



# lcmc

Lutheran Congregations in Mission for Christ

# Zion Lutheran Church NEWSLETTER

## WELCOME TO THE ZION LUTHERAN CHURCH NEWSLETTER

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

**AUGUST 2021**

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

**Pastor Mark's cell: 515-538-2200**

**Church & Parsonage: 988-4534 [www.zionlutheranhuson.com](http://www.zionlutheranhuson.com)**

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

In Deuteronomy 34:6-7, we read: "And Joshua buried Moses in the valley in the land of Moab opposite Beth-peor; but no one knows the place of his burial to this day. Moses was 120 years old when he died. His eye was undimmed, and his vigor unabated." This passage has always seemed sad to me. There are good reasons that our society makes a big deal of having well-manicured cemeteries. We desire a place where we can visit the graves of our loved ones. We see it as a way to honor them and remember them. We hope to have our own graves visited by people who loved us.

In July, I celebrated my 67th birthday. I'm certainly not Moses, but I'd like to think my eye is undimmed and my vigor unabated (although I do wear glasses for reading, I can see well enough to lead worship without them), but I'm only 67 and not 120. My father died at the age of 67, so please don't be surprised that I'm thinking about my mortality as I reach this age. Shortly after my birthday, Sherrie and I purchased burial plots at Rose Creek Cemetery, just south of Austin, Minnesota. It is a beautiful little cemetery with lots of shade trees. Our plots are next to her grandparents, only a few steps from where her father is buried and her mother's empty plot is waiting.

As we stood looking at the plots, I thought of the movie *The Addams Family* which had the romantic scene with Gomez and Morticia standing in the family graveyard, admiring each other in the moonlight. Morticia turns to Gomez and says, "Someday we'll be buried here, side by side, 6 feet under, in matching coffins, our lifeless bodies, rotting together for all eternity." Okay, maybe it's not such a romantic scene, but it has a certain dark humor which makes it memorable.

After choosing our plots, we went shopping for gravestones. We've come to a pleasant agreement on a

specific piece of granite. Now we are working on exactly what will be carved on the stone. What fun! Of course we have to have our names and dates of birth and (blank space left for) death. But what else? A favorite Bible verse? A flower? Names of the people we love? Modern technology can etch something so detailed that it almost looks like a photograph. But a picture of what?

I recall this Emily Dickinson poem, that I've thought would be fitting for my tombstone:



This World is not Conclusion.  
A Species stands beyond -  
Invisible, as Music -  
But positive, as Sound -  
It beckons, and it baffles -  
Philosophy, don't know -  
And through a Riddle, at the last -  
Sagacity, must go -  
To guess it, puzzles scholars -  
To gain it, Men have borne  
Contempt of Generations  
And Crucifixion, shown -  
Faith slips - and laughs,  
and rallies -  
Blushes, if any see -  
Plucks at a twig of Evidence -  
And asks a Vane, the way -  
Much Gesture, from the Pulpit -  
Strong Hallelujahs roll -  
Narcotics cannot still the Tooth  
That nibbles at the soul -

What does this poem mean? I look at it as an expression of faith in going to heaven – another world where there is a place for us. As Jesus said in John 14:2, "In my Father's house are many rooms. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you?". The world that we live in is not the only one there is. Things do not end with death. Something will be found beyond this life, although it will have physical existence (like

sound) it is mysterious and invisible (like the power of music). Faith seems to be not enough of a way of explaining such a belief in the afterlife. Pastors waving their arms excitedly from the pulpit and worshippers enthusiastically singing hymns (“Hallelujahs”) show that people fervently believe in this world beyond, and such a spirit cannot be held back, even when it “nibbles at the soul.”

Most of us want a nice, lovely place to be buried, a place where our family will come and see our tombstone with whatever we have chosen to have inscribed on it. Although it’s always tempting to have our ashes scattered in the wind, that seems too much like the sad ending of Moses, “but no one knows the place of his burial to this day” We hope for something that people will want to come look at and remember us.

In Christ’s Love, Pastor Mark Decker

### **Driving Directions to Zion**

During this time of construction on Grundy Road, please use Strayer Road (from the east) or 190th Street (from the west) as you approach the Zion Church building. Coming this way, you will only have about 100 yards of driving on Grundy Road and will avoid much of the heavy machinery that is moving dirt and rocks elsewhere along the construction area. Please come and see for yourselves how the landscape is changing as the work progresses.

