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THE ZION ZEALANT

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PASTORS'
CORNER

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Greetings in the Name of Christ our Savior!

St. Paul wrote to his friend Titus and said, we're all **"... to be submissive to rulers and authorities, to be obedient, to be ready for every good work, to speak evil of no one, to avoid quarreling, to be gentle, and to show perfect courtesy toward all people."** (Tt 3:1-2). Paul admitted that he himself (*along with each of us as well!*) had been foolish, disobedient, led astray, slaves to various passions and pleasures, passing our days in hatred and envy, we'd been hated by others and we hated one another. (cf. Tt 3:3) But we have been saved from certain condemnation from God and we have been given a new life in Christ Jesus.

We have been given the Holy Gospel. The Law only beat us down and made us feel even worse about ourselves. The Law proved we were incapable of doing what God wanted us to do. And God sent His Son to redeem us and gain for us salvation. **"For while we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly."** (Ro 5:6). Gospel, through and through. God's sweet grace poured out upon us poor, miserable sinners. We don't deserve the bounty of His blessings but, because of Jesus becoming the complete sacrifice of atoning for the sins of all mankind, God looks at each of us as His dear children, worthy of every blessing and promise He has ever made.

Thinking about God's grace is a wonderful daily thing to contemplate. That's one reason I get excited about the Season of Lent quickly approaching this year: with Ash Wednesday being February 17th. There's no greater understanding of God's love for us than walking through the Passion of Christ each year.

Our Lenten theme this year is: **"Return to the Lord your God."** This particular Lenten season, we will focus on God's historic call to His people to repent and the things that might get in the way of us returning to God. Even if our desire is to return to God, there are many stumbling blocks, not the least of which is ourselves. That is the subject of our Lenten theme this year as we dive into God's Holy Word and consider carefully the distinct difficulty experienced by the people we encounter in each biblical narrative.

In this series, during our mid-week sermons and Bible studies on Sundays, we will delve into the following titled sessions: ***A Call to Return; Prayer; Betrayal; False Witness; Denial; The Kingdom of God; and The Resurrection and You: Come and See.*** As we do, we remember in faith to “**return to the LORD your God, for He is gracious and merciful, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love**” (Joel 2:13).

I'll see you in church! Soon!

Pastor Phil Rittner



Voters' Assembly Meeting January 17, 2021

Meeting called to order by Ralph Brooke with 18 members present. Pastor Rittner opened the meeting with prayer.

Minutes: Barb Knuth made a motion to accept the December 2020 minutes printed in the January 2021 Zealant with no correction. Barb Lahrman seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Receiving Treasurer: reported by Chuck Cooper

	December 2020	YTD
Unrestricted Offering Receipts	\$ 6,989.00	\$ 87,824.50
Restricted Offering/ Miscellaneous Offering Receipts	\$ 5,248.25	\$ 18,870.09
On-Line Giving Receipts	\$ 1,862.00	\$ 29,194.00
Dividends	\$ 242.37	\$ 5,813.41
Interest	\$ 2.73	\$ 30.05
Total Unrestricted Receipts	\$ 8,851.00	\$ 116,643.50
Total Restricted Receipts	\$ 5,248.25	\$ 19,245.05
Total Receipts	\$ 14,344.35	\$ 141,732.05

Katie Rittner made a motion to accept the report as presented. Dave Wiehe seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Disbursing Treasurer: reported by Jill Coons
Check/Savings as of **December 31, 2020**

General Checking/Savings	\$ 48,993.60
Youth	\$ 9,621.26
Restricted Funds	\$ 16,051.99
Lehmburg Legacy/ Kyler Endowment	\$180,209.13

Statement of Activity

	December 2020	YTD
General Budget	\$ 319.73	\$ 22,648.00
Non-Budgeted/ Reimbursed	\$ 1,076.04	\$ 11,661.46
Youth	\$.70	\$ (129.70)
Net Revenue	\$ 1,396.47	\$ 34,179.76

Chuck Cooper made a motion to accept the report as presented. Pat Decker seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Elders:

Meeting held January 13, 2021

Meeting was opened with prayer.

Order of business:

Phil Coons has agreed to be president and Steve Smith secretary of the Elders for 2021.

Discussed the new constitution and how the Board of Directors will work.

Discussed Lenten and Easter services. It was decided to continue mid-week services thru Easter. Ash Wednesday service will be on February 17th.

Discussed forming a call committee.

A decision was made to put the Bibles and hymnals back in the pews.

Attendance for the month of December was:

Sundays	36
Mid-week	8
Christmas Eve	45
Christmas Day	22

Meeting was closed with prayer.

