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"Instead you ought to say, 'If the Lord wills, we will live and do this or that.'"
James 4:15

The Holy Spirit writes in the Book of James "Instead you ought to say, 'If the Lord wills, we will live and do this or that'" (James 4:15). A truly appropriate verse for times like these. As of this writing, some within the Michigan government have hinted at the possibility of easing out of the lockdown. What does that mean for church services and activities? Has the worst of this pandemic passed? Will there be other waves of infections? What social and economic shockwaves will we discover as, Lord willing, we reemerge from this lockdown? Did we do enough in reaction to this pandemic? Did we overreact?

We have more questions than we have answers. Regardless of how things play out in the near future, our merciful God has what is best for us in mind. Although we are tempted to believe the universe operates by accident and chance, scripture tells us otherwise. God's providential hand guides, steers, limits, channels, blesses, curses, kills, grows, tears down, and builds back up. We do not always see that big picture. We do not always know what to make of any given fact or situation either. But what we do know is that not a sparrow falls, nor does a hair on your head turn gray apart from God knowing it (Matthew 10:29-31). Our God is Lord even over the rise and fall of kingdoms and empires (Revelation 18:2). He steers and uses the rulers of this world for his purposes, often in spite of their intentions. In Daniel 4, we read that the Lord used Babylon for good—many took refuge under her strength. And again in that chapter, the Lord threatens that King

Nebuchadnezzar would be humbled if he did not repent of his great arrogance. In Proverbs 21:1 we read "The king's heart is a stream of water in the hand of the LORD; he turns it wherever he will."

Christ is risen from the dead. Christ has ascended into heaven. He reigns at the right hand of God. He will come again to judge the living and the dead. This is certain. This is true. This we know, even when we have more questions than we have answers.

Let us go forward into the future in faith and obedience. May this time of uncertainty work for our good (Romans 5:3-5). As so much is unstable, as so much has proven to be limited, let us set our hearts and minds on God. Let us be thankful for the billions of things that go well for us each and every day. Let us turn more and more to the Lord's word, and to prayer—and let us keep that habit even after the lockdown has ended!

The things of this world are passing away. But Christ is risen. Christ has secured our forgiveness by means of his precious blood shed for us. Let's hope and pray for a quick end to this situation, and let us know that God will work it for good—for our own personal good, for the good of Zion, and for the good of the entire Christian church.

Pastor Ulledalen



*The Promise
of Easter*

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION NEWS



Preschool and Child Care Enrollment continues! Our four-year old class is nearing capacity with just a few open spots. Our three-year old class is at 3/4 capacity. Our toddler classroom has just begun to accept enrollments. If you know of anyone looking for preschool or child care please share our website or have them contact the church office. Please keep all of our teachers and school families in your prayers as we navigate through these next few months.

We have begun the initial paperwork process with the State of Michigan and look forward to hearing from them soon. Our contractors are ready to get to work. Please keep the construction process in your prayers as well.

The Board of Christian Education is now accepting resumes and applications for classroom support positions. We will need support personnel in the four-year old, three-year old and toddler classroom. Positions will begin as part-time positions but will increase as enrollment numbers increase. Please contact Christina Roe (989)948-0133 or the church office for additional information.



Spring Little Caesar's Pizza Preschool Fundraiser

For those of you who have orders, pick-up will be on Thursday, May 7 at Zion.

12:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.

Orders will be brought out to your car at the main entrance.

Thank you for your continued support of our preschool here at Zion!

Sunday School News



Greetings! As we continue to find ourselves at home and living life in such a way that is not our usual way, I encourage you to be intentional and creative in your child's Christian Education.

Maybe this time has helped you appreciate your family devotion time. If you are not taking time each day for devotions, I encourage you to begin today!

Mr. Milan and I made an Easter video about me finding an Easter tree while walking through Deerfield Park. We had a lot of fun doing it. We sent it to our grandkids, and they loved it. There are many creative, age appropriate ways to share Jesus with your children or grandchildren.

The following are a few of my suggestions.....

- * Watch Zion's online church service together!
- * Pray out loud together
- * Read God's Word together daily as a family
- * Listen to a Christian radio station, Christian music or programs
- * Watch Christian-themed movies. They make great teaching moments! We just watched "God's Not Dead" on Netflix.
- * Listen to books on tape. My grandchildren love The Chronicles of Narnia by C.S. Lewis and Adventures in Odyssey.
- * Make your own Bible story videos and watch them together.

