

July 2004 Newsletter

Melanie's Final Word From Mecklenburg, Germany

"The great thing, after all, is to live, not to pour out one's life into the service of a myth... If you can get free from the domination of causes and just serve Christ's truth, you will be able to do more and will be less crushed by the inevitable disappointments." [Thomas Merton]

I regret to inform you that this will be the last time you all hear from me from Germany. Today is Sunday the 13th, and on Tuesday I leave to go back to the U.S. I still can't believe it's already time for me to go. I've had such a wonderful experience here, and I really can't put into words how this year has changed me, but I'll try to sum up some of the many things I have learned and will take away with me from this year.

The importance of the ability to adapt and to be able to let go of things has come to my attention throughout the year. When I came here I didn't really know what to expect, but I thought that I would somehow be able to change these people's lives, that I could work miracles and that I could solve all their problems and ease all their pain. On my first day of work the realization then hit me that what I consider to be important, i.e., change and improvement, is not important at all. I slowly learned that the thing the residents value the most are my visits and just sitting there and talking with them, not when I try to have them recite the alphabet or count to ten. Most of them no longer have living family members, so the other residents they live with and the workers who care for them are their family.

I often struggled with the fact that none of them will ever get better, and the first few weeks I just didn't know what to do. It was so difficult for me to be with them when I didn't know how I could help them or simply what to do with them. After much prayer and contemplation I realized I had to let go of everything, of all the expectations I had for myself and for what I could do with these people, and realize that none of this is under my control. Instead of concentrating on what it was that I could do with them, I concentrated on simply being there with them, being fully present mentally and not letting my thoughts wander off. When I gave all of my attention to them, I could tell that was what truly made them happy, simple human contact. The "ministry of presence" is the most important thing I learned the entire year, because it taught me how to let go and let God do his work. Without bringing unrealistic expectations into it I could just go about an activity for the simple reason of it bringing joy and fellowship to the other person, which I discovered is what they most crave. Simply giving. Of course there were many frustrations along the way, but I knew that my thinking wouldn't just change overnight. And every time I really spent time with one of the residents it gave me a great feeling, because I knew they had really benefited from our time together and it wasn't just them doing things to do to occupy their time.

This has most certainly been a life-changing year. There is so much in my life that I now see differently. My time here has taught me to value the simple and real things in life and to not place so much importance on the trivial things. I am so grateful for the people I've met this year and the things I've learned. I would like to thank all of you for your encouragement and support throughout the year. See you soon!

God's blessings, Melanie Slease

Congratulations To Zion's Graduates!

RYAN ELSASS, the 2004 Class of Canton South High School: Ryan has been a Bible Bowler for Zion for years, serving as our Team Captain this year. He has led by example, both in scoring points for the team with his creative answers to obscure questions in biblical trivia, in scoring points on the basketball court in Memorial Hall, in scoring points with friends on overnights and Winter Gatherings! Ryan has been a stellar performer in the Zion family. We share in the Elsass pride in looking forward to Ryan's entering Stark State this fall to study physical therapy.

SARA EVANOFF, the 2004 Class of North Canton's Hoover High: Sara is well known as one of Zion's stellar acolytes. She was also a stellar student at Hoover, graduating with Honors, with interests in computers and calculus. She is now heading off to the Ohio State University in Columbus, where she will pursue her interests in business. In addition to keeping her days filled with employment through Merry Maids, Subway, and the family-owned Jester's at the Canton Centre Mall, Sara honed the art of multi-tasking, with hours and hours of practice of talking on her cell phone while emailing her friends!

KAYLE FROCK, the 2004 Class of North Canton's Hoover High: Kayle has also been a stalwart performer among Zion's stellar acolytes; but her passion has been gymnastics. Whether performing alongside the Vikings as a talented member of the cheerleading squad or competing on the Viking floor as a gymnast, Kayle has displayed poise and perfection. Many have taken note of her talent and discipline, including the Canton Repository, which honored her as their Female Athlete of the Week for February 15-21. Lutherans in Ohio, REJOICE! Kayle will be heading to Capital University this fall.

JAMIE HUMBERT, the 2004 Class of North Canton's Hoover High: Jamie, too, has been a big part of why we call Zion's acolyte corps stellar. She is also a big part of what made Hoover High School's Swim Team a statewide competitor at all levels. Her interests in free-style and butterfly elevated the team's performance, and has won her national recognition, along with many personal records and awards, including the award of a scholarship at the University of Akron, where she will continue her swimming and pursue her interests in business and accounting.

JOEY STAYER, the 2004 Class of North Canton's Hoover High: Joey lives closest to the church, upstairs in Grandma Pat Stayer's home, which is just around the corner. His High School days have seen him get down to business, as his Honor Student status in the Business Vocational side of Hoover's programs has incorporated his work experience at the Harvest Restaurant into his formal education. He will take the fall semester off, extending his summertime R&R with a trip south to Florida, and then head north to the University of Akron, where he will study Business Administration.

