

## GREETINGS FROM THE PASTOR:

Our trip to Turkey and Armenia was so fabulous that it is hard to know where to begin in describing its many high points. Our first stop was Istanbul, where we stayed in the neighborhood of the Blue Mosque and *Hagia Sophia*. *Hagia Sophia* is the great cathedral originally built in 360 to honor the legacy of Constantine the Great. It was Constantine's conversion to Christianity in 312, and whose reign as Roman Emperor from 324 to 337, set Christianity on the path to becoming the official religion of the Roman Empire and Western culture. Its name in Greek means *Holy Wisdom*, which is a traditional reference to the Second Person of the Trinity. What an impressive structure, with such an impressive history!

The history embodied in *Hagia Sophia* is incredibly humbling. The names associated with its history form a *Who's Who* in the history of Christianity. The glory of its interior is still stunning. The construction of its majestic dome revolutionized church architecture. Great turning points in history found their pivot right there in *Hagia Sophia*. With the rise of Constantine to the throne, the persecution of the church was halted, and over the course of 70 years Christianity became the official religion of the Roman Empire. Between the Great Church Council at Nicea (325) and a second Church Council in Constantinople (381), church leaders forged the triumph of Trinitarian Christianity with the writing of the Nicene Creed.

Constantinople became the seat of Eastern Orthodoxy; and it was this great cathedral that witnessed the breach between Eastern Orthodoxy and Western Catholicism with the desecration of its altar by the 4<sup>th</sup> Crusade. That was 1204, when Latin Crusaders on their way to liberate Jerusalem, turned the hospitality offered by the Great Patriarch of Constantinople into an opportunity to attack their fellow Christians of Eastern Orthodoxy, sack the altar of *Hagia Sophia*, and send the Byzantine Royal Family into hiding. The Byzantines returned to power in 1261, but East and West never recovered from this sad and tragic chapter in church history. The Ottoman Empire turned *Hagia Sophia* into a mosque in 1453; and with the fall of the Ottoman Empire after World War I, the Turks turned *Hagia Sophia* into a museum in 1935.

From Turkey, it was on to Armenia for our visit with Austin. Because Austin was nearing the end of his two-years of volunteer service with the Peace Corps in Goris, our visit could not have been better timed. He was already in a farewell mode, so everywhere we went persons were thanking him for his service and complimenting us for having such a good son. We were, indeed, very proud, and well fed, too, since with every farewell there was a party of sorts, with food, and sweets, and a toast, or two, with homemade vodka, homemade wine, and lots of love. What lovely people! What delicious food! What great hospitality and gratitude!

Armenia is a beautiful country, landlocked by mountains. There's not much money in Armenia, which was evident with potholes dotting their pre-1950s road system (with nothing resembling an interstate highway anywhere in sight); but the culture of those who are Armenians forms a tapestry of close-knit strength and generous spirit that is truly impressive. Historic monasteries remind visitors that Armenia was the first nation to embrace Christianity as its official religion in 301. Mount Ararat towers over the capital city of Yerevan reminding everyone of the biblical heritage that forms the backbone of Armenian Orthodoxy. It was, indeed, a trip of a lifetime. We couldn't have enjoyed ourselves more, and we hope you enjoy the pictures on the next page.



The Blue Mosque in Istanbul



Hagia Sophia, Holy Wisdom



Geological wonders in Cappadocia



Constantine the Great



Austin's families there and here



Tatev Monastery set on a cliff outside of Goris



St. Gregory Illuminator Church  
(Mount Ararat in the background)

**CHURCH COUNCIL NEWS**

Our June meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Jim Fidler. In attendance were Juanita Cignetti, Dave Palumbo, Cathy Harvey, Dale Jacobs, Vicki Givler, Lorin Beaber, Beth Shaheen, Mark Votaw, Beth Willis, Alex Robbins, Val Cizek, and Pastor Sherwindt. Brian Milek and Renee Keith were excused. Our primary business for the evening involved thanking Jim Fidler and Mark Votaw for their five years of service on Council. Some highlights included five consecutive budgets in balance, great benevolence, a strong performance on property improvements, with as healthy a year-to-date surplus as we've seen in June!

