

The Newsletter

Zion Lutheran Church & School
Hastings, Nebraska
June – 2019

A WORD FROM PASTOR PAUL WARNEKE AND HEAD TEACHER SARA NIELSEN REGARDING ENHANCING AND EXPANDING ZION'S CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

Dear Zion family,

A special Voters' Assembly has been scheduled by Zion's Executive Board for Sunday, June 2 immediately following our 9:00 A.M. worship service. Please make plans now to attend this very important meeting that has to do with the future of our school. More details are included later in this newsletter, including the Resolution that will be presented and voted on at that meeting. But, in a nutshell, here's the deal:

The Resolution (2019-01) is entitled "*To Enhance and Expand the Christian Education Ministry of Zion Lutheran, Hastings, NE.*" And the resolution proposes that we do that by adopting a Classical Education Model.

Classical Education is nothing new. In fact, it's been around for centuries. It's the way most of the greatest thinkers of the common era were educated. Only about 100 years ago or so did the modern model eclipse the classical model.

But the classical model is making a comeback. 13 other LCMS schools have made the transition to classical education, including Zion Lutheran School in Kearney. And more LCMS schools are in the planning stages.

Leaders at these schools have come to realize that today's modern classrooms are often influenced by progressive educational philosophies that reject objective truth, and instill secular values. The classical education model has proven to be an excellent way to combat such philosophies.

The classical education model does more than just teach facts and what to learn. It teaches students how to learn, how to think, how to solve problems, and prepares students to continue learning even into adulthood.

But the classical education model being proposed for Zion is a Christian model as well, which means that the Word of God, the Bible, is foundational to everything that is taught. Of course, that's how Zion Lutheran School has always operated. Everything that we believe, teach, and confess at Zion has as its foundation the Word of God, Law and Gospel, where God shows us our sin, and shows us our Savior.

In fact, not only are we ahead of the game by having Scripture as our foundation, we already incorporate much of the classical education model in our curriculum already. Our Math and English textbooks are right in line with classical education. But, to be truly classical, there are a number of things we still need to add, including the teaching of Latin.

More from Pastor and Sara on the next page →

Although Latin is sometimes considered a “dead language” up to 65% of the English Language is rooted in Latin. And it’s also the basis for the romance languages (Spanish, French, Italian, Portuguese, etc.). Learning Latin helps students understand English better, and aids in the learning of other languages as well.

Zion School’s staff, Zion’s board of Education, and Zion’s Executive Board are all on board for making this transition. However, in order to help facilitate the transition, and frankly, in order to keep our school afloat, we have had consultation with members of the Thom Foundation. The Thom Foundation has been a supporter of Zion Lutheran Church and School for many years. In addition to annual donations to our church, the Foundation gave a substantial donation a number of years ago for the building of our Performance Center. And now they are interested in helping us transition to Classical Education.

In order for Thom Foundation dollars, and other school donations, to be used most efficiently, it has been suggested that the school be incorporated as a separate tax-exempt entity, taking on the status of a Recognized Service Organization (RSO) of the Lutheran Church--Missouri Synod. This would free up Zion Lutheran Church from many of the burdens associated with running a school. But Zion Lutheran Church would still maintain substantial influence in how the school is run.

Last, but not least, is the name change that’s been proposed, “Zion Classical Academy”. Keeping the name “Zion” gives honor to our roots and our 100+ year history. It also is a reminder of the church’s continued support and influence on the school. “Classical” identifies Zion as a school that’s headed in the right direction – away from the progressive, modern, secular model; and back to the sound and proven methods. The word “Academy” conjures up notions of excellence in education and learning, which is the very thing we want people to think of when they hear about our school.

Please study the documents in this newsletter that give more detail about this proposed transition from Zion Lutheran School to Zion Classical Academy. If you have any questions feel free to contact any executive board member, any board of education members, any steering committee members, or either of us, Pastor Warneke and Sara Nielsen.

And then, please attend the special voters meeting on June 9, let your voice be heard, and (if you’re an eligible voting member) vote in favor of enhancing and expanding the Christian education ministry of Zion Lutheran, Hastings NE.

Sincerely in Christ,

Rev. Paul M. Warneke, Pastor

Mrs. Sara Nielsen, Head Teacher