

NEWSLETTER

Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church
Stetsonville, WI



*“See, I lay a stone in Zion, a chosen and precious cornerstone,
and the one who trusts in him will never be put to shame.” (1 Peter 2:6)*

NOVEMBER 2024

SHORT STORIES THAT SPEAK VOLUMES FOR OUR LIVES

Real Wealth

Jesus told this parable: “The ground of a certain rich man produced a good crop . . . he said, . . . ‘I will tear down my barns and build bigger ones, and there I will store all my grain and my goods. And I’ll say to myself, ‘You have plenty of good things laid up for many years. Take life easy; eat, drink and be merry.’” But God said to him, ‘You fool! This very night your life will be demanded from you. Then who will get what you have prepared for yourself?’ This is how it will be with anyone who stores up things for himself but is not rich toward God” (Luke 12:16-21).

“I need money!”

“How much money do you need?”

“Lots! Start with *one* and keep adding zeros till I say, ‘Stop.’”

Did you ever have a conversation like this? At times we dream about being very wealthy. What would we do? Quit our jobs? Buy a new car? Travel?

While it is fun to dream, the reality is that we are richer than most people in the world. Yet we may not feel rich, even though we have almost everything for maintaining a fairly comfortable lifestyle. So why don’t we feel rich?

The main reason is because there’s something wrong with all of us. We have a sinful nature. It likes to twist things around in our minds, so we constantly want more. And when we get more, our sinful nature still isn’t satisfied.

Jesus illustrates this in a story about a farmer who

had a bumper crop one year. Instead of giving away the surplus to feed the hungry or to proclaim how generous God had been with him, he thought only of himself. He planned to build bigger barns and take life easy. But soon, he died. All his accumulated wealth went to someone else, and he had to face God.

Acquiring a lot of wealth in this world is finally worthless without Jesus. He is our real wealth. The Bible says, “Though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, so that you through his poverty might become rich” (2 Corinthians 8:9). Jesus, the eternal Son of God, left heaven and humbled himself to become a man. He bore the punishment of our sin, including the greed that lurks within our sinful nature. The result of his poverty is that we are freely given the riches of forgiveness and life with God.

When we think about our lives, we have so much to thank God for. Though we may not have all the worldly riches of our dreams, we have real wealth in Jesus!

Turn Your Clocks Back!

Daylight Saving Time (DST) ends at 2:00 A.M. on Sunday, November 3, 2024. Be sure to set your clocks BACK 1 hour before going to bed on Saturday night, November 2. Fall Back!



Thanksgiving Services

Thanks giving services are planned for Wednesday, November 27 at 7:00 P.M. and Thursday, November 28 at 9:30 A.M. Please make plans to attend and invite friends and family members.

Forward In Christ

The November *Forward In Christ*, entitled

“*Worship Wear*,” is available on the entryway counter.

Have you ever gone around the table during your family gatherings at Thanksgiving listing what you are thankful for? This month in *Forward in Christ* lists reasons for us to be thankful.

- WELS pastors who share why they make specific choices in their congregations. This year’s “*Free in Christ*” series has highlighted reasoning behind congregational choices on various topics, this month focusing on what pastors wear (p. 7).
- WELS members who are willing to open up about how God has Led them through hard times in their lives. Don’t miss Jessica, Friske’s article about her struggle with mental illness (p. 20).
- Want to study a book of the Bible? Aaron Goetzing looks at Advent prophecies from the book of Isaiah, starting this month with Isaiah 11:1-9 (p. 32).
- Is the upcoming election making you nervous? WELS President Mark Schroeder offers words of encouragement from God’s Word (p. 6).
- Need a refresher on the Sacrament of Holy Communion? David Scharf digs in, reminding you about its institution and its blessings (p. 15).
- Are you or is someone you know struggling with grief? John Boeder shares the comfort God gives us in his Word (p. 30).
- Paul Meier describes how a moment in nature inspired gratitude for God’s blessings and the realization that gratitude drives out anxiety (p. 10).

