



Good News From Zion

Connecting People with God's Grace...

May 2021

A Message from Pastor Kat

This month, the season of Easter culminates in the Day of Pentecost, a celebration of the coming of the Holy Spirit and the “birthday” of the church. On this day, we look back to this special beginning for the followers of Jesus. How amazing to think that what has become a major world religion began with just a few Galileans and a crowd of curious onlookers. On Pentecost, we also consider how the Holy Spirit is moving in our communities and lives today. What new things are being stirred up in our midst? In what new directions is God's Spirit calling us?

Practically, the Day of Pentecost often marks the end of the program year for congregations as weekly Christian Education – Sunday School and Confirmation – comes to an end for the year, and we embrace a new rhythm as summer approaches and many prepare for camp, travel, and summer vacation.

At this tipping point, I encourage you to look back at all that the Holy Spirit has accomplished this past year. How has your experience of the pandemic had an impact on your faith journey? Have you come to appreciate a new way of connecting to God? Perhaps, you discovered alternative means of nurturing relationships with your brothers and sisters in Christ as we were physically apart from one another. Maybe, the road has been hard – marked by grief and challenges. As you look back, can you think of times when God's strength and comfort lifted you up?

Doing a New Thing

On that first day of Pentecost, God was doing a new thing to bring a message of forgiveness and hope to even more people. The display of the Holy Spirit and its expression through the disciples astonished and surprised those who were watching.

All were amazed and perplexed, saying to one another, “What does this mean?” But others sneered and said, “They are filled with new wine.” –Acts 2:12-13

As we can see in this excerpt, not everybody was impressed! Some were skeptical, even derisive. God's Spirit continues push us in new directions, and, as we follow God's call, we must remember that not everyone will understand. There will be folks who are skeptical, and others who may even react with fear or derision. As a congregation, we must be bold in our actions as well as compassionate to those who may take some time to understand.

Just like the disciples, we are called to do something new to continue to spread God's message of forgiveness and hope to an even wider audience. On this Pentecost, may the Spirit move in us to accomplish the work of sharing God's love in innovative ways!

In Christ,
Pastor Kat

Congregation Council Highlights

The Council met via Zoom conference call on April 15th. Below are the highlights of that meeting.



- Pastor Kat reported on her activities of the last month. She has attended multiple committee meetings, tended to pastoral care needs, and collaborated with Jeff Livingston and Rhonda Rossi in teaching Confirmation Class lessons and First Communion instruction.
- The Christian Education & Youth committee members participated in a successful team-building event this month. They are now working on preparing vision and mission statements and on finalizing the child safety policy.
- The First Communion class will be assisting with packing brown-bag lunches for Faith Kitchen on May 5th.
- Worship & Music committee chairperson Joanne Rupp shared attendance numbers for Easter Sunday. There were 14 Zion members at the Ecumenical Sunrise Service, 12 at the 8:30 a.m. service, and 71 at the 10:30 a.m. It was a great joy to be together in person!
- Linda Held reported that 35 units of blood were donated at the April 1st blood drive. The committee will be hosting another blood drive on June 23rd.
- Rick Schroeder reported that the Call Committee will be recommending their current candidate to the Council at an upcoming joint meeting on Zoom.
- A concern was raised about publishing members' birthdays online. Going forward, we will not post the page of the newsletter where birthdays are listed. We will also revise the newsletters currently on the website to omit that page.
- Thank you to:
 - * Ken & Colleen Bryson for their musical contributions to the Holy Week and Easter services, and for their work in getting the Sunday morning services livestreamed on YouTube.
 - * Judy Formalarie for securing Thrivent gift cards for Zion.
 - * Angela Sztuk for coordinating the April 1st blood drive.

The next meeting of the Congregation Council is scheduled for Thursday, May 20th. 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.



Eleanor Horvath would like to thank everyone at Zion for all of their prayers, notes and cards. She especially enjoyed the Women of Zion Christmas cookies and was thrilled to have Easter flowers delivered. She really misses attending services and seeing her fellow parishioners. She keeps us all in her daily prayers.



Celebrating ALL Women of Zion Lutheran Church

Mother's Day 2021 Lemonade Social

May 9th following 10:30 worship
Outside on the church lawn
Lemonade, muffins, and sweet treats

All are invited to join in this time of fellowship!

Faith Kitchen Update *by Debra Kaufman*

April's Faith Kitchen meal preparation event was held in the morning on Maundy Thursday. Zion families gathered the night before to dye eggs (see page 4) and provided great protein for the brown bag lunches. Beautiful job! The "sandwich crew" assembled the sandwiches and finished up packing the bags. Seventy brown bags of God's grace delivered to Faith Kitchen!

