

PASTOR'S LETTER

And the LORD God planted a garden in Eden, in the east, and there he put the man whom he had formed. And out of the ground the LORD God made to spring up every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food. The LORD God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to work it and keep it.
~Genesis 2:8-9, 15

Do you like gardening? I haven't decided if I like it or not. Certainly, I enjoy a nice-looking yard and beautiful flower beds. If you drive by my house right now, it all looks pretty good. I also enjoy being outside on a nice summer day. I often feel that Minnesota's main shortcoming as a state is that we have too many days when it is difficult to enjoy the outdoors.

But the weeds will come. If you drive by my house in a couple of weeks or a month, it might not look as good. Unwanted plants will come in and choke out some of the flowers and hostas and bushes. A nice flower bed can fairly quickly turn into an unkept mess.

So, we weed. All the time. After working in the yard for a couple of hours, I remember that I don't like the heat and humidity and the sun beating down on me. I don't enjoy the mosquitos. My sore muscles and aching joints definitely distract me from the beauty of creation.

I find it interesting that God put Adam into the Garden of Eden, paradise, to work it and keep it. Does that sound like paradise? Shouldn't God have put Adam in the garden to sit on an Adirondack chair and drink lemonade? But in His infinite wisdom, God gave Adam a job, and that job was gardening.

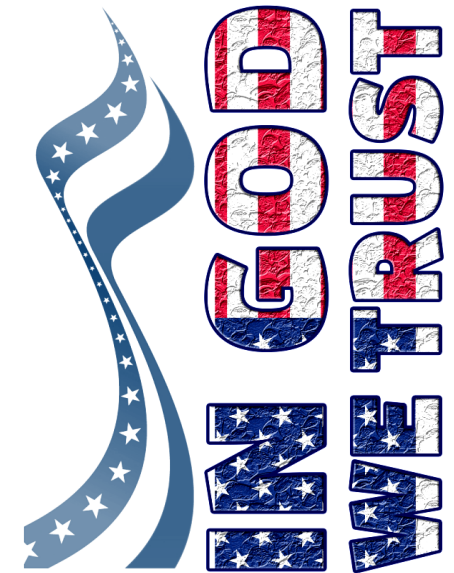
It was paradise. There was no weeding. Weeds are a result of sin. Genesis 3:17-19 says, "And to Adam [God] said, "Because you have listened to the voice of your wife and have eaten of the tree of which I commanded you, 'You shall not eat of it,' cursed is the ground because of you; in pain you shall eat of it all the days of your life; thorns and thistles it shall bring forth for you; and you shall eat the plants of the field. By the sweat of your face you shall eat bread, till you return to the ground, for out of it you were taken; for you are dust, and to dust you shall return."

When we garden, we fight with sin. But that's not the end of it. Sin causes struggles in our relationships and our health and our finances. Sin causes dissention in our community and nation. Eventually, sin causes us to die and leaves a wake of mourning behind us. We are constantly fighting sin.

There is only one solution, Jesus. This world will give us struggles, but by His death on the cross and resurrection on the third day, Jesus has opened heaven to all believers. In heaven we will live in perfect beauty. The trees yield their fruit all year long. The sun will not beat down on us. There will be no more problems of pain, or relationship trouble, or political dissention. Only perfect love and joy and peace. We will serve God, but our work will be a joy.

For now, we serve Him here, and pray for His help and guidance in our troubles, and look forward. See you in church.

Pastor Klespe



Zion Lutheran Church
410 Main Street South
Pine City, MN 55063



July

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
25	26 SPECIAL COUNCIL MEETING 6PM	27 GROWING IN GRACE OPEN HOUSE 6:30-7:30PM (2 OPENINGS)	28 DUAL PARISH MEETING 8:00PM	29	30	1
2 WORSHIP/ COMMUNION 9AM BIBLE STUDY 9AM	3 <i>NO EVANGELISM MEETING</i>	4	5 WORSHIP 7PM VBS MEETING 6-7PM	6	7	8
9 WORSHIP/ COMMUNION 9AM BIBLE STUDY 9AM	10 ELDER MEETING 6PM COUNCIL MEETING 7PM	11	12 WORSHIP/COMM 7PM	13 LWML MEETING 1PM	14	15 VBS DECORATING STARTING AT 9AM
16 WORSHIP/ COMMUNION 9AM BIBLE STUDY 9AM	17 GOD'S LIVING WATER VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL 5:30-8PM	18 GOD'S LIVING WATER VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL 5:30-8PM	19 GOD'S LIVING WATER VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL 5:30-8PM	20 GOD'S LIVING WATER VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL 5:30-8PM	21 YOUTH SERVING- ART IN THE PARK 5:30PM	22
23 WORSHIP/ COMMUNION 9AM <u>VOTERS' MEETING</u> <i>FOLLOWING WORSHIP</i>	24	25	26 WORSHIP/COMM 7PM	27	28	29
30 WORSHIP/ COMMUNION 9AM BIBLE STUDY 9AM	31					

