



Good News From Zion

Connecting People with God's Grace...

April 2021

A Message from Pastor Kat

Christ is Risen! Alleluia!

The aligning of the seasons of Easter and spring can be a powerful rejuvenation for the soul, especially after a long, dark winter. For us this year, the revelation of the empty tomb is lived out in more than just green plants pushing up through last year's dead leaves. We can rejoice as vaccinations are made more available and more people receive protection against the COVID-19 virus. We can shout alleluia as we begin to once more gather together for worship in the same physical space.

Gathered and Sent in Worship

Still, we must remember that the movement to gather together ends with a sending to do God's work. We do not gather simply to enjoy one another's company – we gather to be nourished and renewed by God's word and meal, so that we may share God's peace and love with the world.

When it was evening on that day, the first day of the week, and the doors of the house where the disciples had met were locked for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you." After he said this, he showed them his hands and his side. Then the disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord. Jesus said to them again, "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you." –John 20:19-21

One example of this movement is the [Annual Town-Wide Tag Sale on Saturday, April 24th](#). The proceeds of this event support children being housed by the organization, Family Promise, so they might attend summer camp at Cross Roads Camp in Lebanon Township. This ministry is a sign of God's new life being shared beyond our walls.

Hybrid Community: In-Person & Virtual

This past month, we began to celebrate [full in-person worship services in the church at 10:30 AM on Sundays](#). This marked a change in service time to accommodate Sunday School and Confirmation classes.

We also began to live-stream worship to accommodate those who do not yet feel safe returning to in-person worship and to reach out to those who might be more likely to join our worship in virtual space.

As we celebrate the ways in which Christ continues to breathe new life into our community, may we be bold to embrace new ways of sharing the gospel with those searching for God's love in the world.

In Christ,
Pastor Kat

Congregation Council Highlights

The Council met via Zoom conference call on March 18th. Below are the highlights of that meeting.

- The Worship & Music committee continues to prepare for our return to full-length in-person worship services, which begin on Palm Sunday, March 28th at 10:30 a.m. These services will be livestreamed for those who are not yet ready to attend in person. Worship booklets for Palm Sunday, Easter Sunday, and the Season of Easter are being mailed to the congregation with this month's newsletter.
- Linda Held reported on the activities of the Social Ministry committee:
 - * 200 pounds of coffee were delivered to Faith Kitchen from the Coffee Drive (see photo). Many thanks to all who participated.
 - * 270 pairs of socks were collected in the sock drive and delivered to Market Street Mission in Morristown.
 - * The Tag Sale is scheduled for April 24th. Donations have started to come in.
 - * The committee is hosting a Blood Drive on April 1st. Please sign up online.
- The Council approved the restructuring proposal from the Christian Education committee. The Christian Education committee and the inactive Youth committee have now merged to form the Christian Education and Youth committee. Please see the article on page 5 for more details.
- Rick Schroeder reported that the Call Committee is moving forward with their second candidate. See the article below.
- Thank you to:
 - * John & Wendy Minerowicz and Debra Kaufman for delivering the coffee to Faith Kitchen.



The next meeting of the Congregation Council is scheduled for Thursday, April 15th. Meetings are open for all to attend. If you would like to attend an upcoming meeting, please let the Parish Office know and we will send you the Zoom link.



Western Mission District Meeting Highlights

On February 28th, Helen Livingston and Sandy Matsen attended the New Jersey Synod's Western Mission District Meeting (via Zoom) on behalf of Zion, and Sandy was nominated to run for a position on the ELCA Church Council. The Church Council serves as the board of directors for the church. Its members include the churchwide officers, bishops representing a cross-section of synods and up to 45 other people elected by the Churchwide Assembly. They meet together at least twice a year and communicate by other means when necessary. The vote will take place at the Synod Assembly meeting in May. Congratulations, Sandy!

Update from the Call Committee

Hello congregation,

Progress this past month! The Call Committee interviewed our second candidate and we have decided to recommend them to the church council. With the busy activities of Holy Week/Easter, we are targeting the April council meeting for the official candidate recommendation. At this point we can't say any more about the candidate but the process is in motion. As always, please keep the Call Committee and the church council in your prayers for God's guidance and wisdom. Very exciting!

