

GREETINGS FROM THE PASTOR:

The month of March was been filled with Lent, lots of it, along with Holy Week, and Easter, too! You know the drill: Sunday Evening Lenten Dinners, Sunday Evening Lenten Services, and this year we had our *40-Day Journey with Dietrich Bonhoeffer* to keep things moving. The dinners were extraordinarily delicious. On March 3rd, Zion's Chancel Guild treated us to great soups, chicken sandwiches, and some fabulous desserts. The Praise Team helped lead worship, and our daily dosage of Bonhoeffer provided the focus for our evening reflections. On March 10th, the Men of Zion wowed us with pot roast that couldn't have been more tender, with potatoes, mixed vegetables, and all the rest. Worship featured special music offered by Jon & Barb Elsass, Dale Jacobs, and Phil Lehenbauer. Then, it was March 17th and the Youth of Zion, with lasagna during dinner and the passion narrative for worship. It was our fifth of five Lenten dinners and devotions, leading to the beginning of Holy Week with Palm Sunday.

Palm Sunday always gets everything started with a congregational parade. We gather in Luther Hall, listen to the Processional Gospel; we ask that God bless the palms and all those who are waving them; then the Palm Sunday Parade begins. The organ resonates through the Sanctuary, through the hallways, and into Luther Hall. The Senior Choir helps to keep us singing the same verse at about the same time. We march down the center aisle, and arrive at the beginning of the service: "Hosanna! Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest!" We are told that Jewish leaders were offended by such an undisciplined show of devotion; and Jesus responds, "If these followers were silent, the very rocks would cry out!" The Senior Choir sings, "Rocks keep silent! Ain't no rock gonna' shout for me!" What a great anthem! What a wonderful parade! What a great start to a week rich in meaning, for the church and for the world. (The 10:30 a.m. service features the Sunday School Easter Program, which was great, again, and is described in greater detail with our Youth News on page 6.)

The Great Triduum arrived with Maundy Thursday and Good Friday, with Holy Saturday requiring that we wait until the celebration would continue with Easter's dawning light. Maundy Thursday lifts up the importance of the Last Supper that Jesus shared with his friends and followers. Fellowship is always key to the journey of learning to be faithful. But we soon discover that failure is par for the course, as all of us fall short of God's expectations, and ours. This becomes painfully clear with Good Friday. Our Lord is betrayed in the garden, condemned in the courtyard, beaten in shackles, and then hanged to a tree turned into a cross and planted on The Skull, with three long hours claimed by darkness – and its prince – to put the Lord of life to death. Even the criminal hanging alongside of him could see that Jesus had done nothing wrong. "Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom." None of the disciples were there to hear it; only the lone centurion standing guard got it right, "Truly, this was the son of God!"

It's so much to take in in the span of a single month, and a single week: two services on Thursday; two services on Friday; then the waiting, and with Easter's dawning light the Good News becomes clear. The tomb is empty. The Lord is risen! The story of new life begins, first our Lord's, and then a never-ending litany of lives changed, with praise on our lips, love in our hearts, and new life alive among us. God's grace given leads to our love shared. That's the life that's ours, through the worship we offer and the service we share ... in Jesus' name.

CHURCH COUNCIL NEWS

March’s meeting began with a workshop, as we began to make plans for improving our Youth and Family ministries so that the presence of an Intern will serve as support, not as a substitute, for our interest and action. Lorin Beaber called us to order at 7:00 p.m., and the workshop began after Brian Milek offered devotions. Also present were Dave Palumbo, Juanita Cignetti, Todd Elsass, Beth Shaheen, Vicki Givler, Renee Keith, Cathy Harvey, Pastor Sherwindt, and guests, Connie Riffle and Janet Slease.

The Treasurer’s Report confirmed that we have for two years running enjoyed back-to-back surplus months in January & February. Our *Early Bird Giving* has been another great success! Our year-to-date surplus stands at \$303.25, which is way better than what had been an average deficit of over (\$6,200) that greeted us with the arrival of March. It used to be that March truly came in as a ravenous lion, and left leaving a great big budgetary hole as our financial challenge for the rest of the year. Early Bird Giving has changed all this; and for that, we thank you for your support.

