



The Lamplighter



August 2011

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Pastor's Perspective August 2011

The Apostle Paul once said, "I know a person in Christ who fourteen years ago was caught up to the third heaven--whether in the body or out of the body I do not know; God knows. And I know that such a person--whether in the body or out of the body I do not know; God knows--was caught up into Paradise and heard things that are not to be told, that no mortal is permitted to repeat."¹

Caught up to the third heaven. Caught up to Paradise. Many mystics over the centuries have spoken of traveling to heaven.

I once had a vision like that. I would like to share such a vision with you.²

Imagine that you are in front of your home. And then imagine that you are rising into the air. You rise past your house. You watch as you go up past the roof of your house. You can see down your street. Soon, you are looking down on your community. You see familiar landmarks from the air as you see them from the window of an airplane, for example. Still you rise. Soon you can see main highways leading to distant cities. As you continue to rise, the human landmarks gradually disappear from view, and you begin to see rivers, mountains, lakes. Still you rise. Soon you see the curvature of the earth. Then you are out of the earth's atmosphere. You realize that your body is spiritual in nature, and so, you are not affected by the temperature, lack of oxygen, etc. You are not frightened. It begins to grow darker.

You see the earth as a large blue globe shining in the darkness. Gradually the globe begins to diminish in size and brightness. You see the moon drawing closer. You pass the moon and soon see the moon and earth together receding into the distance. You travel for some time through empty space and then you see the planet Mars approaching. You can see the arid, reddish color of the Martian surface. You can see mountains and valleys. You pass Mars. You approach Jupiter. You are continually accelerating. You pass Jupiter and approach Saturn. Passing Saturn, you draw near to Neptune. Soon, you pass Pluto. You are now outside the solar system.

As you continue to travel, you watch our solar system recede into the distance and become merely a point of light among billions of other points of light in our galaxy. Soon, our galaxy itself looks like a small, saucer-shaped cloud. As you continue to accelerate you see that our galaxy is only one of billions and billions of other galaxies. You continue to travel through these galaxies for an incredible distance, a distance so large that it takes light itself, traveling at 186,000 miles per second, *15 billion years* to cross.

Finally you reach the edge of the universe. In the utter blackness of the outermost reaches of nearly infinite space, you notice that gradually it is getting lighter. Soon the light is nearly overwhelming. You continue to travel through this region of indescribable light. As you look back you see the universe receding behind you like a small, tan ball. Finally, it is the size of a hazelnut.³ It is only the size of a hazelnut, yet you know that within the shell of that hazelnut is all the blackness of space with all the galaxies, nebulae, stars, and planets, all the beings of creation itself. It is a hazelnut which contains the almost infinite universe itself.

As you continue to look at the hazelnut, you are aware of an overwhelming sense of love. You feel love surrounding you. You feel love directed at the hazelnut. Turning around, you discover yourself in the presence of infinite light, and infinite love. You are in the presence of God.

Now, what was it that you were worrying about this morning?

Shalom,

¹ 2 Corinthians 12:2-4

² Remarkably, the film, *Contact*, has as its opening sequence a similar visual description of the cosmic journey. But, then, so did *Star Trek: The Next Generation*.

³ I use the image of the hazelnut which was described by the English mystic Julian of Norwich (1342-1423) in her vision described in *Revelations of Divine Love*.

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE MARCH SESSION MEETING

- Clerk Craig Faulkner reported on Attendance and One Death.
- Pastor Stan gave an update of his activities.
- Ann Camp gave an update for the Calling and Membership committee activities.
- Lynn Curtis gave a report of Fellowship activities planned.
- Finance Committee update was given by Drew Wilkin
- Nurture committee report was given by Teresa Ray. Teresa Reported that plans for The Family Fun Night planned for July 27 from 4:30 - 7 p.m. were being finalized.
- Outreach committee report was given by Todd Gravert.
- Properties Committee report was given by Jim Balk.
- Webmaster Lisa Colgan gave a report including the number “hits” the church was getting on it’s web site. Lisa also related that Bill Mitchell son of the late Jan Stuart had given Web storage space in honor of his mother.
- Worship Committee update was given by Bill Wilkin.



LECTIONARY FOR SUNDAYS AND FESTIVALS SCRIPTURE

August 7 Genesis 37:1-4, 12-28 Psalm 105:1-6, 16-22, 45b Romans 10:5-15 Matthew 14:22-33	August 14 Genesis 45:1-15 Psalm 133:1-3 Romans 11:1-2a, 29-32 Matthew 15:(10-20) 21-28	August 21 Exodus 1:8-2:10 Psalm 124:1-8 Romans 12:1-8 Matthew 16:13-20	August 28 Exodus 3:1-15 Psalm 105:1-6, 23-26, 45c Romans 12:9-21 Matthew 16:21-28
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AUGUST WORSHIP LEADERS

