

SEPTEMBER 2005 Newsletter

Great News (From Carol) About Our Cottage Meetings

Summer Session for a Healthy Church: It's been a busy summer for Zion. Our sessions on a healthy church kept our attention as we worked out the final draft of our Membership Covenant. The discussion, fellowship and food were a great part of the sessions. Seven families opened their homes to us and with over 90 members participating, it was really exciting to see so many members interested in where we are going as a church. I remember particularly the session at the home of Brian and Suzanne Walters. The ideas didn't stop after the discussion time, but carried over while we enjoyed some excellent refreshments. At the beginning of the sessions I thought I would find it repetitious to attend all seven meetings, but that was far from the truth! Every meeting seemed to focus on different ideas and areas of the covenant. Besides the discussion of the covenant, it was really enjoyable to spend some time with people you usually just get to say hello to at worship!

The second session, held at the church, proved to be just as interesting as we found out what was next. Abbot and Costello introduced us to Rick Warren's baseball diamond with their famous "Who's on First?" routine. We learned that active, vital membership is first base, and that spiritual maturity is second base, which was the focus of our second session. So, we spent some time at the second session discussing spiritual maturity and how you get it. We talked about how spiritual maturity might affect our priorities in life, our thinking less about ourselves and more about what God calls us to do. We discussed the connection between spiritual maturity and prayer, between spiritual maturity and knowledge of the Bible.

Pastor talked about spiritual maturity and Zion's challenges, such as commitment, behavior, inclusion, our programs, and the connections we would like to make between the interests of our members and the programs of the church. These and several of the other challenges that Zion faces will be the focus of our next series of cottage meetings, which begin Wednesday, September 7, as we work toward developing Zion's plan for a healthy church. We wrapped up the session with a lively discussion of the benefits of membership at Zion Lutheran Church, which includes such things as our great tradition, food, Vacation Bible School, our people, the choir, our talented singers and musicians, the property, its location, and our building, our commitment to service, the food pantry, the clothing closet, the comfort givers, fellowship.... Did we mention food? The list goes on, and we will need to build on these strengths as we move forward into the healthy future God invites us to find and enjoy.

Session Three Schedule

September 7	Wednesday evening	7:00 p.m	at the home of Bob & Linda Lancashire
September 8	Thursday evening	7:00 p.m	at the home of Steve & Linda Ross
September 10	Saturday evening	6:00 p.m	at our church home in Luther Hall
September 12	Monday afternoon	1:00 p.m	at the home of Nick and Cora Lanzalotta
September 14	Wednesday evening	7:00 p.m	at the home of Lorin & Tina Beaber
September 15	Thursday evening	7:00 p.m	at the home of Lou & Darlene Milavickas

September 16 Friday evening 7:00 p.m at the home of Brian & Suzanne Walters

Great News From The ZION SUNDAY SCHOOL

UPCOMING EVENTS

Sunday, September 4th No Sunday School: It's Labor Day weekend!

Sunday, September 11th It's Rally Day at Zion, from 9:15 a.m. to 10:15 a.m.

Check out the great games and fabulous food!

Be sure to join us for our 3rd Annual Ministry Fair!

Volleyball begins at 5:00 p.m. in Memorial Hall

Sunday, September 18th The Children's Choir Practice 9:10 a.m. - 9:30 a.m.

It's the start of the new Sunday School year: 9:30 a.m.

Sunday, September 25th The Youth of Zion meet at the Ross' home: 3:00 p.m.

RALLY DAY AND THE NEW SUNDAY SCHOOL YEAR

We are looking forward to Rally Day and the start of the new Sunday School Year! We have a year of great stories, children's programs, music and service projects planned. Rally Day will be Sunday, September 11th, from 9:15 a.m. to 10:15 a.m. Rally Day is for the whole family with activities and refreshments for all ages. There will be games and treats for the children, along with the Ministry Fair for our families in Luther Hall. We'll see you on the 11th as we kick off the new Sunday School year!