These are just a few ideas and I'm sure you could add to the list!

Hope this finds you all well!

In the peace and joy of our Risen Christ,
Mrs. Milan



Sunday, May 10

STEWARDSHIP CORNER

Monthly Income & Expense Report
through March 31, 2020

	<u>2020</u>	<u>2019</u>
YTD Budgeted Expenses	\$ 117,022.28	\$ 120,937.80
YTD Actual Expenses	<u>\$ 122,112.76</u>	<u>\$ 127,509.05</u>
YTD Balance	\$ (5,090.48)	\$ (6,571.25)
YTD General Fund Income	\$ 101,842.29	\$ 112,671.25
YTD Actual Expenses	<u>\$ 122,112.76</u>	<u>\$ 127,509.05</u>
YTD Income Less Expense	\$ (20,270.47)	\$ (14,837.80)

Our Savior calls us to follow Him in generosity. "For I have given you an example, that you also should do just as I have done to you." (John 13:15) We cannot give our lives for the salvation of the world, of course. Praise God – that job's already done!

But with hearts full of thanksgiving for what Jesus has given us, we can follow Jesus' example of generous giving. And this is not merely an example alone. It's also our Lord's command. "The one who contributes, (let him give) in generosity." (Rom. 12:8) So, when we give to help others who are in need, and when we bring offerings to the Lord, we should strive to heed His command and follow the pattern He has established for us. Jesus did not give us leftovers. He gave His best. So, we should not give leftovers, either, but the first and best of what He has given us. Jesus did not give as an afterthought, but according to the plan of salvation God established from the foundation of the world.

So, when it comes to our offerings to the Lord, we should make a thoughtful plan to give generously, in proportion to the way He has blessed us. Like the Macedonian Christians, who gave according to their ability – and even beyond their ability (2 Cor. 8:3) – we can and should give a generous portion of the income that God provides us to honor the Lord.

So also, we should give freely, just as Jesus gave freely for us. There is no compulsion involved in our works of love and our offerings to the Lord. Nor do we give grudgingly. We should give freely and cheerfully because we want to out of thanksgiving. "Each as he purposes in his heart," as the Lord says. (2 Cor. 9:7) There is no New Testament ceremonial law involved here.

Rather, we are free to give as generously as our Savior has given for us.

In the same way, our Lord teaches us to give generously out of love – love for Him and for our neighbor. Genuine love is always love in deed (1 John 3:18), love such as Jesus showed us all. It is love that sees our neighbor in need and gives generously to help him. It is love that hears the Word of the Lord and does what it says. If we truly love, we give generously. If we give without love, our giving is not truly following Jesus.

Finally, we follow Jesus in generosity when we give for a good purpose to thank the Lord and support His gospel ministry and other works of mercy. The people of Israel gave generously for the service of God's gospel purposes, to construct and support the operation of the tabernacle. For that was the place where the Lord received the Old Testament sacrifices, through which He bestowed the forgiveness of sins on His people. So, they gave abundantly – so abundantly that they had to be told to stop giving. (Ex. 36:5-6) In the same way, we should bring generous offerings to support the Lord's work of bestowing His gifts of forgiveness, life, and salvation in our congregations through the preaching and teaching of His Word, Baptism, and the Lord's Supper. We should support the Lord's work of caring for those who are poor and needy.

Our Savior calls us to follow His example in generous giving. Let us then, with thankful hearts, rededicate ourselves to following Him in generosity.

Mission of the Month **Concordia Theological Seminary** **Ft. Wayne**

The Concordia Theological Seminary is an institution of theological higher education of the Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod (LCMS) located in Fort Wayne, Indiana and dedicated primarily to the preparation of pastors for congregations and missions of the LCMS and its partner churches. It offers professional, master's and doctoral degrees affiliated with training clergy and deaconesses for the LCMS. The seminary exists to form servants in Jesus Christ who teach the faithful, reach the lost, and care for all. Consider a gift this month to help in this important mission.

Christ is risen – he is risen indeed! The glorious majesty of Jesus' resurrection from the dead remains our joy and hope. That Easter message is the power that unlocks eternal life for you and me, and it gives direction to all we do. For six weeks, now, we've been doing that from home in various degrees, and while we've made the best of it, we're also anxious to get back together.

Of course, wanting to be together again soon is one thing; actually being together in person soon will be quite another. Pastor Ulledalen, the elders, and I have been discussing these things for the better part of a week. We do not know what the civil authorities will advise and order, nor do we know the timing of these things. Because of that, what follows will be divided into two sections – the plans that are in place for the time being (certainly into the summer, likely until September), and the tentative decisions that will be formalized when we begin in person services.

