



Looking Up | Reaching Out

ZION LUTHERAN CHURCH

# Harbinger

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Many, years ago, two little boys were let loose to play. Our Dad was an officer in the Army and we lived in Germany about 15 years after the War. Our family was on a vacation in Bavaria, where for the first time ever, we stayed in a real hotel! Dad and Mom were busy with our little sisters and felt it was OK for us to go outside and let off some steam. Which we did, as only little boys can do. We found other little boys throwing cobblestones against a vacant building and joined "the fun." It was a grand idea (until a cobblestone bounced back and hit my little brother in the head!) Donny started bleeding. He was crying. I grabbed his hand and ran back to the hotel to find Mom! (Little boys always look for Mom when they are hurt!) Running through the lobby a lady stopped us and said to Don, "*Little boy, if I give you a quarter, will you stop crying?*" I was confused. How would money stop bleeding or pain? (Plus, she didn't understand little boys never cry unless they are really hurt!) We found Mom, and as she always did, she became the loving nurse who took care of my brother. That lady's offer of money was never forgotten! How typical to seek a remedy for what makes us uncomfortable, and think that what we value most will be valued by others. Or to assume what we want to change can be bought if the price is right. Happiness, an end to tears, peace, healing, respect — doesn't everything have a price? And yet, we live in a broken world where little boys make mistakes and adults are sometimes clueless. And isn't that the reason God filled a Bethlehem manger with a baby? A helpless child is the gift he shared with an entire world. This baby would grow to be the Healer for all wounds and the Gift that would end tears of pain. He would pay the price to bring Peace. Who could ever imagine a better plan for healing than that? So, whether we are wounded by a cobblestone or clueless when it comes to how to end pain and tears, the Good News is that a baby in a manger has come to fix what we cannot and heal what is broken. And that is the only Gift that will bring true joy and peace!

Pastor Seeber

## COVID UPDATES

We are so thankful to have found new ways to keep in touch with each other during this time of a pandemic when we are forced away from the worship, fellowship, and ministry together that is what the Church is all about. Even when we are apart from each other we are still one because of Christ.

Any time you are here in the building, face masks and appropriate distancing from each other will be in place. Distancing will continue to be important. Worship services will be printed for one-time-use only.

**Worship Services inside have resumed.**

**Saturday 5:30 pm**

**Sundays 8am and 10:30 am.**

**Facebook Meditations** by Aaron and Pastor Seeber are posted Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday. On Wednesdays, we post the readings for the coming Sunday along with the themes for each. Pastor Couch is calling members to keep in touch.

***If you are not receiving a weekly email update from us, please call the church office or send an email to [zion@zionkazoo.org](mailto:zion@zionkazoo.org) with your email address!***

Keep an eye on website, Facebook, and our weekly emails for any updates. This gradual reopening will be dependent on EVERYONE respecting and abiding by guidelines.

**Sunday Radio Sermons continue**

**on WKZO (590AM) at 9:30 am**

**Sunday online worship**

**10am on YouTube and Facebook**

**Website ([www.zionkazoo.org](http://www.zionkazoo.org))** has printed and audio sermons. We will also post updates as schedules change.

New **Portals of Prayer** are available. Grab a copy if you are here for worship, swing by the office when it is open, or call and one of us will drop one off at your home.

Small groups, Bible studies and meetings are being conducted on ZOOM. Call the church office if you would like to join such a group.

YOUR STEADY AND GENEROUS FINANCIAL SUPPORT OF OUR BUDGET CONTINUES TO BE A VERY SPECIAL GIFT TO ALL. THANK YOU!

**Midweek Advent Services**

**Posted on Facebook and YouTube**

**Wednesdays at 6:30pm**

ONLINE this year (beginning December 2)

## CHRISTMAS WORSHIP SCHEDULES

**ARE DIFFERENT THIS YEAR**

**CHRISTMAS EVE FAMILY WORSHIP**

**5 PM**

**CHRISTMAS EVE FAMILY WORSHIP**

**6:30 PM**

**CHRISTMAS EVE WORSHIP**

**8 PM**

**CHRISTMAS DAY WORSHIP**

**10 AM**

Our Family Service will be held twice, to allow those with younger children to come earlier and spread out the crowd! It is a short service of readings and carols.

