



Good News from Zion

Connecting People with God's Grace

February 2022

A Message from Pastor Kat

Tough Words

Jesus continues in his early ministry as we continue in the Season of Epiphany this month. Jesus is a new voice in the public square, but, even so, he is unafraid to speak God's truth as tough as it may be to hear. He challenges Simon Peter and his fellow fishermen to let down their nets into the water after a night of fruitless fishing. He proclaims blessing on those most often seen as misfortunate – the poor, hungry, and grieving – and “woe” to those most often seen as lucky – the rich, satisfied, and successful. He counsels his followers to love enemies and do good to those who hate them. Finally, after a wondrous mountain top experience, his next act is to lament the brokenness of “this faithless and perverse” generation.

As we hear tough words from Jesus, we dive into difficult and complex lessons from Paul's first letter to the congregation in Corinth. Paul struggles with his past as a persecutor of the church and proceeds to wrestle with what it means for us to be people of the resurrection. He does his best to answer the big question, “What happens after we die?”

Don't let anyone tell you that the Christian path is always easy to follow or understand!

Seeds of New Life

Struggle and difficulty have characterized so much of our life together in the past two years as we have been challenged by a time of leadership transition and pandemic uncertainty. Why can't Jesus and Paul just tell us that everything is going to be all right? I'm sure the followers of Jesus as well as the recipients of Paul's letter had similar thoughts. They too had weathered political turmoil and uncertainty. They too were yearning for a time of peace and security – a return to the golden days of Israel.

In her book, *Learning to Walk in the Dark*, American Episcopal priest and author, Barbara Brown Taylor writes, “New life starts in the dark. Whether it is a seed in the ground, a baby in the womb, or Jesus in the tomb, it starts in the dark.” Have you been feeling as if you are stuck in the dark? Whether you are grieving, depressed, or simply exhausted from the upheaval and change, know that God is with you in the dark places and walks with you as you struggle to understand and hold on to hope.

Jesus' teachings – and Paul's too – call us to trust in God, to see God's presence in the hurting places, and to persistently seek God's light in the darkness. As we prepare for the approaching season of Lent, may we surrender our illusions of control and release our burdens and questions into God's capable hands.

In Christ,
Pastor Kat



Annual Meeting of the Congregation

The 2022 Annual Meeting of the Congregation will be held on February 13th at 11:00 a.m., immediately following 10 a.m. worship. The congregation will receive the 2021 annual report and vote to approve the 2022 budget. Please plan to attend!

ANNUAL MEETING

Congregation Council Highlights



The Council met via Zoom conference call on January 20th. Below are the highlights of that meeting.

- The council approved the 2022 budget to be presented to the congregation at the annual meeting on February 13th.
- The Treasurer's Report reflected a positive balance at the end of 2021. Please see page 9 for an update.
- Earnings from Zion's Endowment Fund will provide \$25,148 for mission outreach opportunities in 2022.
- Annual reviews for Rod Briscoe, Jenny Gelson, and Rhonda Rossi were completed in January.
- The Christian Education & Youth committee will be overseeing the process of running background checks on all volunteers and staff who work with Zion's children and youth.
- The Youth Mentoring program is ready to launch, with 8 adults and 8 Confirmation Class students who will be paired up.
- The Worship & Music committee reported that total attendance at Christmas Eve worship services was 106. The livestream of the services had over 100 views on YouTube.
- John McAleer has stepped down as Property committee chairperson and is being replaced by Helen Livingston.
- The Social Ministry committee is exploring the possibility of sponsoring a refugee family from Afghanistan through the Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service.
- Leah Wintemute will be leading a group of members in updating Zion's constitution and bylaws this year.
- Thank you to:
 - * Ken Bryson, Jeff Livingston, and the Bell Choir, for their expert assistance with leading worship on Christmas Eve and on Sunday, December 26th.
 - * Judy Formalarie, for leading worship on January 2nd on very short notice.

The next meeting of the Congregation Council is scheduled for Thursday, February 17th. 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.

Zion Lutheran Church 2022 Prayer Partner Program

Sponsored by the Parish Life Committee



***Do you wish you spent more time in prayer?
Have you been feeling alone in your faith journey?
If YES, then join Zion's 2022 Prayer Partner Program!***

HOW DO I JOIN?

- Raise your hand! This program is for ALL members of Zion – men, women, children, and friends.
- Send an email to the church office, or contact:
Shellie Evers shellie.eversafe@gmail.com 804-678-8993
or
Kathy Rustwick kfrust@hotmail.com 908-328-4362
- A prayer partner will be assigned (or you can pick your own!).
- Pray with your partner and be encouraged.

