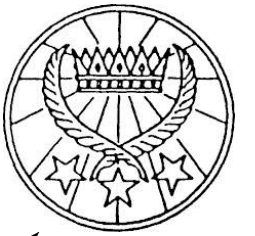


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“Blow the Trumpet in Zion” (Joel 2.15)



# Zion Trumpet

Zion Evangelical-Lutheran Church of Detroit

August/September 2019

by Father Braden

**Herod lived in fear and guilt.** That’s how living with sin feels. It is a burden, a weight, a pressing, crushing condemning load that never goes away. As Tetrarch, Herod Antipas, son of Herod the Great, was appointed ruler of Palestine by his father. When he heard of the miracles that Jesus was performing, St. Matthew records that he said "This is John the Baptist; he is risen from the dead, and therefore these powers are at work in him." (Matthew 14:2) Like a little child who had done something wrong, plagued by guilt, his statement pointed not to Jesus, but to his own sin: murder. He had killed John. But as is often the case, that sin was the result of other sins: lust, pride, hubris, and ego.

Herod had a half-brother, Philip. Philip was married. Herod was having sinful relations with Philip’s wife, Herodias. John the Baptizer did what every preacher ought to do. He spoke the truth powerfully: “It is not lawful for you to have her.” Rather than repent and end the sinful relationship, Herod had John arrested and imprisoned, because Herodias nursed a grudge against him. Herodias wanted her illicit lover to kill John, but as a politician he feared the backlash of from the people, because they held John to be a prophet. St. Mark also records that Herod feared John, “knowing him to be a righteous and holy man.” (Mark 6:20)

On Herod Antipas’ birthday, Salome, the daughter of Herodias (who the historian Josephus names as Salome) danced for Herod. Herod, apparently overcome with lust, his desire perhaps coupled with too much wine, made a rash oath to the girl, and he made it publicly in front of his high officials, his military commanders and the leading men of Galilee: he would give her whatever she asked, up to half his kingdom. Salome conspired

*Continued on Page 2*

**“... If you are willing to receive it, he is Elijah who is to come.**

**He who has ears to hear, let him hear!”** Matthew 11:14-15

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briefly with her mother, who saw her opportunity. What did Salome ask Herod for? "I want you to give me at once the head of John the Baptist on a platter." (Mark 6:25)

Her gruesome request was granted by the reluctant king, unwilling to break his public oath, wine-logged and lust-driven as it might have been. Salome, receiving the horrible prize, gave it to her mother. John's disciples came and laid his body and buried it in a tomb, the reverent, Christian treatment of the earthly remains of a departed saint. John is with Christ. His body sleeps until the Lord he worshipped calls him forth from that grave. (See John 11:11)

Herod's sin is demonstrative of all sin. Sin multiplies and grows. Bigger lies are necessary to cover up earlier lies. The sins of the flesh lead to progressively more serious sins. And the weight of sin is a terrible burden. It plagues the conscience and the soul. It soils in a way that no man can clean. It separates from God. It ruins our relationships with men.

Thanks be to God, there is a cure for sin. John the Baptist was the Forerunner. He was not the Christ, and publicly confessed it. He came to announce the coming of the long-promised Messiah, the Savior, the Christ. Even from his mother's womb John pointed to Christ (see Luke 1:41). He confessed Christ before men. So the promise his Lord made is sure: "...whoever confesses me before men, him will I also confess before My Father in heaven." John is with Christ.

It is He, Christ Jesus, that gave His life for your sins. John was indeed the Forerunner, preceding his cousin Jesus in death. But John's death, although a remarkable account of the fruit of Christian faith,

avails you nothing. It serves as an example for all men. But the death of Christ avails forgiveness and life and salvation. John preceded Him in death, but Christ Jesus took up His life again. He emptied His tomb. It is in Him that John has life, and that life everlasting. And it is true also for you, you who have saving faith in Jesus, you who believe that He died and rose for you. Your sins are forgiven in Christ. That horrible burden, that awful load, is lifted from you. He bore it. He bore it to the cross, where He died for your sins. And in His miraculous, glorious resurrection, you are declared righteous before God, simply by believing in Christ.