Our "late service" will be held earlier than normal to allow more people to come. It also is readings and carols but also the sharing of Holy Communion.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR PRAYERS AND SUPPORT FOR OUR MINISTRY AND STAFF!

### Advent 2020

With COVID cases spiking, we are continuing to be very cautious in how we gather at Zion.

Without a doubt, Advent and Christmas will be different this year. And yet, that can make it one of the most special ever.

Advent means “to come into;” and is the Church’s time of remembering the wait for the Messiah to first come into our world. That is why we hold off on Christmas carols as long as possible, as the “holy day” (holiday) hasn’t yet come! *(And why my grandparents, and many of yours, never put a tree up until Christmas Eve, so the joy of the Christ birth would come as it did on that first holy night!)*

We wait, less patiently than our grandparents, but we can still try! Without waiting, we might forget what we are waiting FOR. Rather than being lulled asleep by carols, or traffic headed to strip malls, and decorations up since Halloween, *why not WAIT?*

This year has been nothing but “waiting” and we are getting good at it. Advent is a different kind of waiting. Many grew up with Advent devotions at home and midweek services at church as normal ways to get ready for Christmas. Many never had that as part of their family DNA. We would like to help make Advent the gift that it can be!

God’s faithful people waited for hundreds of years for the Messiah to arrive in a manger. We wait a lifetime to be welcomed into the manger of our own heavenly home. Every year we wait for the holy day (holiday) of Christ’s birth so we can celebrate again as if this were the first time! Isn’t anything worth having worth waiting for???

Here is what we will do for you, to make our Advent wait unique this year. **Every day of Advent we will post a devotion on Facebook**, which you might even use as your family

devotion at home. Light a wreath, listen to or read the devotion. Prepare so that this year’s celebration of the Christ birth truly brings his Light into the darkness of our world!

**Wednesdays in Advent we will post our midweek “Advent worship” at 6:30pm on Facebook and YouTube.** It will have music, dialog, and a meditation, and be more involved than the daily devotions we share. **There will be NO onsite Advent services.**

Advent resists the world’s unfocused waiting, and offers a “time out” for peace, and quiet. This is an intentional “preparing the way” in our hearts for this most joyous and holy birth.

Our Advent themes this year are based on boat rides in scripture, and how those journeys parallel our journey to the manger. (Noah’s ark, Baby Moses in a basket, Jonah and a great fish, and Jesus and his disciples’ Galilee boat ride on a dark night will be the backgrounds for our Advent journey.

#### **TENTATIVE CHRISTMAS WORSHIP SCHEDULE:**

**Christmas Eve Family Service this year will be held twice, at 5pm and 6:pm.** That will allow for more separation, and families with young kids to come earlier.

**Christmas Eve Worship will be at 8pm this year!** We hope an earlier “late” service will allow more to participate. (NO 11pm!)

**Christmas Day Worship will be at 10am.** We hope that ALL of you will find a time to worship the King!

**We will also either live stream or prerecord Christmas services for those who must stay home. Watch weekly email for updates!**

*We are so tired of waiting for this pandemic to be over. Why not wait instead, as faithful people have always done, with an eye on the real prize — a baby in a manger!*

**CATECHISM REVIEW:**

*(This is our monthly review, for adults, of the topics and meanings of Luther's Catechism)*

**10 Commandments (Context and Purpose)**

Understanding what the Commandments mean needs to be flavored by why they were shared. Israel's twelve tribes, had lived in Egypt for 400 years. They had gotten used to the customs and deities of the Nile, and saw themselves only as unwilling servants of the Pharaoh. Many kept the religious traditions of ancestor Abraham alive, but many had not.

After the miraculous plagues and Red Sea deliverance, the newly freed slaves gathered around the holy mountain of Sinai. This is possibly where Moses had encountered God in a burning bush when he answered the call to "set my people free."

These children of Israel didn't have a clue where they were going, how they would get there, or what it meant to live as free people. Most only knew the "gods" of Egypt. As God gathered them around the "holy mountain," he revealed himself to them as the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (Israel.) He called them "my children." And he gave them his "Words" or, "commands."

God began by introducing Himself saying "I am the God who brought you out of Egypt!" (Ex. 20:1) That established his credentials and let them know who was talking. They had seen his power and knew that their freedom was his gift to them. They were under his protection and were in a relationship that God had established.

