

The Annual Report of Mission and Ministry 2014
Zion Lutheran Church – Kalamazoo www.zionkazoo.org

ADMINISTRATIVE PASTOR

As you read reports of our various ministries, give thanks to God for the opportunities and people that God has blessed us with. YOU are what make this congregation the unique and special place that it is. As you review the variety of ministries, remember that our goal is for each member of Zion to participate in at least one ministry. If you feel the call to serve but have interests or gifts in an area we are presently not serving, talk to one of the staff and we'll do all that we can to help create another new ministry.

While this report is a review of where we have been, it is also the starting point for what comes next. This has been another great year of ministry. You have been joyful in worship, energetic in stewardship of ministry, and supportive of staff and programs here at Zion. As we move forward we continue to wrestle with our prophetic call and the practical realities of our time, talent, and treasure. When we think of the challenge to status quo of Jeremiah, John the Baptist, or Jesus we remember how they "stirred the pot!" At the same time, we think of the practical, pastoral leadership of Moses, Jesus, and St. Paul as they gathered the lost and brought healing and peace, we remember how practical they often had to be in their approach to real life situations.

There is always a tension between the prophetic challenge to a world darkened by sin and the pastoral heart which comforts embraces, and heals. Ministry is always to be found in faithfully hearing and responding to both calls, as we prayer for God's wisdom to guide our efforts and make the best use of our gifts.

Where are your needs from Zion, and how is God calling you to be engaged? Are you after peace or desirous of a challenge? Is the goal of ministry to comfort the afflicted, to afflict the comfortable, or both? Where are you being challenged in your faith and where do you need more of a challenge? These are the questions we wrestle with decisions about worship, education, outreach and healing love. Our involvement in worship, prayer, and spiritual growth helps us as we seek to be faithful to our calling and partners with each other in our life together as a congregation.

We continue to balance worship style and substance. Our worship approach is "traditional but flexible." Our staff will spend considerable time this summer in planning so that we can bring new energy, musical styles and messengers, and excitement into worship without diluting the substance or power of liturgy, the church year, and the balance that the weekly lessons bring to our spiritual growth and health. We will continue to explore practical ways to present the message of the Gospel through the gifts and resources of the people God has gathered in this time and place. As always, your suggestions and interest in this area are welcomed. A case in point is our approach to "continuous" reception of Holy Communion. By this new approach, we have been able to include many who otherwise have been kept away from the altar by the barrier of the steps. This has meant many others have had to surrender the devotional aspect of kneeling by the high altar. The loving surrender of personal needs to allow access to the altar for the entire congregation shows the faith and love that makes this congregation so unique. This is a work in progress and we are continuing to seek ways to maintain the devotional aspect of this time as well.

Our radio ministry continues to be a powerful means of outreach. Not only is this helpful for those homebound on Sundays, but we continue to get regular feedback from outside the congregation from others who appreciate the Gospel message we share throughout Southwest Michigan. By this fall, our new website should be functional, and it will become a "daily bulletin board and message center," as we will be able to make changes from the office on a real time basis. We plan for this to become a more helpful communicative tool.

The next phase of the Prayer Garden should be completed this fall, with a focal point on the hillside to bring a theme to the surroundings, benches, more walkway and additional plantings. This will be an awesome setting to better utilize the natural setting of Zion, whether one is just looking for a quiet place to eat lunch, meditate, meet with a small group, or maybe even have a brief devotional gathering or time of worship.

This year saw the end of our Lutheran Braille Ministry as all of the centers, nations wide, were closed down. That means our Braille workers have completed their mission, which began in 1966. (Talk about faithful servants! Thanks!) Our Hilltop Preschool and Campus Ministries both have fully functioning ministry teams now and that will provide an excellent support and soundboard for the staff of each. And what a joy to celebrate in July of this year the 100th birthday of Pastor Grother, who has been such a fixture in this community since 1948! His anniversary weekend will kick off the beginning of our 150th anniversary as a congregation. We will embark on a four year effort that will culminate in July of 2018 with a powerful celebration. Along the way there will be many opportunities for fellowship, worship, special events, and a commitment to an ever growing outreach through the gifts that God has given. We will be looking to the entire congregation to become involved in the planning and celebrating of the many blessings God has touched us with.

While worship, education, and outreach have been hallmarks of our ministry, we are beginning to understand how important the ministry of "healing" has been here at Zion. There are many efforts in that area, from Prayer Ministry, Prayer Shawls, Healing Services, Stephen Ministers (just to name a few) and we will spend the next year helping to better understand this as a major component of every ministry we are involved in. That ties in with the fact that our culture as a whole is aging, and there are many needs that families and individuals are dealing with that our congregation might become more helpful in assisting with.

Because of the awesome support of members of Zion, your investments in the Church Extension Fund have meant a significant decrease in our monthly mortgage payments, which helps to alleviate that pressure on the budget. I will leave it to Aaron Grube, Pastor Couch, and Gale Lager to share the joys and vision for the efforts we have called upon them to lead, and I appreciate the love and support that so many have given them in their daily ministry.

As part of the anniversary years, there will be opportunities for special projects within the congregation, and the development of new ministries outside of Zion. We are blessed with incredible leadership and families and individuals who are anxious to reach out in love toward each other and work together in many ways to celebrate the miracle of Easter and carry out the daily ministry that Baptism calls each one of us into. I cannot imagine any congregation that I would rather serve in than this one. You are indeed a blessing and a special group of people. Together, we have much to do, but what a joyful burden it is that has been offered to us. Blessings and peace! Pastor Seeber

CAMPUS MINISTRY 2014 ANNUAL REPORT

The goal of Solid Grounds in our campus ministry to the students of WMU is ...1) Provide worship services, Bible studies and fellowship opportunities to help Christian students grow in their faith, 2) empower them to use their gifts and talents and interests to serve the Lord on campus and in the Kalamazoo community, and 3) provide a warm and inviting place where non-Christian students feel respected, welcome, and experience genuine hospitality.

Solid Grounds offers a Sunday worship service and lunch on Sunday's, starting at noon. We have student leaders who lead the music portion of service. The music team consists of our lead piano player, a violinist, a bass player and 3-4 vocalists. There were from 15-30 students that attended Sunday worship and lunch. Lunches are provided by 7 area Lutheran Churches. Our midweek Bible study took place on Tuesday evenings. The students and I took turns leading the study.

On Wednesday evenings, I continue to work with Fellowship of Christian Athletes. There are 30-40 student athletes that attend the Wednesday FCA meeting. I serve as a pastoral advisor to the students at FCA. In addition to serving a wide variety of students on campus, my connection with FCA has been instrumental in recruiting WMU students to serve as mentors to the students at Tree of Life school in the Edison neighborhood. This was our second year in this mentoring program. There were 30 WMU students that served as mentors to 30 students at Tree of Life this year. On the last Sunday afternoon of each month, we had a group event together. The events included taking the kids to Binder Park Zoo, carving pumpkins, making Christmas decorations and cookies, indoor swimming at the pool in Lawson Ice Arena, a trip to Jungle Joes, and a day in the park in April. The mentoring program has given WMU students an opportunity to serve the Lord here in our community by showing the love of Jesus to those students. The mentoring program has also given Solid Grounds an opportunity to reach out to students on campus that are not involved with Solid Grounds or FCA. Another highlight this year was our monthly dinner gatherings with International students. We held our dinner gatherings on the last Friday of each month with 35-50 international students that attended. These evenings were a great opportunity to build friendships, respect and bridges between cultures and religions. There were Muslim and Buddhist students from Malaysia, Japan, Iraq, Iran, and Sri Lanka that attended the dinners and gave us a chance to learn from one another and let them know about Jesus. The mentoring program with the students at Tree of Life and the International student dinner gatherings were great outreach events for our campus ministry.

Looking ahead to the upcoming academic year, we plan to continue all of the ministry events that we are currently doing, as well as looking into the possibility of having monthly music events at Solid Grounds. Nick Mueller, the piano player for our Sunday worship services, is also the director of Gold Company II at WMU. He is very well connected with the music scene in Kalamazoo and is willing to help assemble a variety of music concerts at Solid Grounds this upcoming academic year. I want to thank Linda Mayer, who has served as the Brunch coordinator the last few years, as well as Fred Sitkins, Steve Butt, Tycho Fredricks, Dave Borak, Aaron Grube, Lorraine Hanna, Joni LaPointe, and Charles Fierke for serving on the campus ministry team, and all those who helped prepare a meal for our Sunday lunches in September and October.

If anyone would like to help with campus ministry, please contact me at: pastormarksg@gmail.com. Thank you and God's blessings to you all! Pastor Mark

ASSISTANT PASTOR (part time)

The following are my pastoral activities over the past year as part-time, assistant pastor of Zion Lutheran Church:

1. I make monthly, personal visits and bring Holy Communion to "shut-in" members of Zion and a few Lutheran, non-members. Presently there are 29 "shut-ins" on whom I call.
2. From September through May I teach a weekly, hour-long, Tuesday morning Bible class attended by 15-20 persons. Including some non-members.
3. Since the summer of 2006 I am the staff member relating to Stephen Ministry at Zion.
4. Tuesdays and Fridays are my regular, weekly days to be at Zion and to make calls on members including hospital calls.
5. Since 2009 I am of serving as the staff member relating to Hilltop Preschool of Zion. As part of that responsibility I serve on the Administrative Ministry team for Hilltop Preschool.
6. I serve as preacher and/or liturgist at funeral services as requested by family members or staff members of Zion.
7. Other occasional activities at Zion include preaching, serving as liturgist, teaching Sunday adult classes, new member classes, and aiding Pastor Seeber and other staff members when asked as I can.