In peace,

The Call Committee



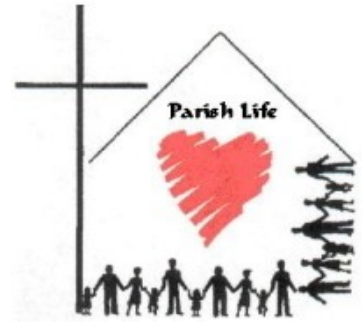
Parish Life Committee Update

Prayer Partners

The 2021 Prayer Partner program continues! If you haven't signed up yet and decide at any time throughout the year that you would like to join us – please reach out. The door is always open!

Want to join us? Parish Life is about connecting to each other and to God's grace – and having fun together whenever possible! Pre-COVID we were planning wine tastings, game nights, parents' nights out, pool party picnics, and annual Somerset Patriots games. During COVID we Zoomed, connected by phone, email, and on the Zion Friends and Family Facebook page. Now as the weather warms up, we will enjoy as many outdoor and/or socially distanced activities as the calendar will allow – and will resume our pre-COVID activity planning as soon as feasible! We would love to have new volunteers in any capacity.

Our next committee meeting is April 28 at 7PM via Zoom.



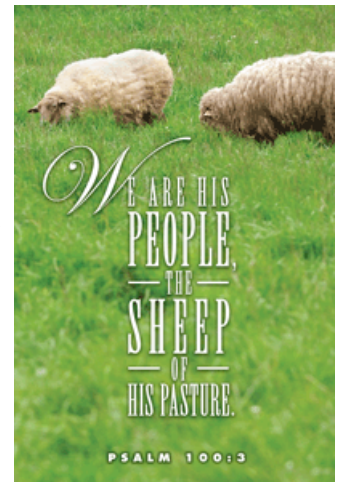
Shepherding Committee Update

You may be getting a call from a phone number you don't recognize... We care how you're doing! Seven members of the Shepherding Committee are calling all 154 Zion families over the next month! Please feel free to share your concerns, joys, and suggestions – or just talk and catch up!

Those making the calls are Eric and Shellie Evers, Judy Formalarie, Kathy Rustwick, Carolyn Schroeder, Cindy Rupprecht, and Debra Kaufman. As of the April newsletter printing had made 125 of 154 calls. Several non-working numbers and lots of voicemails but we have enjoyed speaking with those folks we were able to reach. Would love to speak with you and hear how you are!

Want to join us? Shepherding is all about caring for the congregation and assisting those of us in need. We have a wonderful card ministry, we provide prayer shawls, pray for the sick, offer assistance to those in crisis, send cards and deliver flowers to homebound members, and provide food and/or transportation for those who need it. We also love to celebrate good news – like engagements, marriages, and new babies. We welcome new volunteers and new ideas for ways we can support each other!

Our next committee meeting is April 28 at 7PM via Zoom.



A Little Giggle from Shepherding...

Why did Noah have to punish the chickens on the ark? They were using fowl language.



TREASURED VBS

Discovering you're priceless to God!

Put Faith on the Map!

Embark on an epic quest through hidden ruins, ancient caves, and dense jungles. At **Treasured VBS**, kids dig into action-packed, faith-filled adventures. They'll discover God's greatest treasure isn't diamonds, gems, or gold-it's them!

June 28 – July 2

Ages 3 – completion of 5th grade



Youth and Family Ministry Update by Rhonda Rossi



Holy Week Walk

As the weather is getting warmer and we are anxious to be outside, why not grab your family and go on a Nature Holy Week Walk? Or, if you need some alone time and spiritual renewal, take the walk by yourself. God is sure to speak to you along your journey. Check out the graphic below.



As a congregation we could share our experiences together! If you'd like to be a part of the sharing experience, please send me your pictures and feedback from your walk. With your permission I'd like to share them in Zion's May newsletter, on our church website and Facebook Group page. No names will be mentioned. Please send your pictures and feedback to youth@zionoldwick.com.

I wish you all a Blessed Holy Week and Happy Easter.

