

ZOAR CHURCH PARISH NEWS

A BEACON OF HOPE ON THE NORTH SHORE

Inside this issue:

Pastor's Ponderings

Harry Mouse

News from the Council President

View from the Pew: Eileen Netland Hall chats with Polly Erickson

Matters of Interest

Pastor Ponderings

I read two (perhaps conflicting) statements that got me to think. The first was: "we live in a Good Friday world". Listening to the news lately I can sure buy that!! A Good Friday world is a world full of suffering, trouble, hurts, losses, grief, ... it is a world embattled to the death in conflict of opinion, of theology, of power. It is a world of unfairness, mistakes, and selfish ambitions. Yes, when things are difficult in my life, I can see that we live in a "Good Friday world"



But then I read: "We are Easter people". Easter people: that certainly splashes cold water on my personal pity party. We are Easter people. I had to think that, despite what my anxiety may be, there is something other than just my personal gloom and doom. If we really mean it when we say we are Easter people than we also have to believe that there is light beyond darkness and hope beyond pain. If we really experience being Easter people we discover that, even if our hearts are broken, there is joy as well as pain inside of them.

The writer of the article said "believing 'Easter' in the midst of 'Good Friday' is about a people who are future-oriented. We look forward, not back, and we are, for the most part, a culture of optimistic, hopeful people." When a pastor during Children's Time asked what Jesus may have said when he came out of the tomb, a little boy responded: "Tah Dah!"... Perhaps that needs to be the mantra of those of us who say, "we are Easter people".

"Out of the ashes of our mistakes, from our defeats and even our despair, we rise again in better lives" (Diane Cameron USA Today writer)

Just Pondering.

EvaLyn

What's going on around here?

by Harry the Mouse

Whew, what a winter....Here I was expecting to be holed up under Diane's desk in a shoe box until spring thaw... I never thought I would be seeing birds all winter long...too bad the "snow birds" didn't stick around this year...some have seen more snow that we have! But they will be back soon and it will be so much fun to catch up! But I better get to my mailbox...Lots of mail but only one question!!



Dear Harry Why are there changes in the worship service?

Even though there is a recommended liturgy in the Lutheran Book of Worship, and for the most part, we follow it, every pastor approaches worship in their own unique style wanting to meet the needs of the congregation. Pastor EvaLyn has a plaque in the office that says "God made so many different kinds of people why would [he] allow only one way to serve [him]" That is also true when it comes to worship. There are as many meaningful ways to worship as there are people gathered together in morning worship time.

Like what, for example?

Well, you may have noticed that on some Sundays the organist plays softly during the pastor's prayer. Many have commented that this music background is soothing like like hearing the lapping of the water on the shores of our meditation. For others, the music is distracting making it difficult to concentrate on the words being spoken. Some find prayer time to be most meaningful to them if there is total silence while for others the time of total silence is discomforting. So Pastor EvaLyn tried so give you a little of both.

Does this mean that we will have to get used to another kind of worship service when our new pastor arrives?

Probably. But again, because we have a prescribed order of worship there won't be a lot that is really different, but the service will reflect the gifts and graces of a new person in the pulpit.

Like how? (I say dubiously)

Well, you will be singing out of a new hymnal and maybe parts of the service will come from that, too. I hear he is much more technically

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savvy than Pastor EvaLyn who is very technically awkward. (oops did I say that?) and he will probably be able to at least get it right!

What if I don't like it?

I am so very glad that you have felt comfortable enough to express your feelings and I am sure that the new pastor will feel the same way. It makes it so much easier to develop meaningful worship that will somehow meet the needs of all.

The interim time in a congregation can be a difficult time because the familiarity with “things as they have always been” changes. That isn't a bad thing, it is just sometimes an annoying thing...and for some, a welcome thing. As we progress further into the interim process you will find your self asking: “What is happening around here” and I encourage you to come in and talk about your questions and your concerns. That is how we determine what the congregation needs and is looking for in new leadership.

Thank you for keeping the conversation going.

Harry

**Saturday, April 11 is
Movie Night
at Zoar Church**

The movie **God is Not Dead**
will be shown at **7:00** p.m.

Popcorn and beverages will be served

Rumor has it that Timothy Mouse, Harry Mouse's
brother,
just blew in for a visit with Harry. Maybe you'll catch
a glimpse of them as they take in the movie and
munch on popcorn.

**Many thanks for your
generous gifts of food
and money during the
March "Fill the Pews"
Drive to support the
Cook County Food
Shelf.**

**April is Violence
Prevention Month**

A Message from the Council President

As a Lutheran Church in Mission for Christ, we continue to look for ways that we can increase our focus on missions, both in the community, the county, nationally and internationally. A team of members met recently to look at the opportunities in all those areas, and developed a plan for the year. While supporting the LCMC synod through our budget, we have also identified the opportunities that we will serve this year through monthly special offerings. The list includes the local Food Shelf, Salvation Army, CHUM, and Lutheran Social Services programs while being open to any other needs that may arise. We strive to increase the amount of money that is spent beyond our own congregation.

Harry writes about change, and that is certainly what is happening at Zoar Church this year! Saying good-bye to Pastor Deborah after 6 years of ministry, was not easy. Organizing a call committee, working with interim pastors, looking at who we are, where we are, and where we want to be helps us to prepare for the next steps in the life of the church. Losing our very proficient, knowledgeable, and talented secretary, Elizabeth, leaves another gap. We are grateful for Diane Parker being willing to take on the challenge. We have a committee that will help us choose a new sign to replace the well used one providing a new look to the front of the church. Through all the changes, one thing remains constant: we are committed to being God's presence on the North Shore and we invite everyone to be a part of who we are.

