



ST. PAUL-ZION DUAL PARISH FEBRUARY 2024

A Few Thoughts from Pastor

"Yet even now," declares the LORD, "return to Me with all your heart, with fasting, with weeping, and with mourning; and rend your hearts and not your garments." Return to the LORD, your God, for He is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love; and He relents over disaster.
Joel 2:12-13



During Advent we prepared for His coming, and during Christmas we celebrated that God had taken on our flesh and become Man. During Epiphany we marveled and rejoiced in the fact that the Baby, the Boy, the Man Jesus IS God (literally Immanuel – God with us)!



And now we are in the midst of the “*gesima*” Sundays, a two and a half week “pre-Lent” if you will, during which we prepare ourselves for the 40 days leading up to Easter; a preparatory season for the preparatory (& penitential) season of Lent. And when we prepare well ... oh what joy Easter morning will bring.

Now forty days is not an insignificant amount of time. A 40-day trip or vacation would likely require a fair amount of forethought and preparation, and so we too would do well to prepare for our upcoming 40-day (from Ash Wednesday to the Saturday after Good Friday ... not counting Sundays) Lenten “journey.”

And the reason for our pre-Lent (and Lenten) preparations and special efforts and self-discipline? Well, nothing more than that we might arrive again at Easter in a manner befitting God’s holy people; that we might bask in the glorious glow of new life on Easter morning and add our voices to those of the angels, archangels, and all the saints who have gone before us as we sing loud Alleluias to the King of all creation!



So during Lent we prepare for Easter, and on Easter (and every “little” Easter or Sunday thereafter) we celebrate! We celebrate our Lord and Savior’s life, death, AND resurrection. We celebrate His victory over sin, death, and the devil **FOR US**; His victory (and by grace, our victory) and triumph over all our enemies. We celebrate His accomplished work of salvation even as we continue to look forward to His return. We celebrate and proclaim, “Alleluia, Alleluia, Christ is risen!”

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And so, to that Easter-focused end, I invite (& challenge) you to prepare for Lent during this time of “pre-Lent.” Prayerfully consider how you might better prepare yourself this year. Consider how you might find or make more time to seriously consider and ponder our Lord’s passion and all its implications. Ask yourself how you might reflect on your own sins and life to better prepare to hear once again of our Savior’s death and resurrection. And remember, without a little extra effort and planning the 40 days of Lent will likely fly by, and while you probably won’t “miss” Easter, you may not be as prepared for it as you could (or should) be, either.

So, am I just wanting everybody to simply give something up for Lent as some people do (or at least talk about doing)? No, not really, although such measures can be a helpful way of disciplining our bodies to remind ourselves that we **are not** slaves to our earthly wants and desires. And I suppose if you were really set on “giving something up” I might suggest “giving up” your normal Wednesday evening plans and replacing them with our mid-week Lenten services. There we will focus on our Lord’s passion and suffering and we will consider and ponder the implications of all that surrounds His suffering and death; and we will be reminded of our great sin AND His even greater love.

And then, in addition to gathering with the rest of the church on Wednesday evenings, you may want to consider devoting yourself to prayer a little more each day during Lent. Pick a time (morning, evening, or something convenient) and a prayer (Lord’s Prayer, Luther’s morning or evening prayer, collect of the week, psalms, etc.) and spend some time just talking to God each day. Pray for a different family member or friend each day, or just pray for your pastor (God knows he needs and covets such prayers).

Fast



Give

And if you’d really like to be prepared, might I suggest reading a chapter (or more) from the Bible each day, or digging out your old catechism and reading about a fortieth of it each day. Or find your old Bible History book and reread the stories you once learned as a child. Or start going to Sunday morning Bible class. Just find or do something this Lenten season to better prepare yourself for Easter.

Prepare



Pray

And if you miss a day or forget ... don’t quit!!! ... just start again, right away, and soon it may become a habit, a very good habit, one that helps keep you connected with God through His Son, Jesus Christ. It’s how the Spirit works, through His Word; it’s how He makes and keeps you holy. I guess that makes the Spirit the “*Holyfier*” ... but that’s a thought for another newsletter And if you need help or direction or encouragement, let me know, that’s part of what I’ve been sent here to do.

