

Dear Friends in Christ,

In the May newsletter, Pastor Gary Johnson talked about the ELCA task force proposal document entitled human sexuality. He also mentioned how this is going to be a hot topic of discussion at the church wide assembly that will take place in Minneapolis this coming August.

This proposal was also a hot issue at our synod assembly that took place in Moorhead this past weekend. There were two resolutions that came before the assembly regarding the task force recommendation on ordination of same sex clergy and lay professionals. Both resolutions rejected the task force recommendations and advocated to keep the existing ELCA policy. Even though both recommendations were very similar while one of the resolutions failed the other one passed. What this means is that our synod will bring this resolution to be acted on by the church wide assembly in August. However, the final decision to reject or adopt the task force recommendation on human sexuality depends on the church wide voting members. So we will wait with anxious feeling wondering where this decision will lead us.

Personally, I voted no to the task force recommendation because I found no biblical ground to justify the task force recommendation to allow pastors and other rostered leaders in the ELCA who choose to live in gay, lesbian relationships to do so. If we say the foundation of our faith and confession is guided by the word of God it is important that we constantly hold up scriptural teachings. Because the word of God shapes our lives not only as individuals but also as a community of believers, that is why we have to base our judgment on scriptures rather than on human reasoning. The scripture is very clear in its teaching about marriage and about homosexual relationships. Both old and new testaments speak in favor of marriage between man and woman while prohibiting and discouraging same sex relationships. That is why I am strongly objecting the task force recommendation.

If the task force recommendation is fully adopted, it will not only distance us from the word of God, but also it can create a big division within the ELCA.

I know how sensitive this issue is and how we can have different understanding of it. If you would like to talk about it, please come and see me I will be more than happy to visit with you.

May God bless us with his guidance.

Sincerely

Pastor Ale

**No WOW Services**

**There will be no Wednesday night services this summer.**



## **Zion's Budget Report January - April 2009**

Expenses of \$134,320 exceeded income of \$122,190 for a deficit of \$12,130. Even though Easter offerings resulted in higher income in April the deficit still increased slightly and there is concern whether we will be able to meet our budget in 2009. This is especially true with a large deficit entering the summer months when income is normally down, and the current economic conditions. Please remember Zion during this time with your prayers and support.

## **Stewardship Message Luke 12:13-21**

Someone in the crowd said to him, "Teacher, tell my brother to divide the inheritance with me."

Jesus replies, "Man, who appointed me a judge or an arbiter between you?" Then he said to them, "Watch out! Be on guard against all kinds of greed; a man's life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions."

And he told them this parable. "The ground of a certain rich man produced a good crop. He thought to himself, 'What shall I do? I have no place to store my crops.'

Then he said, "This is what I'll do. I will tear down my grain and my goods. And I'll say to myself, 'You have plenty of good things laid up for many years. Take life easy; eat, drink and be merry.'

But God said to him, "You fool! This very night your life will be demanded from you. Then who will get what you have prepared for yourself?"

This is how it will be with anyone who stores up things for himself but is not rich toward God.

## **The Reading Room**

**Read!!**

**Your brains get hungry too.**

### **Jeanette Oke**

Jeanette Oke is a Canadian author and pioneer of inspirational fiction. Her books are often set in a pioneer time period and centered around female protagonists.

If you like to get so involved in the fictitious lives of the characters in the books you read, Jeanette Oke is the author for you. Her first novel, *Love Comes Softly*, was published in 1979. This book was followed by more than 75 others.

Oke says she never intended that her stories would be written in series, but readers wanted more and more of the lives of her *Love Comes Softly* characters. The series concluded 10 years and eight books later with *Love Finds a Home*. In 1997, *The Tender Years*, the first title in the new Prairie Legacy Series, brought the same characters back to her public. Her books *Beyond the Gathering Storm* and *When Tomorrow Comes* are a continuation of The Canadian West series which feature the characters, Wynn and Elizabeth's children, Henry and Christine.

In 1992 Oke received the President's Award from the Evangelical Christian Publishers Association for her significant contribution to Christian fiction, the 1999 CBA Life Impact Award and has been awarded the Gold Medallion Award for fiction.

**Check out her books in Zion's library.  
Get hooked on her characters.**

### **Standing in Judgement**



In a small town near the Minnesota border, a local businessperson started construction of a new bar. In response, a local congregation started a campaign to block the bar from opening, using petitions and prayers. Work progressed, however, right up till the week before opening, when a lightning strike hit the bar and burned it to the ground.