My goal for the coming year is to continue to fulfill the above responsibilities and to be of service to the congregation and staff in others ways as I am able. Pastor Larry Brelje

DIRECTOR OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

The previous year has brought about a lot of changes in ministry! I have now fully taken on Sunday School and Middle School ministries in addition to the High School Ministry. Confirmation/Middle School has flourished! Sunday School has begun the process of change and growth but will need another year or two before it reaches full potential. Some great volunteers were added to the ministries while some other great volunteers focused their efforts elsewhere.

As I mentioned in last years report, as time goes on my "Director" position will continue to grow into more age groups.

Hilltop Preschool invited me to do chapels for them twice a month. In addition to those chapels it has been great getting to know the kids and just hanging out down there sometimes.

We have a group of Post High School students who were active in Youth Group while they were here, or just go to school in the area and were active at their home congregations. That group has stayed the same size as last year but we usually have a new face each time. We meet once a month for dinner or a late night snack and more often in the summer to occasionally golf.

One of the greatest blessings and biggest successes of the year was the start of a Young Adult Group at Zion. This group is intended for young adults age 22-30, married or single who don't have kids. At our first meeting in March we had six young adults attend. Since then, we have seen a total of 12 faces come through! We meet every other week at a brewery in town and we talk about challenges that a young Christian adult faces in the world today. At Zion we are seeing more and more people in this age group coming to services and getting involved!

Last summer brought about a space change in the Undercroft. We switched the Sunday School and Middle School areas and it has proven to be a good change! We had less space issues this year and everyone felt comfortable after a few weeks of the changes. We will continue to work on these rooms until they are properly finished but for now, the Sunday morning and Wednesday night educational needs are being met!

Over the first two years a lot of good relationships have been established. Throughout the next year we will need MORE adults involved in Sunday School, Middle School, and High School. A lasting faith in our young people requires a high ratio of adults to kids. As we continue to grow these ministries we will need to see more people involved! This is an exciting time in ministry!

Aaron Grube

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

The mission of the Board of Directors is to have oversight responsibility for strategic planning, the management of resources, the financial soundness of the congregation, the spiritual welfare of the congregation, and the completion of ministry programs.

The Board of Directors for 2013-14 was:

- a. President: Mark E. Meyer
- b. Past President: John Roggow
- c. President Elect: Lorraine Hanna
- d. Vice President – Property: Charles Fierke
- e. Vice President – Personnel: Mike O'Connor
- f. Vice President – Finance: Joni LaPointe
- g. Directors at Large: Matt Simmons, Barb Nutsch, Todd Schierbeek, Steve Butt, Karen Chapo, and Dave Dorman

The incoming Board Members for 2014-15 are:

- a. President Elect: Tim Klein
- b. Vice President – Finance: Tim Gumbleton
- c. Directors at Large: Linda Stieve and Dan Buchtrup

During the 2013-14 fiscal year, the Board updated and standardized many of the ministry operating resolutions and updated the policies and procedures of Endowment Grants. Plans for the church's 150th anniversary were initiated. The Braille ministry completed its mission.

The Financial health to the congregation remains good despite a fall off in giving over the later months of the year. The mortgage was refinanced at a lower rate thanks to our members' increased participation in the Church Extension Fund. Our programs for young people remain a vibrant and growing part of our church ministry. Hilltop Preschool continues to become more financially sound and will continue to grow thanks the hard work of its staff in obtaining certification for the KC Ready 4s and Great Start programs. The Youth Ministry lead by Aaron Grube and the Campus Ministry lead by Mark Couch continue to grow and have been a pleasure to see blossom.

The 2014-15 year will likely continue to present us with financial challenges; however, I remain confident in our memberships' willingness to step up the tasks ahead. Our planning for the 150th Anniversary will continue. Strategic planning will focus on potential staffing needs as well as opportunities for development of our adjacent property. It has been a great pleasure to service as President of Zion's Board of Directors and I look forward to my role as Past President.

Respectfully submitted, Mark E. Meyer

ALTAR MINISTRY

The Altar Ministry group had a busy year. We have done some reorganization. The church year has been divided into trimesters, having different co-directresses for each trimester. The June-September trimester was co-directed by Dee Wenzel and Ruth Stokes. October – January 2013 was co-directed by Susan Ahrenholtz and Lois Huechert. February – May was directed by Carolyn Daenzer. This has worked out quite well.

In April the altar area and Sacristy were cleaned. At the same time part of the group helped Cindy Krill and Joanne Smith decorate for Palm Sunday and Easter. We have a Tuesday crew that takes care of the candles and dusting: Carol Rosin and Roz Proos. This helps so much Saturday evening and Sunday mornings. In January we had our annual Epiphany Brunch. Pastor Brelje presented a devotion to further learn about Christmas. This was very interesting. We always welcome new members, for it is a joy to serve at the Lord's table. Carol Daenzer

BRAILLE

In 1966, Zion began a relationship with Lutheran Braille Workers. LBW is a national ministry of the Lutheran Church Missouri Synod. Its mission is "*to provide the message of salvation, through faith in Jesus Christ to individuals who are blind or visually impaired throughout the world.*" Members of Zion became the 25th Work Center out of over 200 that printed these materials. Each week, year after year, our volunteers spent time printing books of the Bible and devotional materials in Braille. These were then bound and mailed to the headquarters in California.

More than 200 work centers throughout the U.S. produced about 250,000 volumes a year. Braille and Large Print publications are available free of charge through the dedication of thousands of volunteers. The Zion work center has been one of the most active and faithful in this effort. In September of 2013, the National Office decided to close all the work centers. In November, our workers had a dinner to celebrate this ministry, and we recognized their efforts in a worship service. When one ministry ends, it provides opportunity for another to begin, and our prayer is that we will keep eyes open from new possibilities.

CHRISTIAN ART MINISTRY

Christian Art Ministry seeks to present the congregation with various forms of visual art, lectures, and workshops to affirm, evaluate, and inspire the spirit. We have had shows from individual artists, groups, and works from our congregation members responding to our requests. We continue to develop various ideas and invite members to join us. Please contact Joanne Smith, Judy Finnegan, Alice Tomer, or Pastor Seeber to get involved.

DINNER TREE MINISTRY

The purpose of this ministry is to provide support to families that have a new baby by offering dinners. The ministry members help to prepare 4-5 meals for the family during the first few weeks of bringing the new baby home. It is a nice opportunity for the new parents to meet other families in the congregation. This ministry has also shown to be a great way to reach out to young families that are new members to Zion. The first goal of this ministry is to continue to provide this service to our families. The second goal is to have more volunteers to make it easier to offer this service.

ENDOWMENT MINISTRY

Mission - Zion Lutheran Church is called to responsible stewardship to develop and utilize this Endowment to support local and international ministries, church worker and music scholarships, building maintenance, music programs, and those ministries which lack alternative funding (i.e., not included in the church budget).

2013 Highlights

- Since 1974, Endowment Fund has disbursed over \$1,059,000 in grants and scholarships.
- Our cumulative 22 year return on investments of 6.6% supports our 6% annual grant budget.
- Grant/Scholarship disbursements to date by category include the following:

Fund Value	Calendar Year	Grants Paid	Zion Ministries	Property Ministry	Outreach Ministries	Scholarships	Music Ministry
	1975-2010	\$960,989	\$274,352	\$272,993	\$195,063	\$174,793	\$43,788
\$ 840,383	2011	38,663	4,534	17,800	10,989	3,600	1,740
\$ 832,199	2012	28,770	11,436	8,500	6,584	-0-	2,250
\$ 947,961	2013	30,736	2,522	23,790	1,729	-0-	2,695
	TOTALS	\$1,059,158	\$292,844	\$323,083	\$214,365	\$178,393	\$50,473
		100.0%	27.7 %	30.5%	20.2%	16.8%	4.8%

2013 Grant Disbursements

Grants/Scholarships	Cat	Payments	Balance
Exterior Wood Trim Painting	P	\$12,561	\$ 439
New Improved Undercroft Lighting	P	6,309	2,691
HVAC Hot Water Filter System	P	4,920	0
All Saints Sunday WMU Brass Quintet	M	1,250	0
LWR Sewing Matching Grant	O	1,026	113
Small Group Ministry Start-up	Z	1,296	889
International Dinner Party Gatherings	O	703	497
Concordia Seward Symphonic Band Concert	M	645	0
Festival of Art and Music	M	500	0
Altar Guild Paraments	Z	461	53
Hilltop Replacement Items	Z	455	0
Initial Funding DCEY Staff	Z	0	6,428
Prayer Garden Landscaping	P	0	6,000
Advent Cantata Orchestra Additional Funding	M	0	800
CEF Stamp Program Matching Gift Program #2	O	0	500
Grant Balances (10) under \$400 – All Categories		610	554
2013 Grant Payments and Balances		\$30,736	\$18,964

Goals for Next Year

- Conduct quarterly meetings with our Professional Investment Manager to review market conditions, investment policy and returns.
- Continue investment policies that sustain an annual Endowment budget of 6%.
- Encourage member grant applications for local and international ministries, church worker and music scholarships, building maintenance, music programs, and those ministries which lack alternate funding.
- Support member legacy gifting to grow the Endowment Fund.

