

"I appeal to you therefore, brothers and sisters, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. Do not be conform to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your minds, so that you may discern what is the will of God - what is good and acceptable and perfect," Romans 12: 1-2

We have now entered the season of Lent. It is in this annual pilgrimage to the cross of Calvary that we are reminded of God's ultimate sacrifice for our eternal life. It is this time of the year that we, in our own spiritual practices, can set aside a purposeful time for reflection, repentance and renewal. Our midweek Lenten services offer an opportunity to do just that. Many take a personal time for devotion and some even give up something during this time to remind them of God's great sacrifice for our salvation. Lent provides us this opportunity to step out of our often-busy schedules to examine once again the direction we are headed in our faith walk. We can use this time to ask ourselves core questions like: How is my faith journey going with God? Am I feeling closer or further away from God? Where do I see my life headed, and is God a part of that equation? It is questions like these that can serve to re-center our lives on discipleship and our faith in Jesus Christ.

Lent can be a time when we ask the same type of questions about our faith community too. Where are we headed as a church? Are we growing closer to God? Are we looking to strengthen our witness as a community of faith in our community?

As we walk together through this season of Lent and explore these questions as individuals and as a congregation, may we move closer to God, with His guidance and his blessings.

Your brother in Christ,

Pastor Gary Johnson

Stewardship Message

Hebrews 13:1-8

Keep on loving one another as Christian brothers. Remember to welcome strangers in your homes. There were some who did that and welcomed angels without knowing it. Remember those who are in prison, as though you were in prison with them. Remember those who are suffering as though you were suffering as they are.

Marriage is to be honored by all, and husbands and wives must be faithful to each other. God will judge those who are immoral and those who commit adultery.

Keep your lives free from the love of money and be satisfied with what you have. For God has said, "I will never leave you; I will never abandon you." Let us be bold, then and say, "The lord is my helper, I will never, I will not be afraid. What can anyone do to me??"

Remember your former leaders, who spoke God's message to you. Think back on how they lived and died, and imitate their faith. Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today and forever.



Zion Parish Planning Council Minutes

**Lutheran
February 17, 2009**

Church

President Lawrence Grant called the meeting to order. Attending: Pastor Gary Johnson, Pastor Ale' Tulu, Youth Director Roberta Kalsnes, Amber Holtan, Deb Holtan, Duane Morey, Bonnie Yost, Judy Melby, Chris Ueland, Connie Peoples, Ginny Armstrong, Winton Forsberg, Lyle Paulson, Bonnie Yost, and Darlene Hulteen.

Pastor Gary led devotions, during which he discussed the origins of the imposition of ashes on Ash Wednesday.

Secretary's Report: Ginny moved to approve the minutes of the January, 2008 meeting. Judy seconded the motion, which carried.

Treasurer's Report: The monthly treasurer's report was presented by Winton. Bonnie moved to accept the treasurer's report as printed. Connie seconded the motion, which carried.

Board Reports: Bonnie said that the February Fling was well attended and successful. She recommended that the \$288 profit from the event be given to the Deacon's Fund and made a motion to that effect. The motion was seconded by Connie and passed.

Darlene indicated that the deadline for newsletter items was February 20.

Chris offered the idea of Zion having a float in summer parades in TRF. The idea seemed well received and was discussed. The matter will be pursued.

Old Business: Lyle informed the Council that Brent Lunke of Evergreen Implement donated a snow blower to the church, much to the appreciation of the Council. Judy moved that a note of thanks be sent. Winton seconded the motion, which passed.

Lyle updated the Council on making the rest rooms across from the patio room handicapped accessible. The women's room would have one regular stall, one handicapped accessible stall, a sink, a baby changing station and floor tile. The men's would be the same except for a urinal instead of the "regular" stall. The estimated cost is just under \$11,000 and funds are available for such renovation. Bonnie moved to renovate the rest rooms as stated. Amber seconded the motion, which passed.

New Business: Gary asked for a volunteer to burn the palm branches to make ashes for next year. Chris said he would do that.

Concerns regarding the kitchen were discussed. Mold has accumulated in the refrigerator. Plants and food should not be stored in the same container. Refrigerators are cleaned monthly. It was suggested that we look for a separate cooler to store flowers as is done in some churches.

The Council was reminded that a Nomination Committee to secure board members and officers for next year needs to be assembled in the coming months. Also, delegates to the Synod Assembly, which will be held in Moorhead on May 15-16 will be sought. The congregation may have five delegates.

