

November 2007 Newsletter

A WORD FROM OUR PASTOR

Dear members and friends of Zion,

On behalf of the Worship Ministry, I would like to thank the congregation for listening to our suggestions for Zion's Christmas Eve worship schedule. In last month's newsletter, and a personal letter that followed, we explained the problem of scheduling too many services for the worshipers we serve. Years ago, we filled our Sanctuary twice, with two standing room only crowds gathered at Zion on Christmas Eves past. That's not the case presently, and hasn't been for some time. During the five years I have served as Pastor, we have had strong attendance at the 8:30 p.m. service, surprisingly good attendance at the 6:00 p.m. service, and declining attendance at the 10:30 p.m. service.

The Worship Ministry suggested that we schedule two services on Christmas Eve, our family-friendly, Praise Team-led service at 6:00 p.m., and our traditional Candle-Light service at 8:30 p.m., which begins with the Senior Choir's Carol Sing at 8:00 p.m. The 6:00 p.m. service has become popular for families with young children, here at Zion and at many churches in the area. It features multi-media story-telling, songs offered by our children and the Children's Choir, musical leadership of Zion's Praise Team, along with our Carol Setting for Holy Communion. The 8:00 p.m. service features Zion's Senior Choir, our pipe organ, the traditional Candle-Light feature of Christmas Eve worship, along with our Carol Setting for Holy Communion.

During the Sundays in October, we asked for your feedback with bulletin inserts that served as voting ballots. We received a very nice response, with 156 total votes. 124 votes were cast in support of the option recommended by the Worship Ministry, namely two services, one at 6:00 p.m., the other at 8:30 p.m. There were 20 votes that supported the notion of offering two services, but preferring the 10:30 p.m. option to 8:30 p.m. There were 5 votes cast in favor of keeping the present three service schedule, and 7 votes cast expressing no preference. Again, we thank you for your interest and for your support. It is difficult when decisions need to be made that reduce the options we have come to offer over the years. It can feel like we are cutting back on our commitment to worship and serve the Lord; but even the Scriptures suggest that it is often the case that strategic pruning can lead to healthier growth, and that's our goal.

Our goal is to grow healthier and stronger as a congregation. The key to this growth is worship. Worship is what sets us apart as God's people. We want to cultivate a sense of good will; but more, we want to know and do God's will. We want to join with all communities of good will in serving the good of the wider community; but more to the point, we must always remember why God has set us apart with His call to be the church. Worship is where we gather as the people of God, focusing on the Word through which Christ calls us, feeding upon the bread of life in Holy Communion, seeking the peace that comes with knowing God's grace and sharing Christ's love. God has blessed us in many ways. We have enjoyed five-plus years free of controversy and filled with stability and growth - in membership, stewardship, and discipleship. We have a great congregation, with a great location, and lots of opportunities to shine with the light of God's love alive among us. This love grows deeper through worship and wider through service. That is our aim and our goal: to grow in love and service by grace. We

trust that the decisions we make will, with your support, continue to move us in that direction.

In His service, and yours,
Pastor Sherwindt

HOLY COMMUNION: LIVING IN GOD'S AMAZING GRACE

*A Report on our Communion Class for Kids
Submitted by Charlie Danner*

Our young students ranging from first through sixth grade came eager to learn more about Holy Communion, well, somewhat eager. The first session focused on the meaning of Communion as we have come to understand from Martin Luther. I am happy to note that for the very first time since we have been offering these classes, when asked who Martin Luther was, no one answered, “a Civil Rights Leader.”

We discussed the “Means of Grace” as the ways God shows his love to us through the Word and Sacraments. A part of this discussion raises the question of what is required of us to know we are ready to receive the body and blood. Our answer - simply a believing heart. This, then, opens the door to discussing a believing heart as a faithful heart, a loving heart, a forgiving heart, all while remembering that we have Jesus in our hearts to be with us.

This year we learned, through videos, vivid examples of a believing heart. The story of the hymns became great teaching tools. We took a closer look at Amazing Grace and It Is Well With My Soul in learning about forgiveness and faith under extreme difficulties. Video clips from Jesus of Nazareth and Les Miserables taught us more about our Lutheran relentless emphasis on the good news of the Gospel verses the Law.

Our students of all ages were extremely receptive, respectful, and responsible. Thanks to the helpers and special thanks to parents for entrusting your children to these sessions. Our Communion Class is just one step in an ongoing journey of learning, loving, and responding to what God is doing for us with his amazing grace.

Our classes began on Sunday, October 7, when, after the children's sermon, we headed into the resource center for the classes I've described. We followed this procedure on October 14, 21, and 28. We now look forward to celebrating the completion of this year's edition of our communion class on Sunday, November 4, when we will congratulate our children with certificates that thank them for participating.

