



# Good News from Zion

Connecting People with God's Grace

May 2023

## A Message from Pastor Kat

### Back to the Beginning

As a society, we tend to measure time in a linear fashion, leaving the past behind us and moving forward into the future. We often think of our life as a straight line from birth to childhood to adulthood. As the church, we see time differently. The church year begins with Jesus' birth and then cycles through stories of his ministry, passion, death, and resurrection. In the Easter season, we begin at the empty tomb, then hear stories of the disciples' encounters with the resurrected Jesus, and then circle back to Jesus' final conversation with his disciples before his passion.

This may seem confusing! We are so accustomed to stories that march ahead in a straight line, but, just like the church year, our faith journey is also cyclical. As people of faith, we may experience periods of growth and learning, then times of doubt and questioning, then a new awakening that leads to further growth – and yet more questions! God's work in our lives is not always accomplished in a linear fashion – and that can be confusing and frustrating, but it can also be liberating.

### A Celebration of the Spirit

At the end of the Easter season, on the Day of Pentecost, we celebrate the birth of the movement that will become the church. The force behind this movement is God's Spirit. The work of the Spirit is often seen as mysterious – but also playful, even mischievous! Nobody can control where the Spirit blows or where it may lead. The Spirit too operates in a nonlinear fashion.

I wonder how God might be at work in your life right now. Are you experiencing a time of growth and learning? Are you full of questions and doubts? Do you sense something new on the horizon? Whatever the case may be, know with confidence that the Spirit is at work mysteriously, playfully, even mischievously bringing you closer to God.

In Christ,  
Pastor Kat

### Mother's Day Brunch

On May 14th, the Bell Choir from the Good News Home for Women will join us for 11 a.m. worship, followed by a 12 pm brunch at the CEB. Everyone is invited to attend the brunch to celebrate the Good News Home and all Zion ladies. Sign up to bring your mom, grandmother, aunt and all your favorite ladies to brunch!

*Happy*  
**MOTHER'S**  
*Day*

#### **Breakfast Items**

*French Toast with Fresh Blueberries  
Orange Glazed Ham with Biscuits  
Mini quiches  
Fruit Cups*

#### **Lunch Items**

*Chicken Tetrazzini  
Glazed carrots  
Asparagus Gruyere Tart  
Romaine Salad, Garlic Croutons, Roasted Shrimp*

#### **Dessert**

*Strawberry Mousse  
Mocha Icebox Cake  
Coffee, Orange Juice, Iced Tea*

## Church Council Highlights

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



- A New Members class will be held on May 7th with new member welcome on May 21st.
- The Evangelism committee will host the hospitality table at the Tag Sale this year.
- The Worship & Music committee reported the following:
  - \* Having received positive feedback from the congregation regarding the single service on Palm Sunday, the committee recommended repeating this format next year.
  - \* Due to the ongoing issues with the quality of the sound in the Sunday morning YouTube broadcasts, new cameras will be installed at the church.
  - \* The policy for summer worship will be to relocate to the CEB only if the temperature is forecasted to reach 90 degrees or higher.
- The Lenten Social Ministry initiative to provide prayer books for prisoners at Edna Mahan Correctional Facility raised enough funds to purchase 127 copies of "Hear My Voice". The council voted to use Endowment Fund earnings to order an additional 73 copies of the book for a total donation of 200 books to Edna Mahan.
- The Property committee is awaiting drawings from the architect that will be used to get estimates on the cost of the two options for the second means of egress at the church.
- Zion's insurance company has authorized rebuild work to begin in May at the CEB. The water damage to the kitchen and storage closets is a result of the pipe that burst on Christmas Eve.
- The Director of Youth & Family Ministry search committee has finalized the position description and is beginning to advertise the job opening. The goal is to have someone hired by June 30th.
- Thank you to:
  - \* Rod Briscoe, the Parish Choir, and the Bell Choir for their leadership and musical offerings during Holy Week and on Easter Sunday.
  - \* Joanne Rupp for coordinating the paraments and flowers at the church for Holy Week and Easter.
  - \* Debra Kaufman and the Evangelism committee for the successful Easter Egg Hunt.
  - \* Janet Hornich for taking pictures at Zion events, including the Easter Egg Hunt.

The next meeting of the Church Council is scheduled for 7 p.m. on Thursday, May 18th. 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.

## Endowment Fund News

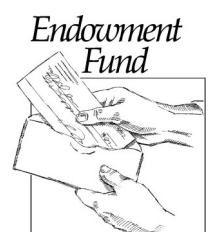
The Endowment Committee will be having our first Endowment Sunday of 2023 on Mother's Day, May 14<sup>th</sup>. The other Endowment Sundays for 2023 will be on Father's Day, June 18<sup>th</sup>, and All Saints Sunday, November 5<sup>th</sup>.

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 14<sup>th</sup> 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.





## Sunday School News

This month in Sunday School, we dyed eggs that were donated to our ministry partner, Faith Kitchen, to help feed the hungry. The confirmands stuffed plastic eggs for the Easter Egg Hunt that was held on April 8th, and we also made Easter cards to send to our homebound members.



