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THE ZION ZEALANT

Zion Lutheran Church, 101 E. North St., Columbia City, IN

Phone: 244-5513 Tonya Stanford, Secretary

E-Mail: zionccdq@embarqmail.com

Web Page: <http://www.zionlutherancc.com/index.html>

Facebook: www.facebook.com/ZionColumbiaCity

Cell Phone: 260-415-9078 (text if easier)

Email: revrittner@reagan.com

PASTOR's Corner

“Grace to you and peace from God our Father.” That’s a quote from St. Paul’s Letter to the Romans, the Corinthians, the Galatians, the Ephesians, the Philippians, the Colossians, the Thessalonians, to his good friend Timothy, and Titus, and Philemon. Yup. St Paul greeted each recipient of his letters with the same salutation. Might you have noticed it’s the same salutation many ministers within the Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod use to begin their sermons from the pulpit during worship?

These introductions of the Pauline epistles offer some fine and intriguing greetings to various individuals and congregations. Hence, it makes good sense your pastor repeat such a greeting before preaching. The accustomed worshipper will recognize that which follows such a greeting will be what the Holy Spirit has given the preacher to proclaim amongst God’s people.

Grace, as Paul stated, came from God the Father and Jesus Christ. Paul understood that it is a divine attribute, a uniquely Christian concept not found in other religions and belief systems. Outside of Christianity and Judaism, no other religion taught of a God who loves, accepts and forgives human beings not based on anything we do, but in spite of what we do. God the Father and Jesus Christ the Son lavish Their love on human beings because that is who and what the Holy Trinity is. In many ways **grace** summarizes God’s interaction with humankind and the message of the gospel or good news. It would be important to note that this greeting of **grace** indeed comes from the pastor, but the **grace** is all God’s!

What is the **grace** of God? Simply put it is God's favor and kindness toward us. God rains down **grace** on all mankind. He gave us the beauty and wonders of nature that we see each and every day. Even as far back as my youth, God wooed me with these kinds of graces: beautiful sunrises and sunsets, relaxing moments surrounded by God’s glorious creation in nature, fun, laughter, and camaraderie with friends. He also lured me with thoughts that there is something more in life, something beyond the simple notion that life is good.

Just being born on this planet includes many benefits. Oh, but as a believer in Christ, I get even more graceful benefits! In fact, believers are blessed with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly realm because we are united with Christ. The most abundant **grace** given by God to me is the forgiveness of my sins. He gives this to you as well! Matter of fact, without the forgiveness of our sins, where would we be? Nowhere.

So next sermon you hear, perk your ears toward what follows after **“Grace, mercy, and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.”**

Here at Zion, Vicar Tim, myself, and some other energetic folks are working to provide worship and Christian education for you via numerous methods. If you weren’t aware, most every sermon is recorded and put onto YouTube at pastor’s channel **“Pastor Phil Preaching the Gospel”**. We’re also looking into beginning back at teaching Confirmation classes via Zoom (as we have used Zoom already for some Bible studies!)

We have been running into some difficulties with producing more of the worship service both through Face Book Live and YouTube, as permissions for using much of the copyrighted materials we normally use in church don't allow us to publicly broadcast them. But we will keep everyone posted as we progress. There's much to learn! But for now, we are indeed having both Sunday worship and Thursday Evening Bible studies in-person at church, using hand sanitizer, masks, and social distancing. We pray for such a time where such precautions either become easier or not necessary anymore.

See you in Church, soon!

Pastor Phil Rittner

Church Council Meeting

The Church council did not meet in the month of July. It was decided to put the current statement of account in the Zealant to keep everyone informed.