Before Israel could leave the desert or enter a land with new distractions, pagan deities, and juicy temptations, they had to know "whose" they were and "how" God expected them to live. The commandments did that.

It is no different from a parent, whose love for her children is so great that she says, "here is

what I expect of you!" Being obedient children is not to make our parents love us, but because we know we are loved. It is about a response on our parts to the undeserved love which is offered first.

When we know we are loved, we are more inclined to respond with love. Too often we think of commandments as rules to "make God love us." But always the focus has been clear. Because God loves us, He has given us these "words" that we call "commandments" or "law." God doesn't love us because of what we do! But because He loves us, we are live out of a response to that love. These words of God shape that response.

But there is more! Keeping these commands is not just about "life in the family" but also about life "outside the family." Much of the journey through the desert was "confirmation class" for Israel. Again and again, Moses reviewed what it meant to be God's people.

This was important because choices would be difficult once they were surrounded with a bountiful land and the temptations of a pagan culture.

They would live in a society that was focused on "me" and "mine" and "getting what you wanted." (Sound familiar??) So Moses told them (Deut.4:6-8) that another reason for them to keep the law was one of "witness." He said others would notice their love for God and each other and learn through them that there is only one true God.

Later on the prophet Isaiah (49:6) would say a similar thing when he announced that God wanted his people to be a "light to the nations." Next month when we review what the individual laws mean it will make much more sense when we have reflected upon the purpose and background for God to gather former slaves in the desert and give them marching orders — all to prepare them for life in the land of milk and honey. (And the same for you and me!) Pastor Seeber

## Friends of Jesus Preschool

COVID has affected the ability of students to attend school. In August the FOJ Ministry Team made the difficult decision to not open in September. The plan was to reassess the situation and watch how the virus played a role in society. We were hopeful for a January start date. Due to the virus not retreating as well as visioning discussions, it was decided that opening in January would put kids and teachers at an unnecessary health risk. This would not be accomplishing certain parts of our vision. The difficult decision was made to remain closed and renew our focus on opening in September 2021.



Friends of Jesus is still fully committed to educating children spiritually, socially, physically, and mentally while embracing them with Christian love, and to build relationships with children's families through Christian love.

So what's next? The Zion Board of Directors has been in discussion regarding staffing options. After discussions that brought in the large scale of congregation/staffing needs, as well as visioning discussions with FOJ and Family Ministry Teams, one favorable option would be to pursue a Called worker with the title Director of Children's Ministry. This position would serve as birth-5th grade children's ministries in the congregation such as Sunday school, Vacation Bible School, and others, as well as Director of FOJ. The parents and students this Director could focus his or her time with would not only benefit the congregation, but also strengthen the ministry that is Friends of Jesus Preschool.

My role has naturally expanded as ministry programs have increased. COVID has caused a need (and future opportunity!) for technology increases as well as personal/individual ministry. High school students, college students, and young adults are requiring much more of my time. A new position such as this would allow even more attention to our

younger members and their families as we continue to expand ministry in many directions!

In the visioning discussions the words "Connections" and "Personal" kept coming up. Personal relationships. Personal ministry. Personal environment. Connections between parents and kids. Connections between families. Connections with other congregation members. All of these terms fit so well into Zion's vision:

*We aspire to be a welcoming and growing community in Christ, providing daily opportunities to live, learn, and share His love.*

Even amidst such a disappointing year, it is exciting and renewing to see where God is leading.

If you have any questions or would like more information, please reach out to me.

God Bless,

Aaron Grube

Director of Christian Education



# Family Life

## Family Ministry News

### Calendar

#### Virtual Christmas Program!!!

Watch your email for more info regarding this fun way of sharing the Christmas message.

We will not gather for in person Sunday School until possibly January! Another packet will be dropped off at your house in December!

### REFOCUS

2020 has caused a lot of our culture and environment to stop working. Things aren't "normal." But it has also made us reassess why we do what we have done and why we should do what we will continue to do. Part of this assessment includes discussions on vision/mission—why do we exist? What is our purpose?

Family Ministry recently had this conversation and we narrowed down our existence to serving two purposes:

1. Provide opportunities for families to grow spiritually within the family
2. Provide opportunities for families to grow spiritually with other families and the congregation

The way we carry out that vision has had to change in 2020. Our focus remains the same: Connections through spiritual growth! Things may be different moving forward as we're learning so much about our new culture and environment, but our commitment to growing spiritually will still be the priority!