More Graduate News:

KATI LEED - from the 1997 Class of Hoover High School and the 2001 Class of Bowling Green State University, Kati received her Masters in Mathematics from Indiana University this spring. Kati was part of a select vocal group at Hoover High called the Hi-Lo's, which enjoyed the sights and sounds of a European Tour during the summer of 1997. While at Bowling Green she was active in the Ski Club. During her more active days at Zion, she (and her Mom) sang in Zion's Senior Choir. She very much enjoyed teaching undergraduates at IU in Bloomington. In August she will be moving to the Cleveland area and will teach math at a community college in Elyria.

Congratulations, Kati. All of us are proud of the good work you've done. God's richest blessings on all you do.

In addition to honoring our 2004 Hoover High School graduates on Sunday, June 20, we also reached back into the Class of '03. We recognized Danielle Frock (Hoover 2003, presently at the

University of South Carolina in Columbia, SC), Melissa Riffle (GlenOak 2003, presently at Stark State), and Austin Sherwindt (Tallmadge 2003, presently at Northeastern University in Boston, MA) for their service as acolytes at Zion all the way through the senior year in high school. We presented these members with gift awards to help offset the cost of books as they continue with college.

Church Council News

Do you think that there are any property concerns that should be addressed here at Zion? That was the question of the evening at our June meeting. At the recommendation of the Steering Ministry, we asked our Council Elders to spread the news among the ministries they support to start thinking about a **FIVE YEAR PLAN FOR PROPERTY RENOVATION**. We are looking for help in formulating a wish list of all major and minor renovations and improvements that will help our church home look inviting and facilitate the goals of our ministry.

Our Learning Ministry announced plans for Vacation Bible School the week of August 9-13. *Our Property Ministry* celebrated the creation of a new lease for our office equipment, which will save the church at least \$150.00 monthly! *Our Parish Life Ministry* has now established two new programs, *the Men of Zion* and *Zion's Coed Softball Team*.

In other business, the ELCA has asked us to redirect our Missionary Sponsorship from Mike and Joanne Shelley, who have returned to the United States, to another missionary family. We decided to connect with Pastor Robert and Denise Schmalzle, both with roots in our Northeastern Ohio Synod, who are serving at Uhura Highway Lutheran Church in Nairobi, Kenya.

We also discussed the need to move forward with redecorating the Youth Room. We will make sure that the present furniture in that double room, which predates existing fire codes, is removed; and we will begin to look for furniture that will fit with the new floor plan that (we hope) is taking shape.

Zion Financial News

The Treasurer was happy to share some good news for the second month in a row. Our General Funds Income exceeded our actual Current Expenses in May, leaving us with a positive balance heading into June. This is actually a story that began with January, since our deficits in January and February were smaller than the previous year, so that the strengths of March, April, and May lifted us into balance and beyond. Our hope is that June will leave us in a strong position as we head into the summer months of July and August.

2004

General Funds May	\$17,557.70
Actual Expenses May	\$16,681.60
(Deficit)/Surplus May	\$ 876.10
General Funds YTD	\$91,388.95
Actual Expenses YTD	\$90,460.00
(Deficit)/Surplus YTD	\$ 928.95

Some comments about the above figures: May was a five-Sunday month, a fact that always improves our showing; but this should not take away from the very strong quarter we are putting together. A strong June will leave us in good shape as we head into what is usually the weakest quarter of the year: July, August, and September.

FYI: If you have some interest in getting involved in putting together our FIVE YEAR PLAN FOR PROPERTY RENOVATION, please let members of Church Council know. We will talk more about forming a Task Force to oversee these efforts at our July 20 Council Meeting. You might want to give these mat-ters some thought between now and then.

The Wow Ministry: Chuck Danner, Visitation Assistant

As the newly appointed Visitation Assistant, I am thankful to God for leading Zion to establish this staff position and ministry, with the purpose of Widening Our Witnessing to our members, active and inactive, who are homebound, hospitalized, or simply desiring a visit. For several years, as many of you may know, I have been informally visiting others in our congregation; this new role simply establishes these visits as an official part of Zion's mission and, I hope, brings some organization and coordination with it.

All I can say after several weeks in this role is - WOW! What a privilege to be asked to do this; and what a joy to be able to celebrate with fellow parishioners and to offer support and comfort where needed. I feel the Holy Spirit leading Zion in this direction. Oh, by the way, one of my responsibilities is to organize teams of visitors and to coordinate these visits. So, if you would like to be a part of a visitation team, please let me know.