How Zion will support the Prayer Partners Program

- ✓ Seasonal devotions.
- ✓ Meditation words/bible verses to encourage discussion.
- ✓ Optional Prayer Partner activities to strengthen our prayer practices.

The power of prayer

*Strengthens our relationship with God
Expresses our dependency on God
Acknowledges the care and power of God*

James 4:8 Draw near to God and he will draw near to you

Faith Kitchen News by Debra Kaufman

FAITH KITCHEN 2022 - The few, the mighty! What great January volunteers - John McAleer, John Minerowicz, Wendy Minerowicz, Jann McAleer, and Linda Lovas. Head soup master, John McAleer, led the creation of an amazing taco soup (thanks to Jann for chopping the mounds of onions and peppers!). He "beefed it up" thanks to the generous support of the Zion congregation. The soup received rave reviews from the Faith Kitchen patrons. Pasta salad - we can't gather without chopping - bananas and applesauce were added to the brown bags. **Our next date is Thursday, February 3rd.** We'll be gathering at Faith Kitchen in Dover to make chicken chili soup - if you want to volunteer and need a ride, please contact Debra at 703-402-2158.



Annual Drive for Faith Kitchen

MOOO - LET'S COLLECT MILK!

For this year's January-February drive to support Faith Kitchen, the Social Ministry committee is asking for donations of **shelf-stable milk** in lieu of coffee. Director Judy Miller tells us that the patrons of Faith Kitchen need shelf-stable milk which will provide them 8 grams of protein and vitamins A & D. This is an urgent need at Faith Kitchen for the winter. They are thankful for the abundance of coffee that we have provided in the past and look forward to receiving our collection of MILK in 2022.

So, let's get "Moo"ving and collect MILK! Here are a few examples of the shelf-stable milk that are available. The 8oz individual servings are best. Any flavor will be welcomed.

Thank you for all the donations thus far — let's keep stacking up the milk!



Youth and Family Ministry at Zion by Rhonda Rossi



Sunday School and Confirmation

All Sunday School and Confirmation classes have resumed in-person with all participants and teachers wearing masks. Due to the continued challenges of the Pandemic, we will be holding two Sunday School classes: PreK-1st grade, and 3rd-6th grade. The PreK-1st grade will remain in room #23 and the 3rd - 6th grade will meet in room #25 with Sandy Matsen. The Confirmation Class will continue to meet in the conference room on the 3rd floor. Thank you for remaining flexible as we continue to work our way through the ongoing challenges.



Hold the Date for First Communion

This year's First Communion class will be comprised of 3rd and 4th graders. Classes will begin on March 20th with First Communion being held on Sunday, April 10th at the 10 AM SSSS. A reception in the Great Room will follow the worship service. Detailed information on the program will be sent to the families in February.



Adult Education

The Adult Forum group meets on Sundays at 9:45 AM in the Great Room. Great conversations, fellowship and coffee is always available!

Adult Education

Christian Education February Calendar

Tuesday, Feb. 1st – Christian Ed/Youth Committee Meeting via Zoom at 7 PM

Wednesday, Feb. 2nd – Entertaining Angels with Pastor Kat via Zoom at 7 PM

Sunday, Feb 6th – Sunday School, Confirmation Class and Adult Forum at 9:45 AM

Wednesday, Feb. 9th – Entertaining Angels with Pastor Kat via Zoom at 7 PM

Sunday, Feb. 13th – SSSS followed by Annual Meeting – Please attend worship with your family and stay for the meeting

Wednesday, Feb. 16th – Entertaining Angels with Pastor Kat via Zoom at 7 PM

Sunday, Feb. 20th –

Youth Mentor Reveal Event for 7th-8th grades at 9:45 AM in the Great Room, followed by 11 AM worship and 12 PM lunch

Sunday School and Adult Forum at 9:45 AM

Wednesday, Feb. 23rd – Entertaining Angels with Pastor Kat via Zoom at 7 PM

Sunday, Feb. 27th – Sunday School, Confirmation Class and Adult Forum at 9:45 AM



Announcing Zion's Youth Mentor Program!

We are pleased to announce the beginning of a new Youth Mentor program at Zion! The program is blessed with 8 awesome adult volunteers who will be matched with the 7th/8th grade Confirmation Class students. The goal of the program is to form and cultivate intentional relationships between the adult members of Zion and its youth, and to help the youth understand they are an intricate part of Zion's congregation and accepted as such.

The matches are a "secret," and the pairs will be revealed to each other on Sunday, February 20th with a planned event. Until that date, the pairs are exchanging cards with descriptions of themselves and their personal interests. We look forward to sharing more of this program with Zion's congregation after the "Big Reveal"!





