



Looking Up | Reaching Out

## ZION LUTHERAN CHURCH

### *Harbinger*

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**Page 2**  
**Faith and Life**

**Page 5**  
**Catechism Review**

**Page 6**  
**Friends of Jesus**

**Page 7**  
**Worship Help**

**Page 10**  
**Family Life**

**Page 11**  
**Youth News**

**Page 12**  
**Campus Ministry**

**Page 13**  
**Book Review**

I joined a "frequent flyer program" at our garden center which simply means every 13th bag of bird seed is free. I never joined in the past as I could not imagine ever using that much seed. Well, times have changed. We have more squirrels than birds and they can empty feeders faster than I fill them. Squirrels **do** need to eat, but I wonder about the need to subsidize the entire squirrel population of our neighborhood, and have changed tactics. I purchased two new feeders that are supposedly "squirrel proof." Sounds great! Except I think the birds are afraid of them because no one is eating seeds now. I never figured out how birds find feeders in the first place, and assumed if I put them in the same location birds would keep coming (as I know squirrels will.) But so far, it hasn't worked that way. The feeders must be intimidating (being a different shape and color) and I guess it will take birds a while to come back. I guess that makes sense because I am the same way too. Change is difficult and sometimes different packaging or a different appearance can put me off. How often have you gone to buy a familiar food item and even though it was in the same spot on the shelf you couldn't find it because the box was a different color? I guess all living things have that in common! Congregations sure do! People get used to certain appearances, sounds or traditions and struggle with change. Guests and visitors show up who aren't familiar with the "old feeders" and so are not intimidated by the new. In fact whatever is being offered as food right now is what has drawn them to Zion in the first place. So, I guess the point of all of this is that we need to understand perspectives of each other. I have found that it takes a lot more seed to feed a few birds than it used to, but have changed tactics to make sure the job gets done. There are never easy answers in life, but we do know that food is basic, and as long as we are faithful in feeding the flock, we are on the right track. It is, after all, the food (Word and Sacrament) and not the feeder that is important. Feeders might change, but the Living Word of a Risen Savior will nourish forever!

Pastor Seeber

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## Faith and Life: Christian Education

Some assume worship is only for adults and Christian education is only for kids — the truth is that both are necessary for all! As with any aspect of our lives, to grow we need to learn, and without learning there is no growth. So *let's agree that just as worship is for all ages, so is Christian education.*

Faith is like a seed planted by God, who offers nutrients and fertile soil for that “living thing” to grow. God offers the warmth of the Son and the gentle breeze of the Spirit. Faith is a gift that is alive — but without proper care and nurture it can wither and die. Remember the parable Jesus told about a farmer who went out to plant seed — some fell on rocks, some amidst thorns, and some on fertile soil. *God plants but we are called to be the gardeners of God's gifts.* Worship, Bible study, fellowship, and prayer are all fertilizers and injections of life into our faith. *Faith is a gift we have the responsibility to care for and use!*

Would you invest in a house and not take care of it? Do you spend good money on a car or furniture and not take care of them? Why is it so easy to neglect the gift of faith, or to give it a lower priority than going to the movies, taking a vacation, or enjoying a club or sports that seem so important at the time?

For that reason, Christian education begins at Baptism and continues until the day we are welcomed into the kingdom of Heaven. We celebrate Baptism in worship because of its sacramental nature, but also to reaffirm the beginnings of faith in our own lives.

Our Sunday School program has many aspects, but they all are related to growing and nurturing a young faith. We want our children to become familiar with Bible stories, so that when they reach “confirmation classes” they already have a background on which to build. But they also are learning about worship and servant love and Christian

fellowship, in appropriate ways for their ages. Our preschool offers preparation for grade school, but also shares many of the same components as our Sunday School program. When our young people are in sixth grade, we have a special class on Communion so that they can begin to join the entire family in that meal of the altar. Confirmation ministry builds on all of this, and the Bible stories that are the foundation are explained more fully. They discover how all of this is tied into a lifestyle of faith. As they begin to face so many choices and decisions, it is important to integrate faith into every part of their lives. Our goal is to help parents with that process.

Why should any of this end at the end of 8th grade when so much has been invested in the start? Would you plant a vineyard and when the grape vines finally start to mature not keep working so the harvest is all that it can be? Education is a hallmark of the Lutheran tradition. That is why Luther translated the Bible into worship and wrote hymns and catechisms that helped parents and adults to learn more about faith.

