

Looking Up | Reaching Out



ZION LUTHERAN CHURCH

Harbinger

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One day, I received a phone call from a young mom with a two month old baby. She wanted me to come to their home and baptize their little girl, as her husband was having surgery for a brain tumor. She said Vince's cancer was incurable and he might not survive surgery. The next evening we baptized their little girl. Vince had surgery, did well, and faced a month of recovery and then radiation. I visited him in the hospital, often. The day he began radiation he told me his wife had taken their daughter and moved out of the house. He didn't know where she had gone, Two weeks later she served him with divorce papers. He was all alone, dealing with the prognosis of death, the loss of a marriage, and having his little daughter taken away. It had all happened so fast! Even though the tumor could not be totally removed, he did well. Although he had lost some of his physical abilities, his recovery was a miracle! We became good friends and his old church hired him as a part-time janitor. As he got stronger he began to work with the youth group as well. No matter what was going on, Vince always had a smile and something positive to share. He always seemed to find joy in what he was doing. Having lost so much, he never displayed anger or bitterness. I know he was lonely and missed his wife and daughter, but that was never "on display." He was one of the most incredible people I have ever known. His hair never grew back, but always said he figured women prefer men who are bald. That was Vince! There was an upside to everything and it was all because his faith was so strong and his future was never in doubt. Four years later the tumor finally made it clear that he was weeks away from death. We talked about dying and his life and he was content that he had lived fully and had no regrets. I often thought about Job (whose faith never wandered) and Vince put a face on that character I had known only from a story. He said that Christmas and Easter had changed his life, and he would celebrate in heaven what he couldn't rejoice in on earth. I will never forget what I learned from Vince!

Pastor Seeber

Zion Lutheran Church
2122 Bronson Blvd.
Kalamazoo, MI 49008
Telephone: 269-382-2360
Email: zion@zionkazoo.org
www.zionkazoo.org

CATECHISM REVIEW — Ten Commandments (Part 3) Why Do We Have the Law?

Any society without laws or rules is not a society but a collection of individuals. Laws are the rules which establish and maintain order and teach the values of a particular culture. For instance, a culture that protects the lives and rights of any individual has a very different basis than one that protects only those with a certain skin color or accent.

In the confessional Lutheran approach to law and Gospel, our quick and easy statement is “the law convicts” and “the Gospel sets free.” In other words, Commandments show us who we really are and how far we fall short of God’s purpose for our lives. The Gospel is the good news that God’s love offers forgiveness and invites us to live in a relationship with Him even though we don’t deserve such grace.

Lutherans often describe law as a “curb, mirror, and rule.” In other words, the law keeps us from straying, it allows us to look at ourselves to see whether we look like God wants us to or not, and it gives directions for how to live as faithful people. God’s law instructs, gives our “marching orders,” and reveals our brokenness (sin) when we turn from God and live as if there was no God.

Civil laws do the same thing. They structure our society. They establish limits, they inform whether we are “in bounds” or “out of bounds,” and they are the authority which ultimately condemns or gives us a pass. We are either guilty or free. With guilt comes deserved punishment, with innocence comes affirmation and freedom.

The only problem is that none of us are able to always keep God first, and daily allow selfishness (acting as if I am “a god”) to distract us from God. We break God’s law and live like disobedient children. With guilt comes punishment. (If I speed, I pay a fine. If I drink and drive, I lose my license. If I rob a

bank I spend time in prison. And so on, and so on.) There are consequences for actions, and when actions involve law breaking, there is always a price to pay.

God’s law is no different, if I disregard what God asks, then I am in violation of the law, or in other words, “a sinner.” And the result of walking away from God is eternal death. (And that only makes sense.) Judgment is not God arbitrarily deciding to strike out in anger because he is ignored, but announcing what is true. Disobedience is a renunciation of our willingness to live as part of God’s family.

However, for people of faith there is Good News. God forgives. Jesus’ efforts on our behalf accepts the guilt we rightly deserve and buries that in a tomb. He sets us free; not to do anything we want but to be restored to the family, forgiven, and free to live again and for always.

Cheap grace is a concern, as it would be easy to take advantage of such a loving God by saying, “It doesn’t matter what I do because I can always say I am sorry.” But it does matter, when we understand the purpose of God’s guidance! Jesus went to great lengths to simplify the process as he summarized all law with one phrase, “Love God, love neighbor.” And his earthly life served as a model of what that looks like.

The bottom line is not getting hung up with what we can get away with, or tremble when we fall short. Instead, accept the law as a gift, as it makes clear what it means to love God and neighbor. (Who would want to engage in any sport or business without knowing the rules?) And the wonderful part of this thing called discipleship is that one of the rules is that God loves us so much he forgives our failures so that we continue to grow into a closer walk with him. So that we might “walk the talk,” remember what God asks, and reveal his presence to the world. It always was and will be about God’s love!

Plastic Bag Recycling Discontinued

Did you ever catch a glimpse of the plastic bags in the coat room? Those weren't just collecting dust. They were part of a ministry spearheaded by Cynthia Cosgrove.

