

# Zion Lutheran Church

Hidewood Township

# Trinity Lutheran Church

Watertown, SD

[trinitywatertownsd.com](http://trinitywatertownsd.com)

Members: Church of the Lutheran Confession      [www.clclutheran.org](http://www.clclutheran.org)  
Pastor Paul Krause. . . [parsonpaulkrause@gmail.com](mailto:parsonpaulkrause@gmail.com). . . 920-238-5775  
Teacher Collette Krause . . . [collettekrause@gmail.com](mailto:collettekrause@gmail.com) cell: 920-238-5132  
Krause's home: 886-6887      Church office: 886-2976

**Fifth Sunday in Lent – March 13, 2016**

**Organists: Melanie Dumann, Naomi Fuerstenau, Rebecca Larson**

**Sunday worship services – Zion: 9 a.m.; Trinity: 11 a.m.**

**Zion Sunday School: after church; Trinity Sunday School – 9:45 a.m.**

## *Welcome!*

*“Behold! The Lamb of God  
who takes away the sin of the world!” John 1:29*

### Note to Visitors about Holy Communion

Holy Communion is rightly called a ‘Sacrament’ because it is a “sacred act;” not in what WE do for Christ, but in what Christ does for US! Because God’s Word presents the reception of this Sacrament as a most intimate expression of spiritual and confessional unity (1 Corinthians 1:10; 10:16-17 Romans 16:17-18), we ask that only those who have publicly professed such oneness of faith with us by membership at Trinity or Zion or another CLC church come forward to receive the Sacrament. This is not a judgment of anyone’s faith, but rather an expression of ours. Please speak with the pastor if you are seeking a church home or have any questions. We’d love to have you!

## ORDER for WORSHIP

*Worship Supplement – Setting Two – as printed in this bulletin*

***NOTE: Communion is celebrated only at Trinity this morning.***

*To prepare for worship – hear Jesus’ words in John 15:1-8*

“I am the true vine, and My Father is the vinedresser. 2 Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit He takes away; and every branch that bears fruit He prunes, that it may bear more fruit. 3 You are already clean because of the word which I have spoken to you. 4 Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in Me. 5 I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing. 6 If anyone does not abide in Me, he is cast out as a branch and is withered; and they gather them and throw them into the fire, and they are burned. 7 If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, you will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you. 8 By this My Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit; so you will be My disciples.”

*The bell calls us for worship*

### Opening Prayer

*P: O God, our Father, Your praise is from those whom You have called from darkness to faith in Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of sins. Uplift our souls to the holiness of Your presence, that with pure hearts we may adore Your name and worship You with joy on our lips, through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Redeemer and Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, forever and ever. Amen.*

**Hymn 153**

### Invocation

*P: In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.*

**C [spoken]: Amen.**

## Confession and Absolution

*P: We have come into the presence of God, who created us to love and serve Him as His dear children. But we have disobeyed Him and deserve only His wrath and punishment. Therefore, let us confess our sins to Him and plead for His mercy.*

**ALL: Merciful Father in heaven, I am altogether sinful from birth. In countless ways I have sinned against You and do not deserve to be called Your child. But trusting in Jesus, my Savior, I pray: Have mercy on me according to Your unfailing love. Cleanse me from my sin, and take away my guilt.**

*P: God, our heavenly Father, has forgiven all your sins. By the perfect life and innocent death of our Lord Jesus Christ, He has removed your guilt forever. You are His own dear child. May God give you strength to live according to His will.*

**C [spoken]: Amen.**

**At Zion only: Hymn 171: 9-10**

*P: Let us pray. We beseech You, almighty God, mercifully to look upon Your people, that by Your great goodness they may be governed and preserved evermore in both body and soul; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one true God, now and forever.*

**C [spoken]: Amen.**

## First Reading – Old Testament – Isaiah 43:16-21

*God will renew His apostate people*

16 Thus says the LORD, who makes a way in the sea And a path through the mighty waters, 17 Who brings forth the chariot and horse, The army and the power (They shall lie down together, they shall not rise; They are extinguished, they are quenched like a wick): 18 “ Do not remember the former things, Nor consider the things of old. 19 Behold, I will do a new thing, Now it shall spring forth; Shall you not know it? I will even make a road in the wilderness *And* rivers in the desert. 20 The beast of the field will honor Me, The jackals and the ostriches, Because I give waters in the wilderness *And* rivers in the desert, To give drink to My people, My

chosen. 21 This people I have formed for Myself; They shall declare My praise.

