

Dear members and friends of Zion,

Sometimes it takes a little time for the magnitude of past accomplishments to sink in. The more I have been thinking about what we did in 2005, the greater the sense of satisfaction becomes. 2005 was filled with meetings upon meetings, which were focused on Zion's becoming a healthy congregation. We read Rick Warren's *The Purpose Driven Church*, discussed it, then adapted and applied it. We met in homes and we met at the church. Gradually, a Membership Covenant took shape, and an Action Plan was formed. With concrete goals and specific targets in view, we found that attendance at worship increased, family participation in the life of the church improved, and financial support of our ministry strengthened. That is quite impressive, and I extend my thanks to you for helping that to happen.

Zion's financial support for the church deserves further mention. Our support for the Operating Budget exceeded our budgeted target. In addition to the \$216,840 we raised in support of the budget, we raised over \$10,000 for Year #1 of our Property Improvement Program, which focused on renovating the restrooms, two in the Main Hallway and two in Memorial Hall. Our support of benevolence also exceeded the targets we set. Our support for the work of the wider church through the Northeastern Ohio Synod reached \$17,000 – quite impressive. We added the support of our time and treasures for Zion's Food Pantry & Clothing Closet. We also provided financial support for the church's commitment to Global Mission, partnership support for St. James in East Cleveland, for Campus Ministry, for tsunami relief, the Companion Synod Youth Mission Trip, World Hunger, the Wernle Home, Lutheran Outdoors Ministries of Ohio, St. Luke's, Habitat for Humanity, the Capital University Foundation.... In all, our support of ministries beyond the bricks and mortar of Zion exceeded \$33,000.00!

These may seem like just a bunch of figures, without much context for understanding their meaning or significance. It is Zion's hope and commitment to prove generous in our support of the work of the wider church, even as we challenge our own members to be generous in their support of our work at Zion. The Bible asks God's people to tithe. We have been blessed as a congregation to better that measure by half, committing 15% of offering income to the various ministries we call benevolence. Generosity is a discipline. If we ask our members to discipline the amount of income they spend on their own needs, we should discipline ourselves as a congregation, too. Zion has lived a proud history of excellence in generosity; and I am proud of the fact that we have been able to continue that track record during my tenure.

Sure, to be honest, it was disappointing, according to our most gracious measures, to fall a tad short of a balanced budget in 2005. In truth, it looked great going into December. We turned our deficit into a surplus in October, and extended the surplus slightly in November. Unfortunately, winter got the better of us in December; and it's going to take your continued generosity to keep winter from doing too much damage in February and March. All that I can say is that I am deeply satisfied with what we accomplished in 2005, and I feel confident that God will inspire us with the will and give us the power to meet our challenges during the coming year.

In His service, and yours,

## **IN LOVING MEMORY OF RONALD G. HARTMAN**

June 14, 1931 – January 24, 2006

*[I was recently made aware of the fact that we haven't been using the newsletter effectively in sharing information about members called to their heavenly home through death. What follows are several excerpts from Pastor Sherwindt's homily. It is my hope that they reveal a little bit about the man, and a lot about the Lord, into whose care we commended him.]*

"Love and laughter: that's what I experienced when I met with Ron Hartman's family in the Resource Center to help plan the funeral. What could be a better testament to what he valued, to what would make him proud. Sure, all of us knew Ron as a man who knew the value of hard work, as a man who was well-practiced in the skills of personal discipline, as one who was undeniably reliable in ordering his life around his responsibilities. Imagine that – a German Lutheran from Iowa, whose life was formed by a conscientious attention to honoring one's obligations, mixed with a love for order and discipline!

"That says a lot about Ron, but it's not the whole story, not even the most crucial clue. For Ron Hartman was a man whose discipline, work ethic, and conscientious attention to a job well done was joined with the love of his life, Audrey Mead Hartman, to create a wonderful family, which was blessed well beyond a humble boy's imagination – blessed to live in a great country, which he served faithfully and with honor, blessed to live in a good, family-oriented community, which he and his whole family enjoyed, blessed because his family found life's meaning filled with love and laughter, and lots of both, in abundance.

