



Mt. Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church

November Newsletter

2018



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God's Encouraging Word ... When I am suffering

Are you familiar with tunnel vision? Someone experiencing tunnel vision can see an object directly ahead, but they often fail to notice what's around it. Maybe age or injury has robbed them of their peripheral vision. Maybe they grow fatigued during a long drive. Do you know what that's like?

We're also prone to tunnel vision when we're suffering. Face it, we've all been there. No one is immune from problems and pain. Everyone experiences hurts or hang-ups. But when we're hurting, is the bad all we can see? Do we focus on the problem so much that we ignore everything else? We can see no help. No hope. No good. No God. Do you know what that's like? It's not a happy place to be.

It can be especially tough as we prepare to enter the holiday season. How can we put on a smile for Thanksgiving and pretend that we are just fine?

No need to pretend. Listen to the psalmist: "My comfort in suffering is this: your promise preserves my life" (Psalm 119:50). Remember how God worked so wonderfully to solve our greatest problem. The burden of sin we could never carry. The consequence of guilt we could never dodge. The sentence of death we could not avoid. So Jesus stepped in for us and shouldered them all. The cross and the tomb—both empty now—mark Jesus' great victory.

And his victory is your victory. So resist the urge to give in to those feelings of defeat. Don't shrink back in fear. Don't separate yourself from others. Don't become bitter. Don't give up. Otherwise you will miss the help God wants to give you.

All around the problem of suffering, God's help is ready and waiting. Look up and find confidence: "My help comes from the Lord, the maker of heaven and earth" (Psalm 121). Look in to God's word where he promises, "Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you" (Hebrews 13:5). Look back and recall how God has helped you through past challenges. Look around and find Christian friends eager to give you a hand and fold hands for you in prayer. Look ahead and see the open heaven God has in store for you through Jesus.

God promises to bring you safely through the tunnel of trouble. Trust his goodness!



A Message from our Board of Elders . . .

Craig and Sheila Broke Up?

Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen. Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you. (Ephesians 4:25,29,32 NIV 2011)

Have you seen the television commercial from a popular insurance company depicting “Craig and Sheila Broke Up?” (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vE-FRVSpRoY>)

If you have not seen it, the premise is that of office gossip where Sheila is talking on the telephone to Craig who seems to be breaking up with her. The remainder of Sheila’s coworkers are meercats (you know, the cute little guys that have their own show on Animal Network?) that spread the gossip like wild fire.

Having been in an office, cubical environment, I know that this is quite true! While we chuckle at the commercial, we all have seen or experienced something similar to what the commercial illustrates.

Merriam-Webster defines gossip as, “rumor or report of an intimate nature” and a gossip as “a person who habitually reveals personal or sensational facts about others”. We all know people like this, right? They listen with itching ears for every little piece of juicy news; and then, behind people’s backs, they whisper the scandalous tidbits to others, who’s ears are also itching uncontrollably.

However, sometimes gossip is more subtle than that. Sometimes it is just a little comment that plants a seed of doubt, rather than building someone up – a little comment about the pastor or teacher or coworker that makes someone else distrust someone else’s motivations.

As Christians we know (or should know) that gossip is a sin. The Bible calls gossip “*unwholesome talk*” and says that it should not come out of our mouths (Ephesians 4:25). Why? Because gossip is divisive, poisonous and not part of God’s plan for you and me!

Gossip does not unify, it divides. It does not build someone up, it tears them down. It tears down relationships and destroys trust between husbands and wives, brothers and sisters, friends and acquaintances – everyone – even the closest of friends (Proverbs 16:25). And the results of gossip can last for a long time – sometimes the results of gossip can never be repaired.

Gossip is poisonous to both the gossiper and the gossipee. In other words, the poison of gossip hurts the person being gossiped about but it also hurts the person doing the gossiping! People that gossip to you will also gossip about you!

Gossip is not part of God’s plan for us. The Bible warns that we will be judged for the words we use (Matthew 12:36). Gossiping about others is no exception to judgment!

So, what is the alternative? What do we do when someone gossips to us or about us? Again, we look to the Bible for the answer! The Bible says that we should “*build others up according to their needs*” rather than harming others with hurtful words. Instead, when we hear gossip, we can choose to do as Titus 3:1-2 says: “*Remind the people to be subject to rulers and authorities, to be obedient, to be ready to do whatever is good, to slander no one, to be peaceable and considerate, and always to be gentle toward everyone.*” The Bible also talks about what to do when we are hurt by spiteful words: we forgive each other just as Jesus Christ forgave us.

Gossip is so hurtful and can be so destructive that the Bible even says there are limits: “*Warn a divisive person once, and then warn them a second time. After that, have nothing to do with them.*” (Titus 3:10 NIV 2011) This is God’s judgement on the gossiper; and it could not be more clear or serious.

