

GREETINGS FROM THE PASTOR:

The Bicentennial Season has begun. Lent has arrived with Ash Wednesday, and that ushers in forty days of preparation for both the great joy of Easter, and the anticipation of Special Guests for the celebration of our Bicentennial Anniversary. Three of our Sunday Evening Lenten Services feature Special Bicentennial Guests. As is our Lenten custom, each of the Sunday evenings during Lent play host to Lenten dinners at 5:30 p.m. and Lenten services at 6:15 p.m. Our First Sunday Evening in Lent focuses on a Special Congregational Meeting, when we will be asked to authorize the Church Council to proceed with three property projects: 1) targeted improvements in the kitchen; 2) resealing and re-stripping the parking lot; and 3) repairing the parking lot overhangs. We will be our own special bicentennial guests, as the Chancel Guild hosts dinner and the Senior Choir leads us in worship. That's Sunday, March 9th.

On the Sunday evening of March 16th, we will welcome back *son of the congregation*, Ralph Edwards, who continues to serve as the Pastor of Good Hope Lutheran Church in North Lima, Ohio, the site of his first call. Ralph grew up at Zion, was active as a member and active as a leader, when Pastors Jim Lutz and Louise Mollick were instrumental in encouraging Ralph to consider pastoral ministry as a calling, which he did: thanks be to God! Ralph and his family lived in the parsonage for some of that time when he was making his way through the seminary. Memories abound, especially memories of the pastoral care he provided both his Mom and his Dad as they were called home to heaven during my tenure as Zion's Pastor. Ralph's assistance and leadership were invaluable to me. Please join us on the evening of Sunday, March 16th, as we honor Pastor Ralph Edwards as our Special Bicentennial Guest.

On the next two Sundays we will celebrate the connections we've enjoyed with our congregational neighbors in North Canton. Father Jay Clarke and St. Paul's Catholic Church will be our Special Bicentennial Guests on the Sunday evening of March 23rd; and the Rev. Sarah Taylor Peck and Community Christian Church will be our Special Bicentennial Guests on the Sunday evening of March 30th. St. Paul's Catholic Church made a habit of joining us during Lent (and Advent) for ecumenically-spirited Bible studies that were co-sponsored at the highest levels of leadership within the Northeastern Ohio Synod and the Catholic Diocese of Youngstown. On March 23rd, Fr. Clarke and I will talk about our shared love for the theology of the cross.

Then on March 30th, we will thank our good neighbors at Community Christian Church for their faithful and generous support for the ministry of our Food Pantry. We have documented it many times; but between their Koinonia Class and other members whose generosity has been contagious, Zion has been blessed with a steady stream of contributions, both in cash and kind, year after year after year. These are two more Sunday evenings in Lent that you will not want to miss. Dave Palumbo will lead Council's hosting dinner on March 23rd; and Mark Votaw will lead the Men of Zion in action on March 30th. Our Singing Chef, Dale Jacobs, and Patissier, Tony Niesz, will be on hand to make sure that we are serving the best food in town, in fact, the best food in Stark County. Please make sure you check the Lenten schedule, and join us for what will be an exceptional season of food and fellowship, with great worship, special guests, and celebrations of favorite sons, ecumenical relations, and the blessings of mutual support.

CHURCH COUNCIL NEWS

Mark Votaw called our February meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. Cathy Harvey, our Caring Ministry Elder, led devotions. Also present were Brian Milek, Juanita Cignetti, Dave Palumbo, Vicki Givler, Todd Elsass, Beth Shaheen, and Pastor Sherwindt. Carol Rossbach and Renee Keith were excused. We were focused and busy, concluding our meeting with adjournment at 8:00 p.m.

We reviewed details related to membership, the sadness of losing members through death, and the joy of new families finding us. We began the year with 482 baptized members and 411 confirmed members, and, thanks be to God, with all the subtractions and additions, we ended the year with 483 baptized members and 413 confirmed members. We were also fortunate in having \$4,500 left over from Advanced Giving in 2013 to add to \$500 we received in Early Bird Giving, which, when added to our income figures in January, left us with just a (\$506.89) deficit for January. While this is our first monthly deficit in over two years, this has been such a brutal winter that we feel blessed to have so small a deficit.

