

The Zion Bell

May, 2007

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

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Conformation or Confirmation???

Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God--this is your spiritual act of worship. Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is--his good, pleasing and perfect will. – Romans 12:1-2

It happens all the time that people misspell the word "Confirmation" as "Conformation." In a way, I can see why. After all, we're asking them to conform their lives to the Law, to conform to a way of God-serving-us worship that is by nature foreign to our we-must-serve-God instincts, and so on. But what's going on Sunday, April 29 at the 10:30 service is a CONFIRMATION. It's confirming the promises God made at the person's Baptism that forgiveness of sins, life, and salvation are held out to that person, and s/he receives them through Spirit-given faith.

A quick cruise through the Scripture shows that whenever "conforming" occurs, it is to the ways of the world, and that whenever "confirming" occurs it is generally the Lord's work in relation to His covenant with His people. This confirming of God's covenant of love happens throughout the Old Testament and is ultimately confirmed in our Lord Jesus Christ: *Christ has become a servant of the Jews on behalf of God's truth, to confirm the promises made to the patriarchs so that the Gentiles may glorify God for his mercy. –Romans 15:8*

So once again, we need to ask ourselves at this upcoming Confirmation ceremony, "Who's running the verbs?" This helps us to differentiate between acts of the Law (what we are commanded to do and forbidden from doing) and acts of the Gospel (gracious acts from God on our behalf). While the Lutheran Church rightly views the Rite of Confirmation as something other than a Sacrament, is it an instrument of the Gospel? Let's see.

From the Catechism: "What is Confirmation?"

Confirmation is: **A. Instruction in the Christian life.** Note the verse beginning this letter. OUR active-voiced actions that are forbidden are conforming ourselves to the world. The passive-voiced action that allows this to happen is we are to "BE transformed by the renewing of [our minds]." Remember that long, long explanation of the third article of the creed? "I believe that I cannot by my own reason or strength believe in Jesus Christ, my Lord, or come to Him...?" That's Gospel action at work in us!

B. An opportunity to make a public profession of faith. [Jesus asked,] "Who do you say I am?" Simon Peter answered, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God." Jesus replied, "Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah, for this was not revealed to you by man, but by my Father in heaven." -Matthew 16:15-17
Who's running the show behind Peter's Confession? The same one who's behind the profession of faith our confirmands will make on Sunday: Our Lord.

C. A public rite to make a lifelong pledge of fidelity. OK, you've got me here. The actual rite with the robes, flowers, and pictures for the wall is a custom of the church, neither commanded nor forbidden by the Lord. However, the public confessions made within this rite are not without witness or promise in the Scriptures: "Whoever confesses me before men, I will also confess him before my Father in heaven. But whoever denies me before men, I will deny him before my Father in heaven. -Matthew 10:32-33

So then, on Sunday, who's at work? The kids making promises? Or the Father confirming His promises? Like always, it is the Lord at work. We pray that He will continue to work mightily in the lives of our confirmation students this year! In addition, let us remember God's promise to us, and reconfirm those promises so that we no longer CONFORM to the world, but CONFIRM God's Gospel-centered work in us!

Pastor Schmitt's

Top Ten List

Concordia University Wisconsin's Alleluia Ringers are coming to Zion on May 16 at 7:30 PM to give a concert of both Sacred and secular music, both written for handbells and transcribed from orchestral work. These ringers are amazing in what they're able to do with bells. I once went on such a tour with a handbell choir that was an attachment to much better concert vocal choir. Still, it was a lot of fun, even with the long bus rides! It was on these rides that I learned the Top Ten Signs You've Spent Too Much Time On A Bus With The Same People:

10. You will never be able to name any of your children with any of your fellow choir member's names for fear they'll turn out the same way.

9. People ask your name on tour, and your reply is "12C."

8. Even though there are 55 people on tour, and every one of them has a black rolling suitcase, you can still instantly match up every one with its proper owner at sight.

7. You're hoping it will be at least several years before you have to eat fast food again.

6. Your roommate's clever jokes from the first night that kept you up laughing half the night? They're tonight's top ten reasons to wish you were deaf.

5. You've used the bus restroom so many times, not only CAN you use it in the dark, you PREFER to do so, so as not to see its present condition.

4. The hair on the back of your head is permanently flattened. Hair dryers, mousse, etc. are no help. (Ever wonder why tour groups always perform facing you and NEVER turn around???)

3. It's a good thing you can literally play your parts in your dreams—sometimes you're so tired while playing you're not sure whether you're awake or not.

2. You start throwing your bells at the director. (OK, it's not always a sign you've been on tour too long. Sometimes it's just what you do. Right, Mary?)

And the number one sign you've been on a bus tour too long:

1. You start to LIKE the smell of bus exhaust!

Confirmation Sunday, April 29 10:30 Service

This year's confirmation students will be:

Kelsie Bridgeford,
Taylor Brunmeier,
Eric Curry,
Jasmine Dorau,
Tori Klaus,
Jasmyn Krueger,
Andrew Price,
Nick Sedlacek,
Ryan Smelser,
and Ben Wichelt

Their questioning will be Friday, April 27 at 7:00 PM in the Lakeview Room. All Elders, parents, family and friends are welcome to attend. Refreshments will be served.



