

**The Annual Report of Mission and Ministry 2009**  
Zion Lutheran Church – Kalamazoo    www.zionkazoo.org

**ADMINISTRATIVE PASTOR**

This past year was very busy and complicated. We completed the renovation and new construction of our facilities. At the same time we lost two full time staff members and added Hilltop Preschool as a ministry of Zion. Zion is full of energy and life, even in an uncertain economic time. Everyone knows that a glass is either half full or half empty, and perspective will determine how one sees that glass. But here is another way to consider that glass.

Let's suppose that Jesus gave us a glass called "Zion" (which in fact is true)! Whether that glass is half full or half empty and someone is thirsty, what do you think we ought to do with the water in the glass? Good stewardship is all about using the gifts God has shared that others know His saving love. He doesn't call us to worship the glass, or worry about how full or empty it is, but make certain that we use his gifts in the manner and means that He has intended for us.

Our mission is based on the Great Commission (Matthew 28:19-20.) Jesus' instructions to his disciples (including us!) are simple: *"GO therefore and MAKE DISCIPLES of all nations, BAPTIZING them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, TEACHING them to observe all that I have commanded you, and lo, I AM WITH YOU ALWAYS, to the close of the age."*

"How" we carry out this mission is what we call "ministry." This annual report is a review of "how" we are seeking to carry out that mission through our various means of ministry. Goals and strategies might change from year to year, but our mission remains the same! The available resources (people, talent, wealth, and opportunity) might change from time to time, but our mission isn't debatable – it is given to us by Christ Himself. We have abbreviated that mission statement here at Zion as *"Reaching Out With Jesus' Love."*

The "glass called Zion" sometimes has been of a different shape or size, but it is always filled with the waters of Jesus' saving love. As we gather for our own nourishment and strength, our mission reminds us that being the Church is not a one hour per week duty, but a daily "call."

Zion has always had a strong emphasis on worship, education, family life and servant ministries. Over the past decade we intentionally increased outreach efforts through campus and music. With the renovation and new construction of our physical facilities and the addition of Hilltop Preschool as a ministry of Zion, we have added more avenues and opportunities for that outreach.

As we consider the goals and strategies that seek to pour the saving love of Jesus into parched and thirsty lives, we might consider another image often used by Jesus...that of a farmer. Remember, we aren't in the business of marketing or sales, but simply one of "planting seeds." Some of those seeds might sprout quickly and others might take longer to appear, but as long as we are planting, feeding and caring for those seeds, we are being faithful to our call. We are more like family farmers than executives in a corporation like Monsanto. Our call is simply to go and "plant seeds." Our call is to nurture the living things in the Lord's garden. Our call is to keep the wells fresh and the weeds picked. We need to be practical, transparent and faithful in our stewardship,

remembering always that we are “the Church” — which is different than a club, corporation, or civic organization.

Zion is a wonderful collection of people, in a community and world full of God's children, all of whom are loved very much. Our mission of “going out” isn't about bringing people into Zion as much as it is about everyone at Zion reaching out to “make disciples!” We certainly would like Zion to grow, but our goal is souls for the kingdom! And if we ALL do what we are capable of, Zion WILL GROW! That is the promise of God's Holy Spirit, which is the breath of life and inspiration that will bring success about. We are all helpers and called to be active in that effort, but like Jesus' disciples, God works through and despite us! We are blessed to be a blessing. We are saved to be sent. We are gathered together to be scattered in our world. We are brought to life so that we might have an abundant life to share.

The inconveniences, dust, and dirt of renovation and construction have given way to a completed project that now has been dedicated to the glory of God (for Outreach)! With this phase of fundraising and our celebration of new space completed, it is important not to treat the building as a monument, but faithfully utilize it as the resource for ministry it was created to become. Along the way Pastor Wehrspann accepted God's call to serve in Minnesota, and Pete Prochnow accepted God's call to serve at Concordia University – Seward. Our “losses” are the others' gain. More theologically correct is that people who were once planting seeds in our community are now doing the same planting where God has sent them next. They keep pouring out of the same glass that God asks all of us to carry and to share! In the same way, Pam Sward (Hilltop), Kim Licavoli (Sunday School and Children's Ministry), and Helen Fierke (Music) have joined the staff and are helping with the planting. Each and every member of Zion is a member of our staff, for we are all called to be disciples — it is just that each of us does it in different ways.

We were blessed to participate this year in the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Dr. Paul Maier's ordination, and Pastor Louis Grother's 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary. What gifts they have been to this community and to Zion! Pastor Brelje continues his ministry (in retirement) visiting teaching, and assisting Hilltop's development. Pastor Couch continues to grow Campus Ministry. Michelle Devine (Building) has been awesome during the dust of construction. Diane Goetz and Sue Ann Coffinger (Office) and Monica Slesinski (Bookkeeper) round out the staff who are such a blessing to us all! How joyful it is to be surrounded by these who approach ministry with such faithfulness.

We have embarked on a Study seeking possible solutions for “staffing” (or providing appropriate resources) to continue growing ministry at Zion. The congregation has lifted up children's education, youth ministry, and the assimilation of new members as the areas this study should embrace fully. This ministry team has been meeting every week, and will soon share their recommendations with the Board of Directors and congregation.

In the following pages, you will read reviews of many of our ministries. Do so with the awareness that our expectation is that EVERY member of Zion will find at least one ministry area in which to serve. These reports will help you see what others are doing, and thank you for where you are serving. (And maybe even open our eyes to new ministries that are needed but not yet begun.) A ministry in transition is our Bare Bones Puppet Ministry. Janet Bremer and Lauren Huberty, who have worked so tirelessly to develop this ministry, have both needed to step away for now. So while we see what

happens next, we also want to thank them for so many and incredible hours of service in this wonderful ministry of outreach.

As Pastor, my first responsibilities are preaching, teaching, worship, and pastoral care. I plan weekly and special worship, and typically write liturgies and special formats for Advent and Lent. I teach two or three Bible classes weekly (membership, first communion, Bible studies, and whatever classes are needed and there is time for). I help with follow up on visitors, do most of the hospital visits, and am 'on call' for emergencies. I help with funerals, weddings, and do most counseling. I give whatever support to other staff members that is required or requested. I schedule worship leadership for the year (preaching, liturgy, etc.), write many of the newsletter articles (a great teaching and outreach tool), record a majority of sermons for WKZO, and develop the weekly themes for worship. Extra time this year has been taken up with building, staff changes, and financial realities. At the same time, it has been incredible to see the congregation continue to support ministry, and so many individuals give so much time in ministry. The ministry reports celebrate the vitality of Zion!

This summer I am introducing a new effort with High School students and we'll see how that pans out. An ongoing goal is to develop Zion Haus (and our incredible forest setting) into a "Renewal and Re-Creation Ministry" that will utilize retreats and study for all of us to grow in faith. Our Stephen Ministry and Prayer Ministries have been awesome support for the pastoral care of Zion. I would like to continue to find new ways to reach out to the community, using art, music, education and fellowship in the Blends area. Each week is different and yet each week is the same - - it is all about seeking to be faithful to my call of ministry, discipleship, and servant love.

With the current economic concerns and ripple effects within our congregation and community, there are related issues that can affect ministry at Zion. We must remember that God is always faithful to his promise to love, lead, and support. Fear can sometimes strangle ministry, and if we ever get into a "this is all we can afford" mentality, we can hurt rather than help ministry. We have to be responsible but we also have to allow God to lead us through some of the dark places where we are tempted to rely on our own decisions rather than the boldness of faith. God has never let this congregation down, and we only have to worry if we start living by fear rather than faith.

In other words, we must be wise but always people of faith – and faith comes ahead of our wisdom! During the Depression churches that grew did so because people trusted in God more than themselves, and that can be a gift today – if we are willing to let God be God and seek his guidance rather than allowing our wisdom and strength be the only source of ministry decisions and direction. If our strength is the power of our future, we will fail. If we allow God to use our weakness and trust in his gifts to change us, we will serve Him well.

Remember good intentions don't always lead to the best of results, but Christ's intentional love certainly brings miracles that never cease! When it comes to "God's work" we must remember that we are imperfect and weak and can be strong only with Christ's help. It is forgiven sinners who are the strength of the Church because we know that God loves us despite our weakness and uses us as we are willing to surrender to his love. When such a love is the motive of our response, God will bless our efforts. May His love fill our midst, bless our living, and guide wherever He wants to lead! Celebrate the glass that we have been given, and joyfully pour out Jesus' love into every life you meet!

Pastor Tim Seeber

## **CAMPUS MINISTRY:**

The goal of campus ministry is to help strengthen, encourage and motivate students in their faith, as well as empower them to live out their faith in their daily lives on campus. Solid Grounds also exists to offer activities and events to reach out to students on campus who are exploring faith issues or don't know about God.

