



Good News from Zion

Connecting People with God's Grace

April 2023

A Message from Pastor Kat

A Celebration of New Life

The Easter Season is a time of celebrating the new life we experience through the resurrection of Christ. We journey with the disciples as they encounter with surprise the wonder of the risen Christ. What they had thought was the end of the story turns out to be just the beginning.

In the coming month, we will hear gospel stories that show us different faces of the risen Christ and reveal his relationship with us. At the same time, we will hear readings from the book of Acts that tell the story of the early church taking shape in the wake of Christ's resurrection. In these texts, something new is being born through the work and proclamation of the apostles and those they encounter.

An Opportunity for New Growth

As we embrace new life, I share joyfully with you that an opportunity for new growth is opening to our congregation. I am very excited to share that we have begun the work of searching for a new director of youth and family ministry. Many thanks to the members of our search committee: Gerry Dehkes, chair; Lou DiCriscio; Jodi Ennis; Cindy Rupprecht; and Brooke Schumann. We have already seen new life in our midst as new members and visitors have joined us. Filling this position will only add to this new life by providing support to our church's families as we grow as a congregation.

Please join me in prayer for our search committee that their work will lead them to the right match for our needs. May God's gift of new life in Jesus open our hearts to the new growth taking shape in our midst.

In Christ,
Pastor Kat

HOLY WEEK



WORSHIP SCHEDULE

Palm Sunday — April 2nd

Single Service at 10 a.m.

No Sunday School

Maundy Thursday – April 6th

Communion Worship at 7 p.m.

Good Friday – April 7th

Tenebrae Service at 7 p.m.

Saturday – April 8th

Easter Egg Hunt at 10 a.m.

Easter Sunday – April 9th

Worship at 8:30 a.m. and 11:00 a.m.

No Sunday School

Special Meeting of the Congregation — April 2nd

The Property committee will host a special meeting of the congregation on Sunday, April 2nd, following 10 a.m. worship. The purpose of the meeting will be to receive a presentation regarding the proposed options for the required second means of egress to be added to the church building. The Council would like to gather feedback from the congregation to make sure everyone's thoughts and preferences are considered when they make their final decision about the location of the new exit.



Church Council Highlights

The Church Council met via Zoom conference call on February 16th and March 16th. Below are the highlights of those meetings.



- The congregation will worship together at a single 10 a.m. service on Palm Sunday, April 2nd.
- The Evangelism committee will sponsor a Pet Blessing on Sunday, June 11th.
- Four of Zion's youth have been matched with their mentors. Many thanks to Anissa Mikitiuk, Brian Reilly, Bonnie Stanski, and Michele Stevens for volunteering to serve as mentors.
- The search committee for a new Director of Youth & Family Ministries has begun their work.
- The Property committee will host a special meeting of the congregation on Sunday, April 2nd, following 10 a.m. worship. The purpose of the meeting will be to receive a presentation regarding the proposed options for the required second means of egress to be added to the church building. The Council would like to gather feedback from the congregation to make sure everyone's thoughts and preferences are considered when they make their final decision about the location of the new exit.
- The Council voted to distribute \$5,000 in Endowment Fund earnings to Lutheran Disaster Response to aid in recovery from the earthquakes in Turkey and Syria.
- Pastor Kat and the Evangelism committee are preparing to host another round of new member classes later this spring.
- The Evangelism committee plans to host a concert in the fall to which the community will be invited. The performers are TBD.
- Parents Night Out was a big success! There were 7 children in attendance and a great time was had by all.
- The next Parish Life event will be on April 1st at Sunken Silo Brew Works, where "The Big Fuss" band will entertain the crowd.
- The Shepherding committee has been calling Zion members to check in and the conversations are going well.
- Jenny Gelson and Sandy Matsen have been transitioning the financial accounting system used in the Parish Office from Quickbooks to Icon Church Management software, and working toward all bookkeeping being done in the office which creates a savings for the church.
- Thank you to:
 - * David Wintemute for delivering lunch to the Council members at their January retreat.
 - * Shellie Evers and Carolyn Schroeder for making calls to the congregation on behalf of the Shepherding Comm.
 - * Sandy Matsen, Gerry Dehkes, Reina Schumann, and Kayden O'Connor-Shin for their help with the February 12th all-school event.
 - * Janet Hornich for taking pictures at Sunday School events and many other occasions.
 - * Donna Reilly and Brooke Schumann for substitute teaching at Sunday School.
 - * Special thanks to Sandy Matsen for continuing to take the lead at Sunday School — making pretzels with the kids, heading up the Eggstravanza all-school event on March 26th, and encouraging the youth and families to support the "Hear My Voice" prayer book ministry. Thank you for all that you do, Sandy!

