

GREETINGS FROM THE PASTOR:

The Pentecost Window is the most imaginatively creative of our five faceted stained glass window designs. This isn't to say that all five faceted stained glass windows are not absolutely gorgeous. I love all five. The Advent Window is a classic Lutheran design, featuring Advent candles and an Advent wreath. What could be better for Christmas than the Holy Family in Bethlehem? Then, the Cross: first, the Lenten Cross at Calvary, the suffering love of God poured out with shades of red and Lenten purple; then, the glorious victory of the Cross with Easter, announcing the triumph of life over death and love over loss! All five windows are beautiful; but, in my opinion, the Pentecost Window is incredibly imaginative and creative.

I have never seen anything like it. It combines a cosmic backdrop, with an iconic Scriptural event, and adds a deeply personal touch. We see God's grace embracing the whole world with spiritual gifts that are individualized through tongues of fires. The heavenly dove represents the Holy Spirit. The globe in the bottom panel hints that we are given a look at the earth facing North America, the oceans on either side, and Central America (sort of) connecting us with South America. Sure, some imagination is needed; but that's art, especially when we're using the medium of faceted glass. The tongues of fire are twelve in number, representing the twelve tribes and the twelve disciples. The festival of Pentecost personalizes the cosmic breadth of God's love reaching into the lives of every believer with gifts that empower us to become all that God desires.

The colors are fascinating. White symbolizes God's purity and holiness. Gold is the color of glory. The tongues of fire combine a glass that refracts the light in ways that can seem orange and red, with hints of yellow and gold, kind of like fire, connecting the heavens and the earth with God's fulfillment of His promises, first extended to Abraham, then reaffirmed with David, and transformed through the gift of His son, our Lord, Jesus Christ. Once you remember the story, then the symbols and the colors create a wonderfully imaginative presentation of the miracle that is Pentecost. Gifts are given; grace is extended; heaven and earth come together in the life of a community that has been blessed to be a blessing. Cosmic in scope, global in breadth, with a personal touch that connects each one through the ministry of the kingdom in the life of the church.

These are the themes we celebrate with the Rite of Confirmation. God's revelation of Himself in the life, death, and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ takes on a very personal touch as we lay hands on our Confirmands and pray, "Father in heaven, for Jesus' sake, stir up in them the the gift of your Holy Spirit: confirm their faith, guide them in life, empower them in serving, give them patience in suffering, and bring them to everlasting life." Make the story of salvation real through the faith we live, the love we share, and the hope that is ours as we trust God's grace, believe God's promises, and live each day in Jesus' name. This is our prayer for three very bright, confident, and thoughtful young ladies, Summer, Kat, and Mallory, who have been born into a community that has a long history of preaching inclusion, proclaiming freedom, empowering women, all ways of changing the world for good. God's gifts, the Spirit's power, the life of the church, and the future of the world: our windows tell this story beautifully; they tell it strikingly, imaginatively, with color and light, with grace and style. May God be praised!

CHURCH COUNCIL NEWS

Our meeting in May continued the good financial news that has kept us in the black with small surpluses all year long. We continue to adjust to a loss in income that comes from ending our long-term rental relations with Senior Independence, Midwest Services, and now, the Betty Bixler Pre-School. We've maintained a conservative approach to managing expenses, which has been met with a sustained sense of trust and generosity in terms of overall giving.

Mark Votaw called our meeting to order at 7:02 p.m. Devotions were led by Todd Elsass. Also present were Carol Rossbach, Dave Palumbo, Jayne Schrader, Randy Cizek, Heather Hoffman, Renee Keith, and Pastor Sherwindt. Following the good news Dave shared about April's financial facts, we kept our focus on our having secured voting delegates for the Northeastern Ohio Synod Assembly in Akron on May 15-16, while also recognizing the need to move forward in planning for our Congregational Meeting on Wednesday, June 24th, when we will elect members to serve on Council, as Deacons, and with the Trustees, and focus a bit on issues related to the parsonage.

