



Good News from Zion

Connecting People with God's Grace

June 2023

A Message from Pastor Kat

Summer, A Season of Growth

For many of us, the routine and pace of our life shifts as we head into the summer season. Children are no longer in school. Many families take vacations and travel. We are exposed to new sights and sounds as we find ourselves in different environs and interact with different people. This exposure to new and different experiences can open our minds and hearts and lead to learning and growth.

A New Look at Jesus

While Sunday School and Confirmation classes may be on hiatus, there are still opportunities to grow in faith at Zion! In worship, we will hear readings from Jesus' ministry and teachings, and we will explore how Jesus upsets expectations and challenges his contemporaries as well as us today. How does Jesus break open the boxes in which we tend to place him?

A New Experience of Prayer

This summer, we will also be going on a prayer adventure! The flourishing of mother nature during this season and the abundance of produce is an invitation to our senses. Over the course of the next three months, you will be invited to engage in prayer practices throughout the week that stimulate each of the five senses. How can we use our whole body to praise and worship our God?

God is always at work inviting us to be resurrected and transformed by God's Word and Spirit. May we have ears to hear and eyes to see – as well as hands to touch and tongues to taste! – as we grow deeper in faith together this coming season.

In Christ,
Pastor Kat



Church Council Highlights

The Church Council met via Zoom conference call on May 18th. Below are the highlights of that meeting.



- The council voted to accept three new members on May 21st.
- The Pet Blessing is coming on June 11th. Please contact Anita Zarate with any questions.
- Following the 9:30 a.m. service on Father's Day, Parish Life will host "Donuts for Dad" on the church lawn.
- The Somerset Patriots baseball game outing is on June 24th.
- The Tag Sale events held on April 29th and May 6th were a big success. Several children from Family Promise will be able to attend camp at Cross Roads this summer.
- Pastor Kat will host a summer semester of "A Year of Growing in Faith" beginning in June.
- Rebuild work at the CEB for damage caused by the December flood will begin on May 22nd with completion by June 5th.
- The Director of Youth & Family Ministry search committee has received three applications so far, and has begun interviewing candidates.
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- Thank you to:
 - * Rebecca Melick and Cindy Rupprecht for co-chairing the Tag Sale.
 - * Debra Kaufman for hosting the beautiful Mother's Day brunch.
 - * Sandy Matsen for coordinating curriculum and teachers for the 2022-2023 Sunday School year.
 - * All who volunteered to lead Sunday School classes and events this year.

The next meeting of the Church Council is scheduled for 7 p.m. on Thursday, June 15th. 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.

Welcome to Our New Members

Please welcome Darren & Kelly Julian and their children Ryan and Emma to the Zion family! The Julians became members on May 21st.



JUNE EVENTS AT ZION

Lunch Bunch — June 8th

Join friends from Zion for Lunch Bunch on Thursday, June 8th, at 12 p.m. This month's gathering will take place at Gladstone Tavern. Please sign up via the link emailed from the Parish Office to reserve your place at the table!



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.



Donuts for Dad — June 18th

Following 9:30 a.m. worship on June 18th, we'll honor our fathers and father-figures with "Donuts for Dad" in recognition of Father's Day. All are welcome to join us for this time of fellowship on the church lawn.



Baseball and Fireworks — June 24th

Our annual Somerset Patriots Baseball & Fireworks night out will be **June 24, 2023** at 7:05 p.m. Tickets are \$10 each and must be pre-ordered. Please contact Shellie Evers at 804-678-8993 for more information.



Endowment Fund News



Next Endowment Sunday is June 18th

Our second Endowment Sunday for 2023 will be on Father's Day, June 18th. The final Endowment Sunday for 2023 will be on All Saints Day, November 5th.

There was \$25,282 from the 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, \$5,000 to Lutheran Disaster Response and \$396.77 was spent to purchase copies of *Hear My Voice* prayer books for Edna Mahan Correctional Facility (bring the total number of books donated to 200), leaving a current balance of \$18,385.23 still available to support 2023 ministries.

Please consider giving to the Zion Lutheran Church Endowment Fund on June 18th as a tribute to all fathers 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 in the church on June 18th. 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!