On Friday, April 17th, 2009, Solid Grounds was awarded the Golden Bronco Award, given to selected individuals and organizations on campus that are recognized for excellence. Solid Grounds was selected as the recipient of the Golden Bronco Award for the most outstanding small RSO (Registered Student Organization) on campus. We were nominated by a staff member of another campus ministry at WMU.

Among the highlights of the 2008-09 academic year was the addition of two new outreach ministries to the students and campus community of WMU. Once a month, Solid Grounds hosted a Seminar Series and a Concert Series. Various WMU faculty, staff, and students were brought in to present on topics such as: Leadership Development, Teamwork within Group Settings, Resolving Conflict, Managing Stress, Career Choices, and Suicide Prevention. The Concert Series featured numerous WMU students who play in various music groups. Both the Seminar Series and Concert Series provided Solid Grounds with the chance to build relationships and contacts with both faculty and students who normally would not have participated in Sunday Worship or mid-week Bible Study.

Also, our Sunday Worship Service at 12 noon at Kanley Chapel saw an average of 30-40 students each week. Our music leadership group, which is comprised of 4-5 song leaders, a guitarist, flutist, drummer, and percussionist, has really developed a great sound and do a wonderful job leading us in music. We offered 2 major Servant Events this past year. In December, we participated in an Urban/Inner-city Servant Event trip to St. Louis and for our Spring Break Servant Event trip, we participated in a Habitat for Humanity project in Vero Beach, Florida. We took 5 international students on our Habitat project. The students are from South Korea, China, Japan, and the Ivory Coast. Both Servant Events were very inspiring trips. Intramural Sports continue to be very popular with the students at Solid Grounds. We had 2 Co-Ed Flag Football teams and a Volleyball Team in the winter. Intramural Sports are a great venue for students to invite friends to be a part of Solid Grounds.

In the Winter Semester, I had a chance to become involved in two new ministry opportunities on campus. Beginning in February, I was invited to attend the Fellowship of Christian Athletes chapter at WMU. FCA meets on Thursday night from 9-10PM. My role is probably best described as an "unofficial advisor and support role." There were anywhere from 25-40 WMU student athletes that attended the weekly meetings. The meetings featured guest speakers and/or Bible Study and small group discussions. There is a great diversity of student athletes that attend, ranging from football players, to softball, track and field, gymnastics and basketball. God has opened a door for me to serve and work with a whole new group of students on campus, in addition to the students currently involved at Solid Grounds. FCA meetings will resume in September. Meanwhile, during the months of June and July, there will be a Bible Study at Solid Grounds on Tuesday night for those athletes who will be in Kalamazoo over the summer, as well as, the students from Solid Grounds.

Also, in an effort to do ministry and reach out to more students on campus, I audited a class during the Winter Semester. The goal of taking this class was to have an opportunity to meet students in their environment. The class was a Middle Eastern Politics class that met on Monday and Wednesday afternoon. I had an opportunity to meet and get to know about 10 different students in the class. When the issue of faith and religion came up in class discussion, I had the opportunity to talk about Jesus and His love. My goal is to audit one class each semester, which will provide me with the chance to meet and talk with students on campus, most of whom may not ever attend a Bible Study or worship service. This is a chance to do ministry with them, in their setting.

Over Memorial Day Weekend, 4 students from Solid Grounds and I will be attending a National Campus Ministry Conference in St. Louis. During the conference, we will have ample opportunity to talk and plan for ministry ideas and goals for the 2009-10 academic year. We are hoping to continue to build on what is working and be open to new ways to continue to reach out to all students and faculty on campus.

One of the most meaningful ways that the members of Zion help support Solid Grounds is through providing meals on Sunday's after worship service. I am thankful to everyone who volunteered to help prepare and coordinate Sunday lunches and look forward to continuing this important part of campus ministry.

Pastor Mark Couch

#### **ASSISTANT PASTOR (part time)**

The following are my pastoral activities over the past year as part-time, assistant pastor of Zion Lutheran Church:

1. I make monthly, personal visits and bring Holy Communion to "shut-in" members of Zion and a few Lutheran, non-members. Presently I call on 26 "shut-ins."
2. From September through May I teach a weekly, hour-long Tuesday morning Bible class attended by 25-35 persons, including a few non-members.
3. Since the summer of 2006 I am the staff member relating to Stephen Ministry at Zion.
4. Tuesdays and Fridays are my regular, weekly day to be at Zion and to make calls on members including hospital calls.
5. In 2009 I became the staff member relating to Hilltop Preschool of Zion. As part of that responsibility I am serving on the Administrative Ministry team for Hilltop Preschool.
6. I serve as preacher and/or liturgist at funeral services as requested by family members or staff members of Zion.
7. Other occasional activities at Zion include preaching, service as liturgist, teaching Sunday adult classes, new member classes, and aiding Pastor Seeber and other staff members when asked, as I can.

My goal is to continue to fulfill the above responsibilities and to be of service to the congregation and staff as I am able.

Pastor Larry Brelje

## **PRESIDENT'S REPORT**

This past year was pivotal for Zion in several areas. Our new facility was completed and with this completion came a significant increase in costs for up to the next twenty-five years. The Board of Directors handled this responsibility in a prudent manner by reviewing those areas that could have cost reductions without a reduction in service to members or staff.

Through the Board of Personnel, benefits were reviewed and compared to other churches, businesses and other non-profits. With advice and help from The Concordia Plans administrator, Zion was able to comply with the wish of staff to keep these plans. A cost sharing program was implemented while providing outstanding coverage.

After discussing the best financial practices with Zion's financial leaders, looking at the history and timing of past audits and consulting with Michigan District Church Extension, a plan was implemented to have an independent outside firm perform a systems and management audit. Funds have been set aside on a regular basis throughout this past year to pay for the audit. The first phase of the audit will be completed over the summer.

A plan of annual reviews for all staff members was proposed and implemented. Annual reviews are required by the Michigan District to insure growth for both staff members and Zion.

Several Zion members, including members of the Board of Directors, gave generously of their time to call each Zion family to thank the family for support by attending services, working on ministry teams and giving financial support. This effort was warmly received by Zion members. An unexpected side benefit of this effort was discovering the Membership Directory was very out of date. A revised Directory of Members was completed and distributed to the Congregation.

After discovering only a week before the start of classes in the Autumn of 2008 that the construction in the main facility resulted in Zion's Hilltop Preschool being out of compliance with Michigan State fire codes, a Herculean effort was required by Board members, leaders of Hilltop, staff and congregation members to save the school. An incredible amount of work was done to be able to open the school only two weeks after the scheduled start date. The school has grown throughout 2009 in the number of students and has benefited Zion with the addition of new members.

Respectfully Submitted, Richard E. Rakow, President

## **ADULT FAITH AND LIFE MINISTRY**

This ministry is focused on adult education at Zion primarily for Sunday mornings and Wednesday evenings. The goal each year is to aid adults to grow in their personal faith through the study of historic, cultural, and contemporary issues. We try to do this through various means such as presentations, Bible studies, and video lessons.

Our goal this past year was a stronger emphasis on Bible study for adults, coordinating various activities with the Sunday school program especially the "Church Pals" program, and supporting our music ministry. Our greatest effort was promoting and presenting the first seminar by Dr Paul Maier entitled, "Jesus...Legend or Lord," which was held in March of 2009. The seminar was open to the public and meant to inaugurate our newly refurbished and expanded areas of the church building. We

were very pleased to see it attended by 177 people and the survey results were extremely positive. We expect to do this each year as long as Dr. Paul is willing.

Since we are into the last year of the LURO Campaign, we featured several Sundays devoted to tithing based on Dave Ramsey's Financial Peace.

Interspersed throughout the education year were various topics presented by a guest speaker, and members of the congregation. Chris and Dave Solberg, John and Candy Buetow, Dennis Dressler, Helen Fierke, Diane Gill, Jayne Mayer, and Linda Stieve spent much time and preparation ranging on topics from tithing, a study of 1<sup>st</sup> Timothy, the Christmas Cantata, Herod the Great, "Praying in Color," and Children's Literature for Parents and Grandparents. Our pastors Grother, Seeber, Breije and Couch presented Christ's Miracles, the Sacraments, Prayer, and the lessons for the day. We were pleased that attendance was up for most of the Sundays.

Our mission is to reach out with Jesus' love and we hope we do that with topics that interest and fulfill needs of our diverse Zion population. Our goals for 2009-2010 include the continued participation of Zion staff in Sunday morning and Wednesday evening classes. We expect to give support to Kim Licavoli and the Sunday School ministry. We will again utilize the talents of Dr. Paul Maier in a one day seminar titled, "St. Paul and the Spread of Christianity" for the Kalamazoo community on March 13, 2010.