Once again, we've enjoyed the journey of growing in our knowledge of God's grace. We thank our teachers (Debbie Fox, Renee Schrader, and myself), and our many helpers. Mostly, we want to thank Zion's children (and their parents) for the interest they have shown in learning more about this gift of grace called Holy Communion.

We are very proud as a church family of everyone who participated: Grant Beaber, Christopher Thompson, Marcus Rhodes, Casey Walters, Jeremy Fox, Justin Dague, Cassie Frank, Mallory Rhodes, Summer Heller, Kat Milek, Brooke Stout, Christian Henderson, Zach Mathie. Carson Lancashire. Eric Dague. Jaret Beaber. Nathan Fox. Carlev Frank. Lva Milek.

Brandon Stout, Natalie Henderson, Max Jacobs, Savannah Heller, and Kevin Walters. God's blessings to all!

CHURCH COUNCIL NEWS

Carol Rossbach called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. Members in attendance were Jayne Schrader, Mark Votaw, Mary Humbert, Steve Ross, Bob Lancashire, Tina Beaber, Chris Thomas, Betty Tracy and Pastor Sherwindt. Our business focused on putting the finishing touches on our 2008 Proposed Budget Guide-lines, which we did in record time. This set the stage for putting together our plans for the Congregational Meeting on October 24.

The beginning of our meeting enjoyed the news reported in the Treasurer's Report, which showed that we cut our operating deficit for the year in half with September's surprising surplus. Income was very healthy for a five-Sunday month, and our expenses came in on the low side of expectations. This means that we enter the strongest quarter of the year with a very manageable deficit. We can say with confidence that congregational generosity seems able to support our operating budget, while also pledging generously to the Sanctuary Renovation Fund.

All things are ready for a busy and successful month, with a Clean-up Day set for October 13, the Youth Missions Craft Show, October 20, the Congregational Meeting, October 24, and Reformation Sunday on October 28.

CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

The congregational dinner, which preceded our congregational meeting on October 24, was yet another excursion into dining excellence at Zion. We were initially panicked when Darlene Milavickas developed a case of the flu, leaving a gaping hole in our plans for dinner. Our Singing Chef came to the rescue, and prepared chicken parmigiana, with sides of spaghetti and garlic bread, and salad, too. Church Council members (and their wives) prepared a dessert bar that was out-of-this-world delicious. With the food we served, it is no wonder we had no problem reaching a quorum. This year we were also helped by scheduling our Annual Sunday School Halloween Party at the same time as our congregational meeting. The number of voting members present exceeded seventy!

Our discussion of the budget went very smoothly, with congregational approval following quickly. While the votes were being counted, Brian Walters offered an update on our Sanctuary Renovation plans. The good news of generously overshooting our goals for the Sanctuary Renovation Fund became even better news when Brian reported that the actual costs for painting the Sanctuary came in well under budget. The changes we've made thus far have been well received. Jim Fidler then gave an update on our plans for overhauling our present boiler system. While it's still too early to speak in specifics about what needs to be done, the Boiler Task Force is presently examining five written bids, and trying to determine the right criteria for evaluating these different approaches to solving our problems. Our present boiler is 47 years old. If all goes according to plan, Spring of 2008 will be a good time to begin investing in a system that will serve us well for the next 40-plus years.

YOUTH NEWS AT ZION: OUR 2007 CRAFT SHOW & OKTOBERFEST

Thank you to the Youth of Zion and our Sunday School leaders for their help and hard work in getting ready for the 2007 edition of our Youth Missions Craft Show. This year's show was a great success! A huge thank you goes out to Diane Dunphy for organizing and heading up this great event. The Raffle Baskets created by the Sunday School classes were once again a big hit. Thank you to our teachers, the youth, and their parents for their donations, as well as to Connie Frank & Diane Dunphy for putting the baskets together! The Raffle Basket winners were: the Basket Just for Boys, Jeremy Fox; the Basket Just for Girls, the Enolds; the Chocolate & Sweet Treats Basket, James Ewing; the Family Fun Basket, Margie Schwallie; the Pamper Yourself Basket, Shirley Cary; and the Ultimate Ohio State Fan Basket, Zach Mathie.