## Second Reading – New Testament Epistle – Philippians 3:8-14

*Gaining Christ is life's supreme goal!*

8 Yet indeed I also count all things loss for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them as rubbish, that I may gain Christ 9 and be found in Him, not having my own righteousness, which *is* from the law, but that which *is* through faith in Christ, the righteousness which is from God by faith; 10 that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death, 11 if, by any means, I may attain to the resurrection from the dead. 12 Not that I have already attained, or am already perfected; but I press on, that I may lay hold of that for which Christ Jesus has also laid hold of me. 13 Brethren, I do not count myself to have apprehended; but one thing *I do*, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead, 14 I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.

## CONFESSION OF FAITH – THE APOSTLES' CREED

**ALL: I believe in God the Father almighty, Maker of heaven and earth. I believe in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord; Who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, Born of the Virgin Mary; Suffered under Pontius Pilate, Was crucified, died, and was buried; He descended into hell; the third day He rose again from the dead; He ascended into heaven And is seated at the right hand of God the Father almighty; From there He will come to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit; The Holy Christian Church, the communion of saints; The forgiveness of sins; The resurrection of the body; And the life everlasting. Amen.**

**Hymn 150: 1, 2, 5**

## Sermon Text – Luke 20: 9-19

9 Then He began to tell the people this parable: “A certain man planted a vineyard, leased it to vinedressers, and went into a far country for a long time. 10 Now at vintage-time he sent a servant to the vinedressers, that they

might give him some of the fruit of the vineyard. But the vinedressers beat him and sent *him* away empty-handed. 11 Again he sent another servant; and they beat him also, treated *him* shamefully, and sent *him* away empty-handed. 12 And again he sent a third; and they wounded him also and cast *him* out. 13 “Then the owner of the vineyard said, ‘What shall I do? I will send my beloved son. Probably they will respect *him* when they see him.’” 14 But when the vinedressers saw him, they reasoned among themselves, saying, ‘This is the heir. Come, let us kill him, that the inheritance may be ours.’ 15 So they cast him out of the vineyard and killed *him*. Therefore what will the owner of the vineyard do to them? 16 He will come and destroy those vinedressers and give the vineyard to others.” And when they heard *it* they said, “Certainly not!” 17 Then He looked at them and said, “What then is this that is written: ‘*The stone which the builders rejected Has become the chief cornerstone*’?” 18 Whoever falls on that stone will be broken; but on whomever it falls, it will grind him to powder.” 19 And the chief priests and the scribes that very hour sought to lay hands on Him, but they feared the people—for they knew He had spoken this parable against them.

**Theme: EXTREME!**

1. “He will destroy those vinedressers.” (v. 16a)
2. They knew He had spoken this parable against them.” (v. 19b)
3. “He will give the vineyard to others.” (v. 16b)

**ALL SING: Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me. Cast me not away from Your presence. Take not Your Holy Spirit from me. Restore to me the joy of Your salvation. Uphold with Your Spirit free.**

***At Zion only: Hymn 170: 1-5***

**The Offering is collected/brought forward – sing Hymn 175:1, 4**  
***1. When I survey the wondrous cross***  
***On which the Prince of Glory died,***  
***My richest gain I count but loss And pour contempt on all my pride.***  
***4. Were the whole realm of nature mine,***  
***That were a tribute far too small;***  
***Love so amazing, so divine, Demands my soul, my life, my all.***

*P: Prayer*

**ALL: Our Father, who art in heaven; Hallowed be Thy name; Thy kingdom come; Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven; Give us this day our daily bread; And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; And lead us not into temptation; But deliver us from evil; For Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever and ever. Amen.**

***Trinity continues below; Zion continues on page 9.***

### The Service of the Sacrament

*P: The Lord be with you.*

**C: (spoken) And also with you.**

*P: Lift up your hearts.*

**C: (spoken) We lift them up to the Lord.**

*P: It is right and beneficial that we should at all times and in all places give thanks to You, O Lord, holy Father, almighty and everlasting God, through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who brought the gift of salvation to all people by His death on the tree of the cross, so that the devil, who overcame us by a tree would in turn by a tree be overcome. Therefore with*