Over a 2-3 month span, she would cut the bags down into a crochetable plastic, called plyarn. This plyarn would then be the basis for a plastic mat, useful, warm and lightweight. Some of these mats ended up in Detroit, others given to shelters or churches in town, to be given out to the homeless or needy. The process to create the mat is lengthy, 2-3 months of a few hours a day just to make one mat.

We thank Cynthia for her ministry and thank you for your donations. This ministry has impacted lives, but will be taking a break for a while.

Therefore, we will no longer be collecting plastic bags so please find another avenue to recycle. Some retail stores (Meijer's is one) do have bins for collecting bags for recycle.

Thank you!



May 20th at 7:00—The Quiet Side of Passion: An Isabel Dalhousie Novel by Alexander McCall Smith

June 24th at 7:00—Mornings on Horseback by David McCullough

Contact Yvonne Wordell with questions at 269-321-7984.

We Have An Opening For A Paid Office

Position beginning around May 1, 2019. Hours are Monday through Friday, 10am to 4pm, for an experienced person who is comfortable working in a team setting to perform secretarial, receptionist, communication, and record-keeping responsibilities for the ministerial staff and congregation.

Applicant must have knowledge and experience in office practices, procedures and equipment, be competent in the use of Microsoft Office, and be comfortable with new technologies such as websites, Facebook, and the like. Good communication skills and a warm and welcoming personality are a necessity for this position.

A more complete job description is available upon request. Please send resume and references to the Church Office c/o Pastor Seeber.

The Board of Directors has approved the following grants:



Congregation Social at the Kalamazoo Growlers \$900

Parking Lot Reconstruction and Striping \$17,490.

The deadlines for submitting grant requests are shown on the Harbinger calendar or you can call the church office for specific dates. Grant applications are available at the church office for new ministry initiatives, local and international outreach ministries, major building maintenance, church worker scholarships, and music programs/scholarships.

For further information, contact the church office.

LIBRARY MINISTRY

Zion received a special gift from Katherine Seilheimer in honor of Elizabeth Seilheimer, a long time member of Zion. The following books will be added to our collection:

Crazy Love, Forgotten God, and Erasing Hell by Francis Chan.

Nudge, A Cup of Coffee at the Soul Café, and I am a Follower by Leonard Sweet

Joining Jesus on His Mission and ***Joining Jesus: Show Me How*** by Greg Finke

The Noticer and ***The Heart Mender*** by Andy Andrews

The Servant by James Hunter

Obsessed and ***God Girl*** by Hayley DiMarco

The Tech-Wise Family by Andy Crouch

Rejection Proof by Jian Jang

Canoeing the Mountains by Tod Bolsinger

Get Off Your Donkey; Help Somebody and Help Yourself by Reggie McNeal

The Art of Neighboring by Jay Pathak

Wounds are Where Light Enters In Reliving the Passion

Miz Lil and the Chronicles of Grace In the Days of Angels

Swallowing the Golden Stone Mourning into Dancing

Ragman and ***Whole Prayer*** by Walter Wangerin Jr.

Beyond the Walls; Monastic Wisdom for Everyday Life by Paul Wilkes

Brand Luther by Andrew Pettegree

Return of the Prodigal Son by Henri Nouwen

Dietrich Bonhoeffer

Martin Luther

William Wilberforce

by Eric Metaxas

Dakota, Amazing Grace, and The Cloister Walk by Kathleen Norris

Gilead, Lila, and Home

By Marilynne Robinson

Traveling Mercies

Grace: Thoughts on Faith

Plan B: Further Thoughts on Faith

by Anne Lamott

Jesus Through Middle Eastern Eyes

by Kenneth Bailey

Whistling in the Dark

Wishful Thinking

Peculiar Treasures

The Hungering Dark

By Frederick Buechner

Kingdom, Grace, Judgement: Paradox,

Outrage, and Vindication in the Parables

By Robert Farrar Capon

Silence by Shusaku Endo

Prodigal God and ***Reasons for God*** by

Timothy Keller

Mere Christianity and ***The Great Divorce***

by C. S. Lewis

A Cry of Absence by Martin Marty

The Ragamuffin Gospel and ***Ruthless Trust***

by Brennan Manning

Run with the Horses by Eugene Peterson

The Lord of the Rings by J.R.R. Tolkien

Whose Bible Is It? by Jaroslav Pelikan

Friends of Jesus Preschool

Fun Fact #9: We've had over 700 people attend special events related to the preschool this year, including but not limited to – Fall Family Fest, Family Movie Matinee, Midweek Dinner, Grandparents' Day!

April was a very busy month at Friends of Jesus Preschool! Our families enjoyed spring break, we welcomed grandparents in for Grandparents' Day, we learned all about the true meaning of Easter and we had parent/teacher conferences! With the arrival of May, we have entered the last month of the preschool year. We'll be having our second annual Bug Fun Run on Friday, May 3rd. As an outreach to the community, extra funds raised for this event will be donated to "First Day Shoe Fun" which provides new shoes for area school students at the beginning of the school year.

