

GREETINGS FROM THE PASTOR:

Brian Milek has been serving as Vice-President of Council for almost a year now. He is the father of four, faithful husband of Nicole, and together they have been an active part of our congregational family for several years now. Among his responsibilities as Vice-President are his roles as chairperson of Mutual Ministry and Ministry Development. Shortly after becoming Lutheran and joining Saint Mary Magdalene Lutheran Church in the Twin Cities, Brian had a great experience in helping a seminary intern to grow into the professional role of pastoral leader. His congregation was blessed to become a teaching congregation, working with Luther Seminary in developing the next generation of leaders for the church. Our own Zion Lutheran had been a regular partner in this teaching ministry back in the 1970's, when we enjoyed the services of interns, called vicars back then, in cooperation with what is now Trinity Lutheran Seminary in Columbus.

As we began to think about inviting interns and pastors back for our Bicentennial Anniversary in 2014, it dawned on some of us that it might be a good idea to reclaim some of the glory of those good old days by getting back into the Internship Program as kind of a bicentennial gift to ourselves. Brian thought that was a great idea. He thought it could help us rethink what we're doing, and change the tenor of how we're doing it. When you know that you are trying to teach students how to learn the art of leadership in the life of a congregation, you tend to focus more on what we should be doing and less on the distractions that keep us from doing that. Plus, it's just plain exciting when you welcome someone into your midst who is gung-ho on the prospects of getting out of the classroom and actually contributing to the life of the church. As it turned out, it became increasingly clear as we thought about this possibility that we have a lot of folks who could really get behind an idea like that. It was financially very feasible; and it looked like a winner from every angle and perspective.

I have featured Brian's article inviting us to consider embracing the idea on the next page of this newsletter. It really was his idea; but more than that, every time we've raised the idea, it seems to spring legs that take it to the next level of interest. When I brought it up with the Bicentennial Task Force, the connection with our glory days seemed obvious. When I brought it before the Council, they wanted to do what they could to get behind the idea. When I brought it to the Finance Ministry, they were amazed at how feasible it was to fund it. You will be amazed, too. As Brian mentions in his letter, we are inviting everyone to a reception during the Sunday School hour between the services in Luther Hall on September 16th. Council members will be present to help introduce the value of moving ahead with interest. Such an idea requires congregational support, participation, and approval. We hope to begin that process with our reception on the 16th. We hope that there is sufficient interest to continue the conversation and answer questions about this program on the 23rd and 30th.

In the end, we would like to enjoy a consensus supporting our participating in this program as we prepare for our Congregational Meeting in October. We've not yet applied to participate, have not been approved to participate, and have not made any commitments, financial or otherwise. So, now is the time to imagine the possibilities. Join us in this adventure on the 16th.

GOD'S GRACE VS. HUMAN NURTURING – WHY NOT BOTH?

(Brian Milek, Vice-President in charge of Ministry Development)

As a post-baby boomer, I have seen our church from a different lens than many of my fellow ZLC members. First, I was raised in a Roman Catholic background. Later, when Nicole and I went through pre-marriage counseling, I was “baptized” into the Lutheran view of Christianity. Today, we are raising our four children in a new century, surrounded by ever evolving technology, and trying to balance everything that parenthood and life, in general, throws at you ... all by the grace of God.

Now, if I jump back twenty years to my time in college at Bowling Green State University, during my freshman year, I elected to take Psychology 101. We studied everything from the theory of the *Ego* by Sigmund Freud to the theory that our *DNA* makes us pre-disposed to the final outcome of our health. In more common terms, this debate was often referred to as *Nature vs. Nurture*, in asking whether the nature we're born with or nurture we receive along the way has a greater role in shaping who we become in life.

To further illustrate, I recall learning in my criminology classes that often an *offender* was also a *victim* earlier in life. Our experiences in life shape the person we become, for better and for worse. Meanwhile, I also recall learning in an anthropology class about how natural selection caused a remote island and a scientist named Charles Darwin to decree *survival of the fittest*. Again, nature vs. nurture: is it our nature or the nurture we receive along the way that shapes who we become in life.

