



Zion Lutheran Church NEWSLETTER

WELCOME TO THE ZION LUTHERAN CHURCH NEWSLETTER
Zion is a member congregation of Lutheran Congregations in Mission for Christ (LCMC)

SEPTEMBER 2020 **5831 GRUNDY ROAD, HUDSON, IA 50643**
Pastor Mark's cell: 515-538-2200 *Church & Parsonage: 988-4534* *www.zionlutheranudson.com*

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Christians need to remember that, when we're feeling persecuted, we should act like Jesus did. Picking up our cross and following him, is what we are called to do.

We are thankful that we have been able to resume public in-person worship again, although we long for the time when even those who are shielding at home can come too.

What was it we have missed on our Sundays apart from each other? Was it the building itself? The church is not a building. But our Zion building is important, a sanctuary – a holy place. While there are obvious dangers in viewing the church building as something sacred beyond a meeting place convenient for the people to gather within its doors. Nonetheless, it is a joy to gather inside this building.

Was it the fellowship? Yes, I think in large part it has been. Technology is a wonderful thing and we ought to be thankful that we were able to continue with Wednesday devotionals and Sunday worship services via Facebook Live. Yet video can be demanding and draining, and closer fellowship is not always possible. We have missed the conversations that we would have before and after services, those natural opportunities to ask for prayer, to encourage, to show love for one another in our conversations. But what did you miss most of all? Was it not the presence of God? God is present everywhere because He is infinite and cannot be bound (Psalm 139:7-10) and so it is true that He has been with His people

throughout the lockdown. He has never left us. But there is a special dynamic to His presence in the gathered congregation. The experience of gathering with our brothers and sisters in Christ is important – yet God is present no matter where we are. So too, there is a difference between God's presence with us throughout the course of daily life

and that special presence that we experience when we gather in worship. Yes, the building is not inherently holy, but when we meet together for worship we are on holy ground. What a privilege! What a responsibility! May He never cease to be in the midst of us!

Of course, God's kindness has been evident to us in a multitude of ways, even though we may not be able to assemble. We should pause and reflect on His many mercies to us over these months. Let's also look to the

future, praying with renewed earnest that God would bless our assembly week by week and that He would bring in the lost and perishing.

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, Mike Dufel, Whitney Laube, Sean Love, Maurita Lubbers, Marvin Miller, Eunice Neil, Holly Paar, and Jim Reid. 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. Let us appreciate the blessings we have, as few and far between as they may seem to be.

Update on Plans for Parking Reconfiguration

On Sunday, August 23, Zion held our semi-annual meeting following a special outdoor worship service held at the Zion Lutheran Cemetery. At the meeting there was also a report on possible changes to the driveways and parking configurations as we are working with Black Hawk and Grundy counties' plan to put in a hard surface on Grundy Road in 2022. The committee met again on Thursday, August 27, to reconsider the parking reconfiguration options. It was agreed that we need more time to follow-up on the various options, including preparing a more detailed map or diagram showing the alternatives. The committee hopes to have a clear diagram ready to present before the congregational meeting tentatively scheduled for the end of October, which traditionally is held for the election of next year's church council and committee leadership. We want to avoid calling too many extra congregational meetings so the hope is to combine the decisions on the parking reconfiguration with another already scheduled meeting.

Sunday School Classes Resume

Sunday School classes have not met since the middle of March. While we went through the classes online with the Wednesday evening at 6:30 Facebook Live devotional time focusing on the lesson for them each week. Beginning Sunday, September 13, we are planning to resume meeting in person for the classes with Cindy Appleton, Molly Volding, and Pastor Mark as the teachers. Classes will begin at 10:00 a.m., following the worship service. With the public schools meeting in person, Sunday School will likewise meet, taking appropriate precautions for the virus. If the public schools move to close in person

meeting, we will re-evaluate as necessary. Because there will be no basement fellowship time, we have a wonderful opportunity to have adults participating in Bible Study class this fall.

LCMC 20th Annual Gathering and Convention OCTOBER 5, 2020 NORTH HEIGHTS LUTHERAN CHURCH, ARDEN HILLS, MN

Our 20th Annual Gathering & Convention is going to happen, just not the way we have gathered in the past. We will still be meeting in Arden Hills, Minnesota, at North Heights Lutheran Church, but for one day only, on Monday, October 5th!

Because of the restrictions placed on large group gatherings by the State of Minnesota, we must limit our gathering to 250 people. Registration for this year's event is first come first serve, online only, and limited to voting delegates.

The event will be live streamed as usual, however this year we plan to offer a more interactive experience for those who will be "attending" the event from home. To watch online please go to www.LCMC.net This may be a very different gathering than what we're used to, but just like the printing press facilitated the Reformation, so also may technology and the internet facilitate even more people being a part of the Annual Gathering and Convention than ever before possible.

We hope to see you there!

Online and In-person Worship at the Same Time

During July and August we have moved into a "gradual resumption" of in person worship in the sanctuary. How has it gone so far? We continue to use the camera and post the Sunday worship service with Facebook Live. Those who prefer watching the service on Facebook have done so, from the comfort of their home. Those who prefer to be in the Zion sanctuary have been welcome to attend the service in person. The in person attendance has been about 15 people per Sunday – plenty of room to spread out and keep a safe distance. At the outdoor service on August 23, we had 40 people in attendance. Those attending in person are able to share in Holy Communion, receiving the bread and wine on their way

out of the sanctuary (after the Facebook Live camera is turned off). Although masks are recommended, they are not required, so far the vast majority of those in attendance in person have been wearing masks. Online Facebook Live views have been between 80 and 150 per Sunday.

Missions Benevolence Report

Our Missions Committee has met (via a conference phone call) and made the donations of \$8,000. Each of the following was sent \$1,000: Riverside Lutheran Bible Camp, House of Hope, Hudson Ministerial Alliance, Waterloo Catholic Worker House, Mexico Mission International, India LCMC Mission, Love INC, and the North East Iowa Food Bank. It is a joy to be able to share with these groups..

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. Many thanks to those of you who continue to give during this “down” time. Your gifts are greatly appreciated!

September Anniversaries

6 Austin & Carrie McCalley
9 Bob & Angie Johnson
9 Sloan & Jenna Beninga
19 Mike & Connie Twente

September Birthdays

5 Deb Brandhorst
5 Tyler Laube
14 Heather Gutknecht
18 Dan Miller
24 Katie Robinson
28 Janet Brandhorst
28 Jared Gutknecht

The paraments during September are green for the season of Pentecost. Our lectionary readings for the Sundays are:

September 6: Romans 13:8-14
September 13: Romans 14:1-12
September 20: Philippians 1:21-30
September 27: Philippians 2:1-13

Calendar:

Sundays at 9:00 a.m.

Worship and Facebook Live streaming

Wednesdays at 6:30 p.m.

Pastor Mark’s Devotional time with Sunday School lesson

Sunday, September 13 – 10:00 a.m.

Sunday School resumes; continues to meet at 10:00 on Sundays, September 20 and 27.

Sunday, September 20 – 11:00

Church Council meeting

The **WEB SITE for LCMC** – Lutheran Congregations in Mission for Christ, is 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.