Our ministry meets one time per month usually on a Tuesday or Thursday evening from 7:00 to 8:00 p.m. Current members are Dave Mayer, Judy Adlam, Troy Cosgrove, John Buetow, Linda Stieve, Phil Schaefer, and Nancy Dressler. Anyone interested in becoming actively involved with this ministry may speak with Dave Mayer at church or call him at home at 375-1241. Dave Mayer

### **ALTAR GUILD MINISTRY**

The Zion Altar Guild Ministry is an active organization of about 30 members whose purpose is to prepare the chancel (altar) area for worship and to serve in a supporting role to the pastoral staff. Each member commits to approximately 4 weekends of service each year. Working with a partner, our responsibilities include cleaning the altar area, filling the candles with oil, changing the paraments according to the season and preparing for Communion services and Baptism. Care of the Altar linens and the robes for the pastors and acolytes are also included in our responsibilities. The busiest time of the year for this ministry is Christmas and Easter with the additional services and helping to decorate the church.

There are usually 3 business meetings per year plus 1 day dedicated to a major cleaning. This has been an exciting year moving back into the sanctuary and returning to the normal communion services and routines. However, we are not completely there yet. We have made some changes in the set up and preparations. We are also considering implementing some of the original routines such as vessel carriers and Summer Sunday Communion at the Altar. There are no required skills to join the Altar Guild Ministry except a willingness to serve and to give back to Christ for all that he has done for us. Training is "on the job" with the help of an experienced Altar Ministry member.

Our future goals include additional member recruitment (families, women, men and young adults) and education.

Preparing the church for worship is an important responsibility. Worship is our response to the eternal God; it is what identifies the church as the church. Service in the Altar Ministry is a privilege of the highest order. Ours is a *great responsibility* but a *joyous and fulfilling* ministry. Please prayerfully consider joining us. Susan Ahrenholz

## **BRaille**

Lutheran Braille Ministry has been active at Zion for 43 years. Our mission statement has been and will continue to be, "Bringing Christ to Those in Darkness." The past 12 months has seen 1800 books sent to all parts of the world. We pray with the Lord's help our center will continue to function and add more willing workers.

We are a self supporting center, that is, we pay for all supplies ordered from the home office in California. Any donations or memorials received are greatly appreciated and have helped to make us self-supporting. Tomi Mursch

## **BUILDING TEAM MINISTRY**

Purpose of this Ministry: To serve as Congregation representative in working with the Architect and construction Manager during construction of the 2008 "Zion Lutheran Church Addition and Renovations" project.

Review of the past 12 months of Ministry: Construction work took place throughout the 2008 calendar year, plus some finish items were completed in the first two months of 2009. The project was completed on time and within the budgeted amount.

Congregation building team members visited the construction site almost daily to observe what was happening and to coordinate activities between contract workers and Zion staff members. Most personal contacts were with the Miller-Davis construction superintendent who scheduled construction work with respect to worship services, preschool classes, and ministry activities that took place throughout the week. On occasion work was halted or curtailed for weddings and funerals.

Team members attended construction meetings every Thursday. One week the meeting was with the Miller-Davis project manager and construction superintendent. The next week was a coordination/scheduling meeting with these two, a Design Plus representative, and sub-contractor managers.

Change orders were reviewed and given approval in accordance with justifications related to unforeseen conditions. In some instances there were additions or deletions requested by the church.

Monthly construction draws were reviewed and approved as submitted by Miller-Davis and Design Plus. These payment requests were also approved by church elected officers and forwarded to the Church Extension Fund office for payment on behalf of Zion.

Thanks and credit are due many volunteers who helped move pews and other furnishings, did major cleanings, occupied temporary offices, and generally put up with construction related dust and inconveniences.

Goals for the Future: Perform tasks, like landscaping, that were reserved for the congregation. Make facilities adjustments, like some lighting, that were not included in the construction contract.

Possible member support or involvement in this ministry: As originally envisioned, the building Team Ministry is completed. There are always opportunities for members to work on facilities improvement projects as sponsored by the Properties committee.

Orlin Loen

### **CHRISTIAN ART MINISTRY**

Christian Art Ministry seeks to present the congregation with various forms of visual art, lectures, and workshops to affirm, evaluate, and inspire the spirit. We've enjoyed artwork from Zion members Lin Griffin, Cindy Krill, Katie Cody, Sharon Wilson, Karen Wilson, Tracy Stewart, Jon Tomer, Alice Tomer, Judy Finnegan, Joanne Smith, and Linda Kanamueller. Other shows have included Eve Reid, Donna Rathert, Jean Flower and Zion's wooden German sculptures with descriptions by Pastor Grother. A summer quilt show will display work by Grace Stiegemeyer, Kathy Huston, Monica Slesinski, Bev Snow, Maxine Bushouse, Sharon Preuss, Judy Finnegan, and Nancy Dressler.

We continue to develop various ideas and invite members to join us. Please contact Joanne Smith, Judy Finnegan, Alice Tomer, or Pastor Seeber to get involved.

Alice Tomer

### **CHURCH PROPERTY**

This past year has been one with many physical changes and improvements with our building and facility. By the beginning of the summer of 2008, the construction project was in full swing and the congregation was once again worshipping in the sanctuary. The air-conditioning was the main thing that could not be installed in the sanctuary. The new AC unit would need to be placed on the roof of the new addition which would not be completed until early fall. We expect to have the air-conditioning fully operational by this summer. Not all of our building will be air-conditioned. The undercroft and the rooms and offices in the educational wing were deleted as a way of reducing the final cost of the project. The Blend's room is air-conditioned even though it's part of the educational wing.

God has blessed us with a beautiful new facility that should provide for our needs for years to come. We need to thank Design Plus for designing this addition and blending it in so well with our existing building. It's amazing how much the new addition looks like the existing building. They also did a great job of picking out the new lights, hardware, doors and all that magnificent woodwork. We need to thank Miller Davis for orchestrating this project and constantly monitoring the quality of work done by many sub-contractors. Several of us became familiar with people who worked for months on this project, but there was one who stood out as a staunch advocate for our church and that was Chuck Peterson, from Miller Davis. We can all thank God for sending Chuck here to supervise this project. Chuck worked on this project for over a year and did a fantastic job. Another person who went way above and beyond normal expectations would be Jack Abate from Miller Davis. He held bi-monthly meetings keeping the project on target, spent countless hours listening to our many questions and solving problems, and he's the one who keep this project financially on goal. Even with unexpected changes that had to be made to the preschool, costing thousands of dollars, Jack would not let this project exceed the 3.2 million dollar budget. Lastly, there

were all the contractors who spent hundreds of hours building our new facility. Many of them did such a nice job that you would have thought they were working on their own church or home. Countless numbers of people worked together to create this new home for all of us at Zion. We thank everyone who helped with the planning, those who selected the various items installed in the building, the people who figured out all the finances, and all of you who were inconvenienced for about one year. The project is done and ready for all of us to use and enjoy for many years. May God bless us as we use the facility to reach out to the people of Kalamazoo. Jim Mayer

### **CONFIRMATION MINISTRY**

On May 3rd, there were 7 members of our confirmation class that affirmed their faith. Those students are: Dustin Bremer, Ryan DeMorrow, Chris Hurry, Luke Johnston, Zach LaPointe, Adam Licavoli, and Anna Sward. They are a great group of students who have a lot to offer. I am grateful to Alice Tomer, Beth Freeby, Jacqui Morgan, and Erica Cook for helping lead small group discussion with the confirmands.

The program that we are using for confirmation is called "Faith Inkubators: Head to Heart." The goal of the program is to teach the faith, the Catechism, the Bible Stories, and what it means to be Lutheran through multi-media and power point presentations in a way that engages students so that they can learn the faith and apply what they have learned (Head) and connect it to their lives (Heart). Faith Inkubators was designed by various Lutheran educators and DCE's nearly 10 years ago. The Head to Heart series is a 3 year series: Living Faith, Living Scripture, and Living Lutheran. Living Faith deals with the 6 chief parts of the Catechism---Baptism, Lord's Supper, Apostle's Creed, Lord's Prayer, 10 Commandments. Living Faith was taught in 2007-08. This year, 2008-09, Living Scripture was the series, which consists of both Old and New Testament Stories, as well as teachings of Jesus. This upcoming year, 2009-10, we will be using Living Lutheran, which deals with the life of Martin Luther and what it means to be a Lutheran Christian. After next year, we will have completed the 3 year cycle and will start the cycle over again beginning with Living Faith in 2010-11. This is why we have moved to a 3 year program, with 6th graders joining the 7-8th graders in confirmation.

Faith Inkubators: Head to Heart involves both a teaching component and small group discussion. One of the pastors leads the teaching component, which lasts for 30-45 minutes. The last 30 minutes consists of small group discussion, where an adult, usually a parent, helps facilitate group discussion, where the confirmands talk about what they have just learned in the lesson and how to apply it to their lives. They also share their highs and lows with each other. This small group discussion has helped build community amongst the confirmands. Another goal of this series is to have parents and confirmands talk about faith issues and share those with each other. Faith Inkubators recently came out with a slogan: Faith 5, where they encourage each confirmand and family members to take 5 minutes each evening to share a Bible verse and talk about their highs and lows of the day and how that verse impacts their highs and lows.