While gossip may be accepted as normal at school or work, the Bible says we are to renew our mind with the will of God, not the will of the world (Romans 12:2). Gossip is tempting to take part in; but it only hurts others (and ourselves). Instead, let us build each other up with words of encouragement, strengthening each other with words of compassion, just as Jesus did for us!

Yours in Christ

Tim Knautz (Board of Elders Chairman)



Financial Summary

Below is our information for October 2018:

Total Budget Needed: \$29,150.00
Total Budget Received \$27,667.95

We exceeded reaching our budgetary ministry needs in September by \$1,482.05 (\$370.51/wk).

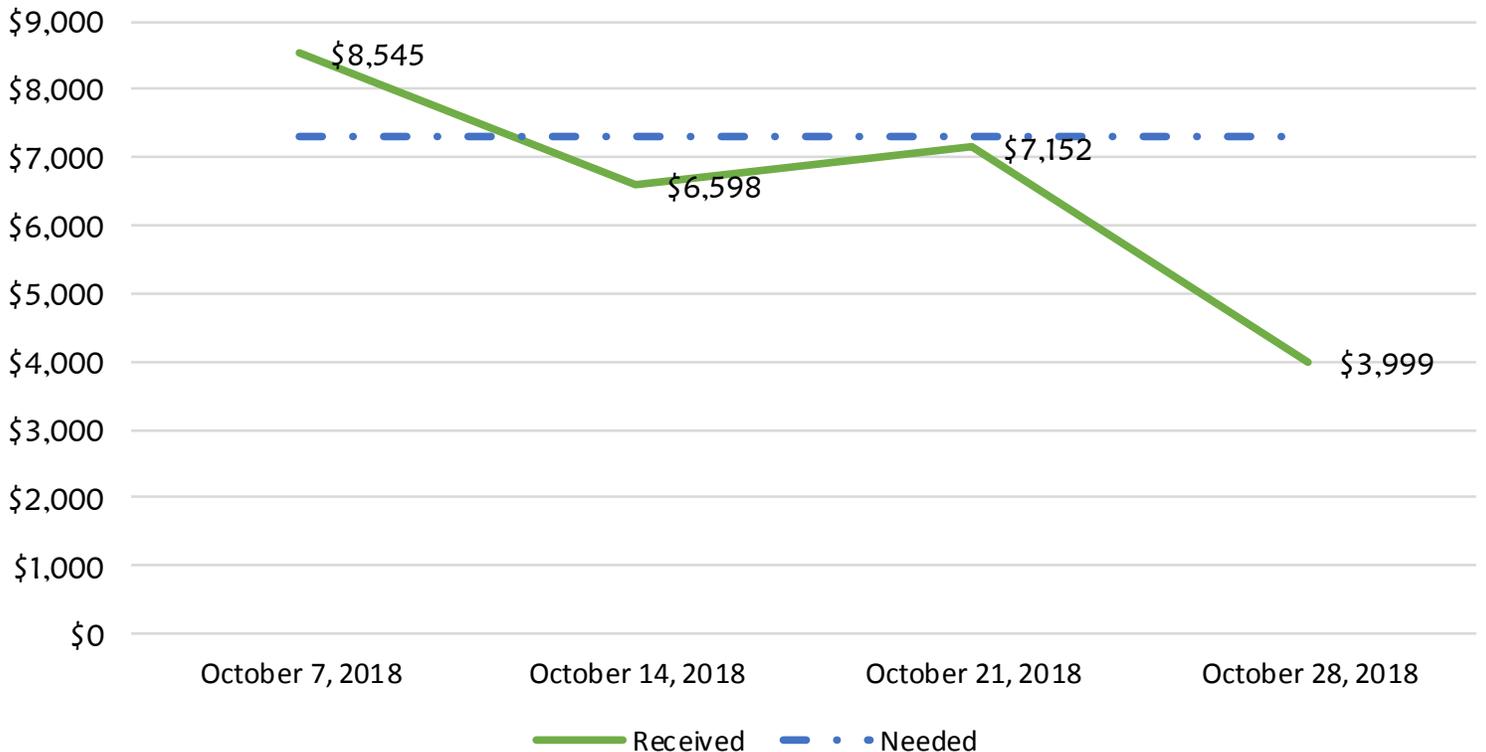
Our current Fiscal Year to Date Budget is: -\$3,929.03 (which is \$218.28/week)



Weekly Total Budget Received

Needed Weekly: \$7,288

Weekly Average for Month: \$6,573 / Weekly Average for Fiscal Year: \$7,069



Capital Campaign

Progress towards \$130,000 our Goal
As of October 30th, 2018



Received & Spent Comparison

(Income & Expenses)

