

Zion News



Dear Members of Zion,

The month of March has arrived, and we rejoice that spring is not far away. We are certainly thankful for the winter weather that has brought moisture to our dry region and we pray that God will continue to provide us with much-needed moisture. Snow or rain, it doesn't matter, as long as it's wet.

We are now in the midst of the Holy Season of Lent. The theme of our Lenten Sermon Series this year is "Promised Treasures." This series centers around how throughout the Scriptures God uses simple ordinary everyday things like salt, ashes, water, and light to communicate to us his love, forgiveness and peace. We also want to say thank you to those working so hard to provide such delicious meals for our Lenten Suppers this year.

It will not be long before Lent will be over and Holy Week will have arrived. On Palm Sunday this year, nineteen of our young people will confirm their Baptismal vows and be welcomed into communicant membership in our church. We pray God's richest blessing for them so that they may always grow in their faith and love for the Savior.

As we look forward to Holy Week and the celebration of our Lord's resurrection on Easter Sunday, we ask God to lead us to a deeper understanding of His great love for us and the many blessing He continues to provide.

There is a lot of turmoil, uncertainty, and conflict in our world today. But one thing never changes and that is God's love for us in the Savior Jesus Christ. The holy season of Lent, Holy Week, and Easter Sunday all serve to assure and remind us of that important fact.

In the midst of an ever-changing sinful world, God's love for us in the Savior Jesus Christ is our shelter and refuge, our strength and our shield. May God bless you and yours this Lenten season and always.

In the Savior's name,

Pastor Bruce

Greetings and God's peace – Vicar Justin Brockman

Vicar here observing the 8th month of Vicarage. My how the time has flown by. These last few months have been a rollercoaster of family tragedies and health problems as many of you are aware of. I wanted to personally thank everyone for their encouragement and sympathy whether it was in card form or verbally these last two months as our family fell on hard times with the death of my grandfather but also with the health problems that reared their ugly heads this past month for myself. Our family is grateful to everyone who has been supportive these last few months and continue to be thankful for the encouragement that were given during these rough patches of our lives.

It is interesting to see the results of all the hard times come to fruition and how God has used many of these hard times as not only teaching experiences but life experiences in general. The words of encouragement that I received and that you all gave I would like to mirror back to you. In our desperate times we may find it difficult to turn to our Lord and Savior in times of tribulation to help us and comfort us when life really starts spinning in various directions. Death of family members, health problems taking its toll on us, worldly problems constantly bombarding on us either side and sometimes even work problems causing us to question whether our work is for us rather than against us.

Jesus' assurance comes from the assurance of the cross. Jesus endured many things before he was crucified, and as Lent season comes in full-swing we will see various times and moments in Jesus' life where he too was bombarded with conflicts of the world. The flesh and how with the help of our Father in heaven he too was able to overcome the temptations of the world. He is the Son of God after all. Jesus was tempted, starved, tested, smitten, afflicted, and crucified for the sins of the world. Our hope is in the name of Jesus because we know that Jesus endured the same problems and the same life lessons in different ways that God saw fit to test in.

With the death of family members, losses of jobs, struggles with life, we may often find ourselves questioning our God, and why on earth he would allow such catastrophic problems to afflict us in this life. Sometimes its hard for us to wrap our heads around these things and sometimes we find ourselves questioning our very essence and faith because of these hard times. What is interesting though is that Jesus still takes on the burdens of sin to rescue us from these hard times through prayers and faith. He says to turn to him in our most desperate hours so that he may give us rest.



“Come to me all who are weary and burdened and I shall give you rest.” There is much that Jesus does for us and has already done for us that encourages us in our most desperate times. He encourages us to hold on a second longer and that he will deliver us according to his will. May God richly and abundantly continue to bless you all during the good times and the bad times, and may his Word serve as a reminder that Jesus has delivered us from evil. In him who reigns above. Amen.

DIRECTOR OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

“The next day he saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, ‘Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!’” (John 1:29) Can you believe that spring is right around the corner? It might not seem like it now, it might not feel like it now, but it’s true. According to the internet, the season of spring officially begins on Monday, March 20th. Now, just because the calendar, or in this case the internet, tells us that spring is here doesn’t always mean that the weather is going to cooperate and follow suit. Unfortunately, we have no control over the weather, and as we all know, the weather can be pretty uncontrollable in this part of the country.

