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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

Greetings in the Name of Christ!

What a year... so far. What a summer... and what even the past few days have been like. Living in the grace of our almighty Lord! Richly and abundantly has the Creator of all things blessed us with so many blessings... whew! Hardly time to catch your breath!

You probably thought upon reading the opening sentence there where I might be headed with this article this month. Well, you're right. There has been unrest like so many of you have never seen before; but those of us at a certain age have seen it all too often. Civil unrest. Riots. Most importantly as it concerns me and you: Christian persecution. Yes, whether from the television or the pulpit, from the newspaper or the Bible: Christians are being persecuted and always have been. We're talking thousands and thousands of years those with faith in the One true God have suffered at the hands of lawless men for their beliefs and trust.

Consider the life and times of one Jesus of Nazareth. Laughed at; mocked; ridiculed; and slain with no sin. The very Son of the living God wasn't even adored or believed to be who He is: God in the flesh. And it is still the same today.

There's a question asked of pastors for as long as the church has been around: "*Pastor, aren't things in the world today about as bad as they've ever been? Isn't it just getting worse?*" No. That's not true. It's the very same as it was when Adam and Eve got kicked out of the Garden of Eden, we just have to multiply the number of people who've sinned against God. We're talking about billions of people over the centuries being disobedient to the Word of God. Notice I didn't say the "Law" of God, for it is also the Gospel of Jesus Christ debased people profane and twist into foul speak. The Bible has been under fire of late for being "out of touch with the reality of our times." Really? To think "**the wages of sin is death.**" (Rm.6:23)

There's an 'official' statement put out by our Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod, written by our Synodical President, Rev. Dr. Matthew Harrison, that says, "***We weep for George Floyd, for his family and loved ones because he was robbed of life. We weep for our nation. We weep for those across our nation who believe their only recourse is***

destruction. We deplore injustice. We deplore destruction, robbery and doing physical harm to others. That, too, is injustice. We plead to citizens and governments of this nation for communities beset by poverty, crime and injustice. We plead for rational and unifying policies that will end injustices and address social breakdown, lack of economic access, and other factors that fuel anger, hatred and dissension. We shall pray, but we shall do even more. We shall follow the ancient mandate of the prophet of Yahweh: “He has told you, O man, what is good; and what does the Lord require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?” (Micah 6:8).

And we shall proclaim Christ, “in season and out of season” (2 Timothy 4:2). “For one will scarcely die for a righteous person — though perhaps for a good person one would dare even to die — but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us” (Romans 5:7–8). ”

The answer to all our woes is love. Christ commissioned every single one of us to love our neighbor. As He has loved us, we in turn share that love with our neighbor.

I'd like to comment about our worship services here at Zion. Attendance is growing once again. Your Elders and I have worked to ensure you may come and hear of God's Word and partake of His Sacraments. Beginning September 6th, we will once again return to celebrating Holy Communion every 1st and 3rd Sunday of each month. We'll do so in a bit different fashion than before, let me explain. The Divine Service will return to how we've done it for years and years. During the Service of the Sacrament of the Altar, when it comes time for the Distribution of Christ's body and blood, we'll come forward to a 'credence table' set before the Baptismal Font, and you'll be invited to pick up the wafer from the table and then your preferred method of the Cup, the Common Cup or the Individual cups (note we'll still have a few cups in the center of the tray filled with water and one drop of wine for those who prefer; and we also offer a 'gluten-free' wafer). After partaking, please simply return to your seat. After everyone has Communed, the pastor will announce a dismissal to everyone. What a joy to return to celebrating this great Feast within the Sanctuary of God's Holy Church!

I look forward to seeing everyone, either at church or in your home, very soon!

Pastor Phil Rittner



**MEETING
MINUTES**

Church Council Meeting August 18, 2020

Meeting called to order by Scott Woodhouse with 7 members present. (Pastor Rittner, Steve Smith, Jill Coons, Phil Coons, Chuck Cooper, Vicar Tim Benzinger, Katie Rittner). Pastor Rittner opened the meeting with a reading from 2 Samuel 7 and prayer.