We also extend a hearty thank you to the Youth of Zion and our youth leaders for making great items for the Youth of Zion Craft Table. The ornaments turned out beautifully - although we still need you to buy the as-yet unsold ornaments dangling from the tree in the Narthex. We also sold cook books, which were a great hit, along with our delicious chocolate covered pretzels. We really appreciate all of the hard work that went into preparing for the Craft Show. A special thanks to Mary Humbert, Linda Ross, Tina Beaber, Connie Frank, Connie Riffle, Janet Slease for leading our youth in making these great items. We would also like to thank the members of the congregation - too many to name - who donated items to sell, which helped raise even more funds for the Youth of Zion. Our thanks go out to Bob Lancashire, Mike Aquilo, and Chris Thomas for helping with set up, and to Renee, Jayne & Adam Schrader, Charlie Danner, Mary Humbert, Karen Kirk, Connie & Melissa Riffle, Janet Slease and the many youth who helped in taking care of the bake sale, the concession stand, and youth tables the day of the Craft Show!

Total Income for our Craft Show exceeded last year's success. The sale of German Dinners raised \$2,569.00, while our Craft Show and related activities raised \$2,566.19. We incurred more expenses this year both because of our interest in advertising in Our Town and the Canton Repository, and because we needed to purchase more signs to post in yards and along area streets. Our German dinner-related expenses were \$555.24; expenses related to our Raffle Baskets and Craft Tables were \$434.92; and expenses related to signs, advertising, mailings and postage were \$980.87. To sum it all up, total income to date is \$5,135.20, and total expenses are \$1,971.03, bringing our net gain to date to \$3,164.17. When we remember that we didn't have such a fundraising event four years ago, it is truly amazing that we have created this incredibly successful annual tradition. It has not been without a lot of hard work and many hours spent hoping for the best, praying for the strength, and calling lots of folks selling German dinners. But the joys of our success have made all the sacrifices worth the effort.

The list of persons we need to thank for our success with the German Dinner part of our Craft Show has to include the kitchen crew of Dale Jacobs, Mark Votaw, Marilyn Espe-Sherwindt, Dave Palumbo, and Susan Everhart. Pastor Sherwindt oversaw the sale of German Dinner tickets, and all of our youth, together with their parents, did a great job in adding to the number of dinners sold. Our joyous thanks go out to Corey Beaber, Todd Cizek, Becca Coulter, Ethan Frock, Christian Heller, Laura Kay, Ronda Keating, McKenzie Kirk, Ben & Matt Mathie, Ashley Porter, Brooke & Taylor Roman, Nicki Ross, Kelly Walters, and Chase Weinman

GREAT NEWS FROM ZION'S SUNDAY SCHOOL

Upcoming Events - Mark your calendars!

Sunday, November 4th: Our Christmas Program Rehearsal begins during Sunday School
Sunday, November 4th: Celebration of Certificates with Completion of Communion Class
Sunday, November 4th: Children's Choir (younger group) sings at the 10:30 a.m. service
Sunday, November 18: Youth Thanksgiving Service Event in Luther and Memorial Halls
Tuesday, November 20: Youth of Zion Fundraiser at Marco Pizza, 11:00 a.m. - 11:00 p.m.
Saturday, December 15: Dress Rehearsal for Children's Christmas Program at 12:00 p.m.
Sunday, December 16: Zion's Children's Christmas Program at the 10:30 a.m. service

Pre-K through the Sixth Grade

The month of November will be dedicated to our Children's Christmas Program and service projects for Thanksgiving. On Sunday, November 4th, the children will begin rehearsals for this year's Christmas program, which is called The Road to Christmas. This program will answer the questions: how do we get to Christmas and what signs will there be? There are plenty of speaking roles for all who are interested. We also have roles for those who do not want a speaking part. The children will meet in the Choir Room at their normal times for choir practice, and then we will practice their parts and staging. We will do this each Sunday during Sunday School for the month of November. This is a great time of the year for Zion's Sunday School children. The kids have a lot of fun and learn about the true meaning of Christmas. It is worth repeating, again and again, that the Children's Christmas Program will be performed at the 10:30 a.m. service on Sunday, December 16th.

We will also be working on our Thanksgiving service project during Sunday School. The kids will be working on a project in connection with Zion's Food Pantry. We are making specially decorated Thanksgiving bags for the Food Pantry delivery of holiday meals. We will have a special youth event on Sunday, November 18th, after the 10:30 a.m. service to fill these bags for our Food Pantry families. We will start with lunch and then get to work. We should be finished between 1:30 p.m. and 2:00 p.m. This event is for all of Zion's Youth, Pre-K thru High School.

Zion's Annual Children's Communion Class

This year's Comunion Class had a great turnout! The children were eager to learn about celebrating the gifts of God's grace that are shared with the bread and the wine of Holy Communion. Charlie Danner taught our 1st thru 6th graders, while Debbie Fox and Renee Schrader worked with our Pre-K and Kindergarten children. The children will receive Certificates of Completion on Sunday, November 4th, during the 10:30 a.m. service.