Respectively submitted,
Stephen Smith (Sec.)

Trustees: No Report

Board of Education: No meeting

The board will be going through the VBS material on hand.

Sunday school students will be doing valentines for our shut-ins

Board of Christian Outreach: No meeting

Grab & Go coffee will continue once a month.

Board of Stewardship: No Meeting

Online giving continues to grow and is going very well.

Board of Youth: No meeting

National Youth Gathering plans are ongoing for 2022!

Pastor:

1. The new Constitution and Bylaws of Zion have been approved by the Board of Directors of the Indiana District of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod, and it has become effective on January 1, 2021.
 - a. Highlights as approved by the Voter's Assembly January 2020 include:
 - i. No more Boards, only Committees (i.e. Education Committee, Outreach Committee, Stewardship Committee, etc.) The Board of Elders will remain as it has been.
 - ii. Only the Board of Directors meet on the 3rd Tuesday of the month, but other Voting Members of the Congregation may attend as guests. The pastor is now a non-voting member of the Board.
 - iii. All Committee Reports shall be submitted to the Recording Secretary by the Sunday before the Voter's Assembly or the Board of Directors meet.
 - iv. The Board of Directors will now be the Trustees of the congregation.
 - v. There are still 2 "At-Large" representatives needed for the Board of Directors.
 - b. The new Constitution and Bylaws will be emailed to all who are emailed the Zealant now. Those who do not, will receive a paper copy in their mailboxes. Anyone desiring a paper copy may certainly request one.
 - c. A form to obtain the signatures of all the Voters of Zion will be on the bulletin board in the Narthex. Signatures will indicate the receipt of the new Constitution and Bylaws and acceptance of them. This is required by the Indiana District of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod.
2. Zion is nearly in desperate need of someone to step forward and begin preparing the music playlist for worship services; as well as someone to work the computer for music and PowerPoint during worship services (should be two people, as it is difficult to do both).
 - a. Training for these positions will be done as there are a few important things to know (i.e., DON'T delete a playlist, it will remove files from the source file library and no longer be available).
 - b. Please see Pastor Phil or Katie if interested.
 - c. The preparation of the PowerPoint is being transitioned to the Church Secretary over the next few months.

Unfinished/Old Business:

Nominating Committee – we need 1 Elder, 2 At-Large members and the Recording Secretary in June/July.

Ralph Brooke nominated Betty Wilkinson for the office of Vice President for Zion Lutheran Church. Jill Coons seconded the motion. The motion was approved. Thank you, Betty, for serving.

Ralph Brooke has been serving as the Nominating Committee for the last few years. He would like to be replaced at the end of July 2021. If you are interested, please see Pastor Rittner or Ralph Brooke.

Several members asked Pastor Rittner to reconsider retiring and staying as Pastor of Zion. Pastor Rittner stated that he would consider it and discussions will continue.

New Business:

Zion received a letter from the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod Synodical Office regarding pushing the District Conventions back one (1) year due to the current pandemic. This will in turn push the Synodical Convention back one (1) year.

Dave Wiehe made a motion to vote to postpone the District and Synodical Conventions one (1) year. Jill Coons seconded the motion. The motion to postpone was approved.

With no further business, Peggy Brooke made a motion to adjourn. Jill Coons seconded. The motion passed and the meeting was adjourned.

Pastor Rittner closed the meeting with prayer.

Respectfully submitted,
Katherine (Katie) Rittner, Recording Secretary

MEMOIRS OF A VICAR

Life has a funny way of stopping us in our tracks. Our busy schedules tell us that there are not enough hours in a day. But the reality of it is; we are over booked and over committed. With busy schedules we neglect the things that are truly important. I am currently working through the book "Broken" Witten by Pastor Johnathon Fisk. Although I am almost through the first chapter, I am reminded that the Word of the Lord stands forever.

The truth of scripture permeates all areas of life. Hebrews 4:12 says,
"For the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and of marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart."

All too often we, or at least I, have the tendency to take scripture for granted. I tell myself I am baptized; I say my morning prayer and start my day.

Without digging into scripture and working on my relationship with God through his Word is like going to a gym, loading the bench press laying down with my hands on the bar, I grunt and make a face and then sit up without lifting the weight to begin the exercise.

I may have a feeling of success because I was intentional at walking in to the gym and loading the weight bar. I was hyped, I showed intention, but nothing was accomplished. I did not grow, I did not let the progression of working out affect my muscles, I did not let the effectiveness of the bar and the weights take its course.