The church folks were rather smug in their outlook after that until the bar owner sued the church on the grounds that the church was ultimately responsible for the demise of his building, either through direct or indirect actions or means.

The church vehemently denied all responsibility or any connection to the building's demise in its reply to the court.

As the case made its way into court, the judge looked over the paperwork at the hearing and commented, "I don't know how I'm going to decide this, but as it appears from the paperwork, we have a bar owner that believes in the power or prayer, and an entire church congregation that doesn't."

\* Used with permission of Bob Hulteen, my brother-in-law, who is publisher of the newspaper, the *Metro Lutheran* of Minneapolis.



**Zion Lutheran Church  
Parish Planning Council Minutes  
May 19, 2009**

Acting President Judy Melby called the meeting to order. Attending: Pastor Gary, Pastor Ale', Deb Holtan, Duane Morey, Winton Forsberg, Lyle Paulson, Acting Youth Director Roberta Kalsnes, Darlene Hulteen, Amber Holtan, Connie Peoples, Kristin Hanson, Ginny Armstrong, Chris Ueland, Kim Decowski, Guest Jim Hulteen, and Jane Schaumburg.

Pastor Ale' led devotions.

**Secretary's Report:** Winton moved to approve the minutes of the April 21, 2009 meeting. Lyle seconded the motion, which carried.

**Treasurer's report:** The treasurer's report was presented by Winton. He reported that as of March we have a \$12,130 deficit. Ginny moved to accept the report as printed. Connie seconded the motion, which carried. Ideas of holding a special appeal and/or fund raiser in the fall were discussed.

**Board Reports:** Deb reported that a Prayer Vigil may be held in the fall and asked if anyone has prayers that she could include in a booklet for the Vigil.

Amber reported that VBS will be held from June 7<sup>th</sup> to June 10<sup>th</sup> in the evenings. If you are interested in having your children attend, please contact the Church to register.

Chris stated that Wednesday Night youth meetings are over and Youth Gathering meetings are still being held.

Darlene informed us that Jody will be leaving the PR Board; however she will continue working on Zion's website. Darlene also informed us they are working on the website and that information for the website should go through her. Darlene expressed her frustration about not receiving board reports and other information for the newsletter in a timely manner. There will be a newsletter in June and the July and August newsletters will be combined into one towards the end of August.

Darlene made a motion to move the "reference books" in the hallway back to the library. Chris seconded the motion, which carried.

Ginny reported that her circle will purchase a BUNN coffee pot for the kitchenette; however there was concern about the size of the coffee pot and the amount of counter/cabinet space needed. Lyle will see if a cabinet could be moved or what the other options would be available.

Guest Jim Hulteen reported on the sound system indicating that a representative of H&B Sound would be willing to attend a Sunday service and make adjustments to the sound system controls. Duane moved that H&B Sound of Grand Forks attend both services on a well attended Sunday (possibly Rally Sunday) and make adjustments to the sound system. Once the adjustments are made, a number of the controls should not be touched; therefore plexi-glass will be placed over that area of the panel. Connie seconded the motion; which carried.

**Old Business:** The Nominating Committee has had success getting members to serve on the various upcoming vacant board positions.

The Graduation Reception went well and was attended by sixteen graduates and their families.

Judy and Chris reported on their attendance at the Synod Assembly. Both enjoyed it and thanked for their opportunity to attend.

The phone system has not been updated.

**New Business:** Chris informed us that the Worship Board discussed dropping the summer WOW Services due to lack of attendance. Chris moved to drop the WOW services at this time. Darlene seconded the motion; which carried.

The summer schedule for Sunday Worship Services will be at 8:30 a.m. and 10:00 a.m.

The Joint Service with Silver Creek will be held on June 14, 2009 at 10:00 a.m. with a potluck dinner to follow. There will no 10:00 a.m. service at Zion that day.

The Semi Annual Meeting will be held on June 28, 2009 between Sunday services.

**Pastor's Report:** Pastor Ale' reported on the Synod Assembly. Pastor Ale' also reported that Pathways work week at Lake of the Woods will be on June 6, 2009 starting at 9:00 a.m. Call Pastor Ale' to volunteer for the work day and to coordinate carpooling.

Pastor Gary also reported on the Synod Assembly. Both pastors mentioned that there are several weddings this summer at Zion.

**Youth Director Report:** Berta thanked Duane for his assistance on Graduation Sunday. Berta also reported on the recent fundraising efforts of Zion's youth. The Rummage sale and pizza sales went well. The car wash was postponed until there is nicer weather. There are 28 youth registered for Bible Camp with the first camp starting on June 7<sup>th</sup>. Discussion was held about a Jewelry Party Fundraiser in June with all profits going to the youth, with more details to follow.