This ministry is not intended to replace the many visits that Zion's members already make on their own. For example, the Fellowship Ministry, which is responsible for writing articles in this Zion Herald for our "Fellowship Honorees of the Month", visits our older members regularly. Continue to visit one another, regularly and often; and to the wider membership of our congregational family, please pray for God's blessings upon all our visitors and all who are being visited.

July Anniversaries

ANNIVERSARIES FOR JULY

July 1	Steve & Jennifer Libby
July 2	Ed & Karen Gronow
July 9	Jack & Pat Taylor
July 10	Rick & Connie Riffle
July 10	Pastor and Marilyn
July 19	Charles & Helen Heller
July 20	Brian & Suzanne Walters
July 21	John & Bonnie Farmer
July 26	Ron & Audrey Hartman
July 27	Steve & Darlene Dague

A Note to Our Readers: If you would like your anniversary information included, just let the

Parish Life At Zion

Our Comfort Givers

will have a reduced schedule during July. Actually, the quilters have taken July off! Look forward to their starting up again as we head into August and get ready for Vacation Bible School.

The Men of Zion,

otherwise known as Zion's Body Builders, enjoyed another great evening for food and fellowship on the evening of Wednesday, June 9th. Chuck Danner once again turned to KFC; and after dinner, we rehashed the great successes of the Mother's Day Breakfast, working on improving our organizational design and kitchen techniques. We decided that we will serve Zion's women at their table next year. We reviewed the success of assisting in the work of keeping Zion's beautiful grounds beautiful. Mulch was ordered (and has been delivered and laid down). We will meet on Wednesday, July 14th, 6:00 p.m.

TEAM ZION

has enjoyed great success despite a 1-3 start in the North Canton Ministerial Coed Softball League. After squeaking out a one-run victory over Community Christian to open the season, the week layoff over Memorial Day Weekend left our team a little rusty, losing in a blowout to Zion United Church of Christ, then dropping two one-run games to Northminster Presbyterian and Trinity United Church of Christ. It has been great, however, to see our members and friends enjoying fellowship and camaraderie on the softball diamond. The names are too many to mention; but we extend our thanks to Bob Lancashire for taking the lead in organizing our efforts, coaching our team, offering out-standing pitching and timely hitting. Why not come out and cheer us on as we head into the second half of our inaugural season!

Christian Ed

ACME RECEIPTS:

Thank you to everyone who brought in receipts from Acme. With your help, we were able to earn about \$295 for Zion's Youth. We really appreciate everyone's help

VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL:

VBS is approaching very quickly. We have a great program planned this year, August 9th to the 13th from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. The children will be coming to "Son Games 2004" this year to learn about being a part of God's Team. They will learn five lessons about one of God's most valuable players - Paul and his journeys as a member of God's Team! There will be great music, games, crafts, food and much, much more! We always need volunteers, so please contact Debbie Fox at 330-966-2433 if you can help! There will be sign up sheets in Luther Hall for supplies and food donations that we will need. As always, we truly appreciate all of the help and support that we receive for the great program! We will have our first meeting for VBS on Tuesday, June 29th, at 6:30 p.m. in Luther Hall for any who are interested in volunteering.

ADULT BIBLE STUDY:

We begin our study of forgiveness at Zion on Sunday, July 18th, during the Sunday School hour at 9:15 a.m. Pastor Sherwindt will be joined by our other adult leaders in introducing our follow up of

The Purpose Driven Life, namely, a study of the nature and mission of the church. God's grace, our forgiveness: that pretty much sums up the Lutheran view. But why settle for the summary. Come and join us on July 18th.

Sunday School News

Upcoming Events at Zion: Mark your calendars!

IN JUNE: Tuesday, June 29th, 6:30 p.m. Vacation Bible School Meeting

IN JULY: Sunday, July 4th, 9:15 a.m. No Sunday School on the 4th

IN AUGUST: Vacation Bible School: The Son Games

Monday, August 9-----9 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Tuesday, August 10-----9 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Wednesday, August 11----9 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Thursday, August 12-----9 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Friday, August 13-----9 a.m. to 2 p.m.

We ended our Sunday School year with a mini "Bible Bowl" review with the kids. We had three teams, and they all did great! As a reward for their hard work and a great year, the children got to go shopping in our Sunday School Store.

We have a lot of fun activities planned for SUMMER SUNDAY SCHOOL. There will be two leaders at Zion each Sunday, and the kids will be baking, playing games, doing crafts or service projects. Also, as a reminder, we will not have Sunday School on July 4th. We know summer is a busy time, so we wanted to offer a fun and relaxing summer program. So, have a great summer, and please join us!

A Word about Zion's Food Pantry

Some Thank You's

Thanks from Melissa Riffle:

"I would like to thank my Zion family for giving me money to use towards school books. I am going to Stark State College and majoring in Early Childhood Education. It was very thoughtful to think of me and I really appreciate it. Thanks again. God Bless!"

