

Zion Lutheran Church • Fairbanks, Alaska

Pastor's Monday • May 21, 2007

Actually it is Sunday morning, 5:30 AM. Judy and I are headed south and east this afternoon toward Haines where we will catch the MV Columbia and from there take the Alaska Marine Hwy through the inside passage to Bellingham and ultimately Tacoma and Seth's graduation next Sunday from Pacific Lutheran University.

I've never written this piece before services on Sunday morning – it is strange. This is commitment weekend – the end of “21days.com”- but hopefully the beginning of a “renewed walk with the Word.” Last evening worship service was wonderful with 17 commitments being brought forward and placed in the baptismal font. I am sure that God will continue to bless the seeds that were planted by the home Bible Studies, by the daily devotions that were planted and by the sermons that were preached. If you did not have a chance to make the commitment, you will be given the opportunity to do so this coming weekend.

This coming weekend will be the last for my assistant Michael Steckel. As you may know, he has been accepted as a student at Concordia Seminary in St. Louis to prepare for the pastoral ministry. I'm sure that you will agree with me that Michael has been uniquely gifted, and those gifts he has generously shared with us, not only since mid October last year when he came on staff as full time Assistant to the Pastor, but for years before then – in many capacities of service and leadership in the congregation. He will drive out with his cousin a day or two after next Sunday; his wife Kathy and children, Tecumseh and Truly, will follow later in the summer. He will be in a very intensive summer school program designed to get the Greek requirement out of the way. I hope you will make it a point to be with him this coming weekend and to personally bless him on his way.

Also, the Lutheran School Development Task force continues their efforts. Mr. Bob Fowls, principal of Trinity Lutheran School, will be with us this coming weekend, meeting with the Task Force, the Guiding Team, and the leadership of the congregation. Mr. Fowls is the principal of a flourishing Lutheran School in Bend, OR. He will bring his enthusiasm and his expertise for how a Lutheran School can be a mission outreach to a community. He will be presenting and answering questions about Lutheran School Education during the bible class hour at 9:45 a.m. next Sunday in the sanctuary. Please remember also that the following Sunday, June 3rd, I have called a congregational meeting to discuss plans for the Lutheran School. It will be a very exciting and informative meeting with presentations by both the Lutheran School Development Task Force and the Guiding Team.

Graduations! Congratulations! ...also to Candidate Joe Baumgarten who graduated from Concordia Seminary this past Friday. He and his family will be packing up for the move north. He will be ordained at the congregation where he served his vicarage in Des Moines, IA on June 24. Shortly after that, they will be coming our way arriving around July 15 with installation planned for Sunday, July 22nd. A great celebration is being planned for that day including our Summer Church Picnic. Continue to pray for Joe, his wife Cyndi, and children, Madeline and Duncan.

Finally, a word of deep appreciation for the kind words of sympathy and encouragement this past week at the death of my brother. The trip to New Orleans, the gathering of family, the funeral service on Thursday, and the trip back at this time seem like a blur – but several things stand out: Christians have incredible resources in facing death – Hope of Eternal life, the support of fellow believers, scriptures and the hymns of the centuries. And, because of the urgency of the harvest, very little time to feel sorry or

ask why. With every Christian's death comes the renewed commitment to share the good news and joy with those who are not yet connected to Jesus.

Pastor Kuehnert

Important Dates to Remember:

Sunday, May 27 – 9:45 a.m. – Bob Fowls presents information and answers questions about Lutheran School Education AND Farewell to Mike Steckel – refreshments after each service (including SNA)

Saturday, June 2, 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. – Giant Yard Sale to raise funds for African Mission trip
Drop off times for donations – Sunday, May 27 OR Tuesday, May 29 through Friday, June 1, 9 a.m. to 8 p.m.

Sunday, June 3 – following 11 a.m. service – Congregational Meeting to discuss plans for the Lutheran School and to hear report from the Guiding Ministry Team

Weekly Prayer Concerns

Cancer

Eva Lose (Mr. Gary's wife)
Linda Yeakley (Bill Fisher's sister)
Russel Paju (Marty Paju's father)
Michael Caskey
Beth Beeler (Kathy Gappert's sister)

Other Illnesses

Merlin Barkdull
Doris Graetz

Recovery

Nathan Burgess
Linda Gronewold
Danny Bernhardt

Surgeries

Grady Cofer
Doug Fry (surgery is Wednesday)
Charlie Helms

Deaths

Richard Kuehnert Family

Others

Joe and Cyndi Baumgarten and their two children Duncan and Maddie as they prepare to move to Alaska and serve at Zion.
John and Derek Bringhurst and their family as they go through hard times.