



Good News from Zion

Connecting People with God's Grace

August 2022

A Message from Pastor Kat

We are Called

One of the most sacred parts of a life of faith is discerning our call. How does God desire for us to use our gifts in service to the world? Where is God leading us next? In our individual as well as our church life, discerning our call is an ongoing process. This can be hard for those of us who really enjoy finding our groove and sticking with it. Sometimes, God calls us to a new thing when we aren't quite prepared for it.

This is the case for Elisha when he is called by Elijah to follow in Elijah's footsteps as prophet. Elisha has a hard time letting go of the groove that he's established with his family as a farmer. When Elisha asks to be allowed to bid his parents goodbye, Elijah rebukes him for his hesitation. In response, Elisha kills the oxen pulling his plow and hosts a feast for his community, a gesture that shows his readiness to assume the mantle of leadership.

How is God calling to Zion?

If discerning our individual call can be difficult, discerning the call of a community and church to which we belong can sometimes be even more challenging! Communal discernment involves conversation and listening – having the courage to speak up as well as being open to what others have to say.

As we prepare to head into a new program year, God is calling to us to consider some new directions for our community. How may Sunday mornings need to change as our worship experience evolves in light of the pandemic? How do we stay connected to families with school-age children and make space for them in church activities when many young people and their families have multiple commitments on their time? How do we stay grounded in the traditions of our community while being considerate of new realities in our current context?

As we consider where God is leading us as a congregation, I pray that you will have courage to lift your voice and ears to hear the voices of your brothers and sisters in Christ here at Zion Lutheran Church.

In Christ,
Pastor Kat



Congregation Council Highlights



The Council met via Zoom conference call on July 21st. Below are the highlights of that meeting.

- Vacation Bible School went very well, despite ending early due to Covid.
- The Parish Life committee has two upcoming events planned — the July 30th outing to see the Big Fuss at Sunken Silo, and the August 5th Sip & Solve at the home of Shellie & Eric Evers. Please see page 4 for more details.
- A decision needs to be made about the proceeds from the 2022 Tag Sale, as Family Promise is no longer sending children to camp at Cross Roads.
- Planning is underway for the September 10th 5K Fun Run/Walk. Please see page 8 for more information.
- The Open Forum held for gathering feedback from the congregation regarding the fall worship schedule was successful, with 30 people in attendance. All appreciated the opportunity to express their opinions.
- The Council reviewed the CEB Use Policy, as it was adopted in 2014. It was determined that the policy does not need to be updated.
- A locking mechanism is being purchased for the front door of the church, which will enable the door to be locked and unlocked remotely.
- Discussion was held regarding the Youth & Family Ministry position. There is great value in having the position staffed, however there is concern about the ability to sustain the position financially.
- The Council reviewed their 2022 goal of adding 14 core families. Events like the 5K should be a great opportunity to attract new people to Zion.
- Thank you to:
 - * Helen Livingston for securing a Thrivent gift card to offset expenses associated with the 5K.
 - * Debra Kaufman and Carolyn Schroeder for providing rides on behalf of the Shepherding committee.

The next meeting of the Congregation Council is scheduled for Thursday, August 18th. 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.



Happy Anniversary, Zion!

Zion's 308th anniversary will be celebrated on Sunday, August 2nd.

Join us after worship for refreshments on the front lawn.

Youth & Family Ministry at Zion

Watch for a Family Summer Activity to Arrive Soon!



Greetings from Zion's Christian Education and Youth Committee! Summer is a great time for families to enjoy spending time with one another and we hope you've been enjoying your summer so far! A summer activity will arrive in the mail towards the end of July. This year our family activity will give you a chance to share a special nighttime prayer as you gaze at glow-in-the-dark stars that you can attach to your child's ceiling with some wall-safe sticky tack. Then every night as your child gazes at the glowing stars they can feel safe surrounded by God's love.



Vacation Bible School

Everyone had a wonderful time at Vacation Bible School! Our campers, volunteers and staff members had a rewarding and incredibly fun time Monday, June 20 – Wednesday, June 22. Even though, we had to end VBS two days early due to a volunteer testing positive for Covid our VBS program was enjoyed by all!!

This year Zion's VBS program was Monumental, Celebrating GOD'S Greatness. Kids went off-road for a Monumental adventure through the colorful canyons and sunbaked trails of the southwest. The children enjoyed lively songs, creative crafts, exciting games, engaging Bible stories, interesting science gizmos and tasty snacks – all of the things that make VBS Camp so much fun for children.

Our VBS campers are looking forward to sharing some of their favorite music with the congregation on Sunday, September 11, during Zion's 9:30 AM worship service. Additionally, we're expecting a visit from "Tiff Cliff" who's set to perform a fun skit from our VBS program.

