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**PUBLICATION
DEADLINES:**
Messenger of Light
noon, January 15
for the February issue

Illuminations
1:00 p.m. Tuesdays
for all weekly
newsletters

***Fan into flame
the gift of God
within you.***
2 Timothy 1:6

“Human Jumper Cables”

Pastor Randall Neal

One little light. That’s all it took to render my car totally unusable. The little light in the rear of my 2000 Jeep Grand Cherokee was left on one night after I unloaded some things, and it stayed on for several days while we were gone. When we got back, everything in that car said, “I’m not starting, pal!” because that one little light totally drained our battery, of course. But then came the hero—Elizabeth, my wife with her vehicle and her trusty jumper cables. And those cables delivered the energy that my flat old battery needed to run again!

What does it take to get a drained and tired battery going again? A jolt from jumper cables that infuses the energy needed to revive it. And what does it take to get a drained and tired person going again? Human jumper cables that deliver new energy to revive them. I’m guessing that you know someone right now who is pretty depleted—emotionally, mentally, maybe spiritually, even physically. When they turn the key, not much is happening because their battles, their responsibilities have left them unable to get going again. As we enter the New Year the tugs and pulls of the long winter seem to drain us even more. That’s why God has given us each other. To be jumper cables for each other when we sense that someone we know is pretty run down. If you’ve got your eyes open for them, you’ll see someone in need of an emotional and spiritual “jump” most every day of your life.

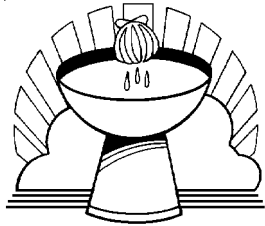
When you’re one of God’s jump starters, you wake up in the morning and you say, “Lord, show me who needs me today.” Then you look for, even go out of your way if necessary, to call that person who needs encouragement, to write them, e-mail them, visit with them, or just stop and take time with them.

It’s almost always a sacrifice to do that because of all the things you have to do. But you may have nothing more important to do than this extension of Jesus’ love to someone who’s really depleted. Your joy can jump start theirs. Your praying in faith can jump start theirs. Your affirmation of their value and their significance can jump start them believing it again themselves. Your belief in them can re-energize their courage to get back in the ring for another round. Your reminder of who they really are to God and to you may be just the spiritual jolt they need to get going again.

You may say, “Yeah, well, I need someone to jump start me!” You’re thinking a lot lately about your burdens, your problems, and your feelings. The greatest way to get out of your pit is to reach out and help someone else get out of theirs. Proverbs 11:25 says: *“He who refreshes others will himself be refreshed.”*

You have what someone needs today to get started again. Don’t just cruise on by, oblivious to the needs right in front of you. “Lord, show me who needs me today.” That’s the prayer that will make you the conduit to deliver the resources of God to someone who really can’t go on without them. You are God’s jumper cables!

Official Acts of Zion



Matthew Eric Bartley
December 14, 2008
(son of Todd & Amy Bartley)

Annabelle Grace Hughes
December 21, 2008
(daughter of
Kirk Hughes & Hope Ortloff-Hughes)



the families of:

Roger K. Zoffka
October 6, 1047 - December 6, 2008

Patricia Clare Koehnen
May 27, 1945 - December 9, 2008

Rita Rose Marie Aaker
October 20, 1935 - December 16, 2008

Christmas Decorations

With grateful hearts, we will take down the Christmas decorations that have brightened our Advent season on Sunday, January 4, 2009. Please join us at 12 noon, after the second service, when we will carefully pack away the decorations for one more year. The work goes quickly with plenty of volunteers. Please consider joining us.



Mission and Outreach Prayer Team meets Thursday, January 15, at 1:30pm in Room #204. Join us as we pray for God's mission around the globe and Zion's involvement in outreach at home and abroad. Please contact Carolyn Bachman, 952-935-5909, or Katie Wareham, 952-938-7661, for more information or if you have any specific prayer requests.

Zion's Valentine Dinner

All Adults - Save the Date!! What are YOU doing for Valentine's Day? Coming to Zion for our *Adults Night Out!!* Delicious Spaghetti Dinner & Entertainment, Saturday, February 14th at 6:00pm. Sponsored by Zion's Treasure Seekers.



