

May 2006 Newsletter

EASTER GREETINGS FROM THE PASTOR

I hope that you have received your Easter gift. It was free, and we passed them out on Easter. No, I'm not talking about the treats our kids received during our annual Easter Egg Hunt. The gift I am talking about is our Easter Devotional Book, with its fifty daily meditations written by members of Zion, sharing with others why we worship. What a beautiful collection of personal stories, written by people we know and love. Who would have ever known that Susan Heyard played the piano and organ? [April 20, Day #5] Now, we'll get to include her in the rotation on Saturday evenings! How about Mike Babich's time spent in prison, while living as a youngster in Europe at the outbreak of World War Two? [May 23, Day #38] For those who know Blair Woodside, reading about his "mountain top" experience at age seven will tug at your heart, as it did on mine. [May 1, Day #16]

It is natural to suppose that those who are active among us have always found it easy to serve in leadership roles. With this Easter Devotional Book, we are now invited to discover the personal challenges behind the decisions that helped transform people we know, giving us the courage to do the same. Just take a look at what Suzanne Walters [May 21, Day #36], Carol Rossbach [April 17, Day #2], and Vicki Givler [May 31, Day #46] have shared in reflecting upon the wonderful ways through which God empowers us to do great things for the kingdom, and wonderful things for Zion. Mabel Kolarik identifies the sentiment perfectly in recalling that image of God's presence told through the poem Footprints in the Sand. [May 13, Day #28] The stories of faith in this Easter gift are so varied, yet heartening and humbling, every one..

Zion is a family that reaches across the generations and around the world. Some have traveled to the other side of the globe. Others have spent their entire lives in North Canton. Steve Ross has traveled extensively looking for meaning in life. [May 29, Day #44] Chuck Danner found meaning driving down the block to bring joy into the lives of another, who may be lonely, or in need of knowing that others care. [May 27, Day #42] When you read these daily devotionals, you will see friends opening their lives and inviting you to share in that special something we find here as we gather for worship, looking for ways to grow in love and service by grace. In seeking with us as we grow in love and service by grace, you will also find the gifts of friendship and camaraderie. You'll hear God calling through the everyday witness of ordinary people, and by saying Yes, you will find purpose for living and meaning in life.

The true gift of Easter is the life of the Risen Christ. That is the greatest gift, God's gift, the gift of His love with the life of His Son. But with our Daily Devotional Guide, we are reminded that Easter is not just a day. It's a season. It's not just about Jesus. It's about us. It's about the life of the Risen Christ alive among us, within us, and through us. On Thursday, May 25, we will com-memorate the Ascension of Our Lord, the day that raises the question that Pentecost answers. Where is the body of Jesus now that the tomb is empty and the Risen Lord has ascended into heaven? The body of Christ is now found in the Church. The Church is Christ's body. We are Christ's eyes and ears, hands and feet. In the beautiful words of St. Teresa of Avila, "Yours are the eyes through which Christ's love looks out into the world. Yours are the feet through which Christ walks the earth. Yours are the hands with which Christ blesses all people now." What a challenging thought. expressed so

beautifully through the daily mediations where we see this miracle alive among us. Enjoy the gifts of Easter: the life God gives through the Risen Christ, and the family that is ours as friends and fellow members of Zion..

All-Aboard! Register Now! Mission Trip Open to All Helping New Orleans Heal -- June 10 thru June 17

We're leaving from Zion on Saturday morning, June 10, and returning Saturday evening, June 17. That will give us two travel days down to the Gulf Coast, three full work days, and three travel days back home, with some excursion time worked into the trip. The itinerary is still quite flexible, as we will want to wait until we know who is planning to join us.

I read a very powerful account of a fellow Lutheran from an ELCA congregation in Pittsburgh who just returned from a mission trip to New Orleans. Her words are a great testimony to the difference we can make, and are making. She writes, "I have never seen such devastation in my lifetime! People lost everything, including friends and family. Their words were still mingled with tears.... Every morning we would get up, eat, worship, pack lunches, and head out to help people in need. Our job was to take everything that once was these persons lives, and put them on the side of the street for the garbage trucks to take away. There in full view was everything that Katrina left behind. Every evening we would eat, worship, talk about the day, and plan the next day.... The biggest and most wonderful part of this trip was to be able to see God in action. God is so visible there, it is breathtaking. You do not see insurance companies. You do not see the government. You do not see the military. You DO SEE churches packed with campers, tents and vans. You DO SEE middle-aged men on roofs and teenagers prying clothes off trees. You DO SEE retired elderly couples wheeling muck to the streets. You DO SEE pastors flying around in vans dropping off these workers and picking up others. You DO SEE tears of hope streaming from the hearts of southerners who watch people coming that care. You DO SEE God, and God is everywhere...."