ZION'S FINANCIAL FACTS FOR APRIL

April Income	14,841.65
April Expenses	<u>14,773.62</u>
April Surplus	68.03
Income through April	80,779.38
Expenses through April	<u>80,469.22</u>
2015 YTD Surplus	310.16
Our Food Pantry Fund	\$8,333.50
Zion's Youth Fund	\$7,671.66
2015 Advanced Giving	\$9,000.00

We thank you for your generous support!

MORE COUNCIL NEWS

Caring Ministry, Jayne Schrader: We are very thankful for everyone who helped to make our participation in this year's FEED THE NEED Stark County Hunger Walk such a great success: 25 walkers, plus a dog, with Zion raising \$2,802.00, as our part in a walk that raised a total of \$12,673.37! We also want to thank everyone involved in the U.S. Postal Carriers Stamp Out Hunger Drive, through which we received over 1,000 pounds of food on Saturday, May 9th. We extend our thanks to all who helped us get the food from the Post Office in Jackson Township to our food pantry here at Zion.

Learning Ministry, Renee Keith: The final Sunday of the Sunday School year will be marked with a Sunday School Party during the Sunday School hour on May 31st. On the following Sunday, we celebrate the Rite of Confirmation with Summer Heller, Kathryn Milek, and Mallory Rhodes. Their families will join us for a Confirmation dinner at Carrabba's Italian Grille on Thursday, May 24th; and we will host a light reception between the services on June 7th as a way of marking two significant happenings here at Zion, namely, receiving Summer, Kat, and Mallory into Confirmed membership, and expressing our appreciation to the Senior Choir for yet another great year of choral anthems and special music. We extend our thanks both to our choir members, and to everyone who helped make our Sunday School year enjoyable and successful, with lots of learning and a whole lot of mutual support. Finally, Debbie Fox has pulled together resources and ideas for this year's Vacation Bible School, which is on the schedule for Monday through Friday, July 13th through 17th. (Please see page 7 in this newsletter for more information.)

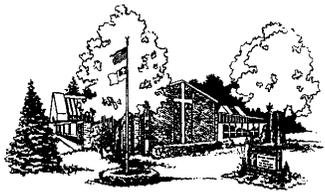
MORE COUNCIL NEWS: PARSONAGE-RELATED ISSUES

We made progress in moving property issues along with the parsonage. In last month's newsletter, we mentioned the need to move beyond recollections and rumors so that we could feel more secure about the factual basis of decisions we might want to make about the parsonage in the future. We called for an open meeting to talk about these matters between the services in Luther Hall on May 31st. What we discovered is that we are well beyond rumors and recollections. The title search conducted by the reputable real estate law firm of Fitzpatrick & DePasquale has made it clear beyond all doubt that there are no restrictions of any kind impacting Zion's ability to utilize or dispose of the almost ten acres of real estate we currently own and occupy at the corner of Portage Street and Lindy Lane.

Jim Fidler, our Resource Ministry Elder, who is helping to oversee the variety of legal issues related to real estate, made it clear that, while he had done some investigating on his own, he recommended that we have a reputable real estate law firm conduct an exhaustive title search to eliminate any questions about how thorough, exhaustive, and complete the title search turned out to be. While it is nice to do what we can on our own, the issues involved and the finality required made it self-evident that Fitzpatrick & DePasquale was the right call. Dave Palumbo actually made the call; but all of us understood the need, and benefited from the clarity, thoroughness, and finality of the work that was done.

As many know, Jim is a lawyer, and was a career litigator for the FBI. He is also familiar with and knowledgeable about real estate matters. Based on the title search conducted, Jim has concluded that "the congregation is in a position to make an informed decision as to the future of the vacant Parsonage, confident in the knowledge there are no restrictions whatsoever on Zion Lutheran's continued use or sale of the property." He summarized his conclusions as follows: "Three sets of documents available for review in the Church Office demonstrate ***beyond all doubt*** Zion Lutheran's unrestricted ability to sell the Parsonage: (1) documents compiled pursuant to the title search showing there are no deed restrictions or covenants on use or sale of the property; (2) the By-Laws of Zion Lutheran Church, Inc., which, neither at the time of conveyance of the property to Zion Lutheran nor today, contain any restrictions on the ability to acquire or sell real estate; and (3) the Certification issued by the Ohio Secretary of State that Zion Lutheran Church, Inc. continues to be a corporate entity in good standing in the State of Ohio."