"In John 10:10 Jesus says, 'I have come that you may have life, and have it in abundance!' Ron knew that life. Whether it was at the altar with Audrey, in the backyard with Greg, sipping some homemade wine with Ron, saying 'I love you, too' to Laura, Ron knew that God had blessed him with a life that was filled with abundance. What his life became went well beyond its beginning on a farm outside of Cedar Rapids. Life on the farm was hard for a young boy and his brother. He never forgot those lessons, and while he learned well the value of hard work and long days, he and Audrey also knew that love is what made a home complete.

"When Jesus stood with his flock in the 10<sup>th</sup> chapter of John promising the blessing of life in abundance, they were not sitting on plush cushions in the palatial estates of those blessed with worldly wealth. This was a group of humble workers, fishermen and carpenters, living off the dry, parched land, which was a mix of Middle Eastern desert and Galilean wilderness. When Jesus stood in the midst of those whom God had given him, talking about his being the Good Shepherd, he wasn't glossing over the great difficulties that filled each life, sometimes with more than their share. Shepherds didn't sit in lazy-boy loungers, and good shepherds knew the cost of protecting their sheep from danger. Jesus was drawing from images that depicted life at its most challenging edge, face-to-face with barren hillsides and rocky wilderness, with wandering sheep seeking grasses, and hungry predators lurking in the shadows.

"The hireling, whose own the sheep are not, sees the wolf coming and leaves the sheep and flees...." Jesus is not a hireling. He is the Good Shepherd. "The Good Shepherd lays down

his life for the life of the sheep." Ron Hartman knew this Good Shepherd, and he learned much from these costly words. He lived them...."

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## **GIVING THANKS FOR THE GREAT EFFORT OFFERED BY SO MANY**

**THE RESTROOMS ARE RENOVATED!** That's the Good News we have to share from Zion this month. It was just last May when we met as a congregation to approve our plans for initiating a five-year plan for property improvement, beginning with the restrooms. We had seen bids in the \$20,000 range for the work we actually did, but our costs came in at \$9,826.11! *That is truly amazing*, and it happened solely because of the commitment, hard work and generosity of you, our congregational family. This project was truly a labor of love: love for our Lord, love for this church, and love for one another, in joining together to accomplish a job well done.

Let the thanks begin with our humble acknowledgment of the leadership and initiative of our Renovation Task Force Chairperson, Brian Walters. Brian organized the project, supervised the work, moved his entire workshop into the shower, and seemed at times to sleep at the church! His leadership is deeply appreciated by all. He was joined on the Task Force by Darlene Milavickas and Marilyn Espe-Sherwindt. Their contribution to the renovation project was also monumental. All joined in every aspect of the work, and what is more, they were joined by so many others, who gave truth to the old expression, which is either *many hands make light work*, or *misery loves company*! I am sure it was the former.

The many hands that contributed to the joy of a job well done began with the restrooms in Memorial Hall – stripping the old wallpaper, applying the new, working on cabinets, countertops and changing tables, fixtures, lighting, plumbing, painting, decorating and cleaning. For these many contributions to our beautiful Memorial Hall restrooms, we thank Lorin Beaber, Dave Bower, Chuck Danner, Pete Fenney, Dean Fox, Scott Gross, Gary Horton, Mary Humbert, Flo Jensen, Bob Lancashire, Nick Lanzalotta, Lou Milavickas, Dave Palumbo, Carol Rossbach, Adam Schrader, Jayne Schrader, Renee Schrader, Ron Singer, Chris Thomas, Mark Votaw, and Dean Yoder. Of course, Brian, Darlene, and Marilyn were present at every phase, and Kevin Walters was drafted on many occasions to help his Dad with tasks large and small. And let's not forget our custodian, Tim Himebaugh, for making our baseboards look like new.

When it comes to thanking folks for the renovation of the restrooms in the Main Hallway, let's begin with utter amazement at the transformation we have witnessed. Brian is preparing a video presentation for our Congregational Meeting later this month to document the miracle. Those who contributed to this little miracle at Zion include John Brokloff, Chuck Danner, Todd Elsass, Jeff and Connie Frank, with special mention of daughters Cassie and Carlie, Gary Horton, Bob and Linda Lancashire, Mike McCartt, Lou Milavickas, Doug Roman, Steve Ross, Jayne Schrader, Renee Schrader, Chris Thomas, Mark Votaw, and again, under the same circumstances, Kevin Walters. We also want to include our Renovations Task Force among those whom we thank, Brian Walters, Darlene Milavickas, and Marilyn Espe-Sherwindt.

