applications sent to select individuals. Call the Concordia Jr/Sr High office at 445-4000 if you have questions.

Coffee and Donuts

On the bulletin board by the Lakeview Room there is a sign-up sheet for anyone who would like to serve coffee and donuts after the 8:00 service. You could do it for an occasion such as an anniversary or birthday.

All it requires is to bring donuts, cookies, or anything delicious, make coffee (coffee and kool-aid already bought and in the cupboard), serve, and clean up.

Thank you to the Lydia Circle and Tregan & Dawn Beck for providing these treats for the months of December and January.

Also, *Lenten suppers* will be starting February 25, Ash Wednesday. If anyone would like to plan and serve a supper, we will have a sign-up sheet on the bulletin board by the Lakeview Room. Any questions, call the church office.

~ Board of Fellowship ~



Rebekah Circle News

On December 16th ten Rebekah members, one guest and Pastor Schmitt met at the Lakeview Room, despite the snowy evening, for the circles annual Christmas party. There was a short meeting to discuss a request from a person in need of food for her family. Our members agreed to purchase the food and bring it to the church. That person was able to pick it up before Christmas.

The group enjoyed a meal of soups, rolls, relish and bars for dessert which Joann and Carol had prepared. The short program was a reading of the traditional Christmas story along with singing several Christmas songs.

Members brought unwrapped toys for children of families who come to Project Hope. Those were collected and Kathy will deliver them soon. Rebekah members also exchanged small gifts with one another.

The officers of both circles met on December 20th and planned the program for 2009. It will be reviewed at the January 27th meeting. There will be a Bible study at that meeting and guests are always welcome.

Carol Scebold, Secretary

Lydia Circle News

We met on November 20th with Pastor, six members and two guests, Marguerite Sandelin and Shirley Lang, present.

Christian Growth leader read an article "Things We Should be Thankful for". It is easy to be thankful for the good things. A life of fulfillment comes to those who are thankful for the setbacks. Gratitude can turn a negative into a positive. Find a way to be thankful for your troubles and they can become your blessings!

Pastor opened our Bible Study with prayer. We did the Bible Study from the Fall Quarterly, "The Wellspring of Joy".

The secretary and treasurer's reports were given and a thank you note was read from Project Hope for all we do for them. It was suggested to bring a roll of wrapping paper and a new toy early in December.

No names were available for election of secretary and treasurer. A motion was made, seconded and carried to accept the offer of our secretary and treasurer to serve another term. Thank you Aleta & Connie. Eunice & Marybeth both have one more year to serve as President and Vice President.

Lois Costar gave an update on our Baking Event on November 22 & 23. Thanks to all who helped make the Baking Event a success. The proceeds will be divided between Project Hope and Open Door Mission. Matching funds from Thrivent will be divided between the Circles.

There was discussion on the changes of the constitution. It will be voted on at the January meeting. Our charitable giving will also be done in January.

Connie Hagen and Joan Graham offered to be in charge of refreshments to serve between services on December 14th.

Our potluck Christmas party was December 18th. Hostesses were Eunice Neuhaus and Elaine Raabe. After fun and games we packed 7 plates of Christmas cookies for our shut-ins. We welcomed Shirley Lang who is our newest member of the Lydia Circle. Shirley's mother was a guest at our Christmas party.

That's all for the year 2008, see you again in 2009.

Aleta Neuhaus, Secretary

PROJECT HOPE

Project Hope is very grateful for all the donations that Zion has given to Project Hope in December and January. Besides the food donations, we have delivered knitwear, toys, wrapping paper and gift boxes from the Cub Scouts. A thank you note is on the bulletin board near the Lakeview Room.

The featured items for February are beans, either dried or canned, and for March it is canned soups or stew. Please also keep in mind that every time a bag of food (called a pantry) is given out it includes the following: cereal, canned chicken or tuna, pasta, canned fruit, peanut butter, canned vegetables, tomato sauce, pork & beans, canned soup or Ramen noodles, macaroni & cheese, crackers, popcorn and a package of cookies. So any of these items are so very much appreciated as well as the items that the clients cannot purchase with their food stamps such as soaps, deodorant, toothbrushes and toothpaste, hair care products, etc.

Project Hope is meant to be an "emergency" food pantry for their clients until these people can find other means to assist them. Therefore, the clients can only visit Project Hope 4 time in one 12 month period of time. As an "emergency" food pantry, you can see why our donations are so very important.

Once again, Project Hope will be participating in the Feinstein Challenge that will start in March and run through April. Every food item donated during the challenge counts as \$1 towards the Feinstein Challenge. Based on how much is collected determines what percent Project Hope will get of the \$1 million challenge. We will have reminders in the bulletin when the time comes.

We continue to collect books for Project Hope, especially Christian devotionals. You may put these in our Project Hope cart along with the food donations.

Thank you to everyone at Zion who continues to assist and donate to Project Hope.

Kathy Rummel, Project Hope Food Coordinator

PROJECT HOPE / OPEN DOOR MISSION TREE

At the time of this writing we have not cleared the Project Hope/Open Door Mission tree. This will be done on Feb. 1st. The tree is filling up and we are hoping that each of these missions will receive approximately 25 items. Thank you to everyone who has been generous in their donations and keeping the tree "decorated".

CARD COUNTER

Please feel free to stop by the Card Counter in the narthex and see our selection of greeting cards for most occasions. Single cards are only 50 cents and boxes have various prices, mostly under \$5.

We now have the Valentine cards available and in March we will have Easter and Confirmation cards and napkins available.

POP CAN TABS

We continue with our collection of pop can tabs for the Ronald McDonald House. Please bring you tabs to the Lakeview Room where there is a container as well as a small "Ronald McDonald House" to put your tabs in. Watch the bulletin in the weeks ahead for the total collected to date.