Receiving Treasurer: reported by Chuck Cooper

	June 2020	YTD
Unrestricted Receipts	\$ 7,368.00	\$ 41,189.50
Restricted/ Miscellaneous Receipts	\$ 25.00	\$ 12,704.75
On-line Giving Receipts	\$ 2,133.00	\$ 15,770.00
Dividends	\$ 2,918.98	\$ 4,397.61
Interest	\$ 3.37	\$ 18.13
Total Receipts	\$ 12,448.35	\$ 74,079.99

Disbursing Treasurer: reported by Jill Coons

	June 2020
Check/Savings	
General Checking/Savings	\$ 36,754.09
Youth	\$ 9,619.52
Restricted Funds	\$ 12,581.05
Lehmburg Legacy/ Kyler Endowment	\$ 178,049.81

Statement of Activity

	June	YTD
General Budget	\$ (808.29)	\$ 6,331.57
Non-Budgeted/ Reimbursed	\$ (2,313.19)	\$ 10,341.79
Youth	\$.79	\$ (131.44)
Net Revenue	\$ (3,120.69)	\$ 16,541.92

Memoirs of a Vicar

HOLD FAST-

As you have probably guessed, I am ecstatic about tattoos. I do not recommend them for everyone due to the permanency of them. If you are in our bible study on Thursday nights, last Thursday on August 6, we discussed the idea of being content. We live in a world that teaches discontent- get it as fast as you can and replace it when necessary.

Why do I say all of this? The love of God is permanent and never changing. If we look at Isaiah 56:6-7b, a section of the Old Testament reading from the 11th Sunday after Pentecost, one thing is very profound to me. **“And the Foreigners who joined themselves to the Lord to minister to him, to love the name of the Lord, and to be his servants, everyone who keeps the Sabbath and does not profane it, and HOLDS FAST to my covenant- these I will bring to my holy mountain, and make the JOYFUL in my house of prayer;”** (my own emphasis added).

For years I have been fond of the term HOLD FAST. Why is that? When I was younger, the ocean and the idea of tough- iron clad sailors spoke to me. Guys who could embrace the storms of life with the boldness of Indiana Jones, the strength of (Rocky), and the never say die mentality of John McClain. Hold Fast was often tattooed on the fingers of sailors. *Hold-* on the four digits of the right hand, and *Fast-* on the four digits of the left hand. Hold Fast means to hold on tight to the ropes of the ship, especially in bad weather. In the book of Isaiah, God is speaking to the Prophet Isaiah to tell the people, **“Hold Fast to my covenant...”** the result is that I- God, will give you Joy.

The covenant with God is relational. Life with God is not a bunch of demands as the world understands. The Ten Commandments were written in the grammar style of an indicative form. Indicating that, “I alone am God, fear, love, and trust in me and My goodness.” Apart from God’s instructions of how to live, lies the danger of separating yourself from His love. The law in the bible has 3 uses and they are all for the benefit of a right relationship with God. The first two uses (as a *curb-* to protect us from hurting one another and ourselves, and the second as a *mirror-* that shows us where we fall short), come with pain of consciousness and that is where the gospel of Jesus crucifixion on the cross sets us free. The third use of the law as a *guide* shows us how to live life to the fullest as a Christian.

God maintains and sustains the covenant with us, all we have to do is Hold Fast. Trust that as we heard in my sermon on Sunday, August 9th, that Jesus is Always with you in your Storms.

Back to the tattoo conversation, though Hold Fast has been a deep impact in my faith as a Christian, one phrase meant so much more to me and that is what is tattooed on my fingers- SOLA FIDE [So-la Fee-Day]. Why the sudden change of subject? See SOLA FIDE- which is Latin for- justification by faith alone. In those times that I cannot Hold Fast, and my faith is weak, SOLA FIDE says that Christ Holds Fast to me. It is that reminder, that the covenant of God, is sustained only by him. I can not add too, take away, nor satisfy God by my actions. I cannot Pray Hard enough, I cannot fast long enough, Nothing I do brings God closer to me, other than my passive actions of belief and trusting in his promises. Isaiah 56.7 says that, **“These (Believers) I (God)will bring to my holy mountain, and (I-God) will make them JOYFUL in my house of prayer...”** Just as my justification, my being declared righteous, is passive righteousness, our righteousness before God relies solely on the active righteousness of Jesus who paid the Atonement of his Sacrificial death on the cross before God on my behalf. SOLA FIDE- Christ Holds Fast to me. – Amen.

