

July 2006 Newsletter

Greetings from the Pastor:

We have now passed the half way point in 2006: so far, so good. In fact, so far it's been *great*. We are six months into the budget year, and income is just about even with expenses. That is good news, since we've been surprised on the upside by some expenses, and we've also had some success in raising money outside the budget for such things as our new sound system. Income is well ahead of last year's pace. Offerings have been strong. Financial support for ministries both within the congregation and outside of the church has been encouraging, and impressive. On behalf of Zion's leadership, I thank you for your generosity and support. We have made some important progress in strengthening worship with our new family-friendly blended service at 10:30 a.m. Sunday mornings. The changes we've initiated have served us well. We've been blessed with more families joining us more often. The new music, the wonderful voices of the Praise Team, our focus on kids with the children's sermon and nursery care, lowering the barriers to participation and increasingly the warm embrace of new-comers and old-timers alike: all of these changes have been well received. We had a vision for what might be. We assembled the talent necessary to implement our ideas. We found great support from our members and friends. That is a formula for success anywhere people are working together to improve what we're doing and how we're doing it.

Our group of missionaries has just returned from a great week in New Orleans. Youth and adults, learning together, teaching each other: that is surely a sign that we are doing some things right! You will hear more about the mission trip in the pages that follow, but overall impressions make it clear that we have created a great foundation for the future of our ministry among Zion's youth. Our missionaries saw some pretty amazing things, and what fun we had while discovering the joy of doing the Lord's work! With every mission trip, people bond with folks they may not have really known all that well. That clearly happened with our youth, and among the adults, too, in New Orleans. But, in addition to the many silly moments we shared, the prolonged laughs we enjoyed, the deeply moving sights we saw and encounters we experienced, it is also true that our connections with Zion were made even stronger when we were able to work with a church whose food and clothing ministries were an important part of serving the community.

We're doing some good things here in North Canton - in terms of financial support, worship attendance, and community service. All of these strengths are beginning to come together for us as we pass the halfway mark of 2006. While the summer is now upon us, we don't have much time for coasting. Vacation Bible School is just a couple of weeks away. That's a tradition that our kids love. It's a ministry that our neighbors look forward to every year. It's a program that our entire congregational family has embraced with eager anticipation and broad support. Let's keep that going. Let's not lose the momentum we've set in motion. Let's face it. Your support for the work of the church, and for our goals of our growing healthier and stronger in 2006 has been nothing short of extraordinary. Let's keep that going, and going, and going

In His service, and yours,
Pastor Sherwindt

DAY-BY-DAY: Sharing the Good; Helping New Orleans Heal, June 10 - 17

Day #1: We came together at Zion early on Saturday, with plans to leave by 9:00 a.m., and we were close! Three of the four cars were on the road before 9:30 a.m., heading south to New Orleans. Matt Ross had a college entrance exam at 8:00 a.m., so the Ross-mobile started out closer to Noon. Our goal was to meet at First Lutheran Church in Nashville, Tennessee, where we would spend the night. We were dressed for the Gulf Coast - expecting hot, humid heat. When the temperature sank below 60o in Columbus, it was quite a shock to everyone in shorts. By the time we got to Louisville, it was back in the 80's. In Nashville, it was 89o at 7:00 p.m., central time. The church had cots and air-conditioning. It was located right downtown. In a Nashville minute, we were walking down Broadway in the center of what is truly one of America's friendliest cities, with live music in every establishment, the Grand Old Opry, the First Baptist Church, and a Country Music Awards Music Festival. What a day! What a night!