Special Concert!!

On Wednesday, May 16, at 7:30 PM, The Alleluia Ringers from Concordia University Wisconsin under the direction of Dr.

John Behnke will perform

HERE at Zion Lutheran Church, 144th and Ida in Omaha. This select 13-member ensemble will perform arrangements of hymns and spirituals, transcriptions of orchestral works, and original works for handbells and hand-chimes. The Alleluia Ringers have performed throughout the United States, Germany, Scandinavia, and Latvia. A freewill offering will be received. Don't miss seeing these incredible musicians!

Capture the Flag & Pizza

6th - 12th Graders
Sunday, May 20
4:30-6 PM
Standing Bear Lake

Join us for an afternoon of Capture the Flag at Standing Bear Lake. Free pizza and pop will be available to all participants. Bring friends.



We will be meeting at the pavilion which is located off the entrance closest to 131 and Military.

In order to have enough pizza, please RSVP by Noon of that day.



Coffee and Goodies

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 on Sundays. 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 the coffee (coffee and kool-aid already bought and in the cupboard), serve, and clean up.

Thank you to Eunice Muller, Rebekah Circle, and Flavio and Sheri Sanchez for providing these treats for the month of April.

~Board of Fellowship~

JUNE & JULY NEWSLETTER

The June and July issues of the *Bell* will be combined next month. Please keep this in mind as you submit articles for the next newsletter.



Vacation Bible School

Sun, June 10 - Thurs, June 14
6-8:30 PM
Dinner starting at 5 PM

Join a Small Group!

Sunday Night Bible Study
Sundays, 6:30-7:30 PM
Upper MPR Room



Join Buck Wehrbein as his small group studies the book of James.

Young Adults Bible Study
Sunday, Date: TBA
Time: TBA

The Young Adults (18-39ish) meet on Sunday nights and are currently studying the book of Proverbs. Newcomers are always invited. Watch bulletin for date and time.



NEW HISPANIC MINISTRY

The new Hispanic Ministry located out of Cross Lutheran is well under way. They need a contact person from each of the churches. They would like this person to attend their meetings, but if this is not possible, an email or an address to which they could send the minutes would work too. In this way each church could be kept abreast of what is happening. If you would like to be the contact person for Zion, please call the church office.



Student Ministry Upcoming Events

May 20 Capture the Flag 6-12 grade
June 10-14 Vacation Bible School
June 16 Bennington Daze Parade
June 22-23 Float Trip-Families



REBEKAH CIRCLE NOTES

The March 27th meeting of the Rebekah Circle, held in the Lakeview room was attended by twelve members and Pastor Schmitt. Jane gave the Opening devotion titled "An Amazing Contradiction" from 2 Corinthians 12:10.

Pastor led the group in a lively game of Bible Trivia dividing us into groups of three, played along the lines of "Millionaire". Every group passed level seven with one answering all ten questions.

Joann called the meeting to order. The minutes were read and approved and the treasurer's report given. Judy gave the Sunshine report with Sympathy to Dom Pistillo (sister) and Get Well to Stan Scebold. Mites were collected.

The Project Hope collection is Mac and cheese and cans of fruits and vegetables would help make a complete meal. We are still in the Feinstein Challenge, hoping to pass last year's total of about 1400 items.

We discussed the India Project for Children and reviewed the items to be collected. Kathy informed us that there are Easter cards and napkins available at the card counter.

A few of our members are planning on attending the Tri-zone Workshop on April 15th at First Lutheran in Plattsmouth. The program will be on the Sudanese mission in Omaha and a collection of useful items will be presented to them.

Because of conflicts, the date of the Mighty Muffin Sunday will be May 6th. The Circles will be serving the muffins and the proceeds will go to Mites.

The meeting closed with Lord's Prayer. LaDonna served a delicious pastry with ice cream and nuts and mints. Our April meeting will be on the 24th with the program being "Ask The Pastor". If you have biblical or church related questions, please feel free to join us. You are always welcome.

Secretary, Mary Christensen



LYDIA CIRCLE NOTES

Our last meeting was held March 29th at 1:30 with 7 members present. Christian Growth leader read a poem "Are We Doing All We Can For Our Lord?" Do we think about what the Lord has done for us, giving His life for us? What do we do in return?

A thank you note was read from Project Hope. Get well cards were sent to Stan Scebold and Ethel Schneider and sympathy to Dolores Bradley and Dom Pistillo.

Our share for the boxes to be sent to the children in India will be \$45. The tree with the tags for this project will be put up after Easter.

Eunice Neuhaus read an article from the Concordia University Guild about Marilyn Walz, a member of our congregation who was chosen Nebraska mother of the year. Congratulations to Marilyn!

Mitey Muffin Sunday is May 6th. Several ladies offered to bring muffins and also to help after the services.

"Gifts from The Heart" kits for the convention in Sioux City in June are listed in the Leaguer. We can each choose whichever one we would like to donate and have them here by the May meeting so someone going to the convention can take them.