The next meeting of the Church Council is scheduled for 7 p.m. on Thursday, April 20th. Meetings are open for all to attend. If you would like to join an upcoming meeting, please let the Parish Office know and we will send you the Zoom link.

Faith Kitchen News *by Debra Kaufman*

Faith Kitchen - Thursday and Saturday crews! We've been inspired by our new aprons - thank you John and Jann McAleer. Sharing God's grace one meal at a time. Please consider volunteering - first Thursdays and third Saturdays. Please contact Debra with any questions at 703-402-2158.



Tag Sale Volunteers Needed

Are you available during the weeks of April 17th and 24th to help sort and price the items being donated for the Tag Sale? Can you work on the day of the sale itself? Please sign up via the link emailed from the Parish Office, and contact Rebecca Melick at 908-229-3744 with any questions you may have. Thank you!



Feed My Starving Children MobilePack — May 19-20

The Feed My Starving Children MobilePack will be back at Zion on May 19 and 20th. Many volunteers will be needed for this food packing event that provides vital nutrition to children in regions around the world. Please use the link emailed from the Parish Office to sign up, and spread the word to your friends, family or organizations who might be able to help.

SUNDAY SCHOOL

Sunday School News

This month in Sunday School, the younger and older kids made pretzels for Lent with Mrs. Matsen as we embraced our seasonal theme of sharing grace through prayer! Legend has it that the pretzel was invented by an Italian monk in the year 610 AD. To reward young children for learning their prayers, he supposedly folded strips of bread dough to resemble the crossed arms of praying children. He called his creation *pretiola*, which meant "little rewards."



At our all-school event on March 26th, we dyed eggs and made cards for our homebound members. The older youth also stuffed eggs for the annual Easter Egg Hunt.



Easter Egg Hunt — April 8th

You don't want to miss the fun! Join us at the CEB at 10 a.m. on Saturday, April 8th, for pictures with the Easter Bunny, crafts, games, tasty treats and of course the EGG HUNT!



Youth Mentoring Program

Four of Zion's youth have been matched with their new mentors! Pictured are a group of last year's and this year's mentors/mentees. Many thanks to Anissa Mikitiuk, Brian Reilly, Bonnie Stanski, and Michele Stevens for volunteering to serve as mentors this year.



We Came, We Saw, We Bowled!

On March 26th, eight adults and four youth from Zion attended the area-wide youth group bowling event at Bowlero in Green Brook. Fun was had by all!



CROSS ROADS CAMP AND RETREAT CENTER

Open Houses — May 13th and June 10th

Come and visit Cross Roads Camp & Retreat Center for one of our open houses this spring! Learn all about our summer and year-round opportunities. Take a tour of camp, hear stories about summer camp, ask questions of our staff, and finish with a delicious lunch in the dining hall.

These are especially great opportunities for families interested in sending their children to camp for the first time (or attending Family Camp together) or for retreat leaders interested in one of our many buildings that are open year-round.

These tours start at 10:30am from the Lodge. Please register online at www.crossroadsretreat.com by the Monday before the date attending.

GET PAID TO HAVE FUN AT CAMP

We are currently accepting applications for our Summer 2023 Staff.



Cross Roads Summer Staff is a professional, vibrant and close-knit community that is hired from mid-June to late-August. During the summer, our Summer Staff has access to a wide range of activities, from rock climbing, arts & crafts, team sports, swimming, nature exploration, and much more!

Visit our website to apply today to help make a difference in the lives of children and youth while being a part of a welcoming and inclusive community providing life changing and sacred adventures for renewal, growth, and joy.

www.crossroadsretreat.com

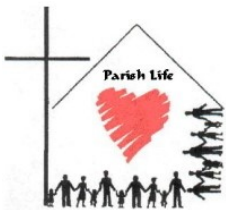
Parents Night Out Recap



Zion's Saint Patrick's Day themed Parents Night Out on March 3rd sham-ROCKED! A huge thank you to adult and youth volunteers Debra Kaufman, Eric & Shellie Evers, Cindy Rupprecht, Reina Schumann, Lauren Janssen, and Jess Rodrick for their help with the shenanigans! An equally big thanks to the parents who let us hang with their wee ones for a bit. We did "lucky and blessed" themed crafts, played games (like pin the coin on the pot of gold), ate pizza and other goodies, and watched an awesome movie!



