
Mt. Zion Herald

Mt. Zion Lutheran Church & School
1680 Balsam Avenue Boulder, Colorado

December 2009
303-443-4151

Dear Friends in Christ Jesus,

The deadline for the December Herald is upon us. The stores have all the Christmas decorations up and offering all kinds of so called sale prices. Now many families are making preparations for Christmas, decorating, card writing, annual newsletters, baking, parties, and the list goes on! Then the matter of those gifts! Excitement and anxiety grow with the impending exchange of gifts – as if “exchange” and “gift” actually go together. A gift is freely given. In an exchange we should get as much as we give.

Yet, God actually worked a “gift exchange”. Adam and Eve exchanged good for evil, giving away blessing and receiving woe. Still even as they stood in shame before the Lord, He announced His plan to undo their mess.

The promised seed was the threat made to Satan and the Gift proclaimed by Paul. For it, Eve hoped, Abraham longed, and David signed. Isaiah saw its light hundreds of years before the Magi saw the star. Only one Gift is worth that much hope and so long a wait. For with this Gift, God gives us righteousness, and we give Him our sins. God gives us immortality, while He receives our mortality. In the hopeless sin of Adam, we all died. With the gift of Christ and His suffering, death, and resurrection, hope was fulfilled, death died, Satan’s power crumbled, mercy prevailed, forgiveness was restored, and life began anew. Now that is a gift exchange!

“I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; He will crush your head, and you will strike his heel.” Genesis 3:15

A Blessed Advent and Christmas to each and everyone

I am in Christ Service,

Pastor Allen D. Anderson

Overcoming Fear: Being Viewed as a Hypocrite by Someone Close

Last month we began a series from the *Equipping Newsletter* called "Overcoming Fear." For the next few months, we will address a specific fear that has deterred us from sharing our faith so we can overcome each obstacle. We want to jump these hurdles so we feel free to share rather than allowing fear to hinder our faith sharing.

Last month we addressed the fear of not knowing what to say. This month, we will work to overcome the fear that keeps many from sharing with a family member or close friend: The fear of being considered a hypocrite.

Family members and close friends have been around for a long period of time, meaning that - in addition to our strengths - they have observed our greatest moments of weakness. They've likely watched as we've crashed and burned, sometimes pulling loved ones down with us - including them.

For some Christians, they feel that their imperfection exhibited over the years disqualifies them from sharing about a perfect Jesus with their spectators. These past mistakes cause them to feel too ashamed to share. However, the beauty of evangelism is that it has nothing to do with us. Take *you* out of the equation.

When it comes to witnessing, do not focus on your past sins or fear what others will say who knew you then. In fact, get over yourself! Witnessing is not about you at all. Even when we share our personal testimony, the emphasis is not on our own goodness, but on the greatness of God. On your own, you are not good enough-no matter what. No one is. That is why we each need Christ-the only perfect one.

The message to communicate is not that you are perfect, but rather that God is. It is by His grace that Jesus died to save us from the horrible things we did in our past. In fact, our imperfect past is a testimony of God's faithfulness. He has shown us mercy as an example to all.

While in Damascus, Paul was looked down on for preaching the Gospel because of his former life: "Immediately he preached the Christ in the synagogues, that He is the Son of God. Then all who heard were amazed, and said, 'Is this not he who destroyed those who called on this name in Jerusalem, and has come here for that purpose, so that he might bring them bound to the chief priests?' But Paul increased all the more in strength and confounded the Jews who dwelt in Damascus, proving that Jesus is the Christ" (Acts 9:20-22).

Paul did not allow his past sins or the fear of what people thought of him hinder his

witness. Instead, he increased in strength-God's strength. He leaned on God, recognizing that this was His kingdom work. And rather than become weak or give up, Paul confounded those who would belittle him or discredit his witness.

You are not disqualified from sharing with friends or family members because of past sins. In fact, God can use your testimony mightily to bring glory to His name. Remember to direct all of the praise and attention to Him. And, next time you begin to doubt your right to witness because of past sins, consider this: Even if you had been spared from this previous humiliation, evangelism would *still* not be about you!

The emphasis is on God's love and mercy. You have been used as an example of that. You are not perfect and neither are your friends or family members. When they see that, despite your imperfections, God has fully forgiven you, fully accepted you and that He fully loves you, they will want what you have been given!

When you remember "it is by grace you have been saved, through faith-and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God- not by works, so that no one can boast," your gaze will be shifted away from yourself and back onto God, making you more available and effective as His witness. Salvation is a gift from God - a work of the Holy Spirit in one's heart - which you can neither earn for yourself or persuade others to by your actions.

God has no doubt strategically placed your family members and friends in your life. Let go of your past -- He has. And, as you move forward, freely share the gift of salvation with your loved ones as you would share any other item you cherish.