SUNDAY SCHOOL & THE CHILDREN'S CHOIR

Sunday, September 18th, will be the first day of the Sunday School Year. We will be learning great Bible stories again this year using the Witness Curriculum. Sunday School will follow the children's choir practice each Sunday! The children's choir will practice each Sunday, beginning at 9:10 a.m., and extending to 9:30 a.m. This starts September 18th in the choir room. Our Sunday School kids will sing once a month at the 10:30 a.m. service. Their first song will be sung on the Festival of the Reformation, which is October 30th. Please watch in October's edition of The Zion Herald for more information. Suzanne Walters will be directing the children's choir this year! Please have your children in the choir room at 9:10 a.m., and then we will take them to their classrooms after choir practice. We are looking forward to a wonderful year of lessons and music!

A GREAT NEW TEAM OF TEACHERS FOR CONFIRMATION CLASS

Confirmation classes will start again on Sunday, September 18th, at 9:15 a.m. in the Resource Center. This class is for all 7th and 8th graders. Mark Morris will be leading our Confirmation Class this year, with assistance from Debbie Fox and Pastor Sherwindt. We look forward to another great year. Our Confirmands take two years to cover such basic topics as the Ten Commandments, the Apostles' Creed, the Lord's Prayer, the Sacraments of Holy Baptism and Holy Communion, along with the Office of the Keys, otherwise known as the call to turn the grace God gives into the forgiveness we live. We are certain that you will enjoy the program. Please plan on joining us.

ACME RECEIPTS

It is that time of year again! We will begin collecting Acme receipts in September. There will be collection cans in Memorial Hall by the coffee counter on Sunday Mornings, and also in the Church Office. Please save your receipts and help us raise money for our youth! Last year we were able to raise almost three hundred dollars! Isn't that absolutely incredible! Thank you in advance for your great support.

ZION'S YOUTH SPOTLIGHT

We have included a Youth Spotlight Form on the next page of this newsletter (see page 11). Please help your children fill out this Youth Spotlight Form. If you have more than one child, additional copies of this form are available in the Church Office or from Debbie Fox. We have had a great response to these personal introductions from the entire congregation. Kids love it, and so do adults! We will have plenty of these forms available on Rally Day! We would like forms for all of Zion's children from ages 1 through 18. We will begin our Youth Spotlight page again next month in the October edition of The Zion Herald. The entire Zion Family looks forward to reading and learning about our amazing youth! Please return the completed forms to Debbie Fox by Sunday, September 25th.

MEETING FOR THE YOUTH: THE HOME OF STEVE & LINDA ROSS; SEPTEMBER 25, 3:00 P.M.

At the same time as many of our adult members are meeting to talk about Zion's healthy future, our youth are also planning a get-together at the home of Steve, Linda, Matt, and Nicole Ross. We have a lot to discuss: the expectations of involvement, what we expect in terms of support from the congregation, where we're heading both next year and right now! The Youth Missions Craft Fair has provided great options. We've thought about heading out to the Rocky Mountain West, with stops for service among Native Americans, flood plain areas, and who knows what more we'll find on our way to one of the geological wonders of the world - yep, you guessed it, Yellowstone National Park. There is so much to talk about. We hope you'll join us. That's Sunday afternoon, September 25th, beginning at 3:00 p.m.

Worship and Music News

The music ministries at Zion are gearing up and getting ready for the beginning of a new year. Our dedicated and enthusiastic Senior Choir will resume rehearsals on Wednesday, September 7th, from 7:15 to 8:30 p.m. New members are always welcome, so please prayerfully consider becoming a part of our choir. This is a fabulous group to work with and I am looking forward to our getting together again soon. Our first Sunday service for the choir will be September 18th at 8:00 a.m. The choir will follow the same schedule as in the past, which is singing at 8:00 a.m. one week, followed by singing at 10:30 a.m. the next week.

Our children's choir will meet for the first time on Sunday, September 18th, for the first twenty minutes of the Sunday School hour. All rehearsals for the children's choir will take place in the choir room. I have some great music chosen for this group, and I look forward with eager anticipation to begin work singing with them! Please have your children join our group to praise God! We will be singing an anthem once each month at the 10:30 a.m. Family Service.