A person grows in strength by effectively exercising. The same is true with scripture. We grow in knowledge and wisdom as we spend time in it. I am not denying the effectiveness of prayer, but if we don't know the truth of who God is and how he has saved us, our effectiveness as Christians to love our neighbor too becomes effected.

God has chosen to reveal himself to us in scripture, and through the reading of it, prayers are answered, questions of life are answered and it is in scripture where we are strengthened. If you don't know where to start, if scripture is intimidating, or if you simply struggle on how to manage your way through the pages. Let's talk, let's grab coffee- this is your invitation. If you need tabs to for your bible so you can find the books of the bible, I have 3 copies in my office waiting for people to give them too. Vice President Betty Wilkinson has already claimed hers.

May you find the joy of scripture this year, may you grow and find others to do life with.

In Jesus name-
Amen.

LADIES AID

The ladies decided not to sew during the month of January but will resume sewing Feb. 4th. We now have a total of 10 regular sewers from Zion, Living Waters, South Whitley and Columbia City. We all enjoy doing this mission project as well as the great fellowship we have while sewing.

We received "Thank You for thinking of us" from some of the shut ins who received the Christmas cards that we sent them. WE plan to send cards regularly to our sick and shut ins.

Yes, we are still collecting stamps for missions. The box for them is across from the mail boxes. Thank You!

“SERVING WITH GLADNESS “

SOME THOUGHTS ON PRAYER TIME

The average amount of time spent in a life span of 75 years is:

23 years sleeping,
19 years working,
9 years in amusement
7-1/2 years in dressing,
5 years in traveling,
6 years in eating,
1 year in waiting
6 months in worship
19 days in prayer.



19 days in prayer doesn't sound like very much time compared with 23 years of sleeping or 7 1/2 years dressing.

When Jesus was on earth, He spent a great deal of time in prayer and He talked a great deal about prayer, telling us to

PRAY without ceasing!!!



UPCOMING FEBRUARY EVENTS

02/04/2021	9:00 am	Ladies Aid Sewing Group
02/10/2021	8:00 pm	Elder's Meeting
02/17/2021	7:00 pm	ASH Wednesday
02/18/2021	9:00 am	Ladies Aid Sewing Group

LÖÖKING AHEAD»»»»»

03/09/2021	10am-3pm	Red Cross Donation-Appts made online
03/14/2021	2:00 AM	Spring Forward! Move your Clocks forward!
03/28/2021	9:00 am	PALM Sunday!



Saturday, January 8, 2021

Dear members of Zion Lutheran Church,

Warmest greetings in the precious name of our Lord Jesus Christ. As you probably know by now, I have started my seminary education at Concordia Theological Seminary in Fort Wayne, in the fall quarter of 2020. This winter quarter has been a very busy one with having a four-and-a-half-month-old baby at home, and a wife working full-time outside the home. Nonetheless, everything is going well. It is amazing how one addition to the family can make the house seem twice as chaotic, yet twice as joyful!

I resigned from my job at Parkview Hospital at the end of July of last year (2020) so that I could focus more on passing Summer Greek. Erika also had an unexpected early labor and delivery a month later, on August 18, 2020. Everything worked out very well: I did very well in Greek and our son Micaiah was born very healthy.

My family and I thank you for the monetary gift that you have sent for me to the seminary. It brings joy to our hearts to know that you have thought of us. We are deeply appreciative of your love and support. Please keep my family in your prayers. Being new parents has its challenge, but we take great comfort in Jesus' promise to us that He will always be with us. We pray that God bless you and keep you in His loving care. Happy New Year 2021!

Blessings to all of you!
Thompson Marin, Sem. 1



I received a HANDwritten 2 page letter at the end of January that told me what I already knew, "YOU ALL are one of a kind and truly go out of YOUR way to make people feel welcome", as I found out when I started here. You know it must have meant something that it was actually handwritten and he felt you all should know the impact of your love. It's dated Dec. 7th, 2020, but like I said I received in Mid January.

Hello Pastor Phil,

I had the good fortune of attending your church twice after running the Veteran's Marathon, most recently this past November. I must heap praise on the church members for their welcoming smiles, words, and pleaseant interaction. Normally when visiting a church there is a short polite interaction that is forgotten by the time a person drives out of the parking lot. Not so with Zion as I regularly recall my joy at the ease with which interactions took place.

Second, I would like to comment on your service of the sacrament. I attend Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church in Akron, Ohio and we also use Divine Service Setting Three. I have never attended communion when visiting a church. The church doctrine or communion procedures had something that seemed "not quite right", so I chose not to attend. Zion's communion practice had me thinking maybe I will take communion; I'll watch their distribution practice during Covid-19. I was quite comfortable with the manner communion was distributed and eagerly took the opportunity of attending the Lord's table. I have not attended communion at my own church since Covid-19, so it was a spiritual lift to partake of the Lord's Supper.