Youth Director's Report: Roberta discussed several items to include a \$133 donation to the Food Shelf from the Souper Bowl, Chris and Terry Ueland meeting with senior high students, the Schwann sales fundraiser, and Flapjacks for Faith. She said that some students have already raised the \$1200 required for the National Youth Gathering. She asked the Council for their advice on selling pies during Holy Week and received positive feedback. Roberta said that Pathways Sunday will be March 8. She also discussed planning camp dates for grades 6 & 7 and grades 4 & 5.

Pastor's Report: Pastor Ale' and Gary discussed plans for Lenten services. The round robin which featured area ELCA pastors rotating among congregations will not be done this year. A program that features what witnesses to the crucifixion might say is being considered. Pastor Ale' reported that confirmation students have one class and one retreat left. He said that 39 young people are in classes this year. He reported that letters will be sent to the homes of those about to have their first communion.

The Food for the Poor program was discussed. Zion had a speaker representing this organization last year.

Gary reported that the Conference 2 (Agassiz) meeting of the NW Minnesota Synod will be held March 15. He said that the ELCA National Assembly will be in Minneapolis this coming August. Gary concluded by thanking people for their cards, prayers and good wishes during his recent illness.

The next Parish Planning will be held March 17, 2009.

The meeting was closed with the Lord's Prayer.

Respectfully submitted,
Lawrence Grant, Acting Secretary

Annual Meeting

January 26, 2009

Zion Lutheran Church Annual Meeting was called to order by President Lawrence Grant.

Pastor Ale gave devotions and offered a prayer.

Lawrence explained that the soul purpose for this annual meeting is to approve the 2009 budget. The semi-annual meeting is held to approve the members of the church boards. He explained there may be times that a special congregational meeting will be called (the purchasing of property, change of staff, large purchases concerning the benefit of the church). He mentioned the purchase of two properties in 2008, the staff offices were moved, the lose of the youth director and the hiring of Berta Kalsnes as temporary youth director, acting in an administrative position; also the hiring of part-time, temporary activities youth ministers, Chris and Terri Ueland, also purchasing new hymnals for the church.

There were no Pastors reports.

Statistical report: Thank you was expressed to Dilene for compiling all the reports for the Annual Meeting booklet and for all she does for the church and congregation.

All board reports are printed in the book and Lawrence suggested we read the reports as well as the memorials for the year. There were no questions or comments on any of the boards.

Treasurers Report: Winton Forsberg was thanked for all the exceptional work he does in handling the churches finances and for all his expert advice. Winton thanked the council and board members for the many years that he has served as treasurer and said it was a pleasure to work with all. He will be done with his term the end of June. He noted we “finished in the black this year”. He also explained that when you take the income, subtract expenses, the difference between the two is known as the faith fund. We need to watch the budget carefully this year as there isn’t much room to differ.

There were no questions or comments.

Lawrence asked for a motion to accept the 2009 budget; Millie Reiersen made the motion; Ginny Armstrong seconded it. The motion passed.

There was no new business.

The meeting was adjourned.

Pastor Gary thanked the congregation for all the support he has received during his illness the past few weeks and is looking forward to coming back soon. He received a round of applause.

Diane led us in singing the table prayer.

Respectfully submitted,

Judy Melby

Acting Secretary for Jane Schaumburg

The Reading Room

**Read!!
Your brains get hungry too.**

Jim Klobuchar, a columnist with the Minneapolis Star Tribune for 30 years, author of 20 books, and father of Amy Klobuchar, State Senator, and Herbert W. Chilstrom, the first Presiding Bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America teamed up in 1987 to publish a beautiful little book called *When We Reach for the Sun*.

Jim Klobuchar and Herb Chilstrom met through their shared appreciation of nature. Each had discovered in nature some clues to his own place on it and humanity's relation to the rest of creation. In this book Klobuchar and Chilstrom combine their unique visions of the world. Klobuchar's often witty and always thoughtful reflections of climbing mountains or howling back at wolves is combined with Chilstrom's color photographs. The result is a beautiful little book.

“The deeper we walk in a dark wood, the more absorbing are its mysteries. The sounds seem amplified. Even the rudest toadstool slows our tread and invites the inquirer in us. We notice things we have never seen before, and recognize the interdependence of living things. And sometimes when we come back to the tent or cabin we are conscious of an odd twist to the exploration we have just made. Probing the mystery of the woods, we have learned more about ourselves.” – Jim Klobuchar