For what are you thankful?

Meditations

The next issue of *Meditations* is available on the counter in the entryway. We ask for a donation of \$3.00 for each regular print and \$5.00 for each Large Print. Devotions begin December 1st.

Patronage Benefits

Some companies offer patronage benefits which may be directed to non-profit organizations like Zion.

Thrivent Financial allows members to direct their Choice Dollars. Log into your account at thrivent.com Your available Choice Dollars are shown under the Generosity tab. Or, call 1-800-847-4836. Say “Thrivent

Choice.” Have your membership number handy.

CMMA stands for Charitable Money Market Account. If you have an eligible account at Forward Bank, you may designate Zion as the charity to receive the charitable contribution Forward Bank makes based on your account balance. Please see Forward Bank for more information.

NPH EXTRA Rewards Program

NPH EXTRA is a free program that allows you to designate an organization like Zion to receive a portion of the dollars you spend at Northwestern Publishing House (NPH). This means your purchases benefit your church and help support the gospel ministry that is being carried out!

Signing up for NPH EXTRA is easy. You can call 800-662-6022 and talk with one of the NPH customer service representatives. They’ll be happy to help you sign up! Or, fill out your information and designate Zion, or another organization, at online.nph.net/extra-rewards-loyalty-program, hit submit, and you’re all set!

Whenever you shop at NPH and are signed in to your account, a percentage of your purchase will automatically go to your designated organization at no additional cost to you. (Please note that you must be signed in to your NPH account for a percentage of your purchase to be applied to your organization.) Don’t have an account with NPH? Call the number above or register online for an account.

That’s all it takes to support Zion in this unique and easy way! Up to four times a year, your designated organization will receive 1 percent of your purchases and the purchases of your fellow church members who are signed up for NPH EXTRA. Zion can then use that money in various ways to carry out gospel ministry!

Service Streaming

Zion’s worship services are streamed at zionlutheranstetsonville.com. A copy of the most recent bulletin is available under the News tab.

Coats for Kids

A Coats for Kids collection box has been placed in the church entryway. Donations of new and gently used winter coats, boots, hats and gloves (for kids and adults) are being accepted.

Volunteer Opportunities

Zion is looking for volunteers to help run the HymnSoft computer program during worship services. ***No computer skills are necessary.*** Training is provided.

Do you play piano? Guitar? Accordion? Do you wish to serve the Lord and Zion with pre-service music and/or accompanying the liturgy and/or hymns?

Zion needs more men to take up the leadership roles in the congregation. Please consider how you might serve your congregation and your Savior. Of immediate need is a man to assist the congregation as Education Elder. The primary duty is to lead the Sunday School.

Interested? Please see Pastor Russow or Jeff Lange.

Online Bible study connecting teens to Christ and one another

Just two months after WELS teens joined together for the biennial WELS International Youth Rally in Colorado, more than 100 WELS teens found a way to connect with one another again—this time online. Rev. Dr. Phil Huebner, campus pastor at Wisconsin Lutheran High School (WLHS), Milwaukee, Wis., led the first National Online Teen Bible Study in September.

Huebner worked with Oliva Hermanson, a 2024 WLHS graduate with a heart for bringing teens together for faith and fellowship. “I recognized that there are teens across the country who do not have the opportunity to go to a school with almost a thousand people who share their faith,” Hermanson explains. “I was looking for a way to bring Christian teens together on a regular basis, create a space where we can discuss our faith, and make connections that are meaningful.”

Hermanson brought her idea for a national online teen Bible study to Huebner, who connected her with Rev. Donn Dobberstein, director of WELS Discipleship. WELS Discipleship has been actively working to support churches in engaging their teen populations.

Dobberstein explains, “God has blessed WELS with about 16,000 souls in the 14- to 17-year-old age group. At the same time, the size of congregations has trended down, meaning fewer teens are in churches today than in past decades. Many churches don’t have the critical mass of youth as they did in the past.”