In his Treasurer's Report Dave Palumbo reported that we have continued our string of consecutive monthly surpluses through May, which makes five in a row. Total Income for the month exceeded Total Expenses by \$420.49, increasing our year-to-date surplus to \$4,711.36, which is better than a \$10,550 improvement over last year! We continue to have great support for our Food Pantry, too, with \$3,965.16 in reserve for needed expenditures. We are hitting on all cylinders. Great job!

<b><u>ZION'S FINANCIAL FACTS FOR MAY</u></b>	
May Income	16,210.84
May Expenses	<u>15,790.35</u>
<b><i>May Surplus</i></b>	<b><i>420.49</i></b>
Income through May	106,376.49
Expenses through May	<u>101,665.13</u>
<b><i>2012 YTD Surplus</i></b>	<b><i>4,711.36</i></b>
<b><i>2012 YTD Surplus</i></b>	<b><i>4,711.36</i></b>
<b><i>2011 YTD (Deficit)</i></b>	<b><i>(5,841.87)</i></b>
<b><i>Thank you for your generous support!</i></b>	

**THANK YOU FOR GIVING**

On behalf of the Finance Ministry, I would like to thank you for your generous support through the first half of 2012. Our Financial Facts for May show another monthly surplus, making it five in a row this year, with the extra giving that came in through our Early Bird Giving program providing the boost of a nice sized surplus as we head into our summer months. Our Treasurer was able to give us a glimpse of what we might expect with June's Financial Facts, which promises yet another monthly surplus, making it six in a row heading into July.

We cannot thank you enough for making sure that we are financially strong as we head into the second half of the year. The summer months are always a challenge as members head off for vacation, getting some needed distance from everyday life and responsibility in a world that is always on the go. God encourages us to remember how important it is to take a break from work; and we certainly want to chime in with our wholehearted AMEN to that!

We would also want to remind everyone in our congregational family that ministry goes on at Zion through the summer. Some of our strongest programs are on the schedule, with Vacation Bible School heading the list, and the ministry of our Food Pantry & Clothing Closet not far behind. We still need as much of your time, talents, and treasures as you're willing to share during these months of July and August. We've got some nice surprises in store when summer ends and the program year begins again in September; but we're hoping that a year-to-date budget deficit is not among them. Please remember your church during the summer, and give as generously as you can.

## FOOD PANTRY NEWS

When Cathy, Beth and I started working with the Food Pantry in March we learned that approximately 60 families were being served each time the pantry was open. The next two months we served around 45 to 50 each time we were open. Was this a sign that the economy was coming back? In June that number went back up to close to 60 again, showing that the need is still very great, and several of the families came for the first time.

Imagine my surprise when I was reading the paper the day after we had served 60 families and saw an article that said unemployment was down to 7.1 percent compared to 9.1 percent last year. What we do here at Zion two days a month is still very much needed by so many of our neighbors in the area.

Because the need is so great, we are very thankful for the donation we received from the North Canton Library of non-perishable food items they collected through their *Food for Fines* drive. During the weeks of June 4<sup>th</sup> through the 16<sup>th</sup>, any one that owed a fine at the library would have that fine forgiven (up to \$10.00) if they brought in at least one item. There must have been a lot of people who owed a lot of fines, or they were very generous people, because our Food Pantry received around 30 boxes of food.

Once again on Tuesday morning, as our wonderful volunteers arrived, many of the Pantry Crew members dug into sorting and checking the expiration dates on all of the items we received and then filled the shelves up even more in the food pantry.

Our pantry is stocked pretty well right now, but serving over 100 families each month, we can always use more non-perishable items. When you are at the grocery store, please consider picking up a few things for the pantry for our neighbors in need.

## THANKS FROM PCHS

[PCHS stands for Providence Catholic High School in New Lenox, Illinois, which sent a group of volunteers to work with Habitat for Humanity of Greater Stark & Carroll Counties. We hosted them during the week of June 11.]

*Dear Pastor Sherwindt and members of Zion,*

I would like to extend my thanks and gratitude for your generosity and kindness in allowing the Providence Catholic High School Habitat for Humanity Chapter to stay at your facility in June 2012, which included sleeping in your gym, enjoying your showers, making use of the kitchen, and meeting some of your members who were kind enough to stop by and welcome us June 11 through 14.