JULY BIRTHDAY & ANNIVERSARIES

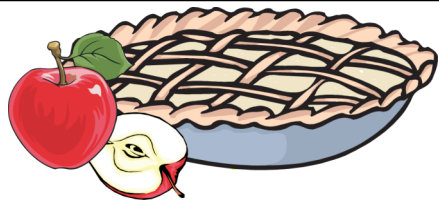
BIRTHDAYS

Bailee Slama	7/4
Clinton Teich	7/10
JoAnn Breska	7/15
Cordia Swenson	7/18
Rick Waxberg	7/20
Ron Smetana	7/27
Doug Heitman	7/30
Ray Ovick	7/31



ANNIVERSARIES

Ryan & Kathleen Ovick	7/1
Jerry & Stepheny Lotz	7/17
Jeremiah & Ashley Slama	7/24
Doug & Tye Heitman	7/26
Keith & Jennifer Strehlo	7/29
Ben & Rhea Bloomquist	7/30



We need apple pies! Please sign-up to bring an apple pie (fully cooked) for the Youth serving at Art in the Park on July 21st.

There is a sign-up at church in the fellowship hall. Thank you so much!

LOVE GROW SERVE



JULY SERVANTS 2023:

ELDERS

Scott Ovick	7/2
Jeremiah Slama	7/9
Jerry Lotz	7/16
Ryan Ovick	7/23
Keith Strehlo	7/30

USHERS

Chad & Corben Fedder
Ryan & Ray Ovick; Tristan Frith

OFFERING COUNTERS

Janet Sundermeyer	7/3
Karen Teich	7/10
Jeanne Casby	7/17
Verna Carpenter	7/24
Barbara Carlson	7/31

ALTAR GUILD

The Lotz Family

LAWN MOWING

Les Peterson	June 25th- July 1st
Ben Bloomquist	July 2nd-8th
Tom Martini	July 9th-15th
Boldt Family	July 16th-22nd
Steve Ovick	July 23rd-July 29th
Steve Olson	July 30th- August 5th





God's Living Water VBS 2023

July 17th-20th

5:30pm-8:00pm

***If you want to help out please check
out the giving tree downstairs!**

God's Living Water explores biblical accounts that emphasize the Living Water, Jesus. Including differentiation between age groups, multiple options for snacks, songs, instructions for games, science experiments, and more, your VBS will overflow with God's grace this summer. Please contact Tracy Gullerud (651)-308-1511 or the church office if you can help with VBS and didn't make it to the meeting.

**Our next meeting will be on July 5th From
6-7pm. Decorating will be July 15th at 9am.**

DUAL PARISH COMMITTEE REPORT (Updated June 21, 2023)

Ryan Ovick, Keith Strehlo, Jeremiah Slama, Jerry Lotz, and Pastor Kleppe volunteered to meet with members of the leadership of Living Branch Lutheran Church to discuss the formation of a dual parish (sharing a pastor). The first meeting was May 16 at their building in North Branch. We toured the building and sat down to meet for about an hour. After asking and answering questions that were on our minds, we went through a portion of the District Guidelines for forming a Multi-Congregation Parish. We discussed how the relationship works, including each congregation maintaining their individuality, what parts of the finances are shared, worship schedules, and how the relationship can be ended in the future. It was a good conversation to begin the process.

The committee met for a second time on June 6 at Zion. The topic of discussion was finances. The part of the Living Branch 2023 budget that is designated for the support of the pastor is about \$97,000, which includes a housing allowance of \$24,500. The same part of the Zion 2023 budget is about \$99,000, which includes the costs of maintaining the parsonage.

After a discussion of how the pastoral expenses would be divided between the two churches, the committee seemed agreeable to Living Branch reimbursing Zion for 40% of the costs, which would save them about \$57,000 per year and would save Zion about \$40,000. We are waiting to hear from the district about the guidelines for salary for dual-parish pastors.

The committee met for a third time on June 20. The topic of discussion was scheduling. Like Zion, Living Branch has typically had worship at 9:00 Sunday mornings. It was agreed upon that Zion could move their worship to 8:30 and Living Branch would move back to 10:00. On Easter, the schedule

would stay the same with Zion having the option of adding a 7:00 service as we have in the past. Living Branch is willing to have Advent and Lent midweek services on Tuesday or Thursday, so Zion's schedule would be unaffected. (They only have midweek services during Advent and Lent.) Living Branch's Christmas Eve Service is at 7:00 p.m. so Zion's could remain at 5:00. Their Christmas Day service has been quite poorly attended, so we would invite them to join us at Zion.