Our Friends of Jesus Preschool Movin' Up and Movin' On graduation celebration is rapidly approaching. This fun ceremony acknowledges all of the achievements of our students throughout this school year. Family, friends and staff members will be celebrating our students who will be moving up to the next level here at Friends of Jesus, or taking the big step into kindergarten! Movin' Up and Movin' On takes place on Friday morning, May 24th.

It's time to start thinking about Friends of Jesus summer camps. We will be offering three sessions this year. If you are interested in having your child(ren) or grandchild(ren), neighbors or friends, attend one or all of our camps, please visit the kiosk in the foyer for forms and enrollment information. Camps are open to children aged 3-7. All camps run from 9:00am to 12:00noon. Cost of camp is \$100.00 per week of camp. A \$25.00 registration fee is due at time of enrollment.

Camp Sessions



Camp #1.....Animal Adventures..... June 17-21

Camp #2.....Water, Wahoo!..... July 15-19

Camp #3..... Happy Campers..... July 29-Aug. 2



If you need more information, please contact Melissa VanderMeeden in the Friends of Jesus preschool office.

Fall Enrollment News: We have several openings for Yellow Bugs (3 year olds) and a few openings for Red Bugs (late 4s, early 5s) for next year. Orange Bugs (4 year olds) are currently full and we have begun a waitlist. If you or someone you know is looking for a Christian preschool with small class sizes, high quality programming and a family friendly atmosphere, please point them in our direction! We love to give tours and welcome new families!

Worship Help for Parents and Children

(It is OK for everyone else to read too! We'll keep finding other ways to help, but this page will deal with worship in the Lutheran Church.)

This month: HOLY COMMUNION

For Dads and Moms and younger adults: To discuss Holy Communion, we always begin with the Passover (Exodus 12) which was first celebrated on the night that Israel escaped from captivity in Egypt. The Passover meal was Israel's reminder of God's deliverance. The blood of the lambs marked the homes of the faithful. This miraculous rescue set Israel on the path to a land of Promise.

Jesus kept the Passover with his disciples on the night of his betrayal. But in the midst of the remembrance of past deliverance, He added something new! *"This broken bread I share is my body ... This cup of wine that I share with you is my blood."* And soon after that meal with his disciples, Jesus sacrificed his life for once and for all!

The new "Passover Lamb" was slain that all people might be set free. The waters of death were held back that God's people might be set on the path of life. From the earliest days of the Christian Church, Holy Communion was celebrated every time the congregation gathered together. There is no way to underestimate the importance of regular participation in the meal of the new kingdom. And so, our liturgy is centered around both Word (Bible) and Sacrament (Holy Communion). God's gifts are so much more powerful than anything we can create!

Holy Communion is a meal of remembrance, God's presence, and peace! This meal is a "foretaste of the kingdom to come" — a preview of coming attractions. It celebrates Christ in our midst. It is the wedding feast in which Christ marries himself to his Church. It is the family meal in which our Savior again and again comes to us in a most special way. In

this meal we receive the gifts of forgiveness and strength for our daily lives. This is a spiritual meal for our spiritual lives.

For many years (in our recent past) Lutherans didn't take communion as often for fear of "trivializing the meal." There was a concern that we would take it for granted if it was offered too often. We have rightly returned to an historic tradition of celebrating this meal every time we gather as one.

For Parents with young children: Talk about your traditions at home — like birthday parties and Thanksgiving meals. Why do you have a certain menu and routine for those annual events? Why are tables decorated and special attention given to the traditions year, after year, after year?

When those questions are answered, it is easier to begin talking about this special meal we call Holy Communion. It is "holy" because God has given it, and He is present with us in this meal in a special way. It is "communion" because it gathers God's family and makes us one with Him. Explain that the altar is like a table that the whole family gathers around (and since we can't all fit at once, we keep coming up until everyone has had a chance to "sit at the table.")

The tradition in the last few centuries of the Church has been to wait until children are "older" for them to "take communion." We begin at Zion in grade 6, but our younger children come to the table and receive a blessing, so they are not left out. This begins the opportunities that you, as parents, have to begin talking about communion with our children at home.

As soon as your kids express an interest or wonder when they can take communion is the time to start answering their questions and teaching them what communion means. And please, let us know if there are any ways we can help with that effort of love!

BOARD OF DIRECTORS NOMINEES AND ANNUAL MEETING

Please plan on joining us after worship on May 19 at 11:30 am for our Annual Meeting. At that time we elect leadership for the coming year and adopt our annual budget. It is important that our members participate in this process of affirming our future direction.

PRESIDENT ELECT

Rick Wordell and his wife, Yvonne, have one child, Austin, who is a high school teacher in Alpina. They have been at Zion since 1988. Rick has Bachelors and Masters degrees in Architecture from the University of Michigan. He is an architect, and recently retired from his firm (Eckert-Wordell.) He has served on Board of Directors, Building Renovation Team, and is advisor to Property Ministry.