ZION'S FINANCIAL FACTS: JANUARY

Income for January	\$20,646.89
Expenses in January	\$21,153.78
<i>January's Budget Deficit</i>	<i>(\$ 506.89)</i>

January was a month when we incurred heavy expenses for utilities, salting, and snow plowing. We also front-loaded some Church Office-related expenses that will save us money over the course of the year. So, we are thankful for the small deficit.

We thank you for your generous support!

MORE COUNCIL NEWS

Mark Votaw called our March meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. on March 2nd. Todd Elsass, our Property Ministry Elder, led devotions. Also present were Brian Milek, Juanita Cignetti, Dave Palumbo, Vicki Givler, Cathy Harvey, Beth Shaheen, Carol Rossbach, Renee Keith, Pastor Sherwindt. We were also joined by the newest member of our congregational family, Drew Keith!

The primary purpose for our meeting this early in the month was to plan our Special Congregational Meeting, scheduled for the First Sunday Evening in Lent, March 9th. The purpose of this meeting is to authorize Council to proceed with three bicentennial property projects. (See page 5 for the full text of our resolution.) The evening will begin with dinner served by Zion's Chancel Guild at 5:30 p.m. Opening devotions for the meeting will precede the Congregational Meeting, which will then be followed by our first Sunday Evening Lenten Service, led by Zion's Senior Choir.

The Treasurer reported that we ran another monthly deficit. The costs of winter continue to run higher than in previous years. Plus, the weather has been pretty uncooperative on Sundays. So, we feel fortunate and blessed!

ZION'S FINANCIAL FACTS: FEBRUARY

Income for February	\$20,854.06
Expenses in February	\$21,045.30
<i>February's Budget Deficit</i>	<i>(\$ 191.24)</i>

Year-to-Date Income	\$41,500.95
Year-to-Date Expenses	\$42,199.08
<i>Year-to-Date Deficit</i>	<i>(\$ 698.13)</i>

We thank you for your generous support!

OUR BICENTENNIAL PROPERTY PROJECTS PROPOSAL

Having circulated surveys inviting member responses to possible property projects to be completed as we approach the celebration of our Bicentennial Anniversary, a clear consensus has emerged focusing on (1) targeted improvements in the kitchen, (2) resealing, and re-stripping the parking lot, and (3) repairing the parking lot overhangs by the Narthex and the exit from Luther Hall.

Our targeted improvements in the kitchen include replacing the two small sinks with three larger tubs, adapting the cabinets to fit, installing a source of hot water closer to the kitchen, and upgrading the fire retardant system to meet present requirements of the fire code. We will do much of the work ourselves, and anticipate costs of up to \$7,500.00.

The parking lot requires resealing and re-stripping, along with some repairs. Vasco did this work that last time we did it in 2002. Including all parking lots and the parsonage, the resealing and re-stripping will cost \$10,987.00, and needed repairs could cost up to \$4,300.00. We are estimating the cost of this job at \$15,387.00.

The two parking lot overhangs, one by the Narthex and the other by the exit from Luther Hall, require significant repairs to the stucco finish. We anticipate that this job will cost no more than \$15,000.00. We have not yet chosen the contractor we would prefer for this job.

We estimate that the total amount to be spent on these three projects should not exceed \$40,000.00. Because of the generosity of those who have pledged their support for the faceted stained glass windows, along with others who have contributed directly to the Bicentennial Gifts Fund, we have received pledges for these three property projects that total \$25,000.00.

Between additional contributions from members and the use of Master Plan Fund monies present in the Merrill Lynch account, we believe that raising the \$15,000.00 for full funding is well within reach.