## Campus Ministry

On a personal note, Melody and I visited family in both Tennessee and Alabama in November. Her mother's husband, whose health had been declining the past year, passed away recently taking our travels to Alabama to spend time with her.

In person classes for the Fall Semester will conclude on Friday November 20<sup>th</sup>. The remainder of the semester will conclude on-line. Our last Sunday outdoor service at Solid Grounds was this past Sunday November 8<sup>th</sup>. We averaged between 6-10 students at the outdoor service.

Our current plan for Sunday services when the Spring Semester begins is to worship together at the 10:30AM service at Zion.

Interest in our Tuesday evening Bible study faded as the semester continued. We started with 4-5 students attending our Zoom Bible study on Tuesday evenings and currently have 2 students that take part.

Our Men's Living Free Group, which meets on Thursday evenings has been a strong group. This is an in-depth continuation of the Conquer Series which is for men struggling with sexual addiction issues. The 4 young men that are a part of this study have found a tremendous amount of growth and healing from both the Conquer Series and the Living Free series and we have become a close knit group.

The highlight of the Fall semester has been the work and effort that went into putting together the Panel Discussion event on October 22<sup>nd</sup> and the continuing efforts toward our next panel discussion event, which will take place in January 2021.

It has been a blessing to build connections with WMU faculty, staff and students in our efforts to come together from a Biblical perspective to pursue racial equality, healing, reconciliation and greater understanding.

I've been speaking with numerous WMU students that attended the first panel discussion to discern what the next step should be and the current thought and plan is to have a mix of WMU students and previous panelists on the next panel as we continue our "Crucial Conversations" series. One possibility is that we will have the next panel discussion event during MLK week. Each January during MLK week, WMU hosts a series of events to pay tribute to the legacy of MLK and we would love to be a part of those efforts.

God's blessings and peace to you all!

Pastor Mark





# Youth News

## **High School:**

### Bible Study

Sunday nights at 6pm! We will meet virtually Dec. 6 & 13.

### December 19 or 20

Depending on opportunities/restrictions...we will go ice skating and have a Christmas party! Watch email/text for more updates but reserve this weekend for our annual party!

## **Middle School Youth:**

### Snowman Contest

The first December day of snow, go outside and build a snowman. Send a picture to Aaron and votes will be tallied. The winner gets a gift card!!! Watch email/Remind for “the day.”

## Echoes

*God IS at work through people in our congregation...here is their story:*

People are stepping up to the challenge of letting God work through them!

-A high school student sent out 30 messages, one each day in November, setting a topic for prayer. She wanted to bring awareness to National Adoption Month and set out to lead 30 days of prayer. Each day we were greeted with something specific to pray for, while being reminded of all those involved in such an important process.

She also organized a toy drive for a group of local kids who are part of the adoption process, which also attracted other volunteers in the congregation! Many lives have been affected, especially within our high school youth group.

-

Families participated in Operation Christmas Child

—a project through Samaritan's Purse. Families put together a shoebox full of fun gifts and supplies for kids in need. What a great way to model service within your family during these trying times!

*Every day we have choices before us...will you allow God to work through you? It might not be a project or in modeling behaviors, but it might be in praying for someone or sending a card. How can God work through you today?*





### Christmas Poinsettia

(These poinsettias are used to decorate the church sanctuary)

Anyone interested in contributing to the "CHRISTMAS POINSETTIA" may do so by sending their gift to the church office or putting it in the offering plate along with this form. Please note on your check "CHRISTMAS POINSETTIA."

We will take checks through Sunday, December 13.

**All contributions will be acknowledged in the bulletin.**

*In Loving Memory of:*

\_\_\_\_\_

*In Thanksgiving of:*

\_\_\_\_\_

*In Honor Of:*

\_\_\_\_\_

*Given By:*

\_\_\_\_\_

**Envelope #** \_\_\_\_\_

**Amount** \_\_\_\_\_

# Christmas WORSHIP SCHEDULE

### Advent Services

Online at 6:30 pm

Wed, **December 2, 9, 16, 23**

### Christmas Eve Services

Thursday, December 24

Family Worship 5:00 & 6:30 pm  
Worship & Communion 8:00 pm

### Christmas Day Service

Wednesday, December 25

Worship 10:00 am

*Keep Christ in Christmas*



**Book Review:** *"The Great Divorce."* C.S. Lewis. MacMillan 1946. reprinted by Harper in 2015.

As with many of the works of C. S. Lewis, this is a book that is difficult to describe. It has the feel of fantasy or science fiction, and sometimes reads like a sermon. There is no doubt it is an allegory with a moral. Some critics have compared it to "Pilgrims Progress." At least one likens it to "Alice Through the Looking Glass." Whatever form Lewis uses, the theme is that of a journey. It was written in 1945, in England, as the War was nearing an end. That context might be helpful in navigating through this book.