Day #2: We were up and out of First Lutheran Church by 7:00 a.m. Corey Beaber, Karen Kirk, Bob Lancashire, Steve & Linda Ross, Matt Ross, Nicole Ross, and her friend Michelle Cohen, Pastor Sherwindt, Mark Votaw, Jon Votaw, Chase Weinman, and two guests, Sandy Misco and Jan Smuda. All four cars were traveling together, sort of, at least to our morning coffee stop at *It's A Grind!* We were still together, kind of, when we stopped at Cracker Barrel for breakfast - or was it brunch? We were in New Orleans by 5:00 p.m. Well, three of our cars were. We were a loose caravan. The first signs of Katrina appeared alongside of I-59 about 135 miles north of New Orleans: 100 miles south to north, 900 miles west to east, 90,000 square miles, the size of the island of Great Britain, scarred or ravaged by Katrina! This was not just a flood. That's the wrong paradigm. In some ways, it was like a tsunami. In every way, it was not the look of a disaster we were expecting. When we arrived at the Adullam Christian Fellowship, we were shocked by what Katrina left behind ... but very nicely surprised by our lodgings. We were originally told to expect an outdoor site, with tents, no toilets, no showers. We found an indoor site, with running water, toilets, showers, and a generator for electricity! The bugs were there, as promised, in more varieties than sprays, lotions, or bombs would battle. But we could not have been more pleased to find showers - no hot water, but no one noticed in the hot, humid heat of New Orleans. We had arrived. The site was great, and all was well.

Day #3: Mike met us at 8:30 a.m., and introduced us to our site and our work. We were going to knock down the ceiling in one corner of the building. Then, it was off into the neighborhood to look at a duplex apartment that our hosts wanted us to gut. That's right, we were going to be gutting a house that our hosts hoped to renovate. The work was dirty, the sun was shining, and the day was hot. It was great! It was an Ernie Banks moment, for demolitioners - Let's gut two! We were gutting homes, all of us, guys and gals. You should have seen the look on Bob Lancashire's face, a look of great pride, when he taught two of our boys where to hammer the frame in order to take out a window! Then, later, it was four boys versus a cast-iron bath tub. The tub lost, and was carried out in pieces to the long pile of trash, once family treasures, now just sitting along the street, indistinguishable from all the other piles and all the other streets.

The showers at the Adullam Christian Fellowship were great - no hot water, but, again, no one noticed! Actually, Mother Nature provided her own showers that evening, with thunder and lightning. and rain pouring down in sheets. We finished our sharing time with

communion just in time for the storm to move overhead. There were no little cat's feet, but flashes of light and booming thunder. The adults moved under the veranda for cover. Our youth had different ideas, first the boys, then the girls - Jon, Matt, Corey and Chase, then Nicki and Michelle - testing the waters, so to speak, getting drenched, then splashed, sprayed, and soaked! It was all in fun, a great ending to an unforgettable day. This was a day that the Lord had made; and we were glad that it ended with a whole lot of rejoicing

Day #4: Our day began again with assignments given at 8:30 a.m. The whole group met with Denise and Nolan, members of the Adullam Christian Fellowship who organized and oversaw one of the bigger sites of Operation Blessing, a regional ministry offering food, clothing, and a hot lunch to anyone in St. Bernard Parish who felt the need. Three hundred and twelve persons came through the line on Tuesday, receiving all sorts of food, other household items, even some reading material telling about the free medical and dental clinics on site. Most of the folks in St. Bernard Parish are living in FEMA trailers, their cars, or who knows where. It will be a long road back to normal. Over 90% of the housing stock was destroyed. We did not see many homes that were habitable, but this is changing, slowly, at a snail's pace, but moving in the right direction. St. Bernard Parish looked like a third world disaster zone, with piles of trash lining the streets, and long piles of ruined merchandise from stores lining the state highways. Words cannot describe it. Everyone's gratitude at our arrival made it all worthwhile.

Denise said it best. The Lord was teaching her about the things we should value, and they're not things. Trust in the Lord. Follow Jesus' lead. Invest in the work God calls us to do. There was surely plenty of that. Half the group stayed with Denise and Nolan with the food and clothing ministry, and half the group went with Mark Votaw to do some more gutting. Nicki and Michelle stayed with Linda and Karen helping with *Operation Blessing*; the boys went with Mark. Bob, Steve, and Pastor split their time between both sites. We had found the perfect site, where everyone in our group could find work to do, with assignments that introduced us to ordinary people with lots of stories to share. We were moved by their stories, and humbled by their gratitude. We were the ones who were grateful, for the opportunity God had given us to see things we had not imagined, to serve in ways that opened our eyes, our minds, our hearts.