Many thanks to the Evangelism Committee for hosting a fun Easter Egg Hunt including crafts, games, the egg hunt and pictures with the Easter Bunny. Thank you to everyone who made it a special community event!



## Vacation Bible School

Vacation Bible School is returning to Zion on June 26th–30th. All children ages 3 through the completion of 5th grade are invited to join in the fun at “Hero Hotline” where everyone’s gifts are valued, and every hero has a role to play. The registration form can be found on our website or by contacting the Parish Office.



## Faith Kitchen News *by Debra Kaufman*

April's Faith Kitchen volunteers - Saturday and Thursday crews! These volunteers are incredibly dedicated to this ministry. Would you like to join us? First Thursdays and third Saturdays — new volunteers are always welcome. Contact Debra Kaufman at 703-402-2158.



### Feed My Starving Children MobilePack — May 19-20

Spaces are still available for those wishing to participate in the Feed My Starving Children MobilePack event. Please use the link emailed from the Parish Office to sign up, and spread the word to your friends, family or organizations who might want to volunteer.



### Lunch Bunch — May 11th

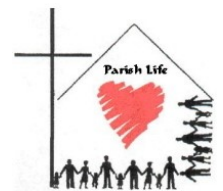
Join friends from Zion for Lunch Bunch on Thursday, May 11th, at 12 p.m. This month's gathering will take place at Delicious Heights in Bedminster. Please sign up via the link emailed from the Parish Office to reserve your place at the table!

### Upcoming Parish Life Events

May 27<sup>th</sup> at 6:00PM — **The Big Fuss** at Sunken Silo Brew Works (Please bring \$10/pp and light food to share)

June 24<sup>th</sup> at 7:05PM — **Somerset Patriots Baseball & Fireworks** (\$10 tickets must be pre-ordered)

Please contact Shellie Evers at 804.678.8993 for more information.



### Pet Blessing — June 11th

Pets and their people are invited to participate in this one-of-a-kind event!

**Pet Blessing** -- Pets will be blessed by Pastor Kat. All pets are welcome!

**Woodlands Wildlife Refuge Presentation** -- Learn about the refuge and enjoy a visit with Tank the box turtle and Cornelius the corn snake.

**Dog Show** -- Enter your dog in this just-for-fun show (non-sanctioned), judged by an AKC judge. Prizes will be awarded for 1st, 2nd, 3rd, and 4th places, as well as Best in Show.

Water for pets and people will be provided, along with dog treats and people cookies. For more information, please contact Anita Zarate at 908-938-4532.

## 2023 Military Recognition

May 29, 2023, is Memorial Day. *All Gave Some. Some Gave All.* Some facts about Memorial Day:

- It honors the men and women who died while serving in the U.S. military.
- It is observed on the last Monday of May, although for many years it was observed on May 30th.
- **Memorial Day** was originally known as **Decoration Day**.
- It became a federal holiday in 1971, and created a three-day weekend for federal employees.



At Zion we begin our annual Military Recognition in May (culminating on Veterans Day in November) by sending cards to our active-duty service members to let them know we are thinking of them. If you would like to send a card, please see the list below. Also, when you see a Zion member who has been in the military, thank them for their service! Please let us know if there are additions or edits to this list. Thank you to all for your service!

Name and Address	Rank/Job Branch/Where Stationed	Affiliation with Zion
<b>Nicholas Graber</b> PSC 201 Box 7174 FPO, AA 34010	Petty Officer, 2nd Class Maritime Enforcement Officer U.S. Coast Guard Offshore	<i>Husband of Sami Wallace</i>
<b>Robert Heinke</b> 1509 Judith Court Virginia Beach, VA 23464	FCA2 U.S. Navy USS Nitze	<i>Brother-in-law of Meghan &amp; Jon Holman</i>
<b>Ben Hubert</b> 205 Ridgeview Road Southern Pines, NC 28387	Sergeant 1st Class Psychological Operations 1st Special Forces Command U.S. Army Fort Bragg, North Carolina	<i>Nephew of Judy Formalarie</i>
<b>Erik Lindquist</b> 5500 Boxwood Court N, unit B Fort Belvoir, VA 22060	E6, 25B, IT Tech White House Communication Agency with Presidential Airlift Group at Andrews AFB U.S. Army Fort Belvoir, Virginia	<i>Nephew of Debra Kaufman</i>
<b>Hunter MacKenzie</b> 217 Summit Road Media, PA 19063	E5, Petty Officer 2 <sup>nd</sup> Class Electrician's Mate U.S. Coast Guard Sector Delaware Bay Philadelphia, Pennsylvania	<i>Son of Shellie Evers</i>
<b>Patricia Oelschlager</b> 205 Ridgeview Road Southern Pines, NC 28387	Major Bravo Company Commander U.S. Army Fort Bragg, North Carolina	<i>Niece of Judy Formalarie</i>
<b>Kurt Rossi</b> CMR 415 Box 6148 APO, AE 09114-0062	Captain 41st Fires Brigade U.S. Army Europe/Africa	<i>Nephew of Lynn Fuller</i>
<b>Zachary Sullivan</b> 1 Washington Avenue Philadelphia, PA 19147	Petty Officer, 2nd Class U.S. Coast Guard Sector Delaware Bay Philadelphia, Pennsylvania	<i>Friend of Shellie Evers</i>