As high school and college students move into the adult world, the continued nurture of faith is a gift that can offer guidance and strength for difficult and complicated choices. Adults deal with relationships, parenting, grief, estate planning, and ethical and business decisions every day. So learning and growing must continue! How to do all of this as people of faith comes as a result of spiritual growth. Sermons hopefully help, but prayer, Bible study, devotional reading, and wrestling with issues of faith are important for a maturing faith! Education in the Church is no different than in our profession or daily lives. We do need to keep growing! As with everything, it is a matter of priorities and new patterns in our living. We have many resources to offer. Ask Aaron or Pastor Seeber if you don't see something which will be helpful for you! Please share with us what has worked for you! *(A seed has been planted...)*

### Aging in His Grace

Falls are not a normal part of aging. They do happen, though, and they have an impact on elders. The results of a fall may range from a mild inconvenience to life altering changes. Fear of falling may restrict activities for some elders. The issues of falls is addressed in a class called Matter of Balance. A Matter of Balance class acknowledges the risk of falling but emphasizes practical coping strategies to reduce the fear. These include:

- Promoting a view of falls and fear of falling as controllable
- Setting realistic goals for increasing activity
- Changing the environment to reduce fall risk factors
- Promoting exercise to increase strength and balance

We would like to offer a Matter of Balance class here at Zion starting at the end of September. The class lasts for 2 hours and meets once a week for 8 weeks. The class is taught by volunteer lay leaders and overseen by a Matter of Balance Master Trainer. The class must have 8 people minimally and a maximum of 14. More specific information about days and times will follow.

The class is geared toward anyone 60 or older who is concerned about falling and interested in improving strength, flexibility and balance. There is no fee for the class. If you have questions or are interested in the class, call Judy Adlam at 375-4388. You may have to leave a message but I will get back to you! You may also get more information by checking out this website:

[https://www.kalcounty.com/aaa/pdf\\_files/MOB%20Program%20Synopsis.pdf](https://www.kalcounty.com/aaa/pdf_files/MOB%20Program%20Synopsis.pdf)

There will be informational flyers at the church.

### Put a Smile on A Child's Face!

We are asking for donations of school supplies to be given to **Community in Schools** and our own **Friends of Jesus Preschool**. You will see the table in the church hallway with bins for your donations. There has been a request for additional supplies to be added to the list. So that you can keep just one list handy, the entire list is shown below. Items needed:

- Scissors
- Rulers—12 inch
- Pencils, Erasers
- Crayons/Markers
- Glue—sticks or bottles
- Notebooks of ruled paper
- Small Paper Plates
- Assorted Band-Aids
- Play-Doh
- ANY OTHER ITEMS YOU LIKE

If you have questions, please call Jayne Mayer at 375-8342.

### FRIENDS OF JESUS CLEANING HELP NEEDED:

Cleaning time is here again at Friends of Jesus Preschool. We have been blessed with many helpers in the past, and we hope you can donate some of your time to help us this year, too.

We will be cleaning Thursday, Friday, and Saturday August 15-17 from 9:00 AM to 12:00 noon. Toys, shelves, walls, and books all need cleaning and sanitizing once again. We also need to have the outside sidewalks and shed power-washed, too.

If you can help, please speak to Linda Stieve, email [LStieve@sbcglobal.net](mailto:LStieve@sbcglobal.net), or call 269-381-5094. We would appreciate any amount of help you can provide: one hour, one day, or as many hours or days as you can attend.

Many hands make for much lighter work! Thank you in advance, and may God bless your decision to help us.

**DO YOU LIKE TO SING?**

The Gloria Dei singers are looking for members to share their musical talents. No experience is necessary, just a love of music! We meet once a week on Thursdays from 7:00-8:00 p.m. Our first rehearsal is September 5th. Please come and enjoy Christian fellowship and the beauty and joy of sharing our voices for the glory of God. Questions? Please call Wanda Jewett (327-9873). Thank you!

**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.

**Remaining Summer Work Date:**

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.



The family of Gil Reinkensmeyer has been searching for words to adequately express our thanks to the congregation. Zion was Gil's home, his family, his spiritual haven. Phone calls and emails from Zion were endless, sincere and comforting. Our mailbox was never empty, bringing more words of encouragement. Gil looked forward to our Pastors bringing him Holy Communion. For a few moments our apartment became a mini Zion. Hovering over all this was Zion's powerful Prayer Ministry. Gil deeply longed for the day he would walk through the valley with his Lord Jesus. His day came. He left gloriously. We remain to say "Thank you" to you, our dear Zion family.