Minutes: Katie Rittner made a motion to accept the June 2020 minutes printed in the July 2020 Zealant with no correction. Chuck Cooper seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Receiving Treasurer: reported by Chuck Cooper

	July 2020	YTD
Unrestricted Offering Receipts	\$ 4,351.00	\$ 45,540.50
Restricted Offering/ Miscellaneous Offering Receipts	\$ 62.84	\$ 12,767.59
On-Line Giving Receipts	\$ 2,265.00	\$ 18,035.00
Dividends	\$ 319.51	\$ 4,717.12
Interest	\$ 2.29	\$ 20.42
Total Unrestricted Receipts	\$ 6,541.00	\$ 63,200.50
Total Restricted Receipts	\$ 137.84	\$ 13,142.59
Total Receipts	\$ 7,000.64	\$ 81,080.63

Phil Coons made a motion to accept the report as presented. Jill Coons seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Disbursing Treasurer: reported by Jill Coons

Check/Savings as of **July 31, 2020**

General Checking/Savings	\$ 36,129.79
Youth	\$ 9,619.62
Restricted Funds	\$ 12,598.91
Lehmburg Legacy/ Kyler Endowment	\$178,289.12

Statement of Activity

	July 2020	YTD
General Budget	\$ (446.08)	\$ 6,319.57
Non-Budgeted/ Reimbursed	\$ 239.33	\$ 11,420.11
Youth	\$.10	\$ (131.34)
Net Revenue	\$ (206.65)	\$ 16,335.27

Chuck Cooper made a motion to accept the report as presented. Phil Coons seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Elders:

Meeting held July 25, 2020

Meeting was opened with a reading from Acts 21 and from the Book of Concord.

Order of business:

The main focus of our meeting was to decide when to open the church up for services again. After much discussion it was decided to start again on August 2. The installation of Vicar Tim Benzinger will be held on this Sunday.

Unfortunately due to FCC regulations we can no longer broadcast the services outside. So we strongly recommend that we stay with social distancing and the wearing of masks inside the church.

A robo-call will be made to our members announcing this decision.

Red Cross will be here on July 23rd and again on July 28.

Meeting was closed with prayer.

Respectively submitted,
Stephen Smith (Sec.)

Trustees:

- The front tires have been replaced on the riding lawn mower used to maintain the grounds of the church.
- Interior repairs continue. Wood sills around the stained glass windows need some careful care done. The walls and pews in the Sanctuary need to be treated with Murphy's Oil Soap since it has been around 3 years since it was done.

Board of Education: No report**Board of Christian Outreach:**

Planning to hold a welcome reception for Vicar Tim Benzinger and his family on September 20 after church.

Board of Stewardship: No Report**Board of Youth: No Report**

Pastor:

1. Visitation of our shut-ins is proceeding on a rather limited basis. Vicar has begun going with the pastor. There are some we still cannot meet due to COVID (i.e. those living in assisted living facilities or nursing homes or hospitals.)
2. Vicar Tim Benzinger has been working very nicely! He's keeping regular office hours. He also welcomes criticism very well! (lol) He and pastor have developed a schedule of preaching and leading worship; and soon we will begin planning worship services together. Vicar Tim is also earnestly contacting parents of Catechism age children to develop a return to these important classes. We're looking into either on-line/Zoom classes or in-person classes – which ever works best with the students, teachers, and our Vicar. Please note that the Vicar works for the Pastor; hence, might you think of something the good Vicar could do to help our wonderful church, kindly let Pastor know.
3. The Indiana District Fall Pastors Conference is slated for in-person in Noblesville in October. The fees for attending will be:
 - a. For Pastor to attend all three days is \$175.00, with the hotel room rate of \$147.00 per night (total for 2 nights being \$294.00 + taxes and fees.)
 - b. Our Vicar is most welcome to attend (per IN Dist. Office), but must pay additional fee of \$175.00 and the same hotel fees as Pastor (due to COVID, single occupancy rooms are recommended.) It is required your Pastor attend this conference (who'll submit to the church for reimbursement of expenses associated to attending, i.e. mileage, room & fee.)

Do we wish to send the Vicar as well to this conference? The Vicar will also attend the conference and will be housed in a separate room.

4. Vicar Tim has requested one additional week of vacation unpaid (he is receiving 2 weeks paid vacation) as he has some family obligations that will carry over to a 3rd week. As long as there is coverage for the service, there is no objection to Vicar Tim taking the additional week unpaid.
5. Zion has received a request from ***Trinity Evangelical Church*** of Larwill to rent out our gym to hold their worship services. Their building is “severely out of code” and they must vacate to at least a location with handicap accessibility.
 - a. They are a member of the “CREC” (Communion of Reformed Evangelical Churches Synod.) Therefore, they'd be prohibited to use our Sanctuary, but the gym is certainly acceptable (many other LC-MS churches do so, one close by is in Merryville, IN. Likewise, I checked with our Circuit Visitor who said it'd be perfectly fine, no statutes in the LC-MS prohibiting such “renting”; as many churches have rented out their gyms for non-member activities.)

