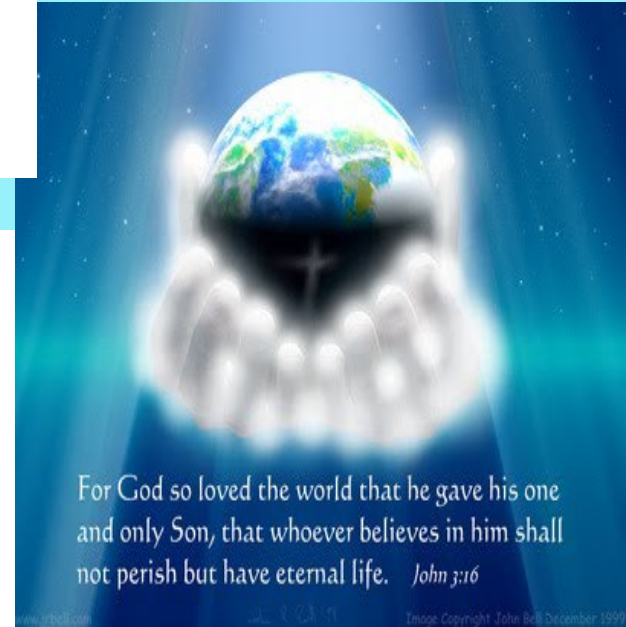


February 2023



From Pastor Girardin.....

John 3:16 tells us that God loved the world. If we were to look at love the way the world does, in the current day, the rest of the verse would never occur. Nothing else needs to be said. God loved the world. God loved us, so He left us alone- free to revel in sin and act as we so choose. This kind of love has a difficult aspect that nobody really wants to consider, but is a very real reality. This kind of love breeds chaos. This kind of love takes God from His throne and instead places our own sinful will upon it so that we are free to do what we want. God loves the world, so He abdicates everything to us. We become the masters of our own destiny... except that never happens.

If John 3:16 were to be left with God loved the world, we want to think of things the way it was just painted. The simple reality is that we don't ascend to the throne. We don't become masters of what we do. We don't come to a point that we can agree with the ancient idea, repeated through the Enlightenment, that mankind has this delightful, little, divine spark. It's a spark that we can fan and in doing so, we become good people. As mankind accepts this idea, we hear the lie of Satan in Genesis- did God really say that? If you eat that fruit, you will become like God... While we want to come to this place, we instead come to understand something far more nefarious. We may be allowed to do as we wish, but the reality is that while we have rejected God, and in so doing rejected His

Christ, we cast off the easy burden of belief in Jesus to place something far heavier upon ourselves. We place the chains of sin upon us. We allow those hateful masters death and the devil to reign over us. Is this really any kind of love? Is it really loving someone to leave them stuck in this kind of self-imposed situation?

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reign over us. Is this really any kind of love? Is it really loving someone to leave them stuck in this kind of self-imposed situation?

John 3:16 doesn't end with the simple phrase God loved the world. Instead, if you know the text, it continues. He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life. This is love. This is true love. This is loving us so much that God looks at us in the slavery of sin. God looks at us as we lie dead in trespasses and instead of saying I love you, best of luck; God says I love you so much I'm going to take care of your unrighteousness. I personally will take it upon Myself to fix my creations problem. God Himself sends His Son Jesus Christ for us and as Jesus comes to us, we see true love. We see a love that cares so much for us that Jesus tells us, calls us, commands us to repent. Jesus comes to us in our sickness and brings health. Jesus lives among us and meets the command of God Himself. Where death reigned, Jesus releases those bonds. We aren't given best of luck and a tacit agreement to whatever. Instead, we are given the answer to the problem. We are given hope in hopelessness. We are given life where death reigned. This is true love. This is the kind of love that is modeled to us by Jesus Christ.

During the month of February, we will celebrate Valentine's Day. People will do all kinds of things. For myself, I'll try to come up with something romantic for Heather. As I write this, I have no real clue what it will be. I am certain she deserves more than whatever it is that will be put together. For my likely failure that I point out, I point to Jesus never failing. The Father sent Him on His course. We take solace in knowing that while God loved the world, He did absolutely everything that He possibly could. God did not try to romance mankind. He saved us. He didn't try to make us feel good, He identified our problem and made it right. God Himself didn't do what we wanted, but instead did what we needed – even at incredible expense to Himself.

As you prepare for Valentine's Day, whether it be for a spouse, boyfriend or girlfriend, or whomever it might be keep this reality in mind; God so loved the world that He gave His only Son that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have everlasting life. God gives us the greatest, best gift ever. God the Father gives us Jesus, who offered Himself and He gives us everything. Jesus gives us the best gifts. He gives us His good works as ours. He gives us His righteousness as ours. Jesus gives us the crown of life that we might be with Him forever. That is something to contemplate as we look at Valentine's Day. This how much God loves us. Go and love your spouse, your kids, your parents, and your neighbors the way God loves us in Jesus Christ.

Amen.

Pastor Phil

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64th Annual Country SAUSAGE SUPPER

**Sponsored by ZION MEN'S CLUB and
LADIES' AID**

Sunday, February 5, 2023

11:00 A.M. UNTIL 5:00 P.M.

ZION LUTHERAN SCHOOL

220 W. Henry, Staunton IL

FULL MEAL CARRYOUTS - DRIVE THRU ONLY

ALL CARRY OUTS - \$12.00

MEAT SALES

ZION SCHOOL: Downstairs Concession Stand

FEB. 2nd & 3rd: 9 AM - 5 PM and

FEB. 4th: 9 AM – 1 PM

**FRESH AND FRIED PORK SAUSAGE,
BLOOD, LIVER AND SUMMER SAUSAGE**

COME WORSHIP WITH US.