Berta indicated that she can continue her interim youth director duties through the end of July.

The next Parish Planning will be held on June 16, 2009.

The meeting was closed with the Lord's Prayer.

Respectfully submitted,  
Jane Schaumburg, Secretary

# Northwestern Minnesota Synod Assembly

By Acting President – Judy Melby

June 16-17 Pastors Gary, Ale, Chris Ueland, Ione Poole and Judy Melby attended the Northwestern Minnesota Synod Assembly at Concordia College In Moorhead, Minnesota.

This was my first time attending assembly; I found it to be interesting, challenging and spiritual. This year's theme was, *"You Are What You Eat"*. The theme of each session was related to the main theme: *Setting the Table, Appetizers and Salad, The Main Course, Take Home Food.*

Each morning was opened with worship and Holy Communion. The sermons were uplifting, and the music "heavenly". Over six hundred people under one roof, praising our Heavenly Father, leaving their differences at the door; we were united as one with our God. Collections were taken each day, one for Seminary Scholarship Fund, the other, The Project.

Saturday morning were introductions of committees, personal, adoptions of rules and regulations, appointment of assembly committees, audit and treasurer's reports, budget, 2010 fiscal proposal and compensation guidelines. We were also witnesses of the installation of Pastor Keith Zeh, Director for Evangelical Mission.

Bishop Lawrence Wohlrabe presided over the assembly; I found him to be uplifting, sincere and humorous; I am very impressed with our Bishop.

*"Opening the Book of Faith"* was presented by Rev. Dr. Mark Vitalis Hoffman, who happened to be Pastor Gary's Greek Professor at seminary. These were also tied in with the assembly's theme, through parables; *You Are What You Eat* (The Mustard Seed), *You Become What You Eat* (Leaven), *You Are With Whom You Eat* (The Great Banquet).

Keynote address was *"Book of Faith Initiative: Claiming Our Center As We Open Scripture and Join the Conversation"*, Dr. Diane Jacobson, Aim from Luther Seminary delivered the message.

Quasi-Committee of the whole on proposed ELCA social statements, Human Sexuality; Gift and Trust and report and recommendation on Ministry Policies came to the floor for debate. Three of the resolutions under consideration were submitted by American Church Council, Long Prairie, MN and United Lutheran Church Council, Gonvick, MN. These were basically the same with exception of language concerning homosexuality of clergy. One passed, the other failed.

Resolution 1: Support of Lutheran Campus Ministry of Minnesota Mission Fund: Passed

Resolution 2: Resolution Rejecting Social Statement and Affirming Current Teaching Documents on Sexuality: Failed.

Resolution 3: Resolution Rejecting Recommendations on Ministry Policy and Affirming Current ELCA Policy: Passed

Resolution 4: In Support of Two-third Majority Vote: Passed

Some of the resolutions were a double negative which was confusing for all; after the paper ballot was taken, it was announced to vote yes, vote no, to vote no, vote yes. I personally think it should have been voted on again after the explanation. These resolutions now go to the floor at national Assembly in August for vote.

Saturday evening Pastor Moyer was recognized for his years of service in the ministry.

Concordia was an excellent, gracious host; if we went away hungry it surely was not their fault. The meals were great. We were also the "chosen few"; our region table was by the coffee pots and ice water. One gentleman asked us how much we had to pay to get our table that close to coffee. True Norwegian....

We will have more to report on the assembly, June 7th by those who attended, at both services.

Thank you Zion for giving me the opportunity to attend the 2009 Synod Assembly. I will remember the experience

Minnesota Lutheran Social Services President Mark Peterson presents the "Servant of Christ" award to Wannaska Lutheran Parish – at Northwestern Minnesota Synod Assembly

Roger Ose Ministries

6824 10<sup>th</sup> Ave S

Richfield, MN 55423-2501

March 18, 2009

Thank you, Zion, for the hymnals. All of them were delivered this morning to the Salvation Army Family Store, 3741 Nicollet Av, Minneapolis. This store receives hymnals and distributes them to churches in the area.

Thank you for the choir robes. Later today they will be packed for shipment to Pastor Elias Berhane serving in Eritrea, Africa.

And thank you for sharing in the funeral services for Linda Lubitz Pacanowski.

Roger Ose Ministries

### Recipe for Furniture Polish

This is a blast from the past from the Huteen/Busse family. Found in some “important” papers, here is a family recipe.