Fast forward back to life after college and being part of the “real world”, and I have learned there is nothing in life that is simply black or white. Dare I say, “Why not both?” Who we become is shaped by both the nature of genetics and the full dose of nurture we receive from family and friends along the way. Presently, we have an opportunity to see if our nurturing, along with the gifts given by God, will help further develop a future pastor for the ELCA. It's called participating in the Internship Program by becoming a teaching congregation.

During the month of September, we will begin to widen our discussion of how Zion can invite a seminary student to serve as an intern at our church during his/her third year of studies. Council authorized exploring this idea back in May. We are now in the process of creating a working group to collect information on the application process to request an intern. We will review our plan for the investment of time, talents, and costs to further nurture this idea along during our Adult Sunday School class on September 16, and may keep the conversation going on the 23rd. Many will be surprised by how feasible it is to participate in this program again.

We are anticipating that we will be able to present our findings in the form of a resolution, which will become a part of our agenda at the Fall Congregational meeting. Whichever side of the aisle you may sit on the debate of nature vs. nurture, our church will be celebrating its 200th year very soon, and what better way to celebrate this milestone than by having a chance to see a future leader be developed by us and God's Grace!

THE PARTY'S ON!

Zion's End-of-the-Summer Party is on for Sunday, September 2nd. It's going to be another great time, with great food, the very best of live entertainment, and lots of fun. Our grillers are back, and we hope that you'll be back. The live music part of the afternoon has changed, and we could not be more excited about the band. Brian Walters' high school band has decided to begin a nostalgia tour. They were called *The Middle of the Road* back then; but chances are they've all moved a little to the right! Join in the fun of a great afternoon at Zion on Labor Day Sunday.

We are looking at an A-list crew of grillers, with Randy Cizek holding down the basics when it comes to grilled, roasted, smoked, and pulled pork. Steve Robbins, will focus on chicken wings. The Singing Chef plans to serve up a batch of sausage-n-peppers, while Dave Palumbo will handle all things fish, including shrimp. Then there's Mark Votaw, who never fails to amaze with the great tastes he can create, and there will be others to offer their treats, too. The church provides baked beans and cole slaw; and we've got Beth Willis and Cathy Harvey lining up other sides and desserts by calling anyone who will help.

We would like to thank the Men of Zion for their help with this fun event; and we would also like to thank **Chris Thomas and Dan Wilson**, in particular, for their thoughtfulness and creativity in designing a temporary ramp to make access through our Narthex entrance easier for persons with walkers, wheelchairs, and carrying carts. We have known for some time that we need a new vision for full and safe access through our Narthex entrance. Our made-to-order ramp gives us time to think through all the issues and possibilities that will ultimately make for the perfect solution.

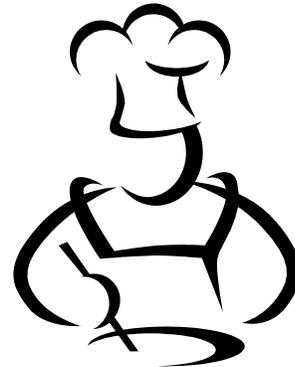
IT'S A GREAT WAY TO
END THE SUMMER:

ZION'S "END OF THE SUMMER" PARTY!

**LABOR DAY WEEKEND
SUNDAY AFTERNOON
SEPTEMBER 2nd, 2012**

**WORSHIP: 8 & 10:30 a.m.
SNACKS at 12:00 p.m.
FOOD at 1:00 p.m.
MUSIC at 2:00 p.m.
Clean-up at 4:00 p.m.**

The Great Grill Off in Action
Pulled Pork, Beef, Chicken,
Fish, Shrimp, and More
Hot Dogs, Hamburgers
Baked Beans, Cole Slaw
Lots of Great Desserts



Good Fun, Great Food, Fabulous Fellowship
A Fun Way to Raise Funds for a Good Cause
All of the Ministries We Support Will Benefit!

