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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



PASTORS' CORNER

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

Email: revrittner@reagan.com

Greetings in the Name of Christ the Crucified!

We solemnly traverse the Church Season of Lent, examining ourselves and our Confession as a Christian. Be sure to watch your email and messages for upcoming information detailing Zion's celebration of Easter 2021.

Last week, I received an email from the President of the Indiana District of the Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod, Rev. Dr. Daniel Brege. The email contained important information concerning the "Equality Act" recently passed in the House of Representatives. My hope is you can appreciate I will seldom report on political items, given the true separation of Church and State that ought to exist. This Equality Act severely closes the distance between Church and State, as it will provide our civil government power over the Church in issuing laws contrary to our faith and beliefs. The following information has not only been disseminated among all the churches of the Indiana District but throughout the much of the Missouri Synod Lutherans. I quote now:

"As you are probably aware, the House of Representatives has passed the Equality Act, and has moved it on to the Senate. Among other things, this so-called Equality Act (if passed) would change all government/legal actions from prohibiting sexual discrimination to prohibiting discrimination against any who have a changed "sexual orientation" or "gender identity" ("SOGI"). This will mean, for instance, that men who believe they are women will have to be allowed in women's locker rooms, restrooms, etc.; and men who have "transgendered" will have to be allowed to participate in women's sports. This act could affect churches and church-schools (uniquely high schools and colleges), not only in terms of sexual policy but in terms of who can use gathering places. It would definitely affect charitable agencies of the church. There are many other ramifications should this Equality Act become law.

To be sure, all people should be treated with love. The Equality Act will ultimately create abuse and victims of discrimination.

I would encourage you and your members to contact our senators about the so-called Equality Act:

Mike Braun
www.braun.senate.gov/contact-mike
202-224-4814

Todd Young
www.young.senate.gov/contact
202-224-5623

For more information follow the links below:

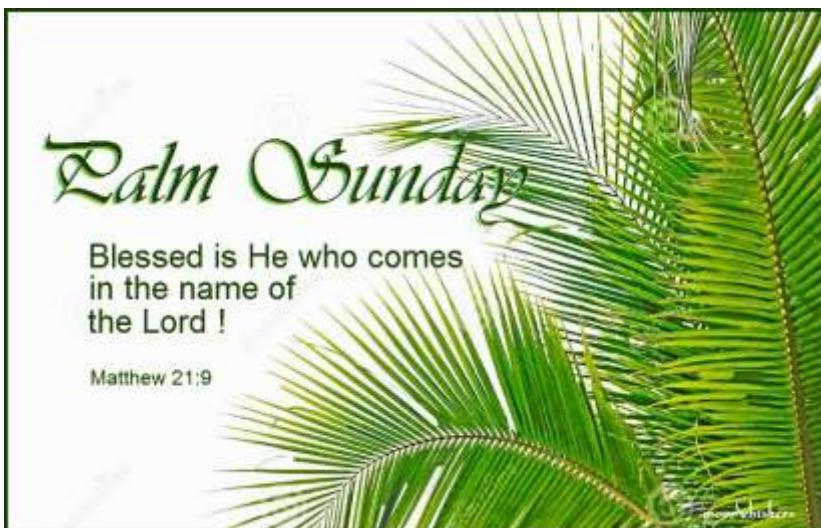
The True Impact of the “Equality Act”

As your pastor, I am bound by laws (according to the I.R.S.) not to endorse, discredit, or make any other statement regarding individual public servants. I AM however, bound both by conscience and rightful caring for the flock of believers entrusted me by God almighty to keep you informed of inference by our civil government to infringe upon our right to freedom of religion, which, this Equality Act will severely disrupt. I have vowed, unto death, to uphold the Christian Faith; belief in ONE true God; faith that Jesus has died for me and your sins; and the Word of God contained in Holy Scriptures; and further vowed to uphold the Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church. Simply put, I personally will not abide by any manmade law directing me to disobey that commanded by God.

If you've questions or comments for me, please know I am always available to you; as I also encourage you to speak with me either privately or publicly concerning this or any other issue causing you trouble.

Always, in faith of Jesus Christ as my Lord and Savior,

Rev. Philip R. Rittner II



Join us on PALM SUNDAY, March 28th
after Sunday Service, for a Palm Sunday reception. We are going to kick off **HOLY WEEK!** A light luncheon will be served.



Board of Directors Meeting February 23, 2021

Meeting called to order by Betty Wilkinson with four (4) members and three (3) guests present.

Pastor Rittner opened the meeting with a devotion from the Return to the Lord Lenten series and prayer.