Scripture records that Jesus once fasted and prayed in the wilderness for 40 days, and He was tempted just as we are ... and so I’ll leave you this month with the words of this Lenten hymn:

*O Lord, throughout these forty days
 You prayed and kept the fast;
 Inspire repentance for our sins,
 And free us from our past.*

*You strove with Satan, and You won;
 Your faithfulness endured;
 Lend us Your nerve, Your skill and trust
 In God’s eternal Word.*

*Though parched and hungry, yet You prayed
 And fixed Your mind above;
 So teach us to deny ourselves,
 Since we have known God’s love.*

*Be with us through this season, Lord,
 And all our earthly days,
 That when the final Easter dawns,
 We join in heaven’s praise.*

Lutheran Service Book - 418

In Christ,
Pastor Holle

Stewardship



Caring for My Neighbor

If any of the Ten Commandments might tempt us to think that keeping the Law is easy, it would be the Fifth Commandment. After all, how hard is it to get through life without murdering somebody? The vast majority of people can handle that!

But Jesus famously blows up this notion by pointing out that the command, “you shall not murder,” goes much deeper - down to the heart.

You have heard that it was said to those of old, “You shall not murder; and whoever murders will be liable to judgment.” But I say to you that everyone who is angry with his brother will be liable to judgment; whoever insults his brother will be liable to the council; and whoever says, “You fool!” will be liable to the hell of fire. (Matt. 5:21–22)

Hatred and disdain come from the same sort of crookedness of heart as murder. With both murder and hatred, you look down on another person and think them of little worth.

In the Small Catechism, Luther also points out that every “do not” in the commandments also includes a “do this:” *“We should fear and love God so that we do not hurt or harm our neighbor in his body but help and support him in every physical need”* (SC, Fifth Commandment, emphasis added).

We are not called merely to avoid evil; we must also do positive good.

So when Jesus drew near to us and became our neighbor by taking up our humanity, He came not only to avoid harming us, but He came to positively help us, bless us and serve us.

We are now called to show the love to our neighbors that Christ showed to us. Your neighbor is yet another gift that God has given you that requires your stewardship. We are called to show mercy, to be kind, to love and serve our neighbor. One aspect of this stewardship is financial: our neighbors need us to support the church’s work so that they can hear the Gospel and come to faith. Our neighbors need the church’s alms and mercy work. Our neighbors need our faithful service in all we do in the name of Christ.



LENTEN SCHEDULE – 2024

Ash Wednesday – February 14th: Services @ Zion at 7:00pm

February 21st: Services @ St. Paul at 7:00pm

February 28th: Services @ Zion at 7:00pm

March 6th: Services @ St. Paul at 7:00pm

March 13th: Services @ Zion at 7:00pm

March 20th: Services @ St. Paul at 7:00pm

March 28th: Maundy Thursday Services @ Zion at 7:00pm

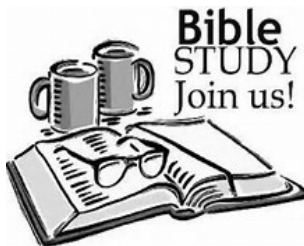
March 29th: Good Friday Services @ St. Paul at 7:00pm

PALM SUNDAY-March 24th

Services @St. Paul 8:30am Services @Zion 10:30am

EASTER SUNDAY: March 31st

Service @St. Paul 8:30am Services @Zion 10:30am



Ladies Bible Study

***Tuesday nights at 6:30pm
at Zion Lutheran.
Please join us!***

ST. PAUL DORCAS

St. Paul Dorcas Group met after church in the church basement. Our 2024 Yearbooks were handed out.

We opened with a new Bible study, “Unshakable” by Donna Snow. We will have a workbook and an occasional video to go along with the lesson. These lessons will take us through this next year, for our devotions and topics. As Christ-followers, our lives *will* get shaken. God loves us too much to leave us to our own, sinful devices. To leave us in our self-built, comfortable boxes. To leave us, satisfied with lukewarm faith. God will shake our circumstances, relationships, and self-planned life goals in order to draw us into deeper relationships with Him to make a kingdom difference. He desires us to live a vibrant life centered on His grace that points people to Him. We do not like when our lives are shaken. It is uncomfortable, discombobulating, and often painful. But hear once again the foundational verse of these Bible studies: “Therefore, let us be grateful for receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, and thus let us offer to God, acceptable worship, with reverence, and awe” (Hebrews 12:28).