Music Ministry

Lord of all nations, grant me grace
To love all people, every race;
And in each person may I see
My kindred, loved, redeemed by Thee

LSB 844 Lord of All Nations, stanza 1
Text: Olive Wise Spannaus, b. 1916
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This Epiphany season, as we meditate on Jesus Christ, true light of the world, we will explore how this light has shone all around the world. In worship we will sing songs from Africa, Asia, Latin America, and from other cultures within our own country. As we learn about Christians from around the world, may Christ grant us grace "to love all people, every race" and to have a heart to reach out to those of other cultures in our own backyards who do not yet know the salvation that is found in Christ alone. Join us in worship for the global worship series, January 25 – February 22.

Join the Choir!

January is a great time to join the choir! Rehearsals are held on Thursdays, 7:30-9:00pm and will resume from holiday break on Jan. 8. Contact Katie Wareham with any questions: 952-938-7661.



Monthly Financial Summary November 30, 2008

Actual Month	Projected monthly	Actual total to date	Projected total to date
\$79,622	\$75,449	\$713,327	\$829,939

EXPENSES (\$876,653 = projected annual – 2008)

Actual Month	Projected monthly	Actual total to date	Projected total to date
\$67,649	\$73,054	\$787,231	\$803,594

Current bills due but not yet paid = \$44,062

General & Mission Offerings for November = \$68,875 (\$64,702 projected per month; \$14,931 per week)

Building Fund Offerings for November = \$16,151
(Our monthly mortgage payment is \$10,747; \$2,480/wk)

Building loan balance = \$1,242,976

Treasure Seekers

Let's get together for a **DUMP DINNER!**

What: Dump Dinner (It's fun & delicious...and a surprise!)

When: Friday, January 16th EAT @ 7:00pm

Where: Zion Lutheran Fellowship Hall

Cost: TBD (Based on attendance)



** In order to plan quantities, I NEED to know if you plan to attend.

** Please **RSVP Amanda by Monday, January 12th** to amnsweets02@hotmail.com (Also, let Amanda know if any of you have food allergies!) Please join us for some good food & fellowship! **SEE YOU THERE!!**

ALSO! The Treasure Seekers have started a new study called **"Jesus Responds to a World Gone Wrong."** Join us every Sunday at **9:40am** in **Room 208** for coffee & good discussion!

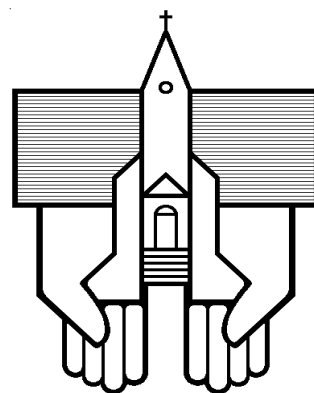
Community Events

ICA – Your Local Foodshelf

Mark your calendars for Sunday, January 18, 3:00pm for the Chamber Music Benefit Concert at Bet Shalom Congregation, 13613 Orchard Rd., Minnetonka. Proceeds to benefit ICA. Tickets are available, \$18.00 in advance and \$25.00 at the door. For more info contact ICA at 952-938-0729.

Saturday Grief Support Group

West Metro Grief Support Coalition invites all persons experiencing grief due to a death. Grief support groups offer hope and healing through educational, listening, sharing, prayer, and fellowship. For January and February the groups meets Saturdays, 9:30am – 11:30am, Wooddale Lutheran Church, 4003 Wooddale Ave. S., St Louis Park, 952-926-9864. For more information contact Darcie Rodman at 763-546-4404.



*Lord, you have been
our dwelling place
in all generations.*

Psalm 90:1

Family Faith Connections

Vicki Peterson

WHAT I HAVE DISCOVERED AND WITNESSED ABOUT GOD WORKING IN CHILDREN'S MINISTRY.

I've learned some life-changing truths about God from children-which prove that in ministry we're all students.

Jesus said, "I tell you the truth, unless you change and become like little children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven" (Matthew 18:3). You might wonder, "What's so great about kids that Jesus wants us to be like them?" Sure, they can be demanding, self-centered and expensive. But kids possess some wonderful qualities I believe we can aspire towards.

- Children are trusting. Faith comes naturally. Faith in others that is. Kids can't look after themselves so they willingly trust adults to look after them. So let us, as adults, be trustworthy.
- Children are quick to forgive. Rarely do kids hold grudges. "Forgive and forget" is their motto. So let us, as adults, be forgiving and forgetful of others wrong doing to us.
- Children are impressionable. If you've earned kids' trust, they will put great stock in what you say and do. Children are ready, just waiting for you to plant the good seeds of God's truth and nurture them with prayer. So let us, as adults, leave them with great impressions of our faith in Christ Jesus!