*angels and archangels, and with all the company of heaven, we magnify Your glorious Name, evermore praising You and saying:*

**ALL SING: Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of Sabaoth, adored; Heav'n and earth with full acclaim shout the glory of Your name. Sing hosanna in the highest, sing hosanna to the Lord; truly blest is he who comes in the name of the Lord!**

#### **WORDS OF INSTITUTION**

*P: Our Lord Jesus Christ, the same night in which He was betrayed, took bread. And when He had given thanks, He broke it and gave it to His disciples, saying, "Take, eat. This is My body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of Me." In the same way He took the cup, after supper, gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, "Drink of it, all of you. This cup is the new covenant in My blood, which is shed for you for the forgiveness of sins. Do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of Me." The peace of the Lord be with you always!*

**ALL SING: O Lamb of God, O Christ our Lord, whose blood, once shed, true life restored, Impart Your joy, our faith increase. Sustain with Your mercy and grant us Your peace.**

#### **DISTRIBUTION of the SACRAMENT – Hymn 172**

*Communicant members of Trinity Lutheran Church or of a sister CLC congregation are invited to come forward. Please see page 1 of this bulletin for more detail. Thank you!*

**ALL SING: 1. O Lord, now let Your servant Depart in heav'nly peace, For I have seen the glory Of Your redeeming grace: A light to lead the Gentiles Unto Your holy hill, The glory of Your people, Your chosen Israel. 2. All glory to the Father, All glory to the Son, All glory to the Spirit, Forever three in one; For as in the beginning, Is now, shall ever be, God's triune name resounding Through all eternity.**

*P: Go in peace. Serve the Lord with gladness.*

**ALL SING: My heart has now become Your dwelling, O blessed, holy, Trinity. With angels I, Your praises telling, Shall live in joy eternally. Lord, may Your body and Your blood Be for my soul the highest good!**

**Zion continues here.**

### **The Benediction**

*P: The Lord bless you and keep you; The Lord make His face shine upon you and be gracious unto you; The Lord lift up His countenance upon you, and give you His peace.*

**C [spoken]: Amen.**

**Closing Hymn 157**

## **CALENDAR and ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**TODAY >>** ZION – 9 a.m. service; then Sunday School

TRINITY – 9:45 a.m. Sun School; 11 a.m. service with communion

**WED >>** 7 p.m. 6<sup>th</sup> Midweek Lenten worship service – Pastor J. Fleischer

**THU-SAT >>** CLC Gradeschool basketball tourney – ILC – Eau Claire

**SAT >>** Trinity bell choir rehearsal at 12 noon

**SAT >>** ILC Tour Choir concert – 7 p.m. w/ refreshments after

**NEXT SUNDAY >>** 8:30 a.m. Palm Sunday breakfast at Trinity

>> ZION – 9 a.m. worship service; then SS

TRINITY – 9:45 a.m. SS; 11 a.m. worship

also at Trinity: 0-3 Sunday School at Trinity during regular SS hour

### **UPCOMING EVENTS**

>> MAR 18 Schaller-Rodebaugh wedding at Messiah/Eau Claire, WI

>> Trinity Lutheran School will be on spring break during Holy Week

>> HOLY WEEK special midweek worship service schedule:

Mar 24 - Zion – 7 p.m. Maundy Thursday communion service

Mar 25 - Trinity – 7 p.m. Good Friday service

>> MAR 29 – 7 p.m. – SDSU Bible Study – in the library

### **ILC TOUR CHOIR CONCERT DAY INFORMATION**

Plans are for the choir to arrive at 5 p.m. on Saturday, March 19. The women of Trinity are planning to serve a meal to the choir members upon their arrival. The concert itself will be at 7 p.m. During the intermission there will be a collection to help the choir with their trip expenses. After the concert refreshments will be served in the fellowship hall. Trinity members are asked to bring bars and cookies; drinks will be supplied. (We are hoping to send whatever desserts are left over with the choir on Sunday.) Afterward the refreshments, choir members will go to the homes of their hosts for the night.