Speaking of the Family Service, our 10:30 a.m. service will be taking on a new style beginning September 18th. Worshipers that joined us on the weekend of August 20-21, and those that will join us on the weekend of September 10-11, have experienced a sampling of the exciting things that are in store for us with our new blended Family Service. The biggest changes this service will offer will be in the form of more contemporary music, a more casual and family-friendly atmosphere, and a more loosely-structured liturgy. Our Senior Choir will continue their customary offering of an anthem every other week at this service. but without choir robes. Pastor will continue to lead worship with heartfelt prayers and eloquent.

inspiring sermons, but without vestments. We will sing a combination of current Christian music and favorite hymns, but with contemporary instrumentation and perhaps a newer musical flavor. We hope to attract long-time Zion members as well as many new members to our congregation through our new worship style.

There is one more musical opportunity that is, for the moment, on the back burner, but will soon be coming to the forefront. This is a renewed effort at forming a handbell choir to play one Sunday a month at the 8:00 a.m. service. Please give me a call if you would be interested in joining us to play handbells.
Suzanne Walters, Director of Zion's Choirs

Church Council News

The August Council meeting began with an excellent presentation offered by special guest, Chuck Heller. We will need to spend more time in coming months focusing on such basics as attendance, mutual support, clarity of vision, communication, and discipline. We then began taking a look at the 2006 Church Operating Budget. Mutual Ministry, together with the input of the Steering Ministry, offered performance reviews and compensation recommendations for the Pastor, our Choir Director, and Custodian. The process continues with the input of the Finance Ministry.

We continued our discussion of our cottage meetings, approving the revised wording of our Membership Covenant, which made allowances for the input of the discussion groups we enjoyed during Session #1. We looked more closely at prioritizing the five activities of the church: worship, education, evangelism, service, and fellowship. The observation was made that, while we need to prioritize our focus and efforts, the intent is to strengthen our weaknesses, not allow our strengths to weaken.

Our Worship Ministry is looking into the possibility of expanding the position of the Choir Director into that of a Music Director, which would include greater responsibility for the development of a family-friendly service, a children's choir, and a bell choir. This "family-friendly" service would make every effort to lower barriers that keep our own and new families from worship.

Three new computers are needed to update our resources in the Church Office, the Pastor's Office, and the Resource Center, for use by our Confirmands, the Youth of Zion, and others who can benefit from it.

Zion's Food Pantry

Beginning in September, Zion's Food Pantry & Clothing Closet will be open for service on the 1st and 3rd TUESDAYS of the month, from 1:00 p.m. to 2:00 p.m. As usual, our volunteers' day begins earlier than 1:00 p.m., with a trip to the Akron-Canton Regional Food Bank, along with the need for sorting and organizing the food and other items we will be sharing that day. Remember, starting this September, we will be open for service on the 1st and 3rd Tuesdays of the month. Volunteers are welcome!

THE NEW FOOD PANTRY SCHEDULE:

FALL: Beginning in September, we will be open only the 1st and 3rd TUESDAYS of the month.

1st and 3rd Tuesdays:----- September 6th and 20th,--- 1:00 p.m. to 2:00 p.m.

1st and 3rd Tuesdays:----- October 4th and 18th,----- 1:00 p.m. to 2:00 p.m.

1st and 3rd Tuesdays:----- November 1st and 15th,---- 1:00 p.m. to 2:00 p.m.

1st and 3rd Tuesdays:----- December 6th and 20th,---- 1:00 p.m. to 2:00 p.m.

September Anniversaries

September 3 John & Virginia Long

September 3 Drew & Beth Heller

September 7 Bill & Peggy Leed

September 20 Calvin and Mary Shunk

September 21 Sam & Beth Shaheen

September 22 Jim and Betty Boettler

September 30 Richard and Susan King

A Note to Our Readers:

If you would like your anniversary information included in The Zion Herald, just let the church office know by calling , 330-499-3909.

The Men of Zion

THE MEN OF ZION gathered for dinner on Wednesday, August 17th, and began looking ahead to an outdoor Cleaning Day some time in October. We continue to thank the family Elsass, and all their helpers, for keeping the grounds at Zion so wonderfully colorful. Also, the congregational garden has been quite a blessing for so many, too. The Men of Zion will meet again on the evening of September 21st, for great food and fellowship. Wear your Men of Zion shirt; if you don't own one, buy one!