Endowment Fund Major Gifts

- The Helm Music Endowment of \$75,000 was gifted in 1997.
- The Heinz estate bequeathed \$52,100 in 2003.
- Doris Dinda gifted \$35,000 to Zion's Endowment in 2004.
- Undesignated Zion Memorials and Gifts of \$2,762 were received in 2013.

Administration

Endowment grants can be completed for member mission trips, servant events, challenge or matching grants, new ministry start-ups, mission congregation support, building maintenance, church music concerts and recitals. Applications for grants, music and church worker scholarships can be obtained from the church office. Zion's Endowment cannot be used for loans or items included in the congregation's operating budget. Invested principal must be preserved; only earned interest, dividends, and realized investment appreciation can be disbursed. Members are encouraged to include the Zion Lutheran Endowment Fund in their wills, estate bequests or memorials, partner in "passing it forward," and become a member of the Zion Lutheran Founders Society.

Endowment Ministry meets quarterly on the second Monday of January, April, July and October to review grant/scholarship applications, investment results from LVM Capital Management, complete an annual budget, financial activity reports, and plan public relations initiatives. To permit internal review, Grant/scholarship requests should be received two weeks prior to our regular quarterly meetings. If you have any questions about Zion's Endowment Funds, please contact any Endowment Ministry members including Dave Alsvig, Dana Butts, Carrie Chapman, Brian Kiessling, Rollie Preuss, Chuck Wendling or Pastor Seeber.

FINANCE MINISTRY

The 2013-14 Finance Ministry Team was comprised of Joni LaPointe, Paul Gilbert, Bruce Huston, Tim Gumbleton, Rhonda Newman, Rollie Preuss, Matt Folck and Debbie Kipp. The Ministry team is responsible for processing and managing the finances of the congregation. For the fiscal year ending May 31, 2014, the following was accomplished:

- The financials for the year resulted in a net income for the year.
- The balanced budget for the upcoming year was prepared using an estimated giving budget of \$700,000.
- As contributions continue to be made to the remodeling project, additional payments are made on the principle of the loan.
- The refinancing of the mortgage loan reduced our interest rate from 4.5% to 2.75%. Continuing to pay the same monthly payment, principle will go down approximately \$2,000 more a month with the new interest rate of 2.75%.

FUNERAL LUNCHEON

This is a special ministry that has been carried out faithfully for many years and it provides assistance with food and fellowship immediately after a funeral service at Zion.

The church office or Pastor informs us of the family's wishes for a luncheon. We visit with the family, explain our service, make suggestions and discuss the menu. The family is responsible for the cost of any food that needs to be purchased. We have a calling committee and a list of food volunteers who very willingly donate to the menu when called.

We organize, plan, shop and call for food donations. We set up, serve and clean-up. We try to make it as easy and pleasant for the family to help ease pain, concerns and grief.

If anyone would like to serve (when called) or donate foods, please call the church office and leave your name and someone will contact you. It's another way to reach out and serve with Jesus' love.
Leona Van Antwerp

GRATEFUL HEARTS THANKFUL HANDS BAZAAR MINISTRY

Mission: to provide an annual fellowship event in which all members of Zion can give of their time and God-given talents and thereby contribute to both Zion's ministries and mission outreach in the community.

The Grateful Hearts Thankful Hands Bazaar ministry was founded in 2009 with a grant from Zion's Endowment as a way to raise funds to help reduce Zion's LURO building debt and support other Zion ministries. The bazaar is held each year on the third Saturday in November. Members are asked to use their talents to create and donate hand made items such as knit wear, jewelry, purses, pottery, doll clothes, baby items, canned and baked goods, etc. which will be sold during the bazaar. Gently used household items, books, games, puzzles, etc. may also be donated. Our goal is to provide quality products at a reasonable cost.

To date, the bazaars have generated over \$36,000 in proceeds with about \$33,000 distributed to various ministries. Since 2013 proceeds from the bazaar have been distributed as follows: Zion's Hilltop Preschool (30% of the proceeds), The Kalamazoo Deacon's Conference (20%), and Zion's LURO Campaign (50%).

The 2013 Bazaar continued using the theme "From our Hearts to your Hands" and we dedicated our work to the memory of Jan Harding who was greatly missed. Our efforts resulted in sales just over \$7,000. As a further opportunity to be of service within the community, some of our 'leftovers' were picked up by The Deacons Conference and distributed to families in need. The bazaar committee is extremely grateful to those members who so generously participate through their time, talents and prayers to make each bazaar a success, as well as to the members of our community who attend.

The 2014 Bazaar will be held November 15th from 9am to 2pm. Please mark this date on your calendars so you will be available to help. Many hands are needed beginning the Wednesday before through the day of the bazaar to help with pricing, display set-up and monitoring, check out and extending a warm welcome to our guests. This is a time for fellowship and building new friendships while serving both Zion and the Community. We urge you to consider joining us.

The Bazaar Committee is co-chaired by Janis Dinda and Sharon Preuss. Committee members include: Jayne Mayer, Linda Mayer, Nancy Dressler, Marti Nuyen, Amy Nelson, Jeanette Meyer, Peter Tanz, Carol Folck and Chris Wilkins. We welcome new members at any time. Watch for our monthly updates in the Harbinger or weekly bulletins for information on how you can help or become involved. Visit our web page at Zionbazaar.com and share it with your friends. To find out more about The Deacon's Conference, visit their web page at kzoodc.org.
Sharon Preuss

HEIFER PROJECT

Mission – Through our donations, we help families here and abroad to be self sufficient and to feel God's love for them. This school year our Sunday School collected money to purchase a llama. Zion members have honored loved ones with donations also. Our goal is to continue to have Heifer as a Sunday School project. Members can support this project by giving in honor of family/friends on various occasions, such as birthdays, Mother's/Father's Day, holidays, etc. Jayne Mayer

HELPING HANDS

Our purpose is to share God's love and resources with community families who are economically challenged by providing food and gifts during the Christmas season.

For the past several years we have helped eight families. Some have been members of Zion while others live in the greater Kalamazoo area. The Kalamazoo County Department of Human Services along with the Salvation Army provide the names of community families who are seeking holiday assistance. We help by purchasing gifts for the families along with providing food for their Christmas dinner. Additional food items are also purchased along with other items of necessity.

The program begins during the middle of November and concludes on the night we deliver all the gifts, just before Christmas. We have a sponsor family at Zion for each family we are helping and they contact them to find out what kinds of gifts and food items they would like. The gifts are listed on trees and Zion members select the tree(s) of their choice, purchase and return them to church. The sponsor families wrap the gifts, purchase food and various items, and prepare for the delivery. We also invite our community members to our Christmas services. This program has been very blessed by all the support and generosity of our Zion members. Jim Mayer

HELPING OTHERS

Mission statement – We will reach out with Jesus' love and help children and adults in our community. In the Bible it is written that what God gave us is for all. The purpose for Zion is to become involved in helping people in our community by giving them school supplies and health care items.

Each year Zion members have been very generous in donating the requested health care items and school supplies. We collect health care items in the spring. In 2014 we did not distribute health care items. Our change in direction to give locally for health care items will begin spring 2015. Health care items will then be given to Ministry with Community and Kalamazoo Deacons Conference. We begin to collect the school supplies in July when the school ads come out so it is a convenient financial time to be involved. This past year we gave crayons, pencils, erasers, glue sticks, notebooks and scissors to The Tree of Life School in the Edison neighborhood. In 2014 we will donate supplies to Community in Schools Kalamazoo. This organization provides materials to needy children throughout the year.

Our goal is to continue this great mission as it is the one of the missions that is very visible to ALL Zion members and children can actively participate. Members can become involved by continuing to donate the requested items. Jayne Mayer - Chairperson

HIGH SCHOOL MINISTRY

This was a transition year for our High School Ministry. My hopes before the year were high but the numbers remained very similar to the previous year. Numbers are not an accurate measurement of success in ministry but they were lower than I had expected. High school students lead such busy lives and when they can attend youth events, Bible studies, and service projects, we are very happy to have them! Each student adds so much to our group and when we have a good number of them the dynamic of the group is greatly improved! At our 8th grade welcome to high school night, we had an awesome 8 out of 9 possible students in attendance! This bodes well for the upcoming year!

One thing to note is that if a youth is involved in any ministry in the congregation (even if it is not specifically Youth Ministry) we are happy and their influence is added to the life of the congregation!

