

Maranatha Free Lutheran Church
101 Foundation Ave
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Glyndon, MN 56547-0094

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GLYNDON MN 56547

Glyndon:

Pastor Lloyd Quanbeck
Senior Pastor @ Glyndon

Pastor Ryan Tonneson
*Associate Pastor of Youth,
Young Adults & Families @ Glyndon*

Glyndon Office: 218-498-2808
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mflc@maranathafreelutheran.com
www.maranathafreelutheran.com

Ulen:

Pastor Peter Ward
Pastor @ Ulen
Ulen Office: 218-596-8580

June 2024 Newsletter



... "where the Spirit of the Lord is,
there is freedom." II Corinthians 3:17

Members of the Association of Free Lutheran Congregations



JUNE 2024 @ ULEN



Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
26 9:00am - Worship Service	27 9:30-10:30am - Bone Builders	28	29	30 9:30-10:30am - Bone Builders	31	1
2 9:00am - Worship Service w/Communion Picnic planning meeting	3 9:30-10:30am - Bone Builders	4	5	6 9:30-10:30am - Bone Builders	7	8
9 9:00am - Worship Service Church Council following	10 9:30-10:30am - Bone Builders 1:00pm - WMF at Viking Manor	11	12 9:00–11:00am - MOPS	13 9:30-10:30am - Bone Builders	14  Flag Day	15
AFLC Annual Conference - June 12-15						
16 9:00am -Worship Service HAPPY FATHER'S DAY	17 9:30-10:30am - Bone Builders	18	19	20 9:30-10:30am - Bone Builders	21	22
23 9:00am - Worship Service	24 9:30-10:30am - Bone Builders	25	26	27 9:30-10:30am - Bone Builders	28	29
30 9:00am - Worship Service	1 9:30-10:30am - Bone Builders	2	3	4 	5	6



JUNE 2024 @ GLYNDON



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
26 9:30am - Worship Service	27	28	29 6:00pm SaltTeens Summer Kick-off 7:00pm Deacon Meeting	30 7:00pm Bible Study at Pat Johnson's home	31	1 7:00am Men's Fellowship Breakfast
2 8:00am - YMT mtg 9:30am - Worship Service w/ Communion	3 7:00pm Secret Sister Mid-Year Get Together at Pat Lewis' home	4 10:30am Morning WMF at church	5  6:00pm All-Church Picnic at Lindenwood Park in Fargo (SaltTeens included!)	6 7:00pm Bible Study at Pat Johnson's home	7	8 7:00am Men's Fellowship Breakfast
9 9:30am - Worship Service	10	11	12 6:00pm SaltTeens	13 7:00pm Bible Study at Pat Johnson's home	14  Flag Day	15 7:00am Men's Fellowship Breakfast
AFLC Annual Conference - June 12-15						
16 9:30am - Worship Service 	17	18 10:00am-3:00pm Quilting at the church 7:00pm Evening WMF at Vickie Haverkamp's home	19 7:00pm Church Council	20 7:00pm Bible Study at Pat Johnson's home	21	22 7:00am Men's Fellowship Breakfast
		JUNE 18-19 SALTTEENS TRIP TO TWINS GAME/VALLEYFAIR				
23 9:30am - Worship Service 11:00am - Congregational Meeting	24	25	26 6:00pm SaltTeens at Wilderness Bible Camp	27 7:00pm Bible Study at Pat Johnson's home	28	29 7:00am Men's Fellowship Breakfast
30 9:30am - Worship Service	1	2	3 6:00pm SaltTeens	4 	5	6 7:00am Men's Fellowship Breakfast

**Maranatha Free Lutheran Church
Glyndon, MN**

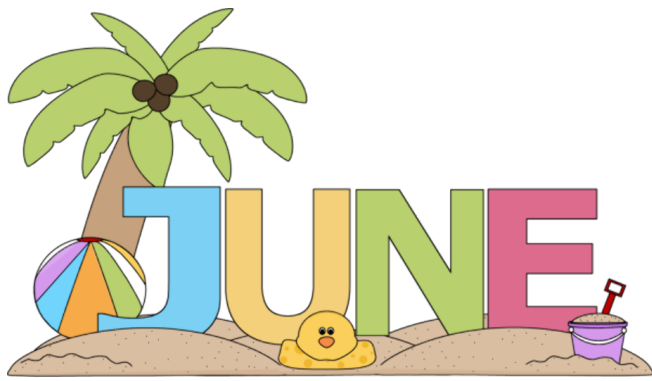
Financial Snapshot - Maranatha Glyndon			
30-Apr-24			
General Fund		Current Month	Year to Date
Contributions		\$21,305.00	\$95,378
Expenditures		-\$27,931.00	-\$108,814
Surplus / (Shortfall)			\$ (13,436)

