



# Zion Lutheran Church NEWSLETTER

**WELCOME TO THE ZION LUTHERAN CHURCH NEWSLETTER**

*Zion is a member congregation of Lutheran Congregations in Mission for Christ (LCMC)*

**APRIL 2019      5831 GRUNDY ROAD, HUDSON, IA 50643**

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Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ, I had many wonderful experiences on my tour of Israel, but one thing stands out above anything else. The world into which Jesus came and lived 2,000 years ago had a very similar attitude toward God and religion as we do today. The Israel of Jesus' day was dominated by the belief that "If you were a good person, followed the rules and lived a good life, then you would be rewarded". Rewarded with success in this life and in the life to come in heaven. Religion – belief in God – even for the most serious practicing Jew in Jesus' day consisted of whether or not you followed the 10 Commandments.

In His Sermon on the Mount, Jesus makes it clear that none of us can keep those commandments. He said, "You've heard it said 'You shall not kill.' But I say to you, if you are angry with your brother or sister, you shall be liable to the judgment." And again, Jesus said, "You have heard it said, 'You shall not commit adultery.' But I say to you that anyone who looks at a woman with lust has already committed adultery with her in his heart." [Matthew 5:21-28] Jesus wanted to make it clear that following the commandments is an impossible task. His frustrated disciples asked him, "How then can anyone be saved?" Jesus' response, "With humans it is impossible, but with God all things are possible." It is only because of God's work in Jesus that we have any chance to be saved. We cannot do it on our own. No amount of good work we do is going to make God love us any more than we are already loved because of Jesus. The good news is that God sent Jesus, His only son, the one who did no sin, to take on our sin and because of his suffering and death we are saved. In Jesus' day, in addition to following the law of the 10 commandments the strict Jews obsessed over other rules found in the Old Testament, such as strict

adherence not working on the Sabbath, keeping kosher rules of eating, not eating pork, not wearing clothing made of blended materials. Jesus had to remind them over and over, "The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath."

To make sure his disciples could understand his new teaching, Jesus used parables that explained this in the simplest ways. 2,000 years later we have a tendency to over interpret Jesus' parables. We turn them into allegories, with each character having an overly symbolic identity. But it's best just to keep it as simple as possible, focusing on the simple, obvious meaning.

As I look at my own preaching, I can see that I have fallen short in my efforts to keep the message of Jesus clear and simple. This is my excitement and resolve as I return from my tour of Israel: may I remain true to the gospel and keep Jesus message of grace clear.

A good example of one thing I heard when I was visiting the place of Jesus' birth in Bethlehem had to do with the shepherds. They weren't unclean, just the opposite, they would sell unblemished lambs to travelling pilgrims on their way to make a sacrifice at the Temple in Jerusalem. To insure that the new born lamb would not injure itself, the shepherds would wrap the little lambs legs with strips of cloth. Called swaddling cloths these kept the lambs unblemished. These swaddling cloths were not the same as those used to wrap human infants, they were only used for these newborn lambs.

So, when the angels tell the shepherds, "This will be a sign for you. You will find the babe wrapped in swaddling cloths and lying in a manger." The sign for the shepherds was that this newborn child would be the unblemished lamb of God, sent to take away the sin of the world.

In Christ's Love, *Pastor Mark Decker*

## **Prayers**

Each Sunday in worship, we publish a list of people who have requested prayers. To help you remember them in your regular prayer time: Dianne Bascom, Susan Decker, Walt Eccard, Lorraine Joens, Clarence Laube, Sean Love, Eileen McKenna, Eunice Neil, Dale Neuhaus, Harlan Selken. If you would like another name added to the list, please let Pastor know.

## **Lenten Worship on Wednesdays**

We continue our annual trek through Lent this year with Wednesday special worship services at 6:30 with a meal provided beginning at 5:30. The theme of this year's Lenten services is stories from the life of King David. We will use the "Holden Evening Prayer" as music for the service.

## **Hospital Visits**

If you or a family member are in the hospital, please let Pastor Mark know so he can visit and pray with you during your time there.

## **Thank You**

To our Zion Church Family: Thank You for the cards, memorials, coming to the visitation or funeral, the kind words, but especially the prayers! It meant a lot to us and was very much appreciated! Brad and Lynn Ohrt

## **Thank You**

I appreciate those who stepped up during my recent time away: Thanks go to Jace Brandhorst for preaching on Sunday, March 24, and to Lyle Wulf serving as worship leader; also, thanks to June Volding for reading the messages of the King David study on Wednesdays March 20 and 27, and to Tammy Bern for going above and beyond leading the Holden Evening Prayer worship during those Wednesdays. What a wonderful blessing to be able to rely on you all to serve as you do! -- Pastor Mark

## **Sign-up to Read or Serve Fellowship Treats**

There are plenty of open days on the sign-up pages on the wall of the church entryway for those interested in taking a turn to serve as a reader or bringing fellowship treats or help with the sound and PowerPoint display on Sunday mornings. Please take advantage these opportunities to use your talent.