Day #5: Wednesday was a repeat of Tuesday, with the girls working with Operation Blessing, and the guys gutting homes. Bob did some truck-driving finagling with FEMA, securing a couple of loads of much-desired bottled water for folks walking through the lines at the food ministry. Steve drove the forklift. Linda kept the tables piled high with canned goods and other assorted items. Nicki and Michelle kept the bins stocked with powerade, flavored water, and papaya juice. Karen was at her station with the clothing ministry. Mark, Corey, Chase, Matt, and Jon returned for lunch looking like chimney sweeps! What a sight! Black dirt everywhere!

The evening brought different experiences. Some went bowling. Others saw the community of Lake Village, an upper middle class neighborhood on New Orleans' north side, facing many of the same challenges as St. Bernard Parish, except that more residents could dip into their own savings to start the rebuilding process, which was moving along at a slightly faster pace. The huge challenge is that so many residents have not yet returned, mostly because they have nothing to return to - no home, no job, no security, no insurance, little assurance that New Orleans will be made safer with higher levees, more securely constructed, and reinforced with concrete and steel. The city isn't yet half its pre-Katrina size, population-wise. Lutherans have lost 75% of their pre-Katrina members. Some of us drove into the French Quarter, enjoying the chicory coffee and fresh-fried beignets at the *Café du Monde*. This area is back. but without nearly as many tourists as had been the case before Katrina.

We returned for our usual evening ritual, group sharing, holy communion, and then bug-time, I mean, bed-time.

Day #6: The work day sped by as we anticipated a night on the town of New Orleans. We had decided to take a River Boat Cruise up the Mississippi. We were in the city at 6:30 p.m., on the boat at 7:00 p.m., with a Dixieland Jazz Band, a great breeze, and some wonderful sights of the skyline, sensing the history, pointing yonder to the field where the Battle of New Orleans took place after the war was won and peace declared. There was the Murphy Oil Refinery, where over a million gallons of gasoline spilled from the large storage tank that cracked when the 37-foot surge brought Katrina's waters over the levees and into St. Bernard Parish. It is quite a sight to look over to the city from the river, and actually see that the city is well below sea level! We enjoyed our two-hour cruise on the river, and then headed into the French Quarter, where we found some great sandwiches at the Quarter-Master. After eating our fill, we headed back to the Adullam Christian Fellowship, where after sharing time and communion, we thought about what we needed to do in order to head out the next morning. It was a great week, life-changing.

Days #7, 8, 9: Mark, Jon, and Chase headed east to the Outer Banks, where a week of vacation with extended family awaited them. The rest of us headed north toward Nashville, where an evening without bugs in an air-conditioned church was calling. Nashville was great the second time through, and the next morning we were up and ready to find our way back home in North Canton. Bob and Pastor left first, and arrived first, in time for our Saturday Evening Worship Service. The rest of the group joined us for worship at the 10:30 a.m. service on Sunday. In the meantime, Brian Walters had put together a video collage, with photos emailed online, and music that fit the mood of our journey perfectly. We've had two sermons on New Orleans, a pictorial collage, presentations by Bob Lancashire and Steve Ross, a four-and-a-half minute video created by Brian Walters, and a *between-the-services reception planned for the Sunday* following Vacation Bible School on *July 23*. I hope you'll join us to hear more about what our missionaries experienced, how we helped, what we learned, and how we grew ... in our love for the Lord, our fondness for one another, and our feelings of empathy for the victims of Katrina.

Our Telephone Pledge Drive is another GREAT SUCCESS!

