

## West Prairie Church Council Minutes

No council meeting for August was cancelled as there was not a quorum.

### People of the Bible trivia

1. What do the books of Joshua, Samuel, Ruth, Jonah, Esther and Job have in common?
2. Who were the man and wife team that were companions of Paul in Corinth and Ephesus?
3. How long was Jesus tempted in the wilderness?
4. John the Baptist spent most of his time in the wilderness of: a) Judea, b) Samaria, c) Perea, d) Galilee.
5. What did Thomas say must happen for him to be convinced of the resurrection of Jesus?
6. Who was the mother of John the Baptist?
7. Where was Paul from?
8. What was the title of the Roman emperors?
9. What emperor reigned when Jesus began His ministry?
10. Who released Peter from prison?
11. When Salome danced before her stepfather, Herodias, on his birthday, he offered her anything she wished for. What did she wish for and receive?
12. Where did Lazarus and his sisters, Mary and Martha, live?
13. Which companion of Paul was also a physician?
14. What books of the Bible are attributed to Luke?
15. Although the gospel is anonymous, to whom do we attribute the gospel of Mark?
16. What question did Nicodemus inquire of Jesus?

Answers: 1. They are all named after a hero or heroine or pre-eminent figure appearing in them. 2. Priscilla and Aquila. 3. 40 days. 4. a, Judea. 5. He must see and touch the nail prints in Jesus' hands. 6. Elizabeth. 7. Tarsus. 8. Caesar. 9. Caesar Augustus. 10. An angel. 11. The head of John the Baptist. 12. Bethany. 13. Luke. 14. Luke and Acts. 15. Mark. "How can a man be born again when he is old?"

## West Prairie Lutheran Church, LCMC

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The mission of West Prairie Lutheran Church shall be to proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ to all through worship, education, outreach and fellowship.

The PASTOR'S PEN by Rev. Steve Bang

The following is from the book I Am a Church Member by Thom S. Rainer: "Based on our research of 557 churches from 2004 to 2010, nine out of 10 churches in America are declining or growing at a pace that is slower than that of their communities. Simply stated, churches are losing ground in their own backyards.

"Another way of looking at it is generationally. About two-thirds of the Builder generation, those born before 1946, are Christians. But only 15 percent of the Millennials are Christians. The Millennials are the largest generation in America's history with almost 80 million members. They were born between 1980 and 2000. And we have all but lost that generation.

"We can blame it on the secular culture. And we often do. We can blame it on the godless politics of our nation. We do that as well. We can even blame it on the churches, the hypocritical members, and the uncaring pastors. Lots of Christians are doing that. But I am proposing that we who are church members need to look in the mirror. I am suggesting that congregations across America are weak because many of us church members have lost the biblical understanding of what it means to be a part of the body of Christ.

"We join our churches expecting others to serve us, to feed us, and to care for us. We don't like the hypocrites in the church, but we fail to see our own hypocrisies. God did not give us local church-

**September Usher...**

John Haugen

**September Lectionary...**

Janet Haugen

**September Acolyte...**

Paris Reimann

**September Altar...**

Shirley Hanson and  
Denise Holst

**Sept. Altar Flowers...**

Misty Juveland

**Sept. Coffee Servers...**

9/4—Phyllis Disque and  
Rita Schutter

9/11—Candy Johnson  
and Helen Finer

9/18—Misty Juveland  
and Lori Jacobs (see time  
change)

9/25—Louise Nath and  
Denise Holst

**Sarah Circle...**

7 p.m. with Candy John-  
son

**Naomi Circle...**

7 p.m. with Lisa Durby

**LCMC WOW...**

9 a.m. quilting; noon  
potluck lunch

**Church Council...**

Wed., Sept. 14, 7 p.m.

**Bible Study Club...**

Sept. 18



- 9/2—Ben Charlson
- 9/3—Jill Holland
- 9/7—Janell Carson
- 9/12—Irene Eide
- 9/13—Denny Norstrud
- 9/15—Johanna Juveland
- 9/18—Wade Holland
- 9/21—Steve Reimann
- 9/25—Jordan Branstad
- 9/26—Blanche Durby



**Happy Anniversary to...**

**September 1**

Terry & Lisa Durby

**September 4**

Bryon & Denise Holst

**September 6**

David & Claire Branstad

**September 23**

Robb & Lori Jacobs

**September 29**

Steve & Colette Reimann

**PHILEMON** from page 6

er he chooses and he is not to be oppressed.