Many thanks to our adult and youth volunteers – we couldn't do it without you!!



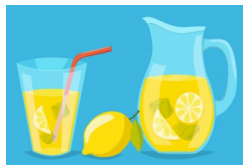
September 11th

Join us for the start of a new, exciting Sunday School year!

Sunday School Rally Day – September 11th

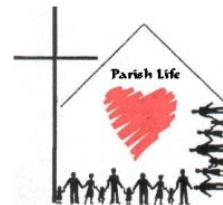
Please join us on September 11th as we celebrate our first day of Sunday School and Confirmation Class for the 2022 – 2023 school year. We have lots of fun and informative activities planned for our students and their families. More information is in the works and will be sent out sometime in August. We're looking forward to seeing everyone soon as we continue to learn about God's love and caring for all of us!

Parish Life News



Summer Social Hour

During the summer months, Zion's weekly fellowship time takes place on the front lawn of the church, immediately following Sunday's **9:30 a.m.** worship service. If you would like to volunteer to bring food or drinks for one of the Sundays over the summer, please sign up via the link emailed from the Parish Office.



Calling All Crime Solvers! — Sip and Solve with Lisa Desire from Prime Suspect — **Friday, August 5th at 6 p.m.**

Do you love Cold Case and CSI? Then this event is for you! Not only will you have fun learning about forensic science — participants will get to do the actual testing required to solve a mystery. The cost is \$25 per person and **pre-registration is required**. The event will be held at the home of Shellie & Eric Evers, and attendees are asked to bring a beverage and an appetizer or dessert to share. Be sure to sign up or via the link emailed from the Parish Office no later than July 29th!



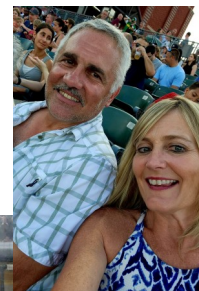
Women of Zion Balance Class — **Wednesday, August 10th, at 7 p.m.**

Balance Class participants will build balance, strength, and concentration in this one-hour session, with standing and seated yoga poses and techniques. And the exercises are suitable for everyBody! The cost is \$10 per person, sent/delivered to the Parish Office by July 31st. Participants should wear stretchy clothing and sneakers. Please sign up in the narthex or online, also by July 31st. Contact Anita Zarate if you have any questions.



Fun at the Ballgame!

Zion members traveled to the ball park for a Somerset Patriots game on June 25th. A great night was had by all, including fireworks after the game!



Lunch Bunch

Lunch Bunch will meet again on Thursday, September 8th. Stay tuned for details!

Faith Kitchen News *by Debra Kaufman*

Zion's volunteers made 170 meals during two days of serving at Faith Kitchen in July. Meatball subs and chicken salad sandwiches topped the menu. Many thanks to the volunteers and to the Zion congregation for supporting this great ministry. **Volunteers are still needed especially for third Saturdays.** The next opportunities to serve are Thursday, August 4th and Saturday, August 20th.



Faith Kitchen Opportunity for Youth

On Saturday, August 20th, all youth in grades 7-12 are invited to participate in creating a meal for Faith Kitchen. Please plan to arrive at 8:30 a.m. to be guided by Debra Kaufman and Helen Livingston in preparing the food.

Although volunteers under the age of 16 are not permitted to serve at Faith Kitchen, this is a great opportunity for the youth and their mentors to participate in a service project together. After the work is done, we will need the Mentors or other adults to transport the prepared meals to Faith Kitchen and stay to serve the food to the guests.

Please contact Debra Kaufman to RSVP!

Food Pantry Collection Continues in August

Numerous deliveries of summer donations have made their way to the Flemington Food Pantry and Open Cupboard. Social Ministry will continue to collect the summer items through the month of August. Thanks to everyone who has already donated - we look forward to many more trips to the food pantries!