Pastor Kleppe would be working at Living Branch on Tuesday and/or Thursday mornings.

There were only minor conflicts in the scheduling of meetings which can be dealt with by the individual groups. We discussed the advantage of inviting the other church to our activities.

Our next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, June 28th at 8:00 p.m. at which we hope to write the agreement.

Submitted by Pastor Kleppe

Please prayerfully consider all of this information. If you have any questions at all please talk to one of the committee members or call the church office. It will also be discussed at the July Voters' meeting on July 23rd following the worship service. So please mark your calendars and plan on attending!

Zion Lutheran May 2023 Council Minutes

*Meeting called to order at 6:58 pm

Members Present: Pastor Kleppe, Bob Thompson, Karen Althoff, Keith Strehlo, Ryan Ovick, Jerry Lotz, Jeremiah Slama, Steve Olson & Larry Anderson.

Members Absent: Chad Fedder, Scott Ovick & Tom Martini.

*Opened with Prayer and Devotion from Romans 1:16-17- Sets the tone for the book of Romans. Not being ashamed of the Gospel. Points to Jesus work and Salvation we have in him. Be joyful for that Salvation!

Secretary's Report- This was shared prior to the meeting electronically. Motion made to accept the report, motion seconded and motion passed. Treasurer's Report- Finances continue to stay steady. There was a missing Concordia Plan Services bill that did not get paid yet, it will change the expenses by about \$3000. Checking is looking good. As we continue through Summer we encourage members to faithfully continue to make offerings, remembering that the ministry and other things keep going. Detailed financial reports available in the Office. Motion to accept report, motion seconded and passed.

Pastor's Report:

-Our YouTube channel is Glen Kleppe. We continue to put services on the channel every week. It is accessible directly or through our church website, zionpinecity.org or through our Facebook page. Now we will return to Wednesday service matching the following Sunday. Please consider attending this service if you are going to be gone on the following Sunday.

-This Summer I will be finishing the study on the book, "Dare to be Different."

-Please stay for the study if you can. It's important that our Church sets a good example in Bible Study.

-Also this Summer I will be preaching on the book of Romans which will be something like a Bible Study.

-VBS is set for July 17-20. Tracy Gullerud will be the Leader.

-The youth will serve Art in the Park on July 21st.

Upcoming dates:

July 17th-20th- Vacation Bible School

July 21st- Youth Serve Art in the Park

Dual Parish Update:

The Committee met for a second time on June 6th. The topic of discussion was finances. The part of the Living Branch 2023 budget

that is designated for the support of the Pastor is about \$97,000, which includes a housing allowance of \$24,500. The same part of Zion's 2023 budget is about \$99,000, which includes the costs of maintaining the parsonage. After a discussion of how the Pastoral expenses would be divided between the two churches, the committee seemed agreeable to Living Branch reimbursing Zion for 40% of the costs, which would save them about \$57,000 per year and would save Zion about \$40,000. According to old salary guidelines, a boost of 5% is recommended for a Pastor serving two churches. Our next meeting is scheduled for June 20, 7:00pm at Living Branch. The discussion will be on scheduling. Motion to accept Pastor's report, motion seconded and motion passed.

Committee Reports:

Evangelism- Handing out something on Fathers Day. Friendship Sunday in September.

Endowment- No meeting.

LWML- Pillow Case Dresses

Preschool- Summer break! Currently two openings for next year being advertised.

Worship, Music & Arts- No Meetings

Youth Group- Possible Mora Aquatic Center day in July with District Churches. Pastor will get more details.

Men's Group- No meeting.

Trustee's Report:

-Shingles off back again. Discussed plan to remedy this. Will get some siding and Larry & Steve will work on getting this up to take care of this.

-Pigeons. Bob provided more insight into this as we continue to look for ways to move the pigeon's along their journey. Possibly setting up a camera and seeing their comings and goings pattern and then fix where they are coming in at. Motion to accept Committee and Trustee reports, motion seconded and motion passed.

Old Business:

-Strategic Planning- We will continue discussing this more as we move forward.

New Business-

-Dual Parish Agreement

-Constitution Amendments/Rewrite- Review at home and then meet as a Council on June 26th @6pm

-Parsonage Garage Repair- Steve said this is on his calendar. We will work to get this done before Fall between Steve and Larry.

-Council Secretary- Still looking for someone to fill this role. If you know anyone encourage them to consider doing so.

-Next Voter's Meeting July 23rd after Fellowship.

Minutes typed and respectfully submitted by Jerry Lotz