Rhonda Rossi

(The Holy Week Walk is a collaboration with @Kerri_Letters and @FedandForgiven. Permission granted for individual and congregational use.)

a cross MARK 15:21	a leafy branch MARK 11:8	something broken MARK 14:3	the sound of a bird MARK 14:72
water JOHN 13:5	a heart JOHN 13:34	a table LUKE 22:14	twelve of something MARK 14:17
Something Sharp or thorny MARK 15:17	something purple JOHN 19:5	Something hiding JOHN 20:19	a stone MARK 15:46
Something empty MARK 16:6	Something springing to life LUKE 24:5	a sweet or spiced scent JOHN 19:40	each letter of Alleluia! HE IS RISEN INDEED!

During Holy Week we tell the story of Jesus' last week, from the triumphal entry to the Last Supper, cross, and empty tomb. Take a walk and use all your senses to find the things listed above. Take a photo or check it off, then look up the verse.



Easter Egg Dyeing Event to benefit Faith Kitchen

Wednesday, March 31st at 6:30 PM
(CEB Great Room)

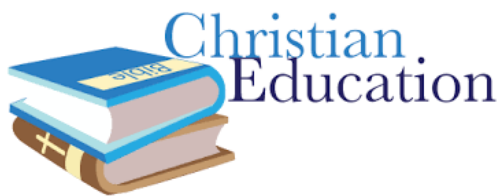
Grab your family and join us in the fun!

We will be dyeing Easter eggs that will be a part of the brown bag lunches that Zion will donate to Faith Kitchen this month. Our goal is to dye at least 70 eggs! After we dye the eggs, we will begin stuffing the lunch bags with the non-perishable food, and then the sandwich-making crew will add the eggs to the bags on Thursday morning. All CDC guidelines will be followed, and masks must be worn. Each family will have their own table to work at. Please bring 1 dozen hard boiled eggs with you. Eggs can't have any cracks! Space is Limited! Please RSVP to Rhonda Rossi at youth@zionoldwick.com or respond to the email.



FIRST COMMUNION CLASSES BEGIN ON SUNDAY, APRIL 11TH AT 9:30 AM

First Communion classes for the current 4th and 5th graders will begin on Sunday, April 11th at 9:30 am via Zoom. Please use the Sunday school link to attend the lessons. Please confirm your participation to Rhonda Rossi at youth@zionoldwick.com.



We're very excited to announce that the Christian Education Committee and the Youth Committee have merged to create the **Christian Education and Youth Committee**. This new committee will enable us to teach and nurture all age groups to grow in their relationship with the Lord in order to prepare us to serve Christ in all we do. The committee will continue to work towards nurturing faith in our adult members through adult forums, Bible studies, and various other educational opportunities. At the same time, the committee will work towards developing and

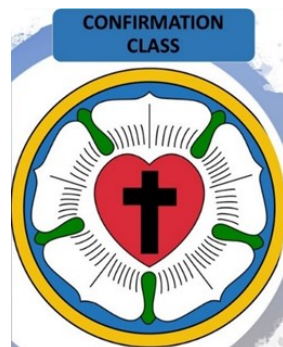
nurturing an all-encompassing youth and family ministry that will include fellowship, worship, Christian Education, and discipleship. The committee looks forward to ministering together to help foster a life-long faith journey for all age groups.



Thank you, parents for taking the time to fill out the Christian Education and Youth Committee Survey. Your input was essential in helping us make our decision to stay virtual with Sunday School and Confirmation classes through the end of April.

We will continue to meet via Zoom with Sunday School classes being held at 9:30 am and Confirmation classes at 9:45 am. The Zoom links can be found in the Zion Weekly emails that are sent out on Wednesdays. With the weather getting warmer, we are hoping to meet in-person OUTSIDE during the month of May.

A special thank you to Pastor Kat for joining the Confirmation Class in March. Pastor Kat taught two wonderful lessons: Prayer and the Trinity. The class enjoyed spending time with her!



Zion's website has a fresh new look! The youth pages have been updated under the "Connect" tab. Information on activities, registration forms for Sunday School, Confirmation, VBS, and a calendar can now be found on the website. Also, included is a parent resource area with sources for parents to help develop faith formation at home. We are still doing a bit of tweaking as programs and events are being developed so be sure to check back regularly, especially as we get closer to the fall!