Stewardship Review

Second Quarter General Fund Giving 2022

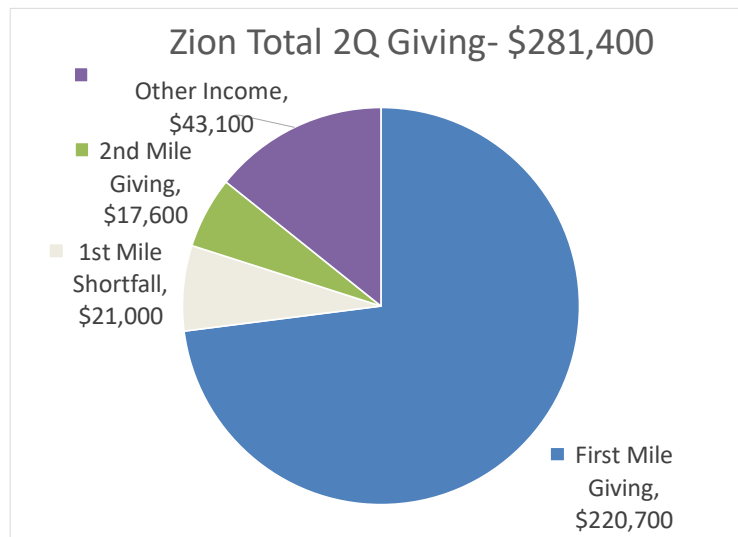
Our 2022 Spending Plan was based on a projected income of \$373,500 from Zion's members. This projection is comprised of giving from 49 pledging families of \$273,000 and an estimate from Plate (giving via the collection plate during service), special services (unique one-time gifts) and giving from 40 non-pledging families for a total of \$100,500. By the second quarter, we have received a total of \$220,700 or 59% of our year end estimate of \$373,500. Included in this is the pre-pledged amount (\$61,200) received in December. On a positive note, 33 families have met or are ahead of pledge by \$53,100. This includes 8 families who have completed their pledge for 2022. On the other hand, 16 pledging families are below their year to date pledge by \$6,800.



The pledged amount is 134% of a mid-year point. The non-pledged amount is only 76% of our estimate. The combined total is 118%.

Zion Giving – The Bigger Picture

The congregation has been generous in giving to areas outside the budget needs. Beyond our giving to our core ministries, Special Appeals and Other Income have been \$60,700 and account for 22% of the total giving. The Special Appeals amount reflects giving to eleven separate appeals so far this year. The Other Income amount reflects Endowment Mission Outreach, the Capital Reserve, and Memorials & Bequests received this year.



Please note that giving to our core ministries, i.e. our budget, should be our “first-fruit giving”; our highest priority. That means giving proportionately and striving toward or achieving the 10% tithe goal. Our current rate of giving indicates that there is a shortfall in supporting these core ministries of Zion. At mid-year, this is estimated to be \$21,000. Second-mile giving should be just that — giving after you have addressed your first-mile proportion. We are blessed at Zion that many of us can give beyond our first-mile giving. However, this should not be at the expense of meeting the need to fully support our ministries funded by the budget.

Thank you for your ongoing support of Zion's ministries.

Zion's Stewardship Committee

FINANCIAL SUMMARY - YTD 2022

GENERAL FUND	INCOME	EXPENSE	DIFFERENCE
January	\$31,968.90	-\$29,412.46	\$2,556.44
February	\$33,165.17	-\$31,893.59	\$1,271.58
March	\$29,721.39	-\$38,082.06	-\$8,360.67
April	\$28,907.80	-\$31,765.47	-\$2,857.67
May	\$30,337.81	-\$37,690.59	-\$7,352.78
June	\$36,476.35	-\$24,957.69	\$11,518.66
Year To Date Total	\$190,577.42	-\$193,801.86	-\$3,224.44



TD BANK FUNDS	BALANCE
Checking Account	\$111,802.45
Money Market Plus	178,123.52
Cash On Hand	\$289,925.97

7/3/2022

6/30/2022

ENDOWMENT FUNDS	BALANCE
CFNJ	\$516,554.71
THRIVENT	\$329,512.51
TOTAL	\$846,067.22

6/30/2022

6/30/2022

ENDOWMENT MISSION OUTREACH	BALANCE
Available Funds for 2022	\$25,148.00
Synod Compensation Aid Fund	-\$1,500.00
Lutheran Disaster Response - Ukraine	-\$5,000.00
NJ Synod Faithful Journey	-\$500.00
2022 Endowment Funds Remaining	\$18,148.00



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

A Little Giggle from the Shepherding Committee

BOAZ AND RUTH... What kind of man was Boaz before he married Ruth?
Answer: He was Ruthless.



ZION LUTHERAN CHURCH

OLDWICK, NJ • SINCE 1714



COMMUNITY
5K Run/Walk

Benefit for
GOOD NEWS HOME

Saturday, September 10
9:30 Registration 10:00 5K Start

18 Miller Avenue
Oldwick, New Jersey

www.zionoldwick.com

www.goodnewshome.org



Exploring the Kingdom of God

What is it, really?!

Virtual Midweek Gatherings
Fourth Wednesdays at 7 p.m.
June-September

Join Pastor Kat on Zoom at 7 p.m. on August 24th for this month's installment of our virtual summer midweek gathering.

Our topic is "Exploring the Kingdom of God."

While this phrase is familiar to many, if asked what the Kingdom of God is we often struggle to put it into words.

Our final gathering for this summer will be on September 28th.