It is the tradition of the Church to commemorate the death of St. John the Baptist, Martyr, on the 29<sup>th</sup> day of August each year. Join us, won't you, as we remember the faithful preaching and witness, and the fearlessness of faith, God gave to St. John the Baptist? Mass is at 7:00 p.m. Our regular Thursday evening Adult Catechesis will be held after Mass.

**At the foot of the Choir Loft stairs,** on the north end of Zion's Narthex, there is a wonderful piece of Christian art. It is attributed to Ressler Art Galleries, and bears the dedication date of 1982 A.✠ D. It is a tall piece, with a dark background. The first thing one notices is the gold halo around the figure, pictured alone. His face is strong, unflinching, and yet angelic, peaceful. He looks straight ahead. His eyes meet yours. He holds in his right hand a flaming sword, in his left an impenetrable shield bearing the symbol of divine omniscience. He is, of course, the Archangel Michael.

Revelation 12 recounts the casting out of Satan from heaven. There was a war in heaven. Michael and

Rast and Meyer urge an LCMS that will reflect the diversity of heaven's saints, and concluding, "*We are your seminaries – for the Gospel!*"

I am grateful that our Pastor, Father Braden, has brought a good mission perspective to Zion Evangelical-Lutheran Church. I am also grateful that the Congregation has been very supportive, encouraging the use of his unique theological teaching gifts, to go to Latin America to provide solid Lutheran theology to pastors and laity. His recent trip was to the Seminary in the Dominican Republic to teach the Book of Revelation in Spanish to Venezuelan pastors, under persecution in their native country, to address the subject of Christ's Church under hardship and suffering, and to encourage their faithfulness to the Lord and His Word.

## **And now a word from Janet Stechholz concerning the LWML:**

It was an honor and a privilege to be the delegate for our LWML Greater Detroit Zone of the English District. It's hard to describe how joyous and uplifting LWML Conventions are. It would take me several pages to let you know everything that went on at the convention. Let me just limit it to three of things I experienced:

1. Our Detroit Zone put together 37 Health Kits at our Spring Rally. We did it for the LWML "Gifts From the Heart" program. We brought new bath towels and wrapped soap, toothbrushes and toothpaste, combs and brushes, washcloths, deodorant, and a devotional book in the towels. The completed kits go to Lutheran World Relief and other recipients. We brought all those 37 kits to the convention in Mobile, Alabama and put them in the room with the other "Gifts From the Heart". We had 4 large bags filled with the Health Kits. It took up our whole trunk! That was a joy!

2. As a delegate. I got to vote for Mission Grants to help other organizations. It was hard to choose! Also, at our last Spring Rally, I let the ladies in our Zone vote for the Mission Grants they thought were great. I voted for the top 8 choices from our Zone. All 8 of those were among the Mission Grants chosen!

3. The singing was fantastic at the convention. It is a joy to sing praises to the Lord! I also sang in the mass choir at the Opening Service and at the Sending Service. We had several hundred women in the choir!

I could tell you more, but since you are all part of our zone, you can **come to our Fall Rally** and I will share my experiences at the convention. I'll let you know when that rally will be after our board meets together. Anyway, the next National LWML convention will be in Lexington, Kentucky two years from now. The dates are June 24-27, 2021. It's less than a 6 hour drive from here and it'll be a blessed experience.

In the meantime, our English District LWML has our convention next year. It will be in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania on April 24-26, 2020. I hope and pray that some of you can come to the convention. We can carpool to get there. It's on a much smaller scale than the National Convention. We usually have between 90 and 120 at our district convention. I'll be giving you more information as the time gets closer. It's important that many from our Zone can come to this convention because in 2022, our Zone will be hosting the convention here in Detroit and we need all the help we can get! Please look for posters on the bulletin board and notices in the Bulletin.