*Helen Reinkensmeyer*

*Marcus and family in Arizona, Irene and Randy in Spring Lake MI, Brian and family in Troy MI.*

Thank you everyone for the cards and prayers during my recent hospital stay and follow-up treatments. Additionally, thank you Pastor Tim and Pastor Larry for the hospital visits. Bert adds her thanks.

—George Geissel



**Zion Women's Book Group**

August 26 at 7:00—Spaceman by Michael Massimino

September 23 at 7:00—Educated by Tara Westover

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

**CATECHISM REVIEW: Apostles Creed (part 3)**

The Second Article proclaims the gift of Jesus, an incredible miracle of grace! We do not believe in three “gods,” or one who keeps changing personalities. Instead, the God who created also redeems this world, and daily fills it with his holy breath (Spirit.) Every culture struggles with how to get close to God. Every religion creates rituals and physical symbols or idols to help describe God or help us “get our hands” on God.

We believe the one true God’s love is so great that He chose to come and reveal himself to us in the Body of Jesus. He carried out his mission of mercy through His life, sacrificial death, and miraculous resurrection. We believe Jesus is both completely divine and completely human. As God’s “Son,” we confess Jesus is the earthly presence of the “DNA” of God. He was born as all humans are born, but His birth was a miraculous intervention of God in the life of Mary. She is his earthly mother, and the bringer of his human life, but Jesus is also God in the flesh.

The early disciples had a simple message that energized and changed their world. They simply told the story of Jesus — his miraculous birth, a perfect life of servant love, his undeserved death on our behalf, and the miraculous victory on Easter morning. Having accomplished his purpose on earth in that life, death, and resurrection, God withdrew his visible, physical presence from one time and place, so that He could be invisibly present in every time and every place. In the same way that God breathed in Jesus, His breath of life now lives in each of us and breathes through the biblical witness and the life of Christ’s body on earth today, which we call “the Church.”

Article Three is about the Holy Spirit, the presence of God today. It literally means “holy breath.” In Genesis, God created by breathing words: “Light! Sun and Moon! Fish

and People!” He breathed and creation happened. That same breath filled the life of Jesus with servant love, powerful actions, the proclamation of God’s love, and victory over sin, death, and grave. That breath fills our lungs and life in Baptism, Holy Communion, Prayer, our reading of Holy Scripture, and the faith-filled love of those around us. That “Holy Breath” inspires us to forgive and encourages us when we are weak. God’s Holy Spirit is the same force of Creation and Easter, and is the gift through which God shares Himself in each of our lives today.

Faith is simply a matter of letting God be our breath, our wisdom, and our strength. As people of faith, our call is to trust in that Holy breath, and share what is so freely given to each of us. Breathe in and breathe out! The Holy Spirit comes in and the Holy Spirit is the love we exhale and share. His love is our living. Faith is simply allowing God to be the power of all that we are, and do, and say.

God’s love is so great that He will never let us go! As God lives in each of our hearts and minds in this earthly life, his promise is that we will live with Him forever. And so even when our frail and imperfect earthly breathing ceases, that Holy Spirit (that Holy Breath) will continue to be our life, and we will be one with God forever in the eternity of heavenly peace. This is Good News for a broken world.

In the Creed, we remember and restate what we believe. This is our mission statement, and power and guide for all that life is. Knowing who we are helps us to remember how we are to live (filled with that same servant love.) Over and over, like a steady heartbeat or the expanding and contracting of lungs, we live this faith. It comes to us as a gift and is shared in how we live as a gift for those around us. In this Creed we remember, we renew, and we proclaim what we believe. It helps us teach the faith and reminds us why we have so much to celebrate, by faith!                      tws

### Friends of Jesus Preschool

The summer camps of 2019 are just a happy (and hot) memory! We had the highest enrollment we have ever experienced for summer camps at Friends of Jesus Preschool. We even expanded the number of openings available to try to accommodate as many as possible who wanted to attend. The staff and campers had so much fun. We love the opportunity to interact with our students during the summer. Our students miss one another over the summer, and are happy to reconnect through camp.