At this point, all that Council desires to do is to confirm our sense of the facts as rendered by the title search recently completed. As a matter of ordinary maintenance, we will want to authorize the Council to spend what is required to re-carpet areas that are presently carpeted, to paint and repair the walls as needed, and to replace the picture window, which is damaged. We also want to pass a resolution, which confirms that, according to the title search conducted by Fitzpatrick & DePasquale, there are no restrictions of any kind impacting Zion's ability to utilize or dispose of any or all of the 9.9 acres of real estate we currently own and occupy at the corner of Portage Street and Lindy Lane.



Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church

349 Lindy Lane Ave NW
North Canton, OH 44720

The Rev. Mark Sherwindt
Senior Pastor

Mark Votaw,
Zion's President

Dave Palumbo,
Zion's Treasurer

Carol Rossbach,
Council Secretary

Jim Fidler,
Resource Ministry

Todd Elsass,
Property Ministry

Tim Himbaugh,
Church Custodian

Our Sunday Morning Schedule
8:00 a.m. Traditional Service
9:15 a.m. Our Sunday School
10:30 a.m. Contemporary Blend

The Church Office Is Open
Monday through Friday
9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.
Office: 330-499-3909
Office: 330-499-3913

*“Growing in Love
and Service
by Grace”
from 1814
through 2015*

CONGREGATIONAL MEETING AT ZION WEDNESDAY, JUNE 24, 2015

Dear Family of Zion:

This letter is a reminder of our Congregational Meeting on *Wednesday, June 24, 2015*. We will begin with our meeting in the Sanctuary at 7:00 p.m. Following the meeting, Church Council will host an Ice Cream Social. We hope that you enjoy the change. This will be a great time for fellowship with your family at Zion.

Our Spring Meeting typically focuses on the election of members to serve with Church Council, the Deacons and Trustees. This year's June meeting will remain on that track. We also have one additional item on our agenda. We want to affirm the conclusions of the recent title search conducted to determine the nature of any restrictions related to the property we own here at the corner of Portage Street and Lindy Lane. In short, there are no restrictions or covenants of any kind.

The agenda for the meeting is as follows:

1. Call to Order, Opening Hymn, and Opening Prayer
2. Finalizing Nominations, and Voting for Candidates
3. Resolution Concerning Title Free of Restrictions
4. The Lord's Prayer, our Dismissal and Adjournment

Please plan on attending the Congregational Meeting, and stick around for the delicious Ice Cream Social to follow. I believe you will find pleasure in both!

This is a great time to show your support for Zion. I look forward to seeing you at our meeting. That's *Wednesday, June 24*, beginning with our meeting in the Sanctuary at 7:00 p.m.

God's peace be with you,
Mark Votaw,
Church Council President

CONGREGATIONAL MEETING, 7:00 P.M. ICE CREAM SOCIAL AFTER THE MEETING

VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL 2015G—FORCE (GOD’S LOVE IN ACTION)

MONDAY THRU FRIDAY, JULY 13—17



Mark your calendars now, and plan on joining us Monday through Friday, July 13th–17th, for Vacation Bible School this year. The format will be very similar to last year. On Monday through Thursday, we will meet from 9:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. On Friday, since Friday is traditionally Water Day, we will meet from 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Registration and sign-in will begin each day at 8:45 a.m., which is a little earlier than normal; but the good news is that we will be able to get our mornings started right at 9:00 a.m. That’s the plan; and don’t forget that we will still have our Family Night and Ice Cream Social on Thursday evening at 7:00 pm.