Zion's youth have a great service opportunity to help with food distribution at this year's **Town-Wide Tag Sale**. Please consider helping our congregation and support underprivileged youth to help them attend Cross Roads Camp this summer. We are needing youth and parents to help with the food table. We are looking for two people at a time to work a two-hour shift from 8 AM to 2 PM. Please watch for the sign-up that will be sent out via Constant Contact the week of April 5th. For more information on youth involvement, please contact Rhonda Rossi at youth@zionoldwick.com.



CROSS ROADS CAMP AND RETREAT CENTER

CHRIST IS RISEN! HE IS RISEN INDEED!

Led by Ruth Roemer

WEDNESDAYS AWAY: APRIL 7

On that first Easter Christ appeared first to Mary Magdalene, called by some as the apostle to the apostles, having stayed at the tomb, she meets Jesus who tells her to go and tell the apostles. Who is Jesus telling you to go and tell?

WHEN | 10 am to noon
WHERE | On ZOOM!
(Link provided upon registering)
COST | \$10

WWW.CROSSROADSRETREAT.COM/WEDNESDAYS-AWAY

Adult Virtual Retreat Wednesdays Away at Cross Roads Camp and Retreat Center

Join Cross Roads for Wednesdays Away, a time of spiritual renewal one Wednesday a month from September through June. Currently, all gatherings are virtual from 10:00 am to 12:00 pm on Zoom. Our time together includes prayer and conversation, led by a spiritual director and focusing on a different spiritual practice or theme each month. The cost is \$10 per gathering. These monthly retreats are open to all people interested in exploring new faith practices.

For more information on Wednesdays Away or to register, please visit the Cross Roads website: <https://www.crossroadsretreat.com/wednesdays-away/> or you may contact Rhonda Rossi at youth@zionoldwick.com.

Faith Kitchen by Debra Kaufman

A bit of St. Patrick's Day (we decided not to do green mayo) and a whole bunch of God's grace packed into those brown bags this month. Zion welcomed a new volunteer, Christine Clark – tomato-slicer extraordinaire! Zion thanks John and Wendy Minerowicz for delivering the lunches to Faith Kitchen over the last several months. Their car was packed with lunches, microwaveable soups, and coffee cans from the Social Ministry coffee drive! Thanks to the other dedicated volunteers - John McAleer, Linda Lovas and Sandy Matsen. Next month's brown bags will be assembled on Thursday, April 1st at 8:45AM at the CEB. Join us!



Zion Supports the Food2You Program at Flemington Food Pantry

During February and March, Zion generously donated food to support the **Food2You** program at the Flemington Food Pantry. The program currently supports 30 people who are recovering from recent health issues and need their pantry food delivered to them. The program is a partnership between the Food Pantry and the Hunterdon Healthcare System. Zion contributed orange juice, tuna fish packets, applesauce, small cans of vegetables, ENSURE drinks, and soups. **THANK YOU!**

Chris Gorton, the leader of the program, expressed her sincere thanks for Zion highlighting and donating to the Food2You program. Are you interested in becoming a driver for the program? Call Debra Kaufman 703-402-2158 or inquire at the Pantry.



Tag Sale — Saturday, April 24th

While this event was sadly cancelled in 2020, Social Ministry is moving forward with plans for this coming April. Please keep us in mind and hold onto any saleable items you may have, please no books or clothing. Donations can be dropped off at the CEB any time. For larger or bulky items that need to go directly into the Great Room, please contact Rebecca Melick at rrmelick@gmail.com or 908-229-3744.

All proceeds collected go towards scholarships for children of Family Promise to attend summer camp at Cross Roads. The children have loved this experience that would otherwise not be available to them.

Volunteers will be needed to help sort and price items during the week prior to the sale and many will be needed at the sale to help move, set up and sell on April 24th.



Stewardship Corner

A Taste of Heaven?

A motorist encounters a man at a stoplight carrying a sign “Vet in need of food money. God bless you.” Initially, the motorist wondered what difference it would make in the veteran’s life if he gave some money. Then the motorist realized that was the wrong question. The real question was what difference it would make in his own life if he gave the vet some money? We may not always control how our gifts are used, but we do have the God-given power to choose our response. The motorist decided to give the man some money.