## Birthday Anniversaries Baptism Anniversaries

### August

5 Sydney Atkins  
9 John Chavez  
14 Jennifer De Vera  
17 Rosell Cross, Jr.  
27 Joshua Chavez  
28 Robert Werner

### September

2 Teri Kelly  
2 Alexis Ruffin  
15 Ethan Atkins  
20 Lois Meriwether  
23 Drucilla Huddleston

### August

5 Pamela Ruffin  
17 Jennifer De Vera  
18 Sydney Atkins

### September

11 Robert Werner  
17 Alexis Ruffin  
20 Paul Snoes  
26 Shirley Bradley

## Marriage Anniversaries

### September

8 Rev. and Mrs. Mark Braden  
18 Dr. and Mrs. Michael Anderson

vacancy pastor, and in other settings, I've frequently heard the lament of faithful Lutheran Christians concerning the perceived decline of the Church throughout North America. Drs. Meyer and Rast provide some interesting perspective in this article that I'll summarize for you, with frequent quotes.

What did Seminary Presidents Rast and Meyer learn from their trip to Ethiopia and interaction with Mekane Yesus pastors and laity and their seminary, which now receives some theological guidance from the LCMS? Rast and Meyer noted **five important applications** for us.

*"The first basic learning is that the American cultural context has changed. We live in different circumstances today. They are not better or worse; they are different." They note the rise of the "nones," people who do not identify with a Christian denomination."*

**Secondly, "a vision that God's work is global and multiethnic in the United States is key to energizing local ministry and mission."** Mission stories and mission trips should be woven into LCMS congregational life. Mission trips are highly recommended. Those who go on one are changed for life.

*"A third learning is 'two wings.'" No, not two wings*

in the LCMS, but rather this from the Mekane Yesus Church. *"The first 'wing' is evangelization. The second is human care." ... "In today's post-churched America the witness of the local congregation will be most effective with the 'two wings' – evangelization and human care."*

*"A fourth fundamental learning is to communicate to people throughout the LCMS how our seminaries are partnering to share confessional Lutheran theology at home and abroad." ... "A growing global vision of our Lord's church will invigorate ministry and mission in local congregations." The authors were quick to point out that this does not mean a watering down of what we teach at our seminaries. They stressed the primacy of our seminaries' residential programs. "Our vision for the future features our graduate programs acting as 'Lutheran leaven' by offering substantial Gospel theology to Christians both at home and overseas."*

*Fifth, congregations and seminaries can cast a vision for a truly multiethnic Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod." They noted that with the decline in LCMS demographics, we will need more pastors who come to the USA from other countries. This has already been happening in North America in the English District-LCMS, and giving a foretaste of what heaven will look like in terms of ethnic and language diversity (Revelation 7). "The student populations at your seminaries are already more diverse than the overall LCMS."*

Presidents Meyer and Rast concluded that we can learn still more from our Lutheran brothers and sisters in the Evangelical Lutheran Church Mekane Yesus in Ethiopia, even as we provided stronger theological education. We live in North America in different circumstances than that of the 20<sup>th</sup> century or decades ago. **Different, not better or worse, but different.** The Mekane Yesus Church continues to grow rapidly, now several times larger than the LCMS, and theological discussions continue leading toward hopeful full pulpit and altar fellowship. Drs.

**The Zion Trumpet** is the informational and educational newsletter of Zion Evangelical-Lutheran Church. It communicates the news of Zion and instructs members in various aspects of the Christian Faith.

The **Trumpet** is published six times each year. It is free for members of Zion. Non-members are invited to contribute toward the production and mailing of the **Trumpet**.

Zion Evangelical-Lutheran Church is a parish of the one, holy catholic and apostolic Church and is affiliated with the English district of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod.

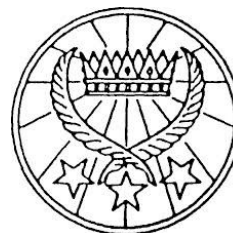
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his angels fought against the dragon and his angels. The dragon was weaker, Michael prevailed, the dragon and his angels lost their place in heaven. The dragon, Satan, the devil, was cast down to the earth with his evil angels.

