

Zion Lutheran Church • Fairbanks, Alaska

Pastor's Monday • April 9, 2007 • Easter Monday

Let's begin with the prayer that greeted me in my Devotion Book this Morning:

“Father, you give your Church constant growth by adding new members to your family. Help us put into action in our lives the baptism we have received with faith. We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.”

What a week it was! Holy Week – Passion/Palm Sunday. Triduum. Maundy Thursday, Good Friday. The Saturday of Holy Week. Easter Vigil. Easter. Amazing. Sad. Wonderful. The paper this morning said that cartoonist Johnny Hart died at his drawing board the Saturday of Holy Week. B.C./ by Johnny Hart. His Christmas and Easter cartoons were always explicit witness to his faith in Jesus Christ. The paper reminded me of his controversial Easter 2001 carton “which depicted a menorah transforming into a cross with accompanying text quoting some of Jesus Christ’s dying words. Critics said it implied that Christianity supersedes Judaism.” The critics didn’t miss the point. And six years later, yesterday Johnny Hart was still at it. If you missed it:

An ant hill with widows and a sign “SKOOL” with dialogue:

“33 is correct. Everyone passed the math test except Johnny, who handed in his ‘English’ composition by mistake.”

“I DID NOT!”

“Then what is this?”

“It’s a numerical dialogue between three persons – a thief, a King, and a soldier---which sums up the truth of the resurrection in 4 quotes, which add up to 33 words. That’s math!”

“OK, smarty pants, you read, I’ll count.”

“Yes’m. ‘Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom.’”

“That’s nine.”

[in red letters] “Assuredly I say to you today you will be with me in paradise.”

“That’s 13.”

[again in red] “It is finished.” “...truly this man was the Son of God.”

“Wow, 33 exactly! ...what can I say?”

“Try Amen Plus.”

So how do you give witness to the resurrection? I hope we all will be encouraged by Johnny’s willingness to be bold in his Christian witness.

My personal thanks to those who worked so hard to make the services this week so meaningful -- Altar Guild. Musicians. (thank you Gail Johansen and the 8 strings that joined you!) I got an e mail this morning from members who yesterday overheard a group of bikers at the Hilltop talking about our Good Friday service! Mmmm. And while there were many great moments in our services yesterday, the one that almost laid me away was when Brent Kaiser, during the Children’s message, asked me if I had forgotten to take my medicine. ...and that was before the sermon! My heartfelt joy and compassion go to the families of Stacy and Hayden Kaiser and Cameron Phillips. It was wonderful to have their families worship with us yesterday.

Don't forget -- Congregational Meeting to extend a call to Tia Pugh as Director of Christian Education this Wednesday at 7:30 PM. She has finished her academic work and passed her certification interview and is now eligible for a call.

Pam Tacquard is not with us as she left to defend her Master's Thesis at Concordia University in St. Paul, MN on Thursday. She was successful! Congratulations to Pam. She was also to have had her certification interview on Thursday, but that was delayed. Pam will return the middle of this week.

And -- as was announced at the services this past weekend, a School Development Task Force has been formed to make plans for a K-8 Lutheran School at Zion with the first grade classroom opening this Fall. If interested in working with the Task Force, please contact me.

See you back in worship and Bible Classes at the regular times next weekend.

Pastor K