## **Wednesday Women's Bible Study**

On the same Wednesdays when there is Confirmation Class, Cindy Appleton leads a study for women. We are starting a new study, "40 Days of Prayer" a DVD series from Rick Warren.

There will also be a Priscilla Shirer live simulcast at the Riverview Conference on Saturday, April 27, called "Going Beyond." Hours for the presentation are 9:00-4:30. Several were interested in going last year, but we didn't get signed up in time, so here is another opportunity! If you are interested, please let Cindy Appleton know so we can register by April 12.

## **Adult Sunday Bible Study**

We invite everyone to our adult Bible study. "You Make Me Crazy: Surviving Relationships God's Way" is a DVD and discussion during fellowship time.

## **Practice for Musicians and Singers**

Immediately following worship, Sherrie Decker is leading a short practice time for those interested in singing or playing a musical instrument with our worship team. We will only do a couple of songs so you will still have time to participate in Sunday School or fellowship afterwards.

## **Blessing of Seeds and Soils**

As we look forward to warmer weather and spring planting we have scheduled our annual "Blessing of Seeds and Soils" for Sunday, April 14, immediately following the conclusion of worship services. After that, all who are able are invited to help take down the snow fence in the field across from the church buildings. With a lot of hands working, this usually is accomplished easily and quickly, although you should expect to get a little muddy.

## **April Anniversaries**

6 Bruce & Dianne Bascom  
14 Jim & Marion Grover  
19 Doug & Karen Wulf

## **April Birthdays**

3 Andy Appleton  
3 Julie Sorensen  
4 Dianne Bascom  
4 Tammy Bern  
5 Joanne Nicklaus  
5 June Volding  
6 Carrie McCalley  
12 Cindy Appleton

- 15 Harold Sorensen
- 19 Jamisen Weitzell
- 26 Danielle Bascom
- 26 Ryan Ohrt
- 26 Marian Grover
- 28 Kevin Simpson

**Acolytes**

- April 7 Zack Young
- April 14 Reese Seible
- April 21 June Volding
- April 28 Tanner Laube

**Ushers**

- April 7 Langley Jensen & Lyle Wulf
- April 14 Elwin & Stacy Lee
- April 18 (Maundy Th) Elwin & Stacy Lee
- April 19 Good Fri) Elwin & Stacy Lee
- April 21 (Easter) Elwin & Stacy Lee
- April 28 Irv & Jennifer Laube

**Communion Servers**

- April 7 Andy & Austin Appleton
- April 14 Chris & Barb McCulley
- April 18 (Maundy Th) Bill & Lori Gutknecht
- April 21 (Easter) Chris & Barb McCulley
- April 28 Dan & Jane Miller

**Communion Clean-up**

- April 7 Monica & Whitney Laube
- April 14 Monica & Whitney Laube
- April 18 (Maundy Th.) Elaine Brandhorst & Janet Brandhorst
- April 21 Judy Shirley & Jenna Parr
- April 28 Judy Shirley & Jenna Parr

The color of the paraments for Sundays, April 7 and 14 is purple for the season of Lent. The color for Sundays, April 21 and 28 is white for the season of Easter.

**Our lectionary readings for the Sundays are:**

**April 7:** Isaiah 43:16-21; Psalm 126; Philippians 3:4-14; John 12:1-8

**April 14:** Isaiah 50:4-9; Psalm 31:9-16; Philippians 2:5-11; Luke 23:1-49

**April 21:** Acts 10:34-43; Psalm 118:1-2, 14-24; 1 Corinthians 15:19-26; Luke 24:1-12

**April 28:** Acts 5:27-32; Psalm 150; Revelation 1:4-8; John 20:19-31

The **WEB SITE for LCMC** – Lutheran Congregations in Mission for Christ, is [www.lcmc.net](http://www.lcmc.net)

**If you have an announcement, message, quote, picture, or prayer, that you would like to share in the newsletter, contact Pastor Mark, (515-538-2200) by the 25th of the previous month.**

Minutes of council meetings which will be included in the newsletters will be from 2 months earlier as they have to be approved at the next monthly meeting before they can be published.