	4/30/2024
GENERAL FUND INCOME	\$21,305
Deacons	-\$16,503
Education	-\$1,600
Finance	-\$4,963
Trustees	-\$4,680
Worship & Music	-\$185
GENERAL FUND EXPENSES	-\$27,931
Other Income (Rent, Interest, special fund transfers etc)	\$35
General Fund Balance Change	-\$6,591

GENERAL FUND BALANCE			\$42,298	Target is \$60,000
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<u>Special Funds</u>	<u>Income</u>	<u>Expenses</u>	<u>Ending Balance</u>
Building Fund			\$ 19,094
Building Improvement Fund	184	-1259	\$ 3,621
Christmas Eve			\$ -
Cookbook Sales for Missions			\$ 245
Designated Donations			\$ -
Good Samaritan Fund			\$ 2,105
Holiday Baskets			\$ 1,442
Lent Offering		-2166	\$ -
Memorial Fund			\$ 9,743
Men's Fellowship/Breakfast		-398	\$ 1,354
Men's Fraternity			\$ -
Outreach Ministries			\$ 166
Sunday Fellowship Fund			\$ 469
Sunday School Missions	6		\$ 381
Thanksgiving Offering			\$ -
Trail Life	80		\$ 93
Vacation Bible School			\$ -
VBS Blanket Project			\$ 515
Wedding Fund			\$ 500
Wednesday Suppers	986	-176	\$ 3,274
World Missions Fund	5	-3900	\$ 10,957
Youth Activities Fund	555	-1501	\$ 1,410
Youth FLY Fund	5,045		\$ 11,816
Special Funds Balance			\$ 67,186
General Fund Balance			\$ 42,298
CHECKBOOK BALANCE			\$ 109,463
PETTY CASH BALANCE			\$ 20

*Detailed expense reports are available in the Glyndon office.
Questions can be directed to Kristine Quanbeck - Treasurer
treasurer@maranathafreelutheran.com
218-498-2808*



BIRTHDAYS and ANNIVERSARIES

June~ Happy Anniversary!

Larry & Shirley Swenson	June 07
Adam & Anne Adrian	June 09
Mitchell & Alicia Delosoul	June 10
Nathan & Bambi Lambert	June 10
Chris & Tammy Erickson	June 16
Larry & Victoria Mosloff	June 16
Aaron & Kristine Quanbeck	June 17
Roger & Sharon Wright	June 19
Derek & Kirsti Heffta	June 22
Mark & Lynn Skansgaard	June 23
Pr Ryan & Liz Tonneson	June 23
Kurt & Danette Trautmann	June 23
Jeff & Nikki Ehrichs	June 24
Chad & Alyssa Johnson	June 24
Daniel & Sally Rugroden	June 24
Dylan & Amber Eckert	June 25
Larry & Lana Davis	June 27
Doug & Tiffany Macziewski	June 27
Corey & Rachel Trick	June 27
Mark & Lenae Harless	June 28

June~ Happy Birthday!

Sarah Eckert	June 01
Ashley Trulson	June 01
Pr Curt Frankhauser	June 02
Dalton Johnson	June 02
Taylor Okeson	June 03
Caleb Klemetson	June 04
Mark Scheuring	June 05
Gunner Illies	June 06
Rhonda Rasmussen	June 06
Caedmon Tonneson	June 06
Tim Cin	June 07
Jocie Herzog	June 07
Tristen Olson	June 08
Dan Ebner	June 09
Annika Lambert	June 10
Kennedy Ebner	June 12
Larry Swenson	June 13
Eric Skolness	June 15
Pr Peter Ward	June 15
Cathy Bachmeier	June 16
Ruth Larson	June 17
Larry Davis	June 18
Jarred Johnson	June 19
Chanyce Dahl	June 20
McKenna Horn	June 20
William Trick	June 20
Charlie Toms	June 22
Sophia Fevig	June 23
Dianne Dahl	June 24
Alayna Klemetson	June 24
Keagan Gilbert	June 27
Shane Johnson	June 28
Trevor Dufault	June 30
Samuel Olson	June 30



Military Personnel

Thankful for those who serve our country!