Pastor Couch

### **DINNER TREE MINISTRY**

The purpose of this ministry is to provide support to families that have a new baby by offering dinners. The ministry members help to prepare 4-5 meals for the family during the first few weeks of bringing the new baby home. It is a nice opportunity for the new

parents to meet other families in the congregation. This ministry has also shown to be a great way to reach out to young families that are new members at Zion. Over the past year the ministry has provided meals for 5 families. Thirty-six volunteers are involved in this ministry. Volunteers are usually contacted 2-3 times a year to make a meal for a family.

The goal of the ministry is to continue to provide this service to our families. The second goal is to have more volunteers to make it easier to offer this service. Families that have had meals made for them are then asked in the future to join the ministry and make meals for others. Most families are more than willing to help, because they appreciated the meals themselves.

If you have had a new baby or know someone in the congregation that has a new baby, please let Sue Bickel or the church office know so that we can work on a dinner tree for this family. We are always looking for new volunteers. If someone is interested in joining the ministry, please can contact Sue Bickel at 353-8428. Sue Bickel

### **FINANCE MINISTRY**

The mission of the Finance Ministry is to educate and encourage the congregation in the stewardship of our financial resources and support all congregational ministries through the proper reception, disbursement, and management of collected funds.

The following has been accomplished over the past fiscal year ending May 31, 2009:

1. The selection of an external audit firm was coordinated by Finance
2. An internal review of the finances of Zion was performed
3. The Hilltop Preschool was integrated into the Zion accounting records
4. Developed several reports including monitoring of construction costs and a new financial report to the board.
5. A program is being developed to notify various ministries of individual contributions to the ministry
6. Monthly financial reviews have been established with Pastor Seeber for Zion activity and with Pam Sward for the Hilltop activity.

The following are goals for the coming year:

1. To follow-up on any comments from the Internal or External audits
2. To consolidate the Hilltop accounting within the Zion accounting records and to consolidate the checking accounts
3. To continue to monitor expenses to insure that Zion meets the budget approved by the congregation
4. To automate more of our reporting procedures to more efficiently communicate financial results to the appropriate ministries.

Participation by interested members of the congregation in the Finance Committee is encouraged. Respectfully submitted, Bruce Huston

### **FUNERAL LUNCHEONS**

The church office informs us of the family's wishes for a luncheon. We visit with the family, explain our services, make suggestions, and discuss the menu. Any purchases made are the family's responsibility and this will be discussed with the committee chairman.

Our committee organizes, plans, shops and calls for donations. We set-up, prepare, serve and clean-up afterward. We try to make it as pleasant and easy for the family as possible.

We hope to continue this service in a Christian loving manner, helping the families ease their concerns and grief. We welcome anyone's interest and support in becoming involved in the Funeral Luncheon Ministry. If you have questions, please call Leona Van Antwerp.  
Leona Van Antwerp

### **GLORIA DEI SINGERS AND BELL CHOIR**

The purpose of our ministry remains constant. The mission of both Gloria Dei Singers and the Bell Choir:

- . is to praise God in music,
- . add another level of understanding to the message of God's love for us,
- . provide a venue of service for members to serve their Lord
- . support the mission of Zion, by reaching out with Jesus love with our music.

Again God has blessed Zion with wonderful people who willingly practice and work and faithfully attend rehearsals so that we may do our very best to praise our Lord. In addition to singing four Sundays a month, Gloria Dei Singers again presented two cantatas this year, Morning Star and Who Is This King. These were presented with full orchestra. Additionally, Morning Star was presented with Kris Butler's wonderful accompaniment at Friendship Village. Bell Choir presented their first Concert in February. This was the first time that they presented many pieces of music at one time, and they were wonderful! Attendance was gratifying and the program was well received.

In the year 09-10 Gloria Dei Singers shall again present two cantatas, one during Advent and one on Passion Sunday. We look to have many volunteers who will want to participate in these moving presentations of praise. We will continue to sing a variety of both old and new music. Bell Choir is again planning a special Bell Concert in February. For both organizations we continue to invite additional members and plan to involve as many Zion members as possible. We are planning to invite other community Lutheran churches in a cooperative effort to present one or both of the cantatas, both at Zion and at the other participating churches. Again we would like to present them for Friendship Village and perhaps another senior residence. This year will involve activity with Hilltop preschool, and the opportunity to bring these little ones into our worship services. We are also looking to encourage Western students to present their recitals at Zion and to continue a relationship with the Western Brass Quintet.

How can members support or become involved? Just come!! Do you play an instrument? Do you sing – even if only a little? Do you have a son or daughter or a grandchild who sings or plays, (high school) and might enjoy being a part of this effort. Let us know! Bell Choir meets Tuesday evenings from 7:00 to 8:30 p.m. and Gloria Dei Singers meet on Thursday evenings from 7:30 to 8:30 p.m. – longer when we get close to cantata dates. There is no need to read music for either organization.

If you are interested in this ministry please contact Helen Fierke or any member of Gloria Dei Singers and Bell Choir.  
Helen Fierke

## **HEIFER PROJECT**

Mission – Through our donations, we help families here and abroad to be self-sufficient and to feel God's love for them. This school year our Sunday School collected money to purchase 34 flocks of chicks. Zion members have honored loved ones with donations also. Our goal is to continue to have Heifer as a Sunday School project.

Members can support this project by giving in honor of family and friends on various occasions, such as birthdays, Mother's/Father's Day, holidays, etc. Jayne Mayer

## **HELPING HANDS**

Our purpose is to share God's love and resources with families who are economically challenged by providing food and gifts during the Christmas season.

For the past several years we have helped eight families. Some families are members of Zion while others live in the greater Kalamazoo area. The Kalamazoo County Department of Human Services provides the names of families who are seeking holiday assistance. We help by purchasing gifts for the children and parent(s), along with providing food for their Christmas dinner. Additional food items are also purchased along with other items of necessity.

The program begins during the middle of November and concludes on the night when we deliver all the gifts, just before Christmas. We have a sponsor family at Zion for each family we are helping, and they contact them to find out what kinds of gifts and food items they would like. The gifts are listed on trees and Zion members select the tree(s) of their choice, purchase, and return them to church. The sponsor families wrap the gifts, purchase food and various items, and prepare for the delivery. We also give community families mangers and invite them to visit our Christmas Eve Service. This program has been very blessed by all the support and giving by you, the members of Zion. The organizers of this ministry are Jayne and Jim Mayer.

## **HIGH SCHOOL YOUTH MINISTRY**

With Pastor Noah's departure early in the year, the High School ministry was left again without staff assistance. Charles Fierke, with help from Renzo and Jil, as well as, Todd and Suzie worked diligently to keep this ministry moving forward. The fall retreat was held in Zion Haus (our former parsonage). Sunday classes were taught by a variety of adults and that plan will be resumed again in the fall. Different meeting spaces were necessitated by the building program, but a more permanent space for our youth is now underway. This spring has seen planning for their Servant Event, which has just been held in Rockford, Illinois, under the leadership of DCE, David Nelson, a son of Zion. This summer the Pastors will hold a once weekly "summer camp" for high school students, involving spiritual growth, fellowship, and servant projects.

This fall Rachel Licavoli and another WMU student will host an evening Bible study, and Rachel will help with the planning and coordination of Sunday evening activities. Charles Fierke will work with Pastor Seeber to coordinate various adults taking turns teaching, which was well received by the youth last year. Our goal is to build the group, increase activity, and involve the youth more in the worship and servant life of the congregation.

## **HILLTOP PRESCHOOL**

1. **Mission Statement:** Provide top-tier Christ-centered education and care that nurtures the mind, body, and spirit in a developmentally appropriate learning environment where each child is celebrated as a unique creation of God.
  
2. **Year in Review:**
  - September 2008: Built new playground and assembled new playground structure.
  - September 2008: Began Parent Roundtable events as support and education for Hilltop and Zion families.
  - November 2008: Provided 10 local families with Thanksgiving dinners for the annual Thankful Hearts Project.
  - December 2008: Passed State fire inspection.
  - April 2009: Director, Pam Sward, began a program to better connect with the local community by meeting with Parkwood-Upjohn principal, touring the facility, and sharing information about Hilltop Preschool.
  - May 2009: Received license renewal after inspection.
  - June 2009: Raised approximately \$14,500 to pay down the \$16,000 playground loans.
  
3. **Goals:**
  - Complete assimilation into Zion.
  - Evangelize unchurched Hilltop families.
  - Continued family education and support through Parent Roundtable and family activities.
  - Maintain our servant projects for local community.
  - Recruit and train Zion member volunteers
  - Increase awareness of preschool within congregation.
  - Continue to meet with local elementary school leaders.
  - Pay off the \$1500 playground loan by December 2009.
  