Provided by Sarah Guldalian, Editor Coordinator, Equipping to Share Newsletter with Lutheran Hour Ministry

Thought of the Day

**"Blessed are they whose transgressions are forgiven, whose sins are covered."
Romans 4:7**

Submitted by Debbie Duggan, Outreach Chair

“Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have” 1 Peter 3:15

Seven Basic Truths About the Gospel

This is a continuation of the explanation of the “Seven Basic Truths About the Gospel” that were listed in the May, 2009 Herald.

Basic Truth #1 – God Loves us Unconditionally

(expanded on in the June, 2009 Herald)

Basic Truth # 2 - We rebel against God’s love.

(expanded on in the July, 2009 Herald)

Basic Truth #3 -- We Cannot Overcome Our Rebellion

(expanded on in the August, 2009 Herald)

Basic Truth #4 – Jesus is God’s Solution to our Rebellion.

(expanded on in the September, 2009 Herald)

Basic Truth #5 – God’s unconditional love brings us

forgiveness and peace through Jesus.

Basic Truth #6: - Trust in Jesus Alone As Our

Personal Savior

Basic Truth #7: - God enables us to live as obedient children who can say, “No!” to sin.

By God’s grace we place our faith in Jesus, and God gives us the power to become His children. We have a new life, a new identity, a new name (Christian), a new elder brother (Jesus), and new way of life. Not because we deserve it, but because the God of all creation loves us. As we live in this relationship, God gives us His Holy Spirit to enable us to leave behind our former ways of life and to embrace the new life that we have in Christ. When Jesus accomplishes His work of salvation in us, our lives can never be the same again.

“ Those who live according to the sinful nature have their minds set on what that nature desires; but those who live in accordance with the Spirit have their minds set on what the Spirit desires” Romans 8:5

“Because of the service by which you have proved yourselves, men will praise God for the obedience that accompanies your confession of the gospel of Christ, and for your generosity in sharing with them and with everyone else”

2 Corinthians 9:13

(Taken from Lutheran Brotherhoods, “Share Life A Witness Workshop” Guide)

Submitted by Debbie Duggan, Outreach Chair

*TO CELEBRATE THIS VERY SPECIAL SEASON
YOU ARE CORDIALLY INVITED TO JOIN US FOR*

THE ADVENT SERIES

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 2ND

7:00 PM Advent Service

Text: Isaiah 55:10-11

Theme: "Ribbons & Bows"

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 9TH

7:00 PM Advent Service

Text: John 6:35-40

Theme: "Christmas Baking"

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 16TH

7:00 PM Advent Service

A SPECIAL CHORAL SERVICE

WITH THE MT ZION CHOIR

CELEBRATE THE BIRTH OF CHRIST

CHRISTMAS EVE CANDLELIGHT SERVICE

DECEMBER 24TH AT 6:30PM

CHRISTMAS DAY SERVICE

DECEMBER 25TH AT 10:00AM

&

START THE NEW YEAR

NEW YEAR'S EVE SERVICE

DECEMBER 31ST AT 6:30PM

Women's Christmas Luncheon – Sharon Schroeder will host the luncheon at her home on Saturday, December 12 at noon. Join us for Christian fellowship and an “Advent Biblical Treasure Hunt.” Our Christmas charity will be providing gifts and meals for refugee families with a cash donation to Lutheran Family Services. If you want to contribute, make a check out to Mt. Zion LWML, with Christmas charity in the lower left. We will also be making cookie plates for our shut-ins.

Seasoned Seniors –

The Seasoned Seniors Christmas luncheon will be held at the Cork, 3295 30th Street at 12:00 noon December 14, 2009. The luncheon entrees will be \$15.00 (the same as last year). This will cover beverage, tax and tips. Everyone is invited to join us. I will need to call them with the number of people attending by December 6th. Please call Peggy Rogers if you will be attending at 303-494-7177. Hope you can join us. The menu selection will be printed in a bulletin as soon as I receive them. You will make your choice the day of the luncheon.

Christmas Gift Bags for Our Neighbors

Sign up today to prepare a Christmas gift bag for the people at the Alpine Residence. Fill a large gift bag with personal care items, card games, puzzles, snacks, hot chocolate, tea, coffee, etc.

We are preparing bags for 6 females and 9 males.

The bags will be delivered on Sunday, December 20.

Thank you for your generosity. Human Care Committee,
Colleen Spahr & Lynn Pflasterer

Office Hours during the Christmas Holiday

I wish you all a wonderful Christmas Season with much joy and a New Year full of hope and new possibilities. This year has been a wonderful one for me and I thank you all for giving me the privilege of working for your Church and School. I will be taking two weeks off while the school is closed from December 21st through January 1st. Therefore, I will need to get the January newsletter done by December 15th. Please make sure that I have all articles for January by that date. Additionally, if you have any announcements for the bulletins of December 27th or January 3rd, they must also be received by December 15th.

Best wishes for the Holidays, Joan Chamberlain, Administrative Assistant

Toddler Class – Ms. Balchunas

The Toddlers have been enjoying a lot of outside time on beautiful fall days. On the cold snowy days they learned that icicles are very cold, that snow is very cold and it is fun to walk in the snow with our boots on. We have also been doing a variety of sensory activities. Some favorites have been; washing babies in warm soapy water, making snow noodle soup, and having good clean fun with shaving cream. We're continuously working on being kind to our friends and using acceptable social behaviors. The toddlers are looking forward to making Thanksgiving crafts. Most of all, we will be counting the ways we can be thankful – on Thanksgiving and everyday.