You've probably heard or maybe have told people to "grow up", but Jesus tells us to "grow down" and become like children. God longs for you and me to love Him with "childlike faith". Just imagine what God can do in the lives of spiritually mature adults who exhibit the childlike faith qualities of trust, forgiveness, and impressionability.



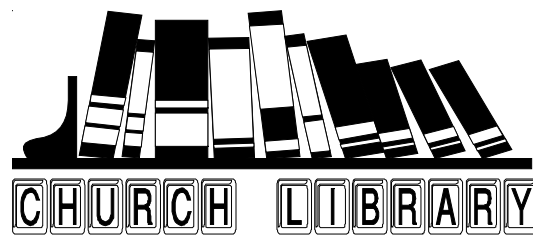
FULL SESSION ON SUNDAY MORNING CLASSES AND WEDNESDAY EVENINGS RESUME THE WEEK OF JANUARY 6.

Teacher's Meeting

There is a Children's Sunday School teacher's meeting January 11, 8:30am in Room #208. Teachers please mark your calendar! We will review September 2007 – December 2008. And look ahead to some designated "fun" days.

Thank You

A special thank you to Linda Swanson who made the costumes for our Christmas program. They were great and we deeply appreciate your time and your talent!



Another section you will find in our Library is #8, Theology and Doctrine. In this section, you will find the *Augsburg Confession*, both *Small* and *Large Catechisms*, the *Book of Concord*, and also the following books:

The 2 Natures in Christ – by Martin Chemnitz (a friend and colleague of Luther), translated by J. O. Preus

Case for a Creator – by Lee Strobel, a journalist who investigates scientific evidence pointing to God.

The Goal of the Gospel – by Philip Bickel & Robert Nordlie

Youth Ministry

Zion Student Ministry Information and Upcoming Events

Zion Student Ministry Mission Statement

To create an environment where youth are encouraged to grow in relationships to God and others and learn to spread the love of Christ.

Have you used GoodSearch or GoodShop yet? Zion's Youth Ministry just deposited a \$98 check from GoodSearch because you have designated us to support. Just like Google or other search engines, use GoodSearch, and, if you do online shopping, we can earn a percentage of your purchases if you go through GoodShop. This is a very easy way to help support Zion's Youth Ministry. As always, we praise God and appreciate all of your support.

Calendar Stuff

Events for All Youth

2009 Summer Juarez Mission Trip Registration Deadline – extended If you are in 8th-12th grade, this trip is for you! We have some spots open still. I have a deadline with YouthWorks on January 11. At that time, if you are not signed up, you most likely will not be able to go. We also want to fill up to 2 “Junior” counselor positions. If you have graduated High School but will not be 21 in August 2009, consider filling one of those positions. Talk to Lisa for more information. **REMEMBER, I must** have your deposit by January 11 if you are planning on going.

Youth Mission Trip Chaperones – we have 3 female chaperones ready to go, but we need at least one male chaperone. If you are willing/able to help, the dates are August 1-9, 2009. Please talk to Lisa for more information.

Christmas Turkey Dinner Thank You! Thanks to all of the youth and parents who helped with the Turkey Dinner this year. Special thanks to Dave and Bev Nieting for the HOURS of work on this to make it a wonderful dinner! Participants earned roughly \$14 per hour working that night! That money goes into your family account here at Zion to help you pay for Zion sponsored Christian events like Mission Trips or Youth Gatherings.

Plan Ahead for our ALL YOUTH February Event – Skating and Spaghetti Dinner! Back by popular demand!! Sunday, February 8 we will leave Zion at 2pm to go to the Minneapolis Depot Ice Rink. After that we will enjoy dinner at The Old Spaghetti Factory. We will return no later than 8pm. Cost: Admission for Ice Skating is \$6; Skate Rental is \$6; and don't forget to bring your own money for the Spaghetti Factory dinner. We do need some adult chaperones to join the party! In order to have enough transportation, and to make restaurant reservations, please be respectful and sign up and pay the \$6 admission fee by February 1. Talk to Lisa if you have any questions.

Confirmation Ministry

Confirmation Classes will resume on January 7, 2009 promptly at 6:30pm – Please be respectful – making sure you are here on time is greatly appreciated.