4. **Member Support/Involvement:**
  - Increase awareness and donations to the Sally E. Grushon Scholarship Fund in order to help more preschool families with tuition. (Checks payable to: The Kalamazoo Community Foundation and mailed to 151 S Rose St, Suite 332, Kalamazoo, MI 49007).
  - Increase financial support through donations for specific items.
  - Increase involvement of congregation through volunteer time and talent.
  
5. **Contact Person:** Pam Sward, Director and Lead Teacher.

Pam Sward

## **LADIES CANDLELIGHT TEA MINISTRY**

The purpose of this ministry is to reach out to our lady members and their friends at this festive time of year with an evening of relaxation and Christian fellowship. We enjoy a speaker who conveys a religious message to us.

We did not have a Ladies Candlelight Tea in 2008 due to the construction, but we will resume this ministry in 2009. In the past we have had a great turnout with hostesses, servers and attendees. This evening is of no charge to the guests, but as of 2007 we began collecting a freewill offering to help cover expenses. This is not a budget item for Zion.

Our goals will be to continue to have a great inspirational speaker, have different people serve as hostesses, and for members to invite more friends from outside of Zion to increase our outreach emphasis. Members can become involved by:

- Serving as hostesses
- Attending the tea
- Inviting friends from the community
- Suggesting speakers they have heard or volunteering to be the speaker
- Volunteer to play the piano
- Volunteer to sing.

The chair people of this event are Jayne Mayer, Linda Mayer and Katie Monck.

Jayne Mayer

### **LIBRARY MINISTRY**

The purpose of the library ministry is to provide up-to-date materials for the information and pleasure of the congregation. Our budget was spent for books for all members and related materials for the children's bags for the pews. Due to the location and the fact that the library is never closed when the church is open there is a lot of activity for a small library. We have 19 bags for the pews that may be carried into the sanctuary at any service and those are not checked out and in. Topics of interest in Bible study classes and special times in the liturgical year are featured on the table in front of the desk and in the contents of the bags for the pews.

My main goal is to have the library once gain accessible to the members of the congregation. Despite the fact most of the church is now up and going our library light problem still needs to be addressed. Due to the windows dominating one wall, we lack one of our stacks. Some shelving was restored and updated to fit under the windows. A beautiful new cart for the 'bags for the pews' was created by Dick Erdmann. He is also creating wood magazine holders and DVD holders. Goals for the future are to supplement the studies carried on week to week in the classes and to provide timely materials for the congregation's use.

Members may become involved by facilitating the use of the bags for the pews to help children sit quietly through a service. Promoting memorials to Zion's library is a great help. Gift subscriptions to children's magazines are welcome. Help changing the contents for the bags for the pews periodically would be welcome. Staffing the library on Saturday services would be of help. As we now have a door on the library and it is intended to open whenever the church is open, I need some help to make sure the door is open and the lights are on whenever services are held. Anyone interested in supporting or becoming involved may contact me on Sunday mornings or Thursday evenings at the church or anytime at my home phone 685.8404. Pat Kasdorf

### **LOAVES AND FISHES**

The purpose of this ministry is to collect food and take it to Trinity Lutheran Church weekly where they have a center for distribution to the needy. During the past twelve months the food has been delivered on a regular basis in spite of minor problems relating to the building program. The goal for the future is to continue to aid the economically challenged people in the community through regular food distributions from Zion to Trinity Lutheran Church. Zion's members can support this ministry through regular contributions of food as we are able. Freeman Russell

### **LOOKING UP – REACHING OUT MINISTRY**

Just three years ago we began to plan the LURO Campaign; and by the end of November of this year, it will have reached its conclusion. The beautiful changes in our building were sure worth the wait.

The Cornerstone Event in February and Dedication Sunday in March were memorable celebrations of Zion's past and the improvements we have chosen to leave to her future. The easy flow of many people into and out of the Easter Breakfast and the two large Easter Services seemed to be exactly what the planners had envisioned. Innumerable people have contributed to the success of the campaign, and we thank God for all of you.

This is the year that we will begin to pay off our \$1.8M loan from the Church Extension Fund. This will require everyone's continued support of this very special project. We know that our present congregation will respond to Zion's needs, as did the many congregations of the past upon whose shoulders we stand. Thanks again for your generosity and sustained support. As always, we remember: By His Grace.

John Cooley

### **LUTHERAN WORLD RELIEF MINISTRY**

Our mission statement is... "Empowered by God's unconditional love, we envision a world in which each person and every generation lives in justice, dignity, and peace." In the Bible it is written that what God gave us is for all. How beautiful it would be if everyone understood this. The purpose for Zion is to become involved in helping people around the world to have school supplies and health supplies.

Due to the construction and therefore no place to collect contributions, we did not participate in Lutheran World Relief projects in 2008. Each year Zion members have been very generous in donating the requested items for the school and health kits. We begin to collect for the school kits in July when the school ads begin, so it is a convenient financial time to be involved. We collect in the spring for the health kits.

Our goal is to continue this great mission, as it is the one of missions that is very visible to ALL Zion members and children can actively participate. It is not necessary to increase our donations, as our members are always very generous.

Members can become involved by:

- Continuing to donate the requested items
- Contribute financially for postage to send items, if we lose the truck pick-up at St. Michael
- Help with packaging up the items collected
- Sewing the bags for the school kits.

Jayne Mayer, Chairperson

### **LUTHERAN WORLD RELIEF SEWING AND KNITTING**

The quilt and layette project meets every 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesday of the month from 8am to 12 noon. In 2008 we completed and shipped 130 layettes and 130 quilts at our October In-Gathering. A quilt is very special. It brings warmth on a cold night, shelter from the sun, becomes a bed, is a room divider or a back pack and sometimes a home. Layettes are gifts of welcome to mothers and newborns at hospitals, refugee camps and villages all around the world. Many of our fabrics are donated. Our knitters

have generously provided us with lovely sweaters. We encourage anyone to visit us, observe our work and join us. We welcome donations, as well as, willing hands and hearts. Our goal is to continue doing the Lord's work by helping and meeting the needs of many unfortunate people in the world. Leona Van Antwerp

### **MEN'S SATURDAY FELLOWSHIP**

Saturday mornings at 8am is an opportunity for men of Zion to meet for spiritual growth and mutual support. This is a great way to start the weekend, and as we only meet for an hour, you can participate and still have your entire Saturday to do whatever you need to do! Pastor Seeber meets with this group each week, September through May, and it is a good opportunity in a more relaxed atmosphere to grow in faith and get better acquainted with each other. We began the year using a book about "vocation" as a way to explore our calling as Christian men, fathers, husbands, workers, friends, and members of a congregation. This book assisted in a conversation about our responsibilities and where we find the strength and guidance for living out our daily faith. We finished our year by using the Sunday Epistle lessons for guidance in daily living. We would like to see all of our men, of all ages, take advantage of this time of renewal, growth, and mutual support. See you in the fall! Pastor Seeber

### **MIDDLE SCHOOL YOUTH MINISTRY**

Middle School Youth Group is being led by Ellie Hayward, with the help of her husband George. The Middle School Youth meet on the first Sunday of each month, immediately after the late service. They participate in a variety of activities each month. The goal of middle school youth group is to help the youth grow in their faith and build Christian community. The hope and aim is to provide a balance of fellowship activities, whether it is a bowling night, a night at Jungle Joe's, a pool party at one of the member's home, as well as, local servant event opportunities, which help the youth grow in their faith and learn the value of serving others.

The Middle School Youth meet once a week for confirmation, as well as, the various fellowship and servant events. Ellie is working with the Middle School Youth to continue to provide activities and events and ministry opportunities that are meaningful and important to the youth and that will help them build Christian community, and are events that will inspire them to invite friends to join them. One of the big events each year for the Middle School Youth is Youth Quake, which is the Michigan District Middle School Youth Gathering, which occurs in early January of each year. This past January, we were not able to attend due to one of the major snow storms that hit the area. Weather permitting, we look forward to returning to Lansing in January 2010 for the next Youth Quake. Pastor Mark Couch

### **OFFICE VOLUNTEERS**

The definition of a volunteer is someone who chooses freely to do something – to offer or give of one's own free will. Zion is blessed with many members who enjoy volunteering. Without our volunteers who help with various jobs in the office, the secretaries would have a lot of extra work. One of our volunteers spends at least one half a day a week collating bulletins, setting up for coffee fellowship, and getting children's bulletins ready. Other office volunteers help each month with collating the Harbinger and getting it ready for mailing. At various time volunteers help answer the phone. If you would like to volunteer in the office, please call Diane. What a blessing it is to have such faithful volunteers! Diane Goetz

## **PERSONNEL**

Benefits: During the year, the entire benefits program was evaluated and benchmarked against other competing plans. After review and cost comparison, the Concordia C plan was selected which still provides comparable benefits to those received by other Lutheran churches as well as implements a cost sharing program in which the employee participates in paying more of the monthly premium. Both the Personnel Board and Board of Directors felt this was a critical change in order to manage rising costs.

