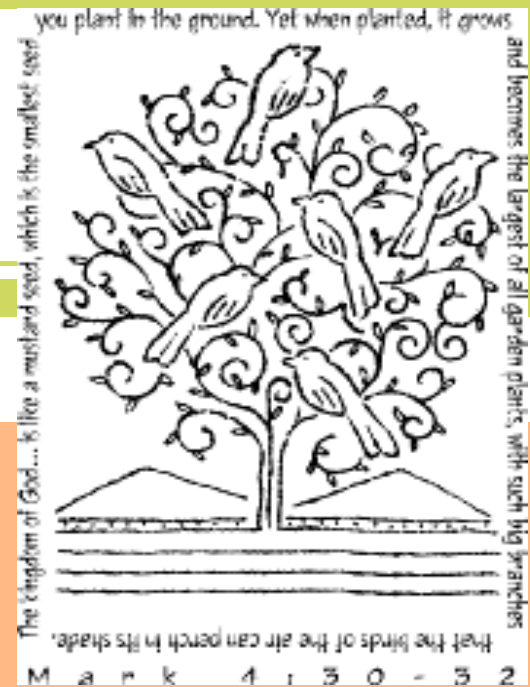


September 2023

Pastoral Ponderings

From Pastor Phil.....



Prior to sitting down and writing this article, I had a fairly in depth conversation with a friend of mine about Hell. Sadly, it was not about the city in Michigan, but about the actual idea of what Hell is as we find it in Scripture, and then spoken of inside our world. The amusing aspect is that as the conversation was going on we were/are living through an incredibly hot streak with heat indexes to run around 117 degrees. It's toasty.

What was generally agreed on in the discussion is that Hell is a place that we really don't want to be. Scripture provides us with the idea that Hell is a fiery garbage pit, Gehenna outside the city walls. Considering what the first century would have thrown away, this would have been a massive compost pile. There would be things in all manner of decay. The temperature would have been that hot, humid nastiness; even in the winter. The smell would have been rather unpleasant. This by itself is striking, yet we haven't even begun to fill in the lines. Perhaps, we don't even have all the lines on the page yet. In the parable the Rich Man and Poor Lazarus, we hear the Rich Man so thirsty that all he wants is a drop of water. I cannot imagine what it would feel like to enter into dehydration, and not be able to do anything about it. The misery would be unimaginable. Then, to consider that very reality of Hell itself is not about stink, or heat, or something else, but the complete absence of God... Think about Job. Satan was allowed to do what he wanted, except. God was in control. His divine control will have been released. It is an idea so horrific that it is truly inconceivable. Hell is going to be a pretty nasty place.

Psalm 121 is a lovely counterpoint to this. While the heat may be scorching outside, we take solace in knowing that God is fully in control. Even though the world seems to be losing its

corporate mind, God still is upon His throne. Even though nations rage, and principalities roar, we take joy knowing that God is our vanguard. He Himself controls our goings out and our comings in.

The simple reality of the dog days of Summer is that we can consider Hell academically, because it is not our inheritance. Even though it's really hot outside, we celebrate knowing that Jesus Christ has cared for us. Psalm 121 tells us that He is our shade, He is our provider, and He is the one who hold us. Jesus has suffered the pain of Hell that, through His suffering and death we might rejoice in the joys of Heaven. Jesus has taken on all our old evil masters, and we are now free. Sin has been destroyed. Death has been laid down. Satan has been defeated. Brothers and sisters, it's all been done. There's nothing left for us to do but believe on the works of Jesus for us. As we receive this, He becomes our bread of life. He becomes the water that will never leave us thirsty. Jesus Himself becomes the tabernacle of God among His people. Praise God, that on these hot days, and on difficult days, we have the joys of heaven to look forward to.

Pastor Phil



Fall Sunday School Classes: Please consider joining us this fall!

Every Sunday morning from 9:30-10:15 a.m.!

In addition to Adult Classes, we have classes for Early Childhood (3 years old through 1st grade),

Elementary (2nd- 5th grade), and a NEW Youth Bible study (6th-12th grade).

Early Childhood classes are team-taught by Elisabeth Wyatt and Susan Fletcher.

Their class meets in Mrs. Kleckner's Preschool room (off the gym).

Elementary classes are taught by Deb Johnson. They meet in

Ms. Chapman's classroom (on the main floor).

The Zion Youth class meets in Mrs. Cook's classroom (on the main floor).

The Adult class gathers in the school cafeteria (lower-level).



LWML ELECTS NEW PRESIDENT, SETS RECORD MISSION GOAL

At the 40th Lutheran Women's Missionary League (LWML) Convention this year, the organization set a mission goal of \$2.35 million, the highest mission goal ever. During the convention, which had over 3,500 attendees, the voting assembly selected 31 mission grants to fund.

The assembly also elected the next LWML president: Eden Keefe of Overland Park, Kansas. Keefe, who has served in many leadership roles in the LWML, will serve as president for the next two bienniums (4 years).

Speaking to the convention, Rev. Dr. Matthew Harrison described the LWML: "You are the rock rib of the Missouri Synod - you ladies make it all happen, who keep those church basements hopping, the outreach going...the Bible being studied, and all so much more... God bless you all and thank you, thank you, thank you."

Several organizations that received grants at the 2021 convention thanked the women, including the Lutheran Association of Missionary Pilots (LAMP), Phil's Friends (care packages for cancer patients), and St. Paul Lutheran Church in Merced, California, which has an outreach to the Hmong people in their community.