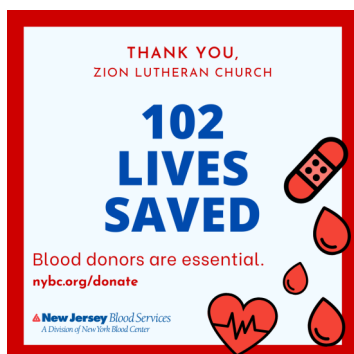


Join us on May 6th at the CEB at 8:45 AM. The First Communion class will be setting up the brown bags on Wednesday night and the "sandwich crew" will gather on Thursday morning.



Social Ministry News

Thank you to everyone who made the Oldwick Town-Wide Tag Sale possible! It was a beautiful day. So many items were donated, priced, displayed outside and sold. It is unbelievable, but we raised over \$4,750 this year that will sponsor nine children from Family Promise for a week of camp at Cross Roads. Special thanks to Rebecca Melick for her leadership and dedication to this event.



The April 1st blood drive was a huge success. Thirty-five units of blood were donated and 102 lives were saved. Our next blood drive is scheduled for June 23rd. Thank you to all!

Youth and Family Ministry Update by Rhonda Rossi



Sunday School and Confirmation classes will continue to meet via Zoom with Sunday School classes being held at 9:30 a.m. and Confirmation classes at 9:45 a.m. The Zoom links can be found in the Zion Weekly emails that are sent out on Wednesdays. The last day of Sunday school and Confirmation Class will be Sunday, May 23rd. Thank you, parents, and students for being flexible this year and joining us on Zoom. We look forward to meeting in person in September!

Special thanks to Rod Briscoe, Melanie, Kristen and Jennifer Hodges, and Sandy Matsen for helping with our Sunday School program this year. And, thanks to Jeff Livingston for teaching the Confirmation Class.



First Communion classes continue to meet on Sundays at 9:30 a.m. via Zoom. Please use the **Sunday School** Zoom link that is found in the Zion Weekly email that is sent out on Wednesdays. Students should have their individual banners completed by Sunday, May 9th. Rehearsal will be held on Saturday, May 15th at 12:00 noon, followed by a group lunch. First Communion will be held on Sunday, May 16th at 10:30 a.m. More details on the worship service will follow. Thank you to Pastor Kat for helping me teach the class!

Mark Your Calendars for Wednesday, May 5th at 6:30 p.m. The First Communion class will be gathering to pack the brown bag lunches for Faith Kitchen. Please RSVP to Rhonda Rossi at youth@zionoldwick.com.



Vacation Bible School

Monday, June 28th – Friday, July 2nd

9:00 a.m. to 11:45 a.m.



All children ages 3 (by June 28th and potty trained) through completion of 5th grade are invited to 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!

To keep everyone safe, we are planning to hold VBS outside. All CDC guidelines will be followed and there will be limited enrollment.

Registration is now open! Please visit zionoldwick.com/connect/ and look for the registration tab under the VBS icon.

We will need pop-up shade canopies to keep everyone cool outside. If you have a canopy that we could borrow for the week, please contact Melanie Hodges at 908-568-7583.

Family Egg Dyeing Event

Thank you to the Hodges, Ahrens/DiCriscio, and Bredeson families, and Cindy Rupprecht and Pastor Kat for participating in the Family Egg Dyeing Event. Over 70 eggs were dyed and became a part of the brown bag lunches served to Faith Kitchen.



CROSS ROADS

CAMP AND RETREAT CENTER

CROSS ROADS SUMMER 2021



JULY 2 - 4	Family Camp Weekend NEW
JULY 4 - 9	Family Camp NEW
JULY 11 - 16	Youth Camp 1 + High School Week
JULY 18 - 23	Youth Camp 2
JULY 25 - 30	Youth Camp 3 + S.E.E.K. 1
AUG 1 - 6	Youth Camp 4 + S.E.E.K. 2
AUG 8 - 13	Family Camp
AUG 15 - 20	Family Camp

WE'RE HIRING!
Make a difference this summer as a member of our Summer Staff. Apply online.



Summer Camp at Cross Roads

Cross Roads summer camp is here! Open houses will be held on Tuesday, May 18th at 7 p.m. and Saturday, May 22nd at 10 a.m. with a Q & A at the end of the presentation. Please visit crossroadsretreat.com to register.

We can't wait to welcome you to camp! Find more details about all Cross Roads summer programs and register at www.crossroadsretreat.com.



WEDNESDAYS AWAY 2020 - 2021

Are you hungry for a deeper relationship with God? Do you thirst for a more meaningful prayer life? Join us for Wednesdays Away, a time of spiritual renewal on the first Wednesday of the month. These gatherings will continue online on Zoom, from 10 am to noon each retreat. The cost is \$10 per gathering.