Planning and preparation are well underway for the 2019 – 2020 preschool year. Bug Blast Off will be held Thursday, August 22. New and returning families have a chance to meet one another and participate in a scavenger hunt to familiarize themselves with our classrooms. Parents attend an orientation to learn about policies and procedures. This event helps all of us get ready to begin school with our best foot forward in September. We'll be kicking off our mum fundraiser that night, too. We hope that the Zion congregation will once again enthusiastically support us as you have in the past. Watch the kiosk for information coming soon. Our first day of school is September 3<sup>rd</sup> for Yellow and Red Bugs. Orange Bugs will begin on September 4<sup>th</sup>. Due to high enrollment, our Red Bug classes have moved back to the afternoon for this year. We continue to make improvements and upgrades to our campus to make sure we are providing our students and their families with the very best preschool experience possible. We have replaced worn carpet in our classrooms and have freshened up some paint colors. We continue to replace worn out toys and classroom supplies with monies from your generous support of our fundraisers. We have very limited openings for fall. If you or someone you know is looking for high-quality, faith-based preschool, please tell them about Friends of Jesus – we'd love to give them a tour and invite them to join our family! Soak up all the summer sunshine!

### Are You in a PICKLE or a JAM???



If you are making jams and jellies this summer or plan on doing some canning later, please consider making several additional jars and donating them to the Grateful Hearts Thankful Hands Bazaar. These are very popular items and have sold very well. If you need canning jars, lids or rings we have some available. Please call Jayne Mayer (375-8342) for further information.

**Prayer Shawl Ministry** meets every 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday from 2:00-4:00 at Biggby on Stadium Drive.

All are welcome to stop by and share your talents or simply see the beautiful shawls that are being created. The group is always eager to share the work that they do!

### Grateful Hands, Thankful Hearts Bazaar Contacts:

If you have questions concerning the upcoming Bazaar, the following is a list of people to contact:

**Attic Treasures and Book Nook:** Linda Mayer (375-1241), Jayne Mayer (375-8342)

**Knit and Crochet:** Janis Dinda (569-0322)

**Ornaments:** Marti Nuyen (342-8714)

**Sewing/Quilting/Crafts:** Sharon Preuss (553-3385)

**Gifts in a Jar:** Jeanette Meyer (381-9078)

**Zion's Table (baked or canned goods):**

Amy Nelson (345-6155);

Jeanette Meyer (381-9078)

### KALAMAZOO LOAVES & FISHES

The wish list item for **August is Whole Grain Pasta**. Please put your donations in the gray tubs under the church office window.

Thank you!



## Worship Help for Parents and Children

(It is OK for everyone else to read too!)

This month: **Worship Assistants**

Worship is all about “showing the worth” of our faith in God through Jesus Christ. On Saturdays and Sundays we gather as one family in Christ, around Word and Sacrament to give God glory, grow in faith, and share our mutual support with each other. It is like a family dinner at Thanksgiving. “Liturgy” literally means “the work of the people” and is our pattern of worship. Lutherans believe worship is something we participate in rather than passively watch. Worship is not a spectator sport! We are not an audience, we are all participants!

Seminary training helps pastors to understand and write liturgy, administer the Sacrament of Communion, and proclaim the prophetic Word (sermons.) But one of Luther's great gifts of worship was to write liturgies, hymns and translate the Bible *into the language of his people*. This brought ALL believers into the participation of worship! Our members assist in that role in many ways. Each week in the bulletin that we list our “worship assistants.”

**Altar Guild** members “set the table” for the Holy Meal of Communion. **Acolytes** assist by lighting candles, gathering offerings, assisting at baptisms, and leading processions on festival days. **Ushers** assist with worship materials, emergencies, and helping the flow of worship. **Lectors** of all ages read Scripture. **Cantors** chant the liturgy and Psalms. **Organists, pianists, choirs,** and other **musicians** lead the singing or proclaim the Word through music. Some help with **sound** and **lighting**. Some **bake** communion bread. **Artists** provide banners, flowers, and other gifts to help celebrate the church year. And **everyone assists** by participating in song, prayer, and simply “showing up” to mutually support each other. We are currently seeking to find more ways to involve more people of all ages, so that the “family” of Zion is truly

more involved in leading and supporting worship. Worship is a participatory event for all! Worship is a “team event!” What gifts, time, or energy might you bring to the table?

For Parents with young children: We have sought many ways to involve our children in worship. Simply by being here, your kids are learning the “liturgy.” They are getting used to the parts of worship and the flow, and so parents are a worship assistant for their family. When you let your children put your offering envelope (or their own nickel or dime) in the offering place, you are helping them learn about stewardship, and they are assisting in the life of our worship.