The group did multiple service projects this year, including a trip to Grand Rapids where we spent the day working in an electronics recycling plant. We provided the labor for a company that helps our environment and gives back to the schools and churches in the community. Another, well received, project that we took on was sending our Zion college students a care packet before both finals weeks. The two packs contained pens, highlighters, snacks, and coffee! Our high school students helped by bringing some items, packing the boxes, and writing the notes. Many thank you notes and stories were received from the college kids! The high school youth also made luminaries for our Christmas Eve Worship Service, held two babysitting nights for our Small Groups, helped with dinners, and made scones for the Bazaar. This group of students is very willing to help out their neighbor!

We did a lot of fun stuff this past year! Our study of denominations and world religions was very well received! We also went to see "God's Not Dead" the movie (fantastic!), SkyZone Indoor Trampoline Park in Grand Rapids, a Newsboys concert, canoeing, had our Costume Contest, had an annual lock-in, went on our annual Winter Retreat to Springhill, made sub sandwiches, had a cooking contest, and went skiing! All in all a very fun year!

Two events I wanted to highlight are as follows:

The LCMS National Youth Gathering in San Antonio saw 28,000+ students from around the United States come together. We had a group of 8 in attendance and all the students and adults grew so much from our experience together. Inside jokes were made, friendships were established, and the relationship with God was strengthened!

The Crunch was the name of our Lenten themed drama that we presented in April. We had a decent turnout and had a great time practicing, performing, and sharing the message of Easter in a different way!

Aaron Grube

HILLTOP PRESCHOOL

Mission Statement:

To provide high quality faith based education and care that nurtures the mind, body, and spirit in a developmentally appropriate learning environment where each child is celebrated as a unique creation of God.

Year in Review:

- July 2013: Camp Hilltop was held during two weeks this month.
- August 2013: Bug Blas-Off Parent/Student Orientation.
- August 2013: Hilltop teachers and staff CPR/First Aid training.
- September 2013: Started the school year serving 39 families – 45 by year end.
- September 2013: Continued providing weekly music classes led by Helen Fierke.
- September 2013: 2nd Annual Fall Mum Sale
- September 2013: Field Trip to Gull Meadow Farms
- October 2013: Family Fall Fest held at Zion – with potluck and family activities.
- October 2013: Began providing Chapel once a month to students led by Aaron Grube.
- November 2013: Annual Poinsettia Sale
- November 2013: Provided 10 local families in need with Thanksgiving dinners with our annual Thankful Hearts Community Outreach Project.
- November 2013: Grandparents Day celebrated at Hilltop
- November 2013: Parent/Teacher Conferences held
- November 2013: Provided Kindergarten Readiness Assessments and Speech Screenings to our students as a KCR4s participant.

- December 2013: "Drop & Shop" event – a fundraiser event to provide childcare (including a pizza dinner, activities and a movie) and a chance for parents to go out for an evening.
- January 2014: Family Movie Night
- January 2014: Field Trip to Kid's Gym
- January 2014: Open House
- February 2014: 2nd Annual Bingo Night held at Zion
- February 2014: Hilltop Annual Read-A-Thon
- February 2014: Open House
- March 2014: 6th year participating in and celebrating National Lutheran School's Week with many family activities including Hilltop Preschool Choir performance and Hilltop staff hosting Wednesday night dinner.
- March 2014: Dr. Seuss Lunch
- March 2014: Field Trip to Kalamazoo Nature Center: Maple Sugaring
- March 2014: Open House
- April 2014: Open House
- April 2014: Parent/Teacher Conferences held
- May 2014: Field Trip to Kalamazoo Nature Center: Spring at the Barnyard
- May 2014: Bring Your Parents to School Night
- May 2014: Open House
- June 2014: Moving Up & Moving On Celebration (Graduation)
- June 2014: Camp Hilltop held for one week during this month.

Goals:

- Become a Great Start to Readiness Program Provider – in an effort to reach more underserved children in the Kalamazoo area.
- Continue our involvement with KCR4s (Kalamazoo County Ready 4s).
- Expand Chapel services to all Hilltop students if Aaron is available.
- Continue development of our Nature Explore Outdoor Classroom.

Member Support/Involvement:

- Continuing our growth and communication with the greater community of Zion.
- Continue our quarterly Hilltop Ministry Team meetings to ensure open communication.
- Continue involvement with Zion's Annual Bazaar.
- Increase awareness and donations to the Sally E. Grushon Scholarship Fund in order to help more preschool families with tuition. (Checks payable to: The Kalamazoo Community Foundation and mailed to 151 S Rose St, Suite 332, Kalamazoo, MI 49007.
- Increase awareness and/or visibility of Hilltop as an essential ministry of Zion.

Recognition of Those Presently Serving this Ministry:

- Hilltop Staff:
Director: Gail Lager
Administrative Assistant: April Alexopoulos
Teachers: Courtney Markham, Melissa VanderMeeden, Stephanie Cullimore, Liz Zimmermann
Assistant Teachers: Robin Olson, Angela Bowers
- Hilltop Volunteers:
Music: Helen Fierke and Julie Ream
Chapel: Aaron Grube
- Hilltop Ministry Team: Gail Lager, April Alexopoulos, Pastor Larry Brelje, Aaron Grube, DCE, Mike Schlack, Bruce Huston, Dave Dorman, Mark Meyer

HOME CHARITIES

Through the generosity of our members, special gifts are shared throughout the year to this ministry of Zion. Its intent is to help our fellow members in need. While the givers and the gifted always remain confidential, it is good for you to know how these gifts do get used. This year we were able to pass

along over \$5,500, through the generosity of members of Zion. This assisted with mortgage payments and utilities for people had 'gotten behind' due to unemployment. It helped with prescription and medical payments, as well as rent for seniors in assisted living. And, as we do every year, we assisted Deacons' Conference with rent assistance for one family, and supporting several other families with needed food and supplies for infants. As Jesus said, "When you have done this for the least of one of these you have done it for me". This congregation is special and despite all of its gifts we share, we continue to have a healthy balance as emergencies arise. This is YOUR ministry and it is a powerful way of sharing the love of Jesus when "some of his children are hurting."

LIBRARY MINISTRY

The purpose of the library ministry is to provide up-to-date materials for the information and pleasure of the congregation. Our budget was spent for books for all members and related materials for the children's bags for the pews. Due to the location and the fact that the library is never closed when the church is open, there is a lot of activity for a small library. We have 19 bags for the pews that may be carried into the sanctuary of any service and are not checked out and in. Topics of interest in Bible study classes and special times in the liturgical year are featured on the table in front of the desk, in the window and in the contents of the bags for the pews. We have had a good year. Donations of gently used books have kept us busy this year evaluating and preparing items for the shelves. A thoughtful family has once again given a subscription to a young children's magazine.

What do members of the ministry do? Put cards and pockets in books and DVDs, and stamp ID. Select and order DVD's. Pull out of date and tattered books from the shelves and place on a table for you to take if you wish. Remaining soft-covered books are given to a jail and other remaining books are donated to a Christian charity. Put stamps, that you REMEMBER TO ASK FOR WHEN YOU MAKE A PURCHASE AT A CHRISTIAN BOOK STORE, on cards that are turned in for books. Call members to ask them to return books and DVDs that have been out a long time. Two new members of our ministry are helping to change the bags for the pews periodically. The Van Antwerp fund allows us to purchase necessary items outside our annual budget.

My main goal is to have the library accessible to families of the congregation. Goals for the future are to supplement the studies carried on week to week in the classes and provide timely materials for the congregation's use.

Members may become involved by facilitating the use of bags for the pews to help children sit quietly through a service. Promoting memorials to Zion's library is a great help. Gift subscriptions to children's magazines are welcome. Staffing the library on Saturday services, noting if the door to the library is open and the lights are on for every service. I am available on Thursday evenings during choir practice, on Sunday mornings and anytime at 685-8404. Pat Kasdorf

LITTLE DRESSES FOR AFRICA

Using donated fabric, pillowcases and trim we sew simple sundresses with tie sleeves that are distributed to orphanages in Africa through a homegrown ministry out of the Detroit area. As of May, 2014 Zion members have made and donated more than 3,000 dresses to this ministry, which has distributed more than 50,000 dresses to the poorest nations in Africa and to Haiti. We are inspired and humbled this year by Morgan Freeby's undertaking of an initiative through Portage Central High School's National Honor Society where several high school students get together once a month to assist us in our ironing, elastic stringing and preparation for dresses. Our tireless seamstresses are Helen Reinkensmeyer, Cindy Bierlein and Roxanne Seeber. Judy Schuppel assists us with stringing elastics and ironing. We get contributions of completed dresses from many members of the congregation, including Sharon Preuss, Pat Fronappel and JoAnn Bowes. We package the completed dresses and then send them via US Mail to the Detroit area, where they are sorted and prepared for distribution to the orphanages in Africa. They are the only dresses that many of these children will ever have. We are thankful for the many donations of fabric, trim and pillowcases that we have received from so

many of you who have cleaned out their closets, their sewing areas and their parents' houses in order to keep us supplied. We have a drop off box in the workroom, just to the left of the door. Just leave what you have in there and we will turn it into a little girl's only dress! Roxanne Seeber

LOAVES AND FISHES

Loaves and Fishes was formed to give assistance to those in need of food. Donations from Zion members and friends are collected every week in the two bins by the office. Clean plastic and brown paper bags are also needed. Once a week the goods are taken to Trinity Lutheran Church by us or Carol and Benno Rosin there the food is sorted and given out by the Trinity volunteers known as *The Pantry Gang*. Each year the need for food donations increases so every item donated at Zion is greatly appreciated, thank you! Bruce and Dorothy DeDee

LUTHERAN WORLD RELIEF SEWING AND KNITTING

Our L.W.R. Quilt and Baby Care Kits sewing project members meet every Wednesday from 8:30a.m to 12:00p.m. There are currently 13 ladies sewing and knitting. We begin in January and continue until mid-October, when everything that is completed is shipped out.