Certain Plans:

– Communion will be offered May 3 and 10 as was mentioned in an email sent out with the April 26 worship link. The basics are that groups of 10 or fewer Zion members will be able to sign up by visiting this link <https://signup.com/go/xZmJsAD> or by calling the Zion office. These services will be brief, shut-in style services focused on distributing the Lord's Supper. Social distancing will be in place, and distribution will be altered to facilitate this. For the first two weeks these will be at Zion and we can accommodate 70 total communicants/week. If demand is more than that, we will add other opportunities.

– Videos of worship will continue to be uploaded for the foreseeable future, possibly indefinitely. Once we start to worship in person, those services will be recorded and then uploaded after the fact. Help will be needed to run the video camera and such. If you are interested or able, please let Pastor Bakker know.

Tentative Plans:

– Matins will be the order we use when we begin worship in person again; it's shorter and there is less movement by people. Offerings will be received before and after worship in a plate at the door, and an usher or elder will bring a plate of offerings forward at that place during the service. Attendees will be encouraged to space their families and groups out in the sanctuary to maintain social distancing. Masks may be worn.

– Full Divine Services with Communion distribution will resume in time – we pray sooner than later.

– Adult Bible Class and Sunday School will not resume until at least Rally Day.

– Canceling the Sunday School and Bible class will allow us to add a temporary third service at 9:30 a.m. at Zion. This will give our members the chance to spread our Sunday attendance across three services instead of two, increasing social distancing until we begin having services with larger numbers. The other services will remain at 8:30 a.m. at Zion and 11:00 a.m. at Christ The King.

– Confirmation for youth was to take place May 3, but has been pushed back indefinitely for now. Pastor Ulledalen is working with these youth and their families to make a plan, but for now we're waiting. Please continue to keep them in your prayers. Likewise, adults ready for confirmation are continuing to wait patiently until we're gathering again.

That's all for now – please remember that the tentative plans are not set in stone, and they do not have a set start date, but I wanted you to know that we are working on being ready to gather together as soon as we can. Changing circumstances could change these plans, though, so please pay attention to emails and the church website and Facebook page. I continue to thank God for all of you, am praying for you, and ask you to continue to pray for me, for the church, and for this world. Lord, have mercy; Christ, have mercy; Lord, have mercy!

In Christ, Pastor Bakker

Holy Scripture: Guided Reading



Revelation: The Revelation of Jesus Christ to the Apostle John is the last book of the New Testament; the final book of Holy Scripture. It's been saved for last because it is truly helpful to have read through the rest of the Old and New Testaments first. If you've kept to the reading plan, you've read every word of Holy Scripture. Rejoice in Revelation that God's promises hold true in Jesus, and you can confidently rejoice in the hope he has in store for you! When you get to the end, the best thing to do is start all over again; we will once again begin with a reading plan in June, but Pastor Ulledalen will be taking over with a different plan to offer some variety. If anyone wants a copy of the three-year plan, just let Pastor Bakker know and he'll get it to you.

Revelation 1 – Seven Churches; the Vision

Revelation 2 – To the Churches of Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamum, and Thyatira

Revelation 3 – To the Churches of Sardis, Philadelphia, and Laodicea

Revelation 4 – The Throne in Heaven

Revelation 5 – The Scroll and the Lamb

Revelation 6 – The Seven Seals

Revelation 7 – The Great White Host

Revelation 8 – Seventh Seal; Seven Trumpets

Revelation 9 – More from the Trumpets

Revelation 10 – The Angel and the Little Scroll

Revelation 11 – Two Witnesses and the Seventh Trumpet

Revelation 12 – The Woman and the Dragon; Satan's Defeat

Revelation 13 – Two Beasts

Revelation 14 – The Lamb and the Harvest

Revelation 15 – Seven Angels and Seven Plagues

Revelation 16 – Seven Bowls

Revelation 17 – The Great Prostitute and the Beast

Revelation 18 – Babylon's Fall

Revelation 19 – The Marriage Feast of the Lamb; the White Horse

Revelation 20 – The Thousand Years and Defeat of Satan

Revelation 21 – New Heaven and New Earth; New Jerusalem

Revelation 22 – The River of Life; Come, Lord Jesus!