Midweek Virtual Gathering

Entertain angels with Pastor Kat on Wednesday evenings, January 19th-February 23rd, at 7:00 PM via Zoom.

We will encounter these holy and mysterious beings in scripture and consider how angels continue to visit us in our daily lives. Join us and be uplifted during this Season after Epiphany!

Upcoming Youth Retreats at Cross Roads Camp and Retreat Center

Elementary Retreat (Grades 3-5) — May 13th-15th (note change in dates)
 Middle School Retreat (Grades 6-8) — April 29th-May 1st (note change in dates)

The theme for the 2022 Cross Roads Youth Retreats is **Crack the Code, Journey with Jesus**. At both the Elementary and Middle School Retreats, participants will embark on a series of challenges to find clues, crack the code, and solve the mystery. Each weekend includes interactive Bible study, group games, small group discussions, and a lot of FUN!

Both retreats begin on Friday evening with check-in at 7 pm and end on Sunday morning at 10:30 am after a worship service. The cost for the weekend retreat is \$95.

For more information, please contact Rhonda Rossi at youth@zionoldwick.com.



**WEDNESDAYS AWAY
2021 - 2022**

Join us for Wednesdays Away, a time of retreat and spiritual renewal one Wednesday a month. This upcoming year we are excited to welcome you back to Cross Roads for these retreats, from 10 am - 3 pm. The cost for each retreat is \$50 and includes lunch. A virtual option for participation will also be available. Register on our website.

**CELEBRATING COMMUNITY:
A PICNIC FOR THE WEDNESDAYS AWAY COMMUNITY**
 Wednesday, September 8, 11 am - 2 pm

Participants and leaders who attended the 2020-2021 Wednesdays Away retreats are invited to a celebratory picnic at Cross Roads. The cost for this event is \$15. RSVP on our website.

WEDNESDAYS AWAY DATES & THEMES

2021	
Autumn Blessings with Wendy Abrahamson	Oct. 6
What My Grandmothers Taught Me with Dale Selover	Nov. 3
"Always we begin again" with Laurie Matarazzo	Dec. 1
2022	
Para + dox with Josh Kelly	Feb. 2
Ash Wednesday: Stations of the Cross with Dale Selover	March 2
Nourished with Kayla Hopgood	April 6
Resurrected Wounds with Kayla Hopgood	May 4
Kindling the Fire with Laurie Matarazzo	June 1

Wednesdays Away at Cross Roads

Join Josh Kelly at Cross Roads on February 2nd for "Para + dox".

We have many views, opinions, and beliefs surrounding our own understanding of the Divine. Often, we frame God as this, but not that, (for example God is fully present, but God is never absent, or God is only limitless and not limited). How might our views of the divine shift if we considered God as this AND that? What if getting a better grasp of God means letting go of one, and allowing the other space to be, embracing a framework of paradox in our views of the divine? Sounds overly philosophical and abstract? Maybe, but consider the cross – is it death? or is it life?

To register for Wednesdays Away, please visit www.crossroadsretreat.com.

Send a Little Love on Valentine's Day

The Shepherding Committee invites you to share a little love with our members who are elderly or homebound. Please consider sending a card to someone on the list below.

Happy 
Valentine's
Day

Judy Bogan
29 Philhower Road
Lebanon, NJ 08833

Gladys Corcoran
Avalon at Bridgewater
565 State Route 28
Bridgewater, NJ 08807

Peggy Eppley
Juniper Village at Brookline
Senior Living - The Pines
1940 Cliffside Drive
State College, PA 16802

Al Forster
31 Fox Hill Road
Califon, NJ 07830

Doris Havran
Hunterdon Care Center, room C-122
1 Leisure Court
Flemington, NJ 08822

Claire LeFevre
913 Sweetbay Lane
Lebanon, PA 17046

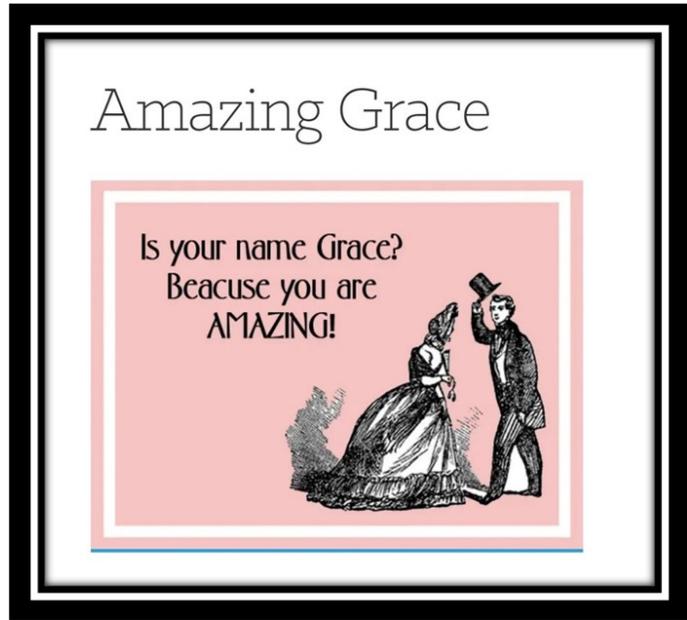
Bob & Audrey Melick
P.O. Box 243
Oldwick, NJ 08858