Kally Anderson, granddaughter of Vonnie Anderson
James Cortelyou, nephew of Art & Delores Welle
Levi Dahl, grandson of Harvey & Dianne Dahl
Cody Dravland, son of Todd & Sara Dravland
Trevor Dufault, son of Todd & Sara Dravland
Makaila England, niece of Joyce Johnson & Lila Ebner
Jonathan Eastvold, nephew of Joyce Johnson & Lila Ebner
Brody Erickson, grand nephew of Glennys Sivertson
Kyle Johnson, son-in-law of Gary & Debi Langerud
Layne Johnson, grandson of Ardis Johnson
Hunter Macziewski, son of Doug & Tiffany Macziewski
Sierra Northridge, member of Ulen congregation
Andrew Quanbeck, son of Pastor Lloyd & Jean
Josiah Quanbeck, son of Pastor Lloyd & Jean
Jakob Rolf, grandson of Jim & Mary Rolf
Ethen Vind, grandson of Art & Dolores Welle



SALT + TEENS



Bethany Bible Camp

Camp is open to kids in grades 3 through 12 (grade just completed) . They will have 3 sessions this summer:

June 14-18 - Elementary School Camp - Grades 3-5

Cost is \$180 (church pays \$90)

June 18-22 - Middle School Camp - Grades 6-9

Cost is \$180 (church pays \$90)

June 22-27 - High School Camp - Grades 10-12

Cost is \$200 (church pays \$100)

If interested in attending, go to their website:

<https://bethanybiblecamp.com/> - Select which camp under **CAMPS** tab for more information and to register.

Registration and payment deadline is June 10th!

⇒ On June 5, we'll join the rest of Maranatha at Lindenwood Park in Fargo for the All-Church picnic! *There will be no SaltTeens at the church.*

⇒ June 26th is our Lake Day! We'll meet at Wilderness Camp from 6-9p for food, games, and activities - including swimming! Those of you who are heading to the BWCA will go to one of the area lakes to work on some techniques for that trek!



Valleyfair

SaltTeens will be offering a **Twins Game/Valleyfair** trip June 18-19. Cost for the Twins game and Valleyfair are covered by the youth activity account, but youth will be responsible for cost of food and drinks. Please register by June 4th using this QR code:



Dates: July 14-18, 2024

FLY BEYOND REGISTRATION

IS NOW OPEN!

FLY Beyond (July 14-18) is the national youth equipping conference for the AFLC. It combines preaching, teaching, apologetics, and worldview with a small group learning environment for a powerful week of spiritual growth. It's been called "the best kept secret in the AFLC." There is still time to register for this life-changing week. Registration deadline is June 15th for the best rate. You pay the initial deposit, the church covers the rest.



**AFLC Family
Wilderness Camp
is July 16-21**



**VBS IS
JULY 22-26, 2024**

**9-NOON IN GLYNDON
6-8PM IN ULEN**

**Volunteer Sign-up for Glyndon is in
the narthex for you to add your name
to!**

Online Registration is OPEN!

www.maranathafreelutheran.com/vbs

Upcoming dates for Glyndon

VBS Decoration Work Days:

June 3 - 10am-2pm, bring a sack lunch

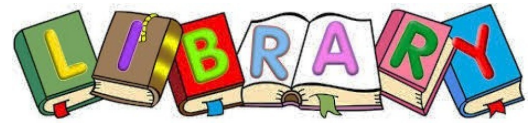
June 17 - 6-9pm

July 11 - 10am until we're done, bring a
sack lunch

Other Dates:

July 14 - VBS all-volunteer meeting follow-
ing the church service.

July 21 - VBS Kick-Off Event at 6pm



**GLYNDON LIBRARY—
BOOK SUGGESTIONS FOR JUNE**

ADULT FICTION: "A Tailor-Made Bride" by Karen Witemeyer. San Antonio, TX, 1881; when a dress maker who values beauty tangles with a liveryman who condemns vanity, the sparks began to fly!