Ms. Anderson's Preschool – 2 ½

We have been doing many fun activities this month helping to prepare for Thanksgiving. We have been signing a Thanksgiving song so they can learn about how and why we celebrate thanksgiving and singing the Trurkey trot (hokey pokey) for fun. We have been working on our monthly shape,(oval) color, (yellow) our animal (the turkey) and of course our counting skills and much more. The class is doing a wonderful job of shape recognition. They are starting to point out many shapes in everyday items, i.e. napkins ,clocks etc. This is a fun activity for them to show off there knowledge and also learn new shapes in their everyday lives.

In December we will be learning about Christmas and what it really means. It is great to see the children so excited for the holidays and growing more and more each day with their knowledge and friendship with each other. I am very pleased with the progress so far and couldnt ask for a better class.

Mrs. Walker's Preschool - 3

This December the class will make decorations for the classroom tree. The decorations will help us learn about Christmas and to get ready for our party on December 18th, at 9:00 am. The class sign up sheet will be posted by the classroom door if you would like to help with supplies. There will also be a paper Christmas tree on the classroom door with ornaments on it. Each ornament represents a gift for the classroom. We do this as our gift exchange, instead of buying gifts for each other. Should you choose to participate take an ornament and bring that gift back to the classroom before our party on December 18th.

Bible stories for the month are

An angel visits Mary, Luke 1.

Mary visits Elizabeth, Luke 1.

Jesus is born, Luke 2:1-7.

The Shepherds visit Jesus ,Luke 2 :8-20.

Mrs. Anderson's Pre K

What a great time of year to be able to teach the children about the true meaning of Christmas!

“A Savior has been born to you; He is Christ the Lord” ...Luke 2:11

Everything that the children do this month is centered around the above Bible verse. This is our purpose to tell everyone about Jesus, to show God's love through us.

Oh How Joyfully.....author unknown

O how joyfully, O how blessedly,
Comes the glory of Christmas time!
To a world so lost in sin
Christ the Savior, enters in:
Praise Him, Praise Him Christians, evermore!

Kindergarten- Mrs. Wu

The kindergarteners are still working hard on their class work. The new math curriculum is often very challenging but very “hands on” which they love. Phonics is always fun as they learn new sounds that they can combine to make words. Wow! They are already reading!

Everyday we are afforded the opportunity to talk about Jesus, God's son and all he did for us. But, especially this month we will celebrate the birth of our Savior, Jesus Christ and to say thanks to God for giving us the greatest gift of all, his son! The Kindergarten children are making gifts for their parents while learning the real reason for giving gifts. May we all remember the reason for this season!

Hi from 1st and 2nd ~ Mrs. Sarr

It is hard to believe that the year 2009 is almost over. It is even harder to believe that the first quarter of school is finished. We are now working hard on new concepts in all areas of our curriculum. Something exciting that we are doing is making a magazine. Mr. Allen, the parent of one of my second grade student's, is working with our class on a magazine we are calling *Kids' Fun!* Mr. Allen has been the art director for magazines and has taught courses at CU. The students are learning how to write stories and articles. They are also learning how to be photographers and illustrators. They might also do interviews with various people around the school and report on different events that will be happening.

We are also excited as we await the birth of our Savior. December is a busy and fun time as we learn more and more about the awesome gift God gave us in His Son, Jesus. MERRY CHRISTMAS!

Thrivent GivingPlus is ending December 31, 2009 and will be replaced by Thrivent Choice in the spring of 2010. Please do not delay giving your contribution to the School or Preschool through the ThriventGivingPlus program.

Thrivent has created a GivingPlus phase-out funding plan to organizations that participated in 2008 and/or 2009 and have received \$2500 or more annually from Thrivent. Both our School and Preschool meet this requirement. Between January 15 and June 30, 2010 Mt Zion can apply for a one time “challenge grant” for up to 20% of our annual average gifts. To qualify we will need to raise twice the challenge grant amount through personal contributions. We will be contacted by January 15 with additional information about how to obtain the phase-out funding. Thrivent Choice program details are still being finalized and we will be updated in the months ahead.

Following are the totals of your gifts and the Thrivent GivingPlus Matching Funds received in October and Calendar and Fiscal (beginning July 1) year to date as of October 31, 2009.

	<u>October</u>	<u>Calendar</u> <u>Year to Date</u>	<u>Fiscal</u> <u>Year to Date</u>
School Gifts	\$400	\$8,350	\$5,200
School Giving Plus	\$225	\$5,400	\$3,150
Preschool Gifts	\$1,200	\$11,800	\$4,800
Preschool Giving Plus	\$600	\$6,550	\$2,525

Thank you for supporting your Elementary School and Preschool with your gifts!

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