VICE PRESIDENT/PROPERTY

Steve Weber and his wife Debbie have 3 children and 6 grandchildren, and have been at Zion since 2000. Steve is graduated from NIU as an engineer and recently retired as Director of Corporate Quality, a VP at Eaton Corp. He and Debbie are active small group Bible study leaders and he serves as an Usher.

DIRECTOR at LARGE (elect 2)

Helen Fierke, was recently widowed after 51 years of marriage. She and Paul, have 2 children and 5 grandchildren. She has been at Zion since 1993. Helen graduated from Wayne State and WMU with degrees in education and music. She served at Zion as director of Adult and Bell choirs and was Music Director.

DIRECTOR at LARGE (elect 2)

Dave Alsvig and his wife Diane have 3 children, and have been at Zion since 2011. Dave graduated from Western Illinois University (journalism and PR) and has been a sales manager for a local advertising firm. He has served on Endowment Ministry and our Croft Ministry.

DIRECTOR at LARGE (elect 2)

John DuBois and his wife Kim have 3 children and 1 grandchild and have been at Zion since 1983. John graduated from WMU (education). He recently retired from teaching and was the Swim Coach at Plainwell High School with several state championships in the mix. He has served as an Usher.

Family Life

Family Ministry News

End of Sunday School Bash

Family Ministry will be sponsoring an end of Sunday School Breakfast Potluck!

Our last day of Sunday School is May 19 so instead of class at 9:15am we'll be coming together for breakfast, songs, and an activity. We will also have a little presentation by our 4th/5th grade class. There will not be a sign up but please bring a dish to share!

Workshop: Summer Spirituality

On Wednesday, May 8th we will be having a workshop on how to stay spiritually charged over the summer. This workshop will give you some ideas and tools that you can implement at home over those long summer months. We take a break from Sunday school during that time to give our teachers a break and to rest and a lot of times that means putting God on hold at home. Let's NOT do that this summer! Come for a free meal and workshop from 5:15pm—7:30pm. Childcare will be provided but you have to sign up on the kiosk by May 5th!

MAY 2019 WORSHIP LEADERS

	May 5	May 12	May 19	May 26 Summer Hours Begin
Head Ushers 8:00am	Steve Weber	Stan Leitz	Dave Newman	Matt Simmons
Head Ushers 10:30am	Joe Zerbel	Brandon Hamilton	Steve Stokes	Steve Nuyen
Greeters Sat 5:30pm	Carolyn Vestal	Bruce & Dorothy De-Dee	Mary & Gordon Berkousen	Dee Wentzel
Greeters 8:00am	Dave & Linda Mayer	Ted & Lucy Maxson	Bob & Barb Nutsch	George & Ellie Hayward
Greeters 10:30am	Dick & Sue Ann Coffinger	Rollie & Sharon Preuss	Steve & Debbie Weber	Wayne & Elaine Skalnican
Communion Assistants Saturday 5:30pm	Rita Linnenkugel	Kathleen Jordan	Mike Schlack	Dee Wentzel
Communion Assistants 8:00am	Jim Mayer John Buetow Linda Stieve	Ted Maxson Ken Toy Matt Simmons	Dave Newman John Buetow Jim Mayer	Matt Simmons Ted Maxson Cyndi Bremer
Communion Assistants 10:30am	Garr Gast Mark Meyer John Roggow	Rollie Preuss Dan Seng Linda Seng	Nick Sward Chuck Wendling Ryan Bickel	Steve Nuyen Steve Butt Brent Butler
Cantor	8:00 – Vicki Holt 10:30 – None needed	8:00 – Linda Stieve 10:30 – Danielle Field	8:00 – Pastor Breije 10:30 – None needed	None needed
Acolytes 8:00am	Megan Bowers Landon Bauer	Mary Besser One Needed	Curtis Chapman Kurtis Scheffler	Claire Alsvig Kurtis Scheffler
Acolytes 10:30am	Matthew Devine Jacob Waterlander	Maren Hampshire Kurtis Scheffler	Aly Hampshire Audrey Hamilton	Kate Phillips Rudy Linebaugh
Lectors 8:00am	Candy Buetow	Carolyn Daenzer	Dave Mayer	Jayne Mayer
Lectors 10:30am	Chris Wilkins	Rollie Preuss	Janis Dinda	Alison Carlson
Altar Ministry Saturday 5:30pm	Phil Rettman One Needed	Elsie Autry Phil Rettman	Pat Frohnapfel Melissa Noseworthy	Elsie Autry One Needed
Altar Ministry 8:00am	Vicki Holt One Needed	Vicki Holt Pam Leitz Amy Nelson	Joe Zerbel Larry Zerbel	Joe Zerbel Larry Zerbel
Altar Ministry 10:30am	Deb Klug Julie Griesbach	Melissa Noseworthy Mary VandenBerg	Joe Zerbel Larry Zerbel	Joe Zerbel Larry Zerbel
Sound 8:00 and 10:30am	8:00 – Vicki Holt 10:30 – Grace Dinda	8:00 – Neil Segerdahl 10:30 – Nick Alsvig	8:00 – Vicki Holt 10:30 – Grace Dinda	8:00 – Neil Segerdahl 10:00 – Neil Segerdahl
Coffee Hour	Bob & Barb Nutsch	Steve & Karen Beckner	Lisa & Dan Frazier	No Coffee