JULY'S BUDGET SURPLUS

Will it be eight in a row? We have balanced our budget for each of the seven months in 2012. We had a monthly surplus in July of \$481.53; and we have a year-to-date surplus of \$5,369.58, which represented a turn-around of \$10,489.06 from last year, when we had a deficit of (\$5,119.48) after seven months. *Turn-around* might be misleading, however, since we have a history and a pattern of balancing our budgets. We are going on seven in a row in that regard. But this year has been especially strong when it comes to supporting the church financially.

The Treasurer's Report for July offered another dose of good news: for the seventh time this year, monthly income exceeded monthly expenses, which means that year-to-date income has exceeded year-to-date expenses. We would like to make it eight in a row! We have not yet seen a summer drop-off; and we're hoping that August will confirm this trend of great support and phenomenal generosity. You will notice that we have also reported on the balance of two funds – the Food Pantry Fund and our Youth Fund – that are not a part of our ordinary Operating Budget. All is healthy.

ZION'S FINANCIAL FACTS FOR JULY

July Income	\$ 22,338.05
July Expenses	\$ 21,856.52
July Surplus	\$ 481.53
Income through June	\$ 148,254.36
Expenses thru June	\$ 142,884.78
2012 YTD Surplus	\$ + 5,369.58
<i>2011 YTD Deficit</i>	<i>(\$ - 5,119.48)</i>
Food Pantry Fund	\$ 3,653.66
Zion's Youth Fund	\$ 4,699.49

We thank you for your generous support!

MORE COUNCIL NEWS

Lorin Beaber called our July meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. Juanita Cignetti (Secretary), Dave Palumbo (Treasurer), Beth Shaheen (Resource), Cathy Harvey (Caring), Vicki Givler (Parish Life), Beth Willis (Social Outreach), Renee Keith (Learning), and Pastor Sherwindt were present. Brian Milek, Dale Jacobs, Todd Elsass were excused. Dave Palumbo opened our meeting with devotions.

Resource Ministry: *Beth Shaheen* reported that we are very healthy financially, both in terms of the checking account that Dave Palumbo oversees at First Merit and our funds at Merrill Lynch.

Caring Ministry: *Cathy Harvey* reported that Jayne Schrader will be retiring as Church Office Secretary on October 20th, and will be relinquishing her role as Food Pantry Director as we move through the holiday seasons of Thanksgiving and Christmas. While this hits us hard because we will truly miss Jayne, we are confident, based on the recent past, that we can handle the challenges that will arise as we work through another transition in leadership.

Parish Life: *Vicki Givler* reported that the Women of Zion continue to serve our local congregation and the wider church faithfully as they look to wrap up another successful drive in collecting *Personal Care Kits* and *School Kits* for Lutheran World Relief.

Learning Ministry: *Renee Keith* reported that Vacation Bible School was a great success thanks to the many members and friends of Zion who contribute to our effort, and that the 2012-13 Sunday School year will soon begin with Rally Day set for September 9th, and the beginning of classes for all ages on Sunday, September 16th.

GREAT NEWS FROM ZION'S SUNDAY SCHOOL**HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO:****UPCOMING EVENTS – MARK YOUR CALENDARS!**

- Sunday, September 2nd:** Zion's *End-of-the-Summer* Party: Great food, fun, and music!
Sunday, September 9th: NO SUNDAY SCHOOL scheduled for our Rally Day Festivities
Sunday, September 16: The 2012-2013 Sunday School Year begins today at 9:15 a.m.
Saturday, October 20th: 2012 Youth Missions Fall Craft Show, 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

RALLY DAY KICK-OFF TO A GREAT YEAR

Rally Day will be Sunday, September 9th. This is going to be a great event filled with fun and fellowship! Rally Day will take place between services this year in the gym starting at 9:15 a.m. There will be carnival games, relay races, refreshments, and more for the kids. We will have lots of information to give the parents, along with the necessary forms for Sunday School, as well as some refreshments. We'll see you at 9:15 a.m. September 9th! We would like Zion's older youth to help out with this event, along with anyone else who might be interested. We will need helpers to set up and lead our games and activities. Set up will begin at 8:30 a.m., and our activities will start at 9:15 a.m. Any help that you can give to assist is greatly appreciated.