ADULT FICTION: For those of you who love books by Julie Klassen, we have #2 of her series, On Devonshire Shores. Her first in the series was "The Sisters of Sea View," now the second is "A Winter by the Sea": Return to Devonshire Coast with the Summer sisters, where loyalties are tested, secrets come to light and new love emerges.

ADULT NON-FICTION: *How can there be only one path to God? Isn't Christianity irrelevant? Are science & faith compatible?* In "Why Believe?" (A Reasoned Approach to Christianity) by Neil Shenvi, these topics and more are presented and the truth of the Gospel is defended. This book is recommended by J.D. Greer.



**Our first *Summer Picnic in the Park* is:
Wednesday, June 5th at 6:00pm
at Lindenwood Park in Fargo.**

The park is located at: 1905 Roger Maris Dr. in
Fargo.

Hamburgers, hotdogs, and bottled water will
be provided. Bring a potluck item to share
and come for a time of fun, food, and fellow-
ship with others in our congregation!

Puzzles & Games

Colossians Cryptogram (Hint: C = R)

LAT UW VCLJ MXNO NA KCTWC
 MXLM JKZ SLJ FNBW L FNPW
 UKCMXJ KP MXW FKCT LAT SLJ
 VFWLOW XNS NA WBWCJ ULJ.



The day after Father's Day.

CartoonStock.com

CROSS-SHAPED BIBLE CROSSWORD

Across											Down																																																									
1 Donkey (3)			2 Jesus' Father (3)			4 One of the twelve (9)			1 One of God's messengers (5,2,3,4)			3 1940s archaeological find (4,3,7)																																																								
8 Didn't believe in resurrection (9)			12 One of David's warriors (5)			13 First word of the Lord's Prayer (3)			14 New Testament name for Noah (3)			15 Wish harm upon (5)			16 Hole in the ground (3)			17 Adversary (5)			18 Savour (5)			19 First woman (3)			20 Mother of John the Baptist (9)			21 Family of priests (9)			22 Third son of Jacob (4)			23 Hates (8)			26 Assurances (8)			30 Endured pain (8)			31 Return from the dead (4)			32 Intercessor (8)			35 Decorating (8)			39 Old Testament book of the Bible (4)			40 The prince of Rosh, Mesech and Tubal (3)			42 A wise insect (3)			44 Dwelling place of kings (6)			45 Make bigger (8)		
4 Tread down (7)			5 Father of Jonah (7)			6 Very salty water bordering Israel (4,3)			7 Defensive structures (11)			8 Refuges (11)			9 Dirty (7)			10 Devout (7)			11 Pieces of money (7)			24 Used to listen (3)			25 Used to see (3)			26 Positions (5)			27 Made available (7)			28 Snake (7)			29 Destroyed along with Gomorrah (5)			33 Finish (3)			34 Possess (3)			35 King of the Amalekites (4)			36 Last letter of the Greek alphabet (5)			37 Almost sacrificed by Abraham (5)			38 Present (4)			41 Unfasten (4)			43 Fish traps (4)					

by Philologus © BiblePuzzles.org.uk

Colossians Cryptogram Answer:
 And we pray this in order that you may live a life
 worthy of the Lord and may please him in every
 way.. (Col. 1:10)

Across: 1 Ass, 2 God, 4 Thaddaeus, 8 Sadducees, 12 Adina, 13 Our, 14 Noe, 15 Curse, 16 Pit, 17 Satan, 18 Taste, 19 Eve, 20 Elisabeth, 21 Aaronites, 22 Levi, 23 Despises, 26 Promises, 30 Suffered, 31 Rise, 32 Mediator, 35 Adorning, 39 Ezra, 40 Gog, 42 Ant, 44 Palace, 45 Increase.
 Down: 1 Angel Of The Lord, 3 Dead Sea Scrolls, 4 Trample, 5 Amittai, 6 Dead Sea, 7 Strongholds, 8 Sanctuaries, 9 Unclean, 10 Earnest, 11 Shekels, 24 Ear, 25 Eye, 26 Posts, 27 Offered, 28 Serpent, 29 Sodom, 33 End, 34 Own, 35 Agag, 36 Omega, 37 Isaac, 38 Gift, 41 Open, 43 Nets.