To date, we have received \$10, 223.00 in contributions for Year One of the Renovation Program. When that is compared to the \$9,826.11 we have spent, the result is a surplus of \$396.89, with which we now look forward to Year Two, which will focus on updating and improving the sound system in the sanctuary. The vision continues. Thanks be to God!

## **STORIES OF GENEROSITY FROM ZION'S FOOD PANTRY**

I would like you to meet Molly. Molly is not your typical High School student. During the Christmas holiday it is easy to become self-absorbed in your own wants and needs. Molly went beyond her personal desires, and requested that her family not buy her any presents for Christmas. That's right. Molly is not your typical teenager. Instead, she asked that her presents be given in the form of cash so that she could donate her Christmas money to help fight hunger here in North Canton.

Molly arrived here at our Food Pantry in January, and not just with her Christmas checks in hand, she also came with all sorts of paper products and food items newly purchased! Her family can be very proud of the thoughtfulness and compassion she has shown for others. Her selflessness is a shining example of the true spirit of Christmas giving. Molly sets a great example and serves as a powerful reminder that, just as Jesus said, it is better to serve than to be served. [Mark 10:45] The first shall be last and the last shall be first in the house of the Lord. [Matthew 20:16]

In recent weeks we have seen a rash of individuals in need of food on days other than the normal Food Pantry Tuesdays. You may ask why. The reasoning can be quite chilling, literally, quite chilling. Option A is: don't pay the gas bill and freeze, and instead buy groceries for your family. Option B is: pay the heating bill and go hungry. That's where Zion's Food Pantry comes in – and thank God for that! I thought that the *meat vs. toilet paper* was an interesting dilemma; but *heat vs. starvation* is inexcusable in this great country.

In our little corner of the county, with your interest, help and generosity, we will continue to do what we can to fight the good fight and stave off hunger with the families we serve.

Thanks for your support. It really helps.  
Shirley Cavender and the Pantry Crew



## **A NOTE OF INTEREST FROM THE CLOTHING CLOSET**

The Christmas rush is now past, and we are busy trying to make room for spring and summer. For the time being, we have all the winter clothing we can handle. Plus, we must admit that, given the smaller space we embrace with our move down the hall, we just don't have the space to store household items, not even toys. When it comes to these types of items, we will let you know of specific requests as they come in to us. In the meantime,

please remember that all the clothing you donate needs to be clean, wearable, and ready for distribution. We are happy for all the volunteer help we receive. We will begin receiving spring and summer clothing after Easter. As always, we thank you for your interest and support – Edna, Betty, Karen and Mary

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## **GREAT NEWS FROM ZION'S SUNDAY SCHOOL**



### **HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO:**

February 3: Austin Todich  
February 6: Todd Ferry  
February 18: Brooke Roman

### **UPCOMING EVENTS – MARK YOUR CALENDARS!**

Sunday, February 26: Zion's *Children's Choir* sings at the 10:30 a.m. Service  
Sunday, February 26: *Bible Bowl* at St. Stephen Martyr Lutheran Church, 2:00 p.m.  
Sunday, March 5: Lent has arrived; the Sunday School focus on the Easter Play begins  
Palm Sunday, April 9: The *Children's Easter Program* at our 10:30 a.m. Service only



### **THE CHILDREN'S CHOIR SCHEDULE**

Sunday, February 26: Children sing at 10:30 a.m. service  
Sunday, May 14, Mother's Day: Sing at 10:30 a.m. service  
Sunday, June 18, Father's Day: Sing at 10:30 a.m. service  
*Just a reminder: Choir Rehearsal begins at 9:10 a.m. on Sundays*

### **SUNDAY SCHOOL: PRE-K THRU SIXTH GRADE**

The children are back in the classroom learning about great Bible stories and faith traits of interesting people in the Bible. This will continue through the entire month. We are looking ahead to the Easter Program already. We will begin regular practices in March, but the children will be receiving their parts and some instruction during the month of February.