Children's activity pages offer children the themes adults are considering and singing about on any given Sunday. When a child comes up and receives a blessing at Communion, they are showing other children, by their example, that worship is a place for children to participate in also. And when a youngster shouts out “Amen!” at the “wrong time” or sings when everyone else has stopped — so what?! This is the Spirit moving them and their way of helping us to remember that we once were young as well. Remember what Jesus said about welcoming little children! That is at the heart of the kingdom and at the heart of our worship. *Don't ever be embarrassed by your kids! They are God's gifts entrusted to you and they are as much a part of our family here as anyone else. If worship is important for any, it is important for all — especially kids!*


We even added windows in the back of the sanctuary, so if your little ones get too restless or noisy, you can have a brief time out, but still see and hear what is going on! If you have other ways that you would like to be involved as a worship assistant, or have ideas for our children, please pass them along. Every time we gather to celebrate Easter, there is some way that all “assist” in making that meaningful and full of joy! Peace!

## AUGUST 2019 WORSHIP LEADERS

	August 4	August 11	August 18	August 25
Head Ushers 8am	Stan Leitz	Richard Rakow	Walter Kohnke	Steve Weber
Head Ushers 10:00am	Dan Buchtrup	Dick Coffinger	Bob Folck	Joe Zerbel
Greeters Sat 5:30pm	Bruce and Kathy Hus-ton	Carolyn Vestal	Bruce and Dorothy Dee	Mary and Gordon Berk-housen
Greeters 8:00am	Benno and Carol Rosin	Terry and Gail Nelson	Bev Snow	Dave and Linda Mayer
Greeters 10:00am	Wayne and Elaine Skalnican	Mark and Erin Hampshire	Mary Lou Wright	Charles and Cindy Krill
Communion Assistants Sat 5:30pm	Roxanne Seeber	Rita Linnenkugel	Kathleen Jordan	Mike Schlack
Communion Assistants 8:00am	Jim Mayer Richard Rakow Linda Stieve	Dave Newman Ken Toy	Matt Simmons Cyndi Bremer Ted Maxson	Jim Mayer Richard Rakow Linda Stieve
Communion Assistants 10:00am	Steve Butt Brent Butler Troy Cosgrove	Janis Dinda Garr Gast Lorraine Hanna	Steve Nuyen Rollie Preuss John Roggow	Dan Seng Linda Seng One needed
Acolytes 8am	Landon Bauer Claire Alsvig	Riley Ketchum Jacob Waterlander	Audrey Hamilton Alex Kiessling	Megan Bowers Megan Brennan
Acolytes 10:00am	Bella Frazier Aly Hampshire Carolyn Daenzer	Maren Hampshire Sean Skuratowicz One needed	Curtis Chapman Kate Phillips Dave Mayer	Matthew Devine Kurtis Scheffler Jayne Mayer
Lectors 8am	Linda Stieve	Erin Hampshire	Rollie Preuss	One needed
Lectors 10:00am	Phil Rettman Pat Frohnappfel	Elsie Autry One needed	Elsie Autry One needed	Melissa Noseworthy One needed
Altar Ministry Sat. 5:30	Carol Daenzer Vicki Holt	Carol Daenzer Pam Lietz	Larry & Joe Zerbel	Two needed
Altar Ministry 8:00am	Dee Wentzel Melissa Noseworthy	Melissa Noseworthy One needed	Larry & Joe Zerbel	Toni Dembski Dee Wentzel
Altar Ministry 10:00am	8:00 – Vicki Holt 10:00 – Grace Dinda	8:00 – Neil Segerdahl 10:00 – Neil Segerdahl	8:00 – Vicki Holt 10:00 – Nick Alsvig/ Andrew Bickel	8:00 – Neil Segerdahl 10:00 – Grace Dinda
Sound				
Coffee Fellowship	Benno & Carol Rosin	Lisa and Dan Frazier	Don and Carol Daenzer	Steve and Debbie Weber