Minutes: Chuck Cooper made a motion to accept the January Voters' Assembly minutes printed in the February Zealant with no corrections. Jill Coons seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Receiving Treasurer: reported by Chuck Cooper

	January 2021	YTD
Unrestricted Offering Receipts	\$ 4,956.00	\$ 4,956.00
Restricted Offering/		
Miscellaneous Offering Receipts	\$ 756.00	\$ 756.00
On-Line Giving Receipts	\$ 2,605.00	\$ 2,605.00
Dividends	\$ 280.25	\$ 280.25
Interest	\$ 2.09	\$ 2.09
Total Unrestricted Receipts	\$ 7,561.00	\$ 7,561.00
Total Restricted Receipts	\$ 756.11	\$ 756.11
Total Receipts	\$ 8,599.45	\$ 8,599.45

Katie Rittner 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 **January 31, 2021**

General Checking/Savings	\$ 50,183.88
Youth	\$ 9,621.32
Restricted Funds	\$ 16,251.83
Lehmburg Legacy/	
Kyler Endowment	\$180,971.18

Statement of Activity

	October 2020	YTD
General Budget	\$ 1,168.17	\$ 1,168.17
Non-Budgeted/		
Reimbursed	\$ 961.89	\$ 961.89
Youth	\$.06	\$.06
Net Revenue	\$ 2,130.12	\$ 2,130.12

Chuck Cooper made a motion to accept the report as presented. Katie Rittner seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Elders:

Elder Meeting for February

Pastor has submitted a request to the District for another Vicar for 2021-2022.

Megan Doehrman was welcomed into membership thru confirmation on February 10, 2021.

Harper Zielinski will be baptized on February 21, 2021.

Average attendance for January was:

Sundays	33
Mid-week	7

Respectively submitted,
Stephen Smith (Sec.)

Board of Education:

Board of Christian Education meeting was held on February 2021 those present were Barb Lahrman, Kenny and Barb Knuth, Vicar Tim Benzinger and Judy Gilbert.

Opening Devotions: Lord's Prayer

Minutes: Were approved

Sunday school Report: Average attendance

Student	Adults
Dec 8	Dec 8
Jan 5	Jan 7

Missions:

Our mission for March and April is Whitley County Energy Association.

So far we have collected \$126.25 for KFUO Radio Station

Old Business: Sunday school made Valentines for our Shut-ins 21 packets were sent out.

New Business: Discussed having a health fair later this year.

Kenny Knuth handed out a Bible to Hadassah Benzinger from Zion Lutheran Church.

Pastors Report: No report

Library Report: No report

Next meeting is March 14, 2021.

Respectively submitted by Judy Gilbert

Board of Christian Outreach: No report

Board of Stewardship: No report**Board of Youth:**

National Youth Gathering will be in Houston in 2022. We are keeping tabs on it to send youth from the church.

There is a pool in North Manchester that charges \$5 a person to swim, suggestion to look into it for the youth.

Pastor:

1. There's going to be an additional Red Cross Blood Drive on Friday, April 30th.
2. We are in the planning stages for hosting a Health Fair here at Zion.
 - Tentative date is mid June
3. We're working out the bugs to "Live-Stream" our worship services, probably over FaceBook

Chuck Cooper made a motion for the purchase of One License up to \$500.00 so Zion can begin livestreaming the services. Jill Coons seconded. The motion passed.

Should we consider providing a hymnal to the shut-ins so they can also participate in the services. Those who already receive the Zealant via email will be sent the bulletins.

4. Pastor is having knee replacement surgery on April 5th.
 - He'll be out for approx. 1 month
 - Vicar Tim and our Field Worker Aaron will be able to conduct some of the services,
 - but outside pastors will be brought in for services with Holy Communion.
5. Discussed Zion providing financial assistance to those members of Zion seeking personal counselling services through Cross Connections in Fort Wayne. The cost is very low, and Zion will only cover approx. 50% of a visit.

Since Zion is a member of Cross Connections Counseling in Fort Wayne. On the referral form, churches regularly offer a contribution for the member who has been referred. Could Zion provide a gift of 50% of the fee – potentially from the COVID assistance restricted fund – or \$150 per year per referral. Jill Coons made a motion for up to \$150.00 to be paid per year, per referral. Katie Rittner seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Unfinished/Old Business: None

New Business:

There will be a wedding rehearsal on June 18, 2021 with the wedding to follow on June 19, 2021 for Kami Wilburn and Tom Clark.

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

Pastor Rittner closed the meeting with the Benediction.