Use 1/3 cup of each: **Boiled Linseed Oil, Turpentine, Vinegar**

Mix together and shake well before using. Pour on soft cloth to apply. Wipe completely dry with another clean soft cloth afterwards

WARNING: Do not try to boil your own linseed oil. “It ain’t the same.” Buy it at a paint or hardware store. \* Linseed oil is also known as flaxseed oil.

P.S. I googled linseed oil, and it is an Ace Hardware product.

## **(W)holy, (W)holy, (W)holy**

Health, Healing and Wholeness Article

June 2009

*Let the favor of the Lord our God be upon us, and prosper for us the work of our hands—O prosper the work of our hands. (Psalm 90:17, NRSV)*

In the psalm, the writer is basically asking God for a blessing on the work of his hands so that it may reflect the goodness of God and further His kingdom while still on this earth. It takes on a much more plaintive quality if serving as a prayer for the person who has lost his/her employment as the result of the current economic situation. On May 8, 2009, ABC News reported on the toll that job loss is taking on the physical health of our friends and neighbors who find themselves out of work. The reporter cited a study, published that same day in the journal of Demography. The researcher noted that job loss leads to an “increased risk of high blood pressure, heart disease, heart attack, diabetes, or depression – even after finding a new job” and went on to note that, “Losing a job through no fault of one’s own, led to a 54% increase in that person reporting poor health.” (<http://abcnews.go.com/print?id=7530730>). Ironically, these data were gathered [1991, 2001, 2003] during times when our economic situation was not as dire as it appears in 2009.

A trauma, such as the loss of one’s job, can put us at higher risk for depression, substance abuse, anxiety and compulsive behaviors such as: over-eating, excessive gambling, and over spending. Our self-image takes a beating if it has been dependent upon vocation as the measure of our worth. Spiritually, we are also affected by job loss. We may be left with questions such as, “Why me?” or think, “Why has God allowed this to happen to me?,” or “How will I be able to keep up my financial contribution since I no longer have a job?” or “How can I walk into church on Sunday and face those people who know that I’m out of work?” Following are some tips gathered from a variety of sources, that may help you get through this rough period in your life.

During this time, it is more important than ever to take care of yourself physically: get enough rest, eat a balanced diet, get plenty of exercise [itself a great stress-buster], learn what you can do to keep your stress level under control. In addition:

- recognize that you are not the only person this is happening to; that you have not been singled out because of something you did or did not do.
- keep to a schedule; plan tasks such as: working around the house, visiting the library, updating your resume – do not sit on the couch and vegetate the day away.
- ask for help – network with people you know for job leads; take part in a support group for tips on re-entry into the job market, or for venting frustration.
- write about your feelings – it can help reduce the sometimes tense emotions associated with the loss.
- keep connected to supportive friends, family, and above all, congregation – they provide valuable support throughout this tough time.
- take this time to learn new job skills – visit your local library, community college, or your state unemployment office [who often can provide financial support for job retraining].
- if hearing about the economic crisis stresses you out, take a “fast” from news media.

- look outside yourself by practicing empathy for others; do some volunteer work
- Pray! Remind yourself that God is walking beside you during this time; lean on Him.

This list is by no means exhaustive, nor is it meant to provide clichéd answers to your problems. If life seems overwhelming, get some outside help: speak to your pastor, your healthcare provider, your parish nurse, or find a mental health counselor to assist you in making some sense of what has happened to you, and to help you get back on track.

*Debbie Best, Program Coordinator*

*Diakon Congregational Health Ministries & Family Life Services*

## **Properties Board Busy**

Some jobs are completed so quietly, we never know they are done. The properties board deserves a little recognition for many jobs well done.

- Larson Plumbing fixed basement restroom faucet.
- Main floor restroom remodel completed.
- Duane Molstad painted restrooms.
- Lyle Walseth and Alan Aaseby replaced floodlights, hung altar brackets and hung baptismal banner.
- Larson Plumbing changed sewer lines, replaced gas water heater.
- Sanctuary floods and balcony floods replaced per Walseth's
- Lyle fixed toilet, door stopper, knife drawer and replaced toilet parts in restrooms.
- Joppru's offered to donate a heater if Zion insulates the shed for the snow blower.
- Millie Reirson is working on the phone systems.
- H&R Sound has been contacted to reset levels of the sound system. Plexi glass will be used to cover the controls that are not to be reset.

Thanks Properties Board. Zion appreciates all you work.

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It has come to the attention of the Herald staff that thanks are due to Carol Waswick for the inspirational and artistic bulletin boards in the Fellowship Hall.

Carol has been responsible for the bulletin boards for several years.

**Thanks, Carol**

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