Cindy Manche led our first lesson, which was on Joseph. Joseph trusted God and used his gifts for good. When life doesn't go as you plan, do you find yourself complaining or fixing your eyes on Jesus to get you through?

President, Sarah Kleopfer called the meeting to order. Roll Call was answered by 13 members. The minutes of the previous meeting were read and approved. There was no correspondence. The treasurer report was accepted.

No old business:

New business: Dennis Barrett's funeral Jan. 8th. Serving 45-50. Karen Bauman, Cindy Manche, and Linda Duesing worked on the funeral menu of ham, cheesy potatoes, green beans, and roll. Cakes will be provided by Rosalie Mellenbruch, Linda Duesing, Becky Meyer, and Leslie Brockhoff. Workers will be Karen Bauman, Cindy Manche, Becky Holle, Kathy Heiniger, Becky & Sadie Meyer and Lela Middendorf.

It was noted that the Bible study workbooks were \$15 each. If anyone wanted to donate or pay towards their workbook, this money could just be added to the offering plate.

Cindy Manche and Nancy Manche were going to work on the financial review.

Our zone is still looking for two Young Women Representative (YWR) for Kansas District Convention. April 12-14, in Wichita, Kansas. Suggestions were; Selena Manche, Evan Brockhoff, Megan Brockhoff, and Emily Meyer. The deadline to apply for this is January 15, 2024.

We had our offering and collected LWML mites.

Announcements: Next month, February 4th our Bible Study will be the Prayer Service led by Kathy Heiniger. Hostesses will be Leslie and Evan Brockhoff. Reminder for Kansas District Convention April 12-14, to get registered before the deadline. Early registration is before March 1st. To get block price on room rates they need to be reserved by March 30th.

We closed with the Lord's prayer.

Refreshments were provided by Sarah Kleopfer.

Secretary,
Becky Meyer

PLEASE REMEMBER IN YOUR PRAYERS:

Military: Spencer Ernst, Bert Ernst, Alexander Williams

College: Joey Meyer, Sage Meyer, Paul Pearson, Megan Brockhoff, Paige Stover, Gunner Smith.

Care Facilities & Shut-Ins: Betty Allen, Carol Bauer, Gene Rice, Darlene Covert, Connie Kneisel, Jaynell Robidoux, Don Robidoux, Charles Fritz, Lois Voss, Tom Hansen, Bonnie Reynolds, Esther Krug.

Also in our prayers: Karla Williams, Bill Rahe, Darwin Hoppe, Dale Strobel, Charlotte Kruse, Wes Duesing, Richard Clay, Aimee Hampl, Carl Mueller, Sherry Hartley, Janice Grubb.

We Remember the blessed saints who now rest in the Lord (Robert Jones) and we pray for their families that they remember all who die in the Lord live with the Lord. (Romans 6:5)



FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS

Feb 2-Christine Rosenberger, Feb 4-Nanci Oswald, Feb 5-Cathy Brockhoff, Feb 6-Larry Walter, Feb 6-Becky Holle, Feb 8-Aubrey Rahe, Feb 11-Kathy Heiniger, Feb 11-Tammy Sisk, Feb 16-Avery Davidson, Feb 23-Dawn Stephens, Feb 24-Dennis Manche, Feb 24-Kurt Killman, Feb 27-Milan Kloepfer, Feb 28- Margo Fries

FEBRUARY ANNIVERSARIES

Feb 11-Dwight & Charlotte Kruse, Feb 16-Maurice & Darlene Atland, Feb 19-Gary & Nanci Oswald

SERVERS FOR FEBRUARY

(Please trade if you have a date conflict)