In 2013 we completed 162 Baby Care Kits and 160 Quilts. We appreciate all the many donations of fabric, bath-size soap, socks, undershirts, towels, 14 x 24 diapers and yarn. Our knitters have very generously supplied us with beautiful sweaters and caps.

Baby Care Kits are welcome gifts to mothers and newborns at hospitals, refugee camps, and villages all around the world. A quilt is very special, it serves as warmth on cold nights, shelter from the sun, a room divider, a bed, backpack and sometimes a home.

We encourage anyone to visit our group on Wednesday mornings, to share our work, and join us. Our goal is to continue doing the Lord's work by reaching and helping the needs of many unfortunate people in the world. Leona Van Antwerp

MIDDLE SCHOOL YOUTH/CONFIRMATION

What a bright spot in ministry right now! At Confirmation Camp in August we had 27 students attend! By the end of the year we had close to 30 students attending! Along with adding a few to our class, we saw a number of friends at our events and retreats.

Last year we studied the New Testament and the Lord's Prayer. We typically meet for class on Wednesday night and on Sunday morning. Through these two encounters during the week, relationships are built, Bible stories are further taught, and fundamental doctrine is explored. We had 8 students affirm their faith on Confirmation Day in May. Next year we will be adding upwards of 12 new 6th graders! Our group just keeps growing!

We were supposed to go on a Winter Retreat in January but the weather stopped us from going. We had 25 students ready to go! Instead, we ended up going in March and had 23 students able to attend! What a great weekend this was! So many parents told me their student said the words: "That was the best weekend of my life!"

The Middle School Youth also did the service project in Grand Rapids with the High school students, and we enjoyed our few fellowship events we were able to have this year.

Next year we plan on a separate 8th grade retreat to Camp Arcadia where we will meet with other students in our district, as well as hear some great speakers to help kick off the year! We also have a group of 10 students going to a summer retreat in July! I am very much looking forward to the summer and the years to come with these students!

MIDWEEK DINNER MINISTRY

The purpose of this ministry is to offer a meal to Zion's congregation and its family and friends. It is a time when all can gather to share a meal and fellowship and then stay for Bible study, Middle School and Confirmation class and High School Youth class, and during Advent and Lent, worship. We ask a donation to cover the cost of each meal.

From September 2013 through April 2014, we prepared and served 27 Wednesday Night Dinners, with an average of 63 people each evening. The High School Youth prepared and served 2 of these meals and Hilltop Preschool prepared and served a meal. This is a total of 1,721 meals served! We had 3 snow cancellations.

Our Annual Sauerkraut Supper was held on October 23, 2013. We served about 203 meals. Proceeds of over \$700 were given to Zion's Capital Campaign. We also served our 4th Annual Mardi Gras Dinner the week before Ash Wednesday.

All meals are prepared by our dedicated volunteers: Sue Ann Coffinger, Kathy Huston, Lucy Maxson, Anna Nicolen, Jan Prange and Chris Sitkins. Others who helped serve and/or clean up included Pastor Larry Brelje, Bruce and Dorothy DeDee, Larry Harding, George Hayward, Aaron Grube, Ted Maxson, Benno Rosin and Abby Seeber.

Our goal is to have many more Zion families and friends join us at 5:15 on most Wednesday evenings to share a meal. We also welcome anyone who would like to join us in preparing these meals and/or help with serving and clean up. Please call Chris Sitkins at 345-4215 if you would be interested in participating in or supporting this ministry. Blessings! Chris Sitkins

MUSIC MINISTRY

Gloria Dei Singers presented two new cantatas this year. The members took on the new music willingly and with gusto, and presented moving messages at both the Advent service and Palm Sunday services. At Easter services Zion had a wind band made up totally of Zion members playing for hymns and anthems. All the while, these good people sang for four Sundays each month, in our late, late, early, early schedule.

Bell Choir continued to present, once a month, music for service, working always to improve skills while adding musical meaning to each service. We added a new member, Sue Bickel and we were very happy to have her join us. We continue to look for new members. We have enough bells and chimes for 3-4 additional players.

Our organists have continued to add beauty to our services with their preludes, offertories and postludes. These dedicated people, lead our singing and praises each Sunday, hidden away in the loft! They spend time and dedication to prepare and play for us each week and are to be commended.

We continue to use a great many hymns from our hymnal and supplement. Following the liturgical year we add our voices in praise as we follow the life of our Savior in song. We will continue to introduce new hymns to add to our repertoire. As Lutherans, we can never sing too much!

Hilltop Preschool students had music lessons once a week for each group of three, four and five year old children. Not only did they learn to sing new songs, they became acquainted with many music "friends" such as treble clef, and bass clef. They learned different kinds of notes, and by the time the five year olds finished this year, they learned to play our choir chimes by singing the names of the notes they rang.

We continued to host music students from Western Michigan University for their performance exams. These talented people play their instruments for grades and do they play well! Zion also hosted Mary

Butler's Cello Consort, which consisted for about half the cello section from the Kalamazoo Symphony. Joyce Zastrow was hostess and was responsible for bringing the musicale to Zion, and it was a beautiful and exciting performance. Zion loves music and it shows in the dedication of her members! May God always bless Zion with music!

Helen Fierke

OFFICE VOLUNTEERS

The definition of a volunteer is someone who chooses freely to do something – to offer or give of one's own free will. Zion is blessed with many members who enjoy volunteering. Without our volunteers who help with various jobs in the office, the staff would have a lot of extra work. One of our volunteers spends several hours a week collating bulletins, mailing bulletins to shut-ins, compiling attendance from the fellowship pads, setting up for coffee fellowship, and getting children's bulletins ready. Other office volunteers help with posting contributions, mailing out offering envelopes, and collating the Harbinger for mailing. At various times volunteers also help answer the phone. If you would like to volunteer in the office, please call Debbie. What a blessing it is to have such faithful volunteers!

Debbie Kipp

PASTOR'S SUNDAY BIBLE CLASS

Initially this class was begun as an option for parents whose children or youth were in Sunday classes. Our curriculum is simply the Bible story which all of our children and youth have for that Sunday. The idea was that if moms and dads found ways to better understand the lesson and find ways to make it relevant and practical in their own lives as parents, they could better support their children during the week ahead. While this group can have as few as eight and as many as twenty-five or more, we use questions and discussion (rather than a lecture) allowing time throughout to have more relaxed conversation in smaller groups. We have found over time that this has become a great fellowship opportunity, as well as a way for new families to more quickly get to know others at Zion. We have also discovered that grandparents and singles have a place here too, as together we are all part of one bigger family. At Baptism we all make a commitment to support the faith life of the baptized and their family. This is one way in which that happens and we are welcoming to any and all who want to grow in faith and find practical ways to utilize familiar Bible lessons in their daily lives.

PERSONNEL MINISTRY

The purpose of Zion's Personnel Ministry Team is to serve, support, and enhance the mission and ministry of Zion's congregation through the administration; nurturing and support of all called and hired staff members. The members of the committee are: Michelle Naylor, Robert Folck, Kim DuBois, Mike O'Connor, Mike Schlack, Mark Schulze and Chris Sitkins.

Our goal is to see that Zion is a workplace where all of Zion's staff, including our Hilltop Preschool, are loved, nurtured and appreciated, as Christ has shown us.

Mike O'Connor

PRAYER MINISTRY

Zion's prayer ministry is a group of faithful members who are committed to pray for the needs of the church. Prayers are done in member's homes, on their own time, with no meetings to attend. The purpose of this ministry is to reach out with Jesus love and lift up the needs and joys of the people at Zion, their families, extended families, and our community, and country, and world. Around 50 members receive e-mailed or mailed prayers several times a month or as needed. We are continuing the practice of sending cards to those for whom we are praying. This year, members of the ministry are making homemade cards with love to send. New this year is that cards are being sent to new members, confirmands, graduates, and often to those who serve with thanks. A goal is to add more members who want to be in closer touch with the church family. All that is needed to join is a heart for prayer and commitment to pray throughout the week for those in need. If you would like to join this ministry, contact the church office or Kathleen Jordan at 349-2534 or 343-4011 or email at Kathleen.jordan@yahoo.com.

PRAYER SHAWL MINISTRY

Prayer shawls are made while the person knitting /crocheting prays, we also take them to church for Sunday school and church services. They can be given out by pastors, Steven ministers, or other Zion members to give to anyone (other church members, shut-ins, or community outreach). People who receive them have something going on in their lives, be it medical, physical or emotional. The shawls serve as a comforting and loving embrace from their church family and a tangible reminder of God's ever-present love for us as shown thru the caring and prayers of others. This year we have given away 16 shawls, going out to various church members or family of church members. The total given away in the last four years is 57 shawls (recorded).