**SUNDAY MORNING:** The men of Trinity will be serving breakfast at 8:30 a.m. Choir hosts are to bring their guests to church for the 8:30 breakfast. The choir will then be on their way to Rapid City at 10:30 a.m. The church service will then begin at 11 a.m. as usual.

**NOTE TO HOSTS:** Please prepare a “lunch” for those you are hosting to eat on the bus on their way west.

Questions? Please talk to Pastor Krause

**CAN YOU HELP PUT UP POSTERS OF THE TOUR CHOIR?** A couple dozen posters have been made regarding the Tour Choir concert. If you could take a few with you and post them at businesses around town (Hy-Vee, Wal-Mart, Pizza Ranch, etc) that would be great! They are on the back table.

#### **NOTES FROM TRINITY'S VOTERS MEETING LAST WEEK**

- >> After discussion, it was decided to install a new high efficiency furnace and central air unit at the teacherage – Lonny's will do the installing
- >> Palm Sunday breakfast plans are in place – we will begin serving at 8:30 a.m. – ILC's Tour Choir will also be eating with us before they are on their way at 10:30 a.m.
- >> a couple changes were made to the breakdown of PK's salary, to get it more in line with his expenses
- >> Pastor Andrew Schaller had asked for the 2 dual cassette decks that have been sitting unused on the shelf in the church office; it was decided to give them to him at no charge
- >> it was moved/approved to extend the collection for the Tour Choir's expenses – see elsewhere in this bulletin for details
- >> Treasurer Paul Reinschmidt also reported that the ending date for our current medical plan costs for PK/family has been moved from Dec 2016 to Oct 2017; but at that time (if nothing changes in the meantime), premiums will see a close to 90% increase

**SPECIAL COLLECTION** – In the back of church at Trinity a basket has been set up for the next 2 Sundays (Mar 13 and 20). This was approved by the voters last Sunday to give our membership an extended opportunity to help out with covering the Tour Choir's expenses. We will also have our customary collection during the intermission at the concert itself.

**MIDWEEK LENTEN SERVICES!** Pastor Joel Fleischer will be “trading pulpits” with Pastor Krause for the last time this Wednesday night at 7:00 p.m. for our special commemoration of Jesus' Passion. The theme for the services has been “Ironies of the Passion.” The service will focus on the unique and lasting significance of Jesus' ministry, death, and resurrection.

**NEWBORN TO AGE THREE SUNDAY SCHOOL!** On the first and third Sundays of the month Kindra Knox will be heading up a Sunday

School session for mothers and their youngsters from newborn to three years old! This will be held during the Sunday School class for the older kids – starting at 9:45.

**BASKETBALL TOURNAMENT SCHEDULE!** On the bulletin board in the fellowship hall you will find the whole schedule of games at the Eau Claire tournament. Here are the days/times/opponents for our Trinity team:

Thursday, Mar 17	6 p.m.	vs.	Okabena
Friday, Mar 18	8 a.m.	vs.	Saginaw
Friday, Mar 18	4 p.m.	vs.	Winter Haven

**FLOWERS FOR EASTER!** Trinity's committee 2 is planning flowers for church on Easter Sunday – we also welcome our membership to bring Easter flowers (lilies, etc) to help adorn the sanctuary!

**PLEASE SEE THE BACK TABLE AND BULLETIN BOARDS!**  
There are a goodly assortment of things you will find there!

#### **CLC CALL NEWS**

##### Undecided calls:

- >> Pastor Matt Hanel, Dallas, TX, to West Columbia, SC
- >> Teacher Sara Pfeiffer, Mountain View, CA, to Spokane Valley, WA
- >> Pastor Neal Radichel, Fond du Lac, WI, to Mankato, MN

##### Accepted call:

- >> Pastor Paul Naumann, Tacoma, WA, to ILC as professor

**FROM MISSIONARY PETER EVENSEN IN INDIA** *Consider yourself mightily encouraged to get on this website!!! :-)* Learn more about our work in India, visit the blog of Missionary Peter Evensen at [evensen.LutheranMissions.org](http://evensen.LutheranMissions.org) and his photo stream at [bit.ly/peterindia](http://bit.ly/peterindia). In Him, Peter Evensen 715-255-0395 (cell) [www.LutheranMissions.org](http://www.LutheranMissions.org)

**NEW ILC TOUR CHOIR CDs AVAILABLE!** A newly produced recording of choral music, sung by Tour Choirs of Immanuel Lutheran College, is available. It is a 2-CD set, featuring pieces sung by various choirs from 1991 to 2015. The first CD primarily reflects the themes of Advent and Christmas, the second the themes of Lent and Easter. The cost per 2-CD set is \$16 (or two sets for \$30). 25 percent of the songs (10 of 40)

have not appeared on previously produced CDs. 75 percent (the remaining 30 of the 40) have been distributed previously.