Thanks from Austin Sherwindt:

"My first year at Northeastern is complete: midterms, all-night study sessions, trying to navigate a whole new city. It is truly a blessing to finally be home with my friends and family. What makes this return even more touching is knowing that there is a whole congregation supporting me in my endeavors. Thank you to everyone at Zion for your generous and heart-warming donation."

Thanks from Danielle Frock:

"Thank you so much for the book money. Your generosity is greatly appreciated! Having grown up in the church, over the years I have been fortunate enough to witness and participate in the compassionate outreach Zion provides. The support from within is what keeps the church alive and growing; but more importantly, it is the selfless giving of time and funds to those outside our doors that reminds us of our true purpose as a congregation of God. Now, as a direct recipient of Zion's generosity, I realize how much such a gesture can mean! Regardless of where I am - South Carolina, North Canton, or anywhere in between - I'll always have a supportive home at Zion! Thank you again! As many of you are aware, books are not cheap. The money will definitely be put to good use!"

"TRUE GENEROSITY IS A GIFT FROM ABOVE."

More Thank You's

"Thank you! Thank you! It is with grateful heart that I express my thanks to my Zion Family. Your prayers (before, during and after surgery), notes, cards, phone calls, Chancel flowers, and visits were deeply appreciated and exactly what was needed. My sincere thanks to the Comfort Givers for their concern and their remembrance of me. My thanks also to the Pastor for calling, visiting, and hand-carrying a taste of the "Confirmands' [Pentecost Birthday] Cake" to me. Thanks to God in all things!"

Love and Blessings to all, Helen Heller

"We want to thank you all for the many beautiful cards, prayers and visits during Jim's illness and after his death. The Prayer Chain was also a wonderful help. A special thank you to Pastor, Charlie Danner, and the women who did the luncheon."

Love and prayers to all, Gert Meyer and family

Our Fellowship Honoree For July: Betty Findlay

Everyone knows Betty Findlay, but I was so enthralled with this interview, it was like reading such an interesting book, I just didn't want to lay it down! Since we all know this lovely little lady as Pastor Findlay's wife, I'm going to share some of the details of Betty's personal life.

First of all, how many of us have had the same address from our birth until our marriage, and can give it without a moment's hesitation? Betty was born on October 23, 1914 and lived in her grandmother and parent's home at 133 Park Ave. NW, Canton Ohio. She had 2 brothers, one was 7 years older and the other was 3 years older, so you can see how many family members there were to love and take care of her every need and desire.

Her father worked for the Timken Company and in those days mothers worked in their homes. Betty graduated from McKinley High School and went to Western College for Women in Oxford, Ohio, which was affiliated with Miami University. During her first year there, Holly, the eldest daughter of her minister at the Trinity Reform Church, arranged a blind date for her. He was a member of Holly's brother's fraternity and had already graduated from Ohio Wesleyan with a

degree in Business Administration. His name was Dick Findlay and he worked for the Sherwin Williams Company.

They dated through the summer, and then on the weekends when she went to the University of Akron the next year. By Christmas they were "going steady", and on New Year's Eve Betty was wearing Pastor's fraternity pin. They were married on August 4, 1935 and moved into a small apartment for a short time. Betty and Dick were very frugal, so until they were able to purchase their own home, Betty used her many talents to transform her parent's large attic into a cozy home. On October 11, 1937, "Dickie" was born and then Bruce on May 9, 1941. Meanwhile Pastor had various jobs before buying his own feed store in Carrollton. So that Dickie was able to attend a private school, they returned to Canton. They purchased the Pontius Farm House, which was very large and had several acres for the boys and their St. Bernard puppy to run and play. Betty was elated to have such spacious rooms for her active boys.

Betty and Pastor planned their lives around their beloved boys and their education. When Dickie was 14 years old the Findlays were advised to take the boys to the Institute in Columbus for better opportunities. Dickie was enrolled first but this upset Bruce so much that as soon as he was 11 years old he joined Dickie in Columbus. So the Findlays sold their Ben Franklin store on Cleveland Ave. and moved to Columbus to be closer to their sons.

While in Columbus they met Chaplin Dick Rice, who was starting a mission in Upper Arlington. Dick Findlay went to many meetings and found his calling, attended Capital University and became a wonderful Lutheran Minister.

When I asked Betty about her having such a happy marriage for 66 years, she attributes this to their thanking the Lord daily for all His many Blessings! Her favorite Bible verses have always been Proverbs Chapter 3, verse 5-6: "Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths". Betty's favorite hymn is "Jesus Loves Me".

I hope everyone appreciates knowing this cheerful, wonderful lady and may she always be a shining example for us all!

Respectfully submitted,

Anna Mae LeBeau