At our March 2nd Council Meeting, we voted to recommend that the following proposal be approved at a Congregational Meeting scheduled for March 9th: ***“Be it resolved that Zion Lutheran Church authorize Church Council to proceed with (1) targeted improvements in the kitchen, (2) resealing, and re-stripping the parking lot, and (3) repairing the parking lot overhangs by the Narthex and exit from Luther Hall. Funding will be secured through contributions to the Bicentennial Gifts Fund, with up to \$7,500.00 coming from the Master Plan Fund monies held at Merrill Lynch.”***

(When we gathered at our Congregational Meeting on the evening of Sunday, March 9th, we easily enjoyed a quorum, and even more easily approved this proposal with an overwhelming consensus embracing the opportunity to move ahead with these property improvements. We look forward to members supporting these projects with their gifts as well as their votes. We also thank members who have already given us great momentum in moving forward together.)

GREAT NEWS FROM ZION'S SUNDAY SCHOOL



Happy Birthday to:

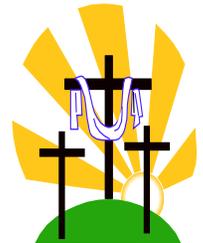
UPCOMING EVENTS – MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

- Sunday, March 16:** The Sunday School Hour is split between play rehearsal and class time
Sunday, March 23: The Sunday School Hour is split between play rehearsal and class time
Sunday, March 30: The Sunday School Hour is split between play rehearsal and class time
Sunday, April 6th: Youth of Zion host our Lenten Dinner and help lead our Lenten Service
Saturday, April 12: Children's Easter Program Dress Rehearsal followed by our Pizza Party
Palm Sunday, April 13: Children's Easter Program during the 10:30 a.m. Worship Service
Easter Sunday, April 20: Our Children's Easter Egg Hunt for all ages during Sunday School
The Ascension, May 29: We traditionally take our Confirmands out to dinner this evening!
Pentecost, June 8th: We celebrate the Rite of Confirmation for Christian Henderson today!

SUNDAY SCHOOL: PRE-KINDERGARTEN THROUGH GRADE 6

During the month of March, our Sunday School classes will continue to meet at the regularly scheduled time, namely, 9:15 a.m. We will have both class time and practice for our Easter program during the Sunday School hour. Please join us!

This year's Easter Program – *Who Was That Man on the Cross?* – will be offered, as is our custom, on Palm Sunday, April 13th, at the 10:30 am service only, which is also our custom. In the program, the children will tell us about many of the biblically-based names and characteristics of Jesus. We will have dress rehearsal on Saturday, April 12th, which will be followed by a pizza party to celebrate all of the children's hard work. Again, we will practice this month for half of the Sunday School hour, and the other half will be the normal Sunday School lesson. There are many roles available, both speaking and non-speaking, as well as assisting with costumes and props. We are looking forward to another great performance by Zion's amazing kids!



This month we are also starting to collect Easter candy and small items that will fit into our plastic eggs for one of Zion's favorite traditions: the Children's Easter Egg Hunt on Easter Sunday – April 20th – during Sunday School. Children of all ages are invited to go on our Easter Egg Hunt. We typically hide over 500 eggs – both inside and out. If you would like to donate any items for the eggs, please leave them in the church office by Sunday, April 6th. Our older youth are once again invited to help us fill the eggs, hide them on Easter Sunday at 8:30 a.m., and assist with the Easter Egg Hunt during Sunday School. We really appreciate everyone's support of this great activity that the children look forward to each year.



MORE GREAT NEWS FOR ZION'S YOUTH

A BICENTENNIAL UPDATE ON THE INTERNSHIP APPLICATION

Our Internship Committee met on the Saturday morning of February 22nd, anticipating that Pastor Sherwindt would be heading to Trinity Lutheran Seminary the next week to meet-and-greet six of this year's class of seminarians who are looking for Internship assignments. Trinity is ranked among the top ten seminaries in the country for its creativity and effectiveness in the area of contextual education. Pastor Sherwindt was happy to report that the seminarians were quite impressive, and the two days spent at Trinity were a blast! We should have more information to report by the middle of March. Also, in the middle of March, on the Sunday evening of March 16th, our Internship Group will host the Lenten dinner. Plan to join us.

A GREAT NIGHT OUT WITH THE CANTON CHARGE!