In the Preface, Lewis writes *"Evil can be undone, but it cannot "develop" into good. Time does not heal it. The spell must be unwound, bit by bit ... If we insist on keeping Hell (or even earth) we shall not see Heaven: if we accept Heaven we shall not be able to retain even the smallest and most intimate souvenirs of Hell."* [p.6]

This is a very short book, but as with any of the works of Lewis, it is best read slowly, with time being spent to wrestle with his message in each section. It is a travel narrative, to be sure. In fact, it is a bus ride through space (or time ... it is hard to figure that part out.) Who the bus driver might be and why the narrator is on the bus is what the journey is all about.

As the story begins (or the journey) a bus departs from a rainy, dreary, gray town and ascends out of rain clouds into a clear sky. The passengers' all change during this bus ride into transparent, ghost-like creations. As the bus arrives at its destination, they see the most beautiful landscape ever imagined.

The conflict or confusion of the narrative begins as the travelers step out and are either encouraged to start walking around in this beautiful and yet unfamiliar place or return to the gray, rainy town they have come from. Here is a sample of one person's feelings:

*'I don't like it! Screamed a voice. She darted past me, back into the bus and never came out of it again. [Another said] "Hi Mister," [to the bus driver] "when have we got to get back?" The driver replied, "You never come back unless you want to. "Stay as long as you please." [pp.28-29]*

As the narrative unfolds it is full of a series of conversation involving the narrator, who is trying to figure out what to make of the journey and what it all means. There are also other conversations and confrontations that he hears and observes.

The narrator has questions of a teacher who seems to have a clue about what is going on. And he asks him about heaven and hell, as well as life and death, The big question is whether one can escape the clutches of hell, or can slide back from heaven. Here is a sample conversation that gives flavor to the type of questions the narrator wrestles with.

The narrator had asked if Heaven and Hell were simply a state of mind. The response he received was as follows: *"Hush! Do not blaspheme. Hell is a state of mind—you never said truer words. And every state of mind, left to itself every shutting up of the creature within the dungeon of its own mind is, in the end, Hell. But Heaven is not a state of mind. Heaven is reality itself. All that is fully real is Heavenly. For all that can be shaken will be shaken and only the unshakable remains."* [ p.69]

The narrator finds that the beautiful land in which he has arrived is so different from earth that there is a temptation of some travelers to return to what was more comfortable and familiar. Another great line from the book follows: *"There are only two kinds of people in the end" those who say to God 'Thy will be done,' and those to whom God says, in the end, 'Thy will be done.' All that are in Hell, choose it..."*[p.72] This is not an easy book, but it is easy to read. Pastor Seeber

# DECEMBER 2020

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
6 8:00 Indoor Service 10:30 Indoor Worship	7 Pastor Tim Fb Devotion	1 10:00 P. Breije Study 1:00 Aaron Fb Devotion 6:30 P. Seeber Zoom Study	2 6:30 Confirmation Class Facebook Readings	3 2:30 Aaron Fb Devotion	4 Pastor Tim Fb Devotion	5 8:00a Men's Bible Study 5:30p Worship
13 8:00 Indoor Service 10:30 Indoor Worship	14 6:30 Personnel	8 10:00 P. Breije Study Noon - Finance 1:00 Aaron Fb Devotion 6:30 P. Seeber Zoom Study	9 6:30 Confirmation Class Facebook Readings	10 2:30 Aaron Fb Devotion	11 Pastor Tim Fb Devotion	12 8:00a Men's Bible Study 5:30p Worship
20 8:00 Indoor Service 10:30 Indoor Worship	21	15 10:00 P. Breije Study 1:00 Aaron Fb Devotion 6:30 P. Seeber Zoom Study	16 6:30 Confirmation Class Facebook Readings	17 2:30 Aaron Fb Devotion	18 Pastor Tim Fb Devotion	19 8:00a Men's Bible Study 5:30p Worship
27 8:00 Indoor Service 10:30 Indoor Worship	28 6:30 BOD	22 10:00 P. Breije Study 1:00 Aaron Fb Devotion 6:30 P. Seeber Zoom Study	23 6:30 Confirmation Class Facebook Readings	24 Christmas Eve Office Closed 5:00p Family Worship 6:30p Family Worship 8:00p Worship/Communion	25 Christmas Day Office Closed 10:00a Worship	26 8:00a Men's Bible Study 5:30p Worship
6:00p HS Youth		29 10:00 P. Breije Study 1:00 Aaron Fb Devotion 6:30 P. Seeber Zoom Study	30 6:30 Confirmation Class Facebook Readings	31 New Year's Eve Office Closed		