SAT. - 5:00 p.m. or SUN. - 8:00 a.m. & 10:30 a.m.

Cambodian Temple Trek

LCMS mission workers of the Asia Region met for their first regional retreat since COVID in Cambodia just after New Year's. I was asked to serve as the retreat chaplain and presenter and Connie was able to accompany me. The retreat was held in Phnom Penh, the capital city of Cambodia, but the group took a side-trip to Siem Reap in north-central Cambodia to the Angkor Wat temples. These are a series of ancient Buddhist sites dating from the 11th c. A.D. At the Ba Yon temple we gathered for this group photo.

The missionaries of the Asia Region serve to bring the Gospel of Christ in many diverse countries and cultures. They are an adventurous group and include some of the LCMS's longest-serving mission workers. It was a great privilege to be with them!



To support the LCMS through the work of the Cortrights, you may send a tax-deductible gift to:

The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod
P.O. Box 66861
St. Louis, MO 63166-6861

or through the folks at:

Mission Central
Attn: Gary W. Thies,
Missionary/Advocate
40718 Highway E 16 
Mapleton, IA 51034-7105

Make checks payable to The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod or LCMS. Include "Cortright-Latvia" in the memo line.

AN LHM Ministry Update

SHARING THE GOSPEL THROUGH HOLISTIC MINISTRY

In carrying out its mission statement of *Bringing Christ to the Nations-and the Nations to the Church*, Lutheran Hour Ministries employs a variety of methods and programs through its locally established ministry centers to share the Gospel with people around the world. Since the staff members are from that culture and understand the local needs, LHM can customize our outreach to the particular issues that people are facing and begin establishing a more personal relationship. By identifying, developing, and using resources in local languages that are culturally relevant and attractive, LHM staff seeks to proclaim the hope and salvation found in the Word of God by reaching out to people of all nations and building trust with those individuals to connect them in fellowship to a local Christian community.

During His ministry on earth, Jesus not only taught and preached but also healed the sick and fed the hungry. Our ministry centers follow His example, often incorporating "holistic" approaches to sharing the Gospel by attending to people's physical and emotional needs as well as their spiritual needs.

In some communities where people may be struggling against the effects of poverty, our ministry centers often assist families by providing vocational training, educational materials, nutritional supplements, or hygiene supplies. When disaster strikes, ministry center staff and volunteers frequently work with partner organizations to distribute emergency supplies of food and clothing and share booklets like *Why Do Bad Things Happen?* to try to help people process their feelings following the disaster. By working with smaller groups of individuals and families, we can build a relationship over time to share the Gospel with them.

Often the recipients of these holistic efforts desire to learn more about the God who motivates these Christians to reach out in love. This opens doors for staff and volunteers to share LHM resources and invite people to participate in our **Bible Correspondence Courses (BCC)** and other programs.

Impact of Holistic Ministry

Ana participated in a financial training course hosted by LHM staff in Mongolia. The purpose of this training is to provide financial education to families, youth, and single parents to teach them how to manage their finances wisely and sustainably. It encourages them to apply what they learn during the training into their daily lives to result in stronger families, in-depth financial knowledge, and a stable financial outlook where they can overcome debt and avoid a budgetary crisis. The weekly training sessions take place over two months and are focused on Christian perspectives regarding specific topics each time. After she completed the financial training, Ana continued to meet with LHM staff and enrolled in the ministry's BCCs to learn more about Jesus. Ana shared that she had a difficult childhood and struggled with anxiety. LHM staff talked with her and shared that she can find her worth in Jesus. Through the power of the Holy Spirit, Ana became a Christian. She and her husband were connected to a local church where she can continue learning about Jesus and she is growing in her faith.

<https://www.lhm.org/newsroom>

Call Us : **+1 800 876-9880** (M-F 8am-5pm CST)



Zion Lutheran Church

February 2023

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1	2	3	4
Youth Group Sunday Feb 12 & Feb 26 2:30-4pm	MetroEastHS Open House on Feb. 5,1-3p		8:30 Chapel 9:00LydiaCircle 10:30Glenwood/ Pr.Phil Girardin	10:00Confirmation 5:00Evangelis 6:30Trustees 7:30Men'sClub	Early School Dismissa/ Improvemen t	9to1pmMea t Sales 5pmService
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
8&10:30Service s SausageSupper 11am-5pm NoSundayScho ol	D.Q. Fundraiser	6pm Girls' Home Game	8:30 Chapel 9:00Lydia 10:30 Glenwood/ Pr.Mark Girardin 6pGirlsHomeGam e	10:00Confirmation Class		Pickup Bundt Cakes2-3pm 5pmService
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
8&10:30Service s 9:30-SunSchool PraiseHimChoir @10:30Service	School Board Meeting 6:30pm	 Happy Valentine's Day!	8:30 Chapel 9:00Lydia 10:30Glenwood/ Pr.Phil Girardin Little Italy'sFundR	10:00Confirmation Class 4:30C-Team Shoot-Out	C-Team Shoot-Out	5pmService C-Team Shoot-out
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
8&10:30Serv 9:30-SunSch 6:00pmPTL C-Team Shoot-out	President Day No School		Ash Wednesday 8:30 Chapel 9:00Lydia 10:30 Glenwood/ Pr. Fred Kraemer	10:00Confirmation Class 7pmAlumni & Friends		5pmService
26	27	28				
8&10:30Service s 9:30-SunSchool	IOWA Testing All Week	6:30Admi n Council 7:00		Watch the bulletin For a Bible Study Opportunity Coming our way!		