We are now looking for commitments. We hope to have a group of twenty-five missionaries looking to make a difference with time well spent in service of others. We've had a lot of success raising funds for this trip. Those who would like to join us are invited to express their interest with a nominal \$25.00 nonrefundable registration fee. Since God and God's people have so blessed us with effective fundraising, this same minimal amount applies to friends, too! We will be meeting again at *1:30 p.m. on Sunday, May 7th*, to talk more about interest and itinerary. There's still room for your interest and your input. Please join in the conversation as we move toward finalizing our plans for what is going to be the greatest mission trip ever!

ZION'S NEW PICTORIAL DIRECTORY

Our last photo directory was back in 2000. A new photo directory will help to bring us closer together and strengthen the relationship that we all share as Christians. Here are some quick facts about our new directory. We are working with *Olan Mills* again. Each and every family who gets photographed will receive a free 8" x 10" portrait as well as a free Church Pictorial Directory. The church will receive additional directories, new member brochures, and more, at no cost to the church. We have had great success in scheduling appointments for our three

photo days, May 2, 3, and 4. As a result, we are now scheduling appointments for an additional photo day on Tuesday, May 30th. If you have not had an opportunity to schedule your family photograph, take advantage of May 30th. Also, if you would like to submit your own photograph for the directory, just drop it off at the Church Office.

Sounds of the Caribbean drumming up a GREAT SUCCESS

We have begun the long journey of raising money for our new sound system. With a little help from our friends in the Rittman High School Steel Drum Band - and well over 200 tickets sold for our fundraising concert on Sunday, April 30th - along with help from the local service team from Thrivent Financial for Lutherans - we have made a \$2,000 down-payment for a future where our children will be *heard and seen* during the special programs during the church year!

PANomenon, the Rittman High School Steel Drum Band, was formed in 1998 as an after-school ensemble. They meet on a daily basis during the school year, work under the direction of Ed Sims, and are backed with a jazz band during performance. Most members are not percussionists. They've enjoyed such success that members of *PANomenon* make up more than 4% of the student body at Rittman High.

So, Year #2 in our five-year property-improvement program is now off to a strong start. We have had the advantage over the course of this past year to enjoy the benefits of a better sound system due to the fact that Brian & Suzanne Walters have loaned us theirs while we introduced our new blend of contemporary and traditional worship at the 10:30 a.m. service. What a treat! Who could not now be convinced of the difference a better sound system will make for Zion?

That, of course, is a rhetorical question, to which the answer is, "None of the good folks here at Zion!" We will need to tap this good will - and generosity - during the coming month, as Brian Walters heads up a phone campaign hoping to secure your personal pledge for helping us reach our goal. We are looking for eight members to pledge \$500 for the sound system, and eight more members to pledge \$250, along with twenty to pledge \$100, and forty more to pledge \$50: for a total of \$10,000 in additional (and absolutely necessary) giving.

Our callers include Brian Walters, Chuck Danner, Flo Jensen, Cindy Ferry, Laura Thompson, and Pastor Sherwindt. Everyone will receive a phone call. Please respond by thanking members for calling, and offering what you can to move our project forward. As we have learned time and again, when we work as a *team*, we rediscover that *together everyone accomplishes more!*

Habitat for Humanity, Thrivent Financial, and Us:

Thrivent Financial for Lutherans and Lutheran congregations in the Canton-Massillon Conference are moving ahead with our commitment to build three habitat homes in Canton. Thrivent is picking up 70% of the cost, and our share, together with our sister Lutheran congregations, is just 10% of the total cost. Darrel Rice is our *Thrivent Builds* Chapter Specialist, and he is calling for a meeting of congregational representatives on Tuesday, May 16th, 7:00 p.m., at St. Stephen Martyr Lutheran Church, which is located at 4600 Fulton Drive NW, just south of Belden Village. Beth Tonsky will be on hand representing Habitat for Humanity of Greater Canton. Renee Schrader is our representative from Zion. Look for

more information to follow.

Church Council News

We enjoyed yet another month of our usual good attendance (Laura Thompson, Carol Rossbach, Dave Palumbo, Jayne Schrader, Pete Fenney, Sharon Stout, Lorin Beaber, Cindy Ferry, Steve Ross, Renee Schrader, Bob Lancashire, and Pastor Sherwindt). The better portion of the heating season is now behind us, but not without leaving its deep imprint on our finances. Our heating bills through March of this year stood at \$12,500 compared to \$10,000 last year!