November 2020						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	Sa
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30					

January 2021						
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3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
						31





# December

BIRTHDAYS

12/1	Mary Bernhardt
12/3	Paul Leitz, Kasey McGill, Karen Sarver,
12/4	Brian Bauer, Matthew Huberty, Taylor Hurry, Ernest Rose, Benno Rosin
12/5	Landon Bauer, Riley Eastman Andrew Leitz, Anna Schierbeek Anna Schuppel
12/6	Richard Griffith, George Hayward
12/7	Lorraine Hanna, Richard Wordell
12/8	Angela Parente, Michael Schlack, Charlotte Toy
12/9	Caila Chapman, Jen Pesch, Audrey Hamilton,
12/10	Sara Bussey
12/11	Tiffany Bierlein, Phillip Slesinski, Audrey Stetten, Nicole Villanueva
12/12	Ian Carlson, Karla Morgan, Michelle Rollen, Loretta Rose
12/15	Ayden Emig, Ron Masek, Marirose Meimers, Pam Nezamis, Luke Skuratowicz
12/17	Angelo Waterlander,
12/18	Sharon Dean, Dylan Scheffers
12/20	Lucas Adlam
12/21	Kayla Laurin,
12/22	Charlotte Fill, Lisa Perry
12/24	Jason Curtiss, John Devine Carlton Kasdorf, Mary VandenBerg
12/26	Carol Cory, Marta Kellam, Jay Linebaugh, Walter Mutz, Sarah Perry, Mark Schulze
12/27	Megan Bowers, Tammy Parat
12/28	Linden Griffin, Joni LaPointe, Annaliese Ream,
12/29	Kimberly Licavoli
12/30	Isabella Frazier
12/31	Alixandrea Allen, Beatrice Mayer Alexander Parat, Leona Van Antwerp

## Parish Report

### Baptisms

Paisley Jean Morrow 11/21/2020

### New Member

Bill & Priscilla Mercier 11/19/2020

### Deaths

Carlton Rink 10/25/2020

Patricia Vickery 11/19/2020



A BIG  
thank  
you

From:

Dave Mayer

I would like to thank the people of Zion and the Prayer Ministry for the very thoughtful and meaningful prayers that were offered on my behalf during my recent surgery. Prayers are so important and meaningful along with a tremendous impact on one's well-being. We are prayer warriors and what a way to address our short comings and ways to heal our sinful lives.

Blessings, Dave

### **KALAMAZOO LOAVES & FISHES**

**December** wish list item: **Cooking Oil**

**Please remember while we are not accepting material donations due to COVID concerns, monetary donations are in great need now.**

## Worship Help for Parents and Children

(These articles are even more important now that we are not all in the sanctuary as often. We must not forget what we are missing, and why we do what we have done for so many years, as worship is key to our life together.)

This month: **Colors, Candles and Crosses**

How do you learn best — by words, diagrams, or by touching and doing yourself? We all encounter the world and learn in different ways. Much of our “faith culture” is passed along in the written and spoken word. But much is “visual” as well. Early cultures passed along history and traditions orally. Later those stories were written. At the same time cave paintings and illustrations on ancient buildings and walls speak to the importance of “visual” stimulation, remembering, and learning. (The artist was as important as the storyteller!)

The Church has been at the forefront of such a varied approach to proclaiming the Gospel from its earliest days. The written and spoken Word of Scripture and liturgy has been important in worship — but so has the visual.