MAY 2019

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
			1	2	3	4
			8:30 LWR Sewing 8:30 Outdoor Beautification 6:00 MS Confirmation Pizza Party	7:00 Choir	8:30 FOJ Fun Run	8:00 Men's Group 5:30 Communion Service 6:00 – 8:30 Bingo Night
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
8 and 10:30 Communion Service 9:15 Sunday School/Conf Sr. High BC/ Adult Classes	6:00 Personnel 6:30 Endowment	10:00 Bible Class 5:30 Finance 6:30 FOJ Ministry 7:00 Bells	8:30 LWR Sewing 8:30 Outdoor Beautification 5:15 Summer Spirituality Workshop 6:00 Property	7:00 Choir		8:00 Men's Group 5:30 Communion Service
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
<u>Mother's Day</u> 8 and 10:30 Communion Service 9:15 Sunday School/Conf Sr. High BC/ Adult Classes	6:30 Board of Directors	10:00 Bible Class 6:00 Family Ministry 6:30 Small Group	8:30 LWR Sewing 8:30 Outdoor Beautification	7:00 Choir	FOJ Bike Day 5:30 – 11pm MS Almost Lock-in	8:00 Men's Group 2-4 Prayer Shawl @ Biggby's 5:30 Communion Service
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
<u>Pentecost</u> 8 and 10:30 Communion Service 9:15 (Last One) Sunday School/Conf Sr. High BC/ Adult Classes & Family Ministry Breakfast 11:30 Annual Meeting	5:30 Campus Ministry 7:00 ZWBG	10:00 Bible Class	8:30 LWR Sewing 8:30 Outdoor Beautification	7:00 Choir	9-11:30 FOJ Preschool Graduation	5:30 Communion Service
26	27	28	29	30	31	
<u>Late Service Time Change</u> 8 and 10:00 Communion Service	 OFFICE IS CLOSED		8:30 Outdoor Beautification 8:30 LWR Sewing			

Youth News

High School:

Bingo Night!

May the 4th be a night for Bingo!
From 6—8:30pm we will be hosting a
Bingo night for the congregation!
Help out with childcare or activities
or concessions!

All Youth: Last day of Sunday School is May 19th!

Middle School Youth

Class Party

May 1st from 6-7:30pm

Almost Lock-IN

Friday, May 17

from 5:30pm—11pm.

Current 5th—8th grades are
invited for a fun night!

Sign up on kiosk by May 12th!

Echoes

*God IS at work through people in our
congregation...here is their story:*

Growth. It should always be an objective
whether you are 1 minute old or 100
years old! My current Growth Plan
involves staying connected with
colleagues and friends, past and present.
Each week I've been taking some time
to call or message someone and the God
at Work results have been pretty
amazing! Some friends have shared
struggles they're going through, thankful
for the timely conversation. Colleagues
have shared vocation changes or have
asked for coaching. One, however, sticks
out. It was a busy week and I wasn't
going to accomplish a call that week.
Instead, I received a message from
someone I grew up with and hadn't seen
in over 10 years. He was in town, knew I
lived here, and wanted to catch up.
Remarkably, he couldn't stop talking (he
was always the quiet kid) and we had a
very good conversation. We talked
about church growing up and the seeds
planted by teachers, pastors, DCE's, etc,
that really encouraged him to stay
involved in a church despite the current
lack of support he had. God is great at
showing up! We just need to be more
aware of His work in our lives!

Campus Ministry



April 7th, was our last Bronco Buddy mentoring event with the students at Tree of Life (TOL) school in the Edison neighborhood. There were 38 WMU students each paired with a Tree of Life student. At each monthly event, we usually have between 25-30 WMU students and 25-30 TOL students attend. Seven of these WMU students, who have served as mentors over the past few years, will be graduating. It is wonderful to see the relationships that develop between the WMU students and TOL kids and their families as a result of our mentoring program. Most of the mentors are WMU students involved with Solid Grounds and Fellowship of Christian Athletes (FCA).

As we look ahead to the upcoming 2019-2020 academic year and resuming Bronco Buddies in September, I am looking for additional mentors and will be contacting different departments and colleges, such as Education, Health and Human Services, Music Education, and Physical Education to try and recruit WMU students who like working with youth to see if they would be interested in serving as a Bronco Buddy Mentor.

Our last Sunday worship service and lunch at Solid Grounds followed WMU finals week on Palm Sunday. On Easter Sunday, the students who do not go home to celebrate, attended the service at Zion followed by our annual post-service Easter lunch at Solid Grounds.

I will be on vacation in Tennessee from April 28-May 5. The Campus ministry team and I have been discussing some new ministry ideas and opportunities for this upcoming academic year and look forward to using the summer months to plan and get ready for the new school year.