Since so much of our property care budget has been stretched to cover typical winter weather expenses, Council has looked to Merrill Lynch to cover some unusual and unexpected expenses related to some repairs to our aging hot water heating system. Council commissioned the Trustees to establish a task force to look into the costs of replacing, repairing, or revamping our present heating system, which is actually several systems. *Lorin Beaber* reported that Chris Thomas, John Long, Mark Votaw, and John Brokloff agreed to take the lead, and will report back to us in June.

Steve Ross reported good news about the progress of our work on Zion's new pictorial directory. He has assembled an effective team (Nick and Cora Lanzalotta, Kay Davis, Annie Lemmo, Jayne Schrader, Renee Schrader, Mark Votaw, Brian Walters), and we look forward to great photo sessions on May 2nd, 3rd, and 4th - with yet an additional day, May 30th, to accommodate more of our families. The response has been great.

We received into membership some familiar faces: the Frank family - Jeff, Connie, Carley and Cassie. We also received Melanie Whalen's Mom, Anna Erbland, as a new member of our congregational family.

More Council News

Parish Life Ministry: *Bob Lancashire* reported we are ready for the North Canton Ministerial Association Co-ed Softball League. Each of the twelve churches in the league pays \$350 to cover fees, fields, sup-plies, and the season-ending family picnic.

Witness Ministry: *Pete Fenney* reported that Howard Dansizen is doing at great job with our web site. Please take the time - no, make the time - to check out our website at www.ZionEvangelicalLutheranChurch.org

Worship Ministry: *Sharon Stout* reported that the changes we've made with our family-friendly service at 10:30 a.m. have shown some good results. The addition of a weekly children's sermon, children's bulletins, children's programming during the service (Lenten banners and communion class), nursery care: all have had a nice impact on such measures as worship attendance and enjoyment. Now, it's on the new sound system. This should continue to enhance the worship experience.

Mutual Ministry: *Carol Rossbach* reported that Diane Dunphy has been doing an exceptional job as our new Church Office Secretary, and, after the usual three-month probationary period, has been moved to regular status as a Zion employee.

Great News from Zion's Sunday School

UPCOMING EVENTS - MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

Sunday, May 14th - No Sunday School: Mother's Day Breakfast between the services

Sunday, May 14th - The Children's Choir sings at the 10:30 a.m. service: be there!

Sunday, June 4th - Last Sunday of 2005-06 Sunday School Year; Confirmation (10:30)

Sunday, June 11th - Summer Program for Sunday School begins: *The Incredible Race*

The Week of June 10 - 17: Zion's Mission Trip, Helping New Orleans Heal

The Week of July 17 - 21: Vacation Bible School, from 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

The Children's Choir Schedule

Sunday, May 14th, Mother's Day: Sing at 10:30 a.m. service

Sunday, June 18th, 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's Easter Program, Props for Easter, was truly delightful this year! The kids did an outstanding job telling the Easter Story with a basket of "props" that told us the true meaning of Easter and its symbols. We really enjoyed their smiling faces and all of their great readings about each of the items they found in the basket left by the Easter Bunny! The music was also great, as always!

We want to thank the children for all of their hard work and dedication to this year's program. We had a great time working on the play. We would also like to thank all of our parents for sharing your children and for your flexibility with all of our scheduling. We have an amazingly wonderful group!

Thank you, as well, to Suzanne Walters for your wonderful direction of the music, and to all of our Sunday School staff for your help: Renee Schrader, Ann Lemmo, Connie Riffle, Janet Slease, Melissa Riffle, Courlene Coulter and Vicki Givler. We truly appreciate all of your time and dedication to the children, not only for this year's Easter Program, but for everything you do!

Debbie Fox & Lisa Roman

Youth Spotlight

More Great News about our SUNDAY SCHOOL

Pre-K thru 6th Grade (continued)

Sunday, June 4, which is the Festival of Pentecost, will be our last Sunday of the 2005-06 Sunday School Year. We will sing at 9:10 a.m., have a short lesson, and then have a carnival to celebrate the year. Sunday, June 11, which is Holy Trinity Sunday, will be the beginning of our Summer Sunday School Program. Join us for *The Incredible Race*, which will consist of 12 Sundays of

full-throttle fun! It's the race of a lifetime that everyone can win! The kids will find turbo charged lessons with help from Biblical pacesetters like Moses, David, John the Baptist, Paul, Jesus, and more! There will be games, crafts, snacks and other great projects that go along with these great lessons! Join us this summer and win *The Incredible Race!*

Vacation Bible School at Zion

Mark your calendars! We have scheduled Vacation Bible School for the week of July 17 thru 21 from 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Join us on our *Adventure to Son Treasure Island* as we find a treasure on the island that is more precious than gold or silver - GOD'S LOVE! The children will learn how God's love is giving, kind, caring, forever and forgiving. It is going to be a great week of fun, fellowship and learning. As always, we need plenty of volunteers to make our VBS a success. Please consider helping and contact Debbie Fox at 330-966-2433. If you are not available during that week, there are still many other ways to help out. We will have donation cans, sign up sheets for food and supplies needed for the week and work days to do all of the prep work for VBS. We appreciate the support Zion's family always gives for this great event!