Evangelism News

Parts of what the evangelism board is charged with is outreach to the congregation and the community. One means that we have utilized is email. We also deliver to the community, or rather Delores Morford, Portals of Prayer to several nursing homes. Our web page www.zionchristtheking.org helps to get information out to our members, especially the recorded services. During this shut down the Pastors have posted the services on Facebook, then notify John Schimmelmann who sends out an email with the link to the YouTube site. John also updates the web page with the new services, that are linked to YouTube. Over the past several years we have established a server list, Zion News. During the shut down it has become even more important to keep in contact, and our board wishes to thank Dale Gust for his tireless effort in obtaining almost 70 additional Zion member emails. We are now able to contact 176 members and/or families. Most of the emails work, a few we are trying to find out why they keep getting rejected. If you're not getting the Zion News, and would like to be added, email ml3153@winntelco.com, or call the church office 772-1516. Again, much thanks to Dale Gust.

Elders News

The Board of Elders continue to encourage all of you to remain faithful during this time when we can't worship in person but can receive the Word through YouTube and Facebook. Pastor Bakker and Pastor Ulledalen have been planning and working faithfully to keep bringing the Good News of Salvation knowing that the crucifixion of Jesus, His death, His resurrection, and ascension have been done all for us. Please continue to contact our Pastors or one of the Elders should you have specific needs or questions. Several people in the church have been making face masks and dropping them off at Zion. We thank them for this gift. Christ is Risen! Alleluia.

Are you a flowers person?

Anyone who is interested in planting some flowers and caring for them in the six cement containers at Zion should contact Tim in the church office. Some funds are available for purchasing flowers.



Women's Guild News



The **LWML Michigan District Convention** is being held in Gaylord from July 10-12. **Please consider volunteering as a hostess** for this event as we are in need of many more women from our zone to assist. Contact Kathy Nims at CTK if you are available to help out. If it becomes necessary to cancel the convention due to Covid-19 concerns this will be communicated by the church email list and future newsletters.

If you receive **postal mail from other countries** please save the postage stamps. This is an ongoing fundraiser for LWML that helps with our mission goals. Stamps can be left at CTK, or the Zion church office, or given to any Guild officer.

New officers for Women's Guild

President-Kathy Nims 2020-2022

Vice President-JoAnn Gust 2020-2022

Secretary-Jan Aldrich 2019-2021

Treasurer-Charlotte Mogielski 2019-2021

Christian Growth – vacant

Historian - vacant

(If you are interested in serving any of the vacant positions please contact Kathy Nims, JoAnn Gust, or Patty Pickler for more information.

Looking Ahead

Women's Tea – The spring tea that was originally scheduled for May 2, has been postponed. We hope to be able to reschedule this for late summer or early fall.

June lunch at the Herrick House – This event is canceled for this year. We hope to continue this tradition in 2021.



NURSE'S NOTE: As we consider initial steps to God's people once again gathering in our sanctuaries across the Michigan District after the "Stay Home, Stay Safe" due to the COVID-19 pandemic, we're suggesting that we take a cue from Nehemiah's return from the Babylonian Exile in order to rebuild the breached wall of Jerusalem. To think that we will simply be going back to business as usual is most likely very short-sighted. Society will have changed. Our people will be changed by their experience(s); and our manner of ministry will be changed: some good, and some difficult to understand at this time.

Nevertheless, we offer the following as a way to think about it and add a few suggestions along the way. We want to express thanks to some thought-starters provided through an article by Ken Braddy, Jr., a Thom Rainer webinar on April 16, 2020, and the Protocol for Churches and Places of Worship provided to us by the Texas District.

Nehemiah experienced the following:

1. He got permission from the king and received the right of passage and provisions for the work (Neh. 2:4-9).
2. He made a personal evaluation of the situation (context) with a small group of advisors (Neh. 2:11-18).
3. He divided up the work among several team leaders (Neh. 3).
4. He encouraged the many joining in the effort to stand strong against opposition (Neh. 4 and 6).
5. He directed ministry to meet the needs of those in the community who were suffering want (Neh. 5).
6. He kept track of people and accounted for them because people are really important to God (Neh. 7).
7. He arranged for God's Word to be proclaimed that led to repentance and renewal and a celebration that is described in this way: "The sound of rejoicing in Jerusalem could be heard far away" (Neh. 8-12; see esp. 12:43).
8. He instituted some lasting reforms ... some things would not go back the way they were (Neh. 13).

Watch your email for the entire article. There are many points to think about and things to do before returning to our place of worship. It will take all of us to do this safely and to meet everyone's needs!

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