Sue Miller from our congregation attended the convention, held in Milwaukee. She said it was worth the trip... to worship and share communion with 3500 other Lutheran ladies. She was inspired by the leadership and faith of those in attendance. The "Mites in Action" presentations, which highlighted the work of the mission grant money, helped her to see the great things that God can do when we give our mites to the work of the Lord.

The ladies of our Zion LWML/Ladies Aid group would like to include you, any confirmed female, to participate in our purpose as a Lutheran Woman in Mission. Ask any of us for more information, come to our Bible study meetings, and fill a little "Mite Box" with your coins and dollars. Our next meeting will be September 28 at 7 pm in the Parish Center conference room.

Watch the church bulletin for updates or call Sue at 618.541.2266 with any questions. Hope to see you at our next meeting! Visit www.lwml.org or www.sidlwml.org for more inspiring info.

September to Remember Spotlight: Eden Keefe, LWML President

Do you have a special person in your life? Someone who makes you smile with gratitude when you think of him or her? Maybe it was (or is) a teacher, a friend, a family member, or an LWML sister or brother.

Someone who often comes to mind for me was a special "sister" to my mom. Her name is Mary. She and my mom (Marlene) were great friends and LWML sisters. They served in various roles in their groups, zone, and district, and were known as the M&Ms. This dynamic duo brought attention to the Gospel impact of mite offerings and missions with presentations filled with love for their Lord, laughter, and of course, M&Ms. Although my mom is now in heaven, Mary continues to serve the Lord with gladness! (Psalm 100:2)

On Tuesday, Sept 12, I will have an opportunity to honor both my mom and Mary by giving a gift to Lutheran Women in Mission For September to Remember.

Who is your special "sister?" Would you consider honoring her with a gift to LWML Lutheran Women in Mission?

Special gifts can be given through the LWML website or simply put the gift in an envelope, mark it for LWML and put in with your offerings.

- Submitted by Sue Miller



JUNIOR YOUTH GROUP (3rd-5th gr.)

We are excited to announce that we are now offering a Junior Youth Group for grades 3 through 5. Mrs. Shelby Bertels will be leading with the help of former student Leah Cook. All are welcome and we ask that you encourage your child to attend. Sessions will be the last Sunday of each month during the school year, from 2:00-3:30 in the school.

If you think your child is interested, please email shelby.bertels@zion-school.org.



"Our Youth Executive Team hosted 15 youth at our First Annual Youth Retreat at Rustic Acres' Jellystone Park. A special thank you to the work they put into making our retreat a HUGE success. Also a great BIG Thank You to BJ and Jenn Davis, for hosting us at Rustic Acres, and, to Renee Carlen, for serving as a chaperone. We look forward to next year's retreat and are looking into inviting youth from other congregations to join us in the future. Please continue to keep the work of our Youth Group in your prayers." –Kristi C.

YOUTH GROUP (6th-12th gr.)

We invite any youth 6th - 12th graders to join us for youth group on select Sundays that are listed below.

Sep 10: Youth Group Welcome Back! Bash with water activities (bring dry clothes) 3-5:30

Sep 10: mandatory parent meeting for youth group 5:30-6

Sept 17: Youth group is going to Bethalto to join their youth group for activities and snacks 3:30-8:30 pm. Questions about any of Zion Youth groups? Contact Kristi or Shelby.



Zion Lutheran

September 2023

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Pastor Phil is at Glenwood on the 1 st & 3 rd Wednesday Pastor Mark Girardin is on the 2 nd Wednesday	Pr. Kraemer is on the 4 th Wednesday at Glenwood.	Jr. Youth Group (3 rd -5 th gr.) meet last Sunday of ea. Month at 2-3:30.	Youth Group (6 th -12 th gr.) on Sept 10 & 17.		1 NO SCHOOL	2 11 am Mt. Olive Parade/Zion School Participating 5pm Worship/Communion
3 8&10:30am Worship/Commun 9:30amSunSchool	4 LABOR DAY NO SCHOOL NO CHURCH OFFICE 5 pm D.Q. fundraiser	5	6 8:30am Chapel 9am Lydia Circle 10:30amGlenwood DivineService 6:30pmAdult Confirmation Class	7 8:30am Adult Bible Class 5pmEvangelism 6:30pmTrustees 7:30 p Men's Club	8 7pm Chapel is reserved	9 9-noon Chapel Is reserved. 5pm Worship/Communion
10 8&10:30am Worship/Commun 9:30amSunSchool 5:30 pm Mandatory Parents' Mtg for Youth Group (6-12 gr.)	11 6:30 pm School Board	12 Pastor's Circuit Conference	13 8:30am Chapel 9am Lydia Circle 10:30amGlenwood DivineService 6:30pmAdult Confirmation Class	14 8:30am Adult Bible Class	15	16 5pm Worship/Communion
17 8&10:30am Worship/Commun 9:30amSunSchool Praise Him Choir Sings at 10:30 Service 3:30-8:30Youth Group (6-12 gr.) in Bethalto	18	19 Field Day at Metro East Lutheran	20 8:30am Chapel 9am Lydia Circle 10:30amGlenwood DivineService 2:30pmHeritage 5pLittle Italy's F.R. 6:30pmAdultClass	21 8:30am Adult Bible Class	22	23 5pm Worship/Communion
24 8&10:30am Worship/Commun 9:30amSunSchool Joyful Noise Choir Sings at 10:30 Service 2-3:30Jr. Youth(3-5gr) 6pm PTL	25	26 6:30pm Admin Council Mt. 7pm Parish Education Mtg.	27 8:30am Chapel 9am Lydia Circle 10:30amGlenwood DivineService 6:30pmAdult Confirmation Class	28 8:30am Adult Bible Class	29	30 5pm Worship/Communion