### **THE YOUTH OF ZION: THE BIBLE BOWL**

Zion's Bible Bowl Team is shaping up for 2006. Led once again by Wayne Sleese and Todd Elsass, *Team Zion* has begun their intensive study of the book of Exodus. Team members include Matt Sleese (Team Captain), Todd Cizek, Becca Coulter, Corey Beaber, Laura Kay, Taylor Roman, Ethan Frock and Christian Heller. There is still time if anyone would like to join the team. The competition is open to 6<sup>th</sup> through 12<sup>th</sup> grade students. Please contact Wayne Sleese or Todd Elsass if you are interested. This is a great event and a great way for Zion's youth to come together and learn God's Word while having a lot of fun! Plus, this year we are giving away T-shirts!

We would also like to invite the entire congregation to join us in supporting *Team Zion*. The competition will be on Sunday, February 26, at St. Stephen Martyr Lutheran Church, which is located on the corner of Dressler and Fulton Road. Registration begins at 2:00 p.m., with the written and oral rounds to follow. Everyone is encouraged to come out and support Team Zion! Good Luck to our Team Members! We are very proud of your hard work and dedication!

## **COMMUNITY NEWS FOR THE CONGREGATIONAL FAMILY**

**COMMUNITY NEWS:** The North Canton City Schools will again sponsor an Early Childhood Screening Program for 3 and 4 year old children who are residents of the North Canton City School District and are suspected of having a handicapping condition. The screening will be held on *Friday, February 24*, at the Mary L. Evans Early Childhood Center, which is located on 239 Portage Street NE. Children need to be pre-registered for the screening. Registrations forms are available in all North Canton City School buildings and at the Public Library, and must be received by February 14<sup>th</sup>.

Vicki Hammond, Director of Special Programs

**SCHOLARSHIP NEWS:** Our North Canton Ministerial Association is pleased to offer a \$500 scholarship to a graduating high school senior, who is an active member in one of our twelve member congregations (including Zion). We offer this scholarship in recognition of God's challenge for us to "use the best of our minds, hearts and souls" in service to others. It is our hope that high school seniors who have demonstrated leadership and maturity here at the church, at school in the classroom, or in service to the community will regard this notice as an invitation to submit an application. Please speak with Pastor Sherwindt to learn more about the program and to obtain an application form.

The Rev. Thomas L. Douce, Secretary  
North Canton Ministerial Association

**MISSION TRIP NEWS:** Get ready for the trip of your life! Yes, you are invited! We've got a lot of planning to do and many decisions to make, but here's what we know. We know that we are heading south toward the Gulf Coast in our desire to *Help New Orleans Heal*. We know that we are leaving toward the end of June. We know that Graceland is on the itinerary. We know that even if we are not able to get into a work site in New Orleans because of personal safety or public health concerns, we will get a look at how the reconstruction is coming along. We know that we have a good number of adults and a whole lot of youth who are beginning to sense that this is exactly the kind of Mission Trip they're looking for. We would like folks of all ages to feel welcome and invited to show interest in joining in our effort. To that end, Steve Ross and I have scheduled a planning meeting for Sunday, February 12, following the second service, around Noon. We are rounding up interest and looking for yours. Let us know if you'd like to be included, even if you're just thinking about it

**IN LOVING MEMORY:** On behalf of the congregational family, I would like to thank Brian and Lisa Kay for their thoughtfulness in directing the donations we received in loving memory of Brian's Dad, *Monroe Kay*, to assist with our goal of renovating the restrooms. While Monroe never saw the plans we envisioned, nor the bathrooms we've redone, he will always be remembered as a vital part of helping us to create the labor of love we now enjoy when we see the work that so many have worked to accomplish. May God be praised!