# AUGUST 2019

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
				<b>1</b>  <b>9:00 – 12:00</b> FOJ Summer Camp	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>  <b>3:00</b> HS Kayak Trip  <b>5:30</b> Communion Service
<b>4</b>  <b>8 and 10:00</b> Communion Service	<b>5</b>  <b>6:30</b> Personnel	<b>6</b>  <b>6:30</b> FOJ Ministry	<b>7</b>  <b>8:30</b> LWR Sewing	<b>8</b>  <b>3:00</b> High School Summer Study Treat Street  <b>6:00</b> Property	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>  <b>5:30</b> Communion Service
<b>11</b>  <b>8 and 10:00</b> Communion Service  <b>9:00</b> NYG Recap  <b>9-1</b> Confirmation Camp	<b>12</b>  <b>9-1</b> Confirmation Camp	<b>13</b>  <b>9-1</b> Confirmation Camp  <b>5:30</b> Finance	<b>14</b>  <b>8:30</b> LWR Sewing  <b>8:30</b> Summer Beautification  <b>9-1</b> Confirmation Camp	<b>15</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>17</b>  <b>2-4:00</b> Prayer Shawl @ Biggby  <b>5:30</b> Communion Service
<b>18</b>  <b>8 and 10:00</b> Communion Service  <b>4:30</b> Pig Roast!	<b>19</b>  <b>5:30</b> Campus Ministry  <b>6:30</b> Board of Directors	<b>20</b>  <b>6:30</b> Communication Ministry	<b>21</b>  <b>8:30</b> LWR Sewing	<b>22</b>  <b>6-7:30</b> FOJ Bug Blast-Off	<b>23</b>	<b>24</b>  <b>5:30</b> Communion Service
<b>25</b>  <b>8 and 10:00</b> Communion Service	<b>26</b> Endowment Grant Deadline  <b>7:00 pm</b> ZWBG	<b>27</b>	<b>28</b>  <b>8:30</b> LWR Sewing	<b>29</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>31</b>  <b>5:30</b> Communion Service

# FAMILY LIFE

## FAMILY MINISTRY NEWS

### Pig Roast!

The annual Congregation Pig Roast Celebration will be on August 18th. Festivities will begin at 4:30pm and end at 7:30pm! Please bring a dish to share! We will have a bounce house, dunk tank, and live music. Invite your friends and neighbors!

### FAMILY SPIRITUAL EDUCATION OPPORTUNITIES

What a fantastic year of Sunday School we had! What an awesome team of volunteers who wrote a years worth of curriculum! What a great Vacation Bible School—a record number of attendees! Looking back at last year we had a lot of highs and very few lows. Consistent numbers lasted most of the year and so did the positive feedback and comments heard by kids and parents alike! We saw some dedicated family time during the year as well as at VBS—times for spiritual and faith conversations and discovery.

We saw 8 visitors at VBS and 60 people! A big thanks needs to go out to the Family Ministry Team as well as the Sunday School Ministry Team!!! Adam & Chrissy Brege, Lisa Brennan, Dani Field, Erin & Mark Hampshire, Darcie Kiessling, Susie Schierbeek, and Beth Wheeler! Thanks for taking ownership of Family Spiritual Education at Zion!

# Youth News

## **High School:**

### Summer Study Dates

One more study remains! We will once again be meeting up for an hour or so for discussion on a famous quote and how it relates to the Bible, on:

**Thurs, Aug 8 at 3pm**

Treat Street

### Kayak Trip

**Saturday, August 3rd 3:30pm**

Incoming 9th graders as well as departing 12th graders are invited to our annual ride down the Kalamazoo River! Sign up via email!!!

## **Middle School Youth**

### Confirmation Camp

ALL students entering 6th–8th grades are requested to be at Confirmation Camp August 12–14th from 9am–1pm each day. Call the office for more info!

## Echoes

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

Real. Present. God.

The theme for the National Youth Gathering is so fitting for this article. As I attempt to make known the times and places where God is working through our congregation members, I have to sometimes sit back and realize God is present in everything. He was definitely present and real in the lives of 25,000 youth last month. As our group of 16 interacted with some of those kids it was evident that God is alive not just in our separate paths but in the whole world. We heard speakers give testimony of that, learned in sessions about how to recognize God even more, and sang our hearts out in anthems of praise. Simple tasks were reminders of God—high fives, encouragement, giving up a seat for a stranger. The spiritual high of a Youth Gathering is only crippled by the routine back at home. Each day as we live our lives please take notice of God and his love...and reflect that to others! Be the reason why someone else might see God today!

## Campus Ministry



During the month of June, there were 9 sessions of freshmen orientation. At each of those sessions, there was an individual session that ran from 5:00-6:30PM called the Involvement Zone. The Involvement Zone was a time when student organizations on campus had a chance to promote what they do to the incoming freshmen. As I interacted and visited with the incoming students, there were a wide range of viewpoints that they shared with me. Some of the students said that they were not religious and didn't have an interest in getting involved with a church or campus ministry, but there were several students who said that even though they didn't grow up going to church, they were open to wanting to learn more. One student told me that she did not grow up going to church, but a friend of hers invited her to some of the events in her youth group and when she did, she felt something stirring inside of her. She said that she felt that same stirring as I was telling her about some of the things that we do in our campus ministry and wants to come and visit us in the Fall semester. The students that did express an interest in wanting to check out Solid Grounds said that the Bronco Buddy mentoring program is the thing that caught their eye the most. I am hopeful that we will see a good turnout of new students this upcoming Fall semester! On Monday July 29<sup>th</sup>, a representative of the Michigan District who oversees the video production department will be meeting with me and a couple of students from Solid Grounds. He is doing a story on the campus ministries in the Michigan District and that information will be shared with congregations in the District to let them know about the Lutheran based campus ministries at WMU, EMU, CMU, MSU, and U of M. One of the biggest challenges over the

years is getting students who were involved with Lutheran congregations connected with campus ministry once they head off to college. I am hopeful that this effort will increase awareness about campus ministry to congregations.