Our meetings are every 3rd Saturday at Biggby's on Stadium Drive for tea, coffee, idea sharing and fellowship. We have between 5 and 8 ladies who attend these get-togethers, but would welcome anyone who wants to come. Currently, those attending meetings are: Janis Dinda, Ardith Bradley, Cheryl Besser, Morgan & Meridith Freeby, Mary Horensky, Tammy Parat, Kim Stiegemeyer and Rita Linnenkugel. If would like to come but need a ride please give me a call (we do car pool).

All of the tubs are in the usher's room in the metal closet (off the sanctuary). One is filled with yarn, knitting needles, crochet hooks and idea/pattern books. Anyone who would like to make a shawl or lap throw (for men) is welcome to any of the supplies we have. Please remember to return the idea/pattern books when you are done. There is one tub for unblest shawls and another for the shawls that are blessed. The blessed shawls tub also contains the journal to record who is getting the shawl, when and a reason. Inside the journal are gift tags to attach to the shawl so the recipient knows the shawl came from the Prayer Shawl Ministry at Zion Lutheran Church. They also make nice bookmarks. Thank you, Linda Stieve for making our tags for us. On the shelf next to the tub you will find gift bags and tissue for anyone delivering a shawl to use. The gift bags make presenting the shawl a little more special for both the giver and the receiver.

We also have a rolling cart and another tub filled with more yarn and pattern books that Janis has been keeping in her classroom (lower level overlooking the prayer garden). Please check with her if you're looking for different color of yarn or books than what is located upstairs.

If your making shawls/lap throws please try to have completed ones finished to be in the blessed tub prior to the fifth Sunday of the month. We make every effort to have them blessed during Zion's healing service and then put in the tub in the usher's closet for people to pick up.

We are continuing to keep our ears open to opportunities to send a little bit of God's love out when we can. We would welcome others who would like to learn to knit or crochet to come to one of our monthly meetings or to call myself of Janis Dinda for more information. We have supplies, we just need others who want to help us make shawls.

We encourage you to give a shawl to anyone who needs a little love. You don't need to ask permission, these shawls are for the congregation, pastors and support staff to give out as needed. All we ask is that you record whom you're giving it to and thank you for helping. It means more when the shawl comes from someone they know than someone totally new.
Thank you again.

Cynthia Cosgrove

PROPERTY MINISTRY

The Property Ministry team is responsible for the physical resources of Zion and works to maintain, improve and dispose of all tangible and real property of the congregation in support of its missions and ministries. We presently have nine members on our team, seven full time members and two special project contributors. We work closely with Staff in support of short and long term needs, and liaise with Michelle Devine, Zion's Building Manager on daily facility issues and mechanicals.

The following is a highlight of projects and changes made this past year.

- Zion's exterior was repainted as part of the continuing maintenance program.
- Initial steps for the Prayer Garden including approval of a sprinkler system approved.
- Our transition to our new heating and cooling contractor, Johnson Controls, has proven invaluable. We worked through challenges that remained at issue since the installation. With an unseasonably cold winter, the system was put through its paces and many things were discovered and finally fixed.
- The Zion Facility Use Policy was updated by a sub-committee of Property and Staff to ensure our parishioners and guests have clearer guidance and support while maintaining a safe environment for both.
- Our computer systems at Zion were updated this year on budget, with the addition/replacement of several workstations and the Server.
- Our middle school ministry purchased new tables for their space in the new construction area. Similarly our High School area painted their room.
- In support of our Preschool Ministry at Zion, the Property Ministry Team approved new use and changes to the preschool playground to make it a Nature Explore Certified Outdoor Classroom. Funding will come through fund raising, donations and parental support, and attract new families to the preschool program.
- An endowment request was made by Property in the amount of \$17,200 for improvements to the exterior of the front of the sanctuary to address roof, water and erosion issues. The request was approved and work will begin this summer/fall.
- In May of 2014, the Zion Property Ministry team voted to take on the responsibilities of the Capital Projects Committee, a sub-committee for the Zion 150th Celebration Committee. In this capacity the Property team will help suggest and oversee capital improvements as part of the celebration.

Projects that are planned for this coming year:

- Complete the first stages of the endowment funded external repairs to the Sanctuary
- Initial planning to address in 2014-2015 sanctuary lighting, carpet and pews in conjunction with Zion's 150th Anniversary plan and celebration

Charles Fierke

SATURDAY MEN'S STUDY

Pastor Seeber meets with men of Zion on Saturdays at 8am (September through April). This has become a great time of support, as we get better acquainted and also grow spiritually as we learn to discuss faith in a comfortable and supportive atmosphere. This year we took the second lesson Sunday worship and focused on one practical question that text offered. Our discussions have been genuine, honest, and helpful for all of us. Most would agree that this has been an enlightening process of learning that guys from various backgrounds, with different vocation and recreational interests, can find a unity in our common faith. This summer we have added to this spiritual support of each other by attempting to keep our discussions going electronically. This effort has been a powerful blessing for all who are involved.

Pastor Tim

SMALL GROUP BIBLE STUDY MINISTRY

The mission of this ministry is to maintain and increase small group Bible study at Zion.

In our third year we continue to have 8 small groups serving approximately 120 members of Zion. The greatest growth has been realized in the Buetows' small Group of young parents. This has been a primary concentration of our team and we are happy to see this coming about. We also know that without the help of the Holy Spirit we would not have seen such growth. To him be the glory!

Our small group theme is "Connect – Grow – Serve" and the guidelines we follow are taken from the book Active by Nelson Searcy and Kerrick Thomas. We are grateful for the following people who have so graciously served as facilitators this year: John and Candy Buetow, Matt and Michelle Simmons, Jill Larson, Linda Stieve, Debbie Weber, Dennis Dressler, Dave Mayer and John and Cheryl Roggow. A number of studies have been conducted including the Sunday readings, a study on the parables, a study on the book of James, a study on Christian parenting, and a study on the book of Philippians.

Our ministry operates on a semester basis which gives people a chance to make changes during the course of the year. For the most part this year all participants have chosen to stay with their group for both semesters. We conduct registration both in the fall and in January.

Each small group chooses a meeting day, time, location and topic to be studied. Two groups have met in private homes and the remaining 6 meet at Zion primarily on Sunday mornings or Wednesday evenings. Some groups meet weekly but most meet bi-weekly. Each group is also charged with performing a mission activity at some point during the year, either for the benefit of the Zion family or the community. This year the mission projects have ranged from serving lunch at Ministry with Community, serving a meal at Solid Grounds, providing lunch for the students at Tree of Life elementary school, and serving as babysitters during the Sunday school hour for the Buetows' small group. Some groups may complete their projects during the summer semester which is more relaxed.

Our ministry team also hosted the 6th annual Dr. Paul Maier Seminar on March 8, 2014 attended by 140 people from the Kalamazoo area and outlying communities. Dr. Maier's topic was "Luther and the Reformation". A number of folks from various ministries at Zion pitched in to help us with setting up, sound system, registration and the luncheon. We have decided to bow out of the responsibilities for organizing the seminar and will put all of our energies into improving and increasing our small group Bible study ministry at Zion.

Our goals for 2014-2015 are two-fold: to foster and encourage discipleship to bring about new facilitators as we complete our three-year plan, and to redefine and clarify what small group Bible study means at Zion.

We continue to add to our library of materials that can be used for study and to provide babysitting in the nursery during the Sunday school hour for those parents attending the Buetows' small group. Aaron Grube, as our staff person, continues to provide wise advice as we commit to learning about and improving this ministry. We appreciate his contributions.

Our ministry team generally meets every two weeks at Zion at 6:30 p.m. The day of the week depends on the team members, but we generally meet on Tuesdays. Currently serving on our ministry team are Dave Mayer, Carol O'Connor, Steve Presdorf, Debbie Weber, Judy Adlam and Nancy Dressler. Anyone interested in joining us may contact Dave Mayer at 375-1241 or Aaron Grube at 382-2360.

STATE HOSPITAL

Over 60 years ago, Pastor Grother began a weekly chapel service for the residents of the State Hospital on the campus of WMU. Every Tuesday, women from Zion take cookies along and serve refreshments after the worship. On the first Tuesday of the month a meal is served. During Pastor Grother's recover from his recent illness we have arranged a schedule so that Pastors from Zion, Immanuel and St. Michael are covering the service each week. This has always been a special ministry of outreach and healing by members of Zion.

STEPHEN MINISTRY

Stephen Ministry is a caring ministry by members of Zion who have been trained by Stephen leaders for quality, confidential, Christ-centered care to people who are hurting. In the book of Acts, Stephen was one of 7 chosen by the disciples to help bring care to the widows of the Church. Over 11,000 congregations throughout the United States, Canada, and 24 other countries utilize Stephen Ministry. Zion's Stephen Ministry began in 1992, and do date we have trained over 50 of our members to help the pastors by working one-on-one in caring relationships with members of Zion who are in need. This fall we will have a special worship service celebrating Stephen Ministry and our Stephen Ministers. This ministry will be taking on a new shape, as we are seeking how best to continue to utilize our trained care givers and recruit new ones to better take care of each other and assist the pastors in the care of our members.