ZION'S FINANCIAL FACTS: FEBRUARY	
Income for February	21,943.07
Expenses in February	<u>21,813.98</u>
February’s Surplus	129.09
Year-to-Date Income	37,565.86
Year-to-Date Expenses	<u>37,262.61</u>
Year-to-Date Surplus	303.25
Yes, we enjoyed another monthly surplus, adding to the 12 monthly surpluses we enjoyed last year. For that, and so much more	
<i>WE THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT!</i>	

MORE COUNCIL NEWS

Early Bird Giving: Council put their challenge out there, a Challenge Bucket of \$3,000 to help offset winter’s expenses; the congregation took that challenge, and raised it by \$3,000, for an actual total of \$6,002.32 in Early Bird Giving from members & friends of Zion! We had more than enough to meet our higher first quarter expenses; and we’ve been able to hold a little in reserve as we look ahead to April. January, February, and March are all in balance, and we’re off to a good start for April. It really is great to move through the year with the strength of being in the black. It raises spirits, bolsters confidence, and fuels a healthy sense of heartfelt praise for God’s faithfulness (and yours).

Caring Ministry: Cathy Harvey has put together a wonderful team of volunteers in supporting the work of the Food Pantry. Some of the faces are new, others have been with us for years; but the bottom line is that service is offered and joy received. We invite all who would like to share in the satisfaction that comes with volunteer service to join us on the 1st & 3rd Tuesdays. You’ll be glad you did, and so will we.

Bicentennial Task Force: Preparing for our two hundredth anniversary is a lot of work. We’ve got a date planned in 2013 for June 15—16 with Zion United Church of Christ; and we’ve got a date planned in 2014 for June 14—15 with previous Interns and former Pastors, along with Bishop Eaton. Both of these events involve food; and both involve worship. On Saturday, June 15, 2013, we will host a joint Prime Rib Dinner, with joint choirs leading in worship on Sunday. On Saturday, June 14, 2014, we will host our gala Bicentennial Prime Rib Dinner, with Bishop Eaton presiding at worship the following morning.

STILL MORE COUNCIL NEWS

Mini-Workshop: The theme of the workshop with which our Council meeting began was *Incorporating an Intern into Our Action Plan for Improving Youth & Family Ministries*.

We do not yet know if an Intern will be assigned to Zion this year; but if we want an Intern to help us with our plans, we need to have a plan. Our Internship Committee was on hand to help lead the workshop. We began with a brief review of insights gained from previous studies of *Catching the Next Wave* and *The Purpose Driven Church*. We then talked about patterns of leadership that rely on one primary leader, and those that add ministers to the pool of leaders to sustain and grow our ministries.

Then, Council turned to creating a calendar of events for older youth, all our youth, and our congregational family. Our goals were to place 25 events on the calendar and find 25 leaders and helpers to assist in the process of planning these events. All the familiar events were there: Vacation Bible School, the End-of-the-Summer Party (with specific requests for the return of the dunk machine), the Craft Show, Christmas and Easter programs, the Mother's Day Breakfast. More mission trips were added, along with movie nights and overnights. We recalled the Strawberry Festival, Ice Cream Socials, and thought an Akron Aeros Night might be a nice addition to the calendar. All ideas were welcome. The calendar was filled to overflowing.

Thinking about a calendar of events was not as big a challenge as wondering if we could find 25 leaders and helpers to get involved and stay engaged. That's what will make the difference between repeating an old past and creating a new future. The workshop proved to be enjoyable and time well spent as we thought a lot about Zion's near-term future.

EVEN MORE COUNCIL NEWS

Property Ministry: We continue to work on small projects inside the parsonage, with our most recent endeavor replacing the (older and cracking) linoleum floor in the bathroom on the main floor. Tim Himebaugh did not miss a beat, and is back keeping things spic 'n span once again. We thank Bob (and Linda) Lancashire for filling in while he recovered from his brief hospitalization. We are looking into repairs that are needed with the limestone pillars and overhangs outside the entrances to the Narthex and Luther Hall. We occasionally talk about the need to re-surface the parking lot again. (Let Betty Boettler know what you think about that.)