I have enclosed a check for Zion's offering. The church is free of course to use it anyway they wish. I would though like to put out an option for consideration. With Covid-19 negatively impacting so many people, perhaps there is an individual or family among Zion's congregation that is experiencing hardships or health challenges. I received much warmth and spiritual joy from Zion's Church practice and its members. Perhaps my offering can be passed on to a person or family in need in Zion Church's name, so they might feel the same warmth and spiritual joy I received and also feel the joy of Jesus birth this Christmas.

*Gloria in Excelsis Deo,
Roger Galbraith*

I will have the letter put on the bulletin board. But that is so very touching that you guys made him feel joy and love so much so that he wrote a letter a month later and mailed it later than that. Great Job being your very gracious selves. ~~~ Tonya

Letters and Cards- We get newsletters from missionaries and cards from Seminary Students from time to time that are posted to the bulletin board near the Library & Secretary's office. Check them out as they are changed out as we receive them.

PowerPoint and Music – with Scott serving at Faith Lutheran, Churubusco, we will no longer have anyone other than Katie to run the PowerPoint during worship weekly. Also, if Katie is called away for Seminary business, there will be no one to run the computer with the music for worship. If anyone is interested in helping out, please let Pastor Phil or Katie Rittner.

Call for Nominations. If you are interested in serving on the Board of Directors, please see Ralph Brooke or Pastor Rittner (the nominating committee) for more information.



Please keep Rev. Logan and Lydia Landes in prayer. They await the arrival of their twin son and daughter, Samuel and Zoey. Lydia has been admitted to the hospital for the remainder of her pregnancy. Samuel and Zoey are due at the end of March. Pastor Logan was out fieldworker a few years ago and is serving in Destin Fla.



Please keep Whitley County Youth in your prayers!

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

Sandra Barrett, John & Lois Duffy, Linda Hobkirk, Gene & Janice Klopfenstein, Maxine Lott, Bill Niedermeyer, Tim & Sandra Rueger, Willie & Karen Scheumann, Jeannine Slavicek, Jack & Joanne Lane, Ralph & Barbara Keiper, Lynn Kyler.





24 Sean & Ge'Onna Decker



Thursday @ 7:00 P.M.
at Church



Eric Childs
Ge'Onna Decker
Christopher Decker
Tracy Decker
Caleb Decker
Nicholas Decker
Bradley Hart
Summer Hart
Jack Lane
Dyllynn Lepper
Melody Reese
Spencer Rossow
Sandy Rueger
Tim Rueger
Barb Lahrman
Scott Woodhouse
John Myers



1 John Myers
8 Karen Scheumann
8 Melody Reese
9 Jack Lane
12 Ralph Kieper
15 Jeremy Grant
15 Tim Rueger
16 Terry Frick
21 Riley Coons
21 Verna Doehrman
21 Bryan Sexton
22 Regan Decker
23 Wyld Jean Cook
26 Erika Marin
26 Vicki Western
28 Alex Hart

I'D LIKE
MORNINGS
BETTER
IF THEY
STARTED
LATER



Office Hours are mostly 8:30am-12:30pm

February 2021



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
31 9am - Sunday School 10:15am - Worship Service	1 Pastor's Day Off	2 Groundhog Day	3 7pm - Worship Service	4 9am Ladies Aid Sewing Grp 7pm-Bible Study	5	6 Pastor's Day Off 9:30am Altar Guild
7 9am - Sunday School 10:15am - Worship Service with Holy Communion 11:30am - Bd of Outreach	8 Pastor's Day Off	9	10 7pm - Worship Service with Holy Communion 8pm - Elder's Mtg	11 7pm-Bible Study	12	13 Pastor's Day Off
14 9am - Sunday School 10:15am - Worship Service 11:30 am Bd of Education Valentine's Day	15 Pastor's Day Off Presidents' Day	16 7pm - Board Meeting	 17 7pm - Worship Service Zealant Items Due ASH WEDNESDAY	18 9am Ladies Aid Sewing Grp 7pm-Bible Study	19	20 Pastor's Day Off
21 9am - Sunday School 10:15am - Worship Service with Holy Communion	22 Pastor's Day Off	23	24 7pm - Worship Service with Holy Communion	25 7pm-Bible Study	26	27 Pastor's Day Off
28 9am - Sunday School 10:15am - Worship Service 11:30am - Bd of Youth	1 Pastor's Day Off	2	3	4	5	6 Pastor's Day Off