As I am sure you can imagine, planning and funding trips like this for twenty-five to thirty students is very costly – especially if we have to pay for hotel rooms for the entire week. We sometimes need to rely on the generous support from the friends and neighbors of the Habitat community we plan to serve for our housing needs. In this case that was you and your congregation.

Please accept our enclosed check for \$1,000 as our token of appreciation for your assistance with our lodging accommodations during our summer build trip. Our group feels blessed and proud to be able to assist families in your neighboring area who struggle with the hardships of poverty housing.

Best wishes to you and your community, and thank you again for this wonderful opportunity to help Habitat for Humanity and families in need.

*God's peace to you,  
Diane Hart, Moderator  
Mathematics Department  
Habitat for Humanity Chapter*

GREAT NEWS FROM ZION'S SUNDAY SCHOOL

**Happy Birthday to:**

UPCOMING EVENTS – MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

**Thursday, July 12:** Please Try to Pre-Register for this summer's Vacation Bible School

**Monday, July 16:** *Adventures on Promise Island (God Is With Us)*: Registration at 9 a.m.

**Tuesday, July 17:** *Adventures on Promise Island (God Cares)*: Bring a T-Shirt Today

**Wednesday, July 18:** *Adventures on Promise Island (God Meets Our Needs)*: T-Shirt Day

**Thursday, July 19:** *Adventures on Promise Island (God Saves Us)*: Enjoy this evening, too!

**Friday, July 20:** *Adventures on Promise Island (God Answers Us)*: It's Water Day Today!

**Sunday, September 2:** It's time for the End-of-the-Summer Party: Labor Day Weekend

**Sunday, September 9:** This is a big day for Sunday School with Rally Day at Zion

**Sunday, September 16:** Classes for the New Sunday School Year Begin Today at Zion

SUNDAY SCHOOL FOR PRE-K THROUGH HIGH SCHOOL

We are taking a summer break from Sunday School classes. This doesn't mean that we will not have an active Christian Education for our kids this summer. Just take a look at what's coming with Vacation Bible School. You'll find out more as you take a look at the next page. After that, we'll start up again in September when we kick off the Sunday School year with Rally Day on Sunday, September 9<sup>th</sup>. Sunday School classes will start up again on Sunday, September 16<sup>th</sup>.

SUNDAY SCHOOL CONTINUES FOR OUR ADULT CLASS

We have spent a good deal of time visiting themes that focus on the doctrine of the Holy Trinity and the Nicene Creed. Pastor Sherwindt's trip to Turkey and Armenia has harvested an almost endless supply of pictures, many of Cappadocia, where the Cappadocian Fathers – Basil the Great, Gregory of Nyssa, Gregory of Nazianzus – found the right formulas to bring Eastern and Western Christianity together with the words of the Nicene Creed, and some of *Hagia Sophia*, where the Great Schism between East and West, which had begun with disagreement on changes to the Nicene Creed in 1054, exploded with the finality of scandal and shame when Crusaders of the 4<sup>th</sup> Crusade attacked and desecrated the altars of *Hagia Sophia* in 1204.

We have not yet begun to mine the rich religious heritage of Armenian Orthodoxy, the first nation where Christianity was recognized as the official religion of the land in 301. There's the Pit of *Gregory the Illuminator* in the church that bears his name located at the foot of Mount Ararat. The monastery at *Tatev* boasts the longest aerial tramway in the world, which carries visitors to a Christian fortress perched atop a cliff for good measure. Then, there's *Echmiadzin*, designated a UNESCO World Heritage Site, which serves as the Mother Cathedral of the Armenian Apostolic Orthodox Church, *Tsitsernakaberd*, a striking Armenian Genocide memorial. The Adult Sunday School Class meets in Luther Hall between the services on Sunday morning. That's 9:15 a.m. to 10:15 a.m. Everyone is invited. All are welcome.

## VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL: ADVENTURES ON PROMISE ISLAND

MARK YOUR CALENDARS RIGHT NOW  
 JULY 16—20, MONDAY THRU FRIDAY  
 EVERY DAY, 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

Our adventures are about to begin! Join us on Monday through Friday, July 16<sup>th</sup>, 17<sup>th</sup>, 18<sup>th</sup>, 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup>, from 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. PROMISE ISLAND is where kids discover God's amazing and lifesaving love. It will be a week of learning all about God's promises: GOD IS WITH US, GOD CARES ABOUT US, GOD GIVES US WHAT WE NEED, GOD SAVES US and GOD ANSWERS US!



There will be great lessons, great music, games, food, crafts and service projects, of course. It will be a week of adventures with fun and learning where the kids will learn that God is good to us and good for us. His steadfast love is ours forever. That's a promise!

Our Vacation Bible School program is designed for children age 5 through those who have completed 5<sup>th</sup> grade. Youth who have completed 6<sup>th</sup> grade and higher are invited to help during the week – and we still need lots of help and helpers. We have many volunteer opportunities!

Registration packets are available in the Church Office. Please turn in your completed forms by **Thursday, July 12<sup>th</sup>**, in order to help us make sure that we have the right amount of supplies on hand. We will still accept registrations during the week of VBS if space is available. We thank you in advance for your cooperation and support.

We have a busy week planned! We'll get started on Monday with lots of fun and activities! We also hope to have some special guests this year, including a Peace Corps volunteer recently returned from Armenia, who will be with us on Tuesday! Wednesday will be T-Shirt day, so each child will need a white T-shirt with their name on the label by Tuesday.

Thursday evening is our *Ice Cream Social* at 7:00 p.m. Everyone is invited to join us that evening for our Vacation Bible School Program in the Sanctuary, with ice cream and fellowship to follow in Memorial and Luther Halls. We'll also have our *Quilt Raffle* that evening.

Friday will be our *Promise Island Celebration*. This will include water activities and fun games to celebrate our week of learning and service! The children will need their swim suits, towels, and sunscreen on Friday! Of course, we will have lessons, crafts, music, games, service projects and lunch each day as well.

Let's face it, we are all looking forward to a great week for our kids, staff and parents, as we all learn about God's promises to us! We have lots to learn about the grace God gives, the love Christ shares, the gift of the Spirit's presence, and the power this promises as we try our best to *grow in love and service by grace* every day.

## ADVENTURES IN SERVICE ON PROMISE ISLAND

We will again focus on service this year, a great tradition at Zion's Vacation Bible School. We have planned many service projects, some familiar and some different. The children will be invited to experience how important serving others and God is in their lives! We hope they will see that no matter how old you are, you can truly make a difference!

**THE DAILY OFFERING:** It has become an annual expectation that we will host a daily contest between the boys and girls, challenging each to collect more than the other. We like to stick with change, and steer clear of paper; but you would be surprised by the excitement that gathers around that morning gathering time when we collect the offering. In the end, everyone wins – the boys, the girls, and especially the recipient of the offering. This year's recipient will be divided between the ministry we support with our Food Pantry and another ministry, which the children will choose.

**ZION'S FOOD PANTRY:** We ask that each child bring in a food item each day, if possible. This food will help stock Zion's Food Pantry, which has been about the ministry of helping many families in the community for going on eleven years. With unemployment still a problem and gas prices sky high, there has never been as great a need for this ministry as right now.

**QUILT SQUARES:** The children will again create quilt squares for Zion's Comfort Givers to sew into quilts for Lutheran World Relief. We will raffle one quilt on Thursday evening at the Ice Cream Social. Which quilt that is will be chosen by the winner! Tickets will be available during the week. As usual, it's 1 ticket for a dollar, or 6 tickets for \$5. Join us for all the fun!

**DAILY PROJECTS:** The children will work on a service project each day during the week. Some of these projects will connect us with kids all over the globe; and other projects will ask our kids to connect with the persons who live with us at home. We think that this is a healthy mix of helping neighbors far away and those who live right next door.

**SCHOOL KITS:** We'll be collecting items for school kits to help children in our community. Items needed are backpacks, paper, notebooks, folders, binders, glue, pencils, erasers, crayons, scissors, rulers and markers. Please bring in any donations by Wednesday, July 18<sup>th</sup>. If anyone in the congregation is interested in donating items, please leave the items in the Church Office.