- b. They average approx. 125 ppl. Per service.
- c. They say they are “very flexible” as to times of when they could conduct their service, and the gym would certainly be acceptable.
- d. They would need someplace for worship until they’ve planned and built or found another building to use as their church. When asked for approx. how long, they said “maybe a year.”

Do we want to help out a neighboring Christian church continue having worship?

Pastor made a motion to find a way to help Trinity and to proceed with conversation with Trinity Evangelical Church to discuss the rental rate, the length of the rental, their communication plan, social distancing plan, equipment they will bring in, if they will need storage of said items, as well as additional information to bring to the Voter’s Assembly for a final vote. Capacity limit per the Columbia City Fire Marshall will also be obtained. Jill Coons seconded the motion. Discussion was held to cover questions that need to be answered and conditions that need to be put in place. In addition they would need to have their insurance company provide an insurance rider naming Zion as the beneficiary for any covered claims to be paid by them in case something happens. They will need to provide personnel to set up, take down, clean, sanitize and remove trash weekly. Pastor reminded us of what Jesus meant when he said, “as you do for the least of these, you do for me.” 6 voted to approve, one voted against. Pastor will contact them to set up a meeting with the Council and their delegation.

6. Zion will have the need to replace the projector in the Sanctuary sooner than later. A professional audio/visual tech looked ours over and found the “Color Wheel” to be non-functioning anymore. Its not an option to repair the projector, as the current problems indicate the projector itself is beginning to fail.

- a. In consultation with the head of the audio/visual department at the Seminary in Fort Wayne, we narrowed down what would best replace our projector at a reasonable cost.
 - i. The **Epson Powerlite 2250U** 5000-Lumen WUXGA 3LCD at \$1350.00 (from a Fort Wayne company) plus the need to replace a number of cables from the control panel near the organ to the projector (\$?) We might be able to do the re-install ourselves, *though Pastor ain’t climbing up that high!*

Steve Smith pointed out that we have been discussing this for a few months and we need to go ahead and do it. Katie Rittner made a motion to replace the projector in the Sanctuary and to have it installed as well so there are no issues with the warranty. Steve Smith seconded the motion. The motion was passed.

7. It has come to our attention that the internet service to Zion is proving to be inadequate for the use of the pastor, Vicar, and Secretary. With three or more people using the internet at one time, it becomes terribly slow, inhibiting work being conducted. Supplying materials via the internet is proving to be more and more necessary to reach both members and the community; whether because of COVID or not. Tonya has looked into upgrading our present service as follows:

- a. We currently pay CenturyLink \$110.23/mo. (\$88.90 internet and phone; \$10.00 for modem rental.) Our service currently is only **10mbps** download, and **1mbps** upload speed. As an example, it takes approx. 5 hours to upload a 15-minute sermon video for YouTube.
- b. A CenturyLink upgrade to **30mbps** download and **1.5mbps** upload service would cost \$100.00 per month (\$85 internet and phone; \$15 modem rental – or pay a one time fee of \$200 for the modem, and then it'd be only \$85 per month.)
- c. For Mediacom service to the church for phone and internet, at **60mbps** download and **5mbps** upload would be \$129/mo. First year, \$149 second year, and \$169 third year and later. Modem is included, and it'd take 3 weeks to install. Mediacom also offers a **100mbps** download and **10mbps** upload plan, but that begins at \$170 per month.

Made a motion to upgrade the internet service in the church. Seconded the motion. Scott Woodhouse polled each member of the Council for their preference of service. 6 members voted for option C, to upgrade to the 60 mbps/5 mbps option through Mediacom. 1 abstained.

Unfinished/Old Business: None

New Business: None

With no further business, Katie Rittner made a motion to adjourn. Chuck Cooper 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

Called to *Serve*

September begins the season of Pumpkin Spice. What has been in the years past, September 1st as the official day of the coffee connoisseur fall kickoff, it actually starts today- a week early, August 25th, 2020. On my way home from the office, I will be stopping by Starbucks© to bring my lovely bride, my wife with whom God has blessed me, a Grande- non-fat, no whip, Pumpkin Spice Latte. Though Pumpkin spice is a staple in the Benzinger household all year long, for my wife, nothing feels more like fall than her beverage of choice. Pumpkin Spice, whether it is coffee, candlewax, bath wash, soap, hand lotion, the smell permeates our household from the beginning of September to end of November.