**CAMP KOYQUIN 2016** Just a quick reminder that registration for Camp Koyquin 2016 opens March 18! Camp Koyquin takes place June 19-25 at the "Camp JIM" facilities in Pillager, MN. Camp Koyquin is for CLC members and friends entering grades 5-12 and is a great opportunity for young people to study God's Word, meet new role models and mentors, and enjoy the blessings of Christian fellowship and fun. Cost is \$175 per camper if registered by May 31st. For more info about camp, FAQs, and to register for Camp Koyquin 2016, please go to [koyquin.clclutheran.net](http://koyquin.clclutheran.net). Please address any specific questions to one of the camp directors: Tom Naumann (920-266-5387 [thomasjnaumann@gmail.com](mailto:thomasjnaumann@gmail.com)) and Jessica Sydow (952-905-9981 [jessicasydow10@gmail.com](mailto:jessicasydow10@gmail.com))

#### **THANK YOU!**

>> We thank the Lord with Rosie Mertz that she escaped major harm in her 4-wheeler rollover on Wednesday!

>> Do you have something you are thankful for at Zion/Trinity? Let Pastor Krause know, and he will be happy to include it here in the bulletin!

#### **ATTENDANCES FOR THE WEEK OF MARCH 6:**

Zion Sunday: – Trinity Sunday: 67 Trin SS: 6 SDSU BC: –  
Golden: 17 Jenkins: 22 Trin Wed Eve Lent: 31 Trin. Lords' Supper: –

#### **LAST WEEK'S CONTRIBUTIONS AT TRINITY (03/06/16):**

Envelopes \$2,989.00 Loose: \$209.00 other reimbursement: \$706.16  
Total: \$3,904.16 - Included in totals above: \$125.00 for the Building Fund

#### **FEBRUARY CLC / MISSIONS OFFERINGS AT TRINITY:**

For CLC General Missions (CBP) – Offerings: \$2,600.00; SS: \$27.00  
Other CLC Funds: ILC Building Fund: \$1,000.00

#### **TRINITY SERVICE SERVANTS THIS COMING WEEK:**

Today 3/13	Greeters: A/R Larson	Ushers: Paul/Chris Mertz
Wed 3/16	Greeters: B/A Tvedt	Ushers: –
Sun 3/20	Greeters: D/R Klatt	Ushers: Brian/Gannon Tvedt

### **The National Lutheran Church of Myanmar - Yangon The Zomi Lutheran Church of Kalay and the Chin Hills**

#### Burma

The presence of Christians in the kingdom of Malea (North Burma) in the ninth century is recorded along with other south Asia centers by Didacus de Couto. It should be remembered that Marco Polo discovered Nestorian Christians amongst the Shans when the Mongol armies entered Burma in 1252. The first American foreign missionary, Adoniram Judson and his wife Ann, arrived around 1812. And now here we are long years later, and the work is still there. Some things don't change - the barefoot monks are still trudging about with their begging bowls. Some things do change - the traffic is heavier, construction is going forward and while when the new democracy began lately the prices went up, they are stabilized now. But one thing does not change - the need for the Gospel.

Our work in Yangon is with Pastor Charles Edwards. His son Sam, 22, wants to be a pastor, so that now we are praying about how that could come about. I was able to visit around to some of the stations and people. Some examples of the visiting follow.

>> At a Karen (tribe in Myanmar) pastor's house I said we were Lutheran and wanted them to be Lutheran and I would be back next year to see.

>> We prayed at the home of a Tamil (originally from India) member whose 17 year old had recently died.

>> We prayed at a Karen widow's house we met her children and prayed for God's blessings on her son and his new wife of two weeks.

>> Stopped in at a Baptist's and tried to show him that immersion is not the only way.

>> I had devotions at three places, one where there were over thirty children.