Respectfully submitted,
Katherine (Katie) Rittner, Recording Secretary

MEMOIRS OF A VICAR

In Thursday night bible study 7pm- we are studying the book of Leviticus. It is one of those books that most people groan about when they attempt to read the whole bible in a year. Leviticus, I agree can be at times long and dreary, but to truly understand the gospels, I would go as far to say that a basic understanding and concept of Leviticus is important.

Growing up, every summer my family and I would go to my Mom's Uncle and Aunt's farm with a swimming pond. I can not remember for the life of me, what type of animals they had on their farm, but what I do remember mostly was the swimming, fishing, cookouts, and barb wire fencing. Being one of the youngest to my older cousins, I got picked on a lot. My first experience of fishing was wonderful, until that frightful moment when I was being chased by a flopping rainbow trout dangling from a fishing line.

Running and screaming for my dear life as an innocent 5-year-old I got to experience the barb wire fence first hand. I can tell you, that I made it out alive, I don't remember too much of the situation, other than I swore the rainbow trout was going to hurt me, and instead I became aware of the protective nature of a barb wire.

Just as a fence is designed to protect, the book of Leviticus is set up a similar way. The protection from a fence happens in 2 ways. The first is it protect the inhabitants inside the fence from outside intruders, and in other situations it protects those outside the fence from what is inside it- i.e. a raging bull or a lions pen at the zoo.

Leviticus is stuck right dab in the middle of the Torah- the 5 instruction books of Moses. To begin the conversation, Leviticus comes right after the book of Exodus. God's people are brought out of Egypt and at the mount of Saini God establishes a new covenant with them with the 10 commandments. In this covenant, God decrees to dwell with them, within the newly ordained tabernacle (tent of meeting). In their sin- they rebel with the sin of the golden calf and break the relationship with God. Leviticus picks up this narrative that because of the rebellion of Israel- Moses was no longer able to enter into God's presence, and God speaks Leviticus from the tent as Moses sits outside of it and records what God says.

In chapter 10 we see this come to fruition by the death of Nadab and Abihu. God tells Moses to have Aaron the high priest teach the people the difference of Holy and common things. This discussion carries on through the whole book. Because mankind is sinful (common) there is a danger of desecrating God's holy things and therefore the death of mankind. Ultimately sin, impurity, and darkness finds its demise in the holy presence of God where there is no darkness. Wickedness cannot live or survive near God's presence, similarly to when a person turns on a light switch, darkness is snuffed out.

So, we have this fence of protection that God establishes in his laws and decrees of Leviticus to protect his people so he can dwell among them. It protects in both ways. It protects the common people from being consumed by a Holy God (the raging bull concept), and it also protects the tribe of Israel intermingling with outsider nations that can turn their hearts from God. Holy means to be set apart- and God commands the Israelites to be holy as I am holy- "be set apart."

In Ezekiel 33.11 God says, "I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way and live..." This fence of protection is designed in the substituted sacrifice of an animal in the place of a human. During the rite of Atonement in the sacrifices, man in his sinful fallen condition places his hand on the forehead of the animal, as a confession of sins which transfers his wickedness to the animal. The shedding of blood pours the life from the animal who is now become contaminated by the wickedness of the human as a substitute- and atonement is made. The atonement means a covering is made so the life of the substitute coves for the life of the depraved person. There is so much depth to the gruesomeness of man's sin that his contamination can pass from one person to another simply by a physical touch and render that person unclean, and therefore put that other person at risk.

A person who was unclean had to separate himself/herself from the community of believers and from God in fear of contaminating others or their life could potentially be snuffed out in God's holy presence. After a period of time, the person could return to the community and

There is so much more depth to Leviticus than this surface understanding. The main focus is understanding who we are and who God is. A common people who are by nature sinful and unclean, and a Holy consuming God who longs to dwell among his creation.

Leviticus was written as a love story from a God who aches to be with his creation.

What does this mean for us? We are in the midst of lent- the preparatory time where we are face to face with the frailty of life, our sin, and a savior who *removed the fence of protection* so we can come boldly into God's presence. One must understand the depth of his depravity- the depth of pain suffering Jesus endured on Good Friday so we could dwell one day with God for all eternity in heaven- absent of pain, absent of suffering, absent of tears and sorrows.

Lent leads us in these 40 days of repentance as a remembrance that Christ overcame the devil in the wilderness for us, so that he could die as a pure spotless substitute (sacrificial lamb) for us. The purple paraments remind us to repent and turn from our sins for Christ is the King who demands for us to be set apart, no longer being conformed to this world- but having a renewed mind because Christ went to that awful cross to die for our sins and to be raised for our justification on Easter morning.