ZION'S NEW SUNDAY SCHOOL YEAR

We are always looking for new volunteers to help with teaching and leading our Sunday School classes from Pre-K through High School. It is great to have new and fresh ideas for our program. If you are interested in being a teacher, a classroom helper, or a substitute for these positions, please contact Debbie Fox at 330-966-2433. Believe me when I say that it is a rewarding and enjoyable experience to share God's love and God's Word with Zion's Youth!

PRE-K THROUGH THE SIXTH GRADE

All of us in Christian Education are looking forward to Rally Day and the start of the new Sunday School Year! We have a year of great lessons and activities planned, along with our Christmas and Easter Programs. We will also have our traditional Halloween Party, service projects at Thanksgiving and Christmas, along with other fun events this year! Our children's classes are for kids from age 3 through 6th grade. We have a brand new curriculum for our kids and their classes. Pre-K thru 4th graders will begin their study with *Holy Moly*, a program that is designed to capture the children's imagination by bringing the Bible to life. Their studies will start with the Old Testament. Our 5th and 6th graders will begin their study with a program called *Connect*, which will revisit some of the Bible's greatest stories, uncover major biblical themes, and help the kids discover how the Bible relates to their own lives. We are excited about the new curriculum, and we are looking forward to a year full of fun and learning, with classes set to begin on September 16th.

MORE GREAT NEWS FOR ZION'S YOUTH

CONFIRMATION INSTRUCTION AND THE HIGH SCHOOL CLASS

Confirmation classes will start on Sunday, September 16th, at 9:15 a.m. in the Resource Center. This class is for all 7th and 8th graders. Renee Keith will lead our confirmation group, and will continue to follow the *Here We Stand* Confirmation program. Thank you to Renee for her continued support and commitment to our children.

Our High School class will also start Sunday, September 16th, at 9:15 a.m. Tina Beaber will be leading this group once again this year. We are very grateful for the time and dedication that Tina commits to this class, and we encourage all of our High Schoolers to join us each Sunday morning for an important part of their Christian education experience.

FALL OKTOBERFEST YOUTH MISSIONS CRAFT SHOW NEWS

The Craft Show will be here before we know it, so we are planning to start working on the youth's projects this month. We will once again put together raffle baskets from the Sunday School classes. Classes will receive their basket themes on Sunday, September 9th, which is Rally Day. We would like all items to be donated for the baskets by Sunday, October 7th. Tickets for these baskets will go on sale in October. The youth of Zion will again host a bake sale at the Craft Show. Their project this year will be making items like chocolate-covered pretzels, chocolate-covered oreos, and much more. We will also be asking for additional baked goods from our Zion family to help round out the Bake Sale Table.

Our *Ninth Annual Craft Show* will take place on Saturday, October 20th, from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Connie Frank and Jayne Schrader are looking forward to this year's edition matching last year's success. Registrations have been coming in a bit slower this year than last. At this writing, thirty-one craft tables have been rented! We still have plenty of time to reach our goal of seventy. This is a great event at Zion that helps our youth program, and we need lots of help to make it a success. There will be sign-up sheets in Luther Hall in late September for volunteers, bake sale items, and other food we will need. We encourage everyone to help out if possible. Again, we very much appreciate your support of Zion's youth!

YOUTH SPOTLIGHT PAGES ARE BACK, BUT DIFFERENT

We are going to try something different this year for the monthly Youth Spotlight. Each month, starting with October's newsletter, we will ask the kids a question about many different things – their favorites, their interests, their talents, and more. We will then share the kids' answers to each month's questions. We will ask these questions during Sunday School and through e-mail. So parents, please be sure that Debbie Fox has your correct and updated e-mail address.