St. Michael also appears in the Book of Daniel the Prophet. He is one of the "chief princes", who comes to aid the Prophet by revealing the future to him (Daniel 10:13). When the Angel speaks, Daniel falls to the ground before Him. When Daniel looks up, he sees "One having the likeness of the sons of men". Daniel calls Him "Lord". In the 12<sup>th</sup> chapter of the Book of the Prophet Daniel the Archangel Michael appears again, this time at the end of time, on the Last Day, the Day of Resurrection. Luther, commenting on the Book of the Prophet Zechariah, says that St. Michael is the Angel of the Lord of the Old Testament (AE 20. 173), the pre-incarnate Christ.

Zion has a long history of commemorating St. Michael, also held to be the angel-protector of soldiers, and the "patron saint of chivalry". A few years ago, during a flood in the Undercroft, I rescued a box containing some old banners, which are inscribed with the names of the Zion members who died in war. I suspect that at some point in time they were displayed by the painting of St. Michael in the Narthex.

St. Michael is commemorated each year on the 29<sup>th</sup> day of September, the eve of the dedication of an ancient Roman basilica in his honor. Following the Revelation account of his victory over Satan, St. Michael is usually pictured victorious over a dragon. This year September 29 falls on a Sunday, and the Feast of St. Michael, Archangel will displace the lesser Sunday after Trinity. As is our custom at Zion, the Sundays following will be numbered as Sundays in Michaeltide.

For the last 11 years, our St. Michael Liturgical Conference has been held on the Monday closest to the Feast of St. Michael, Archangel. This year the Conference will be held on Monday, September 30. Brochures and registration materials are already available from our church office and in our tract racks in the Narthex. This year registration is possible online

through Eventbrite.com. I hope you can join us on Sunday, September 29<sup>th</sup> for Mass and Bible Class, and then again the next day for our theological conference.

**The Annual Voters Assembly** was held at Zion on Sunday, June 30<sup>th</sup> after Mass. The usual reports were given, and the 2019-2020 budget was approved. Copies of minutes and of the budget will be available from the church office in the near future.

**If you stand in front of the painting of St. Michael,** and turn around, you'll see that the Narthex has been refurnished. The floor still sparkles from the recent refinishing, but now two new benches, two new chairs, a new table and a new lamp have been added. The Narthex looks wonderful, and inviting! Thanks to our Trustees for their hard work in making Zion such a welcoming facility.

**The Annual Congregational Picnic** was held on Sunday, July 14<sup>th</sup> after Mass. It was a perfect day – great weather, nice sunshine, and cool shade under the large tree behind the Rectory. The buffet table was full of tasty salads and side dishes and desserts, and the grills were full of hamburgers, hot dogs and bratwurst. A “bouncy house” and a “corn hole” game kept the children busy while the adults enjoyed one another’s company. And a grand time was had by all! Thanks very much to all who worked to make the 2019 picnic a success!

**Rectory Yard Work** – Zion is blessed with many faithful, hard-working members that all pitch in to do the work of the church. All are deserving of a great “Thank You!”, and I count you all a great blessing both the to congregation and personally. You serve willingly, and without seeking recognition or reward, simply desiring to advance the work of the church. That’s a fruit of saving faith. That said, I would like to single-out and name several Zion men who worked incredibly hard to get the Rectory yard cleaned up and ready for the picnic: Archdeacon David Stechholz, his son Andrew, Joel Solomon, and Mitchell Meyer. Working together with our Board of Trustees, these men transformed the Rectory yard into a beautiful picnic site. Thanks to all!

As we move from the Sundays after Trinity into the season of Michaeltide, I encourage you, inasmuch as you are in a state of grace, to avail yourself of Christ’s Gifts in the Divine Service, the Holy Mass. Our liturgical schedule is quite full, and affords many opportunities each Sunday, every Wednesday, and during many special Feasts, for you to hear the Word of God and receive Christ’s Gifts. Even if you travel for vacation this summer, there will still be a Mass you can attend at Zion. I hope to see you there!