**CHURCH COUNCIL**  
**NEWS**

Again, perfect attendance, thanks to Laura, Carol, Dave, Jayne, Peter, Cindy, Lorin, Renee, Steve, Sharon, Bob, and Ann. We received the Treasurer's Report, impressed by what Zion accomplished on the income side, and concerned by what we saw in the expense column, with special mention of utility costs. We spoke of the need to take another look at how our rental partners might share in these expected increases. We also recognized the need to manage our commitments more closely. We saw, for instance, that when all was said and done, we overshot benevolence by over \$4,000 (which is good); however, since we are talking about degrees of generosity, we should try to keep closer to our targets. The rest of the evening focused on staffing issues – hiring Diane Dunphy, reworking the connection between the positions of Music Director and Organist, reassessing the need for a Nursery Attendant, and tweaking our Custodian's contract. None of these adjustments affected budget totals. With Ash Wednesday set for March 1, we are looking at a ***Congregational Meeting*** scheduled for ***Wednesday, February 22***, beginning, as usual with dinner at 6:15 p.m. and the meeting at 7:00 p.m.

December Income	19,944.07
December Expenses	<u>22,010.74</u>
Surplus/(Deficit)	<b>( 2,066.67)</b>
Year-to-date Income	216,838.76
Year-to-date Expenses	<u>218,380.58</u>
<b>2005 YTD (Deficit)</b>	<b>( 1,541.82)</b>
Renovation Fund Income	10,223.00
Renovation Expenses	9,826.11

<b><u>FINANCIAL FACTS FOR</u></b> <b><u>DECEMBER</u></b>
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## STEWARDSHIP NOTES

The Stewardship Committee would like to thank the congregation for the extraordinary efforts in meeting our 2005 financial objectives. As we move into 2006 let us consider our offertory prayer, "We offer with joy and thanksgiving what you have first given us – ourselves, our time and our possessions."

Do we joyfully offer ourselves when there are tasks to be done or offices to be filled? We've always heard, "use your time wisely", but do we? Do we thankfully place our offering envelope into the plate remembering the words we say "what you have first given us"?

In Hymn #410 (in the *Lutheran Book of Worship*) we sing those very familiar words, "We give thee but thine own whate'er the

## THE WOMEN OF ZION

The monthly **WOMEN'S BIBLE STUDY** will meet on **Tuesday, February 21**, continuing our focus on **Acting Boldly** with the fruit of the Spirit. February's fruit is generosity. When we are generous to others, is it a response to God's generosity to us? Lydia was rich and generous. She wore beautiful purple clothes and lived in a mansion. Would we be more giving if we owned what Lydia owned? We are called to be charitable and kind whether we are rich or poor.

Martha E. Stortz suggests that we can learn about generosity by worrying about its opposite, which she calls being *possessed by our possessions*. "Ancient words from Mount Sinai name the biggest threat to Christian generosity: 'I am the LORD your

gift may be; all that we have is thine alone, a trust, O Lord, from thee". A trust: all that we have – ourselves, our time, and our possessions – are God's gifts to us, signs of his gracious love. For the sake of him who offered *himself* for us, can we not give back a small portion – a tithe of our time, talents and resources?

Zion's Stewardship Team –  
Cindy Ferry, Chris Thomas  
Steve Ross, Mabel Kolarik

### **CONGREGATIONAL MEETING AT ZION WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 22**

Dinner in Memorial Hall at 6:15 p.m.  
Meeting in the Sanctuary at 7:00 p.m.

Our Main Business is the election of members to positions on the Church Council, with the Deacons and Trustees. Also, we look forward to Brian Walters' video narrative of our **Restrooms Renovations** project.

God; you shall have no other gods before me.' The commandment refers to the various gods and goddesses that people of the ancient world worshiped: the bloody god Moloch, the fecund fertility goddess Astarte, the beaked Egyptian goddess Isis, and so many others. But we fool ourselves into thinking that idols are a thing of the past. If we rummage through our anxiety closets, we can find plenty of others that threaten to enthrall us.

"Martin Luther located these other gods by following our heartstrings. In explaining the first commandment in his *Large Catechism*, he found the pulse of idolatry: 'That to which your heart clings and entrusts itself is...really your god.' Our possessions tug at us, and we stand shoulder to shoulder with the great biblical worry warts: 'Will moth or rust infest my harvest?' 'Will thieves make off with my profit?' 'Will the stock market uptick or downturn?' 'Will people like me?'

Anxiety turns the heart in on itself, transforming possessions into gods."

## ODDS 'N ENDS AT ZION

*Dear Members and Friends of Zion,*

I just wanted to thank everyone for giving me the opportunity to serve as your Church Office Secretary and for making me feel so welcome. I absolutely love my job here.

