

Faith Formation



Livin' Forgiven

First Communion/ Refresher Course

Does your child reach for the bread during the Lord's Supper? Has your child been asking why they cannot receive communion? Do you feel it's time for your child to receive instruction and begin communing?

Pastor Kathy is offering a 3-session program for children 2nd grade and above interested in learning or re-learning about the importance of Holy Communion on Wednesdays in March. Younger students are welcome if parents think they will be open to learning the material that helps them initially understand the gift and the practice of the sacrament. The *Livin' Forgiven* curriculum shares the story of the Exodus, last supper and history of the Lord's Supper, the why's and how's we commune, and a primer on confessing our sins to God and one another and what it means to forgive and be forgiven.

PLEASE NOTE: A parent, grandparent, godparent or other adult sponsor is required to attend with all students.

Who: Children 2nd grade and above (unless previously approved by Pastor)

When: Wednesdays, March 7, 14 and 21, 6:30-7:15 p.m.

Where: Zion Lutheran classroom

Led by: Pastor Kathy, Vicar Michael, and others

Celebration of First Communion

Palm Sunday, March 25, 10:30 a.m. worship **OR** Maundy Thursday, March 29, 7:30 p.m., depending on the wishes of the majority of the group. **NOTE:** Chelsea and Manchester all have spring break the week of March 23 thru April 1. Grass Lake's break begins on March 30.

Contact Pastor Kathy with questions. The sign-up sheet is on her office door if you and your children plan to attend this 3-session course.



Living Water Stony Lake Confirmation Camp will be July 8-13. If you have not yet registered online, please do so as soon as possible. The cost is now \$400 and no deposit is required at this time. Zion will plan to pay the equivalent of the deposit.

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Summer Youth Mission National Youth Gathering Houston TX

Eight youth and two adults have signed up the upcoming ELCA National Youth Gathering in Houston, Texas. First and foremost, please pray for our Zion team that God will richly bless them with experiences and opportunities that will grow and deepen their faith. Those attending the NYG include:

Joshua K. – Senior
Helena S. – Junior
Nicole S. – Junior
Olivia O. – Sophomore
Andrea K. – Freshman
Jacob S. – Freshman
Natalie S. – Freshman
Parker O. – 8th grade

Pastor Kathy and Kaley Dixon Schroeder,
chaperones

Second, watch for future opportunities to help our youth financially, as a trip like this takes both time and dollars to accomplish. With the funds in our youth mission account, our fund goal over the next five months is to raise more than \$7,000. We are already on our way with our Super Bowl fundraiser, and have raised over \$1,200. (Of the eight people who received funds from our fundraiser, three turned a portion of their winnings back to the National Youth Gathering account.)

Forming our kids' faith – *one step at a time*

A small team of us have been strategizing around the future of children's faith formation here at Zion. What is central in our minds is the need to provide resources for parents and other family members to be the 1st teachers and 1st responders. Below is an article from the February 15 issue of *Christian Century*. It touches on a pastor's view of the concern many have for our children in schools these days – and also shares what one parent provides in way of blessing and sending at the beginning of each school day with his kids.

There are many other parents who live by this morning blessing as well – and they bookend the day with 'Highs and Lows' of the Day, I'm sorry's, prayers and a blessing at the end of every day.

It's a wonderful way to bring God into your day. Stay tuned for more information!

~ Pr. Kathy and the
Faith Formation Team

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Calling our Children Dust

By Alan Sherouse, senior pastor of 1st Baptist Church, Greensboro, North Carolina

At our church, several pastors participate in the imposition of ashes. Three stations, two ministers at each, alternating turns so that six thumbs are smudged by the end.

It's a good thing, too, because I want no part of ashing my own children.

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“Someone else will need to put the ash on the Sherouse kids,” I say with a chuckle and a tear. As a minister, I am often reminded of my own mortality. But my kids? They’re all parts glitter and no parts ash. And I don’t want to be the one to tell them, “Remember you are dust...” The world will tell them that clearly enough.

And then I got the full news of the shooting in Parkland, Florida, while leaving the sanctuary and scrolling with my ashen thumb. “Aren’t you from Parkland?” a friend had asked via text earlier in the day, before I knew it was the latest hashtagged locale. I assumed his most recent Tinder date must be with a Florida gal. “Not Parkland. Lakeland,” I wrote back, but I was still a Florida guy for most of my life. That means countless friends have personal connections. College friends are mourning for their high school alma mater. A college classmate, friend, and fellow Baptist pastor is grieving the death of his adolescent buddy, known to the rest of us as the heroic football coach who stood in front of students against an AR-15.

I scroll through these points of connection, and it somehow brings this closer. Then again, personal connections aren’t needed. At one level I am from Parkland. We all are.

Because this is the world. It’s not some scary place far off beyond my reach. It’s not some place that imposes something on my children from which I’m otherwise shielding them. It’s the place I live; it’s within my control. It’s a place that I am co-creating. God created a garden, but we have created the world as it is. So this is

the world as we have made it—as I have made it.

It’s the world I sent my kids into again this morning, complete with all our morning rituals—habits so strong I forget what they mean. First, we roll in to the sound of the Kidz Bop soundtrack. Then comes the frantic update on the time from the backseat (“four minutes until the bell!”). A reluctant “I love you, Della,” under the breath of a too-cool big brother. “Daddy, will you hold my bag?” his little sister asks. I don’t mind, you see, as long as she keeps holding my hand all the way to her kindergarten classroom. (You better believe I’ll carry that bag to first grade, too.) Then these words:

Remember who you are.

Remember who loves you.

Remember to do your best work.

Remember to be a good friend. (That one’s from their mother.)

But it occurs to me, as I walk away, that the schoolyard ritual today was incomplete. It ought to have included that refrain that we are repeating to our children each and every day in our mad world:

Dear ones, remember you are dust.