God's blessings and peace to you all!
Pastor Mark

Eric Eichinger has received this year's Illumination Book Awards Silver Medal for his biography titled *The Final Race: The Incredible World War II Story of the Olympian Who Inspired Chariots of Fire.*"

The Illumination Book Awards are designed to honor and bring increased recognition to the year's best new titles written and published with a Christian worldview. Eric grew up at Zion, is a Lutheran pastor in Florida, and was with us last year for our anniversary celebration.

Congratulations, Eric!



While you're enjoying the warm weather festivities this summer, be sure to set aside time for these important and fun events:

Family Vacation Bible School

June 24th—27th, 5pm—8pm

Congregational Service Project

June 27th, 5pm—8pm

Congregational Growler's Game

July 27th, 7pm



KALAMAZOO LOAVES & FISHES

The wish list item for **May is Canned Vegetables (low-sodium)**. Please put your donations in the gray tubs under the church office window. Thank you!



Book Review: "New Seeds of Contemplation." Thomas Merton. New Directions. 1961.

How do we become "more spiritual?" What I mean is, we all have "faith" yet some seem more comfortable with and immersed in their faith than others. I am sure we all wrestle with our willingness to "grow into the gift of faith." Most fascinating to me are people willing to spend their entire lives in a monastery, as they seek to get closer to God. And I am just as overwhelmed by missionaries who surrender so much to bring faith to unbelievers, as they completely immerse themselves with those who are most "alone" in our world. Jesus' own examples of going away to pray and then searching out lepers to heal seem to be at those same opposite ends of the spiritual spectrum, between growing spiritually and living a life of faith.

Thomas Merton's most famous book is "New Seeds of Contemplation." It shares his thoughts on true meditation and spiritual growth, and seeking to awaken (or set free) the power of God's Spirit in our lives. He had grown up as a privileged young man in England, but had no faith, and grew up with a series of painful losses. After his conversion, he became a Trappist monk and spent most of his adult life as an author and poet at Gethsemani Abbey in Kentucky. (His book, "Seven Storey Mountain" tells his story.)

"New Seeds" is a powerful book that can be read (and probably should be read) one brief chapter at a time. This book has insights and direction for anyone seeking to deepen their spiritual journey. It is a wonderful gift for all of us who live more fully engaged in the world (than monks) but assistance in our own spiritual journey needs growth.

Here is an example of his writing: "*It is not we who chose to awaken ourselves, but God who chooses to awaken us.*" [10] This is similar to Luther's statement "I cannot by my own reason or strength" come to faith, but it

is God's Spirit who brings faith to me. Part of Merton's encouragement to "meditation" or "spiritual contemplation" is finding time to withdraw from all that distracts us so that God's voice can be more clearly heard!

He suggests, "*Every moment and every event of every man's life on earth plants something in his soul.*" [14] Our times of prayer and meditation help us to discern how God can help those seeds grow. Or, "*What good does it do to say a few formal prayers to God and then turn away and give all my mind and will to created things, desiring only ends that fall far short of Him?*" [43]

He is strongly convinced that contemplation, meditation, and quiet prayer are more than an "escape." He says the purpose of such spiritual exercises is to become closer to Christ so that we are closer with those around us! In coming closer to Christ, "*We all become doors and windows through which God shines back into His own house.*" [67]

Here is another sample: "*God does not give us graces or talents or virtues for ourselves alone. We are members one of another and everything that is given to one member is given for the whole body.*" [57] And also, "*Too often our notion of faith is falsified by our emphasis on the statements about God which faith believes, and by our forgetfulness of the fact that faith is a communion with God's own light and truth.*" [128] In other words faith is not about the right words but rather a loving heart!

"Serendipity" means a "happy accident" or a "pleasant surprise." A lot of conversations and some other books I happened across led me quite unexpectedly to read this book. I would encourage you to check it out. Read one chapter and think and pray about it for a day or two and then read the next. See what happens for you! We all have faith, and it is OK to seek help in nurturing that gift! This is one of those books that can help. Pastor Tim

HABITAT FOR HUMANITY

Habitat for Humanity builds affordable homes for low-income families and individuals throughout the country. Their motto is: "Not a hand-out, but a hand-up." All future Habitat homeowners are required to do between 250-300 hours of "sweat equity." Not just building their own home, but other Habitat homes as well. The Kalamazoo chapter is in the process of building five new homes in the Kalamazoo area.

There are a variety of tasks that volunteers are able to perform, such as landscaping, dry walling, painting, framing, siding, and insulation. The days and hours to volunteer with Habitat are Tuesday-Thursday and Saturday between 8:30AM-3:30PM. Anyone that is interested in volunteering is required to fill out a Waiver of Liability form and Background Check form. The email address to access these forms is habitatkalamazoo.org. The maximum number of volunteers for each work day is 15 people. A typical volunteer workday begins at 8:30AM. They take a break from 10:00-10:15AM and then resume work until the lunch break which is 12:00—1:00PM, and then work from 1:00-3:00PM.