## Shepherding Committee Update

### Shepherding Calls

The Shepherding committee has completed their recent outreach to all Zion families. Contacts were made in person, by phone, and by email. Special thanks to MVC (Most Valuable Caller) Carolyn Schroeder who made over 80 calls! She shrugs it off as no big deal, saying how much she loved speaking with everyone she was able to reach. No doubt her bright smile and cheery voice brightened lots of days. Thank you, Carolyn!



### Meal Train Assistance

Zion has a long-standing tradition of caring for members in need or in mourning by providing meals. If you would like to be on the list of volunteers supporting this ministry, please reach out to Shellie Evers.

## Stewardship Review

### First Quarter General Fund Giving — 2023

Our 2023 Spending Plan was based on a projected income of \$373,500 from members. This was comprised of pledges from 46 families of \$274,000 and an estimate from 47 non-pledging families of \$99,500. We received pre-pledges of \$58,500 in December. By the first quarter, 7 families met their total 2023 pledge. We have received a total of \$163,800 or 45% of our year-end estimate.



- On the plus side, 34 families have met or are ahead of pledge by \$78,100. The majority of the surplus is from the 7 families who have completed their pledges (\$75,700).
- On the flip side, 12 pledging families are below their year-to-date pledge by \$3,700. In total, 23 families (25%) have made no contribution to our operating expenses. With Holy Week and Easter in April, it is expected that this percentage will come down.
- Actual giving from pledging families (\$142,900) is over 200% of a 1<sup>st</sup> quarter milestone.
- Actual non-pledge income (\$20,900) is only 84% of an expected 1<sup>st</sup> quarter milestone.
- Actual total giving (\$163,800) is 175% of a 1<sup>st</sup> quarter milestone.

### Additional Generosity

Members have provided support in areas outside of the General Fund.

- Members have given \$4,700 in support of 7 special appeals
- Members have given \$2,200 in support of Memorials and various other areas.
- Total giving to all causes is \$170,700.

### Stewardship Special Appeal

Our 2023 Spending Plan calls for expenditures of \$395,300. If we achieve both our projected income and our authorized spending, we will have a deficit of \$28,800. We want to hire a new Director of Youth and Family Ministry this year. The congregation received a letter from the Stewardship committee the week after Easter where members were asked to consider increasing their giving to show your support for this important part of our ministry. This can be either by making your initial pledge or by increasing the pledge you have already made.

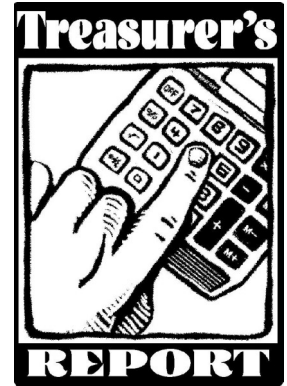
We would love to hear from you. We are asking you to let us know your decision by submitting a new or first-time pledge card by Sunday, May 14, 2023.

Thank you for your support of Zion's ministries.

Stewardship committee

## FINANCIAL SUMMARY - YTD 2023

GENERAL FUND	INCOME	EXPENSE	DIFFERENCE
January	\$26,969.67	-\$26,902.86	\$66.81
February	\$35,166.23	-\$30,400.70	\$4,765.53
March	\$36,556.41	-\$31,024.54	\$5,531.87
<b>Year To Date Total</b>	<b>\$98,692.31</b>	<b>-\$88,328.10</b>	<b>\$10,364.21</b>
<b>TD BANK FUNDS</b>			
	<b>BALANCE</b>	<b>DATE</b>	
Checking Account	\$93,245.23	4/3/2023	
Money Market Plus	\$278,193.67	3/31/2023	
<b>Cash On Hand</b>	<b>\$371,438.90</b>		
Directed Funds	\$229,659.40	3/31/2023	
Operating Funds	\$141,779.50	3/31/2023	
<b>Cash On Hand</b>	<b>\$371,438.90</b>		
<b>ENDOWMENT FUNDS</b>			
	<b>BALANCE</b>	<b>DATE</b>	
CFNJ	\$487,572.37	2/28/2023	
THRIVENT	\$356,003.73	3/31/2023	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$843,576.10</b>		
<b>ENDOWMENT MISSION OUTREACH</b>			
<b>Available Funds for 2023</b>	<b>\$25,282.00</b>		
Synod Compensation Aid Fund	-\$1,500.00		
Lutheran Disaster Response	-\$5,000.00		
<b>2023 Endowment Funds Remaining</b>	<b>\$18,782.00</b>		



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