The softball season is behind us. Team Zion did exceptionally well on a hot summer's afternoon in July to get to the championship game by winning a hard fought contest with previously unbeaten Church of the Lakes. But, without much time to rest, Grace United Methodist Church proved too much, with Zion claiming the runner-up spot. Now, it's on to VOLLEYBALL. The North Canton area churches are invited to join us on Sunday evenings here at Zion, when we will use Memorial Hall for volleyball, with games beginning at 5 p.m. You are invited to join us. Everyone is welcome.

Stewardship Notes

Our financial news for June showed a significant monthly deficit. Our financial news for July showed a significant monthly surplus. Summer months constitute a tough challenge for most churches in terms of offering income; and while we lost ground during the summer months of 2005, our year-to-date deficit is much less this year than last year: \$2,404 this year, compared with \$7,360 last year. That is really good news. What makes it even better news is that we have also raised over \$10,000 for the Restrooms Renovation Project!

Our income news for 2005 has been very encouraging. We still have our work cut out for us. We need a strong August and Sep-tember, along with a strong fourth quarter, if we are going to move our finances in the same healthy direction as other aspects of our mission. The main area where expenses have run ahead of expectations has been property care, both the snow plowing bills of winter and our newly increased rates for energy. Everything is going up, and, thanks be to God, so is the upper limit of your generosity! We are truly grateful for all that you share to support God's work at Zion.

The Women of Zion

"ACTING BOLDLY", our Bible study meets the third Tuesday, September 13th: The most important commandment of the New Testament is "Love your neighbor as yourself." This month the Women's Bible Study will be exploring biblical and modern-day examples of acting boldly with love. We will be discussing two different kinds of boldness: *tolmao* and *parrhesia*. The grounding of the study is Galatians 5:22-23, which lists Paul's fruits of the spirit. The verses are worth remembering. Paul exhorts those who have been led by the Spirit to allow the fruits of the Spirit to thrive among us: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Paul likes to draw us into thinking about the contrast between a life lived to satisfy ourselves and a life offered to and blessed by God. We also will study one woman acting boldly with love in John 12:1-8, when Mary anoints Jesus' feet.

SCHOOL KITS and HEALTH KITS for LWF:

We are still collecting for the school kits and health kits this month. HEALTH KITS: hand towels, bars of soap, toothbrushes, toothpaste, combs, nail files, $\frac{3}{4}$ " bandaids, wash cloths, 12" x 14" cloth bags with handles. SCHOOL KITS: blunt scissors, 12"/metric rulers, 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ " erasers, pencil sharpeners, colored construction paper. The items needed for our health kits are the same as last month; however, we no longer need notebooks, pencils or crayons for our school kits. Please place the items in the sewing closet in Luther Hall - that's the middle closet - in the space marked for Stewardship LWR. If you don't have time to shop, a monetary donation may be left in the Church Office. As always, we thank you for your assistance.

REACHING OUT TO OTHERS

"BLANKET SUNDAY" is set for October 9th: It is time once again to be looking for some bargains on buying blankets. We use these blankets to ship with the Lutheran World Relief shipment. All of our health kits and school kits and blankets will be gathered together at Jerusalem Lutheran Church in Seville on

Saturday, October 15th, 2005. We would like to have as many blankets as possible ready here at Zion by October 9th.

These are sent to places where people are homeless and need some shelter from the weather. Some blankets are used for lying on the ground to sleep. Others are used for shelter from the cold. Still others are used to wrap themselves in for warmth and comfort. These blankets become quite a help for poor persons all over the world. Thank you.
The Comfort Givers

2005 ELCA CHURCHWIDE ASSEMBLY

The Ninth Biennial Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) addressed a variety of topics, including new worship resources, Interim Eucharistic Sharing with the United Methodist Church, ethnic ministry strategies, churchwide structure and governance, sexuality proposals and a Middle East strategy.

Renewing Worship to Include New Worship Book: By 740-252, the assembly directed the ELCA Office of the Presiding Bishop through worship staff to complete the liturgical review of proposed content for a new book of worship in accordance with the ELCA's established policy, and to work with synods, churchwide units, and institutions and agencies on further development of worship resources.