Confirmation Records If you want to make sure that you are on track for completing this year's Confirmation requirements, take a look at the master record book outside of Pastor Krienke's office next to the postage meter. If there are any discrepancies or questions, please talk to Lisa.

(continued on page 6)

Confirmation Ministry cont'd

Confirmation Parent's Night will be on Wednesday, January 14. We hope to have a special guest speaker this day talking about internet and text messaging items – and things to be aware of. If you are the parent of a 6-8th grade confirmation student, please make plans to be here.

Plan Ahead... Feed My Starving Children Trip for Confirmation Students: February 21 – 11:00-2:00. We will travel to the FMSC in Chanhassen again and package bags of food. This is an amazing and wonderful opportunity to put your servant hearts into action! Please let Lisa know if you will NOT be able to attend.

College Students

Online Chat Jared Betterman and Lisa Day have been working on something that is very exciting as we start 2009. With a desire to 'meet' with our Zion College Students (and their friends) we will be starting an online chat. There are some GREAT books out there that talk about growing in faith and apply very well to you! Jared selected the first one – Messy Spirituality by Mike Yaconelli. We will discuss 1 chapter each meeting time (so you don't have to do a LOT of reading for this). Our meetings will be on the 1st and 3rd Thursdays of the month and will go from 8:00-9:00pm We are planning on using the AOL Chat and have it as an invite only room. In order to do that, if you are interested, please give either Jared Betterman or Lisa Day your AOL screen name – or get an AOL screen name and then give it to us. Lisa's screen name is daydce (or daydce@yahoo.com) You will also need to get the book – talk to Lisa Day if you are interested and she will line you up with one.

Volunteer Opportunities?? If you are home for a bit of time and don't want waste your vacation doing basically nothing, why not consider spending some time serving our Lord by volunteering in our community? You may be able to get your friends together and have a good time serving others. Contact Lisa Day if you are interested in hearing some of the opportunities available to you.

Events for Sr. High Youth Only (Grades 9-12)

Sunday JAM - for 9th-12th graders - is led by Mike Schumacher. Mike will be using Nooma videos and other creative resources throughout the year to help you grow in knowledge and faith.

Wednesday JAM – Kate Dressel is leading this group again. This class is currently looking at "Jesus Did It" a Bible Study in a Can – it's an "Experiential Multimedia" opportunity complete with hands on activities and prizes. This is also open to all 9th-12th graders and their friends.

2nd Annual LUTSEN Snow Retreat – Register by January 7 We will again be traveling to Lutsen this year to enjoy the snow – either skiing, snowboarding or just having fun 'up north'. The dates are January 16-18, 2009 (Friday-Sunday). There is no school on Monday so we will stay a little later than last year. We will leave at 4pm (or as soon as possible) on Friday and return at about 9:30 pm on Sunday. Cost will be \$160 (not including ski/board rental). This includes all meals on Saturday and breakfast/lunch on Sunday, 2 nights lodging, 2 full day lift tickets, swimming & hot tubbing at the Grand Marais Recreation Center, and transportation. Need to Rent? Handle this on your own before we leave: go to www.lutsen.com; click on "Plan & Buy"; select "Rentals"; decide what you want and finish your purchase online (this saves time and money). Pick up a liability and registration form from Lisa. Forms and money must be turned in by January 7.

Events for Jr. High Youth Only (Grades 6-8)

Sunday JR. JAM - DARE TO BE DANIEL – Our Director of Student Ministries, Lisa Day is very excited to be teaching our 6-8th graders this year. We are having a wonderful time looking at how bold of a witness Daniel was for his Lord and how we too can be bold witnesses for our Lord, Jesus Christ.

Confirmation Information - don't forget to read the important Confirmation Information included in this newsletter.

(continued on page 7)

Events for Jr. High Youth Only cont'd

Jr. High Snow Tubing – Saturday, January 24. We will leave Zion at 2:30 pm and travel to Buck Hill for 2 hours of tubing fun. We will then stop for a pizza supper on the way home. We will be home around 7pm. Cost is \$22 and includes tubing, transportation, and supper. Bring WARM clothes, boots, and good gloves/mittens (preferably not knit ones). Sign up and pay by January 18. You can download a 'generic' activity registration for from the Zion website and add all of the specific information.