Our Tuesday evening Bible study this summer has been going really well. We have 6-7 students that attend the study and have had some really solid conversations about faith and life as a college student. On Wednesday July 31<sup>st</sup>, there will be a volunteer event with Habitat for Humanity here in Kalamazoo for members of Zion and WMU students. There is a sign up sheet on the kiosk at church for those who are interested in volunteering.

I will be guest preaching at Christ Lutheran Church in Marshall on Sunday July 21<sup>st</sup>, Immanuel Lutheran on Sunday August 4<sup>th</sup> and St. Michael's Lutheran on Sunday August 11<sup>th</sup>.

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

## Grateful Hearts Thankful Hands Bazaar Date

This year's Grateful Hearts Thankful Hands Bazaar will be held on **Saturday, November 16<sup>th</sup>**. Please note this date on your calendars. And let your friends know, too. In order to make this bazaar as successful as those in the past, we need your help! Without your thankful hands creating the crafts and food items, knitting, crocheting, canning, sewing; baking, building, sanding, and painting, we would have few items to sell.

If you don't consider yourself 'crafty,' you can still help by praying for the bazaar's success and by donating needed items. Check the list on the bulletin board for ideas. Proceeds from this year's bazaar will again help support Friends of Jesus Preschool, the Deacon's Conference, Zion's Youth Ministries and LURO.

**Book Review: "Son of Laughter."** Frederick Buechner. Harper Collins. 1993.

Oh, my goodness! Where shall I begin? This masterpiece of fiction follows the saga of Jacob in the book of Genesis. Remember Jacob? He stole his twin brother's birthright? He had to bargain for 7 years' labor to be given Rachel, but Uncle Laban tricked him into an extra 7 years to finally receive Rachel as his bride? And that all night wrestling match with an unknown assailant, or an angel, or God himself? Of course you remember Jacob (later "Israel.") But do you really? Too often we race through Bible stories missing the full complexity and prophetic message which is at the heart of Scripture's inspiration. Buechner helps us to dig deeper, discerning in our own living the opportunity for the same growth as occurred in the lives of Jacob, Joseph, David, and every other character in Scripture. Buechner is a master of language who helps us to think deeply about stories that are incredibly more complex than we often understand.

All of us should be able to read passages from the Bible and understand what is going on, but as with traveling to another country, a tour guide can always make the journey more fulfilling. Buechner is such a tour guide. His understanding of the cultures and customs allow him to tell the same story but from a perspective that we often miss. Plus, he can flat out "write." There are few authors of fiction who can use words and images like he does. Buechner has an ability to create phrases and thoughts that generate deeper insights and understanding. He is a gift!

We read scripture as Western oriented people ... we are logical and linear and literal. The middle east and the people of the Old Testament are more used to pictures, cycles, parable and metaphor. Where we read in black and white, they hear in color.

After Jacob worked for his sly and manipulative uncle Laban for more than 14

years (after hoping to just show up, grab a bride and head back home in a month or so), he was finally ready to head home and have his fear-filled reunion with Esau. But Jacob knew that Laban would not let him go without extracting a price. And it would be steep. Here is how Buechner imagines the bargaining that certainly took place:

Jacob spoke. *"The time has come to give me my wives and children. I've paid for them, slaving for you for fourteen years and then some, but it's the way of things to ask your leave so I'm asking for it. I 'm going home.'* Laban held a lamb in both arms now, hugging her. He pressed his nose into her deep curls as if she was yet another love I was threatening to rob him of. He looked up at me with moist eyes. *'I was a boy when I came,' I said, 'on the day when I almost broke my back heaving the stone off the well, the day when Rachel watered my black camel. I'm not a boy any more. I've become a bird. I've grown a vulture's talons tramping your fields for you. My nose is a beak from pecking and pulling your weeds. But home is where I mean to fly to, Laban, and I mean to take my hens and nestlings with me.'"* [134]

Others have tried to use fiction in the retelling of favorite Bible stories, but I am not sure that anyone has done it as well as Buechner. He is a Presbyterian pastor who has become an incredibly gifted writer. Annie Dillard refers to him as "one of our greatest writers!" (That is an incredible accolade for someone whose Christian faith is at the core of every piece of fiction that he has produced!)