“Therefore brothers, since we have confidence to enter the Holy places by the blood of Jesus... let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, with our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water, let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering for he who promised is faithful.”
Hebrews 10.19,22-23.

Blessings-
Vicar Timothy

LADIES AID

The Ladies Aid Sewing Group took February off due to weather. They will be resuming in March weather permitting.

Saturday April 10th, 2021 @ St. Peter’s Lutheran Church Huntington, **The Fort Wayne LWML Three Zone Rally.** Registration & Breakfast starts at 8:30am. Registration Fee: \$6.00 “Sing to the Lord, Bless HIS name” Psalm 96:2 Speaker: Natalie Reynolds. Information or to advise your going, Let your Secretary- that’s me!- know before April 1st.

UPCOMING MARCH EVENTS

03/09/2021	10am-3pm	Red Cross Donation-Appts made online
03/10/2021	8pm	Elder’s Meeting following worship
03/14/2021	2:00 AM	Spring Forward! Move your Clocks forward!
03/28/2021	9:00 am @11:30am	PALM Sunday! Light Luncheon following church to kick off Holy Week!

If you would like to help the Altar Guild fill the church sanctuary with colorful flowers and white lilies: you can bring in your own pot of flowers and drop off in the library room by Wednesday of Easter week, or donate money before 03/29/2021. If you would like to give on behalf of someone or to honor those you wish too, fill out the form in the bulletins and give to altar guild member, put in offering plate with info filled out or drop off/mail to office.

LOOKING AHEAD»»»

04/01/2021	7pm	MAUNDY Thursday Worship w/ Holy Communion
04/02/2021	7pm	Good Friday Tenebrae Service
04/04/2021	8:00 am	EASTER SUNRISE w/ Holy Communion
	10:15 am	EASTER w/ Holy Communion
04/30/2021	10:00 am	Red Cross Blood Drive-Online Appt www.redcross.org



Join us on PALM SUNDAY, March 28th after Sunday Service, for a Palm Sunday reception. We are going to kick off **HOLY WEEK!** A light luncheon will be served.

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 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.

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



Ralph Sexton
Verna Doehrman
Brody Hart
Levi Hartman
Ralph Kieper
Mason Knuth
Maddox Lahrman
Ryan Bills



3 Morgan Sawyer
10 Alysa Sawyer
11 Bonnie Spoerke
13 Ryan Bills
13 Peggy Brooke
13 Kinsley Schuller
14 Lily Lane
20 Chuck Cooper
22 Ge'Onna Decker
25 Barbara Kieper
25 Joan Lane
28 Melinda Puckett



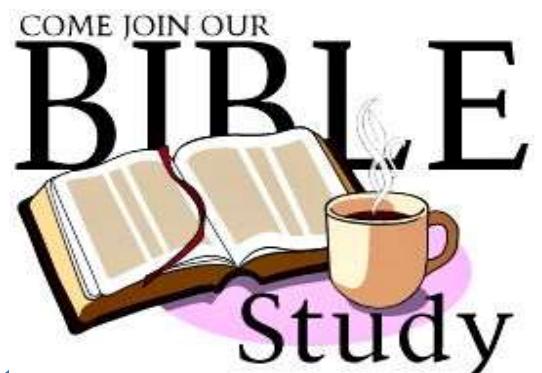
23 Jerry & Barb Lahrman

53 YEARS!!!!

CONGRATS



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



Thursday @ 7:00 P.M.
at Church

March 2021

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
28 9am - Sunday School 10:15am - Worship Service 11:30am - Bd of Youth	1 Pastor's Day Off	2	3 7pm - Worship Service	4 9am Ladies Aid Sewing Grp 7pm-Bible Study	5	6 Pastor's Day Off
7 9am - Sunday School 10:15am - Worship Service with Holy Communion 11:30am - Bd of Outreach	8 Pastor's Day Off	9 RED CROSS	10 7pm - Worship Service with Holy Communion 8pm - Elder's Mtg	11 7pm-Bible Study	12	 DON'T FORGET TO SPRING FORWARD REMEMBER TO TURN YOUR CLOCKS FORWARD ONE HOUR
14 9am - Sunday School 10:15am - Worship Service 11:30am - Bd of Education SPRING FORWARD	 Change your clock, CHANGE your batteries	16 7pm - Board Meeting	17 7pm - Worship Service	18 9am Ladies Aid Sewing Grp 7pm-Bible Study St Patrick's Day Zealant Items Due	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 PALM SUNDAY	29 Pastor's Day Off	30	31 NO SERVICE TONIGHT	1	2	3 Pastor's Day Off