Performance Reviews: For the first time in many years, performance reviews were conducted with each of the full time staff members. The format was conducted so that the individual met with members of the Board of Personnel and reviewed both documentation provided by Pastor Seeber as well as gave them an opportunity to share their personal insight as to how their job was going and any support they required. The performance management process will be conducted annually and will be enhanced/modified as needed to provide feedback to the staff. This year's process was more of a dialogue than constructive feedback as this was new for everyone.

Salary Review: Salaries were again reviewed in comparison to the down economic climate. Based on available finances and a desire to avoid a budget deficit, most of the staff's salaries will be held flat. The exceptions were a couple of the administrative support roles, who as a percentage, were more significantly impacted with the cost sharing on the benefit changes.

Director of Music: A job description for a Director of Music position was created, budgeted for and ultimately Helen Fierke was offered the part time position. Helen brings a wealth of knowledge to the position and adds to her current responsibilities of directing the choir and bell choir.

New Personnel Board Members: During the year, several new members were confirmed to the Personnel Board. Dick Erdmann, Candi Buetow and John Boettcher have been wonderful additions to the Board. A special thanks goes to Lois Heuchert for filling in as Acting VP when my travel schedule required that I was out of town. In addition to providing excellent leadership and organizational skills, Lois also filled in for many of the Board of Directors meetings. Brent Butler

## **PRAYER MINISTRY**

Purpose of this Ministry: To deepen personal and corporate prayer life of the members of the congregation, to highlight the importance of prayer and ways to pray and to reach out to others with Jesus love by praying for the needs and joys of our Zion family and beyond.

In the last 12 months: We have held another 25 hour prayer vigil, All Saint's weekend in November with the theme "For All the Saints" featuring eight saints to contemplate. Around 50 people participated. Pastor Seeber led a Sunday morning Bible class on prayer in March. Zionprayers have expanded from 30 to around 50. Thirty are e-mailed prayer requests several times a month and 20 are being mailed to people without computers. These prayer warriors cover our joys, sorrows, and needs in prayer throughout the week. Monthly prayer services were held five times. These were a half hour quiet time in the sanctuary with a theme and resources; however, they were disbanded for lack of attendance. A combined project with the Sunday School this year was the making of bracelets for learning the Lord's prayer. A prayer shawl ministry

was begun this year. We have around fifteen knitters and crocheters who are crafting and praying over shawls for those in need. They are blessed in the 5th Sunday healing services and distributed with cards. We keep them in the robing room at the back of the sanctuary. They may be distributed by pastors, Stephen ministers or members. Around ten have been distributed so far.

Future Prayer Ministry Activities: We hope to hold another prayer vigil at some time during the year, and to infuse prayer studies, activities, and ideas throughout the year in small group studies and/or services. We would like to keep expanding our e-mail ministry and prayer shawl ministry, and involve the Sunday School children in our ministry. We would like to plan some special events such as making prayer blankets for children, teacher's prayer breakfast, prayer walks, labyrinth activities, prayer garden or nature walks, book studies, etc. All ideas are welcome! All members are encouraged to get involved in some way in this ministry. It is a blessing to watch this ministry evolve through the leading of the Holy Spirit. Contact Kathleen Jordan 349-2534 or [kzoojord@yahoo.com](mailto:kzoojord@yahoo.com) with ideas and offers to help. Kathleen Jordan

### **PUPPET MINISTRY**

The puppet ministry strives to use a variety of new and innovative messengers to reach out with Jesus' love in our community. In addition, we provide an outreach ministry opportunity for the children in Grades 3, 4 and 5 through the production of a quality puppet show.

The puppet ministry worked with 4 new and 5 returning puppeteers this season. To help recruit new puppeteers, the 2007-08 team performed during church in September. The ministry team put together its 4<sup>th</sup> original, thirty minute puppet show; practicing an hour and 15 minutes Wednesday evenings September through January. We 'took the show on the road' in February performing at the following locations: CHUM Co-op Preschool, Bickford Cottage Assisted Living, Zion Sunday school, Wyndham Assisted Living, Park Village Pines Assisted Living, and Zion 10:30 service.

With the assistance of the Sunday School Ministry, the puppeteers were able to hand out nearly 100 key chain crosses to the residents at the assisted living facilities we visited. Our child audiences were given the opportunity to create their own finger puppets to take home after the show.

The primary goal of the puppet ministry is to recruit new leadership for the 2009-10 performance season. The puppet supply room is well stocked with puppets, scripts and music; there are training opportunities available this summer. In addition, one of the challenges facing the puppet ministry is the loss of our 6<sup>th</sup> grade puppeteers whose years of training are the foundation upon which the show is built.

Prayerfully consider the opportunity to work with Zion's youth through the unique gift of puppetry. The puppet ministry practices are every Wednesday evening from 6:15 to 7:30 PM beginning in September. We begin performing in the community in January/early February and usually conclude performances in March. The puppet ministry is open to all children in Grades 3 through 5, individuals of high school age, and adults. Unable to commit to the whole season, we can use help creating props, setting up prior to practice, setting up at each performance venue and running the sound equipment. If you are interested, please call Lauren Huberty at 324-1739.

Lauren Huberty

## **STEPHEN MINISTRY**

Our mission is to provide, together with our pastors, distinctively Christian one-on-one care giving for those in a crisis situation or those experiencing the stress of daily living. Stephen Ministry trains, equips, supports and supervises lay members to provide extended Christian care to persons who are grieving, hospitalized, divorcing, in a crisis, lonely, bereaved, lost their job, retired, or struggling with faith issues. Stephen Ministry training can nourish your spiritual life, help you face daily living challenges, and enhance your relationships at home, in the workplace, and the community. We listen, explore feelings, pray, share Christ's love, maintain confidentiality, attend to the care giving process, and leave the results (healing) to God.

The following activities were completed during the past year:

- Continued a care giving personal contact program for homebound members.
- Provided Christ centered care giving for seventeen persons on a weekly basis or as frequently as needed by the care giving situation.
- Initiated sending grieving books to ten persons at specific times, as appropriate.

Goals for the coming year include:

- Schedule continuing education sessions for active Stephen Ministers to further advance caring skills and invite congregation members to applicable sessions, possibly in conjunction with St. Michael Lutheran Church.
- Actively recruit care receivers from the congregation.
- Expand programs for the homebound and institutionalized via personal telephone contacts and care notes.
- Train two Stephen Ministers as Leaders to help perpetuate the ministry.

Zion members can support Stephen Ministry as follows:

- Pray for our Stephen Ministers and Leaders as they provide Christian care to others.
- Pray for all who are receiving confidential care through Stephen Ministry.
- Refer persons in crisis situations to Stephen leaders or Pastors.
- Openly receive Stephen Ministry care giving when going through a crisis.
- Consider taking the training class and serving as a Stephen Minister.

If you would like for a Stephen Minister to walk with you in your life, please contact the church office or any of the following Stephen Leaders: Pastor Larry Brelje, Sue Curtiss, Jill Larson or Barb Nutsch. Barb Nutsch

## **SUMMER BEAUTIFICATION**

This ministry involves caring for the grounds around the church, parsonage, garage and shed. Cleaning leaves off the roofs and out of the gutters, cutting trees, trimming shrubs, raking the lawn, cleaning the parking lot and general outdoor maintenance. The work is sometimes physical, but you can work at your own pace. Many of our helpers are in their seventies and even eighties. We work on various Wednesday morning from 8:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. Schedules are available from Jim Mayer (375-8342) and dates are always listed in both the Harbinger and the bulletin.

If you would like to join this ministry, please contact Jim or just show up. If your name is on his list and the weather requires us to cancel, you will be called early that morning. Equipment is available for your use, and it's a good idea to bring along a pair of work gloves. We take a break around 10:00 for refreshments and devotions. Jim Mayer

## **SUNDAY SCHOOL MINISTRY- PRESCHOOL THROUGH 5<sup>TH</sup> GRADE**

The purpose of this ministry is to provide a Bible based education once a week for an hour during the school year. The Sunday School hour provides a time for fellowship and Christian education through small and large group activities, singing and playing of instruments, group memorization, and mission outreach opportunities.

Classes consisted of two teachers and parent helpers for each grade level. The teaching staff used the "Growing In Christ" curriculum out of Concordia Publishing and taught three forty-five minute lessons a month. On the first Sunday of every month, children and parents gathered for a Family Group Activity, which centered on our Outreach Programs adopted for the year. Our mission outreach projects included the Heifer Project, collections for the Food Pantry, Recycled Crayons for the Boys and Girls Club of Kalamazoo, a visit to Park Place Nursing Home, letters to our home bound, and key chain crosses for nursing residents delivered through Puppet Ministries.