I sometimes wonder if Jesus has a tattoo with my name on it.

-Vicar Timothy Benzinger

GUIDELINES For REOPENING SANCTUARY

PLEASE NOTE: Your Elders and Pastor met to discuss the reopening of worship services inside the church's Sanctuary. It was decided to attempt to begin having worship services again beginning on **June 28th, 2020 at 10:15am**. Of course, things could change between now and then, but we will keep everyone up to date as the time approaches.

Also, please note that the following items were considered for reopening:

- Signage will be provided to require hand sanitizing before entering the church and sanctuary. Face masks will be suggested to be worn by those entering the church. Also, those symptomatic of COVID19 should **stay home** to avoid problems for your neighbor. The church building itself has undergone some sanitation procedures recommended by the state and the Indiana District-LCMS, all of whom we've been getting guidance. This included items in the Sanctuary that you may have to come into contact with (pews, door handles, etc.) as well as Communion Ware. The entire service will of course be made available on the PowerPoint screen, to avoid the use of using the hymnals (which would need cleaning after each service)
- Holy Communion will be practiced differently than we have done it in the past, and for as long as necessary **until** we can safely return to everyone coming to the Communion Rail to partake of the Lord's body and blood. There is a table set up for the Lord's Supper. Pastor will Consecrate them, and then the congregation will be invited to approach (observing social distancing guidelines) and take the host and individual cup of wine to commune. This will effectively be a non-contact manner of distributing the Lord's Supper. Holy Communion will be available after each service for those wanting to partake or you may call and make an appt to come in to meet with the Pastor.
- Social Distancing guidelines will be in place in the Sanctuary by the taped off pews.
- A devotional video by the Pastor will continue to be provided, though notification means should be limited to those who desire them (a sign-up system will be developed).
- **The Thursday Evening Bible Study** will continue at church at 7pm. It is encouraged that everyone come join us for wonderful discussion and learning more about Jesus!
- **Sunday School will not resume until public schools are reopened by the Governor of Indiana. That date is yet unknown.**

Your elected officials and Pastor have been working diligently in the time we've been closed to maintain the church building and keep in touch with everyone. The priority will and continue to be, the sharing of the love of Christ for all people, doing so by the proclamation of the sweet Gospel message of Christ's Resurrection from the tomb, atoning for the sins of all mankind; and by the administration of the holy Sacraments as commanded by our Lord. Know this, God loves you so much, He sent His Son to pay the price for your forgiveness! Bless and praise Him!

Attend #	Tithing	Actual	Budget	Difference
Sun Wed	Unrestricted Offering	(Received)	(Needed)	
38 COVID	07/05-07/11	1,651	2,018.37	(367)
46 COVID	07/12-07/18	2,670	2,018.37	652
No Service	07/19-07/25	680	2,018.37	(1,338)
No Service	07/26-08/01	1575	2,018.37	(443)
				-
Total Operating Income		\$6576	\$8,073	(1,497)
	Restricted Offering	Pew cushions, field workers, Maintenance, Missions etc.	\$12,543	

UPCOMING AUGUST EVENTS

Thursday Night Bible Study At 7pm at the Church

STOP THE PRESSES!!!! The Garage Sale that is in August has been **CANCELLED! boo!**
Will be rescheduled, that is TBD at a later date!

If you have not tried it yet, look into our **Online Giving**, a web-based electronic contribution application. We are providing this service so that you have the option to manage your contributions online or with your offering envelopes. Our offering envelopes will have a check box which will indicate "I've given online," you can use them to present during offertory at worship. This service is safe and secure. And it is convenient for you. Sign up for Online Giving by visiting our church website at www.zionlutherancc.com and select the Online Giving link or **scan this QR code**.