Helen Pappas
Morningside House of Ellicott City
5330 Dorsey Hall Drive, apt 330
Ellicott City, MD 21042

Jim & Shirley Reed
28 Sullivan Road
Flemington, NJ 08822

Ted Talis
1147 Barley Sheaf Road
Flemington, NJ 08822

A Little Giggle from the Shepherding Committee



Thank You!

Pastor Kat, Rod Briscoe, Rhonda Rossi and Jenny Gelson would like to thank the congregation for your generous Christmas gift. Your appreciation of our dedication to the ministries of Zion is a true gift to all of us.

Thank you!

Pastor Kat, Rod, Rhonda, and Jenny

Thank
you!

Lunch Bunch — February 10th

Please join Pastor Kat at the Tewksbury Inn on Thursday, February 10th at 12 p.m. RSVP to the Parish Office no later than Tuesday, February 8th.



Pocket Prayer Shawl Ministry — Crochet With Us!

Pocket Prayer Shawl crocheters are needed! Do you want to help with this ministry? The cotton thread will be provided. If you would like to volunteer please call or text Debra Kaufman at 703-402-2158.



Women of Zion — Spring Painting Class



**** SAVE THE DATE ****

Women of Zion Spring Craft Event

Thursday, March 24th at 7 p.m.

(LOCATION TBD – ZOOM OR CEB)

Let's gather and PAINT!

Women
of
ZION



FINANCIAL SUMMARY 2021

GENERAL FUND	INCOME	EXPENSE	DIFFERENCE
January	\$25,231.84	-\$21,764.39	\$3,467.45
February	\$26,011.61	-\$24,121.36	\$1,890.25
March	\$30,517.25	-\$35,025.96	-\$4,508.71
April	\$39,973.28	-\$29,769.52	\$10,203.76
May	\$32,397.55	-\$26,551.59	\$5,845.96
June	\$27,953.28	-\$22,500.80	\$5,452.48
July	\$28,398.55	-\$27,824.51	\$574.04
August	\$30,624.35	-\$29,315.87	\$1,308.48
September	\$25,015.03	-\$27,184.77	-\$2,169.74
October	\$32,956.27	-\$28,366.13	\$4,590.14
November	\$27,787.64	-\$36,223.74	-\$8,436.10
December	\$47,022.40	-\$31,368.78	\$15,653.62
Total	\$373,889.05	-\$340,017.42	\$33,871.63



TD BANK FUNDS	BALANCE	
Checking Account	\$101,996.91	1/3/2022
Money Market Plus	\$178,079.37	12/31/2021
Cash On Hand	\$280,076.28	
Directed Funds	\$149,220.38	12/31/2021
Operating Funds	\$130,855.90	12/31/2021
Cash On Hand	\$280,076.28	

ENDOWMENT FUNDS	BALANCE	
CFNJ	\$572,604.77	(12/31/21)
THRIVENT	\$396,763.75	(12/31/21)
TOTAL	\$969,368.52	



Give to Zion from your phone! Scan the QR code to be directed to Tithely's electronic giving site.

ENDOWMENT MISSION OUTREACH		
Available Funds for 2021	\$23,500.00	
ELCA Compensation Aid Fund	-\$1,500.00	2/28/2021
Cross Roads Camp and Retreat Center	-\$1,000.00	5/27/2021
Jehu Jones Bishop's Challenge	-\$2,000.00	6/30/2021
Sunday School Marketing Program	-\$634.83	9/29/2021
Good News Home for Women	-\$1,799.00	
Lutheran Disaster Response Matching Funds	-\$7,400.00	11/30/2021
Northern Hunterdon Ecumenical Council (gift cards)	-\$3,000.00	11/23/2021
Upgrade to Live Stream Worship	-\$2,123.14	
Family Promise: Housing for Families Displaced by Fire	-\$4,043.03	12/31/2021
2021 Endowment Funds Remaining	\$0.00	

SAVE THE DATE!



**The Oldwick Town-Wide Tag Sale,
sponsored by Zion's Social Ministry
committee, returns on Saturday,
April 30th.**