We will have an action-packed week of fun, learning, and service at what we are calling Zion’s G—FORCE PARK! The kids will learn many ways to show God’s love by MOVING, ACTING, CARING, FOLLOWING and SHARING. There will be great lessons, great music, fun games, delicious snacks, lots of crafts, and service projects, too, lots of them.

Our Vacation Bible School program is designed for children age 4 through those who have completed the 5th grade. Youth who have completed 6th grade and higher are invited to help during the week. We have many volunteer & service opportunities planned for these youth! Registration packets are now available in the Church Office. Please turn in your completed forms by Friday, July 10th, in order to help us order sufficient supplies. We will still accept registrations during the week of Vacation Bible School if space is available.

We have a busy week planned! We’ll get started on Monday with lots of fun and activities! Wednesday will be T-Shirt day, so each child will need a white T-shirt with their name on the label by pick up time on Tuesday. Thursday evening is our traditional Family Night and Ice Cream Social, which begins at 7:00 p.m. Everyone is invited to join us that evening for our VBS Program, and then for ice cream and fellowship afterwards. We will also have our Quilt Raffle that evening. Then, on Friday, we’re back for our Big G Force Park 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 snacks each day as well! We are all looking forward to a great week for our kids, staff and parents, as we all learn about God’s Love!

SERVICE AT VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL

As always, we will focus on service this year, which is always a great tradition at Zion’s Vacation Bible School. We’ve planned many service projects, some familiar, some new. The children will experience how important it is to serve others and God in their lives! We hope they will see that no matter how old we are, we can truly make a difference! Here’s a summary of this year’s projects:

G—FORCE SERVICE PROJECTS DURING VBS

THE DAILY OFFERING – There will be a contest each day between the boys and girls to collect change as our offering. Each team will have a jar and the most money collected wins! This money will then be donated to a charity chosen during the week.

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 over fourteen years.

QUILT SQUARES – The children will once again create quilt squares for Zion’s Comfort Givers to sew quilts for Lutheran World Relief. We will raffle one quilt, chosen by the winner, on Thursday evening at the Ice Cream Social. Tickets will be available during the week. As usual, it’s one ticket for a dollar, or six tickets for five dollars. Join us for all the fun!

DAILY PROJECTS – The children will work on several service projects throughout the week at Zion and at home. We really like to make the connection between what we learn at church and what we do at home.

SCHOOL KITS – We will be collecting various 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 the morning of Thursday, July 16th. If anyone in the congregation is interested in donating items, please leave the items in the Church Office.

We are looking forward to a great week and hope you will join us! We are still in need of volunteers for the week! Please consider joining us one, two or all five days. It truly is a rewarding and enjoyable experience with a great group of kids! We have also put out sign-up sheets in Luther Hall for lots of food and supplies needed for the week, along with donation cans for those who are interested in helping. If you have any questions, or would like to volunteer, please call Debbie Fox at 330-966-2433, or just email her at dfox521@sbcglobal.net. *As always, thank you, thank you, thank you for your great support!*



Hey! Let’s Not Forget Happy Birthday to:

UPCOMING EVENTS – MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

Sunday, June 7: The Rite of Confirmation for Summer Heller, Kat Milek, Mallory Rhodes

July 13 thru 17: This is it! Vacation Bible School at Zion, G—Force, God’s Love in Action

Sunday, September 6: Rally Day, with the start of Sunday School classes on September 13

THE WOMEN OF ZION

Our women's year-long journey with Carol Schersten LaHurd entitled *Transforming Life and Faith* came to a close with Session 9 last month. June begins a new study with a new summer focus, *Give in Secret*. Read Matthew 6:2-4. This is a part of the Sermon on the Mount. Verse 1 began with a warning, "Beware of practicing your piety before others to be seen by them." While our Lord speaks of prayer, giving alms, and fasting, all of us must ask how it is that we can allow our light to shine, without drawing attention to ourselves for the wrong reasons. Please join our women for their *monthly Bible study*, which is set for the morning of June 16th, at 9:30 a.m., in the Resource Center.