SUMMER BEAUTIFICATION

This ministry primarily involves caring for the grounds around the church, Zion Haus, and the garage/shed. Some of our jobs include leaf removal from the lawn and parking lot, trimming shrubs, spreading mulch and general outdoor maintenance. The work can be physical, however, you are encouraged to work at your own pace.

We work on various Wednesday mornings during the spring, summer and fall from 8:30 to 11:30 a.m. If you are only able to work part of the morning that is perfectly fine. Schedules are located in both the Harbinger and bulletin. If the weather is inclement we will either work indoors or the session will be cancelled and you will be called by 8:00 a.m.

If you are interested in helping, just show up at the work session. Equipment is always available for your use, and it is a good idea to bring along a pair of work gloves.

We take about a half hour break at 10:00 a.m. for refreshments, devotions, and rest and relaxation. This is a great opportunity to meet and get to know other members of Zion. If you have any questions, please call Jim Mayer at 375-8342.

SUNDAY SCHOOL MINISTRY - PRESCHOOL THROUGH 5TH GRADE

The past year has been a year of changes for Sunday School. We had some new teachers, new curriculum, and a big new space! The changes were well received by the students. After a few weeks we fell into a routine and adjustments were made to help everything run smoothly.

Our goal for Sunday School is to help kids grow in their love for the Lord and to learn the stories in the Bible! Students are at so many different levels that this is harder than it first appears. In addition to the class time, this year we had different activities to help with expression, and further the learning process.

Mike Kamphuis was a great asset to our ministry! He's our music guy who has been able to teach the students new songs and prepare them to sing in worship! Next year we will be seeing the kids a lot more in worship! We have been blessed with great opportunities to use music to help engage the students and build their relationship with Christ.

Consistency is an issue we faced this year. Our number of students ranged anywhere from a total of 24 (grades pk-5) all the way up to 58! This presents a few more challenges but again we are happy to see each and every student when they are here. Consistency is very important to the spiritual formation process because it helps students feel more comfortable, allows stories to be built off of a previous story, and builds up a level of commitment and dedication that we hope to see later in life.

Our offering project for the year was the Heifer Project and together with a few generous congregation members, we are able to make a donation of just over \$1,000! That will definitely buy our Llama that we voted on to buy!

The summer will be a time of more changes for Sunday school. I will be reviewing curriculums to find one that fits our ministry needs a little better. I will also be recruiting more adults and helpers as our needs will increase. I will be meeting with Mike and possibly other activity leaders to help form a stronger presence of expression within the Sunday school. We will start up classes again in September!

WKZO RADIO MISSION OUTREACH

In 1950, Pastor Grother initiated a radio ministry by broadcasting part of the Sunday worship service on WKXO. This ministry continues and has become an outreach ministry to all of Southwest Michigan through our weekly radio broadcast. Each Sunday at 9:30am a recorded sermon and meditative music are broadcast on AM 590. We regularly hear from a variety of people from Stevensville to Grand Rapids, and from Jackson to St. Joe. This is a major mission outreach that we take quite seriously as a way to share the Gospel of Jesus outside the walls of Zion. What began many years ago as a live feed over a phone line and open microphone, is now produced in our studio on campus at Solid Grounds. Neil Segerdahl produces the show with either Pastor Tim or Pastor Mark as we share the message of a risen Christ with all who will listen.

Annual Congregational Meeting

May 18, 2014

- I. The meeting was opened with prayer by Pastor Seeber.
- II. The congregational meeting was called to order by President Mark Meyer. He introduced and thanked the Board of Directors for their support and service to the Congregation this past year and especially outgoing members: John Roggow, Joni LaPointe, Steve Butt, and Todd Schierbeek.
- III. Election of Board of Directors: The following members agreed to stand for election:
President-Elect: Tim Klein
Vice President of Finance: Tim Gumbleton
Director-At-Large: Dan Buchtrup Ron Masek Linda Stieve

There were no additions from the floor and nominations were closed. The congregation voted and Tim Klein, Tim Gumbleton, Dan Buchtrup, and Linda Stieve were elected.

- IV. CEF Loan Report: Mark reported that the congregation has on deposit \$1,108,065.00 with the Church Extension Fund. This allowed Zion to receive a .5% decrease in the interest rate on the loan. This will lead to a savings of over \$70,000.00.
- V. 150th Anniversary Celebration:
Remember the gifts of God through Zion to past and present members.
Reflect on the meaning of those gifts in our lives.
Reconfirm our faith and the spiritual nature of our mission.
Renew our commitment to bring those gifts to future generations.

John Roggow is leading the steering committee. Volunteers are needed to work on the following sub-committees: Projects, Outreach, Event Planning, Publicity, and History. The celebrations will begin this summer. Anyone interested in serving on this committee should contact John Roggow or the church office.

- VI. Budget FY2014-2015: Joni LaPointe, Vice President of Finance, presented the proposed budget. She thanked the Finance Ministry Team: Paul Gilbert, Rhonda Newman, Debbie Kipp, Bruce Huston, Matt Folck, Tim Gumbleton, and Rollie Preuss. She reviewed the current year, the proposed budget, and presented projected budgets estimates for FY15-16 and FY16-17.

Current Budget information included:

- Giving under budget by \$7,000.00
- Will experience a gain of \$1,600.00
- Major budget variances included
 - Hilltop will have a net gain rather than the budgeted loss
 - Maintenance costs are over budget
 - All other near or at budget
- Solid Grounds will experience a small net gain over budget
- The tough winter affected giving and utility and maintenance costs
- We did not need to use savings to meet the budget
- Giving estimates will increase
- Will start FY15 in a better position than FY14
- Gave staff minor gifts at end of year

Joni explained that the proposed budget for FY14-15 was developed by asking ministry teams to submit requests which were consolidated into the appropriate categories, information from the Board of Personnel regarding salaries and benefits. The Board of Directors determined a projected giving dollar amount based on an increase in giving of 6%. Joni highlighted the following:

- Income projected at \$700,00.00 – this reflects 6% increase in giving
- Hilltop net expenses budgeted to break even
- Property Budget increased by \$7,000 over 2014 budget due to maintenance and utilities costs
- Missions will be 10%
- Other ministries requests were fulfilled
- Increases for staff salaries included in budget

Solid Grounds has a separate budget

- Zion Missions: (\$47,430)
- Support from Michigan District (\$28,600)
- Other support including individual contributions, contributions from other churches, room and parking space rentals, endowment grants, plate contributions and alumni contributions (33,300)
- Expenses in total are \$107,800.00 including staff support, utilities, music, Sunday brunches, recruiting, and worship
- Expense budget current year is \$98,700
- Michigan District also provides some facility upgrades to Solid Grounds not included in the budget

Total budget for Zion, Hilltop, and Solid Grounds is \$904,667.00.

- Giving increase of 6% (will be challenge. As of mid-March, giving was lower than had been projected in 2014)
- Hilltop has no loss
- Higher maintenance budget
- Continue new Equipment Savings Fund
- No savings included to balance budget

Challenges Zion faces in achieving the budget include:

- Do not achieve budgeted giving. There are contingencies in place but do not want to use them
- Hilltop does not achieve tuition budget
- Funding from District lower than projected
- Funding from other sources for Solid Grounds lower than expected
- Utility costs significantly higher than budgeted or harsher winter resulting in maintenance costs

The projected budgets for FY2016 FY2017 were developed with estimated 2-3% growth in giving. They include costs of additional staff and 2% increase for other expenses. The long-range outlook is positive. They are presented for informational purposes to see where Zion is headed. Discussion: There were no questions

The budget passed unanimously.

VII. The meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted, Janis Dinda

ZION BUDGET PROPOSAL For Year Ending 05/31/2015

<u>PROPOSED ZION BUDGET</u>	2015 Proposed Budget
INCOME BUDGET:	
Member Giving	\$700,000
Other Income-From Savings	\$360
Hilltop Income	<u>\$142,407</u>
Total Income:	<u><u>\$842,767</u></u>
EXPENSES	
STAFF SUPPORT (Salaries,Benefits, etc)	\$325,209
OFFICE OPERATIONS	\$18,554
HILLTOP OPERATION	\$142,407
CHURCH PROPERTY	\$94,650
EDUCATION MINISTRIES	\$10,590
EVANGEL/MISSION	\$600
PUBLIC RELATION MINISTRY	\$500
WORSHIP	\$2,800
SOCIAL MINISTRY	\$4,950
MUSIC MINISTRY	\$43,370
FINANCE MINISTRY	\$125,837
ZION HAUS MINISTRY	\$3,300
MISSION SUPPORT	<u>\$70,000</u>
Total Expense:	<u><u>\$842,767</u></u>
INCOME LESS EXPENSES	<u><u>\$0</u></u>

DEFINITIONS

Income: Member contributions include regular envelopes, Lenten and Advent envelopes, as well as cash

Expenses:

Staff Support: Includes the salaries, benefits, and taxes to support our Administrative Pastor, Director of Christian Education, Bookkeeper/Office Assistant, and Building Manager. Also included are salaries, benefits, and taxes for our part time positions, including Pastors Brelje and Grother and part time office support staff. Other costs include mileage reimbursement, conference & convention expenses, and miscellaneous.