WMF NOTES
(Women's Missionary Federation)

Glyndon Morning

Morning WMF met May 14, 2024, with 11 ladies present. Cris Finstrom opened with prayer and led our Bible study, "The Best Workout".

President Joan Pake opened the business meeting with prayer. Secretary and Treasurer reports were read and approved.

Old Business:

~ Anne ordered the food for the Alaskan Mission.

New Business:

~ WMF will be June 4th next month because of the annual conference during our regular meeting time.

~ A motion made and approved to give \$100 to Christian Education.

~ A motion made and approved to give \$100 to UC Hope.

Meeting concluded with prayer requests.

Respectfully submitted by Lila Ebner for Delores Welle,



Glyndon Evening

Evening WMF met on May 21, 2024. Pat Palloch hosted serving a delicious lunch and Joyce Johnson led our Bible study. There were 6 lovely ladies .

Janet Boe opened our meeting in prayer. Secretary and Treasurer reports were given and approved.

Old Business: None

New Business:

~ WMF District Rally is October 12th in Wadena at Zion Free Lutheran.

~ \$50 was given to Christian Education.

~ \$100 for dues to WMF

~ \$50 to General Fund

Prayer requests were given and prayed over.

Respectfully submitted by Melody Okke for Coco Geray

Ulen

Our Ulen WMF met Monday, May 13, 2024 at 7:00pm with 5 ladies present. MaryAnn W. led our Bible study.

Following our study MaryAnn W opened our business meeting. Our Secretary's report was read and Dianne made a motion to accept as read, Debi second, motion carried. Our Treasurer's Report was read and MaryAnn S. made a motion to accept as read, Ellen second, motion carried.

Old Business:

Our Treasury has a good balance in it and discussion was held on a possible donation somewhere. Dianne made a motion to donate \$500 to Samaritan's Purse for Baby Kits, Debi second the motion. Motion carried.

New Business:

~ Our project offering of \$75 this month goes to Christian Education.

~ Sr. Sunday is this coming Sunday and we will be honoring Izzy Klemetson.

~ A reminder: There is the basket available in the sanctuary for donations to "The Valley's Largest BABY SHOW-ER" for The Women's Care Center.

Looking ahead to the following: WMF Day at the Conference is June 12, VBS here July 22-26, Wilderness Camp week July 16-21-will discuss more at next meeting, possible Class Reunion here during Ulen Days-we will contact someone on that, Fall Rally in Wadena on October 12. Next Month's Bible Study and meeting will be held at Viking Manor where we will celebrate the June birthdays there also. Our meeting was adjourned and we closed with several prayer concerns and the Lord's Prayer. Debi served a delicious rhubarb dessert.

Respectfully submitted by Ellen Zillmer, Secretary

SERVING GROUP 2 & 3 ~ Glyndon

Ladies of Serving Group 2 - We continue to be responsible for serving the month of June. Serving Group 3 will be responsible for July, August & September. Please take time to check the date or dates that you would be willing to serve goodies after church on Sunday mornings and sign up on the sign-up sheet in the kitchen. We will also be responsible for serving other events that come up—lunches, special events, and funerals. Thank you for your willingness to serve our Lord & our church family—it is much appreciated. If you have any questions, contact Lori Pender in Group 2 and Kim Jensen or Ruth Larson for Group 3. Thank you!

**MARANATHA GLYNDON
CONGREGATIONAL
MEETING**

SUNDAY, JUNE 23RD

**FOLLOWING THE CHURCH SERVICE
(AT APPROX. 11:00PM)**

****Agenda will include
education board election
and discussion on funding
for the furnace
replacements**



Facts about the United States Flag

Until the Executive Order of June 24, 1912, neither the order of the stars nor the proportions of the flag was prescribed. Consequently, flags dating before this period sometimes show unusual arrangements of the stars and odd proportions, these features being left to the discretion of the flag maker. In general, however, straight rows of stars and proportions similar to those later adopted officially were used. The principal acts affecting the flag of the United States are the following:

- Flag Resolution of June 14, 1777, stated, "Resolved: that the flag of the United States be made of thirteen stripes, alternate red and white; that the union be thirteen stars, white in a blue field, representing a new Constellation."
 - Act of January 13, 1794, provided for 15 stripes and 15 stars after May 1795.
 - Act of April 4, 1818, provided for 13 stripes and one star for each state, to be added to the flag on the 4th of July following the admission of each new state.
 - Executive Order of President Taft dated June 24, 1912, established proportions of the flag and provided for arrangement of the stars in six horizontal rows of eight each, a single point of each star to be upward.
 - Executive Order of President Eisenhower dated January 3, 1959, provided for the arrangement of the stars in seven rows of seven stars each, staggered horizontally and vertically.
- Executive Order of President Eisenhower dated August 21, 1959, provided for the arrangement of the stars in nine rows of stars staggered horizontally and eleven rows of stars staggered vertically.

**Women's Summer Bible Study
will be Thursdays
beginning June 13th
at 10:30am
Maranatha - Glyndon**

Pearls for a Princess

The study will be from "Pearls for a Princess", a WMF study from years back. The cost for the book is \$3. See Lila or Joyce with any questions or to get a book.

A sign-up sheet is on the bulletin board in the fellowship hall.

Maranatha Free Lutheran Church – Glyndon Council Meeting

May 9th, 2024 8:00pm

Present: Cliff Langerud, Mary Langerud, Brittany Pender, Bruce Smith, Pastor Lloyd Quanbeck, Kristine Quanbeck, Todd Dravland, Brad Dunham, Jake Pender and Alyssa Johnson

Cliff opened the meeting with devotion and prayer.

Secretary's report of April meeting minutes was read by Alyssa. No corrections nor additions to the Secretary's report. Stand approved as read.

Treasurer's report was given by Kristine. Reported April 2024 income as \$21,305 and expenses of \$27,931. General fund balance \$42,298 (target \$60K). No corrections nor additions to the Treasurer's report. Stand approved as read.

Board Reports:

- Education – Brittany
 - ~ 5/19: potluck for Senior Recognition Sunday and last day of Sunday School
 - ~ Setting up summer camp table
 - ~ Children singing for Mother's Day
 - ~ VBS 7/22-7/26, 9:00-12:00pm. Team approved, will be split with Ulen again this summer – Liz Tonneson will be VBS Director
 - ~ Planning a VBS kick-off evening prior to VBS week – food, activities, and games. Date TBD
- Trustees – Jake
 - ~ One heat pump to be replaced (NW corner – kitchen, fellowship hall). \$22,956 – Trustees plan to take out old pump which will decrease amount (TBD)
- Finance – Todd
 - ~ Finance Board received flyer from UC Hope – they are fund raising for the addition of a new building to their location. Finance Board plans to give \$500 to UC Hope
 - ~ Finance Board and Trustee Board met to discuss heat pump replacement. Building Fund and Building Improvement Fund can cover the expense, but will bring those funds to \$0
 - * Finance Board will bring recommendation to June Congregational meeting on a plan to rebuild Building Fund
 - ~ Bruce made a motion to use the Building Fund and Building Improvement Fund to cover the cost of the new heat pump, seconded by Mary; motion carried
- Worship & Music – Mary
 - ~ 5/19 Senior Recognition Sunday - 10 Seniors
 - ~ Working on photo back drop
 - ~ Planning a board to welcome new members – board to include their photos/info
- Deacons – Brad
 - ~ Deacon Bible study monthly
 - ~ Working with Kent Chromey on safety plans
 - ~ Funding Summer Institute of Theology attendance – Deacons to donate \$250 to be split between those interested in attending
 - ~ Planning summer Congregational family outdoor activities
 - * June 5th Lindenwood Park, Fargo
 - * Other dates/locations TBD
 - ~ Wilderness camp August 17-18

(Glyndon Council Meeting Continued)

- Pastor Report – Pastor Lloyd
 - ~ Confirmation ended
 - ~ Attending Annual Conference - June
 - ~ Trail Life growing – 22 boys
- Old Business: None
New Business: None

Pastor Lloyd closed the meeting in prayer

Motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Todd, seconded by Brad; motion carried.