We extend our deepest thanks to our callers and to our contributors! Once again, we exceeded our highest hopes by a wide margin. We had hoped to raise \$10,000 through our Telephone Pledge Drive. The response was far more generous than we had any right to expect. We had hoped to find as many as eight members willing to pledge at the \$500 level. Instead we found ten! We had hoped to find eight members to pledge at the \$250 level. We found that many, and more. These two groups helped us to raise over \$11,000 in pledges. Wow! We had hoped to find twenty members to pledge at the \$100 level, and forty to pledge at the \$50 level. If we're able to meet these goals, our Telephone Pledge Drive will have raised \$15,000 for our new sound system. We'll need every penny of it, and more.

We are thrilled with the response of support we have received. It seems that the good will inspired by our renovation of the restrooms last year, together with the fun we enjoyed with the Steel Drum Band in April, has fueled some genuine optimism about our future and buoyant sense of camaraderie in the present. Brian Walters helped us to see what we could accomplish with the restrooms, and now, he'll us hear what we can do with the sound system. It needs to be updated and improved. We have enjoyed the difference a better sound system can make with the system we've been borrowing for the past year. It has whet our

appetite for something better; and better costs more. We hope to hear more about the specifics of what we need and what we can afford in August.

At present, we have received over \$14,500 in both pledges and gifts. We really do need for our members and friends to continue to help in offering their support ... at any level. We would like to exceed our most optimistic estimates. When these optimistic estimates are added to the fun we had hosting *PANomenon*, the Rittman High School Steel Drum Band, the idea of reaching the \$17,500 mark displayed in the bar graph to the left is very much in play. If you have not yet pledged, please let our callers know what you can give. If you would like to give without pledging, that is welcome. The important news is that almost everyone has enjoyed the opportunity of getting on board. As we've been saying since Vacation Bible School taught us about the *team* in teamwork last year - *Together Everyone Accomplishes More*. That certainly has been true when it comes to working together as a team in raising funds for the new sound system.

So, thanks around - to Laura Thompson (Council President), Cindy Ferry (Resource Elder), Brian Walters (Task Force Chairperson), Chuck Danner and Flo Jensen (all-around great helpers and callers); and thanks as well to all who responded so graciously, offering the support of your generous pledge. Make sure that you've made your check payable to *Zion Lutheran Church*, with "*new sound system*" on the memo line.

Church Council News

We again enjoyed excellent attendance at a combined June-July meeting: Laura Thompson, Carol Rossbach, Dave Palumbo, Jayne Schrader, Pete Fenney, Sharon Stout, Lorin Beaver, Cindy Ferry, Bob Lancashire, Mary Humbert, Steve Ross, Renee Schrader, and Pastor Sherwindt. Pete Fenney attended his final meeting, for a least a year, as his eight years of service reach a term limit! Steve Ross will now move into the role of Witness Ministry Elder, with newly elected Mary Humbert serving as Caring Ministry Elder.

Financially speaking, May continued the healthy pattern of April, with a good deal of our income going to the new sound system, which is not a part of the Operating Budget. While Operating Budget Income for the month of May fell below actual expenses, for the first five months of the year, income missed covering expenses by just \$355.10!

In terms of new members, the baptism for Avery Kitzmiller, daughter of Aron & Nikki Kitzmiller, was scheduled for August 5. We were happy to receive the Milek family - Brian & Nicole, and three children, Lya, Kathryn, Weston - by way of transfer from our sister ELCA congregation in Minnesota, St. Mary Magdalene Lutheran Church.

More Financial Facts

Through May, we had received \$10,802.76 for the new sound system. That increased in June to \$14,548.76. The matching check from *Thrivent Financial for Lutherans* for \$700.00 arrived, which brought the total for our *Sounds of the Caribbean* fundraiser to \$2,234.00. As is evident from our graph and news update on the previous page, we are very encouraged by the support with which this fundraising drive has been received

Our *Helping New Orleans Heal* Mission Trip saved a good deal of money by using four personal vehicles, rather than renting vans. We spent a total of \$4,526.10, with \$1,500.00 going to the Adullam Christian Fellowship in St. Bernard Parish. and \$250 to First Lutheran

Church in Nashville, \$1,179.99 for gasoline, \$946.34 for food, and \$649.77 for a variety of miscellaneous expenses, including bowling, work gloves, first aid kits, and the Natchez River Boat ride along the Mississippi River!