>> Visited various individuals beyond these and in nearly every case we prayed at each home.

>> Prayed over an 80 year old about ready to be with the Lord.

>> Two services on Sunday.

Buddhism is seriously entrenched in this country. We are looking to buy a sizeable number of Burmese Bibles for pastor to hand out. In doing seminars we came across a couple young men who had three years in a Bible College. Pray that they see the truth in our teachings and come over to us.

Pastor Edwards keeps busy preaching as his schedule below shows.

#### His Stations

- >> Hlaing Thar Yar is where he has his home, church building and attendance between 70-100 preaching each Sunday.
- >> Bogalay is 180 miles away and he preaches there once every two months.
- >> Oakan is 80 miles away and he preaches there once every two months or more if he can.
- >> Shwephyther is where he preaches twice a month.
- >> Kyawin's house is where he preaches twice a month.
- >> 86th bus gate is where he preaches weekly. Todd baptized some from there last year.
- >> Thingangyum is where he preaches once a month.

At our seminars the following was taught: An Overview of John's Gospel, Ps. 23, Six Chapters in Daniel, Christ's Active and Passive Obedience, Understanding Prophecy, 16 Prophets, Baptism, Communion, Christ the Anointed One, John 19 and Zechariah Messianic Prophecies.

At Kalay I taught the same things and we had generally 85 in attendance. I preached at four services with the same attendance.

The big consideration for our brothers here is to move from rented quarters to building on the land we purchased. Pastors Thang and Kham head the church.

One of the orphans Kham and his wife care for, Zokim, required surgery to remove her appendix. This was done during the seminar times and she is recovering in the hospital for maybe two weeks.

The ZLCM Pastor Cin Lian Mung went with the Lord rest in peace in January at Chin State. He was suffering his bodily pain scar cancer. Each pastor serves 5-6 congregations and is assisted by a traveling evangelist.

#### Daily Bible readings for home devotions, March 14-19, '16

**Mon Isaiah 43:16-21** God thwarted the army and oppression of Pharaoh, (16-17), but that display of His power was puny compared to the greatness of His next enterprise, which nobody would miss (18-19). God promised to resurrect the entire countryside via a *new thing*, the Water of Life, so that His children, the people of Israel (20), would know that He loved them (21).

**Tues Luke 20:9-19** Here's the plot of the parable: For centuries God nurtured the Israelites (His vineyard) so that their heavenly genetics would flourish (bear fruit)—but they not only rejected their God-given caregivers (the prophets), they even plotted against and assassinated the King's Son (13-15). When the audience caught on that the parable told their story and God was targeting them for retribution, they felt insulted (19). Stay tuned.

**Wed Philippians 3:8-14** Paul did not feel insulted at God's intervention in his life, for when he was brought to recognize Christ as His savior, he gladly dumped the rubbish of his "good deeds" (7-8). "When I survey the wondrous cross On which the prince of glory died, My richest gain I count but loss And pour contempt on all my pride" (*TLH*, 175). God grant that we benefit likewise during our time of grace!

**Thurs Psalm 73** This psalmist/hymn-writer admits that he hit a low spot in his life when he was envious of non-Christians who made a fortune and lived like kings. We should prepare ourselves for this trick of Satan by reviewing how richly God has blessed us (15-17) with His grace and love (25-26). Those who are not spiritually rich go to the grave bankrupt (27). Lord, have mercy!

**Fri Luke 1:67-79** God gave Zacharias the perceptivity and the words to set the record straight for anyone willing to listen: God has visited and has redeemed His people by a sequence of marvelous deeds. He raised up Jesus to activate the mercy long-promised, based on remission of humanity's sins, via the arrival of His Son, Jesus Messiah. *How great Thou art!*

**Sat Ephesians 1:3-14** We are absolutely thrilled to hear God explain Himself and clarify — that He has chosen us already from eternity (4) to be His dear children (5). Being chosen from eternity is a mystery we can hardly fathom—including the mystery of how God could enjoy doing this for us, but He tells us that He has done so *according to His good pleasure, which He purposed in Himself* (9). Indeed, His pull of love (a sort of heavenly gravity) has made all human history coalesce in Jesus (10); further, His power has drawn us into the orbit of salvation—so that our lives circle around Jesus year after year.