**ZION’S MESSENGER**

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

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 First of all, I wish to thank you for the beautiful geranium plant and gift card that was given to me for my birthday in April! I appreciated them very much.

 Now, it is May and spring is fully upon us. There is so much going on in this time of spring and in the month of May. Farm machinery is regularly seen going up and down the road as well as in the fields as the farmers are beginning the harvest season. Grass is growing and the work of mowing has commenced. Flowers are blooming and trees are budding and leaves are growing. New life is all around us.

 New life is happening in our church as well. It is good to be having in person worship along with our continuation of the drive in and life streamed services. I have to say that leading worship with people in the sanctuary is a blessing, even as our faces remain masked. We have been through so much in a little over a year and it’s good to see the signs of renewed life among us.

 There are a lot of events happening this month and there are articles about them in the rest of this newsletter. May 23 is Pentecost and as we celebrate the birth of the Christian church and the power of the Holy Spirit that still blows in us and enlivens us, we will conclude the collection of bathroom items for Manna’s market. It has been good to watch this collection grow in the fellowship hall each week. On that day, we will also inaugurate an outdoor coffee cart with some drinks and packaged refreshments following the worship service. We have some special people who have worked hard during this challenging year to be sure that worship has happened in many ways and we will honor volunteers during this fellowship time.

 One thing that I would like to highlight is a special service that we will be having when we are able to have a full church again. I do not know when this will be, but that day will come. We have grieved as a congregation as we have lost beloved members of Zion and have not been able to have funeral services for them in the church. Most were held at graveside and the service for Dana Traub will be held when we can do the things that Dana wanted to see happen at his service. I will be holding a special memorial service to remember all of these loved ones together in the church. Families will be invited to join with the congregation as we remember their lives among us. I hope this will give us a time to grieve together, joyfully remember the lives that these people lived among us and have closure in our losses. At this writing, we will remember Chuck Bursley, Betty Hynes, Mark Willard, Dana Traub and Irene Ames. The council and I will be following guidance from the CDC and our medical professionals in the state as to when we can safely worship with a full congregation and keep you posted as to when this service can happen. I will be looking for people to provide special music, members to be designated to share memories of each of these people and ideas for other special things that will be included in this service.

Enjoy this blessed spring time!

Pastor Becky +

**COUNCIL UPDATE**

 Council met on April 13th and began with devotions on 1 Peter 3:8, “Finally, all of you should be of one mind, full of sympathy toward each other, loving one another with tender hearts and humble minds.”

 Council appointed Carlotta Willard to fill the secretary position that was vacant with the resignation of Brenda Bite. Council expressed thanks to Carlotta for being willing to step into this role. Council expressed thanks and gratitude to Brenda for her years of excellent service as Council Secretary, her work on the Board of Education and Youth and as an offering counter. All indicated that Brenda will be missed at Council meetings.

 Pastor reported she had her first in-home visitation since the beginning of the pandemic and is looking forward to additional visits. We discussed worship and the need to keep our safety protocols in place and gradually relax them as more people get vaccinated and the numbers drop. Pastor indicated there will be memorial servicer for Dana Traub much later when his wishes for lots of singing and a meal can be honored. Pastor also reported that she is planning to set up a class for people who are interested in becoming members at Zion.

 Karen reported that things look good financially. The snow removal expense for last winter was $576.55 which is lower than in previous years. It was noted the schedule for those serving as offering counters is different in the bulletin than the list that was distributed. It was agreed the list should be followed.

 It was agreed to resume having an elder serve each week. This will allow the elders to fulfill their role and provide support and assistance to the Pastor. Paul reported that with services resumed in the sanctuary, he is making plans to move the camera down by the pews and allow for it being moved from the Pastor to the Elder.

 Jolene reported that Evangelism is working on a number of fun activities. These include providing carnival games the Woodland Homecoming together with the Woodland UMC and applying for a booth at Art in the Park to provide a break station. Discussion was held on whether to have a float in the parade and it was suggested that we have something on a smaller scale, similar to what we have done in the Christmas Parade. Evangelism is also working on creating a new pamphlet introducing the church and a business card that can be used to give to those who may be interested in finding a church and to have available in the Narthex. We continue to welcome donations of Christmas Trees and decorations for the Christmas Tree Farm mission that will provide these items to area residents in need at no charge.

 Mike reported that the church boiler is not working. The trustees are working to obtain bids to determine whether repairs are possible or if the boiler needs to be replaced.

 Resuming Fellowship was discussed. Pastor shared an idea that is being used at other churches for a summer Coffee Cart so that outside fellowship time can be held. This would allow beverages and packaged treats to be shared.

 The Safety Committee will resume having a safety person of the day now that services are being held in the sanctuary.

**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.

**VOLUNTEER NEEDED!**

 A volunteer is needed to begin selecting hymns each week for worship. If you are interested, please contact Pastor Becky.

**MARK YOUR CALENDARS**

**SUMMER WORSHIP TIME 9:30**

Sunday, June 6, Zion will begin having service at 9:30 AM. This time will continue through the summer, ending the week after Labor Day.

**END OF THE SCHOOL YEAR**

**WELCOME SUMMER CELEBRATION**

**SUNDAY, JUNE 6TH**

 Bring your kids of all ages to church on Sunday, June 6th, for a special Sunday and let your family at Zion help them celebrate the end of the school year and welcome summer. There will be a safe outdoor fellowship time with prepackaged snacks. All kids will receive a goody bag of items to help them enjoy the summer months. Note that service will be at the summer time of 9:30 am.

**GRADUATION RECOGNITION**

 Zion is planning a Graduation Recognition Sunday for our graduates! We will choose a date that works for all. Please let Pastor or Martha know of any high school, college, or trade school graduates who should be included.

**PENTECOST AND VOLUNTEER RECOGNITION: MAY 23RD**

 Pentecost is May 23rd and it seems like the perfect Sunday to honor some of our most diligent Sunday Worship Service volunteers. Join us in recognizing individuals who are a blessing to all of us at Zion. In their honor, we will hold the first outdoor Coffee Cart fellowship time complete with safely packaged ice cream and cake. Also, remember to wear red for Pentecost!

**EASTER THANKS**

 Thank you to everyone who worked to make our drive-in service for Easter such a wonderful and meaningful day. The weather was beautiful and it was a glorious day to celebrate our Risen Lord.

 A special “thank you” to Mary Makley for organizing and coordinating the Flower Garden in front of the cross. It looked so beautiful Sunday morning with the sun shining down. Thank you to Doug Makley for helping Mary carry, build and arrange the flowers.

 A big “thank you” to all who helped to make the Easter Egg hunt a huge success. Everyone – from those who donated candy and trinkets/money, those who prepared the eggs and those who hid the eggs to those who found the eggs – had a wonderful time.

 Our ongoing “thank you” and appreciation to Paul Meade, Mike Johnson, Jerry Engle, Terry Speese and others for their work to ensure we have our sound system, radio broadcast, and livestreaming in place.

**MANNA’S MARKET DONATIONS**

 In the month of May, Zion will be doing another collection for Manna's Market.  This Action Team project will be for supplies that are used in the bathroom. We all take for granted all the items we use in the bathroom every day.  We can all help Manna's Market provide free needed items for others in our community.  Jerry Engle has been given a $250.00 grant from Thrivent Financial for Lutherans to purchase some of the supplies.  The items most needed are toilet paper, facial tissue, paper towels and all sizes of garbage bags.  Other items you may choose to donate are shampoo, cream rinse, soap, toothpaste, toothbrushes, deodorant, razors, shave gel, toilet bowl cleaner, cleaning wipes and any other items you know would be useful.  You may also donate cash to be given to Manna's Market. A table will be set up in the Fellowship Hall to put all the donated items on.  Sunday, May 23rd. will be the last day to bring items.  That week the action team will pack everything up and deliver it all to Manna's Market.

**SUNDAYS IN MAY**

**May 2- In Sanctuary & Drive-in, Communion**

Pastor Becky Ebb-Speese

Elder: Jolene Griffin

Trustee: Dan Zylstra

Safety Person: Ken Heise

Offering Counters: Doug Mackenzie, Mike Johnson

**May 9- In Sanctuary & Drive-in, Communion**

Pastor Becky Ebb-Speese

Elder: Dan Utterback

Trustee: Jerry Engle

Safety Person: Dan Zylstra

Offering Counters: Mary Makley, Martha Yoder

**May 16- In Sanctuary & Drive-in, Communion**

Pastor Polly Standley

Elder: Paul Meade

Trustee: Mike Johnson

Safety Person: Jerry Engle

Offering Counters: Diane Griffin, Carlotta Willard

**May 23- In Sanctuary & Drive-in, Communion**

Pastor Becky Ebb-Speese

Elder: Jolene Griffin

Trustee: Dan Zylstra

Safety Person: Diane Griffin

Offering Counters: Jerry Engle, Carlotta Willard

**May 30- In Sanctuary & Drive-in, Communion**

Pastor Becky Ebb-Speese

Elder: Dan Utterback

Trustee: Jerry Engle

Safety Person: Jerry Engle

Offering Counters: Doug Mackenzie, Mike Johnson