Our financial support for ministries beyond the Operating Budget through May includes such recipients as the Northeastern Ohio Synod (\$7,708.35), Zion's Food Pantry (\$1,648.00), ELCA Global Missionary Support (\$1,500.00), St. Luke's Lutheran Community (\$600.00), and Stark County Campus Ministry (\$150.00), putting us a tad ahead of last year's pace. We still have a lot to do for *Habitat for Humanity of Greater Canton* this summer; and we have some ground to cover in raising funds for our Food Pantry. These ministries will receive more of our focus in the months ahead. Stay tuned as details develop.

Habitat for Humanity

***Thrivent Financial for Lutherans* has pledged \$100,000,000 to the work Lutherans are doing with Habitat for Humanity. Three homes are being built in the Greater Canton area, with funds made available through this commitment. Thrivent is picking up 70% of the cost; Habitat for Humanity will raise 20%; area Lutheran congregations, including Zion, will contribute the remaining 10%. Right now we are asking for volunteers to help with the construction of these homes. Renee Schrader is helping to organize our efforts. We hope that there are a good number of our members, younger and older, who will show interest and offer their time. We would also like to think that our youth and their youth advisors will want to chip in and help**

One of these houses is located in Canton at *1433 Second Street NE*. While sign-up sheets are available with the weekly bulletin, we need help with some of the following tasks: landscaping (July 8), drywall (July 8, 15), painting (July 22), cabinets and doors (July 29), baseboards (August 12), finish trim (August 19, 26), clean-up (September 23).

Another house is located in Canton at *618 Ninth Street NW*. The needs are as follows: roofing (July 15, 22, 29), windows (July 22), vinyl siding (July 29, August 12), forms (August 19), landscaping (September 23, 30), insulation (August 12), drywall (August 19, 26, September 9), paint (September 16), cabinets and doors (September 23), base-boards (September 30), finish trim (October 7, 14, 21), clean-up (November 11).

A typical workday begins at 8:30 a.m., with devotions and a snack at 10:00 a.m., lunch at Noon, and volunteers heading home by 3:30 p.m. We need your help. Call in, sign up, and come on down! We'd love to see you.

Zion's Food Pantry

The Stark County Hunger Task Force is celebrating 25 years of service with a community-wide invitation to *Join Hands with One Thousand Neighbors*. Zion's Food Pantry is an integral part of this network, with Shirley Cavender serving as Vice-President of the Board. The goal is to raise \$25,000 by finding 1,000 neighbors who will donate \$25 in order to increase the pantries' budgets to meet rising food costs, provide additional funds for holiday meals, fund new pantries in under-served areas. Every dollar donated will stay right here in Stark County. Zion is working on plans to join in this effort. Stay tuned as details develop. Zion's Food Pantry will be open just one Tuesday in July. That day is July 11th. We have been blessed with a growing list of volunteers, and for that we are thankful: but we still need

more, and we still need you. Our day begins 9:30 a.m. with the arrival of our delivery from the Akron-Canton Food Bank. There is organizing, stacking, and getting ready for the families we serve. We distribute food from 1:00 p.m. to 2:00 p.m., after which some reorganizing and a little clean-up brings our day to a close. We are open for service on July 11, and then again on August 1 and 15. We look forward to your joining us.

The *Food of the Month* continues to focus on peanut butter and bread. Since the schools are not open during the summer, our families can use these extras to make sandwiches for their children. Kids need to eat, and we're happy to help. You can leave these extras in the box provided in the Narthex. Drop off your donations when you join us for worship, or anytime during the week, preferably when the Church Office is open, between 9:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m., Monday through Friday.

