



Good News from Zion

Connecting People with God's Grace

August 2024

A Message from Pastor Kat

Nourished by God

Every three years, we get to dwell for a month on how we are nourished by God in what is known as “The Bread of Life” series. We will first hear a story about a sign or miracle usually known by the title, “The Feeding of the Five Thousand,” and then listen with the disciples to a discourse or lesson from Jesus on his identity as the bread of life for all people.

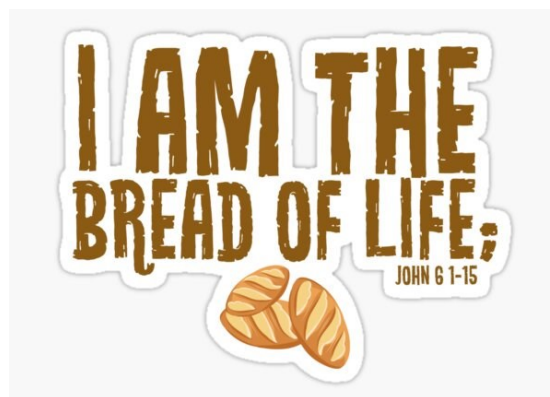
During this month, we will not only hear this sign and discourse from the Gospel of John. We will also hear Old Testament stories, which underline how God has always provided for God's people in times of challenge and need. These stories remind us that, in every circumstance, even when we feel our energy and resources have been depleted, God gives us nourishment.

Strengthened for Ministry

This theme of being nourished by God, even in times of challenge and change, is timely as the people of Zion prepare for changes on the horizon. This month, on Sunday, August 4th, we will celebrate twenty-six years of ministry by our Director of Music, Rod Briscoe. We will also wish Rod Farewell and Godspeed at his final worship service as our Director on Sunday, August 25th. At the same time, we keep in our prayers the members of the search committee who are working to find a new Director of Music to lead us in the next chapter of Zion's worship and music ministry. We also prepare for change in our church building in which construction to provide a second means of egress will soon begin.

Changes of this nature can put stress on a congregation, but we can take heart, knowing God continues to be with us: strengthening us for the journey and giving us a new vision. God nourishes us so we can not only survive times of change, but thrive and flourish as we embrace a new future.

In Christ,
Pastor Kat



Church Council Highlights

The Church Council met via Zoom conference call on July 25th, which fell after the deadline for this newsletter. Highlights from the July and August meetings will appear in the September newsletter.



News from the Parish Life Committee

The Parish Life committee is hoping you will join us for brunch as we celebrate **Rod Briscoe's retirement** on Sunday, August 4th following our 9:30 a.m. worship service. Please RSVP via the sign-up link emailed from the Parish Office.

Want to learn how to crochet? Barb Surhoff has offered to do a **crochet class** on Tuesday, August 20th at the CEB (time to be determined). We are inviting all ages, beginners thru experts, to learn how to make a mini prayer shawl. We will be providing the yarn and crochet hooks or you may bring your own! Prefer knitting? Bring a project!

If you love a great cover band, meet us at Sunken Silo Brew Works in Lebanon to hear **The Big Fuss** on Saturday, August 24th from 7-10 PM! Bring your own food, enjoy their microbrews, and try to keep up with the dance moves of John & Kathy Rustwick's granddaughter (whose dad is in the band!). There is usually a cover charge of \$10, so bring a little cash. You will not be disappointed!

If you're interested in **being a part of the Parish Life committee**, please send an email to cindyrupprecht@gmail.com. We meet once a quarter to discuss fun things we can do together as a congregation, and we would love your input!



Fifth Annual 5K Fun Run/Walk — September 7th

Mark your calendar for Zion's 5th annual 5K fun run/walk on Saturday, September 7th starting at 10:00 AM. The suggested entrance fee for this event is \$20, with all proceeds benefiting the Good News Home for Women in Flemington. The race will start from the CEB parking lot and will wind it's way through scenic Oldwick. If 5K (3.1 miles) seems like too much for you, the first part of the course circles back to the CEB after less than a mile before heading out through farmlands. Snacks and drinks will be available before and after the event, as well as music provided by our own Dan Metz. If joining the run/walk isn't for you, please stay tuned to your email to learn more about a variety of volunteer opportunities that are available. We hope to see you at this fun event on September 7th!



Pet Blessing & Dog Show — September 22nd

Join us at the CEB on September 22nd from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. for Zion's annual Pet Blessing & Dog Show, sponsored by the Evangelism committee. Pets of all kinds will be blessed by Pastor Kat throughout the afternoon, and the Dog Show (non-sanctioned) will begin promptly at 1:30 p.m. Water for people and pets will be provided, along with dog treats and people cookies. If you plan to register your dog for the show, please visit the Events page on Zion's website and click on the link for the event.



Save the Dates!

Please mark your calendar for this fall's Women of Zion events. All will take place at the CEB.

Balance Class with Shalini — Thursday, September 26th at 7 p.m.

Thanksgiving Dinner — Tuesday, November 12th at 6:30 p.m.

Christmas Cookie Exchange — Wednesday, December 11th at 7 p.m.