Resource Ministry: Early Bird Giving has kept us in the black through the first quarter. The various special funds that our Treasurer oversees sport healthy balances, with special mention of the Food Pantry Fund (with a balance of \$4,171.55), our Youth Fund (with a balance of \$3,535.30), and the Internship Outreach Fund (with a balance of \$8,030.66). Balances at our Merrill Lynch Account also remain as healthy as they've ever been. We have four funds at Merrill Lynch (a Building Fund, Reserve Fund, the Master Plan, and Undesignated Memorial & Gifts), with a combined total of \$219,189.07.

Learning Ministry: It has been a very busy month for Christian Education at Zion. The Sunday School hosted a Lenten dinner and led our worship that same evening, then offered a great Easter message with *Props for Easter*, and enjoyed yet another edition of our Annual Easter Egg Hunt. As we look ahead, Confirmation is on the horizon. Four younger members – Jaret Beaber, Eric Dague, Nathan Fox, and Carley Frank – will celebrate the Rite of Confirmation at Zion on the Festival of Pentecost, which is May 19th this year.

GREAT NEWS FROM ZION'S SUNDAY SCHOOL



Happy Birthday to:

Weston Milek – Thursday, April 18th

Brooke Stout – Friday, April 19th

Christopher Thompson – Thursday, April 25th

UPCOMING EVENTS – MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

Thursday, May 9: Our Confirmation Dinner with Confirmands, their families, and the Council

Sunday, May 12: 11th Annual Mother's Day Breakfast between the Services in Memorial Hall

Sunday, May 19: The Festival of Pentecost for the Church & the Rite of Confirmation at Zion

CHILDREN'S EASTER PLAY: PROPS FOR EASTER!

The Children's Easter Program was another great success. As always, the kids did a fantastic job with their parts, and they also provided us with a little humor along the way. Thank you to all of the kids for their hard work and effort! Our program, *Props for Easter*, provided us with a tale of three children who found that the Easter Bunny left a basket full of unexpected "goodies". All of our children – in their pajamas – then unraveled the mystery behind each of the items in the special Easter Basket, items like the cross, nails, a rock, a torn curtain, bread and a goblet, silver coins, eggs, a lamb, and so much more. We were all reminded of the true meaning of Easter; and we hope everyone enjoyed their special egg that the children passed out at the end of the program.



A big thank you to everyone who helped with the program! It was truly a collective effort. Thanks to the Sunday School teachers – Janet Slease, Connie Riffle, Nicole Milek, Sharon Stout, and Tina Beaber – for all their help during Sunday School, the pizza party and day of the program. Thanks to Suzanne Walters for helping with the music and for her accompaniment during the program. Thanks to Brian Walters for helping with the sound system. Finally, thank you to Nicole Milek and Betty Tracy for helping with the props. Everyone's help and support is so greatly appreciated!

ZION'S ANNUAL EASTER EGG HUNT



This year's Easter Egg Hunt was a big hit! We hid 725 eggs this year filled with candy and other surprises. The children were able to search for eggs all over the inside the church. What a great day! Thanks to the older youth and Sunday School leaders for hiding all of the eggs! The children look forward to this event each year, and it is always a lot of fun!

Thank you to everyone who donated candy and items for the eggs. With so many eggs to fill, we needed all sorts of help, and we really appreciated your support! Last, but not least, a big THANK YOU goes out to the High School and Catechism classes and their leaders for filling *all of the eggs!* It's a joyful tradition that we couldn't do without you.