Upcoming Parish Life Events



April 1, 2023 at 6:30PM The Big Fuss at Sunken Silo (Please bring \$10 per person and light food to share)
June 24, 2023 at 7:05PM Somerset Patriots Baseball & Fireworks (\$10 tickets must be reserved in advance)
Please contact Shellie Evers at 804.678.8993 for more information!



Lunch Bunch — April 13th

Join friends from Zion for Lunch Bunch on Thursday, April 13th, at 12 p.m. This month's gathering will take place at Galasso's Cucina in Lebanon. Please sign up via the link emailed from the Parish Office to reserve your place at the table!

Calls from the Shepherding Committee

We care how you're doing! Shellie Evers and Carolyn Schroeder are reaching out on behalf of the Shepherding Committee to all Zion families. Please feel free to share your concerns, joys, and suggestions – or just talk and catch up!



Women of Zion Spring Event

All are invited to the Living Stations of the Cross at St. John Neumann in Califon, at 12 p.m. on Good Friday, April 7th. We will experience a one-hour outdoor program, which includes attendees from other area churches. Afterwards, our group will go to lunch at Max's Market & Eatery, just up the road. Please sign up for lunch via the link emailed from the Parish Office, and call Anita Zarate with any questions.



Save the Date!

Mother's Day Celebration at Zion

On Sunday, May 14th, the Bell Choir from the Good News Home for Women will join us for 11 a.m. worship, followed by a 12 p.m. brunch at the CEB. Everyone is invited to attend the brunch to welcome the ladies and celebrate Zion's support of the Good News Home! Please sign up for the brunch at church or online via the link to be emailed from the Parish Office.



Endowment Fund News

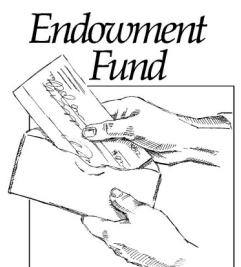
The Endowment Committee will be having our first Endowment Sunday of 2023 on Mother's Day, May 14th. The other Endowment Sundays for 2023 will be on Father's Day, June 18th, and All Saints Sunday, November 5th.

There was \$25,282 from Endowment Fund earnings available for new ministry opportunities in 2023. This is determined by taking 3% of a 3-year average of the fund. The Church Council is open to suggestions on ways to use the funds to support our ministries. YTD \$1,500 has been donated to the NJ Synod Compensation Aid fund and \$5,000 to Lutheran Disaster Response, leaving a current balance of \$18,782 still available to support ministries in 2023.

Please consider giving to the Zion Lutheran Church Endowment Fund on May 14th 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.

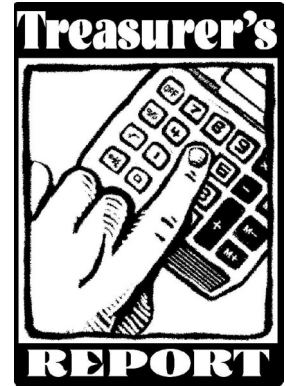
Envelopes marked "Endowment Fund" will be available at the church on May 14th. If you are worshipping virtually, please consider mailing a check marked "Endowment" to the Parish Office.

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



FINANCIAL SUMMARY - YTD 2023

GENERAL FUND	INCOME	EXPENSES	DIFFERENCE
January	\$26,969.67	-\$26,902.86	\$66.81
February	\$35,166.23	-\$30,224.70	\$4,941.53
Year-To-Date Total	\$62,135.90	-\$57,127.56	\$5,008.34



TD BANK FUNDS	BALANCE	
Checking Account	\$192,612.79	2/4/2023
Money Market Plus	178,182.82	2/28/2023
Cash On Hand	\$370,795.61	
Directed Funds	\$240,595.90	2/28/2023
Operating Funds	\$130,199.71	2/28/2023
Cash On Hand	\$370,795.61	



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

ENDOWMENT FUNDS	BALANCE	
CFNJ	\$496,752.34	1/31/2023
THRIVENT	\$350,271.48	2/28/2023
TOTAL	\$847,023.82	

ENDOWMENT MISSION OUTREACH	
Available Funds for 2023	\$25,282.00
Synod Compensation Aid Fund	-\$1,500.00
Lutheran Disaster Response	-\$5,000.00
2023 Endowment Funds Remaining	\$18,782.00

A Little Giggle from the Shepherding Committee

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