Office Operations: Includes costs to communicate with the congregation including costs of paper, postage, printer ink, computer and copier support, and telephones,

Hilltop Support: Includes the costs for operating the Hilltop Preschool including the cost of salaries, benefits, supplies marketing expenses, etc. The annual projected net costs of Hilltop (income less expenses) projected for next year is a loss of about \$3,000.

Church Property: Includes the funds to maintain and improve the interior and exterior of our buildings. These activities include grounds maintenance, insurance, cleaning supplies and building maintenance. Also included are the utility costs for heat, cooling and waste disposal.

Education Ministries: Includes the funds to purchase and support the elementary, middle school and high school programs as well as adult Education.

Evangelism/Mission: Includes support of State Hospital and World Relief Sewing.

Public Relations Ministry: Includes advertising in the Gazette and other media.

Worship: Includes communion supplies for weekly services and decoration expenses for festival Sundays.

Social Ministry: Includes the costs of supporting our Sunday morning fellowship, Library and Video ministries, Portals of Prayer, Prayer Ministry, Sewing Ministry and Red Cross Blood Drive.

Music Ministry: Includes costs for our organists and pianists, instrument maintenance, youth music programs, music for the Gloria Dei Singers and Bell Choir and the salary for our part time Director of Music and accompanist. Also included are the costs for special music programs throughout the year.

Finance Ministry: Includes the costs of our loan to the Church Extension Fund (CEF), bank charges, and any miscellaneous costs to support finance operations.

Zion Haus Ministry: Includes the utility and maintenance costs for Zion Haus

Mission Support: Represents the tithing of our yearly income as defined above. Money currently supports Solid Grounds, the Lutheran Church Missouri Synod District Office, Sunday morning radio program, and local ministries such as Deacon's conference and Gospel Mission.

ZION BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2013-14

President Elect: Lorraine Hanna

President: Mark Meyer

Past President: John Roggow

Vice President of Property: Charles Fierke

Vice President of Personnel: Mike O'Connor

Vice President of Finance: Joni LaPointe

Directors: Matt Simmons, Barb Nutsch, Todd Schierbeek, Steve Butt, Karen Chapo, Dave Dorman, Janis Dinda (secretary)

Ministry Teams at Zion

Our expectation is that every member of Zion will be involved in a ministry. Any time 2 or 3 members wish to begin a ministry, they form a ministry team to carry out that ministry. Some are new. Some have been in existence for decades. Here is a listing of the active ministry teams at Zion. (Please accept our apologies for any ministry that may have been inadvertently omitted!)

Acolytes	Finance	Nursery
Altar Ministry	Funeral Luncheons	Office Volunteers
Art Ministry	Gloria Dei Singers	Personnel
Attendance Records	Greeters	Pig Roast
Baptism	Guest Follow-up	Prayer Ministry
Bell Choir	Harbinger Volunteers	Prayer Shawl Ministry
Blood Drive	Heifer Project	Radio Ministry
Birthday Greetings	Helping Hands	Servant Events
Building Maintenance	Helping Others	Small Group Ministry
Calligraphy	Hilltop Preschool	Sound System
Campus Ministry	Historian	State Hospital Ministry
Cantors/Vocalists	Instrumentalists	Summer Beautification
Christian Art	Kitchen Clean-Up	Summer Camps
Church Decorations	Ladies Candlelight Tea	Sunday School Teachers
Church Property	Lawn Maintenance	Symbol in the Window
Coffee Fellowship	Lay Ministry	Ushers
Confirmation Teachers	Lectors	Video Library
Counters	Library	World Relief Sewing
Dinner Tree	Loaves & Fishes	Worship Assistants
Easter Breakfast	Mary Martha	Zion Golf Outing
Endowment Fund	Memorials	
	Mid-Week Dinners	

A sampling of available Community Ministries our members are involved in are: Deacons Conference, Ministry with Community, Habitat for Humanity, Mentors, 1st Presbyterian Health Clinic, Gospel Mission, Loaves and Fishes, Hospital Visitors/Volunteers, Tutoring.

CORE MINISTRIES

This year we want you to understand how our "core" ministries fit together. This can also serve as a resource to share with neighbors or friends who have no church home. And if you have comments or suggestions concerning any of our ministries, please don't hesitate to share those thoughts or offer your time, talent or energy as part of our family.

Baptism. Call the church office to schedule a Baptism. A pastor will meet with you and help support you as we celebrate that new life in Christ. A baptismal banner and baptismal candle are the congregation's gift to help remind you of God's special gift of grace.

Birth. When an infant and mom come home from the hospital, other couples bring meals to help in those first few days. This is an opportunity for support and helping our families to get to know each other. Please call the church office, when you celebrate the birth of a child!

Campus Ministry. Pastor Couch is called to serve the Western Michigan University and Kalamazoo College campus communities in a partnership with the Michigan District. Solid Grounds is the location for this ministry on the campus of WMU. Students from that ministry are very involved in the life of Zion and we benefit from their life with us.

Confirmation Ministry. Our 6th - 8th graders participate in a 3 year program on Wednesday evenings from September through May. During this time we review the purpose and plan of the Bible, and the basics of our Christian faith (using Luther's Small Catechism as a guide, but set in a relevant and practical format for today's young people). The first Sunday in May is when our 8th graders "affirm their baptismal faith" and are "confirmed" in that faith.

Counseling. Our pastors are available to support and be a sounding board and faith resource during difficult times of life. We do a lot of counseling, but when we feel that long term needs would be better met by a full time professional we will help in that referral. Our Stephen Ministers are also an important part of this ministry of support.

First Communion. After appropriate instruction, our 6th graders participate in receiving the sacrament of Holy Communion.

Hilltop Preschool. Zion is in partnership with the preschool, which accepts children ages 3-5 with a day long program. Call the church office for details.

Funerals. At the time of death, we celebrate what Baptism began. Pastors work with the family to plan a funeral or memorial service. Women of the congregation provide a fellowship meal after the service as a ministry of support. Stephen Ministers and pastors are available to support the family in the time of transition that follows loss.

High School Ministry. Our high school students meet on Sunday mornings and Wednesday evenings for Bible study and discussion that relates to their daily lives. They also have opportunities for fellowship and servant ministry. Each summer they have an opportunity for a major servant trip, or youth gathering. Our high school students are encouraged to be involved in ministry wherever they are comfortable serving.

Homebound and Nursing Homes. Pastor Brelje provides ministry to those who are unable to join us for worship and fellowship at Zion. Stephen Ministers and other lay ministers are also available to help in this ministry of encouragement, support, and carrying Holy Communion to those that health prevents them from joining the rest of the worshipping community at Zion.

Hospitalizations. Please call the church office when you are facing surgery or confined to the hospital. The pastors visit the hospital daily to pray with patients and offer support for their families.

Marriage. Any couple seeking to be married at Zion must meet with one of our pastors before setting a date. If either or both are not active members of Zion they attend a Membership Class. In addition, they go through premarital counseling with one of our pastors. Our pastors are involved in marriage as the worship and spiritual leaders of the couple getting married.

Middle School Youth Ministry. The Middle School Youth meet monthly and participate in a variety of activities. During the year there are opportunities for retreats as well. Our goal is to involve them in every aspect of congregational life.

Nursery Ministry. We offer a nursery during Sunday School and during our late Sunday worship service. At the same time, we welcome infants and young children in worship, as this is where learning begins. During communion, we encourage young children to be brought along to receive a blessing from the pastor.

Small Group Bible Study Ministry. We reject the notion that worship is for adults and education is for kids. Both are for all! We have many opportunities for adults to grow in faith, and more comfortably integrate their lives as Christians into daily living. Check the calendar as we have a variety of classes taught by pastors, members of Zion, Stephen Ministers and community resource people. Classes are available on Sundays and various days/times during the week.

Sunday School. Children ages 3 through grade 5 meet on Sunday mornings. Our lessons follow the church year and are the same stories we read that day in worship. This allows families more support as parents, children, and grandparents all have the same weekly lessons. Sunday School also has a strong emphasis on mission projects and allowing children to participate in worship and servant ministry projects.

Worship. Zion has a variety of worship opportunities each week. All of our services follow a traditional liturgical format, but use different language and musical styles. All are respectful and powerful as God's guidance and blessings are the motivation and power of our worship. Saturday evening at 5:30pm utilizes piano and a variety of guest musicians and musical styles in an informal worship setting. Sunday at 8am is our most traditional, by-the-book format, primarily using the organ for music leadership. Sunday 10:30am is a service where we experience the entire range of our potential. We utilize any and all of our resources including organ, handbells, jazz, praise band with liturgy that is sometimes out of the hymnal and sometimes entirely printed. Solid Grounds on the WMU campus is another worship location, "house church" style worship is Sunday at noon September through April.

Youth Ministry. Our 6th - 8th graders meet on Sunday mornings. Sunday classes seek to make faith relevant in daily situations they encounter. They meet two Sunday afternoons or evenings each month for fellowship and servant opportunities. During the year there are opportunities for retreats as well. Our goal is to involve them in every aspect of congregational life.



**The Annual Report
of
Mission and Ministry
2014**