**fZION’S MESSENGER**

**July 2020 + Zion Lutheran Church + 269-367-4817**

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 Each month, I have not expected to still be living under the shadow of the coronavirus but here we still are, though with some improvements for sure. It’s summer and the weather has brought us good times to be able to enjoy the out of doors. Terry and I are going to attempt a vacation in early July. We have had a couple of drive-in worship services under our belts now and I feel that this has gone very well! It has been so nice to see you again, even if from behind car windows and fun to hear you honk your horns during parts of the service. We will finally be able to celebrate with our high school graduates during our worship time on July 19. Please pray for favorable weather on that day as we will still be outside!

 If you have not been by the church recently, you will see that Zion has gotten quite a face lift, both inside and out. We have a beautiful new roof! We have nice looking new sidewalks and the parking lot project should be completed soon. The inside of the church has been deep cleaned.

I have said this before, and I will say it again, though we were shut down for many months and are just now starting to have small group meetings inside the church and worship in the parking lot, Zion certainly has not been closed as a congregation. People have been reaching out to each other by phone calls, emails, FB messaging and texting. Short services and sermons have been done online, both on our website and on FB live. I have learned to embrace the internet in ways I have never imagined! Because it seems that Zion has gained a following of people from our area and from all over the country, using the internet for worship is a new thing that will be a part of how we worship, even when we are able to return to the sanctuary. Evangelism has happened as we have been learning to be the church outside of our walls.

 I have tried hard to remain positive during this very unusual and difficult time. But things are happening in our communities and in our country that cause me a lot of distress. In many ways, the coronavirus has helped us to learn and do good things, but it also seems to have brought out some of the worst in people. How in the world has something as simple as wearing a mask to show care for one another, as Jesus has called us to do, become such a divisive thing? Where does the attitude of “no one can tell me what to do” come from in the midst of our Christian faith? The Bible is full of teachings on how to be show hospitality and to be community of love and compassion to one another. I pray every day that the we learn and listen to ways to keep the virus contained that we may re-engage in life in safe ways. I also pray for a vaccine to be developed as soon as safely possible.

 I am also deeply saddened by the huge resurgence in racial violence in recent months. Racism certainly did not go away after the civil rights era, but I had thought we had made positive gains over these decades. Now, it is clear that racism has never gone away and we as the church of Jesus Christ need to work harder to let the power of love be stronger than the power of hate.

 These are just my musings as I have been home for many months. There is much to pray about and know that I pray for all of you in our Zion family every day. And Terry and I thank you for your prayers.

 Pastor Becky +

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**GRADUATE RECOGNITION**

Three of our young people graduated from Lakewood High School. We will be celebrating them on Sunday, July 19.

Laura Krikke, daughter of Tom and Lisa Krikke, will be attending Albion College. She has been accepted into the honors program and will be on the tennis team. Her major will be biochemistry.

Rebecka Nelson, daughter of Amy Robinson and Mark Nelson, will be attending MCTI in Plainwell. We are thankful that Rebecka found Zion and has made us her church home.

Isabelle, Izzy, Zylstra, daughter of Dan and Nicole Zylstra, is still deciding between attending Lansing Community College in health technology or attending the Spectrum CAN starter program.

We will these young ladies well as they move on in a new chapter in their lives!

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**BIBLE BUDDIES!**

The boards of youth/education are working on pairing adults with our children and youth as Bible Buddies. We have close to 30 children and youth connected to Zion. So far, two adults have requested to be Bible Buddies, but we need more! This is not a hard task. If you are willing to send cards or notes with words of encouragement and sharing Bible verses to one or two of our children and teens, wonderful intergenerational relationships can be developed. Once the child receives a card or note, they will be encouraged to write back to their adult. This is intended to be like the pen pals that I remember having. Please contact Tara Brodbeck if you are interested. When she receives enough names, Jennifer Rutledge will pair the children and adults and let the adults know who their child/children are. It would be great to have this up and running soon!

**Sign up today!**

**COUNCIL UPDATE**

The June Council meeting was held in person at the church. Council met in the Fellowship Hall and spread out to maintain social distancing. It was good to meet in person after missing the March meeting and meeting virtually in April and May.

Even though we have been having worship via Facebook Live and not in the church building, Council has continued work on a number of projects and issues to ensure we are ready to resume services in the sanctuary when it is safe to do so.

**Parking Lot Project**. The parking lot project is underway. It was determined that the sidewalks were in very poor condition, uneven, and the grade was such that there was not room for the new asphalt. Therefore, the sidewalks have been replaced and now the new asphalt can be laid. When completed, this should greatly improve drainage in the parking lot and solve some of the issues we have had with water pooling in various parts of the parking lot. At the 2019 Semi-Annual meeting, the congregation directed council to complete this project using memorial monies. Donations designated for this project have also been received.