Sunday School Staff in the Spotlight

This month's Sunday School Staff Spotlight shines on *Annie Lemmo*, who has been a member at Zion for about three years. Annie has been helping with the Sunday School for the last two years. She has helped to teach the 3 & 4 year-old class, along with helping out with all the children's programs and anywhere else she is needed. Annie feels that it is very gratifying to teach and help the kids at Zion. Her favorite part is when all of the children are singing together. Annie also serves on Zion's Council as the Social Ministry Elder.

Annie is married to Mike, and has been for thirteen years. They have one son, Adam, who is in 2nd grade, and their family dog, Dakota. During the week, Annie is a Travel Agent with AAA. Her hobbies include traveling, drawing, reading and cooking. Annie's favorite foods include anything Mexican or Italian. Her favorite TV show is *Grey's Anatomy*, and her favorite movie is the classic, *Christmas Vacation*, with Chevy Chase. Annie loves to listen to all kinds of music, especially classical, country and jazz. Her country favorites are Kenny Chesney and Faith Hill, while her jazz favorite is Diana Krall.

When sitting down with a book, she prefers to read books by Dean Koontz. Annie is a very proud mom of Adam, and they have worked together on two Habitat for Humanity homes. We are very grateful to Annie for her dedication to Zion's children, and for the many ways she has found to serve at Zion! She is a wonderful and invaluable member of our congregation. Thanks Annie!

The Women of Zion

The monthly Women's Bible Study will meet on Tuesday, May 16, finishing up our nine-month focus on *Acting Boldly* with the fruit of the Spirit. May's fruit is *self-control*. The final fruit in our deluxe gift basket from God might present the biggest challenge: how to act boldly, yet with self-control. Boldness tempered with self-control might call for acts such as embracing fair-trade coffee campaigns and speaking up against social, cultural, and racial injustices. This fruit allows us to direct our energy wisely, and can assist us in acting boldly in all the other ways mentioned in our previous eight sessions. Join us as we meet in Luther Hall.

The *Lutheran Women's League* Annual Spring meeting will be held on May 8, 2006 at 7:00 p.m. in the St. Luke's Lutheran Community Chapel. David McClintock, Christian recording artist, will provide the musical program, with a short business meeting to follow. Please bring a potted RED geranium to be planted in the St. Luke landscape. Refreshments will be provided by First Lutheran Church, Canton.

The Clothing Closet invites donations of spring and summer clothing. Remember that all the clothing you donate needs to be clean, wearable, and ready for distribution.

ANNIVERSARIES IN MAY

Lou & Darlene Milavickas	May 8
Jim & Susan Whalen	May 9
Wayne & Janet Slease	May 22
Larry & Evelyn Moore	May 23
Herb & Cheryl Beadle	May 30

MAY SENIOR BIRTHDAYS



Happy Birthday to:
Gladys Miller **May 21**

Thank You's and More

Dear Members and Friends of Zion,

I would like to thank my church family for the prayers, cards, flowers, and visits. It was a long fight back this time. I am still working on it, and I hope to be my old self soon. Again, thank you to all.

Peace, Helen Edwards

Reaching out through Zion's Food Pantry

After seven wonderful years, Zion's Food Pantry is still running steady and, at times, at full throttle. It would better if our economy were improving, natural gas prices coming down, and the cost of gas no longer escalating, because all these things are putting more pressure on many people from all walks of life. When we haven't seen a client for a while, we always make it a point to let them know that it has been good not to see them, because in reality this means that things are

going okay and that they have not needed our help. Lately, however, things have turned ugly, and there is no relief in sight.

When things become drastic for our clients the mood of their impoverishment falls onto the entire pantry crew. We have two rules, which, as a food pantry, we try to abide by: rule number 1, if we won't eat it, we do not expect someone else to; rule number 2, if we have never been that hungry or desperate, we will not pass judgment on our pantry client. According to a recent Hunger Awareness Study, the number of households with children experiencing hunger as defined by the USDA [United States Department of Agriculture] has risen from 32% to 49%. That is significant by any measure.