With that idea in mind, I’m sure that everyone has heard the old adage in reference to this month, “March came in like a lion and went out like a lamb,” or vice versa. If you are unfamiliar, this adage is referring to a way to predict the type of weather that we will have in the month of March depending on how the month begins, weather wise. The line of thinking follows that if March begins with terrible weather, or like a lion, then the weather to end March will be more mild and calm, or like a lamb. Of course, this is not an absolute rule, and I’m sure there are many people who can remember some years where this predictor was false and March came in and went out like a lion or lamb.

I bring this idea up because this actually has a connection, purposeful or not, to an idea from the Bible. While lions and lambs seem like two polar opposites with little to nothing in common, the Bible actually uses both animals to describe the complex nature of the same person, Jesus Christ. Jesus is referred to as a lion, as in the Lion of Judah (Revelation 5:5), and He is also referred to as a lamb, as in the Lamb of God (John 1:29). How can this be, though? How can the mutually exclusive natures of a lion and a lamb be used to describe the same person? Doesn’t it have to be either or, as in either a lion or a lamb? If those questions were going through your mind, you’re probably not alone.

In the church today, I think we often try to make Jesus just one of the two of these at a time, typically favoring the lamb over the lion. We like Jesus to be gentle and soft spoken, and we like Him to be the kind of guy who would heal the sick and spend time teaching to children. We often like to forget that that same Jesus, capturing the nature of a fierce lion, was the man who brandished a whip to clear the temple of the merchants and money changers. Jesus was humble and meek, but he was also strong and courageous. Not either or, but both and.

Christianity is quite used to the idea of both and. For instance, the Bible consists of two great teachings, both Law and Gospel. The Sacrament of the Altar is both bread and body, blood and wine. Even Jesus displays this idea in the fact that He was both True God and True Man. Jesus can, and as the Bible shows, was both a powerful lion and a humble lamb, and when we try to make Jesus into only what we want Him to be, we do Jesus, and the Church, a great disservice.

In closing, as we prepare to weather whatever weather we get here in the Midwest this March, I would invite you to take some time to reread the Gospels and see what they actually show us about Jesus. By the time you are reading this we will already be a week, or two, into the season of Lent. This season is specifically marked as a time of preparation, so with that, perhaps we can spend some time preparing by diving into Scripture as we once again remember how our great Savior triumphantly defeated our enemies like a lion by laying down His life on the cross like a lamb.

DCE Intern, Derek Jareske

May the sure hope that comes from the knowledge of the forgiveness won by Jesus Christ's glorious death and resurrection comfort and preserve you.

As the thaw, hopefully, begins going into these spring months, we in the youth department of Zion have quite a few things planned for the next several months. Before going into that, though, let me provide a few ongoing reminders. First, as we have stated in the past, if any students would like a church worker from this church to try to attend activities, make sure to let us know when these events will be taking place. While a calendar can tell us when activities are taking place, we can only know which activities involve you if you tell us. On top of that, we would also love to see everyone at our many planned activities that take place throughout the month. Please consider checking the list of events below, so you can keep track of the next time something is taking place at the church or otherwise. Bring a friend, as well!

Speaking of events, we have several planned to take place during this next month. First we are planning to take a group of 7th through 12th grade youth students to Great Bear Ski Valley in Sioux Falls, SD on Friday, March 3rd, for a fun day of skiing and fellowship. Our plan is to leave early and come back a little later in the day, so if students are planning to attend this event, please make sure that you are receiving updates in regards to departure and arrival times, along with associated costs. Next will be our regular monthly Fusion Youth Group meeting for 7th through 12th grade students planned to take place on Sunday, March 12th, from 4PM to 6PM at Zion Lutheran Church, likely in the church fellowship hall/gym. On top of building fellowship, it is always our goal to use these events to engage in a greater study of God's Word and more actively involve our youth in the ministries of this church.

On top of our regular meetings and events, we are also planning to host several fundraising opportunities over the next month. First, on Sunday, March 5th, the youth group will be hosting a "Little Late Sweetheart Lunch" in the Zion gym from 11:30AM to 2:00PM to help fundraise for our upcoming trips and initiatives. For those interested in attending the meal will cost \$15.00 per person, and the youth group will also be providing babysitting services at the suggested amount of \$3.00 per child. For more information, please check the flyers around the church or on our church website for additional details. In addition, the youth will also be hosting the Lenten meal on Wednesday, March 15th, by providing a soup supper before the evening church service on that date. For families that would like to assist with this endeavor, please speak to Mr. J about signing up to help or donate.