Ushers

The May Family
Paul and Judi Delzell

Greeters

August 7	Odetta Swanson and Ruth Bos
August 14	Marie Burkhardt
August 21	Open
August 28	Jean and Bill Wilkin

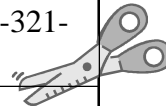


JAN STUART'S PANTRY CORNER MONTH OF AUGUST

Tuna Fish
Pork and Beans
Canned Green Beans



The Nurture Committee is hard at work planning for this Fall's Sunday School program. We have teachers for middle and high school student, but we need teachers and substitutes for preschool and elementary children's classes. The registration form also has a teacher sign-up available for recruiting teachers for our preschool and elementary children's classes of Sunday School. Please pray about this and see if God is asking you to help. IS GOD CALLING YOU TO TEACH? Please fill out the registration form for your children as soon as possible and return it to church or mail it to me. Lynn Richards 3940 220th St., Clinton IA 52732. If you are interested in teaching and would like to talk, give me a call or fill out the registration form. 563-321-3657. Thank you!



Registration Form Sunday School 2011-2012

Preschool-12th Grade

Childs Name

Birthday

Grade

Parent/Guardian Name

Address, City, State, Zip

Phone/Cell/E-mail address

Emergency Contact Name & Phone (other than above)

Please note any special needs for the above children (allergies, etc.)

I _____, would be willing to help in the following way(s).

_____ Teach

_____ Help (or provide transportation to special events)

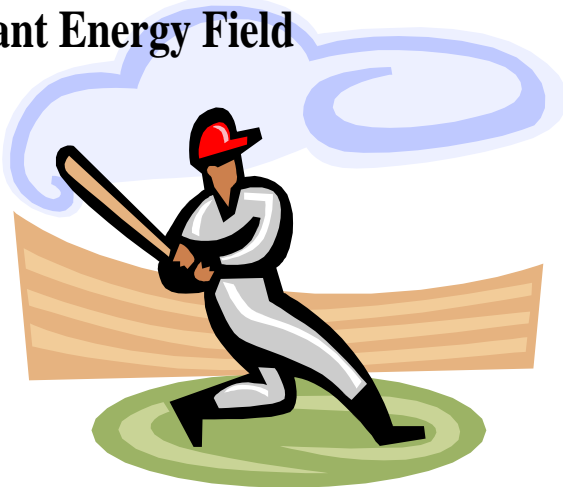
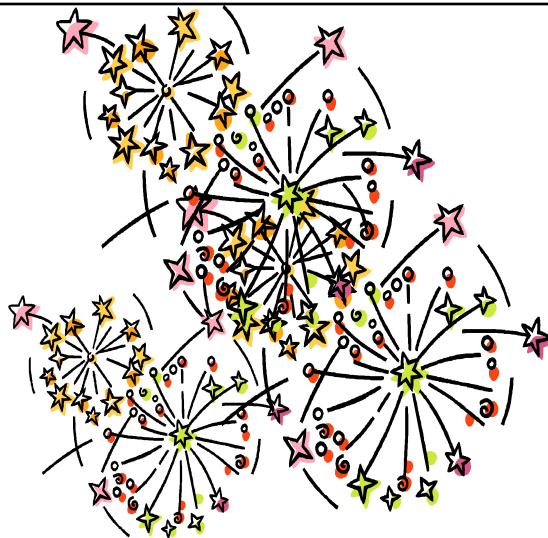
_____ Help with Christmas Program

I _____ give my permission for the child(ren) listed above to be transported by other parents for special events off of church property (such as singing at a nursing home). I understand that they will be properly secured in safety seats/belts as required by law. I also understand that I will be notified by newsletter or note in advance of such special events.

Parent/Guardian signature

LumberKings Baseball And Fireworks Spectacular

Saturday, August 27th
At 7:00 PM
Alliant Energy Field



**Two Kids
Baseball
Door Prizes**

Sign up on the “Baseball” sheet on the bulletin board if you are interested in joining us for an evening of baseball and a truly wonderful fireworks display after the game.

This was a well attended event last year and we were very fortunate that one of our church members donated the tickets for all attending. We do have some tickets available again this year, and depending on how many people sign up for the event, we may be able to again offer free tickets for all those attending. Confirmation to follow.

If anyone that has unused LumberKings tickets that we can use for general admission at this game, please consider donating them for this event. Contact Lynn Curtis at 563-243-6337 or drop them off at the church office. Thank you.

Looking forward to meeting you in the section behind home plate.

Let's play ball!!!

CHURCHWIDE GARAGE AND BAKE SALE AUGUST 5 & 6

Friday 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Saturday 8 a.m. to Noon

Please have bake sale items to the church by 7:30 a.m.

Suggested items:

Household goods

Children's clothing

Books

Furniture

Etc.

(Please: no tires, remodeling items, or automotive items)

We will continue collecting items through Monday, August 1st, 2011. (Please put items in the last Sunday School room on the left)

Proceeds from the garage sale help to fund the ministries of our church. This is another way our church members and friends join together to help support our church's growth.