We started our Food Pantry seven years ago just handing out food. But as we began listening with our ears, and our hearts soon followed. We now have the capability to direct our clients toward informational assistance, such as Access to Benefits Coalition, AARP/Medicare drug discount card, Home Energy Assistance Program, RX for Ohio and The Stark County Hunger Task Force. Zion Lutheran Church has got the greatest pantry crew anywhere. Everyone thoroughly gets it. We are simply trying "to grow in love and service by grace." Really it's a no-brainer. We do it because God calls us to serve. We do it because it is the right thing to do.

Saturday, May 13th, marks the annual FOOD POSTAL DRIVE. Once a year on the second Saturday in May, our wonderful postal workers not only deliver our mail, but they also make extra trips to pick up food placed by the homeowners in their mailbox. The food is then brought to post offices across our nation; from there, pantries load the items into vehicles to transport the food back to their local pantry. We're going to need your help to make this happen here at Zion. We will need volunteers to help *load and then unload 4,000 pounds of food at Zion*. We start around 3:00 p.m. at the North Canton Post Office on Main Street. If you can give us some help, please let us know.

Food Pantry Facts for March: we served 49 households with children, 30 households without children, 8 seniors (age 60 or older) with children, 9 seniors without, 61 adults (age 18-59) with children, 43 adults without children. The total number of children served (birth to 17) was 115. The *Food of the Month for May* will be five-pound bags of sugar.

It has been a great seven years. With God's blessings, we hope to continue serving for many more years to come. Thanks for your support, your help, and your presence on Tuesdays. Don't forget three dates in May: Tuesday, May 2; Saturday, May 13, and Tuesday, May 16.

Shirley Cavender (330-494-5392)

May is Mental Illness Awareness Month

The National Alliance on Mental Illness [NAMI] has designated May as *Mental Illness Awareness Month*. Charlie and Shirley Cavender have grown increasingly interested in this issue, and have taken time to put some of their thoughts together on paper. These thoughts are worth a good read, and another re-read. "Mental illness is everybody's business. Did you know that one out of every four families in America has a member with a serious mental illness? Two out of every one hundred young adults will be affected by a serious brain disease between the ages of eighteen and thirty.

"What is mental illness?" Mental illness is a general term, which refers to a group of neurobiological brain disorders that cause a person to think, act and feel different from others. People who have a mental illness can be very confused and frightened by their illness, and usually suffer a great deal. People through ignorance and misunderstanding, reject and discriminate against those with mental illness, causing further suffering. Mental illnesses are serious brain disorders - like epilepsy or Alzheimer's. They are biologically-based medical problems. In fact, the

newest medical technology can take general images that show the difference between brains with these disorders and normal brains. In any given year, about five million American adults suffer from an acute episode of one of five serious disorders: schizophrenia, bipolar, major depression, obsessive-compulsive, and panic/anxiety. Many of America's children - more than three million, in fact - suffer from these disorders, often referred to as emotional disturbances. If left untreated, brain disorders profoundly disrupt a person's ability to think, feel and relate to others and to his or her environment.

"What causes mental illness? You cannot catch a mental illness like a cold. Many factors combine to cause mental illness. Heredity may be a factor in mental illness as it is in diabetes and cancer. Recreational drugs may also contribute to the onset but are unlikely to be a single cause. Life stresses and physical illness also may be contributing factors. Anyone can develop a mental illness. Despite age - old myths and misinformation, 'mental illnesses' are not caused by bad character, poor childrearing, or any individual's behavior.

"Can mental illness be prevented or cured? At present, there is no effective prevention or cure for mental illness. However, mental illnesses are diagnosed and treated as precisely and effectively as many other medical disorders. Effective medical counseling, therapy and self-help community support programs help people live productive and rewarding lives. In Ohio, insurance companies still consider a brain illness as behavioral, which, in turn, means they will not cover the medical bills. But yet, it is a disease - just as is cancer, diabetes, Parkinson's or heart disease. It does involve a very vital organ, but because it is located in your skull, then it must be behavioral. Trust us when we say that one with a mental disorder would never choose to have this disease. If we were to ask our congregation, or any group of individuals, how many people have encountered cancer or heart disease in their families, hands would be waving. But when we asked how many have encountered mental illness, few hands would be raised, although many of us have direct knowledge of persons whom we know and love who struggle with mental illness. That's why we need more information, more awareness, more months to consider how to help shed the light of God's love on areas of need that cry out for understanding, compassion, and support."