Then the miracle happened. As he drove off, he noticed that the car behind him was rolling down their window and also giving the veteran some money. The miracle wasn’t the money, it was the shadow of heaven that created generosity where there hadn’t been any. The miracle was a taste of heaven’s perspective in his heart and it touched the hearts of others. God gives us these heaven-inspired opportunities. All God asks of us is a willingness to be open and to respond.

Are you Tithing?

Do you find the concept of a tithe overwhelming? The New Jersey Synod offers a model for living known as 10-10-80:

- Share 10% first fruits to help others
- Save 10%
- Use the remaining 80% for normal living expenses

We have an opportunity to let that taste of Heaven to come into our lives. Many of us will be receiving a stimulus check in the near future. We ask that you consider giving 10% of that to the General Fund of the church. This would be \$140 for one person families, or \$280 if two members receive the stimulus. Some members of our congregation chose to give all of the previous stimulus to the church or other worthy causes. For example, Feed My Starving Children or other places such as Cross Roads Camp and Retreat Center. You may also want to consider this.

Do this above your pledge or planned giving to the church. After you have done this, take a look at where your giving level is as a portion of your income. Being near tax time, that information should be available. Reaching 10% may seem far off, but it is important to have a plan and act. Tithing the stimulus amount can set a plan in motion. For example, always tithe any annual increase in earnings and maybe take an additional step to move you towards the goal of 10%. Make this a yearly action on your part.

Stewardship is everything we do after we say, “I believe.”

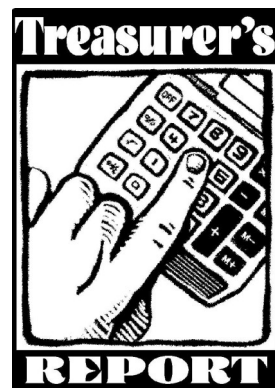
Be open to this opportunity. Be generous and experience the miracle of a taste of Heaven.

Thank you.

The Stewardship committee



FINANCIAL SUMMARY - YTD 2021



GENERAL FUND	INCOME	EXPENSE	DIFFERENCE
January	\$25,231.84	-\$22,004.39	\$3,227.45
February	\$26,011.61	-\$24,121.36	\$1,890.25
Year To Date Total	\$51,243.45	-\$46,125.75	\$5,117.70

TD BANK FUNDS	BALANCE	
Checking Account	\$136,966.28	3/3/2021 Bank Statement
Money Market Plus	\$152,933.89	2/28/2021 Bank Statement
Cash On Hand	\$289,900.17	
Directed Funds	\$194,675.67	2/28/2021
Operating Funds	\$95,224.50	2/28/2021
Cash On Hand	\$289,900.17	

ENDOWMENT FUNDS	BALANCE	
CFNJ	\$508,020.06	(12/31/20)
THRIVENT	\$364,715.15	(12/31/20)
TOTAL	\$872,735.21	

ENDOWMENT MISSION OUTREACH

Available Funds for 2021	\$23,500.00	
ELCA Compensation Aid Fund	-\$1,500.00	2/28/2021
2021 Endowment Funds Remaining	\$22,000.00	

Endowment Fund News

The Endowment Committee will be having our first Endowment Sunday for 2021 on Mother's Day, May 9th! The other Endowment Sundays for 2021 will be on Father's Day, June 20th, and All Saints Sunday November 7th.

There is \$23,500 from the Endowment Fund earnings available for new ministry opportunities in 2021. This is determined by taking 3% of a 3-year average of the fund. The Church Council is open to suggestions on using the funds to support our ministries.

Please consider giving to the Zion Lutheran Church Endowment Fund on May 9th as a tribute to all mothers or to commemorate and celebrate a significant milestone in your family's church life such as a baptism, confirmation or wedding. Always keep in mind that the Endowment Fund only grows with contributions from members and friends of Zion — those who share the vision of not only a living memorial for loved ones, but also recognize that upon maturity, the fund will provide significant monetary grants for many new mission-oriented programs ... forever.

Envelopes marked "Endowment Fund" will be placed in all the pews. If you are worshipping virtually, please consider mailing a check marked "Endowment" to the church office.

Please contact any member of the Endowment Committee (Mike Donnelly, Ted Jermansen and Rick Schroeder) if you have any questions!