The Sunday School children participated in worship. The December Christmas Pageant had 63 children in attendance. In March, the children shared the Lord's Prayer with the congregation by leading the Prayer and in April, children passed out palms for the Palm Sunday Service. A variety of tools were used to communicate with the Church family on a weekly and monthly basis. These communications were delivered through the bulletin, Harbinger, email, weekly mailings of missed lessons, and end of the year surveys. Zion's members involved themselves in the Sunday School in a variety of ways throughout the year. Volunteers could be seen helping with Rally Day activities, Christmas Pageant, Family Group Activity Days, the Easter Egg Hunt, implementation of our outreach projects, and weekly treats for Fellowship time.

The PALS program (Partnering Adults and Little Ones) was initiated in September. Forty-nine individuals/couples paired with children preschool - 8<sup>th</sup> grade for activities to build intergenerational relationships. The program was a huge success and will be implemented again in the fall.

Looking ahead to a new year, Zion should focus on the following three goals: provide opportunities to build intergenerational relationships, provide more opportunities for children to participate in worship, and concentrate on improving attendance. The average attendance was at 54% this year. Zion's members can help support the Sunday School by being a part of the creative process in implementing the three goals for the coming year, embracing new ideas that are "outside of the box" and volunteering their time and talents to "Train up a child in the way he should go, so that when he is old he will not depart from it." Proverbs 22:6

Respectfully Submitted by Kimberly Licavoli

## **ZION HOME CHARITIES**

Through the generosity of members of Zion, Pastor Seeber has available funds to assist our people in times of financial crisis. People of Zion donated approximately \$2300 this year to Zion Home Charities. Over the course of the past 12 months, disbursements helped our families in the following ways: \$900 in mortgage assistance, \$300 for prescriptions, \$250 for utilities, and \$100 for food. In addition, \$400 was given to the Deacons Conference to help four local families with rent and utility subsidies. This fund is a special way to help brothers and sisters in this congregation and community, during times of crisis and need. Thank you for your generous support of this ministry, and please don't hesitate to contact Pastor Seeber if you have emergency needs that we can help with. Such help is always kept in the strictest of confidence. Pastor Seeber

## Zion Lutheran Endowment 2008 Annual Report

Mission Statement: In response to God's love, Zion Lutheran Church is called to responsible stewardship to develop this Endowment and utilize this resource to support local and international outreach ministries, church worker and music scholarships, major building maintenance, church music concerts and recitals, and those ministries which lack alternative funding.

At December 31, 2008, Zion's Endowment Fund has decreased in value by over \$265,000 (27%) due to the October 2008 market revaluation to \$753,200 (includes the Helm Music Endowment of \$67,900).

- Our cumulative return on investments since 1990 from LVM Capital Management is 5.1%.
- An annual first fruits grant of \$20,000 has been pledged over five years (2007-2011) to the LURO capital campaign as our annual 1/3 budget for Property Ministry major projects.
- Endowment principal can only be spent on an "emergency basis" and has **not** been disbursed to date.
- Endowment budgeted 6% (\$59,000) of our investments for the 2008/09 fiscal year on May 31, 2008 prior to the October 2008 Stock Market decline. To protect invested principal, next year's budget will be significantly reduced and based on the May 31, 2009 market evaluation.
- Endowment has disbursed over \$873,000 since 1975 as follows:

Calendar Year	Total Paid	Zion Ministries	Scholarships	Outreach Ministries	Property Ministry	Music Ministry
1975-2005	\$708,116	\$312,255	\$161,898	\$133,704	\$79,449	\$20,810
	100.0%	44.1%	22.9%	18.9%	11.2%	2.9%
2006	45,365	17,944	-0-	21,140	-0-	6,281
2007	62,698	17,331	2,500	26,200	11,200	5,467
2008	57,043	5,021	4,946	14,274	30,000	2,802
<b>Totals</b>	<b>\$873,222</b>	<b>\$352,551</b>	<b>\$169,344</b>	<b>\$195,318</b>	<b>\$120,649</b>	<b>\$35,360</b>
	100.0%	40.4%	19.4%	22.4%	13.8%	4.0%

Individual 2008 Grant and Scholarship disbursements include the following:

Grants/Scholarships	Cat	Payments	Balance
Ascension Day Svcs/50/70 Ordinations	MZ	\$ 3,000	\$ -0-
David Nelson Scholarship	S	2,500	-0-
Pastor Noah Wehrspann Scholarship	S	2,446	-0-
Sunday School Coordinator (Part time)	Z	2,000	-0-
Capital Campaign 10% First Fruits Campaign Pledge	P	30,000	9,700
Friends of Jesus/Hilltop Young Fives Program	O	7,821	16,097
Adult Servant Event Transportation/Camp Restore	O	2,756	1,460
Solid Grounds Coffee Ministry/Forums & Recitals	O	3,050	2,200
Music Summer Camp (Helm)	M	870	219
Capital Campaign Celebration Events	Z	865	1,268
Puppet Outreach Ministry	O	647	481
Financial Peace Video Program	Z	570	154
LWT Equipment/Maintenance	Z	518	73
Staff Pastor Salary & Benefits	Z	-0-	14,500
Approved Grants (7) not yet disbursed	ZS OM	-0-	11,102
<b>2008 Grant Payments and Balances</b>		<b>\$57,043</b>	<b>\$57,254</b>

Accomplishments for the year include the following:

- Approved our 2007/08 grant budget in six months (11 Grants).
- Updated Rules & Regulations to reflect current practices (matching grants).
- Received a significant member bequest - the first one in four years.
- Completed an audit of 2006-2008 grant payments with no exceptions.
- Documented grant and scholarship disbursement procedures for all future payments.

Endowment's goals for 2009-2011 include the following:

- Optimize our investment strategy and increase our return with LVM Capital Management with a "Covered Call" Option.
- Complete Zion Lutheran Founders Society Mission Statement and Objectives.
- Offer estate and financial planning seminars.

Endowment grants can be made for member church worker and music scholarships; mission trips; challenge or matching grants, new ministry start-up funding, mission congregation support, major building maintenance, church music concerts and recitals. Applications for grants, music and church worker scholarships can be obtained from the church office. Zion's Endowment can not be used for loans or items included in the congregation's operating budget. Invested principal must be preserved; only earned interest, dividends, and investment appreciation can be disbursed. Members are encouraged to include the Zion Lutheran Endowment in their wills, estate bequests or memorials.

Endowment Ministry meets quarterly on the second Monday of January, April, July and October to review grant/scholarship applications, fund investment strategy by LVM Capital Management, and plan public relations initiatives. If you have any questions about Zion's Endowment Funds, please contact any Endowment Ministry member (i.e., Troy Cosgrove, Dave Dorman, Marti Nuyen, Rollie Preuss, Dave Solberg, Linda Stieve) or Pastor Seeber.

Rollie Preuss

## Financial Results for 2009 and Budget

	<u>2009 Budget</u>	<u>2009 Actual</u>	<u>2010 Budget</u>
<b>INCOME BUDGET (Zion and Hilltop):</b>			
Member Giving	\$ 704,500	\$ 657,258	\$ 690,000
Hilltop Tuition	<u>\$ 70,400</u>	<u>\$ 81,939</u>	<u>\$ 88,000</u>
<b>Total Income:</b>	<u><u>\$ 774,900</u></u>	<u><u>\$ 739,197</u></u>	<u><u>\$ 778,000</u></u>
<b>EXPENSES</b>			
STAFF SUPPORT (Salaries, Benefits, etc)	\$ 402,487	\$ 335,124	\$ 286,431
OFFICE OPERATIONS	\$ 23,500	\$ 24,643	\$ 26,450
HILLTOP OPERATION	\$ 109,562	\$ 98,328	\$ 113,800
CHURCH PROPERTY	\$ 63,394	\$ 68,306	\$ 77,400
CHURCH EXTENSION LOANS	\$ 86,102	\$ 66,281	\$ 110,000
EDUCATION MINISTRIES	\$ 15,450	\$ 12,318	\$ 18,570
EVANGEL/MISSION	\$ 800	\$ 240	\$ 650
PUBLIC RELATION MINISTRY	\$ 2,200	\$ 1,053	\$ 2,400
WORSHIP	\$ 2,700	\$ 2,316	\$ 3,370
SOCIAL MINISTRY	\$ 3,650	\$ 4,081	\$ 5,900
MUSIC MINISTRY	\$ 26,425	\$ 29,886	\$ 45,529
FINANCE MINISTRY	\$ 242	\$ 27,500	\$ 15,300
ZION HAUS MINISTRY	\$ 7,100	\$ 5,965	\$ 3,200
MISSION SUPPORT	<u>\$ 70,450</u>	<u>\$ 65,726</u>	<u>\$ 69,000</u>
Total Expense:	<u><u>\$ 814,062</u></u>	<u><u>\$ 741,767</u></u>	<u><u>\$ 778,000</u></u>
INCOME LESS EXPENSES (Zion and Hilltop):	<u><u>\$ (39,162)</u></u>	<u><u>\$ (2,570)</u></u>	<u><u>\$ -</u></u>