Thrivent Financial for Lutherans created a great opportunity for families in our Canton-Massillon Conference when Dave Zastawny, our Thrivent Representative, sent us an invitation to purchase tickets for \$5.00 apiece, and food vouchers, too, for \$5.00, which included a hot dog, a hot pretzel, and pop or water. It was quite a deal, and Zion had quite a showing, with the Riffles, the Rhodes family, the Fox family, the Hendersons, the Thompsons, the Dague family, Mark Votaw, Lorraine Weinman, and Pastor Sherwindt putting it on their calendar. We saw the Canton Charge beat the Texas Legends handily (on Saturday, February 22nd). The Canton Charge is one of the teams in the NBA's Developmental League, and affiliated with the Cleveland Cavaliers. In fact, one of the Charge players was called up by the Cavs that weekend, only we got to see his talents for \$5.00, here in our backyard, which was quite a deal and a real treat.



THINKING AHEAD TO OUR YOUTH LENTEN DINNER:

The Youth of Zion will be hosting the Lenten Dinner on Sunday, April 6th at 5:30 p.m. The kids and their families will be serving a wonderful meal and, of course, fabulous desserts. We will be contacting the youth and their families with more details about dinner and the worship service, too. We will need lots of help and appreciate everyone's support! Anticipate great surprises!

A FINAL ACME COMMUNITY CASH-BACK REPORT:

Thank you to everyone for bringing in your Acme receipts during this year's program. We really appreciate your support! It was a record year for us! We will be receiving a check for right around \$325.00 to help our youth. The program has ended for this school year and will start again in the fall. Thanks again for all of your support!

CELEBRATE A BAPTISM WITH THE BEABER FAMILY!



On Sunday, March 16th, at the 10:30 a.m. service, Bryce Anthony Beaber, his parents, Corey and Juli, along with grandparents, Tina and Lorin, and their families, Beaber and Wonsettler, will come together to celebrate the Good News of God's grace proclaimed with the Sacrament of Holy Baptism. It should be a great morning for Zion and for the Beabers. All are invited! Everyone is welcome.

THE WOMEN OF ZION

This year's Bible study theme for the women of the church has been *In Good Company: Stories of Biblical Women*. This month's focus is on the daughter of Jephthah. This is a difficult story both because Jephthah is a man with a colored past, and because his daughter goes unnamed. This is a story of bold action and lasting loyalty, leaving as its legacy the taste of tragedy as a haunting, yet inspiring, testimony to God's faithfulness. Rather than beginning with our story in Judges 11:1-40, we would be better served by spending some time with Psalm 130: "Out of the depths I cry to Thee; O Lord, hear my plea!"

There is no doubt that we will enjoy the conversation that follows as the women of Zion gather in the Resource Center on Tuesday, March 18, at 9:30 a.m. to examine yet another story of inspiring women in the Bible. All are welcome. Everyone is invited. Make it a point to join us. You'll be glad you did; and so will we.

Zion's Comfort Givers meet on the second and fourth Thursdays of the month, March 13 & 27, beginning at 9:30 a.m. in Luther Hall. We really do need your help. You know the old saying, "Many hands make light work." So consider joining us as we enjoy coffee, conversation, and being filled with the feeling of knowing that we are helping others in need through the good that we do.

Zion's Chancel Guild will meet on Monday, March 24, at 6:00 p.m. in the Sanctuary as we tend to some annual cleaning duties, celebrate the successful dinner we hosted on the First Sunday Evening in Lent, and rejoice that we have made the transition from wax to oil in caring for the candles in the Chancel! We extend our thanks to Betty Tracy for the work she does and the leadership she offers.

BASKETS OF PROMISE

The Women of Zion are inviting all of us to join them in supporting what Lutheran World Relief calls their *Baskets of Promise* appeal. Each week during the season of Lent, we will collect a different item that we will use to assemble Personal Care Kits that give people around the world tools to stay healthy in life's most challenging situations. We usually hear more about the Personal Care Kits and the School Kits in September and October, which is closer to the season of timely back-to-school sales and Blanket Sunday.

