



# Good News from Zion

Connecting People with God's Grace

June 2025

## *A Message from Pastor Kat*

### **A Pentecostal Climax**

In many ways, the season of Easter, which we've been living in throughout this past month, reaches its climactic moment in the Day of Pentecost. This church festival marks the end of the Easter season and the culmination of Jesus' teachings to the disciples during Easter. In his post-resurrection appearances and his pre-passion discourse, Jesus prepares the disciples to be his body in the world after his earthly ministry has concluded. God will now work through them, bringing healing and forgiveness to a hurting world.

We have been catching glimpses of what this post-resurrection church looks like in readings from the Book of Acts, but, on the Day of Pentecost, we see how it all begins: with the Holy Spirit raining down with wind and fire and words of hope spoken in tongues to be understood by all people.

### **We Are Christ's Body**

Sometimes, we forget just how powerfully Christ through the Holy Spirit is present in us and in our lives. Pentecost reminds us that God does wondrous things through us, Christ's body. We live in an age when the scope of evil and injustice in the world can make us feel powerless, but the Pentecost story shows us that we are powerful insofar as God's Spirit is acting through us to bring about God's grace-filled reign.

This month, I pray that, remembering God's Spirit has been poured into you in your baptism and abides in you still, will empower and inspire you – filling you with hope for the future.

In Christ,  
Pastor Kat



### **History of Oldwick and Zion Lutheran Church**

On June 28th at 1:00 p.m. at the Christian Education Building, Zion member Harold Wrede will be giving a presentation about the settlement of the village of Oldwick (aka New Germantown), sponsored by the Tewksbury Historical Society. Harold's presentation will include some of the history of Zion's congregation and our church building. Following the presentation, Harold will lead a tour of the church to highlight some of the design elements of the building. All are invited to attend this special event.

## Church Council Highlights

The Church Council met on May 22nd. Highlights from that meeting are below.



- Over 400 Operation Christmas Child gift boxes were packed on May 11th with the help of Sunday School children, parents, teachers, and mentors.
- The Christian Education program year concluded on May 18th. Families marked the occasion with a Sunday School closing celebration and a miniature golf outing.
- Over \$6,000 was raised at the Tag Sale. With reserves from past years, we were able to send \$10,000 to Family Promise. The plan is to continue to round up Tag Sale proceeds to a donation of \$10,000 for as long as reserves last.
- The Parish Life committee is sponsoring three events in June: a trip to Long Valley Peonies on June 1st, a Crochet Class on June 12th, and a group outing to the Somerset Patriots baseball game on June 28th.
- The Social Ministry committee is sponsoring a blood drive at the CEB on July 10th.
- The annual 5K Fun Run/Walk has been scheduled for September 6th.
- Pastor Kat shared that she and Rev. Levi Powers got engaged on May 18<sup>th</sup> and thanked the council members for their ongoing support of the transitions in her personal life.
- Thank you to:
  - \* Brooke Schumann, Reina Schumann, and Michele Stevens for serving as Sunday School teachers this year.
  - \* Gerry Dehkes, Lou DiCriscio, and Cindy Rupprecht for assisting with Confirmation Class this year.
  - \* Cindy Rupprecht for coordinating the Operation Christmas Child service project.
  - \* Jaime VanNostrand for preaching on May 11<sup>th</sup> while Pastor Kat was on vacation, and Janet Hornich for serving as the emergency contact person.

The next meeting of the Church Council is scheduled for 7 p.m. on Thursday, June 19th via Zoom. 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 link.

## Endowment Fund News

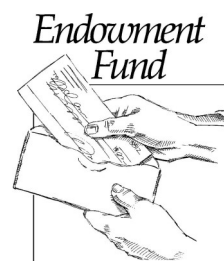
Our second Endowment Sunday for 2025 will be on Father's Day, June 15<sup>th</sup>. The final Endowment Sunday for 2025 will be All Saints Day, November 2<sup>nd</sup>.

There was \$26,814 from the Endowment Fund earnings available for new ministry opportunities in 2025. 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, \$4,425 to Feed My Starving Children, \$2,000 to Operation Christmas Child, \$5,000 to Lutheran Disaster Response, \$1,000 to the Good News Home, \$250 to Clinton Township Relay for Life, \$1,500 to the House Next Door retreat for pastors, and \$420 for Candlelight Meditation leadership, leaving a current balance of \$10,719 still available to support 2025 ministries.

Please consider giving to the Zion Lutheran Church Endowment Fund on June 15<sup>th</sup> 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 a 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 June 15th. 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.





## Youth and Family Ministry at Zion

*by Jaime VanNostrand*

During the month of May, our Youth & Family programming theme was “Beyond Our Walls.” As we prepare children and families for a summer season without Sunday School classes, we want to remind students that we learn about God, meet God, serve God, and grow in faith not just at church but beyond our walls as well.

To support this theme, our all-school event on May 4th was a celebration of Camp Ministry. Helen Payanzo, Program Director at Cross Roads Camp and Retreat Center, led the kids in a variety of camp games before leading a discussion about what camp is like. She even had one of our own students who has a long history of attending camp at Cross Roads talk to the kids about his experience. We closed out the morning with a camp craft - making friendship bracelets! The kids had a great time and learned a lot about meeting God at camp and in creation!

Our service project on May 11th was our second annual box build event to support Operation Christmas Child. It was a wonderful morning! Parents, children, teachers, mentors, and volunteers worked together to assemble 400 boxes that will be sent to children all around the world (far beyond our walls!) this Christmas.