ST. PAUL LUTHERAN

February 4th: Galen & Sharon Meyer

February 11th: Darryl & Helen Hoppe

February 18th: Eldon & Rosalie Mellenbruch

February 25th: Mark & Becky Meyer

Altar Guild for February: Sarah Kleopfer, Cindy Manche, Mark Meyer

ZION LUTHERAN

February 4th: **Elder**-Leon Wissmann, **Acolyte**-Brady Killman, **Usher**-David Middendorf,

Greeters-Scott & Jessica Gigstad, **Sound System**-Leon Wissmann

February 11th: **Elder**-Scott Gigstad, **Acolyte**-Corey Dunaway, **Usher**-Leon Wissmann,

Greeters-Kurt Killman & Brady Killman, **Sound System**-Bob & Virginia Freese

February 18th: **Elder**-Kurt Killman, **Acolyte**-Saige Stover, **Ushers**-Bob Freese & Larry Walter,

Greeters-Tim & Jackie Bianchi, **Sound System**-David Middendorf

February 25th: **Elder**-Leon Wissmann, **Acolyte**-Remington Killman, **Usher**-David Middendorf,

Greeters-Larry & Carol Walter, **Sound System**-Leon Wissmann

Altar Guild for February: Deb Reschke, Anne Arnesen

AMERICAN HERITAGE GIRLS

AHG continues to celebrate the WOVEN theme at troop meetings. *For you created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother's womb. I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful, I know that full well.* – Psalm 139:13-14

On January 25, Pioneer Allison Jeschke girl hosted a baby-shower style pro-life party. The troop girls brought baby supplies and diapers to donate to the Saint Joe Pregnancy Resource Center. Allison hosted the event (complete with invitations) as part of her Level Award Project! The Troop remains grateful for the support of their Charter Organization!

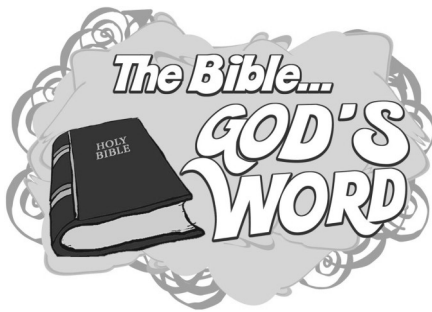
SUNDAY SCHOOL

We invite all kids to come and join us for Sunday School!
Sunday School meets each Sunday morning at **9:15am at Zion.**
Sunday School at **St. Paul** starts after the service at **9:30am.**
The Zion Adult Bible Class meet on Sunday mornings at 9:15am.

Please come join us!!



MIDWEEK BIBLE STUDY



Midweek Bible Study will examine the readings of the Epiphany.
The Bible Study will start at 7:00pm and will rotate between St. Paul and Zion.
January 31st will be held at St. Paul.

PLEASE HELP TO KEEP US UP TO DATE:

If you have a new phone number, address, or email address, please make sure you send it to the office.

You can e-mail the office at office@NEKpartnership.org or call 785-740-0268. The office would also like the names and addresses of any members who are at college. Thank You!

FEBRUARY, 2024

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1	2 Groundhog Day Pastor Holle day off	3
4 Sexagesima 9:15 Bible Study @Z 9:30 St. Paul Dorcas	5 7:00 Joint Elders @Zion	6 6:30 Ladies Bible Study	7 7:00 Midweek Bible Study @Zion	8 6:15 AHG Troop mtg.	9 Pastor Holle day off	10
11 Quinquagesima 9:15 Bible Study @Z Super Bowl	12 7:00 Dual Parish Council	13 9:00 Circuit 6:30 Ladies Bible Study 7:30 Zion LWML	14 Ash Wednesday 7:00 Ash Wednesday service @Zion Valentine's Day	15	16 Pastor Holle day off	17
18 1 st Sunday in Lent 9:15 Bible Study @Z	19 Washington's Birthday Articles Due for Newsletter	20 6:30 Ladies Bible Study 7:30 Zion Council	21 7:00 Lenten service @St. Paul	22 6:15 AHG Troop mtg.	23 Pastor Holle day off	24
25 2 nd Sunday in Lent 9:15 Bible Study @Z Fellowship @St. Paul	26	27 6:30 Ladies Bible Study	28 7:00 Lenten service @Zion	29 6:15 AHG Troop mtg.	