After the 2022 youth rally, WELS Discipleship began considering how it might help churches enhance

their youth ministry efforts between biennial youth rallies. “First, we developed resources for ‘Youth Night,’” explains Dobberstein. “It’s a series of three youth-focused events during the school year to bring high school youth from area churches together . . . to encourage faith, fun, and fellowship.”

The WELS National Online Teen Bible Study accomplishes similar goals as teens from across the world gather digitally to study the Word. “Geography is no longer a barrier,” says Dobberstein. “It’s about connecting them at a critical time in their life to Christ and with each other.”

Hermanson played an active role in planning and executing the event, and Huebner selected the first topic: the parable of the prodigal son. “I chose a topic that I thought teens would relate to well and that would touch their hearts with God’s compassionate love,” says Huebner. In addition to hearing this relevant message, attendees dug deeper into the topic in small discussion groups.

For Hermanson and so many other Christian teens, staying plugged in to their faith community can be hard. “If [the study] showed just one struggling teen that they are not alone and built them up in their faith, then it served its purpose,” she says. “I praise God that he worked through me to help do that.”

She continues, “We are all learning so much about ourselves and what God has planned for us in our teenage years, and it is so important to have faith-based discussions about what we are struggling with.”

Going forward, the National Online Teen Bible Study will take place on a quarterly basis and feature messages from a variety of WELS pastors. The next study is scheduled for Nov. 10 at 6 p.m. (Central).

Learn more and register for the next online teen Bible study at wels.net/events.

Three home missions launch weekly worship

Three home missions launched weekly worship services in September: Divine Savior—North Collin County, Celina, Texas; Anchor Church, Marquette, MI; and Victory, Wichita, KS.

“A grand opening is important in the life of a mission church because it signals that from here on out you are fully operational for worship,” says Rev. Joseph

Lindloff, home missionary at Anchor Church. “It’s like the gun going off at the beginning of a marathon. It signals that we can now get to work reaching one soul at a time as a full-fledged church, bringing people regularly into the house of God and before the means of grace. What a joy that we get to do this work, joining Jesus on his mission!”

Divine Savior—North Collin County, Celina, Texas: Seventy-one people attended the launch service on Sept. 8. Divine Savior’s core group has been meeting for planning and Bible studies since 2021; it was approved as a mission site in 2023. Celina, a northern suburb of Dallas, is the fastest growing city in the United States.

Following the launch service, the real work begins, says Rev. Caleb King, home missionary at Divine Savior—North Collin County. “The reality is we’re a church of about 25 adults and a handful of children. We could sit and ‘play church’ and think that we made it, or we can recognize that the launch was a great milestone but not the mountain peak. The next step, then, is to continue to engage people one by one with the gospel so that they can know the Savior who changes their life; to care for individual souls in ways that the rest of the world doesn’t.”

Anchor Church, Marquette, MI: On Sept. 15, 75 people (including 20 visitors) attended the grand opening under the theme “Hope in Christ, Firm and Secure.” Approved as a mission site in 2023, Anchor Church has a 24/7 ministry space in downtown Marquette where it hosts community service events, Bible studies, youth ministry, and now weekly worship.

Lindloff says that the community has been welcoming to the concept of a new church: “We are right where we need to be, downtown in the heart of Marquette, serving it spiritually and physically.”

Victory, Wichita, KS: Started as a home mission in 2022 as part of a multisite effort for Messiah, Wichita, Kan., Victory launched worship at its second location on Sept. 15, with a full day’s worth of events. More than 100 people attended, including 15 first-time visitors.

While the festivities and food were a hit, the message is what made an impact. Rev. Jacob Jenswold, Victory’s home missionary, shares this reaction from a visitor who hadn’t been in church for months and had never been in a conservative Lutheran church. “He told me, ‘This felt different. The service felt more focused,

like everything came back to God’s words for me. I like that. I want to come back for that.’ We will see if he comes back for that, but that’s what we are going for! Jesus for you!”