WEDNESDAYS AWAY DATES & THEMES 2020-2021

Sacred Ground , Laurie Matarazzo	Sept. 9
Call Me By Name, God , Wendy Abrahamson	Oct. 7
Give Thanks, with a Grateful Heart , Ruth Roemer	Nov. 4
The Coming of Christ , Laurie Matarazzo	Dec. 2
Star Gifts: Words to Ponder All Year , Dale Selover	Jan. 6
What Will We Do Without Ashes? , Dale Selover	Feb. 17
Called to be Water Bearers , Wendy Abrahamson	March 3
Christ is Risen! He is Risen Indeed! , Ruth Roemer	April 7
The Image of God , Josh Kelly	May 5
Wisdom for the Long Walk of Faith , Dale Selover	June 2

Wednesdays Away with Cross Roads

Are you hungry for a deeper relationship with God? Do you thirst for a more meaningful prayer life? Join us for Wednesdays Away, a time of spiritual renewal on the first Wednesday of the month. Below are the descriptions for the remaining two Wednesdays Away virtual retreats in the 2020-21 series. Please visit crossroadsretreat.com to register.

Wednesday, May 5th – The Image of God presented by Josh Kelly

We will explore the imago dei - the image of God and what it means for us to be made in God's image. What is the significance that after the resurrection Christ still bears scars? Can our scars bear witness to God's beauty? Come and see... or hear, or feel, or smell, or taste!

Wednesday, June 2nd – Wisdom for the Long Walk of Faith presented by Dale Selover

In his classes, beloved priest, author, and spiritual guide Henri Nouwen offered gentle wisdom for the spiritual life. We will explore his invitation to look within to the heart, look to God in the book, and look to others in community.

WWW.CROSSROADSRETREAT.COM/WEDNESDAYS-AWAY

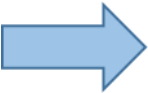


Women of Zion Watercolor Painting Class

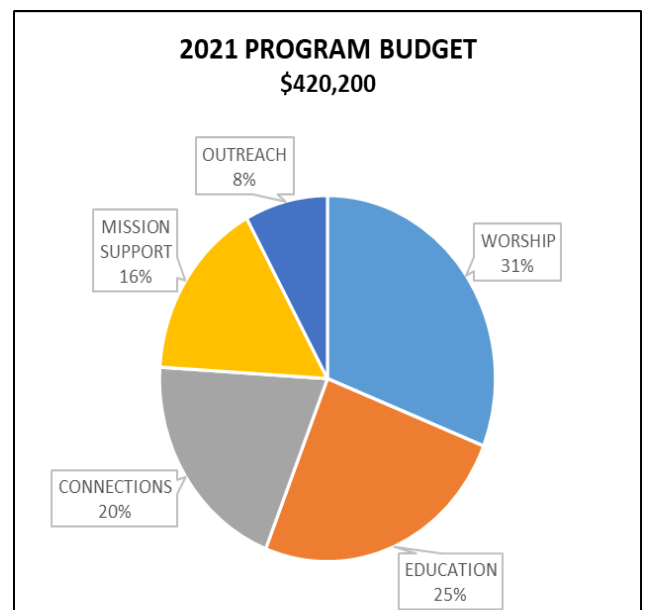
Women of Zion (WOZ) hosted a fun evening of watercolor painting in late March., creating beautiful notecards. 18 ladies joined, including four sets of moms and daughters. We even had a few children and an uncle participating! WOZ is planning more events for the upcoming months – stay tuned.



Stewardship Corner

Because of your Generosity...

-  Zion purchased equipment to record worship services during this year so we could worship together while apart — both pre-recorded services and now livestreamed.
-  Members are provided with *Living Lutheran* magazine. Pastor Kat led *Let's Talk* on Zoom during Lent — a time of prayer and conversation.
-  Zion buys sandwich makings, fruit, chips, and cookies for 70 brown bag lunches each month. Volunteers pack and deliver the meals to Faith Kitchen at Trinity Lutheran Church in Dover. Faith Kitchen welcomes all for lunch Monday -Saturday, “no questions asked, no judgement, just love.”



THANK YOU!

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
March	\$30,767.25	-\$35,025.96	-\$4,258.71
Year To Date Total	\$82,010.70	-\$81,151.71	\$858.99

TD BANK FUNDS	BALANCE	
Checking Account	\$59,504.62	4/3/2021 Bank Statement
Money Market Plus	\$232,957.98	3/31/2021 Bank Statement
Cash On Hand	\$292,462.60	

Directed Funds	\$204,059.67	3/31/2021
Operating Funds	\$88,402.93	3/31/2021
Cash On Hand	\$292,462.60	

ENDOWMENT FUNDS	BALANCE	
CFNJ	\$511,911.53	(3/31/21)
THRIVENT	\$362,029.12	(3/31/21)
TOTAL	\$873,940.65	

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

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

There is \$22,000 remaining from the Endowment Fund earnings available for new ministry opportunities in 2021. The Church Council is open to suggestions on ways to use 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.

Endowment Fund