**VOLUNTEER SERVICE FOR YOU:** We are looking forward to a great week and hope you will join us! Again, we are in need of volunteers for the week. You are qualified to volunteer: we guarantee it! Please consider joining us one, two, or all five days. It truly is a rewarding and enjoyable experience, and you will be working with a great group of kids!

We've put out sign-up sheets for food and supplies in Luther Hall, and we have put out donation cans for those who are interested in helping. If you have any questions, or would like to volunteer, please feel free to call Debbie Fox (330-966-2433), or Jayne Schrader (330-499-3909). As always, thank you for your great support!

The wide reach of Zion's family never ceases to surprise us with all we give for this great event. We look forward to your joining in the fun! Don't forget: that's Monday through Friday, July 16<sup>th</sup> through the 20<sup>th</sup>, from 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m., with lunch included. God blessings to all!

THE 2012 NORTHEASTERN OHIO SYNOD ASSEMBLY

(Submitted by Susan and Carl Geib, Zion's Voting Delegates)

*God's Work – Our Hands, On the Journey Forward* was the theme of the Annual Northeastern Ohio Synod Assembly held June 1—2. This year it was held at the John S. Knight Center in Akron with nearly 500 in attendance. It started with registration, fellowship, and instructions for first-time delegates, then opening prayer, followed by the Rev. Bishop Elizabeth Eaton's words of welcome.

Bishop Eaton is an eager speaker, keeping the assembly moving along on schedule and speaking with wisdom and humor. She stressed (1) that every congregation is a mission station, (2) having excellent worship, (3) with faithful, focused, fervent leaders, (4) that we are in this together, and (5) we need to be authentically Lutheran. She said "know your community, and invite people to your church".

There were several reports and elections and proposed resolutions to consider, along with workshops to attend, and literature displays in a main gathering hall that offered information about our many ministries that involve and reach out to women, men, youth, and children of the church. The ELCA consists of 10,000 Lutheran congregations in 65 synods. Carl and I were so proud to be among 500 Lutherans.

Let's remember what active church membership can do for each of us. It creates order, and possibilities, is protective, extends family, and holds people together. Just think every Sunday we are nourished by Word and Sacrament. Invite people to Zion! Our congregation is having a birthday soon – 200 years!

The Assembly was very interesting and educational. We thank Zion for the opportunity to represent our church.

God's blessings,  
Carl & Susan Geib

***Highlights from this year's Synod Assembly:***

- Bishop Eaton explained that our synod has slipped into third place out of all the synods in the Malaria Campaign. After the assembly was over and totals were updated, we reclaimed first place again, with \$196,893.89 given to date.
- The focus of the assembly was a presentation entitled *Journey Forward*, introduced by a Task Force of presenters. A common refrain throughout the assembly was *We Are In This Together*. The Task Force outlined the three questions each congregation must ask: What are the key issues our congregation must address in the next one to three years and how are we going to address them? How do we define our congregation's unique gifts for God's mission and how might we better utilize them? What do we and our fellow members know about our community and what do we need to know to be more effective in our mission? Many of our synod's 182 congregations are facing similar challenges, and *Journey Forward* invites us to learn from our experience together. Each congregation received a packet of materials we can use to process these questions as we engage our future.

THE WOMEN OF ZION: CHANCEL, QUILTERS, BIBLE STUDY

*Zion's Chancel Guild* gathered in Luther Hall on June 12<sup>th</sup> for a Chancel Guild Luncheon that was both light and delicious. A warm starter of tomato basil bisque led to a salad of mixed greens, cashew nuts, Mandarin oranges, strawberries, with a sweet & sour dressing. The entrée was a spinach, bacon and cheese quiche, which was followed by a delicious dessert, a turtle ice cream crepe with fudge sauce, caramel, whipped cream, and pecans. Add iced lemonade and some coffee, and you've got the perfect lunch to celebrate another great year of service. Shirley Cary and Edna Smith were our hostesses.

We were happy to welcome two of our newer members, Linda Smith and Margaret Leffler, and we hope that more will join in the work of the Chancel Guild as they realize what fun we are and what delicious food we enjoy!