**Worship Services**. Council approved purchasing an AM transmitter to allow for drive-in services to begin. With the transmitter, the service is broadcast on AM radio so people can listen on their car radio. Paul Meade researched the needed equipment, and he and the Pastor searched for a vendor to purchase a transmitter. Transmitters are in high demand right now so finding one was a bit of a challenge. However, with their diligence, a transmitter was found, and the first drive-in service was held on June 21st with 40-50 people in attendance. Thank you to Paul and Jerry Engle for their work in the hot sun to set up and test the equipment and for coming early on Sunday to set things up and get it ready for service. Thank you to Claude and Mary Smith and Jerry and Carol Engle for loaning canopies to the church to use for the service. The second service on June 28th had 33 people in attendance and we look forward to continuing our outdoor worship and the possibility of having the option of bringing a lawn chair added in the near future. We hope to add communion when the disposable communion kits can be obtained.

**Semi-Annual Meeting.** Since there were no issues on the agenda that required a congregational vote, the Council decided to not hold an in-person Semi-Annual Meeting. Boards were asked to prepare written reports which will be compiled into a packet and distributed to members.

**Church Cleaning and Sanitizing.** Council approved Stanley Steamer as the vendor to sanitize and clean the carpeted areas of the church. The cleaning took place on June 22nd. The carpets and church pews were cleaned and sanitized. They look great and are ready for when we return to the church building.

**UPDATED ADDRESS FOR**

**THE WILLARDS**

The Willards are temporarily staying in Arkansas for part of Mark’s treatment. Here is there address should anyone wish to send cards or letters:

Palisades Apartments

1501 Rahling Road

Little Rock, AR. 72223, Apt 1503

**LAWN MOWING**

Zion's lawn was mowed each week in June!  Thank you to all who help make this happen! July is open for anyone able to help with mowing the parsonage and church lawns.

* + July 6
	+ July 13
	+ July 20
	+ July 27

If you are able to mow, please let Tom Krikke know

**WOMEN’S BOOK STUDY**

The women’s book study will resume in the fall. If anyone would like to join in the fall and wants to enjoy some summer reading to catch up, read Sensible Shoes and Two Steps Forward by Sharon Brown. We will start the 3rd book in the series in the fall.

**UPSTAIRS REFRIGERATOR**

 The church’s main refrigerator in the upstairs kitchen is no longer in service. It was running nonstop and no longer staying cold. All items that were still good have been moved to the downstairs refrigerator.
 The ZLCW is researching a new refrigerator. Since there is not a rush we plan to take our time to ensure we find a good fit and have one that we know can be serviced in the future by local repair places.
 The plan is to scrap the refrigerator as it is too costly to repair and this model does not meet current energy requirements. Please see a member of the ZLCW board with any questions.

**YOU’RE INVITED!**

Come help us celebrate Laura Krikke's graduation with an Open House!
When:     Sunday, July 26, 1:00 - 4:00

Where:    Krikke's Home

**THANK YOU!**

Dear Church family,

 Thank you for all you have done for me. I appreciate all the thoughts and prayers these past few months. Also all the gifts, cards, and visits to help beat back the boredom and loneliness. Thank you so much for being there for me and my family.

Sincerely,

Cornealius Zylstra

**SPECIALS IN JULY**

**Anniversaries**

01-Bernie & Barb Smith

10-Duane & Buffy Meyers

**Baptisms**

04-Evelyn Brecheisen

04-Roxanne Johnson

10-Aidreana Childs

13-Erin Brodbeck

20-Jackson MacKenzie

20-Rachel Meade

25-Cornealius Zylstra

25-Isabell Zylstra

26-Jenna (Avery) Olmstead

**Birthdays**

04-Dan Utterback

05-Jared Krikke

06-Donald Griffin

06-Will Plummer

07-Diane Southgate

07-Dana Traub

08-Jolene Griffin

13-Irene Ames

13-Amber Holland

13-Calvin McDowell

16-Ivy McDowell

27-Jeremy Avery

**(All Schedules subject to change as we continue to monitor the Covid-19 situation.)**

**SERVING IN JULY**

**Altar Guild**

Irene Ames

Caroline Brecheisen

Martha Yoder

**Cleaning Committee 7/5 to 8/1/20**

Dawn Brodbeck

Paul & Kim Meade

Buffy Meyers

**Greeters**

Mary Makley

Doug Makley

**SUNDAYS IN JULY**

**July 5- Drive in Worship**

Pastor Becky Ebb-Speese

**July 12- Drive in Worship**

Buffy Meyers

**July 19- Drive in Worship**

Pastor Becky Ebb-Speese

**Graduate Recognition Sunday**

**July 26- Drive in Worship**

Pastor Michael Anton