This year we are sounding the call early during the Sundays in Lent. **On March 9th**, at all three services, 8:00 a.m., 10:30 a.m., and 6:15 p.m., the item we are featuring is soap, bars of soap, 4 to 5 ounces, any brand, in the original wrapping. **On Sunday, March 16th**, we will feature bath towels, light-weight, no bigger than 52" x 27", dark colors recommended. **On Sunday, March 23rd**, it's adult size toothbrushes in the original packaging. **On Sunday, March 30th**, we'd love for you to bring in combs. **On Sunday, April 6th**, we need all the nail clippers (metal, attached file optional) we can get. **On Palm Sunday, April 13th**, it's back to soap, bars of soap, just in case you missed it on March 9th. For more information, please contact Helen Heller.

Lent is a good time to focus on service. In that spirit, we would like everyone to know that our *Food Pantry and Clothing Closet* will be in focus on the evening of Sunday, March 30th. Our special guests from Community Christian Church have been our most faithful and generous partner over the years. In their honor, we are donating the offering from our evening service to assist with this ministry that serves on average around sixty families every Tuesday that we are open for service. Please make it a point to support us.

A BICENTENNIAL UPDATE

We have enjoyed a wonderful response to our beautiful bicentennial commemorative plates, with ninety-five sold to date, and many of these donated so that we can offer them as gifts to our special guests. Our first special guest to receive one of these plates as a gift was LJ Brown, the two-year old grandson of Ron & Linda Tvorik, who, with their granddaughter Chrissy, were welcomed as members on March 2nd. Pr. Ralph Edwards is next in line, with many to follow. Thank you for your generosity and support.

We have quite a few special bicentennial dates as we look ahead. They culminate, of course, with our special weekend on June 14-15. On the morning of Saturday, June 14, we will come together with Zion United Church of Christ at our original site in what is now North Canton Cemetery for a Joint Service and Bicentennial Anniversary Celebration for the North Canton Cemetery, Zion United Church of Christ, and Zion Lutheran Church. We will enjoy special music, a Mayor's Proclamation, and two baptisms, including the baptism of Drew Keith! On that evening, we will reconvene in Luther Hall at Zion for our Bicentennial Prime Rib Dinner for 200! Great food, good fellowship, lively conversation, fascinating videos, lots of memories, old and new, with special guests galore: it should be quite a dinner and quite a time.

May and June should be memorable months with the Mother's Day Breakfast and Pastor Lutz, Bishop Dillahunt and the dedication of our faceted stained glass windows, Memorial Day Weekend with the Meuschke's, and then the return of former Interns, former Pastors, former Presidents, special ladies, great guests, and all the rest. Spread the word. Mark your calendars. Help us praise the Lord for all God has given ... in Jesus' name.

SOME SYNOD NEWS, TOO

Conference Gatherings went off without a hitch as the process of receiving nominations to serve as Bishop in the Northeastern Ohio Synod began in earnest on the afternoon of March 9th. The Canton-Massillon Conference gathered at 2:00 p.m. at St. Stephen Martyr Lutheran Church, with Pastor Chip Belanga, our Conference Dean, presiding. (FYI: Chip serves as the Pastor of Holy Trinity Lutheran Church in Massillon.)

After some introductory comments related to the historic and constitutional expectations and responsibilities associated with the role of bishop, small group discussion ensued, nominations were received in written form, and our meeting adjourned ... in time for our Pastor to get back for Zion's First Sunday Evening Lenten Dinner, the Congregational Meeting that followed, and the worship service that followed our meeting.

The next phase of this process will involve inviting the top ten vote-getters from Sunday's nominations to accept the honor and submit biographies that will be distributed with the pre-Assembly materials that go out ahead of our Sunday Assembly, which is scheduled for May 15 – 17 at the John S. Knight Center in Akron, when the election for bishop actually occurs.