Our Lutheran History

The birthday of the Lutheran Church was June 25, 1530! This was the day that the Augsburg Confession was read to Emperor Charles V and the Assembly (imperial diet) at Augsburg, Germany. The Assembly was convened to deal with the threat of the Turks to the empire and the Lutheran-Roman Catholic disagreement that was dividing the church.

Philip Melancthon (a colleague of Martin Luther) wrote a confession of what Lutherans believed and taught on the basis of Holy Scripture. It was prepared under guidance of Martin Luther, who couldn't appear as he was under the imperial ban. The confession was composed partly of earlier documents written by Luther (the Schwabach and Marburg articles). The Confession was read, in German, to the Assembly and Charles V by Dr. Beyer, a layman. Upon finishing, he declared to Charles V, "Most gracious emperor, this is a confession which, with the grace and help of God, will prevail even against the gates of hell."

Table Talks

Life Issues and the Christian Faith (Abortion)

Pastor Neal will be leading a two session Bible Class series on Sundays, January 11 & 18, 2009 at 9:40am in the Fireside Room (#104). We live in an age of attempts to shut God out of life and to make individual choice supreme. "If it feels good, do it." God's Word, however, makes it clear that it is not for any of us to discern right or wrong on the basis of what we think or feel. Join Pastor Neal as he leads us in digging deeper into issues facing our nation today regarding the sanctity of life. Grab a cup of coffee and join your friends around the table for a lively session each Sunday.

Do you want to share the Gospel? How about showing someone you care? Next time you are walking down the street, take a look at the faces of the people you pass. About each one, ask yourself, *Will I ever see him/her again?* Think about it for a moment, will you? If you absolutely know that each one is saved, names written in the Lamb's Book of Life, of course you'll see them again, you'll see each one in eternity and God will call each one by name! But if you don't know, will you see them enter Heaven's Gates?



With Ablaze, we'll take a look at how we can minister to the lost, how we can help the disadvantaged, and how we can show the Great Commission at work. Won't you join us! To learn more about this wonderful opportunity, stay tuned to Pastor Neal's sermons beginning January 25!

ZECC Ministry

Ring the bells, ring the bells.
Christmas bells, Christmas bells.
It is Jesus' birthday; it is Jesus' birthday,
Can you tell? Can you tell?

This is the song our Pre - Kindergarten children sang at our annual Christmas Sing A Long Family Event earlier this month. I thought it would be fun to take a peek into each classroom and see how they are celebrating Jesus' Birthday. Let's take a peek together;

The Infants – Snuggle Bunny Room

When we peek into the infant room we see a "Happy Birthday Jesus" bulletin board. On top of the children's cubbies is an open Christmas box awaiting donated gifts to infants in need to honor baby Jesus. The gifts will be donated to the local family resource center. In a room out of parent sight is the homemade parent gift the teachers carefully and artfully crafted with their child's handprint and photo. Let's move onto the next classroom;

The Toddlers- Dancing Ducklings

In this classroom we see a sparkly decorated paper Christmas cookie project on the wall, representing family time. The children also have a wall bulletin board nativity scene they have been working on piece by piece as they learn about baby Jesus from their Hands On Bible lessons. The candy cane art project was a fun one for the toddlers. The candy cane was used to demonstrate the use of the shepherd's hook for saving the sheep from danger. The little ones laughed as the sheep "bleated" to be rescued from its plight. How much is the sheep like us as we call on God when we need to be rescued? Let's look at the next classroom;

Preschool – Busy Butterflies

Shhh – The parent gift is hiding away from parent eyes. The children made a candy cane cradle with baby Jesus lying in the crook of the candy cane. Interestingly to note is a few of the baby Jesus' are missing from their candy cane cradle parent gift. The teacher suspects the creative artist couldn't be without baby Jesus for themselves! Let's go on the last classroom;

Pre-K – Fantastic Frogs

We see a nativity scene that is on display. As a backdrop we see a framed photo of a teacher, in her younger years, portraying Mary in a Christmas pageant. A Christmas project the children had fun making was traced and cut out hand prints made into a Christmas wreath representing the never ending love God has for each of us.

I pray that this time of year finds +all of you in good spirits. *"The patient in spirit is better than the proud in spirit. " (Ecclesiastes 7:8)*

In God's Service,
Judy Fuhrman
Director



Zion Early Childhood Center (ZECC)

A nurturing and loving environment for the growth and development of your child.

Monday - Friday 7:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m.
(952)938-7661 ext. 21