During Paul’s third journey among the people of Ephesus, a man named Philemon of Colossae was converted. Paul addressed this wealthy slaveowner as a “beloved brother,” which indicates a kinship existed between the two, one that would serve a significant purpost.

Philemon owned a slave named Onesimus (meaning profitable). He probably was a talented young man as the Roman army often took the brightest and best young men and women to be sold into slavery.

Some years later after Paul was imprisoned in Rome, Onesimus stole some money from his master and ran away to Rome. Either by accident or divine design, he managed to find Paul and was persuaded to be a Christian.

Roman law required Paul to return Osnimus to his master with serious penalties if he failed to do so. Paul’s relationship

with Philemon required that he try to gain Osi-mus’ release.

Paul sent Osnimus back to his master with a letter wherein he inter-ceded with Philemon to forgive his runaway slave and receive him as a Christian brother. In the book of Philemon, verses 17-20 Paul mentions re-paying the money owed.

The Bible gives no hint of to how Philemon re-ceived his returning slave. We should understand that is the way the Gospel works. Christ in the heart of the slave made the slave recognize his re-sponsibility and returns to his master determined to be a good slave. Christ in the heart of the master made the master recog-nize the slave as a Chris-tian brother and give him his liberty.

This is evidence that the love of God, for-giveness in Christ and the inherent dignity of hu-manity has a real impact in everyday life. These are principals that should af-fect the life of believers.

## Philemon — Concerning a runaway slave

Like all other slave law, Roman law had to address the dual status of slaves: by nature they were persons, but from an economic standpoint they were disposed of as property. The head of the household could legally execute his slaves, and they would all be executed if the head of the household was murdered.

Slaves composed a large part of the agricultural work force in parts of the Roman Empire. They competed with free peasants for the same work.

Slaves were found in all professions and generally had more opportunity for social advancement than free peasants. Unlike the vast majority of slaves in the U.S., they were able to work for and achieve freedom and some freed slaves became independently wealthy. This social mobility applied especially to the household slaves—the only kind of slave addressed in Paul’s writings.

Nearly everyone took the institution of slavery for granted, except a few people who purportedly said it was “against nature.” Paul’s message to Philemon goes beyond documents of his time in not only pleading for clemency for an escaped slave but asking that he be released because he is now a Christian.

Skilled and educated male slaves were often sent on errands and trusted as agents with their master’s property. Such slave could sometimes earn enough money on the side to buy their freedom, still some took the opportunity of an errand to escape which in some cases their master’s money was used to get away.

The Old Testament law regarding harboring escaped slaves in Deut. 23:15-16 says that if an escaped slave takes refuge with you, you are not to return him to his master, but to live among wherev-

## Sunday School resumes

Sunday School for the youth resumes for the fall session with Rally Sunday on Sept. 18, beginning at 9:30 a.m. A presentation of the program to be studied will be held the following Sunday, Sept. 25.

## Fall Festival at Sion

Sion Lutheran of rural Lake Mills will hold their annual Fall Festival on Sunday, Sept. 18. Everyone is welcome to attend the event which will begin with a worship service at 11 a.m. followed by a noon meal.

The meal will be served from noon until 1:30 p.m. and includes a pulled pork sandwich, beans, chips, watermelon, bars and ice cream.

Fall produce and baked goods will be offered for sale. Apple cider to quench your thirst and hay rides will top off the day.



## PASTOR'S PEN from page 1

es to become country clubs where membership means we have privileges and perks. He placed us in churches to serve, to care for others, to pray for leaders, to learn, to teach, to give, and, in some cases, to die for the sake of the gospel.

“Many churches are weak because we have members who have turned the meaning of membership upside down. It’s time to get it right. It’s time to become a church member as God intended. It’s time to give instead of being entitled.”

Beginning Wed., Sept. 21 at 7 p.m., we will embark on a journey to discover or rediscover the privilege and joy of church membership. We will be using Rainer’s book and the scriptures to lead us for a few weeks on this topic. This adult Bible study should be challenging to each of us as well as enlightening. Join us! See you in church!

Pastor Steve

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