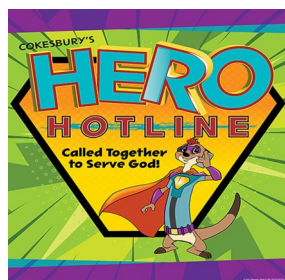
Sunday School News

May 21st was the last day of Sunday School, and we celebrated with a bang! Children made crafts, participated in fun activities, and enjoyed snacks as they got fired up for Pentecost (the birthday of the Church) and wrapped up another great year of Sunday School!



Thank You!

We give thanks to Sunday School teachers and volunteers, mentors, and parents for all you do to share God's love and the story of God's people with the young people of Zion. We couldn't do the work of deepening the faith of our children and youth without your help! Thank you so much! You rock!



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 and the deadline to register is June 10th.



Congratulations to Our Graduates

Middle School

Alexa Batkowski	Hillsborough Middle School to Hillsborough High School
Chloe Brokaw	Union Township Middle School to North Hunterdon High School
Lauren Janssen	Old Turnpike Middle School to Voorhees High School
Maisie Ronaldo	Clinton Township Middle School to North Hunterdon High School
Cassidy Smith	Woodglen Middle School to Voorhees High School
Chase Wieder	Gill St. Bernard's Middle School to Gill St. Bernard's Upper School

High School

Catherine Bryan	Voorhees High School to Raritan Valley Community College
Hannah Melick	Voorhees High School to Sacred Heart University
Matthew Melick	Voorhees High School to University of Pittsburgh
Brian Pepe	Hunterdon Central Regional High School to Delaware Valley University

College

Will Melick	Moravian College — BA in Business Management
Gavin Strand	New Jersey Institute of Technology — BS in Financial Management

Graduate School

Samantha (Wallace) Graber	University of Pennsylvania — Doctor of Veterinary Medicine
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Food Pantry Donations Needed — Summer Meals for KIDS!

Breakfast items

Cereals
 Instant Oatmeal
 Pancake Mix
 Juice Boxes
 Fruit Cups
 Applesauce
 Mini Muffins

Lunch/Dinner items

Boxed macaroni and cheese
 Cup of Noodles
 Cup of macaroni and cheese
 Canned ravioli
 Fruit snacks
 Healthy snack treats



Faith Kitchen News *by Debra Kaufman*

And then there were three! Vacations, knee replacements, jury duty, physical therapy... oh my. The "regulars" were scattered leaving the "faithful "three" to serve on May 4th — John McAleer, John Minerowicz, and Wendy Minerowicz. They did it — sharing God's grace one plate at a time. And special thanks to Judy Miller, executive director of Faith Kitchen who pitched in to help. Praise God for the opportunity to serve His people.



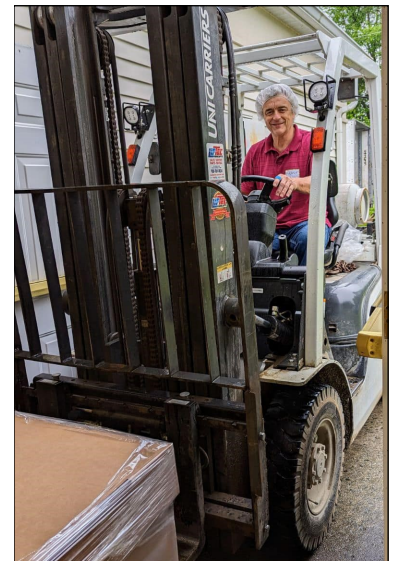
Oldwick Town-wide Tag Sale

Thank you to everyone who helped with the Tag Sale! We raised over \$6,000 to send children from Family Promise to summer camp. It was a lot of work to sort, price and sell our donations over two Saturdays but well worth the effort to connect with and serve our community.



Feed My Starving Children MobilePack

Thank you to everyone who helped make this event possible! We packed 85,000 meals to help children in need.





NJ Synod, ELCA

2023 New Jersey Synod Assembly Recap

On Saturday, May 13, 2023, close to 400 people from across the Synod gathered at Grounds for Sculpture in Hamilton for a day of worship, learning, fellowship, and inspiration. The agenda was crafted around the 4 parts of our Lutheran worship: gather, word, meal, and sending. Thanks to the voting members and visitors for coming with a spirit of joy in being together so we were able to live our theme and *Lead with Love*.