Finally, to provide a brief recap from last month, February had quite a few opportunities for the youth students of Zion. For starters, we held our monthly group meeting on Sunday, February 5th, and the students had a great time engaging in a general time of fellowship, working through a brief devotion, making plans for upcoming events, and playing pool noodle hockey. If you have joined us for a meeting lately, definitely make a point to put it on your calendar for the future! In addition to that regular meeting, we also held an event on Sunday, February 19th, at the church where the students played some games, watched a movie, and shared in a spaghetti meal as a group. This event was so much fun we even went an hour longer than planned! Of course, we strongly encourage any 7th through 12th grade students to jump right in and get involved. There is no better time to get started!

As you can see below, March is packed full of youth opportunities, so please make sure to mark your calendar and make sure to check our church website for more updates and announcements.

In the long term, we are also planning to take a group of students, 5th through 10th grades, to Camp Luther this May. If you are planning to attend, continue to check back for updates in the near future.

Mr. J



March 3rd - Youth Ski Trip - 8AM departure from Zion Lutheran Church to Sioux Falls, SD
March 5th - Sweetheart Lunch Fundraiser - 11:30AM to 2PM at Zion Lutheran Gym
March 12th - Fusion Youth Meeting - 4PM to 6PM at Zion Lutheran Gym/Fellowship Hall
March 15th - Youth Lenten Meal - 6PM to 7PM at Zion Lutheran Gym/Kitchen

CUNE College Trip

If any high school students, especially juniors and seniors, would be interested in taking a group college visit to Concordia University Nebraska (CUNE) in Seward during this next year, please speak to Mr. Jareske in the near future to receive information about visit costs and waivers. CUNE is one of the universities in the LCMS university system, and they have a variety of programs of study, including several opportunities for those considering church work.

Faith Weavers

Six months have come and gone in the blink of an eye! By the time this message is sent out to the congregation, we will be just moving into our third and final third of the year for Faith Weavers instruction. It seems like just yesterday I was writing a message about the start of Faith Weavers for the year, and here we are looking toward the end. That being said, we are not done yet! Faith Weavers will be continuing through the month of March although we would like to remind everyone that we will be taking a week off on Wednesday, March 29th, due to the Confirmation Questioning that will take place on that evening.

Again, until the weather cooperates and it stays light into the evening, we will be continuing to hold our games station indoors, and we would likewise remind parents that students should not be playing on equipment unless supervised by a parent or guardian.

As always, Faith Weavers will take place every Wednesday evening from 5:15PM-6:45PM as long as school is in session, or otherwise announced, and if any children between Kindergarten and 6th grade would like to join the fun, parents should check our church website under "Educational Ministries" for more information and a way to register online. That being said, with snow continuing to be a factor we would like to remind everyone that if the public school were to cancel school due to inclement weather, Faith Weavers will likewise be canceled for that evening.

In addition, if you would like to help with Faith Weavers this year, or next year, by serving in some capacity, week to week, please contact Kim Baumann, Suzie Wachter, or Mr. Jareske (402-329-4313) in the near future. Those interested in donating to support the Faith Weavers program this year, besides monetary donations, should see the list below for currently needed items. As always, your support and encouragement is greatly appreciated!

DONATIONS NEEDED

Please put donations in the kitchen with a note (from who, for who) and alert church staff about your donation. Frozen items should be placed in the freezer. For more information, contact Mr. Jareske using the church phone number.

For March:

1. Boxes of spaghetti noodles
2. Rolls of 85/15 or 80/20 ground beef
3. Boxes of instant mashed potatoes
4. Bottles of apple sauce
5. Large bags of frozen chicken nuggets
6. Large bags of frozen french fries
7. Cans of regular corn

For April:

1. Bags of shredded mozzarella cheese
2. Cans of fruit cocktail
3. Large packages of frozen mini corn dogs
4. Large bags of frozen french fries
5. Cans of green beans
6. Large bags of plain tortilla chips
7. Bags of shredded cheddar cheese
8. Jars of alfredo sauce

Unless otherwise stated, the Wednesday night Bible Study led by Mr. J will not plan to meet during the season of Lent due to the midweek Lenten services that will be taking place on Wednesday evenings. We will plan to meet again beginning in mid April.