AN ACME COMMUNITY CASH BACK PROGRAM UPDATE

It's that time of year again! We will begin collecting Acme receipts again this month to help Zion's Youth. Acme's Community Cash Back Program runs from September 22, 2012 through February 9, 2013. We'll have a collection jar in the Narthex. Thanks for your support!

ZION'S SENIOR CHOIR

If you are a present, past, or potential choir member, then this invitation is for you:

I have been extremely blessed and pleased to work with such a wonderful group of singers, and have been honored with the opportunity to continue in this capacity for another church year.

We would like to start off the year with a combination potluck picnic and rehearsal on Wednesday, September 5th. The picnic will begin at 6:00 p.m., followed by our first rehearsal. If you would like to come, then all we ask is that you bring the following: Sopranos – salad or side dish; Altos – dessert; Tenors – 2 liters of pop or ice tea; Basses – hot dog & hamburger buns.

If you have not sung in the choir for some time, or at all, we hope that you will prayerfully consider joining us to sing praises to God! We are hoping to completely fill the choir pews this year.

Looking forward to a great choral season with you being a part of it!

Blessings, 
Fred Locker

Please remember, and don't forget: Zion's Senior Choir is set to resume rehearsals on **Wednesday, September 5th**. Our rehearsals are usually on Wednesdays, and typically run from 7:15 p.m. to 8:15 p.m. Our first Sunday to sing will be Rally Day, which is **Sunday, September 9th**. We will typically sing at the 8:00 a.m. service, although occasionally we sing at 10:30 a.m., too. The choral season runs through Trinity Sunday, which will be May 26th. We'd love to have some additional voices join us this year. So, if you are at all interested, contact Fred Locker (330-265-5129) or the Church Office (330-499-3909).

ZION'S FOOD PANTRY

It is hard to believe that it is September already and the kids are back in school. This summer was a busy time for our Food Pantry. The past three months we distributed food to 170 seniors, 419 adults, and 163 children, which makes a total of 318 households, which shows that the need is still very great. I would like to thank our wonderful group of volunteers who dedicate their first and third Tuesdays of every month to helping make Zion's Food Pantry run so efficiently and smoothly. I have been blessed to work with each one of you and to have the opportunity to get to know the *Food Pantry Crew*.

As you may have heard, I have become a *grandma* as of August 26th, with my son, Adam, and his wife, Rhonda, celebrating the birth of their daughter, Savannah Mae. Many also know that my daughter, Renee, and her husband, Josh, will be blessing us with a grandson in December. I have been waiting to be a grandma for what seems to be a long time. Now that I am one, I have decided to retire from my job as Zion's Church Office Secretary and the Food Pantry Director to provide childcare for my granddaughter, and to be available to help with my grandson when needed.

I will be working through our Craft Show which is October 20. I will continue working with the Food Pantry Team through the biggest day for our Food Pantry, our Thanksgiving giveaway, which is November 20, the Tuesday before Thanksgiving. It has been a privilege and honor to serve Zion as the Church Office Secretary and to work with such a great group of volunteers as part of the Transitional Food Pantry Team. Thanks again for all of your support and help as I learned the ins and outs of helping to run the Food Pantry these past months.

REINFORCEMENT NEEDED!

From time to time I run across new studies that reinforce established truths. For instance, there was a study done on church attendance in Switzerland in 2000, which concluded that a father's church attendance has an unbelievably significant effect on the future attendance (or absence from church) by the children in that family. Many families participated in the study, and here's how the *next-generation-effect* works:

(1) If both the father and the mother attend church and participate in worship regularly, 33 percent of their children will end up as regular churchgoers, and 41 percent will end up attending, but irregularly. 25 percent of their children will end up not practicing at all.