It is also time for *Zion's Comfort Givers* to start thinking about their regular schedule of second and fourth Thursdays, which in June are the 11th & 25th. You are invited to join our quilters at 9:30 a.m. in Luther Hall on these Thursdays. You'll be surprised by how comfortable it can be and how much fun it is to sew with us. Vacation Bible School is right around the corner in July, when we will change our monthly schedule so that we can keep our more active schedule of joining VBS Monday through Thursday. We'll need more help to keep up with our kids. So, if you are able, please plan to join us in July. You'll be glad you did; and so will we!

THANK YOU'S & MORE

The 13th Annual Mother's Day Breakfast deserved major kudos for the effort expended and the dedication displayed. It starts from the leadership of Council. Dale Jacobs, Mark Votaw, Randy Cizek, and Dave Palumbo were major voices in seeing to it that the tradition continued. Jim Fidler took the lead with the roses. Then, help with the food in the kitchen, help on the floor with serving, and help with clean-up afterwards, these were incredible. The men we involved in offering donations of breakfast items, monetary gifts, and commitments of time and interest reached an all time high. Thank you to Tony Niesz, too, for adding his own delicious touch with cheese cakes made especially for the occasion. Almost fifty men had some role to play in making sure that this year's edition of our Mother's Day Breakfast showed no signs of letting up or dropping off. It has become a huge production, and I appreciate the help that everyone offers. My thanks to all!

*From all of Zion's Women
To all of Zion's Men:
Thank You for the
Mother's Day Breakfast!*

WE ARE CHURCH TOGETHER: SYNOD ASSEMBLY REPORT

The Northeastern Ohio Synod Assembly was held on May 15th and 16th, at the John S. Knight Center in Akron with 411 persons registered, of which 370 were voting delegates. 227 were lay members, and 143 were clergy. As a gathering of our churches, everything was regarded as an act of worship. Our Assembly began at 8:40 a.m. with the procession of the cross. Hymns were sung; the ELCA Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton blessed us with baptismal water; prayers were offered; and the Assembly was declared to be in session.

Our main order of business was to elect members of the Synod Council. After the first ballot was completed, Bishop Abraham Allende gave his Bishop's Report. The offering for today's Eucharistic worship service would be directed to the Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service. The offering amounted to \$2,605.37. Next year's Northeastern Ohio Synod Assembly will be May 13th and 14th. Bishop Allende's vision is to strengthen the synod for mission and ministry. He would like to visit every congregation in the synod. He reported that two more congregations in our synod have closed. Some wonder whether our church is dying. Bishop Allende indicated that while the church will look different, we will go on. He would like to see us work to revitalize campus ministries, as well as the Lay Academy.

Bishop Elizabeth Eaton gave the ELCA report. She spoke about the progress being made in the fight against malaria. She mentioned that 30,000 young people are registered for the Lutheran Youth Gathering in Detroit this summer. Did you know that there are more Lutherans in Indonesia and Tanzania than in the United States? Now you do. The ELCA has created a new tradition, a national *God's Works Our Hands* work day, which is scheduled for Sunday, September 13th. *Freed and Renewed in Christ: 500 Years of God's Grace in Action* will be the theme of our Quincentennial Celebration of the Lutheran Reformation in 2017. Bishop Eaton then reminded us that we are church together; we live in paradox, as saints and sinners, under law and gospel, but freed in Christ to serve. She spoke with passion about Lutheran Disaster Relief and Lutheran World Relief, which were on the ground in Katmandu, Nepal the day after the earthquake struck.

We saw an interesting presentation by the newly reestablished Northeastern Ohio Synod Communications Committee, which provided tips for getting congregational storytellers to record examples of God at work in our lives. The tips were very practical, and the point is to tell our stories of service so that the world might know how God is changing lives through the work we do in congregations all across our Synod. It would be nice to participate.

