
Zion News

A newsletter of Zion Ev. Lutheran Church, Lawrenceville, Georgia – August, 2008

“Come let us declare in Zion the work of the Lord our God.” Jeremiah 51:10

Church Picnic with the TVBS Team

Reported by Ann Duncan

Sunday, June 29, Zion held a cookout for members, friends and family at Rhodes Jordan Park in Lawrenceville. In attendance were Pastor Mayhew, Debra and the children; Pastor Paul Tiefel and Mrs. Tiefel, of Messiah Lutheran Church in Eau Claire, Wisc., as well as the TVBS Flyer Distribution Team. Congregation members at the picnic included John and Gloria Longwitz; Brian Radichel; Brian and Kim Greve and son Jason Griggs; Mark Greve; Aaron, Amanda, Sarah and Rebecca Durst; Lance, Sherrie and Autumn Schoon; and Bill and Ann Duncan.

The men attended the grill, cooking chicken fillets, bratwurst, and hotdogs. Numerous side dishes were brought including potato salad, coleslaw, chips, jello salad and some frozen cream pies. Because no one remembered to bring a knife, I saw several people attacking a frozen coconut cream pie with a plastic fork with limited success. The children ran about getting perilously close to the beautiful lake that was there, and chased the ducks and geese, which sometimes went into attack mode.

Everyone enjoyed the cool, breezy day from under the shade of the roomy picnic



shelter that the pastor reserved for us. A good time was had by all, and there were plenty of leftovers that were used to feed the TVBS team on another day. †



Zion members Gloria Longwitz, Debra and Julia Mayhew, and Kim Greve enjoy some time to visit at the picnic.



TVBS Flyer Distribution Team members (from R to L): Riley, Holden, Dylan, Chris, Mariah, Melanie, Alyssa and Valerie had a surprising number of family connections to our congregation!

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From the Pastor

Have you been following the presidential candidates who have been campaigning for their party's nomination for President of the United States? This journey began already last year and is just now coming to an end as we near the Democratic and Republican conventions. We began the beginning of the year with numerous presidential hopefuls, but as the state caucuses turned out winners, candidates on both sides started dropping out of the race.



Throughout the nomination process, candidates on both sides have been critical of their party peers, accentuating the many differences among them. At times the battles were fierce between Obama and Clinton and between McCain and Huckabee. Although the Republican race ended much sooner than the Democratic, both have this in common: A final call for unification behind the presumptive nominee.

There is a parallel to this call for unification within the religious realm as well. Many church and civic leaders have invited or called for unification of Christian (and non-Christian!) denominations. (The National Day of Prayer in May is a prime example of such unionism.) This may sound good at first, especially in our post-modern society, but it is important to notice that real unification is not taking place. The religious unification that is being called for by so many is – like the current political unification – only an outward one.



How very dangerous! Throughout Scripture God reveals to us that true unity can only be found in faithful adherence to His Word. It is for this very reason that He calls us to be faithful stewards of His precious Word of Truth.

“Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth” (2 Timothy 2:15). We should never be willing to set aside the true teaching of God’s Word (for it alone can

bring true unity) for the sake of a shallow, outward unity which only covers up the real disunity that truly exists! How much better is the true, God-supplied, doctrinal unity that is ours through the living and active Word which is the power of God to salvation for all who believe! †

2008 VBS Report

Our summer Vacation Bible School was a great success this past month! We had a record number of 27 children attend our VBS this year and learn about the work of the only true God in their lives.

Of the 27 children that attended, 21 of them were non-members. Two non-member children came as a result of finding out about our VBS through an internet search, and 19 came as a result of the flyers that were distributed by the TVBS team several weeks ago.

During our worship service on July 20, 2008, the VBS children sang a hymn which they learned during the week of VBS, and for the first time in Zion’s history, we had non-member children join us for our special post-VBS worship service!



We thank the LORD for His bountiful blessing on our VBS program this year, and pray that He would continue to strengthen these young people and their families through the truth of His Word!

Many thanks to all those who helped with our VBS in so many ways! It made a huge difference! Thank you! †

Spotlight on Aaron Durst:

Recognition of Outstanding Achievement

Reported by Ann Duncan

One of our resident musicians, Aaron Durst, recently realized his goal of completing his doctorate in musical arts with an emphasis on saxophone performance, an outstanding achievement. But how did a farm boy from Iowa end up a Georgia Bulldog?

Aaron grew up on the family farm in Spencer, Iowa, where his family raised corn, beans and feeder cattle. When Aaron was in the fifth grade, he joined the school band – but what instrument should he play? His mother told he could pick anything he was interested in; however, if he wanted any help at home, it better be a saxophone. Mom and two older siblings all played the sax. By the time Aaron reached middle school, he was starting to lose interest. Plus, many of his friends in band were dropping out. Mom stepped in and insisted he stick it out. When Aaron got into high school, he appreciated his mother's guidance, because it was getting fun again. During the summer of his junior and senior years, he made the Iowa State Fair Jazz Band, rehearsing for two weeks at Luther College in Decorah, Iowa, touring the state for 30 days, and performing three times a day at the Iowa State Fair for its entirety.