On Sunday, May 18th, we held the final day of Sunday School for this program year. Students had an abbreviated 30-minute lesson before coming back to the Great Room for an end of the year party with food, fun, and fellowship! May 18th was also the date of our final Sunday Social of the program year. A group of 18 parents, children, and mentors gathered after the 11am worship service for a pizza lunch before carpooling to the Farm View Golf Center in Hackettstown. It was a busy day! And a wonderful way to say farewell to the program year.



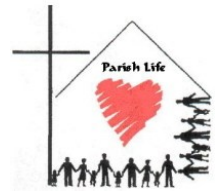
Our Sunday School ministry may be on a summer break, but there is still plenty to look forward to in Youth & Family ministry here at Zion! Be sure to keep an eye out for stories from Vacation Bible School as well as suggestions for summer Faith at Home practices!

## Parish Life News

Parish Life has some fun gatherings planned for June!



We will visit **Long Valley Peonies** after the June 1st service. Experience the fragrance and colors of five acres of blooms! Meet in the CEB parking lot at 10:30 to carpool (let us know if you want to do this) or join us up there at about 11:00. Cost is \$10 cash or Venmo and the address is 227 W. Mill Road in Long Valley.



Crocheting is easy when you have a good teacher! Barb Surhoff will be holding **crochet classes** from 5:00-6:30 (and she will be there at 4:30 for anyone who wants extra instruction) on June 12<sup>th</sup>, July 10<sup>th</sup>, August 4<sup>th</sup>, and September 7<sup>th</sup>. Bring a crochet/knitting project or supplies will be provided. All ages and skill level welcome!



The **Somerset Patriots baseball game** and fireworks group outing is on Saturday, June 28th with a 7:05 start time. We have 30 tickets reserved, so contact the Parish Office to get yours at the low, low price of \$10!

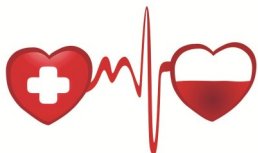


### Lunch Bunch — June 12th

Join friends from Zion for Lunch Bunch at River Mill View in Clinton at 12 p.m. on June 12th. Please sign up via the link that was emailed from the Parish Office to reserve your place at the table!

### Vacation Bible School — June 23rd - 27th

All children between the ages of 3 and the completion of 5th grade are invited to embark on an exciting journey with **Road Trip: On the Go with God!** Join us in a fun-filled adventure on the open road, taking kids on thrilling journeys to exciting destinations. Through engaging stories from the Bible, campers will delve into timeless tales of faith from the Old and New Testaments. Get ready for twists, turns, and excitement as we face new challenges and find strength in God's presence on this unforgettable trip! **Please register by June 6th.**



### Blood Drive — July 10th

The Social Ministry committee is sponsoring a blood drive on July 10th from 1 p.m. to 7 p.m. Please see the link emailed from the Parish Office to register.

### 5K Fun Run/Walk — September 6th

Mark your calendar for Zion's sixth annual 5K Fun Run/Walk, benefitting the Good News Home for Women. The event will be held on Saturday, September 6th at 10 a.m. We will have pre- and post-race snacks available, and the sign up link will be available soon. We're looking forward to having a great time walking through the Oldwick neighborhoods and close-by farmlands.



### Thank You to Zion's Handbell Choir

Zion's 2024-25 handbell choir season has come to a close. Special thanks to our members for their dedication: Linda Dierking, Meghan Holman, Wendy Minerowicz, Alex Pepe, Brian Pepe, Tara Pepe, Cindy Rupprecht, Bonnie Stanski, Frank Stanski, Sue Swanson, and Cathy Winter.

Wishing everyone a wonderful summer, and looking forward to next season!

Janet Hornich

Handbell Choir Director

## Open Cupboard Food Pantry — Washington Basket Location

Donations for the Open Cupboard Food Pantry can be dropped off at the church or CEB any time. Thank you for your continued support of this important ministry.

Current Washington Pantry needs: toilet paper, baked beans, grape juice, coffee, tea



## Faith Kitchen Update

On May 1st, the Zion Faith Kitchen group enjoyed another Thursday serving meals in Dover. A lunch of drumsticks, spicy black bean rice, salad, and banana was provided. We had the experienced group of John McAleer, John and Audrey Ruland, Bonnie Stanski, and Steve and Barb Surhoff on hand. We took a little break before serving lunch and shared Audrey's delicious rhubarb cake!



Saturday's Faith Kitchen volunteers Cindy Rupprecht, John McAleer, Sue Swanson, Catherine Kotch, Helen Livingston, and new volunteer Brian Reilly, prepared a delicious meal of BBQ chicken, spicy rice and beans, salad, and cookies to 36 patrons. We prepared another 52 meals to go. This is a favorite meal at Faith Kitchen and we received several thank you's for the great meal!



## Next Crochet Class — June 12th



We had a great turn out for May's crochet class. Barb Surhoff taught a few beginners who look like they are going to be pros in no time! We had all levels there from beginners to advanced. Some brought projects they're working on and others worked on the prayer squares. Maybe more importantly, we had a chance to socialize with a lot of fun conversation. Our next meeting is Thursday, June 12th, 5:00 - 6:30, although Barb will be there by 4:30 if you want a little earlier start. Also, if you crochet or are a knitter and you're just working on a project and you want to hang out with a fun group, please join us! Classes will continue throughout the summer, meeting on July 10th, August 4th, and September 7th.