Youth and Family Ministry at Zion

by Jaime VanNostrand

As we head into the month of August, we here at Zion are deep into our summertime rhythms. And I bet our children, youth, and families are, too! So how can we support your family's faith formation when we are on the far side of our major summer-time programming but are still a few weeks away from a busy new program year? This month we would like to offer you a flexible but meaningful "Faith at Home" practice!

Practicing our faith at home draws our attention to the reality that God is present and active in our daily lives! And it teaches our children to notice that presence while growing in faith. So try taking your faith formation home this month! You'll be amazed by all the ways God shows up.

There is, perhaps, no simpler a way to explore new faith formation practice than by connecting it to items and habits that are already a part of your routine. We invite you to experiment with this idea this month by experimenting with smartphone prayer.

This is a prayer practice that you can engage anywhere and at any time as long as you have about five minutes and a smartphone. You will spend each one of those five minutes with a different focus of prayer.



Minute 1: Scroll through your text messages. See which individuals or relationships jump out to you as being in need of prayer and pray for them.

Minute 2: Open a news app or webpage and scroll through the headlines. Notice what is calling for your attention and focus your prayer there.

Minute 3: Open a social media app and pray for the people who pop up in your feed.

Minute 4: Open your photos app and scroll through your most recent photos. Notice the things that they prompt you to hold in prayer.

Minute 5: Open your notes app and prayerfully recording anything that this practice has drawn out of you - praise, gratitude, concern, worry, trust.

There are so many ways to adjust, expand, or abbreviate this practice! You may wish to keep track of time by referencing the clock on your phone or by setting a timer that will alert you as each minute passes. You may wish to shorten the intervals or decrease the number of categories if you have only a moment. You may wish to lengthen the intervals or add other apps if you'd like to spend more time in prayer. You may wish to move through this prayer practice as a family, in which case, each member of the family could take turns leading one section of the prayer. If you have older children, invite them to try this on their phones. If you have younger children, consider gathering them around yours and talking through each step as you take it.

Adapt this activity in whatever ways make the practice more accessible to you! The purpose of a smartphone prayer is to seamlessly weave prayer into the fabric of your day in small, simple, meaningful ways. You're the expert on exactly what that will look like for you and for your family!

This prayer practice has been adapted from one featured in Traci Smith's Faithful Families: Creating Sacred Moments at Home.



Lunch Bunch Returns in September

Lunch Bunch is on hiatus for the summer and will return on September 12th!

Open Cupboard Food Pantry

Thank you for your continued support of the Washington Basket Open Cupboard Food Pantry. Volunteers from Zion are welcome on the fourth Thursday of the month to sort donations and organize the shelves. Please contact the Parish Office to sign up.



August Washington Pantry needs:

- Sweetened cereal
- Unsweetened cereal
- Canned ravioli
- Baked beans
- Regular coffee
- Tea
- Crunchy peanut butter

Faith Kitchen Update

On July 4th, Zion's crew "set off fireworks" giving out 60 plates of food and 45 takeouts. Everyone enjoyed John McAleer's meatball sandwiches and the Italian ice was a welcome dessert. The team of John and Wendy Minerowicz, John and Audrey Ruland, Barb and Steve Surhoff, and John McAleer were also treated to Audrey's rhubarb crisp!



The Saturday (July 20th) Faith Kitchen crew of Cindy Rupprecht, Sue Swanson, Tom Groendyke, Melanie and Jennifer Hodges, Helen Livingston and Stephanie, a friend of Cindy's, served a crowd of 71 plated meals and 54 meals to go. The patrons enjoyed a meal of meatball sandwiches, Cindy's special Mexican slaw and zucchini corn fritters. Italian ices were the cool end to a delicious meal!



FINANCIAL SUMMARY - YTD 2024

GENERAL FUND	INCOME	EXPENSE	DIFFERENCE
January	\$ 22,712.19	\$ (29,323.59)	\$ (6,611.40)
February	\$ 29,240.48	\$ (39,877.69)	\$ (10,637.21)
March	\$ 42,530.41	\$ (38,062.34)	\$ 4,468.07
April	\$ 28,974.86	\$ (28,999.80)	\$ (24.94)
May	\$ 28,467.96	\$ (34,975.88)	\$ (6,507.92)
June	\$ 34,860.26	\$ (26,920.94)	\$ 7,939.32
Year To Date Total	\$ 186,786.16	\$ (198,160.24)	\$ (11,374.08)



TD BANK FUNDS	BALANCE	
Checking Account	\$ 107,995.04	07/03/24
Money Market Plus	\$ 228,347.23	06/30/24
Cash On Hand	\$ 336,342.27	
Directed Funds	\$ 228,907.10	06/30/24
Operating Funds	\$ 107,435.17	06/30/24
Cash On Hand	\$ 336,342.27	

ENDOWMENT FUNDS	BALANCE	
CFNJ	\$ 535,953.41	05/31/24
THRIVENT	\$ 426,935.50	06/30/24
TOTAL	\$ 962,888.91	

ENDOWMENT MISSION OUTREACH

Available Funds for 2024	\$ 25,850.00
Synod Compensation Aid Fund	\$ (1,500.00)
Website Video	\$ (1,000.00)
Cross Roads Camp and Retreat	\$ (2,500.00)
2024 Endowment Funds Remaining	\$ 20,850.00



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