Candles are a symbol of Christ as Light of the World. An empty cross proclaims the victory of resurrection; a crucifix reminds us of the Savior's passion and death. Stained glass windows or banners proclaim a message through color and symbol. Such visuals “speak” Gospel at so many different levels.

Every Sunday the altar color proclaims a theme. Advent is blue (for royalty.) Christmas and Epiphany are white (for stars and angels, and a Light for the World.) Lent is purple (for passion and a royal procession to the cross.) Easter is white (for the dazzling hope of the resurrection.) Pentecost is red (for the fire of the Spirit.) The Pentecost season is green (for the growing time of the Church.)

Communion vessels are silver, and candles are lighted, because this is a most precious meal and the table is set with our “finest”

dishes. The stark bareness of the chancel (no colors, candles or furnishings) from Maundy Thursday to Easter announce the lonely vigil of death which our Savior endured for us. Our stained glass proclaims the Biblical message from Genesis to Revelation. Our windows in the sanctuary are clear, so that we are reminded of the world in which we live and are called to serve. We are surrounded by so many visual aids, and rather than take them for granted, why not let each be understood as a gift that enhances and enriches your lives of faith!

For Parents with young children:

We have all felt overwhelmed with keeping children “busy” in worship, but what a blessing these visuals can be to help bring little ones into the power of our time of worship! “Children's bulletins” allow them to draw pictures that reinforce a theme for the day. Why not have them pick a scene from the window to copy and use that to talk about that message for the day? Ask what color the pastor is wearing today, and talk about why colors change. Look at woodcarvings on the walls (from Jesus' passion) and use them to talk about what Jesus did out of love for us.

Encourage them to ask about what they see. When the acolyte lights a candle, use that as a chance to talk about how light changes darkness and why Jesus is the Light of the world. When smoke rises from a candle, let them think about prayers “rising to God.” What window colors match the color of the season? Why is the baptismal banner blue (water?) Why is there a symbol of a dove? How many crosses can they find in the window, or throughout the building? How neat that ordinary items can be used in a special way to enhance and enrich worship — to create a mood, announce a theme, or proclaim the Good News of Jesus! You see there are many ways to learn and many ways to feel and reflect the power and the message of our faith. Pastor Seeber



**150TH ANNIVERSARY BOOK IS READY!**

A major project to complete our anniversary celebration was the production of a book called "Days in the Life of Zion." Phil Kunze has been hard at work on this for the past two years, combing the archives for material and crafting a wonderful narrative that gives a feel for the people and ministry of Zion over these 150 years.

On our anniversary day, the booklet which contained the worship service also had a fairly complete history of the congregation. It was decided that this last production of the anniversary would therefore not be another history, but a chronicle of the life of Zion over the various decades of our ministry. It is full of pictures, news clippings as well as reflections of some of our members and former staff. This is meant as a companion volume to the anniversary day booklet.

Due to a grant from our Endowment Ministry, every family of Zion should have already received their free copy of this booklet in the mail. Should you not receive your copy, please let us know.

Additional copies for family members or former members of Zion may be purchased for \$7.50 each. You may email or call the church office to make arrangements.

Special thanks to Phil Kunze for his tireless work and many edits on this book, which was delayed by the COVID-19 shut downs. Make sure to thank Phil for his great work on this.

**2021**

Offering envelopes will be mailed to your home the first part of December. Please let us know if yours do not arrive in the mail!

If you wish to contribute through automatic payment, Excel in Giving authorization forms are available.

Can't find your envelopes or you are interested in receiving them? Please contact Monica by calling 382-2360 or email at [Monica@zionkazoo.org](mailto:Monica@zionkazoo.org).

**Please Note:** Contributions received and dated through 12/27/2020 will be recorded on your 2020 Contribution Report. Contributions received 12/28/2020 and later will be reported in 2021

***Thank you for your faithful support of ministry during this most difficult time for all of us!***

**150th Anniversary Book Order Form**

Household Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Street Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_

Additional Quantity: \_\_\_\_\_ x \$7.50 = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Make Checks Payable to: Zion Lutheran Church

Email form to: [zion@zionkazoo.org](mailto:zion@zionkazoo.org) or Mail to: Zion 2122 Bronson Blvd Kalamazoo MI 49008



### Financial Report for October 2020

**ZION:** October Giving was under budget by \$6,510. Expenses were under budget by \$9,380. October ended with a Net Loss of \$8,053. YTD Net Income Gain was \$6,259, over budget by \$10,613.