Respectfully submitted by Alyssa Johnson

Secret Sister Mid-Year Get Together

Monday, June 3rd at 7:00pm

At Pat Lewis' home

902 Woodbridge Circle, Dilworth

Come join other Secret Sisters for a visit,
coffee & dessert!

"HIS WORD DOES NOT RETURN EMPTY" | ISAIAH 55:11
2024 ANNUAL CONFERENCE

JUNE 12-15 | FLBCS CAMPUS | PLYMOUTH, MN

**The 2024 AFLC Annual Conference
will be June 12-15**

on the FLBCS Campus in Plymouth, MN.
Walk-up registration is still available for conference, youth, VBS, and Nursery. For more information regarding Annual Conference registration, go to <https://www.aflc.org/about-us/conferences/> for the links to register for the conference, meals & childcare, and WMF Day.

Maranatha News

JUNE 2024

FROM PASTOR RYAN...

Thus says the LORD: "Let not the wise man boast in his wisdom, let not the mighty man boast in his might, let not the rich man boast in his riches, but let him who boasts boast in this, that he understands and knows me, that I am the LORD who practices steadfast love, justice, and righteousness in the earth. For in these things I delight, declares the LORD." (Jeremiah 9:23-24)

I love spending time in the Old Testament prophetic books. Yet, for many people (and for some good reasons), these books at the end of the Old Testament can be confusing and hard to place in the over-arching narrative of Scripture. They can be dark - often speaking of judgment against the enemies of the Lord and, even, against the Lord's own people. The prophets often used idioms and figures of speech that have been lost in the 2,500 years since they wrote. And, quite honestly, they have names that are really hard to pronounce!

However, if you get to know these Old Testament prophets, I think you'll discover a beauty to them and find a consistency in the encouraging message of the Gospel. Yes, they often spoke of the judgment to come (Amos 2:4-16); however, they also reminded the Lord's people of His faithfulness to them (Jeremiah 9:23-24; Micah 7:18-20) and the promises of restoration (Zephaniah 3:14-20). (By the way, don't just gloss over these references: pull out your Bible and read along!)

Through His prophets, the Lord continually called His people to repentance (Joel 2:12-14) and to a life of faith (Habakkuk 2:4). The prophets reminded the Lord's people that - in spite of everything crazy going on in the world - the Lord is still in control (Isaiah 45:1-7; all of Habakkuk). The prophets were given glimpses into the future, and they saw both the First Advent of the Messiah (Isaiah 7:14; Micah 5:2; Isaiah 52:13-53:12; Zechariah 12:10) and His Second Advent (Isaiah 25:1-12; Zephaniah 3:9-13; Zechariah 14:9).

The verses above were written by the prophet Jeremiah, somewhere around the year 600BC. Jeremiah is known as the "weeping prophet" (ie: Jeremiah 8:18-9:1). To say that he had a long and hard ministry as a prophet is to sugarcoat it: He preached to a stubborn, obstinate, rebellious people who refused to hear the voice of the Lord through Jeremiah and, instead, listened to the advice and false hope given by false prophets (Jeremiah 27 & 28). He was repeatedly locked up by the palace guard (Jeremiah 20; 32-33 & 36-37). The king burned the words of the Lord that Jeremiah had written (Jeremiah 36). Jeremiah was an eye-witness to the destruction of Jerusalem and Judah (Jeremiah 39) -- something he had been warning about for ages. He was taken as a prisoner to Egypt (Jeremiah 43). All the while, Jeremiah remained faithful to the message that the Lord had given him. Jeremiah was one light - often the only light - in a sea of darkness.

In the above verses, the Lord, through Jeremiah, reminds us of His character and His nature. Who is the Lord? What is He like? The Lord "practices steadfast love, justice, and righteousness on the earth" and "delights" in those attributes.

As Jeremiah's world was collapsing, Jeremiah needed to anchor his faith, his hope, his trust, in the Lord and on who the Lord was and is and will continue to be. The Lord is loving. The Lord is just. The Lord is righteous. He was in the past - and He will continue to be in the future.

You may not be weeping like Jeremiah, but we all go through the ups and downs of life. As you do, keep your eyes on your Savior (Hebrews 12:1-3). Remind yourself daily of His love for you - His steadfast love, His justice, and His righteousness. He doesn't promise us easy roads - but He does promise His presence with us (Isaiah 43:1-7).