VBS PLANNING

Hard to believe, but it is once again time to start looking forward to Vacation Bible School for this upcoming summer! The theme for this year will be a medieval VBS focusing on the armor of God called "Keepers of the Kingdom" by Answers in Genesis. Mr. J is already beginning to plan, but if you would like to be involved in this process, please come to our upcoming planning meetings on both March 7th and March 28th, likely beginning at 5:30PM in the church fellowship hall. This event takes a lot of planning and preparation, and so we appreciate any help that anyone can offer. We will look forward to seeing you soon!

LWML Agape Circle

February 8, 2023

Zion's LWML Agape Circle Met on Wednesday February 8 at the church. Sandy Bucknedahl gave a devotion about prayers and Syliva Furstenau told on one on her early church memory. President Lynette Koestler led the bible study + Covered by God's Grace ". President called the meeting to order with 10 members present. The secretary report was read and approved. The treasurer's report was read and approved. Treasurer Jolene Smith will pay for 16 Quarterly. The LWML North and South Districts of NE will have a joint servant event on April 15 at Grand Island. The servant project will be the Orphan Grain Train and Mercury Meals. We will be hosting a Lenten meal on March 8. We will be having a pasta and dessert bar. We will ask the Katherine Circle if they would like to join us. Be at the church by 5:30. Tabled until we have more information about sending cards to the soldiers and their families. A fund raiser was discussed about having Janice Siwy come and talk about her collection of Nativity. The birthday song was sung to Marj Weber. The meeting closed with the taking of mites, the LWML pledge and prayers. Dessert was served by Holly Koehler. Next month's meeting will be on Thursday March 9 at 7 p.m. at the church. Hostess will be Betty Maulding. *Respectfully Submitted, Holly Koehler, Secretary*

2nd Grade News



We are blessed to be able to learn and play at a Lutheran school! Thank you to everyone that has helped make that happen for all of us!

Second graders work hard!
English assignments keep us on our toes!
Called to be like Jesus!
On top of the world when we go out to recess!
Never going to stop loving Jesus!
Dimes, nickels, and pennies get counted in math!

Growing our faith each and everyday!
Reading new stories and studying new vocabulary words each week!
Art class is our way of using our imaginations!
Definitely love to learn about science!
Everyday is full of new challenges

Thrivent Choice Dollars

Eligible benefit members (age 16 and older) of Thrivent Financial, can help choose where Thrivent distributes part of its charitable funds each year. Call 1-800-847-4836 and say "Thrivent Choice" or visit www.thrivent.com/thriventchoice. The deadline to designate for 2022 is **March 31, 2023**. Starting in April you will need to re-designate your choice. You do not need any certificate number or birth date. It is very simple. Zion Lutheran Church or School both can receive these choice dollars.



For the last 12 years, the families and friends of the Zion Lutheran School have gathered for the Annual Wild Game Feed to spread the word of God's work in the school, and enjoy some great food in doing so. As plans are made for this year's annual free will offering and wild game feed buffet and auction, one solid theme rings throughout the committee, "***NOW IS THE TIME.***"

Now is the time was coined as the tagline for the Zion Lutheran School Building Campaign, but speaks so true to the goal of the Wild Game Feed too.

If you haven't been to the Wild Game Feed, ***Now is the Time.***

If you want to share your time, talents or treasures with Zion, ***Now is the Time.***

If you want your child to grow in their faith at a school with open arms and big plans for the future, ***NOW IS THE TIME.***

The Zion Lutheran School Wild Game Feed will be held on **March 18th, 2023** at the Pierce County Fairgrounds. The free will donation buffet will be open from **5:00-7:30**. A live and silent auction, meat and gun raffle, games and DJ music will also fill the night on the 18th, and all are welcome to attend. If you cannot make it in person, please feel free to check out the Auction online at

<http://events.handbid.com/auctions/2023-zion-lutheran-pierce-wild-game-feed-auction>.

For more information about Zion Lutheran School, the building campaign or the Wild Game Feed, please contact us at 402-329-4658.

VOTER'S MEETING FEBRUARY 8, 2023

Chairman Tom Weinrich called the meeting to order.

Pastor Bruce opened with prayer.