MORE GOOD NEWS FOR THE YOUTH OF ZION

A HEARTFELT THANK YOU TO OUR YOUTH AND THEIR FAMILIES

Thank you to all of the youth and their families for another great Lenten dinner! All of us really appreciate the dedication of our youth and their families when it comes to hosting dinner and leading worship on the fifth Sunday evening in Lent. Special thanks go out to Jeff Frank for taking the lead in leading our team in delicious lasagna as the main course! We also enjoyed great garlic breads, an assortment of salads, and a wide array of desserts. We also want to thank all of the youth and their families for contributing food, and for helping to set up, serve, and clean up afterward. We are so lucky to have such a great group of families that are willing to pitch in and help! Our thanks to Debbie & Dean, Jeff & Connie, Steve & Darla, Brian & Nikki, Lorin & Tina, Loretta, Laura, Rick & Sharon, Robert & Johanna, Janet, John, and Connie.

From our delicious dinner in Memorial Hall, we moved into the Sanctuary for another of our excellent devotional services, this one a reading of the Passion narrative from the Gospel of Luke. Zion's Sunday School children did an exceptional job. We extend our thanks to Carley Frank, Jaret Beaber, Nathan Fox, Eric Dague, Brandon Stout, Mallory Rhodes, Brooke Stout, Christian Henderson, Grant Beaber, Kat Milek, Jeremy Fox, Christopher Thompson, Justin Dague, Marcus Rhodes, Cassie Frank, and David Panzarello. What a cast! Everyone did a great job. Thanks for providing a great end to our schedule of Sunday Evening Lenten Programs.

SUNDAY SCHOOL RESUMES ITS REGULAR SCHEDULE

We altered the schedule for Sunday School during Lent to get ready for our Easter Play, and added an extended rehearsal schedule on the weekend of Palm Sunday. Our children's Sunday School classes are cancelled on Easter because of the Easter Egg Hunt that day. The Sunday School will resume its normal schedule beginning on Sunday, April 7. Sunday School classes start at 9:15 a.m. and end at 10:15 a.m. Our children will continue to learn important lessons in class, along with enjoying crafts, games, and lots of snacks. See you there; and bring a friend!

THE FINAL TALLY FOR THIS YEAR'S ACME RECEIPTS

Because of your attention and support, we received a total of \$248.83 from Acme this year to support our youth programming, our best years yet! Thanks to everyone for your support!

SPAGHETTI SUPPER FUNDRAISER FOR TROOP 10

The Dague family invites Zion's congregational family to join in support of a great fundraising opportunity for Boy Scout Troop 10, which is Eric's troop. The date is Saturday, April 20th, from 4:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. Spaghetti will be on the menu, and the cost is \$7.00 for adults and \$4.00 for children under 12. You will recall that Zion hosted this scouting event last year, and, despite one of the worst snow storms of the winter, it was very successful. We will surely have much better weather this year! So just show up on the 20th, and enjoy a great dinner, which will taste even better knowing that we are helping young boys grow into the wisdom of becoming responsible young men. That's Saturday, April 20th, from 4:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.

THE WOMEN OF ZION

This year's Bible study continues the theme *Gathered by God*. Session 8 tries to recapture the excitement of the success that greeted the early church's missionary journeys into Jordan, Syria and Turkey. A man named Saul was blinded on the road to Damascus; and when he regained his sight, he saw that Jesus was the Christ. Saul became Paul, and from being a persecutor of the church he became its greatest advocate and apostle. You will want to read Acts 14, and take another look at the old-time gospel favorite, *I Love to Tell the Story*. Our theme verse is Acts 14:27, which reminds us how the missionary apostles gathered the church together to tell tall tales and great stories about all that God had done with them and through them. You are always invited to join the Women of Zion on the third Tuesday of the month, which this month is **April 16th**, when coffee is served and the conversation begins at 9:30 a.m. in the Resource Center

Zion's Comfort Givers meet on the second and fourth Thursdays, **April 11 & 25**, beginning at 9:30 a.m. in Luther Hall. We can really use your help. So consider joining us as we enjoy coffee, some cookies and conversation, along with being filled with the feeling of knowing that we are helping others in need through the good that we do. Plan to join us. We know that you will be happy you did.

