



# *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 2020**      **5831 GRUNDY ROAD, HUDSON, IA 50643**  
*Pastor Mark's cell: 515-538-2200    Church & Parsonage: 988-4534    [www.zionlutheranhudson.com](http://www.zionlutheranhudson.com)*

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

We are living in a time that is different from how it was even a few weeks ago. Who would've ever thought that we'd be cancelling Lenten suppers and worship services on beautiful spring days in March and April? We want to keep people physically safe. That's why we've cancelled our times of gathering for shared meals and worship until further notice. When I was in seminary, one of my professors made a point that as a pastor there are only two places I NEED to be: I need to be in worship on Sunday morning and when someone from my church is in the hospital, I need to go visit them in the hospital. Now I can't do either of those. In the midst of uncertainty and calls for "social distancing" there is still a need for community. In days of growing anxiety, how can we move from fear to joy? We have a God who says, "My peace, I give to you." Peace comes from caring for one another. We hear news of people hoarding and clearing out grocery store shelves. We also hear of people feeling isolated and lonely. There is a growing anxiousness about the economy, this virus, and will I have enough to get through these next few months? We also remember that Jesus came to care for those who are most at risk.

For those of you who are able to go on Facebook, please connect to the Zion page at 9:00 a.m. on Sunday mornings for a short "service" of readings, prayers, singing and reflection led by my wife and myself. It's hardly a substitute for gathering in person, but it is a way to connect with one another and possibly observe the Sabbath. I am also making phone calls to many of you, just to check-in and see if you have any needs, especially for prayer or pastoral concerns.

This month, what I'd like you to do – in the midst of self-quarantines, cancelled programs, closed schools and restaurants. Make sure you reach out – find somebody you know who is lonely, feeling isolated and give them a phone call. Let them know you are thinking of them and they are not alone. Ask them what are some concerns you can pray with them? Let them know they have a God who cares for them. As challenging as the weeks ahead are sure to be, I'm convinced that as we reach out as a church, we will become closer to the heart of Christ – in new and powerful ways as we are reminded how connected we are.

In Christ's Love,  
Pastor Mark Decker

### **Please Join Us in Prayer**

Each month, we publish a list of people who have requested prayers. To help you remember them in your regular prayer time: Dianne Bascom, Whitney Laube, Sean Love, Eunice Neil, and Holly Paar. Prayer requests can be submitted to Pastor Mark.

### **Hospital Visits**

If you or a family member are in the hospital, please let Pastor Mark know so he can pray with you during your time there. Unlike in years past, hospital staff does not call the pastor to notify him when a church member has been hospitalized. Although, during this time of quarantine, the pastor is not allowed to visit in person, we are nonetheless able to connect via the phone and pray in that manner.

## **From the Church Council**

During this time of suspension of gathering for worship, the expenses of being a congregation continue. Although, many of our church members regularly give through electronic means, we cannot collect offerings as we usually do during worship. Please consider sending your offering checks through the U.S. mail to the church: 5831 Grundy Road, Hudson, IA 50643

## **Zion Cookbook**

During this time of quarantine, many people are experimenting with new ways to prepare meals. Our Zion Cookbook is a great way to accomplish that. The cookbook is available for purchase and can be mailed to those who are unable to come in person to the church. The price is \$20, please include an additional \$5 for postage if you'd like one mailed to you. It contains 615 recipes. Each recipe makes our book special. Our cookbook also contains many recipes from those we hold in our memory. Thank you to everyone for your support and encouragement. We have a great cookbook and we hope you enjoy it!

## **Blessing of Seeds and Soil and Snow Fence Dismantling**

Our annual service of "Blessing of Seeds and Soil" usually takes places at the conclusion of our worship service sometime in early April. Then, following those blessings, we take down of our snow fence in the field across the road. We are planning to have a small crew do the snow fence work, but will likely not have the traditional blessing of the seeds and soil. If any of you are interested in having pastor come out to your shop or field for a prayer of blessing, please contact him and he'd be more than happy to do that.

## **Passing along some quotations**

It seems like I'm getting about 30 emails a day about how to pastor people online in the age of coronavirus. And honestly, the emails themselves can create more anxiety than the thought of actually pastoring online. I need to remind myself that I don't need to produce amazing livestream. I don't need to be leading 98 online Bible studies. I don't need to be posting cutting edge content on social media at all hours of the day. I don't need to lead the charge in our community to make sure everyone has food, hand sanitizer, and toilet paper.

But I'm finding that the better approach is to discern what opportunities are actually available based on our context here in Iowa. And then connect

those opportunities to my strengths as your pastor. That's where breakthroughs happen. For me, it's about connecting with people, fostering conversation, and speaking into that conversation wherever it goes. So I'm focusing on ways to do that online and with personal phone calls. We aren't going to feel the pressure to excel in every area, because we can't.

Here are a couple of quotations that I have come across that I hope you may find worth your time to reflect upon. Thanks, Pastor Mark.

From St. Francis de Sales:

"Do not look forward to what may happen tomorrow; the same everlasting Father who cares for you today will take care of you tomorrow and every day. Either He will shield you from suffering, or He will give you unfailing strength to bear it. Be at peace, then, put aside all anxious thoughts and imaginations, and say continuously: "The Lord is my strength and my shield; my heart has trusted in Him and I am helped. He is not only with me but in me, and I in Him."

From Martin Luther when he was dealing with The Black Death plague, he wrote these wise words that can help inform the way we approach things happening in our world right now:

"I shall ask God mercifully to protect us. Then I shall fumigate, help purify the air, administer medicine and take it. I shall avoid places and persons where my presence is not needed in order not to become contaminated and thus perchance inflict and pollute others and so cause their death as a result of my negligence. If God should wish to take me, he will surely find me and I have done what he has expected of me and so I am not responsible for either my own death or the death of others. If my neighbor needs me however I shall not avoid place or person but will go freely as stated above. See this is such a God-fearing faith because it is neither brash nor foolhardy and does not tempt God."

[Luther's Works Volume 43 pg 132 the letter "Whether one may flee from a Deadly Plague" written to Rev. Dr. John Hess]

## **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

## **Ushers**

We will probably have worship on these dates, but if we did, the ushers would be:

April 1 (Lent)	Rod & Marilu Degener
April 5	Rod & Marilu Degener
April 9 (Maundy Th)	Elwin & Stacy Lee
April 10 Good Fri)	Elwin & Stacy Lee
April 12 (Easter)	Elwin & Stacy Lee
April 19	Elwin & Stacy Lee
April 26	Irv & Jennifer Laube

## **Servers**

We will probably have worship on these dates, but if we did, the Communion servers would be:

April 5	Andy & Austin Appleton
April 9 (Maundy Th)	Andy & Austin Appleton
April 12 (Easter)	Chris & Barb McCulley
April 19	Chris & Barb McCulley
April 26	Gerald & Janet Brandhorst

**The color of the paraments for April 5 is Purple for Palm Sunday, for April 12, 19, and 26, the color is white for Easter.**

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

**April 5:** Isaiah 50:4-9; Psalm 31:9-16; Philippians 2:5-11; Matthew 26:14—27:66

**April 12 (Easter):** Acts 10:34-43; Psalm 118:1-24; Colossians 3:1-4; John 20:1-18

**April 19:** Acts 2:22-32; Psalm 16; 1 Peter 1:3-9; John 20:19-31

**April 26:** Acts 2:36-41; Psalm 116:1-19; 1 Peter 1:17-23; Luke 24:13-35

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.