There was some discussion on the use of our church kitchens.

Pastor led us in playing Bible Trivia and we closed with the Lord's Prayer.

Lois Costar served a delicious spring dessert, nuts, candy and coffee for refreshments.

The Tri Zone Workshop was held April 15th at First Lutheran in Plattsmouth. Four ladies from the Lydia and Rebekah Circles attended. Pastor Richard Boring showed slides from Sudan and Sudanese women and children sang for us. There is a Lutheran Sudanese congregation here in Omaha and King of Kings has quite a few Sudanese members. Pastor Ronald Holling gave the prayer for the Dedication of the Offerings gathered that day. A skit was given by Bethany's Teen Tetras (LWML). The offering and ingathering items brought in that day were given to the Sudanese Mission.

Secretary, Aleta Neuhaus

PROJECT HOPE BOOK BANK

Easter blessings to you all! Once again I'd like to thank everyone who has donated items for the Book Bank at Project Hope. We have received so many wonderful children's books, adult books and devotional material and continue to add to the Book Bank. A special thank you to the churches that provided The Very First Easter books which we shared during Holy Week. At this time, we have enough National Geographic magazines and Readers' Digest books on hand.

Thank you again for your continued support.

~ Cindy Sadowski, Book Bank Coordinator



LWML NATIONAL CONVENTION

The LWML National Convention is in Sioux Falls, SD this coming June 21-24. Several members of the Lydia and Rebekah Circles will be attending the Convention. As part of the convention, there will be a collection of "Gifts from the Heart" that will be given to agencies in Sioux Falls as well as the Orphan Grain Train. The Circles here at Zion have decided to put together Bath Towel Kits and Health Kits. You, as part of Zion, can help in this mission effort by donation any of the following items and putting them in the plastic bin in the narthex labeled "Gifts From the Heart". The items that are needed are:

Bath Towel Hand Towel Wash Cloth

For the Health Kits, the following are needed:

Bar Soap Shampoo Comb
Lotion Deodorant Toothbrush, Toothpaste

All items are to be new and regular size, **not** travel size.

We need all items no later than June 10th so the Circles may assemble them into kits in time to be taken to the Convention.

MITEY MUFFIN SUNDAY

The Rebekah and Lydia Circles' annual Mitey Muffin Sunday is coming up the weekend of May 5th & 6th. After each service, delicious homemade muffins will be served by members of the Circles. A free will offering will be taken to be sent in as a special Mite offering to LWML.

Some of the Mission Projects that these mites support are Orphan Grain Train, Leadership training for Kenya, Camp Luther, Concordia Seminary Food & Clothing Co-op in Ft. Wayne, Trinity/HOPE in Haiti, Alaska Mission for Christ, Lutheran Blind Mission, Refurbishing of the Lutheran Student Center at Wayne State College, LCMS World Missions in Kyrgyzstan, Lutheran Family Services for FACES, Bibles for International Student Ministry, and for Scholarships. These District Mission grants total more than \$60,000. That is why every mite offering, no matter how small helps with these mission projects.

So please plan on joining us for delicious muffins after the services on May 5th and 6th. Or if you rather, we will also be offering the muffins to be taken home and enjoyed there.

Thank you in supporting our mission projects.

The Lydia & Rebekah Circles.

GLOBAL CARE PACKAGES

As was reported last month, the Lydia & Rebekah Circles have decided to support this year's Global Care Packages for the children of India. In the past, the Circles have supported these gift packages to the women of Vietnam, Uganda, and Uruguay. An "India Tree" will be set up in May and have tags on them that list each individual item needed. Please read the tags carefully as some items will be specified for certain ages as well as for a girl or boy.

Many children of India were left orphaned by the Tsunami on December 26, 2004 especially in Tamil Nadu. As part of the ongoing efforts to share the Gospel in Tamil Nadu, these care packages are being collected. The Lutheran Hour Ministries ministry center in India will use the care packages filled with school supplies, a hygiene kit, and a toy, as a way to share the good news of Jesus to thousands of children.

As in the past, all you need to do is select a tag or tags, purchase the item and put it in the basket marked "India Global Care Packages". If you have any questions at all, please feel free to contact me.

Kathy Rummel,
Global Care Packages, Coordinator

PROJECT HOPE

I do not have all the numbers as of yet, but through April 16th we collected over 1200 food item for Project Hope for the Einstein Challenge. With a couple more weeks to be included, I am sure we have collected over 1400 food items and perhaps even passed that mark which would have been more than we collected last year for the challenge. Watch the bulletin for final totals.

The featured items for the month of May are soaps (bar, dish, or **dry** laundry). These are items that the clients of Project Hope **cannot** buy with their food stamps. Other items that the clients cannot buy with their food stamps are diapers, deodorant, toothbrushes and toothpaste, mouthwash, feminine hygiene products, hair products such as combs & brushes, shaving cream, shoe laces, razors, bathroom tissue and Kleenex.

As always, macaroni & cheese, peanut butter, canned fruits, and any and all other food items are so greatly appreciated.

Kathy Rummel
Project Hope Food Coordinator