In addition to building new homes, Habitat also does critical home repair. These tasks are done for homeowners who are not able to afford hiring outside help. The only tasks that Habitat does not perform are plumbing and electrical.

Members of Zion have volunteered with Habitat in previous years and we will be looking at a group volunteer work day for members sometime during the summer. Once a date has been determined, we will make an announcement and put a sign up sheet on the kiosk at Zion.

If you are interested in volunteering with Habitat on your own, please feel free to contact the volunteer coordinator, Tim Smolenski, at (269) 344-2443 x206.

Thanks----Pastor Mark

Outdoor Beautification Schedule 2019

You are invited to join us as we care for and maintain the church grounds. Our clean-up days are **Wednesdays** from 8:30 and finishing around 11:30. Break time and refreshments occur from 10:00-10:30. If you are interested, contact Jim Mayer at 375-8342 or just show up on the days listed below. On the scheduled date, if the weather is not cooperating, the workday may be rescheduled or canceled. All who have their name on the contact list will be contacted if we need to cancel.

Spring Work Dates:

May 1, May 8, May 15, May 22, May 29 (if needed).

Summer Work Dates:

June 12, July 10 (if needed), August 14.

Fall Work Dates:

September 11, October 16, October 30, November 9 (Final Fall Clean-up).

The Final Fall Leaf Clean-up is Saturday Morning, November 9, 2019, Starting at

8:30 am. A delay date will be the following Saturday, November 16, 2019.

If this schedule needs to be modified in any way, and there is enough time, the Sunday Bulletin will announce any changes. If you are on the contact list, you will be either e-mailed or called.



Spring Cleaning???

You may be getting ready for a garage sale or downsizing your household...both huge tasks!! Please think of the Attic Treasures area of our Grateful Hearts and Thankful Hands Bazaar with this venture. We would love to have the items you can no longer use!



You may bring them to Zion at any time and place them in the workroom. We accept a variety of things, including...kitchen ware and kitchen electronics, silverware, serving pieces, glassware, linens, decorative items, candlesticks, vases, knick knacks, pictures, collections, any holiday décor, antiques, lamps, jewelry, purses, books, puzzles, toys. Basically ANYTHING in good condition, except clothing.

We offer **donation slips** for your contributions. When you bring in your items, please take a donation slip from the basket on the counter for your tax purposes. If you have any questions, please call: Jayne Mayer (375-8342) or Linda Mayer (375-1241).



WORKMANSHIP

Sewing Group Needs Towels

The L.W.R. Sewing Group is in need of new or gently used towels, about 13 x 21—dark colors.

These will help towards our layette bundles.

Thank you,
L.W.R. Sewing Group



LITTLE DRESSES FOR AFRICA GROUP

We would like to thank and say congratulations to Mary Phillips and Helen Reinkensmeyer. Both Mary and Helen completed their 2,000 little dresses for Africa this winter.

Good job ladies!!



UPDATE on CROFT MINISTRY SUPPORT

For many years, Zion was part of a consortium of churches that operated a retreat center, named "The Croft." Due to rising costs and the unwillingness of all the churches to continue the effort, the retreat center and land were sold and the money invested in the Kalamazoo Foundation, with the stipulation that each year the available income would support The Deacons Conference, The Gospel Mission, Ministry with Community, and Habitat with Humanity. This year the first gifts were shared with each organization receiving almost \$4000. For perpetuity, these ministries will receive more support each year from the proceeds of this Fund.

It is good for us to be part of this annual support.



MAY BIRTHDAYS

- 5/1 Rhenda Pease
- 5/2 Thomas Bernhardt, Julie Schmidt,
June Schurig
- 5/3 Mandy Scheffler
- 5/4 Thomas Cooper, Kayla Eichaker,
Meredith Freeby, Shawn Schipper,
Pete Tanz, Paul Vickery
- 5/5 Judith Adlam, Crosby Field,
Hunter Laurin, Daniel Phillips,
Megan Wiltse
- 5/6 Eli Frazier, Mike Kamphuis,
Kevin Morrison, David Ostrem
- 5/7 Matthew Folck, Carter Simmons,
- 5/8 Bruce Huston
- 5/9 Jan Johnson, Ella Krill
- 5/10 Diane Alsvig,
Karen Stokes- Chapo,
Marti Nuyen, Steve Slesinski,
Zoey Soppelsa, Patricia Vickery
- 5/11 Myles Ream, Jacob Waterlander
- 5/12 Gilbert Reinkensmeyer,
Celia Schipper, Jeffrey Thiede
- 5/13 Amy Hendricks, Aiden Woods
Thuy Martin
- 5/14 Parker Wagner
- 5/15 Zoe Tinigin, Aaron Whittaker
- 5/17 Wanda Jewett, Alex Schmidt,
Jacob Wiltse
- 5/18 Jill Koning, Kurt Weber
- 5/20 Tim Klein, Steven Stokes
- 5/22 Christopher Glasser, Robert Klein,
Andrew Pridgeon
- 5/23 Carrie Chapman,
Sue Ann Coffinger,
Laine DeMorrow
- 5/24 Donald Klug
- 5/25 Eliza Grube, Eleanor Hayward,
Riley Ketchum, Diane Koning,
Samantha Leitz
- 5/26 Patricia Langworthy
- 5/27 Gregory Dinda
- 5/28 Don Eastman, Nicole Greene
- 5/29 Laurel Cullimore, Kirk Decker,
Hannah Laurin
- 5/31 Brandon Hamilton,
Linda Hoepfner, Paul Maier