I have met so many nice people and look forward to meeting many more. Be patient with me. You only have one name to remember and I have many! My goal is that eventually I will know you all *and by name*. Thanks again.

Sincerely, Diane Dunphy

*Pastor Sherwindt, Chuck Danner & friends,*

## COOPXERATION & SXRVICX

*I received an email from Pr. Mel Lindberg, sharing some thoughts on **COOPXRATION**, which I thought you might find amusing and insightful. Its author is unknown.*

Evxn though my typxwritxr is an old modxl, it works quitx wxll, xxcpt for onx kxy. I havx many timxs wishxd that it workxd pxrfxctly. It is trux that thxrx arx forty-onx kxys that function wxll xnough, but just onx kxy not working makxs thx diffxrxncx.

We want to thank you for all of your prayers and thoughts for our father, Hubert Roy. Your visits and cards were all appreciated very much. Dad loved his Zion family and friends, and most of all, he loved the Lord.

In Christian love,

Deborah and Rich Weikel

## ANNIVERSARIES IN FEBRUARY

February 14 Art & Helen Edwards  
February 18 Chris & Peg Thomas

## FEBRUARY SENIOR BIRTHDAYS

February 19 Dale Hirschman  
February 24 Atlee Fall  
February 24 Catherine Elsass

*Note to Our Readers (again):* If you would like your anniversary and birthday information included in *The Zion Herald*, just let the Church Office know by calling Diane Dunphy, 330-499-3909. Diane is looking forward to updating this information. So why not make sure you give her a call.

Somxtimxs it sxxms to mx that our church is somxthing likx my typxwritxr – not all thx kxy pxoplx arx working propxrlly. As onx of thxm, you may say to yoursxlf, "Wxll, I am only onx pxrson, I don't makx or brxak thx church."

But it doxs makx a big diffxrxncx, bxcausx a church, to bx xffxctivx, nxxds thx activx participation of vxvry pxrson. So, thx nxxt timx your xfforts arx not nxxdxd vxry much, rxmxmbxr my typxwritxr and say to yoursxlf, "I am a kxy pxrson in thx congrxgation and I am nxxdxd vxry much."

This is what happxns to thx wholx church, and multiply this by many timxs --- thx whole thing just doxs not makx sxnsx! So, don't be a broken key --- be a useful one.

As many of you know, Carol Rossbach, our Vice-President, has been doing a great job finding members to fill some of positions that are coming open on Council (six), among the Deacons (three), as well as the Trustees (three). No matter how hard she tries, she cannot be successful without your help, without your willingness to become one of those keys that works. You are needed very much. We cannot become the church God wants us to be, the church God has called us to be, without your service.

men if we expect to get it together and pull this off. We found a few willing workers at January's meeting, but we will need more than a few to be successful. Steve Ross and Chuck Danner will be our eyes and ears in looking to see who will say YES to the call to join in the fun of helping us get to know the faces that go with the names we no longer recognize in the newsletters and the bulletins. You are needed. Please say YES

## **THE MEN OF ZION**

The Men of Zion gathered for dinner on January 11<sup>th</sup> in Luther Hall. The food was great, and the fellowship even better. We were joined by **Dick Spall**, who invited us to participate in a breakfast sponsored by the **Lutheran Men in Mission** at Martin Luther Lutheran Church in support of the youth of the Canton-Massillon Conference. We enjoyed Dick's company, and pledged to send a delegation to the breakfast, which was scheduled for January 28<sup>th</sup>.

We then talked a bit about our own need for planning and programming. We decided to meet on the first Wednesday evening of the month, and to offer some kind of program along with the dinner. On **February 1<sup>st</sup>** we will hearken back to the time "**When URI Met Johnny**" (as in Carson), a program that will have a little fun with *the Secrets of the Psychics*. Chris Thomas and Gary Horton are working on some great ideas for dinner. Our evening together on February 1<sup>st</sup> will be great fun. Please plan to join us.

Unwilling to settle for the new ground we were breaking with our exciting ideas about great programs, we decided to take the lead in working on the new picture directory that we would like to see Zion produce this year. That's right, a **New Picture Directory!** This will be a huge undertaking, and we will need the help of a good number of Zion's



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