My suggestion should you read this book, is to read it all the way through. And don't hurry! Then pick up the book of Genesis and read chapters 25-50. And then pick up this book and read it again. This would be a wonderful devotional book, a group study book, or another way to better understand the beauty of Holy Scripture.

Pastor Seeber

8/1 Roberta Geissel, Amanda VanderHorst, Sandra Witek

8/2 Rebecca Bauer, Matthew Devine, Carol Folck, Beth Freeby, Jacob Newman, Rebecca Quesnell, Joshua Zerbel

8/4 Kathleen Huston

8/5 Natalie Gogan, James Huberty, Greta Jendralski, Timothy Seeber, Kevin VanderVeen, Carolyn Vestal

8/7 Curt Chapman, Ed Quesnell, Colton Woodhams

8/8 Cynthia Bierlein, Lisa Brennan, Susan Bruns

8/9 Gary Bruns

8/11 Willeen Ehlich, Louis Tinigin

8/12 Greg Gerfen, Rita Malvitz, Michelle Naylor, Melissa Noseworthy, Evan Schoonbeck

8/14 Kenneth Lundquist, John Malmstrom, Ben Nutsch, Kurtis Scheffler, Linda Seng, Grant Stetten, Pam Wesley

8/15 Dave VanderMeeden, Ashley Weber

8/16 Steven Anderson, Andrew Harding, Jil Larson, Hannah Wendling

8/17 Ethan Boettcher, Ashtin Eichaker

8/18 Madeleine Kolk, Barb Schulze

8/21 Eloise Cullimore, John Freeby, Aaron Grube, David Laurin

8/22 Bonnie Borak, Daniel Burnard, Eldor Quandt, Joanne Smith, Andrew Watson

8/23 Kate Phillips, Nick Sward

8/24 Sheryl Stephan

8/26 Jackson Couch, Daniel French, John Roggow, Paisley Woodhams

8/27 James Dinda, Cherie Dorman, Millie Field, Charles Fierke, Jenna Freudenburg

8/28 Beverly DeVries, Jack Fredericks, Emily Switalksi

8/29 Cheryl Besser, Stephanie Cullimore, Gunnar Fredericks, Ryan Stetten

8/30 Phyllis Emig, Erin Hampshire, Brent Miltzer, Jessica Parr, Abigail Seeber, Debbie Weber

8/31 John Buetow

## Parish Report

### Deaths

Art Schwerin 6/21/2019

Phil Schaefer 7/6/2019

### Bazaar Facts

Did you know: To date, our Grateful Hearts Thankful Hands Bazaars have generated over \$63,000 in proceeds with over \$35,000 going to Zion to reduce the mortgage on the renovations, over \$16,000 to other Zion ministries, and over \$10,000 to community ministries. Without each of you this would not have been possible. This year's proceeds will be disbursed as follows: Zion's Friends of Jesus (Hilltop) Preschool (30%), The Kalamazoo Deacon's Conference (20%), Zion's Youth Ministries (20%) and Zion's LURO Campaign (30%). We pray that God will continue to bless this ministry and outreach effort.

### Completed Bazaar Items

If you are working on crafts or sewing items for the Grateful Hearts Thankful Hands Bazaar, you may drop off your completed items in the Workroom. Please enter your name, phone number, the quantity and type of item you are leaving and a suggested selling price if you have one in mind on the sign in sheet. **Note: if you are leaving items for Attic Treasures or the Book Nook you do not need to sign them in.**

### Staff Anniversaries

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

Emily Sierengowski	8/10/2018
Emily Agnello	8/22/2017
Aaron Grube	8/1/2012
Denise O'Brien	8/1/2014
Stephanie Cullimore	8/19/2009
Melissa VanderMeeden	8/25/2008
Pastor Mark Couch	8/1/2001



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# **Congregation Pig Roast!**

**August 18th, 4:30-7:30 here at Zion**

**Live music and bounce house  
begin at 4:30**

**Dinner begins at 5:30**

**Please bring a dish to share!**

**BOUNCE HOUSE!**

**DUNK TANK!**

**LIVE MUSIC!**

**INVITE YOUR**

**FRIENDS AND**

**NEIGHBORS!**