Zion's Chancel Guild pulled together to offer a very delicious meal for the Sunday Evening Lenten Dinner on March 3rd. Soup 'n sandwiches hit the spot on a cold, winter's night. We also want to thank the Chancel Guild for everything they did in making sure that the Sanctuary was rightly prepared for all the different services we hold during Lent and Holy Week. Our thanks to all.

WOMEN'S SPRING CLUSTER

The Canton-Massillon Cluster will celebrate the 25th Anniversary of the Women of the ELCA at their **Spring Gathering** at Faith Lutheran Church in Massillon on April 17th, which is a Wednesday. Registration begins at 9:00 a.m. The cost is \$7.00. The theme, *There's Always a Silver Lining*, is based on Proverbs 8:10. Pastor Elaina Styblo will be the speaker. *In-kind gifts* invited are baby quilts for area agencies and lap robes for St. Luke residents. The *Love Offering* will be divided equally between Lutheran World Relief to help cover shipping costs for personal care kits and NEOSWO, the North-eastern Ohio Synod Women's Organization. Contact Betty Tracy with your interest.

Now is the time to start thinking about the **Fall Event** planned for Saturday, September 14th, at Holy Trinity Lutheran Church in Sebring, Ohio. And keep in mind that the **15th Biennial Convention** for NEOSWO will be Friday through Sunday, October 11-13, when the theme will be *I Lift up Mine Eyes unto the Hills* (from Psalm 121). Hotels are available, and our meeting place will be at St. Paul's Lutheran Church in Bellville, Ohio.

This year elections for synod bishops will be held in 25 of our 65 synods. Currently, 7 of our 65 synod bishops are women, including Bishop Elizabeth Easton of our Northeastern Ohio Synod, who is also up for election at this year's Synod Assembly, which will take place at the John S. Knight Center in Akron on the weekend of May 31-June 1. Seven of sixty-five is ten percent. But is 10% enough? That's a question raised by Linda Post Bushkofsky, who observes in *Dawn* that ours is a church, the ELCA, where nearly 62% of worshippers are women. 31.9% of our clergy are women. Is ten percent enough?

MEN OF ZION NEWS

The Men of Zion put on a great spread, with pot roast and all the fixings, on March 10th. It couldn't have been more delicious; and the number of men who joined us couldn't have been more supportive of our efforts. There are simply too many names to name for all the help that was offered. Thanks to all.

Now it is time to look ahead to what will be our 11th Annual Mother's Day Breakfast, which is coming up on May 12th. That's a big event that takes a whole lot of planning, with teams to manage the drinks, the fruit salad, our breads of all sorts, and world-class main course baked and burnt by the Men of Zion.

But then there's an even bigger event that's become quite a fundraiser for us that has placed the focus on fathers: Zion's Prime Rib Dinner. This year, we'll be joined by our partners in two hundred years of history, the congregational family at Zion United Church of Christ. We'll be looking at a great crowd, a great program, and some great food. The date for this event is Saturday, June 15th.

A HUGE THANK YOU TO ALL

What a month, with so many members and friends to thank for so many aspects of our life together at Zion. First of all, a great big thank you to all of the groups that hosted our Sunday Evening Lenten dinners: Church Council, the Senior Choir and Praise Team, the Chancel Guild, the Men of Zion, and the Youth of Zion. Each group turned out in force on the night they hosted, and the food at these Sunday evening dinners was out of this world. Then there are all the persons who helped with the services: the Senior Choir and Praise Team, our organists, soloists, and readers, along with the Chancel Guild, ushers, and deacons working behind the scenes to make sure that all was ready and went well. Thank you to all for everything you did to make this Lenten journey a spiritual (and gastronomical) delight.

Then, there's Holy Week, with the palms on Palm Sunday, the props for the Sunday School Easter play, leading to Maundy Thursday and the Stripping of the Chancel, the black veil draped over the Cross on Good Friday, and all the Easter lilies on the Festival of Easter! The work involved, the beauty at worship, the hymns, the anthems, special music, trumpets, organists, all coming together to create the sights and sounds of Easter's resurrection joy. And let's not forget the support offered by the congregation, offering the gifts of your time, your talents, your treasures to help make our church healthy and our mission strong.