Why are smells and tastes such a powerful thing? Both bring us back to memories of the past, and upon new occasions, they can become new memories marking pivotal moments in our life that one day will help us not only remember a specific time and place, but often times invoke a feeling tied to that situation. For our family, fall brings joy and thanksgiving.

When you think of the fall time what goes through your mind? Is it bonfires? Is it Oktoberfest at the casa de' Ken Knuth in his barn? Is it the comfort you find in your favorite hooded sweatshirt, or your favorite flannel? Fall is the beginning of the season of gratitude and thankfulness.

I don't know where you folks are in your life, everything may be peachy, but many times when people come to church, they often feel they need to pretend everything is ok. I know I have. We, as the Benzinger household, had to admit, and "own" the fact that we were struggling. These past two seasons we have forgotten what it was like to be thankful. So, we made some minor changes in our own house. We have chosen to start a little early in our fall celebration and house decorations.

Fall to the Benzingers is a reminder that God never stops providing for us, and that we have so much to be thankful and grateful for. Fall is a new season, a new time to start over for our family, the air is crisper, which reminds us that God breathed breath to us, HE- sustains us, HE- provides for us. In God, and in God alone we find our hope. As the smells and tastes of Pumpkin spice fills our house, we are reminded of a Loving God that is ever faithful. God is the God of the Harvest. The Fall begins the season of the Harvest. – A time of blessings and provision.

Harvesting in the bible was one of the most important events. It was a time of celebration commanded by God in Exodus 23.16 "Celebrate the Festival of Harvest with the first-fruits of the crops you sow in your field. "Celebrate the Festival of ingathering at the end of the year, when you gather in your crops from the field (ESV)."

"For the fruits of His creation, Thanks be to our God. For His gifts to every nation, Thanks be to God, For the plowing, sowing, reaping, Solent growth while we are sleeping, Future needs in earth's safe keeping, Thanks be to God. (LSB 894).

When things look bleak, when things look helpless, as the season changes, may fall remind you that we have a big God who blesses us and provides all we need.

+Te Deum+
Vicar 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!

Zion
Lutheran
Church
AUGUST

2020 Budget

Attend #	Tithing	Actual (Received)	Budget (Needed)	Difference
Sun Wed	Unrestricted Offering			
28 COVID	Sun AUG 2	1795	2,018.37	(223)
36 COVID	Sun Aug 9	2067	2,018.37	49
29 Covid	Sun Aug 16	2130	2,018.37	112
31 Covid	Sun Aug 23	1396	2,018.37	(622)
46 COVID	Sun Aug 30	1910	2,018.37	(108)
Total Operating Income		9298	10091.85	(794)
Restricted Offering		Pew cushions, field workers, Maintenance, Missions etc.		\$12,596

UPCOMING SEPTEMBER EVENTS

Thursday Night Bible Study At 7pm at the Church

Sept 20th after worship, Welcome Luncheon for Vicar Tim & his family



Bible Study



Thursday @ 7:00 P.M at Church



Jeffery Clark
Jason Doehrman
Connie Forrester
Janice Klopfenstein
Cecily Knuth
Tom Knuth
Maxine Lott
Emma Mullet
Jennifer Harter
Bonnie Spoerke
Myra Hartman
Sharry Wiehe
Judith Kovacs
Luke Conrad (Grant)



2 Nicholas Decker
7 Maxine Lott
8 Bonnie Pease
14 Kyler Bills
15 Tracy Decker
18 Linda Hobkirk
20 Lois Duffy
24 Katie Rittner
28 Kim Yann
28 Kian Hartman



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.



28 Toby & Lindsey Lepper

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

SEPTEMBER 2020

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1	2	3 7pm- Bible Study	4	5 Pastor's Day Off
6 1015am-Worship Service	7 Pastor's Day Off	8	9	10 7pm- Bible Study	11	12 Pastor's Day Off
13 1015am-Worship Service	14 Pastor's Day Off	15	16	17 7pm- Bible Study	18	19 Pastor's Day Off
20 1015am-Worship Service 1130am Welcome Luncheon w/Vicar	21 Pastor's Day Off	22	23	24 7pm- Bible Study	25	26 Pastor's Day Off
27 1015am-Worship Service	28 Pastor's Day Off	29	30	1	2	3
NOTES:						