Synod Assembly Report

*The Northeastern Ohio Synod Assembly
by Renee Schrader, Voting Delegate*

On Friday, June 16, I attended the Synod Assembly in Akron. I didn't really know what to expect. What I got was a great worship service with other Lutherans and the chance to meet a lot of people. It was great to see some familiar faces and to meet some new ones. It takes a lot of people to help run things smoothly within our synod

The best part of the day for me was the keynote speaker. Her name was Dr. Carol Jacobson. She is a professor from Pacific Lutheran Seminary in California. She had a lot of great and uplifting stories about the youth she works with. During her speech she made mention of a few myths that people have about the youth. The myth that I felt was the most important was this: *Children are the future of the church!*

You may wonder, as I did, why this is a myth. I've heard it a lot of times and used to think the same way. Eventually the children in our church will be the ones running things; therefore, they are the future, right? Wrong! Children are not the future of the church, they are the PRESENT! They are here now! We, as a church, need to use the children NOW. Sure we have to help guide and teach them for the future but we have to use them now! Take, for instance, our recent youth mission trip. As we heard reports from their mission trip to New Orleans, the youth were very instrumental in all that they did down there. They were, and are, hard working and caring. As we look for ways to make our church better and grow, we need to remember the youth. Guide, teach, and utilize them. They can do so many wonderful things, all we have to do, as a congregation, is let them.

Odds 'n Ends at Zion

The Men of Zion will meet for dinner on Wednesday, July 5th, at 6:00 p.m. We are looking for ways, and for men, to help with the Habitat houses we're building in Canton. Why not join us for dinner, and join in the fun of helping with Habitat for Humanity? Also, we thank the congregation for your donation of geraniums from the Festival of Pentecost, and we thank Fred Elsass for getting those geraniums planted around the church. Our thanks to everyone who does so much to make the church look so beautiful.

The Comfort Givers will be doing double duty as fundraisers for mission during VBS. You can help. Just join our quilters any day during the week of July 17-21. We are always able to

use your help, and the results of our auction help with funding the mission of the wider church.

The *Women of Zion* will meet for their monthly Bible study on July 18th, 9:30 a.m., continuing the theme of *Raising Up Healthy Women and Girls*. We'll talk about health and wholeness, shaping attitudes, changing behaviors, and improving health.

Jessica Lynn Stayer extends her thanks to the congregational family of Zion Lutheran Church for letting her, and her family, use Luther Hall for a great graduation party.

ANNIVERSARIES IN JULY

July 2 Ed and Karen Gronow

July 9 Jack and Pat Taylor

July 10 Rick and Connie Riffle

July 10 Pastor and Marilyn

July 19 Chuck and Helen Heller

July 20 Brian and Suzanne Walters

July 21 John and Bonnie Farmer

July 27 Steve and Darlene Dague

July 31 Jon and Karen Samuelson

More Odds 'n Ends

Our Co-ed Softball League is in full swing, and *Team Zion* has gotten off to a winning start. Our season opened with a win against Trinity Baptist. We then settled for a tie with Grace United Methodist, and followed that with victories over Cornerstone Chapel and Northminster Presbyterian. We have games remaining against St. Paul Catholic Church (July 9 at 5 p.m. on field #1), the Interfaith Campus Ministry (July 16 at 6 p.m. on field #1), and Zion United Church of Christ (July 23 at 5 p.m. on field #4). The round robin tournament begins on July 30, and concludes on the afternoon of August 6.

We've got a great team assembled for this year: Mike Aquilo, Becky Aquilo and Tim Aquilo, Randy Cizek, Todd Cizek and Valerie Cizek, Michelle Cohen, Todd Elsass, Zach Fitz, Dean and Debbie Fox, Johanna Henderson, Mary Humbert, Laura Kay, Bob Lancashire, Debbie Lancashire, Matt Leasure, Tina Morris, Melissa Riffle, Alex Robbins, Shelly Rocco, Doug Roman, Taylor Roman, Linda Ross, Nicole Ross, Steve Ross, and Jon Votaw

Lutheran Men in Mission are hosting a Golf Outing to raise funds for men and women entering the ministry. It's a best ball scramble at the Raintree Country Club, set for Saturday, July 29, beginning at Noon. The \$75 registration fee covers 18 holes, a steak dinner, and refreshments.

