



GOOD TIDINGS FROM ZION



Go and...tell the story

Last week's tornadoes presented an opportunity for lots of stories. People had stories about where they were when they saw it. People at Garner Industries and many homes in Elkhorn, Blair, and Bennington have harrowing stories to tell.

It awakened memories and stories for me. In 1980, I was home for the summer in Grand Island when 7 tornadoes hit the city. Countless businesses and homes were completely destroyed and many more damaged, including our home. My sisters and I told tornado stories when we were back in Grand Island visiting a relative the day after the recent storm. One of the most distinct memories for all of us, besides the tornado itself, was trying to sleep on the living room floor in a house full of June bugs. It seems a home with one end wide open to the sky is an open invitation to June bugs. My middle sister and I also remember going with my mom to the hospital where she was Director of Nursing and where we both worked. It was dangerous and we probably lucked out.

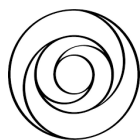
It was a traumatic experience for so many in Grand Island, many much more so than us. Telling the story about traumatic experiences is a part of healing from them. It's the foundation of trauma based mental health care and treatment of things like PTSD.

But there's a story that happens in disasters like tornadoes that we need to rethink. It's the one that tries to work out God's hand in either the disaster or the fact that more people didn't die. In particular, those who narrowly missed true tragedy will tell the story of God watching out for them – protecting them.

But one person did die. His family and friends might have wondered where God was for him. And in Grand Island in 1980 five people died. What about them? Where was God for them?

I do think it's right to give God thanks that things were not as bad for us as they could have been. But I also think we need to rethink our story about how God acts in the midst of all that. And our key is in realizing that how God ultimately acted in history was through a cross, not a shield. The cross tells the story of a God who suffers with humanity. The cross tells the story of new life that comes through death, not by avoiding death. The cross means that God suffers with those who shelter in their basements while their life's dream gets blown to smithereens over their heads. And God suffers with those whose lives are catastrophically ended by tornadoes and other disasters, and with those who love them.

Then out of those disasters, we look for signs of resurrection. We see people coming together for the sake of helping those who were affected. We see volunteers picking up debris, handing out meals, and gathering supplies. We see new dreams rise. We see healing happen as the traumatized tell their stories over and over. And we place our hope for those who died in a God whom even death can't defeat.



Seeking the Spirit By Virg Unverferth

The Rhythms of Life

I was recently on a weekend spiritual retreat and it gave me time to think about the rhythms in my life. I feel the rhythms of the seasons, the hours of my days and weeks, my breathing, my heart beat, in the music I play on the piano, how my feet hit the ground when walking on grass versus hard pavement, and in the rhythmic pedaling of my legs when biking. I also have rhythms when responding to positive and negative interactions, when driving during rush hour versus on an open country road, and when speaking to my children versus an elderly person who has difficulty hearing.

We can't avoid the rhythms of life and most of us don't want to avoid them as they give us a sense of repetition that brings us comfort and a sense of security. These rhythms are especially important to children and their lives can be very disrupted when there is no rhythm or sense of security in their daily activities.

Our lives can be improved spiritually when we can take time to identify the rhythms in our lives especially those that tap into the sacredness of nature as those give more meaning to our lives. As we go through the spring season, I hope you can find time to spend in nature listening to the rhythm of the wind, your breathing, your footsteps, the sound of the rain on the roof, or in the rising of vegetation from the ground. Then, find time to thank God by entering into rhythms of your faith through prayer, daily devotion, weekly church services, and service to others.

Worship is at 9 am Sundays, in person or online—or you can join us later on YouTube or on our Facebook page. Links to the bulletin, Facebook page, and YouTube channel can be found on our website:

<https://www.zionithaca.org/worship>

Calendar

May 5	9:00 am—Worship with Holy Communion 2:00 pm—Cross dedication at the cemetery
May 8	7:00 pm—Wednesday school and confirmation
May 12	9:00 am—Worship
May 15	7:00 pm—Confirmation—end of year review and celebration
May 19	9:00 am—Worship with Holy Communion Affirmation of Baptism—Evie Nygren First Communion—Eli Nygren
May 27	9:00 am—Worship

May helpers

Cleaners—Charlie and Diane

Usher—Charlie, Jon

Lector—Nygrens

Communion Asst.— Charlie

Contact Information

Pastor Kris Bohac—402 499 4993

krisbo90@gmail.com

President Diane Rine—402.480.1483

Facebook—[Zion Lutheran Church ELCA](#)

Website—www.zionithaca.org