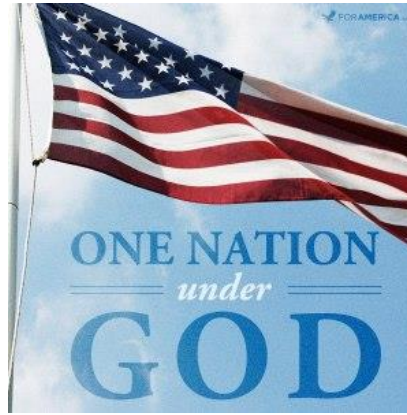


FYI: Some of your offering envelopes have specific programs that if you use them, your offering will go to that program. (VBS, Maintenance, Cushions, etc.) If you don't want your offering to fund that program, then mark it out and write general offering or whatever program that you may want to fund.



BIRTHDAYS THIS MONTH

- 2 Connie Forrester
- 2 Jeanine Slavicek
- 5 Michael Sexton
- 6 Ralph Sexton
- 10 Justin Yann
- 11 Austin Rittner
- 13 Jerry Lahrman
- 18 Jason Doehrman
- 18 Kenneth Knuth
- 23 Jennifer Harter
- 23 Sharry Wiehe
- 23 Myra Hartman
- 25 Madison Childs
- 28 Rachel Degitz
- 30 Melanie Pressler
- 31 Janice Klopfenstein
- 31 Andrew Hart



- Logan Bachelder
- Mathieu Hartman
- Judith Kovacs
- Cari Knuth
- Emerson Knuth
- Jerry Lahrman
- Nolan Lahrman
- Timothy Sexton
- Christine Woodhouse
- Nikki Harris



- 13 Phil & Jill Coons
- 18 Gene & Janice Klopfenstein
- 20 John & Lois Duffy
- 20 Shawn & Sara Schuller
- 21 Matt & Rachel Degitz
- 26 Rev. Phil & Katie Rittner
- 29 Robt & Judith Kovacs



Please remember in your daily prayers our Members in Nursing Homes and those at home:

John & Lois Duffy, Linda Hobkirk, Gene & Janice Klopfenstein, Hela Ziegler, Dortha Marsh, Maxine Lott, Bill Niedermeyer, Tim & Sandra Rueger, John Myers, Willie & Karen Scheumann, Jeannine Slavicek, Jack & Joanne Lane, Shane Hoffman (brother of Cari Knuth), Ralph & Barbara Keiper, Mark Forrester and Lynn Kyler.



Thursday @ 7:00 P.M at Church

Those serving our Country in the Armed Forces: Joshua Rittner, Jason & Ashley Weatherly.

Sunday		Monday		Tuesday		Wednesday		Thursday		Friday		Saturday	
26		27		28		29		30		31		1	
9am - Sunday School		Pastor's Day Off				7pm - Worship Service		7pm-Bible Study				Pastor's Day Off	
10:15am - Worship Service												9:30am Altar Guild	
2		3		4		5		6		7		8	
		Pastor's Day Off										Pastor's Day Off	
10:15am - Worship Service with Holy Communion								7pm-Bible Study					
11:30am - Bd of Outreach													
9		10		11		12		13		14		15	
		Pastor's Day Off						7pm-Bible Study				Pastor's Day Off	
10:15am - Worship Service						8pm - Elder's Mtg							
11:30am - Bd of Education													
16		17		18		19		20		21		22	
		Pastor's Day Off		7pm - Council Meeting				7pm-Bible Study				Pastor's Day Off	
10:15am - Worship Service with Holy Communion													
						Zealant Items Due		WCCS 1st day of school					
23		24		25		26		27		28		29	
		Pastor's Day Off						7pm-Bible Study				Pastor's Day Off	
10:15am - Worship Service													
11:30am - Bd of Youth													
30		31		Notes									
10:15am - Worship Service		Pastor's Day Off											

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