There are so many ways in which God's people serve, and so many persons to thank for a wonderfully powerful season of worship and service. May God be praised!

In His Service, and yours,
Pastor Mark Sherwindt

EXPLANATIONS FOR OUR LITURGICAL PAINTINGS

A brief walk into our Sanctuary makes it clear that we are truly blessed to have an artist like Carol Rossbach, who loves to complement the spiritual power of worship with the wonderful beauty of art. Her liturgical paintings add color, warmth, and meaning to the walls that surround us at worship. During Holy Week, and now during the season of Easter, the west wall tells the story of salvation through five liturgical paintings, four of which are featured on the cover of this newsletter. Each painting tells a story; and Carol has helped to get the story started with brief descriptions.

PALM SUNDAY features two palms and a gate. The palms recall how they took branches of palm trees and went out to meet Jesus, crying “Hosanna! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest!” What many may regard as a quaint and pleasant gesture, waving palms, was actually very symbolic and potentially a revolutionary act. Palms were important national symbols for Israel, used in Solomon’s temple and in Ezekiel’s vision of the temple. To wave palms in such a way could ignite a revolt in the incendiary mood of Jerusalem around 30 AD. The arch represents of the gates of Jerusalem, through which Jesus entered the city on Palm Sunday. It is typical that triumphal arches are built by kings to celebrate victories for their kingdoms, similar to the arch that still stand in Rome as a symbol of its victory over Israel in 70 AD.

GOOD FRIDAY features the Cross and crown of thorns. The Cross is the central symbol of Christianity. “The word of the Cross is folly to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. Jews demand signs and Greeks seek wisdom, but we preach Christ crucified, stumbling block to Jews and folly to Greeks, but to those who believe, it is the power of God’s love and the wisdom of God’s ways.” The cross combined with a crown of thorns symbolizes Jesus’ suffering. We can’t know what thistles or thorny plants were used for the crown; but we know that thorns can symbolize punishment for sin, the punishment that Christ bore for our sins on the Cross.

THE EMPTY TOMB: Only the wealthy could afford large tombs cut into the rock. Their families were buried in these tombs for years, sometimes centuries. The tomb that Joseph of Arimathea provided for Jesus was such a tomb. The stone was so large that the women were afraid they would not be able to roll the stone away. A stone of this size would be found at the tomb of a wealthy man. Considering the cost of property near Jerusalem and for such a rock-hewn tomb, Joseph’s gift to Jesus was very generous. The willingness to offer his tomb for Jesus’ burial shows the measure of his devotion. It also fulfilled the prophecy that Jesus would be buried “with the rich” (Isaiah 53:9).

EASTER’S CROSS & LILIES: When his opponents in Corinth stressed a theology of glory, Paul spoke of the Cross: “Far be it from me to glory except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ.” The Cross of Christ is the symbol most often used in Christian churches through the ages. The cross stands empty, reflecting the victory of the resurrection. But it stands there, reflecting the supreme sacrifice God made in his love for the entire world. The rays of the rising sun in the background show that it was morning of the third day that Christ arose. Lilies are often called the *white-robed apostles of hope*, and were said to be found growing in the Garden of Gethsemane after Christ’s agony. Tradition has it that the beautiful white lilies sprung up where drops of Christ’s sweat fell to the ground in his final hours of sorrow and deep distress. Churches continue this tradition at Easter time by banking their altars and surrounding their crosses with masses of Easter lilies to commemorate the resurrection of Jesus Christ and our hope for life everlasting.

The Zion Herald

Proclaiming Good News

April, 2013

The Story of Salvation on our West Wall

Palm Sunday: A Victorious Beginning ... leads to Death on Good Friday with



the Cross at Golgotha

Then, after waiting through Saturday, the Dawn of Easter Morn Arrives:



The Tomb Is Empty?
The Lord Is Risen!



He Is Risen, Indeed.
ALLELUIA!

Artwork by Carol Rossbach