*Zion's Comfort Givers* will join forces with VBS during the week of July 16 — 19 to have a great time with our kids, and a busy time of sewing. We'll need all the help we can get. So please join us!

Our *Women's Monthly Bible Study* will focus on *Food for the Journey*. We will walk in the wilderness with the Israelites, and then with the prophet Elijah. Our hope is that we will learn to trust the Lord for our daily bread, expecting great things from the God who has promised that we are a light to the world when it comes to knowing the love of God and its saving grace. Our key Scripture passages will include Exodus 16:1-36 and 1 Kings 19:1-10. Hearing God speak to us in the silence of a still, small voice is always a good feeling. As usual, feel free to join us. You are always welcome.

We meet on the fourth Tuesday, July 24<sup>th</sup>, in the Resource Center at 9:30 a.m. That's **July 24<sup>th</sup> at 9:30 a.m. in the Resource Center**. We've got a great lesson and a great group. We'll hope to see you there!

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## THANK YOU FROM NEOS

*Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,*

Thank you for your Mission Support. Thank you for making the beauty of God's creation real for a kid at Camp Mowana, for a family at Camp Luther, for a youth group at Luther Memorial Camp. Thank you for preparing candidates for ministry at Trinity Lutheran Seminary. Thank you for giving a homeless man shelter and dignity through Lutheran Metropolitan Ministries Men's Shelter. Thank you for sending chaplains to pray with parents in crisis and to sit with families in hospital waiting rooms. Thank you for sending young adults to serve a missionary year in South Africa, England, Hungary, and Malaysia. Thank you for supporting missionaries around the world. Thank you for starting new congregations in our synod and in 61 other places across the church. Thank you for feeding the hungry and clothing the naked through ELCA World Hunger Appeal, Lutheran World Relief, and Lutheran Disaster Response. Thank you for helping congregations in conflict become healthy gospel communities. Thank you for making curriculum, print, digital, and musical resources available from the Synod Resource Center to every congregation. Thank you for training members of our congregations to knock on doors and invite neighbors to church. Thank you for sending military chaplains to bring God's peace to our men and women in uniform serving in dangerous places. Thank you for making the gospel known. Thank you for your Mission Support. Your Mission Support to the Northeastern Ohio Synod makes a difference in people's lives. Together we can change the world.

*The Rev. Elizabeth Eaton, Bishop  
Northeastern Ohio Synod, ELCA*

## SOME IMPORTANT DATES

We celebrate America's 238<sup>th</sup> birthday on *Wednesday, July 4<sup>th</sup>*. Have fun. Be safe.

The Witness Ministry will meet *Wednesday, July 11<sup>th</sup>*, 7:00 p.m. in the Resource Center to discuss improving our website.

Mutual Ministry will meet *Saturday, July 14<sup>th</sup>*, 9:30 a.m. in the Resource Center, and then will meet in August on *Saturday, August 18<sup>th</sup>*, at 9:30 a.m.

The Steering Ministry will meet *Monday, July 16<sup>th</sup>*, 7:00 p.m., in the Pastor's Office.

The Church Council will meet on *Tuesday, July 17<sup>th</sup>*, 7:00 p.m., in the Resource Center. Our August Meeting will return to the 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday, which is August 14<sup>th</sup>.

*Adventures in Promise Island* is set for Monday through Friday, July 16—20, from 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Let's have great fun!

Zion's Bicentennial Task Force is set to meet in the Resource Center on *Monday, July 23<sup>rd</sup>*, beginning at 7:00 p.m.

*Zion's Food Pantry & Clothing Closet* are open for service July 3<sup>rd</sup> and July 24<sup>th</sup>.

The Worship Ministry will meet in the Pastor's Office on *Tuesday, July 24<sup>th</sup>*, beginning at 7:00 p.m.

Zion's Trustees will meet in the Resource Center on *Tuesday, July 31<sup>st</sup>*, at 7:00 p.m.

Our schedule for the Food Pantry & Clothing Closet in August returns to the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesdays, *August 7<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup>*.

We offer two services of worship every Sunday, at 8:00 a.m. and 10:30 a.m.