As we move forward with the process, we ask for God's guidance in lifting up the names of those who may be called to serve as our next bishop. May these candidates be empowered to discern the Spirit's lead, and may all of us learn to listen to the word revealed in Christ. May God protect us from our need to know the end of the election story, for all we need to know is that God is walking with us on the journey, and that God's abundant mercy is ours, now as always. Let this be our prayer, offered in Jesus' name. Amen

IN LOVING MEMORY

On Transfiguration Sunday, I offered some comments with my sermon that mentioned two deaths affecting our extended family at Zion, the passing of Kathryn Morrison and Doris Cogan. Both lived long lives that were blessed with much love and God's grace. Kathryn Morrison was Laura Thompson's grandmother, Kay Reiss's mother, and a part of our Zion family, joining us for worship whenever she could. "She inspired us with qualities like faith in God, love for family, loyalty among friends, and unwavering character, well-practiced in living with her feet on the ground, her head on her shoulders, and a heart that beat with love for ninety-five-plus years. These are the kind of qualities that constitute *true north*, grounding us in the right way here and now, and keeping us focused on what really matters as we look ahead to where we want to go and how it is that we're going to get there. The path may vary; but qualities like faith in God, love of family, loyalty among friends, with our feet on the ground and our head on our shoulders: these are the basics for any and every adventure."

I then referenced the obituary that Joan Cogan wrote on behalf of her mother, Doris Cogan: "Life's journey is not to arrive safely at the grave in a well-preserved body, but rather to skid in sideways totally worn out shouting, 'Oh my, what a ride!'" I concluded my sermon by reminding us that the Festival of the Transfiguration lets us know that we're in for quite a ride. It might not be the ride we're expecting. It'll be better, because of where it leads, to heavenly glory, and because of what it means, that good will triumph, that life will win, that the Word made flesh in Jesus Christ is God's last Word, God's first Word, God's loving Word, and God's living Word. Amen

THANK YOUS AND MORE

To my church family and friends,

Thank you for all your prayers, cards and special remembrances during the illness and death of my brother, Gail, in Nevada. Love and prayers traveled miles, giving comfort, peace, and smiles.

*In Christ's Love,
Betty Tracy*

Dear Pastor Sherwindt,

While *Pastor, Shepherd, Reverend*, are great words to describe your progression, we think the word *Minister* best describes your loving service to our family during this time of bereavement. You very gently and sincerely ad-*Ministered* love, kindness, compassion, and, most importantly, God's truth to us concerning death, and even more, life through Jesus Christ! On behalf of the Reiss, Thompson, Morrison, Pavelchak, and Jarrell families, and in honor of Kathryn Morrison, thank you!

*Grace & Peace,
AJ Reiss & family
Laura Thompson & family
Kay Reiss & family*

ALL ARE INVITED: EVERYONE IS WELCOME!

Sunday Evening, March 16th

Dinner is at 5:30 p.m.

Devotions begin at 6:15 p.m.

Please help us welcome

Pastor Ralph Edwards

*Proud Son of the Congregation
Baptized and Confirmed at Zion!
Active Member, Faithful Leader,
Family Roots, Lifelong Friend,
Colorful in Life, Creative in Serving
Ordained, Installed, Serving at
Good Hope Lutheran Church
North Lima, Ohio, ELCA*

Saturday Afternoon, March 22nd

*A Birthday Celebration at Zion
With a Reception in Luther Hall
To Mark the 90th Birthday for*

Mr. Ellis R. Le Beau

*It is a Privilege to Honor Our
Oldest Living Lifelong Member!
The Children of Ellis Le Beau,
David, Gordon, and Darlene,
Cordially Invite You to Help
Celebrate Ellis's 90th Birthday
With an Open House at Zion in
Luther Hall, 2 p.m. to 4 p.m.*



Sunday Evening, March 23rd

Dinner is at 5:30 p.m.

Devotions begin at 6:15 p.m.

Please help us welcome

Father Jay Clarke

*Reverend, Monsignor, Religious
Leader, Pastor, and Rector at
St. Paul's Catholic Church
An Ecumenical Evening with
Our Ecumenical Partners,
With a Focus on Our Shared
Appreciation for the
Theology of the Cross*

Sunday Evening, March 30th

Dinner is at 5:30 p.m.

Devotions begin at 6:15 p.m.

Please help us welcome

Rev. Sarah Taylor Peck

*A Graduate of St. Olaf College
and Harvard Divinity School
Newly Installed Senior Minister
at Community Christian Church
An Ecumenical Celebration
With a Focus on Our Shared
Support for Service through the
Ministry of Zion's Food Pantry*

