

# **Stand Firm and Hold Onto the (Church) Traditions You Were Taught**

## **Zion Lutheran Church Celebration**

### **Stand Firm and Hold Onto the Traditions That You Were Taught.**

Our church celebrated it's 125th anniversary this past weekend. Even though I have only been a member for 37 years, there was one thing that was evident - the rich and deep, deep history of this Lutheran church - Zion Lutheran. We have families that go back generations, families that great grandfathers who started our congregation. And those memories were shared this past weekend.

Our celebration also included a dedication to a memorial. The memorial has an inscription from 2 Thessalonians 2:15 - "Stand Firm and Hold Onto the Traditions That You Were Taught." Lutheran education is one of the traditions and strongholds of Lutheranism. And our church was no exception. Zion Lutheran school was a very important part of life here in southern Minnesota from 1890-1967.

Our celebration started on Friday evening with a ice cream and pie social, followed by a short church service. Pies were baked by members of our church (including me).

I think one aspect that is unique to a small, close-knit church congregation is how we all come together. The days, weeks and months prior to the celebration many members worked together to spruce up the church, used member's talents to make repairs and other improvements. Literally, the day before our celebration, the men's bathroom sink was put into place. Just in time.

Sunday was the BIG day.

On a normal Sunday service, about 80 people attend the church service. On this particular Sunday, we had over 230 people. Nearly triple a normal Sunday service. Finding places for people to sit reminded me of my kitchen remodel project. We placed people in every nook and cranny that we could find--from the couch in the narthex to people in the basement watching the service on TV. But it was very inspiring to see this many people attend our celebration!

What made the day most memorable to me was listening to some of the teachers who taught at the school. Let me note the school was closed in the 1967. But we had three teachers who taught at

the school speak on Sunday afternoon (along with the three pastors in attendance). Because I love history, their perspective on their life and the life of being a Lutheran school teacher was fascinating to me. I also enjoyed the pastor's perspectives on their struggles and journey into their ministry.

Our church served a meal after the church service. Because we have a strong ag and pig farming presence, it was a no brainer that our meal would be pork. Pork loin was grilled by a couple of our church members. And it was delicious!

Even though we see church attendance on the decline across the country, I feel we need to attend church. I know some people criticize those who attend church saying we don't always practice what we are taught. And they are right. Christians are not perfect - we are sinners. We sin everyday. But that's precisely why we need the church, the Bible, God, the pastors and our fellow church members. Our physical presence is important for not only us, but others, and we must not forget that.

**"Stand Firm and Hold Onto the Traditions That You Were Taught"**

And I hope and pray our church will be here for the 150th year celebration.

Some more pictures from the day: