**ZION’S MESSENGER**

**March 2021 + Zion Lutheran Church + 269-367-4817**

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It’s March again. Last year, March brought the beginning of what has come to be a very challenging time. Last March, I thought for sure that the pandemic would not last into the summer. But it did and we are still dealing with it a year later.

I wish I could give you a definitive answer as to when we will resume our services in the sanctuary. As we have watched the positivity rates steadily go down in our country, in our state, and in our counties, this is a hopeful sign. I certainly hope that you will get news about when this will happen before March is over. One thing that has entered our picture this year is the presence of the variants. How these may spread is something that we have to watch going forward.

March is probably my least favorite month. It’s a month where we can continue to have winter and we can also have spring and that can change, even day by day in Michigan. We can get excited about some warm days and even see early spring flowers appear and buds on the trees and then get hit with a late winter snow storm. I like things to stay in their correct places, even seasons and March is a month where nature does not do that. It’s frustrating to say the least.

But good things also are consistent in March. We will again spring forward on March 14 and get a lot more daylight in the evenings. That is certainly something that will boost our spirits. We will see signs of spring as the grass will start to green up, flowers will begin to bloom and buds will appear on the trees. We know that spring is coming and new life will appear for all of us.

This March, we are in the midst of Lent. Our midweek Lenten services are still happening, even as at least some of them will continue to be virtual. Holy Week comes in the last week of March and the beginning of April, with an early Easter this year. You will be kept informed of how we will celebrate Palm Sunday, Holy Week and Easter as we get closer to those days.

However you are practicing Lent this year, I hope that you can see God at work in your lives in special ways. Last year, I started a midweek Lenten series on “Making Change”. We did not get to finish it so I decided to do it again this year. We have made a lot of changes in this past year. So, I hope it will be meaningful to you again this year. As seasons change, as life changes, as things in our lives change, one thing is certain. God is with us in the midst of change and no matter how we will observe Holy Week this year, we will do it and God will be with us. In all circumstances of our lives, God is with us and will bless us in many ways. Hold on to that reality and hope in this crazy month of March!

Pastor Becky +

**Here are the themes each week of Lent:**

Wed. Feb. 24: Change of Season

Wed. March 3: Change of Habit

Wed. March 10: Change of Circumstances

Wed. March 17: Change of Heart

Wed. March 25: Change of Plans

**COUNCIL REPORT**

The February 9th Council meeting began with a devotion, “The Courage to Take a Stand,” led by Pastor Becky.

Council members elected in January were recognized and thanked for their willingness to serve: Jerry Engle, Trustee; Brenda Bite, Secretary; Jill Avery, Financial Secretary; Jolene Griffin, Elder; Mike Johnson, Trustee; Dan Zylstra, Trustee.

Pastor Becky advised that there will not be camp or gatherings for youth again this year. Council discussed providing an alternate opportunity for Zion’s youth to get together including possibly a lock-in at the church or an outing to a camp or other location for a weekend retreat. Chaperones from Zion would be needed.

Jolene advised that the ZLCW is discussing having a craft day or evening to make cards for shut-ins. Dawn Brodbeck and Buffy Meyers have been making and sending the cards.

Council appointed Jill Plummer to the Nominations Committee for 2021.

Lent and Easter were discussed. Ash Wednesday will be a drive-in and live stream service. The remaining Lenten services will be livestream only. Worship committee is working on plans for Easter and is looking at two options. One if service is in the sanctuary and another if a drive-in service is more appropriate.

Council asked Karen and Martha to pursue a second Payroll Protection Program grant. Karen completed the application and required supporting documentation. Martha signed, copied and delivered the application to Union Bank on February 24th.

Terry Speese and Rebecka Nelson have volunteered to assist with live streaming of services. Paul Meade has written procedures and is training them. Internet service for the church was discussed. A hot spot is being used to livestream the services. It is working better than the church internet, but could be improved as it loses signal at times during the service. Since Council met, Paul has learned that fiber optic cable is coming to Woodland Township and should be installed between July and October. This would be an excellent upgrade.

There was a water leak into the north entrance area that was discovered a couple weeks ago. The Trustees and Paul Meade are working on fixing the source of the leak. The washer/dryer unit at the parsonage was able to be repaired.

**SPECIAL OFFERINGS FOR 2021**

Council approved designations for special offerings at the February meeting. The special offering designations are:

* Lent: World Hunger
* Thanksgiving: Lakewood Ministerial Association
* Advent: Family Promise of Barry County
* Christmas Eve: Lakewood Community Council

Labels for your offering envelop boxes with the special offering designations will be prepared and distributed. Your Lenten offering can be given at any time during the Lenten season. Thank you for your faithfulness.

**MEN’S WEDNESDAY COFFEE**

The men’s Wednesday coffee is canceled until further notice due to the rise in Covid 19 cases.

**TECH TEAM**

As we will continue to live stream our worship services, even when we do return to in-person worship, more people are needed to be on the tech team to make this happen! Paul Meade will train you to do this. Please see Paul or Pastor Becky if you would like to be involved in this new ministry.

**LAKEWOOD COMMUNITY WOMEN**

The Lakewood Community Women are pleased to announce that there will be a short video study by Robyn Dykstra available on their Facebook page. This video can be used for small groups, zoom meetings or viewing individually. Robyn is a former Playboy Bunny turned Bible teacher. After surrendering her life to Jesus, she was widowed twice in four years, leaving her a single mom and an expert in the faithfulness of God. If you’ve experience loss or trial in your life- whether self-induced or thrust upon you, you’ll want to hear Robyn’s encouraging discoveries for how to energize your faith in God and find the strength to face life’s challenges. Check it out at <https://www.facebook.com/LakewoodCommunityWomen>.

**THANK YOU!**

Betty Hyne’s daughter, Julie Possehn, wishes to thank everyone for their memorial donations and for all who gave her rides to church. She was blessed with a living family at Zion.

**ZION EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH BOARD DESCRIPTIONS**

**Board of Endowment**

This board is responsible for providing stewardship of church investments. The board meets approximately four times per years, or as needed. The board reviews interest rates and terms of reinvestments and new investments. The board calls special meetings when there is a need.

**Board of Evangelism**

The Board of Evangelism works to strengthen the presence of Zion in the community outside of the church to encourage people to attend and worship. The board finds opportunities for Zion to have a presence in community events such as parades and looks for ways to invite and reach out to people to share the message of salvation and teachings of the scripture.

**Board of Fellowship**

The goal of this board is to strengthen the relationships of the people as a whole in an environment other than worship. The primary method of achieving this is to plan periodic activities of fun, enrichment, and education to include the family of Zion. Examples of Fellowship activities include coffee fellowship, Lenten suppers, and recognition of special times such as confirmation and graduation.

**Board of Parish Education**

The Board of Parish Education meets regularly to plan and oversee the curriculum and activities for Sunday School and Vacation Bible School. The board addresses Sunday School needs for children, youth, and adults.

**Board of Stewardship**

The objective of this board is to develop good stewardship attitudes in members for using their time, talents, and treasures. The board also seeks opportunities for teaching members about stewardship and looks for opportunities to utilize the talents of members.

**Board of Worship Planning**

The Board of Worship Planning is tasked with guiding Zion to an active and meaningful worship life for every member of the Congregation, giving special attention to the liturgical year.

**Board of Youth**

This board organizes youth activities affiliated with Zion, from Middle School through Young Adult to plan fun, educational and spiritual activities in a safe environment.

**Safety Committee**

This committee works with the Trustees to ensure the building and grounds are in a condition that provides a safe environment for all. The committee also designates a safety team person for worship services.

(June 2019)

**ON FOLLOWING PAGE:**

**2021 Board Member List:**

**(With year(s) elected/appointed)**

(Note: Pastor and Council President are ex officio Board members)

**Rev. 02/17/2021**

**Church Council:**

* President: Martha Yoder, ’18, ‘20
* Vice Pres: Paul Meade, ’19, ’20
* Secretary: Brenda Bite, ’17,’19, 21
* Treasurer: Karen Heise, Appointed
* Financial Sec: Jill Avery, ’17,’19, ‘21
* Elder: Dan Utterback, ’18,’20

Jolene Griffin, ’20, ‘21

* Trustee: Jim Elenbaas, ‘20

Dan Zylstra, ’19, ‘21

Jerry Engle, ‘21

Mike Johnson, ‘21

**Board of Endowment: (3 yr. term)**

* Paul Meade, ’18, ‘21
* Carol Engle, ‘20
* Buffy Meyers, ‘19
* Claude Smith, ‘20

**Board of Evangelism:**

* Jolene Griffin, ’17,’19, ‘21
* Doug MacKenzie,’18, ‘20
* Dan Utterback,’18, '20
* Martha Yoder, ‘20
* Martha Yoder (council rep)

**Board of Fellowship:**

* Deb Elenbaas, ’17,’19, ‘21
* Carol Engle, ’17,’19, ‘21
* Mary Makley,’17,’19, ‘21
* Irene Ames,’17,’19, ‘21
* Dawn Brodbeck, ’19, ‘21
* Mary Smith, ’19, ‘21
* Diane Griffin, ’18,’20
* Doug Makley, ’18,’20
* Jolene Griffin, ’18,’20
* Roxanne Johnson, ‘21
* Jill Avery (council rep)

**Board of Parish Education:**

* Kayla Cole, ’17,’19, ‘21
* Diane Griffin, ’18, ‘20
* Jolene Griffin, ’19,’20
* Jennifer Rutledge, ‘20
* Brenda Bite (council rep)

**Board of Stewardship:**

* Claude Smith, ’17, ’19, ‘21
* Jim Avery, ’16, ’18, ‘21
* Doug MacKenzie, ’19, ‘21
* Karen Heise (council rep)

**Board of Worship Planning:**

* Buffy Meyers, ’18, ‘20
* Mary Smith, ‘20
* Irene Ames
* Dan Utterback (council rep)

**Board of Youth:**

* Combined with Board of Education at this time.

**Nominating Committee: (1 yr. term)**

* Ken Heise, ‘21
* Jim Avery, ‘21
* Buffy Meyers, ‘21
* Jill Plummer, ‘21

**Building & Grounds**

* Jerry Engle
* Linden Fisher
* Ken Heise
* Mike Johnson
* Paul Meade

**ZLCW 2020-21**

* President: Buffy Meyers
* Secretary: Jolene Griffin
* Treasurer: Carol Engle
* Secretary of Action:

Dawn Brodbeck

Mary Makley

* Circle Rep:

**SUNDAYS IN MARCH**

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

**March 7- Drive-In Communion**

Pastor Becky Ebb-Speese

Elder: Paul Meade

Trustee: Mike Johnson

Offering Counters: Diane Griffin, Carlotta Willard

**March 14- Drive in Communion**

Pastor Becky Ebb-Speese

Elder: Jolene Griffin

Trustee: Dan Zylstra

Offering Counters: Jerry Engle, Brenda Bite

**March 21- Drive In, Communion**

Pastor Michael Anton

Elder: Dan Utterback

Trustee: Jerry Engle

Offering Counters: Doug Mackenzie, Mike Johnson

**March 28- Palm Sunday:**

**Service type TBD**

Pastor Becky Ebb-Speese

Elder: Dan Utterback

Trustee: Jerry Engle

Offering Counters: Mary Makley, Martha Yoder