## “Archdeacon’s Antiphonal Accents”

From Archdeacon Rev. Dr. David Stechholz

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ Jesus, our Lord, it has been a while since I last wrote for Zion’s “Trumpet” Newsletter. Thank you for being so understanding of my serving for almost a half-year as Vacancy Pastor at St. Matthew Evangelical Lutheran Church & School, Westland, and then filling in elsewhere this Summer, such as Emmanuel, Dearborn.

Janet and I enjoyed the LWML (Lutheran Women’s Missionary League, also known as Lutheran Women in Mission) Convention. Held June 20<sup>th</sup>-23<sup>rd</sup> in Mobile, Alabama, it was heart-warming to meet and greet many sisters and a few brothers in Christ, worship the Lord and participate in Bible studies, view the huge Exhibit Hall displays, and listen to missionaries over lunch or dinner. I’ll let my wife share her experience as a delegate. **Janet will add a little LWML plug at the end of this article.** For me, it was good for a change to just attend as Janet’s husband.

On the return trip through Alabama (civil rights sites in Selma, Montgomery, and Birmingham), Tennessee, and Kentucky (Mammoth Cave, the state capitol, two distilleries, the Ark Encounter [museum], etc.), we both did some reading. One article that I want to call to your attention was an editorial entitled “*What Can We Learn From Them?*,” by our two LCMS seminaries Presidents. The article was in the Spring 2019 *Concordia Journal* and was written by the Rev. Drs. Larry Rast (Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne) and Dale Meyer (Concordia Seminary, St. Louis). The two learned men had been to Ethiopia in March and spent time at the Mekane Yesus Seminary of the EECMY (Evangelical Lutheran Church Mekane Yesus) in Addis Ababa. I share some of their insights, which are applicable to the changing religious scene of North American Christianity.

While serving as Bishop of the English District, as a

**HOLY MASS** is celebrated every Sunday and Wednesday at 10am, and on major feasts as announced.

**COMMUNICANTS** are baptized Christians who have been instructed in and publicly confess the Evangelical-Lutheran Faith. If you desire to commune, please visit with the Pastor before approaching the Altar.

**THE DIVINE OFFICE** is prayed in the Chapel of the Holy Incarnation in the Rectory. **MATINS:** Daily 8:45am (except when there is a morning Mass); **VESPERS:** Thursday 6:30pm.

**PRIVATE CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION** is available on Saturday from 9-10am or by appointment.

**PASTORAL CONSULTATION** based on the Holy Scriptures is available by appointment.

**THE SACRAMENT OF HOLY BAPTISM** is for infants and adults, and may be arranged by contacting the Pastor.

**COUPLES DESIRING HOLY MARRIAGE** should contact the Pastor before finalizing the wedding date. Bible instruction in Holy Marriage is required. All marriages are conducted by the Pastor according to Zion’s usual order.

**NEW MEMBERS** are received by baptism, confirmation, transfer or profession of faith. Instruction in Luther’s Small Catechism and Private Absolution are required for all new members. Visit with the Pastor for further details.

**THE SICK AND HOMEBOUND** are visited regularly by the Pastor. Please contact the Parish Office if you know of any parishioner in need of pastoral visitation.

**PARISH ORGANIZATIONS** Adult Choir, Altar Guild, Children’s Choir, Jubilate Deo Women’s Choir, St. Seraphim Prayer Guild, Society of St. Samuel (Altar Boys), Usher Club, Zion Endowment Board.

**DEACONS** Archdeacon David Stecholz, William Gramzow, Thomas Habitz, Jr., Michael Anderson; **TRUSTEES:** Bill Arthur, Paul Snoes; **PARISH EDUCATION:** Shirley Cross, Robert Kelly III, Sarah Braden; **OFFICERS OF THE VOTERS:** Thomas Habitz, Jr. (chairman), Alan Kroske (vice-chairman), Pamela Ruffin (secretary), Paul Snoes (treasurer), Jessica Chavez (financial secretary).