Zion's Children's Choir, with its New Wrinkle

Our new Children's Choir schedule is working out great this year! The children are practicing in two groups, Group #1 (Pre-K through 1st grade) and Group #2 (2nd through 6th grade). Group #1 practices from 9:10 a.m. to 9:20 a.m., and Group #2, from 9:20 a.m. to 9:30 a.m. The children meet in the Choir Room and have practice each Sunday at these times, and then go to their Sunday School class. The two groups alternate singing each month at the 10:30 a.m. service. Our children will also be working on the music for the Christmas Program during the months of November and December. Once again, a great big thank you to Suzanne Walters for all of her time and commitment in directing this choir. and for the great job she does with the

kids!

The Children's Choir Anthem Schedule - offered at the 10:30 a.m. Service:

Sunday, November 4: Group #1: Jesus Loves the Little Children

Sunday, December 2: Group #2: Rejoice in the Lord Always

Sunday, January 13: Group #1: We Were Made to Love the Lord

Sunday, February 3: Group #2: Sing, Shout, Clap

Sunday, March 2 (Lent): Group #1: Praise Him

Sunday, April 6 (Easter): Group #2: Amen!

Sunday, May 4 (Easter): Group #1: All Night, All Day

Sunday, May 11 (Mother's Day): Group #2: Pass It On

Sunday, June 1 (Pentecost): Group #1: Butterfly Song

The Sunday School Halloween Party

The Halloween Party was a lot of fun this year! We had a great turnout, and the children looked awesome in their costumes. There was such a great variety. We really appreciated everyone's flexibility with changing the party to a Wednesday evening. A big thank you to everyone who helped make the party such a great success, especially the party volunteers: Tina Beaver, Connie Riffle, Janet Slease, Connie Frank, Christian Heller, Brooke Roman and Kelly Walters! There was good food, great crafts, creative pumpkin decorating and fun games: a terrific time was had by all! We would also like to thank everyone who donated items for the party, those who helped us Trick or Treat at the end. It is truly the case that we appreciate everyone's time and donations. Without your help, we couldn't have such terrific events for our children!

Still More Youth News

As we move toward the holiday season, we are planning a busy schedule of activities for Zion's Youth. We are hoping to do several service projects, one for Thanksgiving (as mentioned on page 6), and a couple for the Christmas season, including our Advent Giving Tree, which invites members to purchase presents for needy families in our community. We have a whole lot of fun activities planned, too. We will keep you posted as details develop.

Also, please note that we will be doing a new fundraiser this year to help raise money for the Youth Fund. It is scheduled for Tuesday, November 20, when there will be a Marco's Pizza day for Zion. All you have to do is place an order with Marco's Pizza from 11:00 a.m. to 11:00 p.m. and make sure to mention Zion. The Youth of Zion will receive 15% of the sales we generate that day by mentioning Zion when you order. It's that easy: order lunch or dinner or both, and enjoy a great, easy and quick meal! Marco's has a great menu with more than just pizza. Menus will soon be available in the Church Office. Marco's phone number is 330-499-6600, and Zion will receive credit for pick up and delivery orders, as long as you mention Zion when ordering. Please tell your family and friends too!

We are collecting Acme Receipts to help raise funds for the Youth. This year we receive cash back credit for receipts dated September 29, 2007 through February 16, 2008. Please be sure your receipt has the "Community Cash Back" amount at the bottom. There are collection cans in the kitchen by the coffee on Sunday mornings and in the Church Office. Save your receipts and help us raise money for our youth! We thank you in advance for your great support!

THANK YOU'S AND MORE

Dear Members and Friends of Zion,

I would like to say a **BIG Thank You** to all those who helped with the 2007 Youth Missions Craft Show. The show would not have been the success it was without the continued help and support of Zion's members. They say that many hands lighten the load, and I can honestly say there were lots of hands ready, willing and able to help, from organizing and advertising, to set-up and clean-up, and everything in between. Once again, thank you to everyone who helped with the craft show; I truly could not have done this without you.

With God's Blessing,
Diane Dunphy

A Special Note of Thanks -

Thank you so much for your thoughtfulness for the beautiful carnations, which are my favorite flower because they last longer than most. They sure put a smile on my face and gratitude in my heart.