All three missionaries are thankful for the continued support of Home Missions and WELS members. “Our mission’s work and ministry wouldn’t be possible without you,” says King. “You may never meet a person that is impacted by the work you support. But you will meet them in heaven someday. . . . Keep us in your prayers as we hold on to God’s promises in his Word.”

WELS is committed to starting 100 new missions in the next 10 years. Learn more about this initiative at wels100in10.net.

☺ *For A Smile* ☺

A Christian farmer spent the day in the city. In a restaurant for his meal, he sat near a group of young men. After he bowed his head to give thanks for his food, one of the young men thought he would embarrass the old gentleman. “Hey, farmer, does everyone do that out where you live?” The old man calmly replied, “No, son, the pigs don’t!”

Having lost weight over the past few years, a lady was discarding things from her wardrobe that no longer fit. Her seven-year-old niece was watching as she held up a huge pair of Capri pants. “Wow,” the lady said, “I must have worn these when I was 183.” Her niece looked puzzled, then asked, “How old are you now?”

Everyone had weighed in, and our diet workshop leader began her lecture on the week’s topic: the problems of dining out. She talked about alternatives, such as requesting diet sodas and dressings, and having meat broiled instead of fried. Finally she turned the question over to the group for discussion. “What is the greatest problem you encounter when going out to eat?” Replied one woman quickly, “Running into you!”

A German psychologist says that women talk more than men because they have a bigger vocabulary. But, it evens out because men only listen half the time.

Thanksgiving: when the Indians said, “Well, this has been fun, but we know you have a long voyage back to England.”

October

1. 1 Kings 9:1-10:13
2. 1 Kgs. 10:14-11:43
3. 1 Kgs. 12:1-32
4. 1 Kgs. 12:33-13:34
5. 1 Kgs. 14
6. 1 Kgs. 15:1-16:7
7. 1 Kgs. 16:8-34
8. 1 Kgs. 17, 18
9. 1 Kgs. 19
10. 1 Kgs. 20
11. 1 Kgs. 21
12. 1 Kgs. 22
13. John 1:1-18
14. Jn. 1:19-34
15. Jn. 1:35-51
16. Jn. 2:1-22
17. Jn. 2:23-3:21
18. Jn. 3:22-36
19. Jn. 4:1-26
20. Jn. 4:27-54
21. Jn. 5:1-29
22. Jn. 5:30-47
23. Jn. 6:1-21
24. Jn. 6:22-40
25. Jn. 6:41-71
26. Jn. 7:1-24
27. Jn. 7:25-52
28. Jn. 7:53-8:29
29. Jn. 8:30-59
30. Jn. 9
31. Jn 10:1-21

Through My Bible In 3 Years

To the left is a Bible Reading schedule for the month of November. It is hoped that such a schedule will help each of us “*grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.*” (2 Peter 3:18) As we grow in God’s Word, we will be anchored securely on the solid foundation of Christ crucified and arisen. Also, we will be better prepared to give the reason for the hope that we have. (1 Peter 3:15)

Hospital

Please notify Pastor Russow of your hospital stay. By notifying Pastor Russow, he can visit you and include you in his private prayers, and in the Prayer of the Church in worship, if you so desire.

Offerings

Please remember the ongoing financial needs of the church. If travel, illness or other reasons keep you from attending, remember God’s amazing grace in daily forgiveness and in supplying your daily bread. Our offerings are part of how we thank Him.

Kwik Trip Scrip

The Ladies of Zion (LOZ) thank you for your continued support of their Kwik Trip Scrip fund raising program. Kwik Trip gift cards for the purchase of fuel or in store purchases in various denominations. Scrip cards may be purchased from one of the Ladies of Zion.

Private Communion

If physical problems prevent you from attending services and you desire private Communion, please schedule a visit with Pastor Russow. To contact Pastor Russow, please call: (Office): 715-678-2208; (Home): 715-678-2204; or (Cell): 715-965-1782.

Address or Phone Change?

Please inform Pastor Russow of any address or phone change you make. Please update your address with the church. If you no longer have a land line, or a cell phone is the best way to contact you, please inform Pastor Russow.