### **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, Jim & Julie Leonard, Eunice Neil, Holly Paar, Sheila Petry, Adriana Reyes, Eleanor Wettengel, and Jean Wittgreve. 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. Even though some facilities may not allow the pastor 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. One bright spot regarding hospital visits is that most hospitals are now allowing pastors to visit church members!

### **Semi-Annual Meeting**

Zion’s Semi-Annual Meeting will be held Sunday, August 15, immediately following the worship service. This meeting is a report of our finances for the first half of the year.

### **Blessing of Backpacks**

On Sunday, August 22, during our worship, we plan to have the “Blessing of the Backpacks” which honors and asks a blessing on students returning to school for the fall as well as teachers, administrators, and all workers returning after a summer which included vacations and time away. Please bring along your backpack for the blessing.

### **Sunday School Classes Forming**

We are looking ahead to resuming our Sunday School program with Rally Sunday on September 12. If you are interested in serving as a teacher or helper, please let Pastor Mark know. Parents, please let us know if you or your neighbors are interested in having your children in Sunday School classes when they resume this fall – so we know how many supplies to order.

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

There are still some 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 serving Holy Communion during worship on Sunday mornings. Please take advantage these opportunities to use your talent.

### **Health Updates for Pastor Mark and Sherrie**

My elbow surgery on July 14 went as well as we were hoping, so I’m very thankful for the power of God being displayed throughout my surgery and ongoing recovery. The doctor was even bold enough to want to pray with me before my surgery. What a blessing! The titanium “radial cap” came out easily. I had been hoping to take it home as a souvenir, but the doctor wanted to show it to his students and an example of an obsolete medical device. I suppose that is a better use for it than hanging from the rear-view mirror of my car.

Sherrie continues to heal from her spinal fusion surgery. She wears her bone-growth stimulator electronic device and undergoes physical therapy sessions with grace and eagerness. She is still unable to drive a car, which makes me her favorite chauffeur.

We have greatly appreciated your prayers and for your expressions of support and encouragement.

Pastor Mark

### **Online and In-person Worship at the Same Time**

With the resumption of in person worship in the sanctuary, we continue to use the camera and post the Sunday worship service with Facebook Live. Our online Facebook Live views set a new with over 610 views for the worship service on Sunday, July 4. The church council

continues the plan for mounting the camera in a rear wall position rather than using a phone hand held in the front of the sanctuary. Some prefer watching the worship service on Facebook, from the comfort of their home. Others prefer to be in the Zion sanctuary have been welcome to attend the service in person. The in person attendance has leveled off to about 30-40 people per Sunday – plenty of room to spread out and keep a safe distance. Those attending in person are able to share in Holy Communion. We are no longer requiring masks be worn as you enter and are welcoming people come to come downstairs for fellowship.

### **From the Church Council**

Although the COVID virus continues, with some restrictions for gathering together, the expenses of being a congregation continue. We are grateful that many of our church members regularly give through electronic means. 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. Your gifts are greatly appreciated!

### **August Anniversaries**

3 John & Teri Neil  
12 Bill & Lori Gutknecht

### **August Birthdays**

3 Miranda Johnson  
6 Elaine Brandhorst  
6 Garry Dufel  
6 Sam Kilgore  
7 Tanner Laube  
8 Sharon Dufel  
10 Molly Volding  
14 Kari Finley  
16 Pat Gutknecht  
17 Kyle Degener  
18 Chelsea Miller  
21 Shirley Dufel Petersen  
22 Rodney Degener  
22 Zachary Young  
24 Sandy Pedersen  
24 Taylor Bern

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.

### **Colors:**

The color of the paraments for August is green for the season of Pentecost.

### **Readings:**

Our lectionary readings for the Sundays are:

August 1: Joshua 6  
August 8: Luke 19:1-10  
August 15: John 6:35, 41-51  
August 22: John 6:51-58  
August 29: John 6:56-69

### **Calendar:**

Sundays at 9:00 a.m. -  
Worship in the Sanctuary and Facebook Live streaming

Sunday, August 8 – Reports due for Semi-annual Meeting

Sunday, August 15 at 10:00 a.m. - Semi-annual Meeting of the congregation

Sunday, August 15 at 10:30 a.m. - Church Council meets

Sunday, August 22 during the 9:00 a.m. Worship –  
Blessing of the Backpacks