With all that musical experience, it's not surprising that Aaron chose to major in music education, picking the University of South Dakota. It was the first time he had a real saxophone teacher. He met his lovely wife, Amanda, and they married in the summer of 1995. When he received his bachelor's degree in December, Aaron didn't feel ready to teach. What else could he do? The Army Band recruiter came to school to hold auditions, and Aaron decided to try out – only to get some feedback on his ability and skill level. Scoring high in the audition, Aaron soon found himself signing on the dotted line,

enlisting in the Army for four years. (I guess that recruiter was pretty good.)

Aaron went to Basic Training at Fort Leonardwood, Mo., and then on to the Armed Forces School of Music in Norfolk, Va. In the meantime, Amanda finished school, graduating in the spring of '96. Aaron then was stationed at Fort Wainwright in Fairbanks, Alaska, from March '97 to July 2000, and took Amanda with him this time. He served in the Regional Army Band and also attended the University of Alaska, receiving a master's degree of Arts and Music with a specialty in wind conducting. After his discharge, the couple put down roots in Rapid City, S.D., where they could be close to friends and family. Sarah was born in 2002, and Rebecca arrived in 2003. Aaron worked as the director of bands in the tiny Newell, S.D. School District, which consisted of three schools at one location with a total student population of 400.



The Durst Family: Amanda, Rebecca, Sarah and Aaron

However, Aaron wasn't quite finished with his education. He always dreamed of going to UGA and studying with Dr. Kenneth Fischer since his undergrad days in Iowa when the music professor had come to his school. Aaron was accepted to UGA and awarded a teaching assistantship in 2004. The Dursts packed up their stuff and loaded up a U-haul truck. Their house finally sold two days after

they arrived in Athens, Ga. The Lord supplies!

Aaron's career goal is to teach saxophone at the college or university level and currently is awaiting job opportunities and reviewing his options. The Dursts will be in Athens until the end of August. And then – off to the next blessing that the Lord has for them. Our congregation will surely miss this special, loving, and talented family. May the Lord bless you and keep you, always! †

Food for Thought

I knew he was about ready. But one day Daniel got on a bicycle and, without any help, he was off! It's all about balance. If you get that, you have it made.

Isn't that the way it is in our lives too? Our entire lives are a balancing act: Work and home; family on his side and family on hers; time with your kids and time with your spouse; the list goes on. And just think of the problems that arise when we don't balance correctly!

Similarly, there is a balance that constantly needs to be struck between our outreach to the community, and our focus on issues within our congregation. Often, churches known for their outreach efforts find that their people are not growing themselves. Others focus only on themselves and become so internalized that they never reach out to those around them. There must be a balance.

Where are we going? As Christians it should be our desire to share the hope that is in us with those around us. At the same time we need to continue to grow in our own understanding of the Word through personal Bible study. And we dare not neglect soul-care issues that arise within our congregation. Lord, help us all to work together to achieve the proper balance between the two! †

New in Zion's Outreach

A Light in the Darkness

"But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light; who once were not a people but are now the people of God, who had not obtained mercy but now have obtained mercy" (1 Peter 2:9-10).

After a very long wait, the sign above our church building finally gives light! Earlier this year we cleaned up the sign and readied it to be hooked up. Now, after much waiting, the sign can be lit up to brightly announce the presence of our church at night!

After the voters' meeting on July 20th, Brian Radichel and Mark Greve worked strenuously all afternoon to get electricity hooked up to the sign. The sign is now activated by a sophisticated timer which turns the sign on at dusk every day, and turns it off at dawn (it even automatically adjusts for the lengthening and shorting of the days throughout the year)!

If you drive by the church after dark, you will find the sign brightly lighting up the parking lot in front of the church. It is a fitting reminder of the light of the Gospel which we have received and which has brought us out of darkness into God's marvelous light. †

New Church Banners

At our April voters' meeting permission was given to the council to "use the \$500 outreach donation for special banners and signs to advertise our church." After its next meeting the council enlisted the help of Jill Tiefel, a professional graphics designer, to come up with some ideas for a church logo and sign.

After much work, the council decided to print up two banners – one to announce our yearly Vacation Bible School, and another for general church information that can be used in front of our church or taken to church functions.

Thanks to Mark Greve's ingenuity, the signs can now be readily displayed (and easily exchanged) at the corner of Northdale Road and Hampton Square Drive. Look for our new banner – its hard to miss it! †



Mark Greve is at work in front of the church, readying the poles which now display our new banner.