(2) If the father does not attend church and the mother worships regularly, still only 2 percent of their children will become regular worshippers; 37 percent will attend irregularly; and about 60 percent of their children will not attend at all.

In short, if a father does not go to church, no matter how faithful his wife's devotions, only one child in 50 (that is, 2 percent) will become a regular worshipper. On the other hand, if a father does go to church regularly, between two-thirds and three-quarters of their children will become churchgoers (regular and irregular), with the effect leaning toward regular as both the father and the mother share a commitment to worship.

In the Sherwindt household, when I was growing up, even though my father was Jewish, he and my mother attended church regularly; and three of their four children wound up attending church regularly, just like the study documents. When parents value their faith together, their children benefit.

WOMEN'S BIBLE STUDY

The Women of Zion begin a new Bible study with their meeting on the third Tuesday, which is *September 18*, when Audrey West – Ph.D. in New Testament from Duke, with a Masters of Sacred Theology and MDiv. from Yale, the author of the award-winning Bible study *Everyday Surprises: The Parables of Jesus*, and presently serving as a visiting professor at Luther Seminary in St. Paul – focuses on the Gospel of Matthew with a series of lessons entitled *Gathered by God*.

In Matthew 1:23, we are told that Jesus is *Emmanuel*, the fulfillment of the promise, “*God is with us.*” In Matthew 28:20, Jesus again promises, “*I am with you ... always.*” Session 1, entitled *Our Present, Christ's Presence*, focuses on the promise we find in Matthew 18:20, “*Where two or three are gathered in my name, I am there with you.*”

Dr. West writes, “From beginning to end, the Bible testifies that the God who gathers is the same God who is present with us whenever two or three are gathered, to the end of the age. This promise of God's presence in Christ is true even in the messy, difficult, or conflicted times we experience. No matter the shape of our present situation, God is with us in Christ. And Christ is especially with us whenever we gather together in his name.”

Plan to join the Women of Zion at their monthly Bible study, which begins a new 9-session course focused on being gathered together by God to worship with joy and learn about that life that is ours through God's promise to be with us always. They will meet in the Resource Center on the morning of **Tuesday, September 18th**, beginning at 9:30 a.m. You will enjoy the fellowship, and we will enjoy your company. That's the third Tuesday of the month, every month.

MORE WOMEN'S NEWS

The Canton-Massillon Cluster: Our Fall Fellowship will focus on the theme ***Fall in the Country***. The date is Saturday, September 15th, from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m., at St Jacob Lutheran Church, Mudbrook Road. Registration is from 9:00 a.m. to 9:30 a.m. Mr. Loren Viegel, Director of *Voices of Canton*, will present a program on *The History of Hymns*. The cost is \$6.00, which includes brunch. We will collect in-kind gifts of bingo prizes (items like lotion, tissues in cube boxes, costume jewelry, men's white socks, and fun-size candy bars) for the residents of St. Luke Lutheran Community. The deadline for registration is Saturday, September 8.

Zion's Comfort Givers return to their regular schedule of meeting on the second and fourth Thursdays of the month, **September 11 & 25**, beginning at 9:30 a.m. in Luther Hall. We are heading toward Blanket Sunday in October, when we gather up a year's worth of service and send blankets and quilts around the world through the efforts of Lutheran World Relief. We can really use your help, so surprise us with your presence. You'll enjoy the coffee and conversation; but mostly you'll enjoy being filled with the feeling of knowing that we're helping others through the good we do.

The Women of Zion thank you in advance for your support in their drive to provide Lutheran World Relief with more *Personal Care Kits* and *School Kits* this year. We have had a great response from previous requests, and items needed are now limited to bath-size towels (dark color is recommended), bars of soap and metal nail clippers for our **Personal Care Kits**, and 70-sheet notebooks, ball point pens (no gel ink) and unsharpened #2 pencils for our **School Kits**. Don't forget that cash donations are also appreciated. We can do the shopping, or help LWR pay for shipping.