Our day proceeded with a formal celebration of Holy Communion to end our afternoon. The Gospel Reading was John 17:6-19, with our Lord's High Priestly prayer *that they may be one* leading to a series of ecumenical greetings from the Catholic Diocese of Youngstown, the Catholic Diocese of Cleveland, the Western Conference of the United Methodist Church, the United Church of Christ, Presbyterians from the Western Reserve. It was a nice gesture, a nice service, and a good day, ending with our singing songs, celebrating communion, and then heading home revived, inspired, and ready to serve. Chuck Danner, Pastor Sherwindt, and I, Carol Rossbach, thank you for the opportunity to represent you once again this year.

IN LOVING MEMORY OF BLAIR C. WOODSIDE, JR.

(October 6, 1920 – May 15, 2015)

To be honest, I was humbled by the greatness of this extraordinary man. The heroic life he lived with such matter-of-fact simplicity humbles me still as I reflect on his life of witness to the strength of God's love alive within him and among us. When I was growing up outside of New York in Connecticut during the early days of television – well, not so early, but early enough to remember rabbit ears and black-and-white – there was a man who called himself *the great one* – or maybe it was others who called him *the great one*. He was a large man who cut quite a figure in the world of comedy, with *The Honeymooners*, and then *The Jackie Gleason Show*, first in New York, and then from Miami Beach. There's no real connection between Jackie Gleason and Blair Woodside, Jr., except one of contrast that exposes the difference between the loud sounding cymbals announcing the relevance of America's cultural centers on both coasts and the quiet greatness that fills fly-over country with such inspiration found in reflective lives well-lived.

When I was doing doctoral work at Notre Dame, I found myself forced to study Aristotle as the standard for how to go about the discipline of ethics. Aristotle lifted up a particular model of ethical perfection, translated in some circles as *the magnificent, magnanimous man*, or, more simply, for those interested in a snappier translation, *the great one*. The great one in Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics* (c. 323 BC) was the man who was thoughtful, wise, and prudent, a man of good judgment, well-practiced in all the classic virtues, which require a sense of balance, consistency, and courage. Many of the virtues that Aristotle described are well-known, common knowledge, so to speak: generosity, justice, fortitude, faithfulness, self-control, gentleness, truthfulness, even wittiness. All of these virtues should come together in a man who embodied magnificence, the magnanimous man, not for show, but for life, real life really lived. If the magnificence of the magnanimous man were for show, then Jackie Gleason would fit the bill. But in real life, there was none greater than the soft-spoken loving man we honor today, Blair Woodside, Jr. He was a great man.

I know there are many stories I should tell. He was generous in his giving, meticulous in his caring, attentive, conscientious with details, always with a plan, often flawless in execution, and curious in asking whether we can do this better. Yes, I know, there are stories I should tell, qualities I should highlight, praises I should offer, and I will. But I'd like to begin by making it clear that I found Blair to be a deeply religious man, whose life had been indelibly touched and immensely affected by God's love. We talked often about many things. Blair knew that I loved to talk about God – how God was categorically unique, beyond human comprehension, unknowable, yet known through faith and love. Still, there was always a glint in his eyes that let me know that for all the abstraction I could generate, he knew that there was an inescapable simplicity about the love with which God had embraced him and called him.

Blair Woodside had the right word for every occasion, and on those one or two occasions when he found himself without words, that, too, was the right word. Now it is time for God's Word: "Well done, good and faithful servant. Enter into the joy of your Lord." Death has staked a claim; and our mortality makes us vulnerable. But God will have the final say, the last Word. This last Word, God's Word of life, has been promised with the resurrection of our Lord, a word of promise that found powerful expression in the words of Saint Paul: "I am fully persuaded that there is nothing we've done or ever could do, there is nothing now, nothing ever, there is nothing in life, not even death, that can ever separate us from the life-giving embrace of God's love, which is ours through Christ Jesus our Lord." To this we simply respond by raising our voices, and saying, "Amen!"