Elections: The following people were elected to serve in leadership positions in the Synod:

Vice-president - Arundel Clarke

Secretary – The Rev. Blake Scalet

Synod Council – The Rev. Jose Escalara (Delaware Mission District), The Rev. Pamela Werner (Shore Mission District), The Rev. Miles Hopgood (Middle Mission District), Patricia Espejo (Gateway Mission District), The Rev. Lisa Holliday (Northern Mission District), Robert Bowden (Western Mission District), Grant Lefchak (Youth).

Resolution: The assembly adopted one resolution designating the synod as a Stigma-Free Zone in regard to mental illness and encouraging congregations to do the same. Resources from NAMI on what this means can be found at [nami.org/Get-Involved/Pledge-to-Be-StigmaFree](https://www.nami.org/Get-Involved/Pledge-to-Be-StigmaFree) the full resolution can be found on the assembly page.

2024 Spending Plan: The assembly unanimously adopted the 2024 spending plan, which you can find on the Synod website.

The Assembly Offering, designated for Lutheran Disaster Response, totaled \$3,676.00. THANK YOU!!

In addition to the above items of business, we celebrated with rostered ministers new to the synod, recently retired leaders, and with congregations celebrating significant anniversaries.

The Rev. Dr. Christa Compton led the assembly in a reading of God's Holy Darkness followed by table discussions on bias and discrimination in our language. The Rev. Sara Lilja led the assembly in an active listening Bible study on 1 Corinthians 13.

The Rev. Amy Reumann, Senior Director of Witness in Society for the ELCA, served as our churchwide representative. Pastor Reumann highlighted the work we do together across the whole church and thanked the NJ Synod for its part in it.

Our “Go and...!” evangelism team shared stories and ideas for congregations to engage their communities with God’s love in Jesus Christ. The team is available to come to local congregations. Resources from *Go and ...!* can be found on the Synod website.

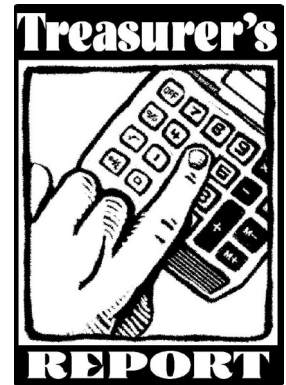
Our house band led us in robust singing throughout the assembly. The band included Peter Melz and Pastors Jay Unzaga, Kathryn Irwin, Carmine Pernini, and Raymond Kolison. Thank you for making such beautiful music!

Displays from our mission teams and ministry partners filled the West Gallery offering information and opportunities to become involved in the Synod’s ministries.

We thank all of those who helped make this assembly such a joy-filled time of being church together. The livestream of our whole day is on the Synod website. The NJ Synod Assembly 2024 is scheduled for Saturday, May 11, 2024 at Grounds for Sculpture – mark your calendar.

FINANCIAL SUMMARY - YTD 2023

GENERAL FUND	INCOME	EXPENSE	DIFFERENCE
January	\$26,969.67	-\$27,037.86	-\$68.19
February	\$35,166.23	-\$30,400.70	\$4,765.53
March	\$36,556.41	-\$31,024.54	\$5,531.87
April	\$32,573.13	\$29,884.46	\$2,688.67
November			\$0.00
Year To Date Total	\$131,265.44	-\$118,212.56	\$12,917.88



TD BANK FUNDS	BALANCE	
Checking Account	\$92,689.53	5/3/2023
Money Market Plus	\$278,205.10	4/30/2023
Cash On Hand	\$370,894.63	
Directed Funds	\$219,782.17	4/30/2023
Operating Funds	\$151,112.46	4/30/2023
Cash On Hand	\$370,894.63	

ENDOWMENT FUNDS	BALANCE	
CFNJ	\$496,083.18	3/31/2023
THRIVENT	\$358,623.90	4/30/2023
TOTAL	\$854,707.08	

ENDOWMENT MISSION OUTREACH	
Available Funds for 2023	\$25,282.00
Synod Compensation Aid Fund	-\$1,500.00
Lutheran Disaster Response	-\$5,000.00
2022 Endowment Funds Remaining	\$18,782.00



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

Free Under Five

A little child in church for the first time watched as the ushers passed the offering plates. When they neared the pew where he sat, the youngster piped up so that everyone could hear:
"Don't pay for me Daddy, I'm under five."