THANK YOU'S AND MORE

Dear Zion members,

I want to thank you all so much for your cards and prayers during my recent hospital stay. I would also like to thank Pastor for his visits and prayers.

*In Christian love,
Carole Singer*

Dear Pastor Sherwindt,

I wanted to take the time to thank you for your kind smile, and your words of comfort and caring that meant so much to us during Michael's recent hospitalization. We are taking it day by day.

*Thank you again,
Cherie & Mike Henson*

Dear Pastor and Marilyn,

The Hertler Family wishes to express our sincere gratitude to you for visiting at our home and serving us communion, for allowing us to plan Shirl's service with your guidance and patience, for creating a personal and touching sermon to honor Shirl, and for your gift to Zion's Memorial Fund to celebrate Shirl's life and memory.

We were and are blessed to have you in our lives, and all of your kind gestures will never be forgotten.

May God bless you
and yours always,

*The Hertlers –
Don Hertler, Sr.,
Don Hertler, Jr.,
Becky Volkmann,
Susie VanVranken*

IN LOVING MEMORY OF SHIRLEY A. HERTLER

December 22, 1931 – August 6, 2012

What a wonderful woman in every respect, including the spirit with which she battled every challenge she encountered, whether the challenge was medical (with her many battles with various forms of cancer), emotional (with the death of two husbands and the untimely death of two children), in her personal life or in business. Shirl was a wonderful woman, a wonderful friend, a wonderful mother, wife, sister, aunt.... I could go on and on. She was even wonderful when it came to her sense of timing, and God's, in terms of tying up loose ends, saying goodbye to her life here on earth, and responding to God's call to come home to heaven; and make no mistake about it, that's where Shirl is right now, basking in the glory of God's eternal life, well, *basking* might be the wrong word, because we all know that she's got her orders in hand, and is working hard at whatever God has in mind for her up in heaven.

There aren't enough superlatives to describe her strengths, express our thanks, and offer our praise to the God who gave her to us as a sign of His goodness and a gift for our lives. Early on she trained for a craft that would help her care for others through the skills of being a nurse. She was then side-tracked to break new ground in becoming a successful local business woman who embodied the best of North Canton – contributing to the community by caring about its people, supporting its causes, living to make everyone's life better, because that's what it meant to be a good person, a responsible citizen, a faithful Christian, and a true friend to everyone who knew her. Harman, Hummel, Wuchnick, Hertler: Shirl wore all these names well and made them family, forever woven into the fabric of our lives, the fabric of this community we know as North Canton and this fellowship we know as the Church.

If I could pick a verse in the New Testament that captured my sense of this moment, it would be Matthew 25, "*Well done good and faithful servant.... Enter into the joy which has been prepared for you from before the foundation of the world.*" (25:21, 34) Well done, indeed. Her activities of involvement in the life of the church are too many to number. Her love of life, family, and friends was evident to all. Her witness to the faith that was in her made her stand out among us and rubbed off on everyone who knew her. The Book of Hebrews tells us that "*faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not yet seen.*" (11:1) We have seen what faith looks like, by witnessing the faith Shirl had, the love she shared, the life she lived, and the hope that found expression through a resilient spirit that never stopped trusting in God's goodness, carrying herself with such grace, offering all of us the friendship of *her* love and the assurance of God's.

Shirl was *blessed to be a blessing*: that's what got the biblical narrative going with God's promise to Abraham in the Book of Genesis (12:1-3), and that's what describes the full narrative of Shirl's life, inside and out. She was well-organized, hard-working, and attentive to everything that mattered. She was thorough and conscientious, responsive and responsible, thoughtful, loving, faithful, hopeful, a woman of incredible faith and exemplary character. Shirl's deep and abiding love for God, her profound faith in God's goodness, and her indomitably, resilient spirit of trust and confidence in the Good News that God's promise to be with us provides us with all that we need, enabling us to see the need, devise a plan, and serve with joy. Shirl did all of that, and more.