While were talking about the *Lutheran Men in Mission*, we would like to thank them for their \$125 donation to our mission trip, *Helping New Orleans Heal*. This gift was a part of the Chili Cookoff Fund-raiser a couple of months ago, where Chris Thomas earned an honorable mention for the high heat he offered with his homemade chili.

Sunday School News

We took the time between our worship services on June 25 to honor our graduates with some good stories, some great cake, and a few gifts. We are very appreciative of our high school youth who serve as worship leaders on Sunday mornings. As a way of saying thanks to graduating seniors and four-year acolytes - *Chad Riffle, Matt Slease, and Anna Sherwindt* - we presented gift checks for \$100. Matt and Anna will use their gift to buy books for the fall semester. Chad is headed to the United States Navy, and will find many uses for the gift we gave. We also included *Valerie Cizek* and *Melissa Riffle* among those whom we honored. Melissa has continued to serve in many ways during the two years she has been at Stark State. We were happy to present her with a \$50 gift certificate to Borders as she heads to Akron University next fall. We hadn't yet taken the time to remember Valerie for her years of service at worship, and in the nursery. So, we thanked her on the 25th with our gift and best wishes.

Our Summer Sunday School Program has begun. Our curriculum is *The Incredible Race*, which consists 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*! We meet every Sunday at 9:15 a.m. Everyone is invited.

SON TREASURE ISLAND: Vacation Bible School at Zion

Join us at *Son Treasure Island* from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. on Monday through Friday, July 17-21, here at Zion. Our week-long adventure will take us on a hunt for the ultimate treasure, God's love! Our children will learn how God's love is giving, kind, caring, forever, and forgiving. Vacation Bible School is designed for children who have completed Kindergarten through Sixth Grade. It's free for all who participate! Activities include Bible study, games, crafts, singing, outdoor activities, and community service. We serve a different lunch every day. We'll design our own T-shirts on Tuesday. We have *Family Night* on Thursday evening, when we get to hear the kids sing, enjoy some great ice cream, raffle off our quilts, which helps to raise money for mission. Friday is *Beach Party Day*, with lot of games and outdoor fun, weather permitting. You will not want to miss out on this year's edition of Vacation Bible School. Kids love it. Neighbors and friends are invited. It's a great tradition of fun and service.

Vacation Bible School offers lots of opportunities for serving the community. Every day we will receive an offering, with a contest between the boys and girls challenged to collect change. Each team will have their own jar, and the heaviest jar wins! This money is donated to a local charity.

Also, we ask that each child bring in a food item each day. This food will help stock *Zion's Food Pantry*, which offers help to many families in our community.

Once again, our kids will help to make quilt squares, which *Zion's Comfort Givers* will sew into quilts for Lutheran World Relief. We will raffle one of these quilts at our Ice Cream Social on Thursday evening. Tickets will be available during the week - 1 of \$1, 6 tickets for \$5

In addition to these collective efforts, on Monday each of the classes will be given a list of service projects from which they will select their project for the week. Some examples of the projects we offer are collecting items needed for school kits and health kits, creating coloring kits for children in hospitals, making cards or baskets for the elderly.

The truth is that our church family at Zion knows that community service is an important

part of the VBS experience. Service teaches our children love and compassion. It also helps to work together as important members of God's Team. We want *to grow in love and service by grace*. And, as we are learning, *Together Everyone Accomplishes More*.
As is always the case, we will need plenty of volunteers to make our Vacation Bible School 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. That's Monday through Friday, July 17-21, from 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Be there!