It's a sign of what's coming: a task force is being formed to look at the options and make a recommendation for a new sign for the front of the church. We've checked with the county to know the placement options. We are looking for a design that fits with the other signs along the highway. We need one that announces our service time, but also one that allows us to post special events. If you have any ideas or recommendations, please leave your name and number at the church, or contact one of the leadership team members.

Judy Gregg

Needed:

**Task force members to
work on the new sign
placement and design.
Please volunteer.**

A View from the Pew

Polly Erickson visits with
Eileen Netland Hall

She grew up Eileen Erickson, on Maple Hill, north of Grand Marais and attended church in Grand Marais. She became well acquainted with Tofte and Zoar Church, however, long before she moved here. Eileen's older sister, Gladys, was like a second mother to her. Gladys had married Andy Tofte, Jr. and lived in Tofte. Eileen spent time with her sister, especially during the summer months when she attended Vacation Bible School at Zoar Church. She met the local townfolk and felt very much at home here.



In 1946, not long after Eileen's first husband, Swen Netland, returned from WWII, Eileen and Swen moved with their two children Janis and Danny, to Tofte. Later, they had eleven more children who were all raised with regular attendance and involvement at Zoar Church. They sat in the front row during Sunday service so that their mother could keep an eye on them from her place in the choir loft. Eileen sang in the choir for about 40 years under several different directors.

Over these many years, Eileen has been a very active member at Zoar Church. She taught Sunday School, Vacation Bible School, and the women in the Christian Women's Club. She taught the Gospel of Mark five times to various groups. Each week Eileen went with the pastor and Muriel Michaelson or Joan Hall to Grand Marais to teach confirmation. Eileen served on the church council for many years and was also a deacon. She spent so much time in the kitchen helping to cook and serve dinners for weddings and funerals that she was delighted when the new (present) church was built with such a wonderful kitchen. She baked for bazaars, worked at rummage sales, and joined prayer groups. Her husband once wondered why she didn't take her clothes and move into the church, since she was always there!

If there was something going on at Zoar, Eileen was involved---and she still is, if she can find someone to drive her there. Eileen is treasured as our oldest active member, and what a Treasure she is !

**Attention all
Norwegians**

**Norwegian
Independence Day is
May 17!**

**Congratulations
Cook County High
School Graduates,
class of 2015 !**

**Got any bikes just
gathering dust in the
garage?
We can put them to
good use---WOW!**

Starfish fund

You have perhaps heard the story of the man walking along the beach early one morning to find a young man throwing things into the sea. Upon inquiry the young man explained that thousands of starfish had been thrown onto the beach with the tide and if not returned to the water would die. As he continued to watch the young man throw the starfish one by one back into the sea, the old man shook his head at the futility of the task. "There are so many here, and many more further down the beach you can't possibly make a difference, son". The young man listened patiently and then bent down and picked up another starfish hurling it into the ocean past the breaking waves he said "it makes a difference to that one".

Upon hearing this story, the Missions Committee has developed a "Starfish Fund" which is designated to help people in the church and in the community with special or emergency needs. An anonymous donation has been given to start the project and there will be special offerings for the fund throughout the year. If you would like to be part of this ministry or contribute to this fund contact Polly Erickson.

WOW: Workers on Wheels

Workers on Wheels is a ministry of First Congregational, UCC in Grand Marais. Used bicycles are fixed up, and put in good condition by volunteers at the Church. International workers often have no means of transportation other than their own two feet. For a small cash deposit, international workers can pick up bicycles to use during their stay. Workers on Wheels has become a very popular program during the five or so years it has been in operation. This year, Zoar Church will work with Steve Deschene and Jeff Kern in obtaining bicycles for our west-end international workers. Interested workers or employers should contact Judy Gregg or Pastor EveLyn for more information.

Matters of Interest

Preparing for the Future

July is fast approaching! Really!! And before we know it we will be greeting Pastor Daren and his family. There are a few things we need to do in order to be ready for their arrival. There will be some painting at the parsonage with some general fixing and cleaning. There is also a need to do some updating in the pastor's office. If you have the skills and time to donate to this effort give Judy Gregg a call and she will steer you to the one's working on various projects.

Children's Sunday

We welcome Children and youth to all of our church events, but on Sunday April 19 the service will be all for Kids, about Kids and by Kids! You don't want to miss this special Sunday when the children from this year's Kids Bible Study will be bringing you the message in word and song. Following the service will be a famous Gary Hansen Pancake breakfast. I wonder if the pancakes will look like Mickey Mouse? Come and find out! Jesus said "suffer the little children to come unto me and forbid them not, for such is the kingdom of God"

We care

Did you notice the bags in the front pew? Grocery bags that is, filled with food items that will go to the food shelf. Winter has dragged on, summer jobs not yet in sight and, for many, resources are slim. The Cook County Food Shelf provides that extra boost that families need to get through the slow times. Your contributions in food and food dollars makes this happen. Donations are always welcome, whether they are in the pews or not. Call the church or Polly Erickson.

Mark your Calendar

Sunday, April 19: kid's service and pancake breakfast

April 29 is the last day of Kid's Bible Club