**FRIENDS OF JESUS PRESCHOOL:** Income was under budget by \$9,959. Expenses were under budget by \$14,701. October Net Gain was \$354. YTD Net Income Gain was \$1,013, under budget by \$4,114.

**Solid Grounds:** Income was under budget by \$3,459. Expenses were over budget by \$413. October Net Loss was \$3,606. YTD Net Income Gain was \$1,665, under budget by \$3,233.

ZION LUTHERAN CHURCH	Current Month			Year-To-Date		
	Budget	Actual	Over/Under	Budget	Actual	Over/Under
<b>INCOME</b>						
Zion Giving & Misc.	47,425	40,915	-6,510	282,125	245,222	-36,903
<b>EXPENSES</b>						
Zion Staff Support	28,073	28,470	397	141,192	141,121	-71
Office Operations	1,435	473	-962	7,375	4,982	-2,393
Church Property	7,315	5,494	-1,821	36,806	25,353	-11,453
Education Ministry	1,335	1,367	32	4,055	2,297	-1,758
Evangelism/Missions	200	0	-200	300	0	-300
Worship Ministry	875	729	-146	2,775	2,493	-282
Other Ministries	450	159	-291	1,375	601	-774
Music Ministry	3,175	1,625	-1,550	11,000	5,000	-6,000
Finance Ministry	10,340	6,367	-3,973	51,701	31,854	-19,847
Zion Haus Ministry	400	222	-178	2,000	1,383	-617
Missions - General	4,730	4,062	-668	27,900	23,879	-4,021
Total Expenses	58,328	48,968	9,360	286,479	238,963	-47,516
<b>INCOME LESS EXPENSES</b>	<b>-10,903</b>	<b>-8,053</b>	<b>-2,850</b>	<b>-4,354</b>	<b>6,259</b>	<b>10,613</b>

#### FRIENDS OF JESUS PRESCHOOL

<b>INCOME</b>						
FOJ Income	10,313	354	-9,959	46,549	5,475	-41,074
FOJ Staff Support	12,281	0	-12,281	32,732	3,737	-28,995
FOJ Operations Expenses	2,420	0	-2,420	8,690	725	-7,965
<b>INCOME LESS EXPENSES</b>	<b>-4,388</b>	<b>354</b>	<b>4,742</b>	<b>5,127</b>	<b>1,013</b>	<b>-4,114</b>

#### SOLID GROUND

Solid Ground Income	9,610	6,151	-3,459	51,366	47,134	-4,232
Solid Ground Expenses	9,344	9,757	-413	46,468	45,469	999
<b>INCOME LESS EXPENSES</b>	<b>266</b>	<b>-3,606</b>	<b>-3,872</b>	<b>4,898</b>	<b>1,665</b>	<b>-3,233</b>

#### BALANCE SHEET

	6/1/2020	10/31/2020	YTD Change
<b>ASSETS</b>			
Cash	78,336	94,404	16,068
Investments	137,222	137,720	498
Other Assets	10,944	-669	-11,613
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>226,502</b>	<b>231,455</b>	<b>4,953</b>
<b>LIABILITIES</b>			
Payroll	5,829	4,643	-1,186
Dedicated Funds	87,136	86,003	-1,133
Unrestricted Funds	133,537	140,809	7,272
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>226,502</b>	<b>231,455</b>	<b>4,953</b>

#### MORTGAGE LOAN BALANCE

Dedicated Accounts with Balances over \$3,000

Youth Ministry	\$9,124	FOJ Estate Gift	\$3,799
New Staff	\$50,000	FOJ Fundraising	\$11,685





Monthly Publication of

Zion Lutheran Church

December

NON-PROFIT  
ORGANIZATION

U.S. POSTAGE  
**PAID**  
PERMIT NO. 479  
KALAMAZOO, MI

2122 Bronson Boulevard, Kalamazoo, MI 49008

CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED

## Christmas Worship Schedule

### Christmas Eve

5:00p.m. & 6:30 p.m. Worship Service

8:00 p.m. Worship Service and Communion

### Christmas Day

10:00 a.m. Worship Service



*Wise Men and Women Still Seek Him*