Mary Jane Hawkins

THE WOMEN OF ZION

Blanket Sunday was a great success. The Sanctuary looked beautiful with the many colored quilts draping the pews and filling the Chancel. We filled 43 boxes, weighing 601 pounds, with 95 quilts, 43 blankets, 78 school kits and 45 health kits. Verle & Ruth Elsass, Todd Elsass and Debbie Pierce loaded them up and delivered them over to Jerusalem Lutheran Church in Seville on Saturday, October 13, where they became part of a larger shipment headed to such places as Armenia, Azerbaijan, Botswana, China, Ghana, India, Iran, Liberia, Peru, Sao Tome, Sierra Leone, Thailand, and Zambia. Thanks for caring, and thanks for helping.

The Women of Zion will celebrate their annual Thankoffering Service on the weekend of November 17-18. This is an opportunity to lift up the ministry of women in the ELCA, the work done by women's organizations in congregations throughout the country. Love Offering envelopes will be made available in the bulletin on Thank-offering Weekend. Women and men are invited to show their thanks with an offering of support for the work of the Women of Zion and the Women of the ELCA.

The monthly Women's Bible Study meets on Tuesday, November 20, with our focus on the Beatitudes in Matthew. Our yearlong theme is Blessed to Follow: the Beatitudes as a Compass for Discipleship, with November's theme focused on the blessing promised to the poor in spirit. Poverty takes many forms: the gnawing ache of hunger, the bitterness of emotional need, the fear of abandonment. Our assignment as Christ's people is to attend to the reality of poverty around us and within us. Behold it and bless it, as we listen to the promise for yours is the kingdom of God.

ODDS 'N ENDS AT ZION

The Men of Zion would like to thank the men and the women who helped with our Outdoor Clean-up Day on Saturday, October 13. We enjoyed some great food, a whole lot of great fellowship, and the satisfaction of knowing that we had done our part to make Zion look great, inside and out. The Men of Zion are scheduled to meet again in Luther Hall on Wednesday, November 7, when at 6:00 p.m. dinner will be served and plans for hosting one of the Sunday evening Advent services begins. You are welcome to join us.

Sunday Night at the Movies

During the Sunday evenings in November, beginning at 6:00 p.m. - on the 4th, 11th, and 18th - we plan to take out the big screen and enjoy three movies that connect religious themes and real life. In honor of the duo of Reformation and All Saints Sundays, the first movie on our schedule is Luther, the epic story of how one man's faith changed the world. This 2003 production features Joseph Fiennes as Martin Luther and Peter Ustinov as Prince Frederick. On the following Sunday evening of November 11th, we will take in a little Robert Dinero in the 1986 production of The Mission, which is the sad story of Christian missionary activity in the "new world" in the 17th century. The theme may sound distant and abstract, but you will be surprised by its emotional power. Then, on November 18th, we will feature School Ties, a movie that portrays the faith journey of a young Jewish football player at an east coast Episcopal prep school. This movie will help to tie together some of the religious themes we discussed after viewing our first two movies. Everyone is invited. Youth will be there, and older folks, too. Bring your friends. We're gonna to have a great time!

NOVEMBER SENIOR BIRTHDAYS

Happy Birthday to:



Joy Benton	November 4
Vickie Swartz	November 12
Dean Yoder	November 12
November 14 Wayne Snyder	November 14
Elsie Earles	November 22
John Brokloff	November 23
Sue Whitmer	November 25
Ruth Elsass	November 27
Nick Lanzalotta	November 28

NOVEMBER ANNIVERSARIES

Happy Anniversary to:

Elaine & Jim Fidler	November 11
Anna Mae & Ellis LeBeau	November 18
Karen & Richard Kolarik	November 21
Carol & Mike Wasara	November 25
Cora & Nick Lanzalotta	November 25
Terri & Randall Cizik	November 26
Joy & Bill Benton	November 27

THANKSGIVING MEANS TURKEYS AND A COMMUNITY SERVICE

We're looking for a few good turkeys - not the human kind, but the poultry kind!

Please help us achieve our goal of providing 75 turkeys so that we can offer a full Thanksgiving dinner for all of our food pantry families. You are welcome to donate turkeys, or, if you prefer, cash so that we can purchase the turkeys. We need for the turkeys and the cash donations to be in place by November 11th. That will give us the time we need to make sure that our pantry clients receive the gifts we have for them.

We are now accepting Cash Donations or the Actual Frozen Bird!

When it comes to Thanksgiving, we not only serve our pantry clients, but also all the Siffrin homes in Stark County! Siffrin homes are group homes for individuals with mental or physical limitations. Our goal for Thanksgiving is seventy-five 12-pound turkeys. The turkeys are just a part of what we supply through the ministry of our Food Pantry. Every family is also handed bags filled with stuffing, potatoes, vegetables, cranberries, applesauce, noodles, muffins, pies, and something to drink. We know that with your help, and God's, we will achieve our goal.