### SOLID GROUNDS

INCOME	\$ 98,600	\$ 96,660	\$ 93,567
EXPENSES	<u>\$ 98,600</u>	<u>\$ 93,864</u>	<u>\$ 93,567</u>
INCOME LESS EXPENSES (Solid Grounds):	<u><u>\$ -</u></u>	<u><u>\$ 2,796</u></u>	<u><u>\$ -</u></u>

## Overall

<b>Zion Results</b>	<u><u>\$ (39,162)</u></u>	<u><u>\$ 226</u></u>	<u><u>\$ -</u></u>
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### Zion's Debt:

Construction and Roof Loan	\$1,854,000
Playground Equipment	<u>\$ 8,000</u>
Total Debt	<u><u>\$1,862,000</u></u>

Bruce Huston

## ZION BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2009-2010

President Elect: Dennis Dressler

President: John Buetow

Past President: Richard Rakow

Vice President of Property: Jim Mayer

Vice President of Personnel: Chris Sitkins

Vice President of Finance: Bruce Huston

Directors: Paul Fierke, Laurel Miner, Phil Schaefer, Nick Sward, Phil Torrence,  
Rick Wordell

### MINISTRY TEAMS AT ZION

Our expectation is that every member of Zion will be involved in a ministry. Any time 2 or 3 members wish to begin a ministry, they form a ministry team to carry out that ministry. Some are new. Some have been in existence for decades. Here is a listing of the active ministry teams at Zion. (Please accept our apologies for any ministry that may have been inadvertently omitted!)

Acolytes	Faith and Life	Mid-Week Dinners
Altar Guild	Finance	Office Volunteers
Art Ministry	Fix It Group	Parish Health
Attendance Records	Friends of Jesus	Personnel
Baptism	Funeral Luncheons	Pictorial Directory
Bare Bones Puppet	Gloria Dei Singers	Pig Roast
Bell Choir	Greeters	Prayer Ministry
Blood Drive	Guest Follow-up	Radio Ministry
Birthday Greetings	Harbinger Volunteers	Servant Events
Braille Workers	Heifer Project	Small Group Bible Study
Building Maintenance	Helping Hands	Sound System
Building Team	Historian	State Hospital Ministry
Calligraphy	Instrumentalists	Stephen Ministry
Campus Ministry	Kitchen Clean-Up	Summer Beautification
Cantors/Vocalists	Ladies Candlelight Tea	Summer Camps
Church Decorations	Lawn Maintenance	Sunday School Teachers
Church Property	Lay Ministry	Symbol in Window
Coffee Fellowship	Lectors	Ushers
Confirmation Teachers	Library	Video Library
Counters	Loaves & Fishes	World Relief Sewing
Dinner Tree	Lutheran World Relief	Worship Assistants
Easter Breakfast	Mary Martha	Zion Golf Outing
Endowment Fund	Memorials	

A sampling of available Community Ministries our members are involved in are: Deacons Conference, Ministry with Community, Habitat for Humanity, Mentors, 1<sup>st</sup> Presbyterian Health Clinic, Gospel Mission, Loaves and Fishes Hospital Visitors/Volunteers, Tutoring

## CORE MINISTRIES

*This year we want you to understand how our "core" ministries fit together. This can also serve as a resource to share with neighbors or friends who have no church home. And if you have comments or suggestions concerning any of our ministries, please don't hesitate to share those thoughts or offer your time, talent or energy as part of our family.*

**Adult Faith and Life.** We reject the notion that worship is for adults and education is for kids. Both are for all! We have many opportunities for adults to grow in their faith, and find ways to more comfortably integrate their lives as Christians into daily living. Check the calendar as we have a variety of classes taught by pastors, members of Zion, Stephen Ministers and community resource people. Classes are available on Sundays and various days/times during the week.

**Baptism.** Call the church office to schedule a Baptism. One of the pastors will meet with you and help support you as we celebrate that new life in Christ. A baptismal banner and baptismal candle are the congregation's gift to help remind you of God's special gift of grace.

**Birth.** When an infant and mom come home from the hospital, other couples bring meals to help in those first few days. This is an opportunity for support and helping our families to get to know each other. Please call the church office, when you celebrate the birth of a child!

**Campus Ministry.** Pastor Couch is called to serve the Western Michigan University and Kalamazoo College campus communities in a partnership with the Michigan District. Solid Grounds is the location for this ministry on the campus of WMU. Students from that ministry are very involved in the life of Zion and we benefit from their life with us.

**Confirmation Ministry.** Pastors and teachers lead 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> graders through a two year program on Wednesday evenings from September through May. During this time we review the purpose and plan of the Bible, and the basics of our Christian faith (using Luther's Small Catechism as a guide, but set in a relevant and practical format for today's young people). The first Sunday in May is when our 8<sup>th</sup> graders "affirm their baptismal faith" and are "confirmed" in that faith.

**Counseling.** Our pastors are available to support and be a sounding board and faith resource during difficult times of life. We do a lot of counseling, but when we feel that long term needs would be better met by a full time professional we will help in that referral. Our Stephan Ministers are also an important part of this ministry of support.

**First Communion.** Pastors and parents lead our 6<sup>th</sup> graders, on Sunday mornings in the fall, through our beliefs and practices regarding Holy Communion. First Communion is celebrated the first Sunday in November.

**Hilltop Preschool.** Zion is in partnership with the preschool, which accepts children ages 3-5 with a day long program. Call the church office for details.

**Funerals.** At the time of death, we have the opportunity to celebrate what Baptism began. Pastors work with the family to plan a funeral or memorial service. Women of the congregation provide a fellowship meal after the service as a ministry of support. Stephen Ministers and pastors are available to support the family in the time of transition that follows loss.

**High School Ministry.** Our high school students meet on Sunday mornings for Bible study and discussion that relates to their daily lives. They meet twice a month on Sunday evenings for fellowship and servant ministry. Each summer they have an opportunity for

a major servant trip, or youth gathering. Our high school students are encouraged to be involved in ministry wherever they are comfortable serving.

**Homebound and Nursing Homes.** Pastor Brelje provides ministry to those who are unable to join us for worship and fellowship at Zion. Stephen and other lay ministers are also available to help in this ministry of encouragement, support, and carrying Holy Communion to those that health prevents them from joining the rest of the worshipping community at Zion.

**Hospitalizations.** Please call the church office when you are facing surgery or confined to the hospital. The pastors visit the hospital daily to pray with patients and offer support for their families.

**Marriage.** Any couple seeking to be married at Zion must meet with one of our pastors before setting a date. If either or both are not active members of Zion they attend a Membership Class. In addition, they go through premarital counseling with one of our pastors. Our pastors are involved in marriage as the worship and spiritual leaders of the couple getting married.

**Middle School Youth Ministry.** The Middle School Youth meet on the first Sunday of each month, immediately after the late service. They participate in a variety of activities each. During the year there are opportunities for retreats as well. Our goal is to involve them in every aspect of congregational life.

**Nursery Ministry.** We offer a nursery, during worship, on Sunday mornings. At the same time, we welcome infants and young children in worship, as this is where learning begins. During communion, we encourage young children to be brought along to receive a blessing from the pastor.

**Sunday School.** Children ages 3 through grade 5 meet on Sunday mornings. Our lessons follow the church year and are the same stories we read that day in worship. This allows families more support as parents, children, and grandparents all have the same weekly lessons. Sunday School also has a strong emphasis on mission projects and allowing children to participate in worship and servant ministry projects.

**Worship.** Zion has a minimum of four worship opportunities each week. All of our services follow a traditional liturgical format, but use different language and musical styles. All are respectful and powerful as God's guidance and blessings are the motivation and power of our worship. Saturday evening at 5:30pm utilizes piano and a variety of guest musicians and musical styles in an informal worship setting. Sunday at 8am is our most traditional, by-the-book format, primarily using the organ for music leadership. Sunday 10:30am is a service where we experience the entire range of our potential. We utilize any and all of our resources including organ, handbells, jazz, praise band with liturgy that is sometimes out of the hymnal and sometimes entirely printed. Kanley Chapel on the WMU campus is another worship location, service is Sunday at noon September through April. Music is led by a praise band and Pastor Couch is the primary worship leader.

**Youth Ministry.** Our 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> graders meet on Sunday mornings (and are joined by the 6<sup>th</sup> graders after First Communion is completed.) Sunday classes seek to make faith relevant in daily situations they encounter. They meet two Sunday afternoons or evenings each month for fellowship and servant opportunities. During the year there are opportunities for retreats as well. Our goal is to involve them in every aspect of congregational life.