Parish Report

New Members

Greg, Marirose, and
Daniel Meimers 3/26/2019
Michelle Rollen 2/25/2019

Births

Connor McGill 3/24/2019
Michael Nutsch 4/2/2019
Chase Masek 4/4/2019

Staff Anniversaries

Congratulations to the following staff for their service to Zion (May):

Jan Johnson 5/1/2017
Monica Slesinski 5/29/2018



KALAMAZOO LOAVES & FISHES

The wish list item for **May is Canned vegetables, low-sodium.**

Please put your donations in the gray tubs under the church office window. Thank you!



Friends of Jesus (FOJ) Income for March was \$10,487, over budget by \$2,749. The YTD Income is \$76,833, over budget by \$125. March expenses were \$8,824, over budget by \$285. The YTD expenses are \$64,255, under budget by \$2,003. YTD net income is \$12,578, over budget by \$1,297.

Solid Ground (SG) Total monthly income was \$8,888, under budget by \$108. March expenses were \$9,802, under budget by \$164. The MTD net loss was \$914, better than budget by \$56. YTD income is \$98,787, under budget by \$2,344. YTD expenses are \$98,069, over budget by \$848. YTD net income is \$718, under budget by \$3,192.

Zion March giving was \$61,308, under budget by \$4,339. Total income for March was \$71,795, under budget by \$1,590. Total monthly expenses were \$70,385, over budget by \$1,031. March ended with net income of \$1,410, under budget by \$2,621. YTD giving is \$590,432, under budget by \$3,559. Total YTD income is \$667,265, under budget by \$3,434. Total YTD expenses are \$648,028, under budget by \$10,360. YTD net income is \$19,237, over budget by \$6,926.

ZION LUTHERAN CHURCH - March 2019

INCOME & EXPENSE	Current Month			Year-To-Date		
	Budget	Actual	Over/Under	Budget	Actual	Over/Under
INCOME						
Zion (Giving + Interest)	65,647	61,308	4,339	593,991	590,432	3,559
Friends of Jesus	7,738	10,487	-2,749	76,708	76,833	-125
TOTAL	73,385	71,795	1,590	670,699	667,265	3,434
EXPENSES						
Staff Support	28,236	28,179	57	284,875	282,278	2,597
Office Operations	1,062	971	91	13,275	15,201	-1,926
Church Property	7,896	11,393	-3,497	77,153	77,173	-20
Education Ministry	420	575	-155	10,935	9,971	964
Evangelism/Missions	0	0	0	600	529	71
Worship Ministry	670	1,716	-1,046	5,185	5,961	-776
Other Ministries	832	139	693	3,754	2,349	1,405
Music Ministry	4,068	3,025	1,043	30,702	22,462	8,240
Finance Ministry	10,306	10,367	-61	103,160	103,387	-227
FoJ Operations	8,539	8,824	-285	66,258	64,255	2,003
Zion Haus Ministry	770	721	49	3,905	6,109	-2,204
Missions - General	6,555	4,475	2,080	58,586	58,353	233
TOTAL	69,354	70,385	-1,031	658,388	648,028	10,360
INCOME LESS EXPENSES	4,031	1,410	2,621	12,311	19,237	-6,926

SOLID GROUND - March 2019

Solid Ground Income	8,996	8,888	108	101,131	98,787	2,344
Solid Ground Expenses	9,966	9,802	164	97,221	98,069	-848
INCOME LESS EXPENSES	-970	-914	-56	3,910	718	3,192

BALANCE SHEET	6/1/2018	3/31/2019	Change
ASSETS			
Cash	29,683	40,743	11,060
Investments	159,631	185,293	25,662
Other Assets	-8,125	-2,668	5,457
TOTAL	181,189	223,368	42,179
LIABILITIES			
Payroll	3,235	9,873	6,638
Dedicated Funds	163,307	179,611	16,304
Unrestricted Funds	14,647	33,884	19,237
TOTAL	181,189	223,368	42,179

MORTGAGE LOAN BALANCE - \$924,661.21

Primary Dedicated Accounts (Balances over \$2,000)

Equipment Replacement Fund	12,957	Capital Campaign	7,508
FOJ Estate Gift	8,394	Youth Ministry	9,584
FOJ Grushon Scholarship	2,734	Pews	12,514
FoJ Fundraising	15,071	New Staff Savings	50,000
Benevolence	2,360	Savings	46,500

Monthly Publication of

Zion Lutheran Church

May

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