The new worship book, expected to be available as early as October 2006, will be at the center of a family of worship resources for the ELCA.

Interim Eucharistic Sharing with the United Methodist Church Authorized: Voting members initiated "Interim Eucharistic Sharing" with the United Methodist Church 877-60. The agreement fosters mutual prayer, support and study. It encourages joint services of Holy Communion following guidelines established by both churches. Interim Eucharistic Sharing is a step that may lead to a relationship of full communion.

Ethnic Ministry Strategies Adopted: The assembly adopted new ministry strategies related directly to the five strategic directions of the ELCA. The assembly approved the African Descent Ministry Strategy, "Many Voices, Tell the Story, Create the Vision: Build our Future" by a vote of 940-5. Voting members approved an Arab and Middle Eastern Ministry Strategy, "Bridges Across History, Lands, and Cultures" by a vote of 858-6.

Assembly Acts on Sexuality Proposals: The assembly considered three recommendations forwarded to it from the ELCA Church Council. The recommendations resulted from a multi-year study process on sexuality led by a task force. The assembly adopted Recommendation One by 851-127. The action urges this church to "concentrate on finding ways to live together faithfully in the midst of disagreements, recognizing the God-given mission and communion we share as members of the body of Christ." Recommendation Two was adopted 670-323 as amended. The action asks that this church "continue to respect the guidance of the 1993 statement of the Conference of Bishops," which found no basis for establishing an official ceremony for the blessing of a homosexual relationship. Recommendation Three, which would have established a process by which a person living in a committed long-term homosexual relationship could seek an exception to current ELCA policy concerning rostered leaders, required a two-thirds vote to be adopted. This proposal was defeated 490-503. This means there is no change in this church's expectations of rostered leaders.

Holy Land Campaign Implemented: Voting members urged Lutherans to participate in a campaign, "Peace Not Walls: Stand for Justice in the Holy Land," designed to build awareness. By 668-269, the assembly adopted the campaign, a primary component of the "ELCA Strategy for Engagement in Israel and Palestine," approved by the ELCA Church Council in April 2005.

Renovation Update

The bathroom renovations are gearing up and ready to begin on Thursday, September 8th at 6:00 p.m. We will begin with the two bathrooms in Memorial Hall by stripping the wall paper and removing the sinks and counter tops. Wall preparations will follow the next day and then hanging new wall paper on Saturday, September 10th. It is my goal to complete these two bathrooms by the following weekend with new counter tops, faucets, changing tables and great looking accents. Materials are still being ordered and purchased for the other two bathrooms. I want to thank everyone in advance for your cooperation and skills. I look forward to working together as a church family, building relationships while building new improvements in God's house.

Brian Walters, Task Force Chairperson

Thank You's

From the family of Ray Breese -

**We thank all of you for your kind words and sympathy. Also for the many beautiful cards that we received. Thank you, Pastor, for the beautiful service which was very meaningful. God bless all of you!
Earl & Juanita Bathol**

Our many THANK YOU'S this month include notes from the Wernle Home in Indiana, St. James Lutheran Church in East Cleveland, St. Luke's Lutheran Community here in North Canton, Lutheran Outdoors Ministry of Ohio, and the Northeastern Ohio Synod. These are ministries that receive our regular support through the 15% of our income that is designated for benevolence. We recently received a special plea for those who would like to assist relief efforts in response to the damage caused by Hurricane Katrina.

Congregations who wish to assist relief efforts can do so by sending money to: ELCA Domestic Disaster Response, P.O. Box 71764, Chicago, Illinois, 60694-1764.

Individuals may give through their credit card by calling 1-800-638-3522. Currently Lutheran Disaster Response is identifying persons with specific skills to assist in the search and rescue efforts. As waters recess, hardship grants will be given to congregations and communities for health and child care needs, along with temporary housing and emotional and spiritual care. Presiding ELCA Bishop Mark Hanson sends this message: "I thank God for all in this church who are offering support through their prayers for the safety of people who have been evacuated, those who have lost homes and communities, and those who are risking their lives in search and rescue effort."