Roll call was taken. A motion was made by Mike Krueger to accept Haley Babl, Kathy Warneke, Brady Bretschneider, Afton Tietgen, and Cole Tietgen as new voting members. Rick Sirek seconded. Motion carried.

Minutes from the previous meeting were reviewed. Pastor Bruce moved to accept the minutes. Tami White seconded. Motion carried.

The Steier Group presented their campaign wrap up. The summary is included as a written report. Al Collison then followed up with the Building Committee report. His report was submitted as written.

General Treasurer's report was given by Greg Warneke. Our operating debt is approximately \$138,000. It was mentioned that in previous years, the Trustees went to the bank to negotiate a lower interest rate on the operating note. Greg stated that a backup treasurer is needed. Arlan Warneke made a motion to move forward to look into a Vice Chairman for Mission Treasurer and General Treasurer. Casey Krueger seconded. Motion carried. The Elders will look into this.

Mission Treasurers report was submitted as written.

Rick Sirek gave the Statistical report. Submitted as written. Rick moved to accept his report, Mike Krueger seconded. Motion carried. Rick informed the Voters that Amy Weber had been hired as church secretary to replace Lorie Sullivan who retired in January.

Dennis Watts presented the Trustee's report. Dennis stated that the Trustee's approved the Certificate of Resolution necessary to secure the loan from Lutheran Church Extension Fund-Missouri Synod to fix the roof. A resolution is also needed from the Voter's Assembly. Dennis made a motion to approve the Certificate of Resolution to borrow up to \$300,000 from the Lutheran Church Extension Fund-Missouri Synod. Tami White seconded. Motion carried.

Brandon Hamilton gave the School Board report. Submitted as written. Brandon remains the Chairman, Casey Krueger is Vice-Chairman and Laura Benes is Secretary. The Book Fee has been raised to \$500 per members child. Non-member tuition is \$2150 for the first child and \$1600 per additional children. Brandon also discussed that he and Andy White have talked about ways to educate our families as to the cost of educating a child and to motivate increased giving. Currently, the school has one full-time para and 2 part time paras. They continue to review the needs of the teachers and students. The possibility of tuition was again brought up. Brandon moved to accept his report. Casey Krueger seconded. Motion carried.

Building Committee Report was given earlier in the meeting after the Seier Group presentation. Tami White made a motion to accept the report. Al Collison seconded. Motion carried.

Dennis Watts made a motion to approve the Certificate of Resolution to borrow up to 7,045,432 from Lutheran Church Extension Fund-Missouri Synod up for the school building project. Al Collison seconded. Motion carried.

Pastor Bruce made a motion to thank Lorie Sullivan for her dedication and years of service to our church. Andy White seconded. Motion carried.

Pastor Bruce gave his report. Submitted as written. Pastor also gave Vicar Brockmann's report, who was absent due to illness. Pastor made motion to accept both his and Vicar's report. Ken Peekenschneider seconded. Motion carried.

Stacy Johnson gave the School Administrative Report. Submitted as written. Stacy moved to accept her report. Brandon Hamilton seconded. Motion carried.

Derek Jareske DCE Intern gave his report. Submitted as written. Derek moved to accept his report. Rick Sirek seconded. Motion carried.

There was no Old Business.

New business. Rick Sirek made a motion to give Derek Jareske a call as our DEC with his salary the same as a first-year teacher. Gerry Krueger seconded. Motion carried.

Rick Sirek presented the proposed salary guidelines. The overall increase proposed is 7.13% which amounts to a total increase of \$35,384. He noted that the cost of health insurance went down this year. Rick made a motion to accept the proposed salary guidelines. Gerry Krueger seconded. After some discussion, motion carried.

Greg Warneke made a motion to approve the annual resolution to authorize signatures at the bank to include Tom Weinrich, Greg Warneke, Mike Baumann, and Dennis Watts. Doug Cromwell seconded. Motion carried.

Rick Sirek made a motion to adjourn. Ken Peekenschneider seconded. Motion carried.

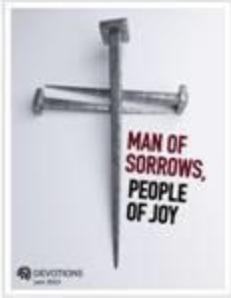
Closed with The Lord's Prayer.

Respectfully submitted,

Sherri Krueger, Secretary

OFFICERS 2023/2024

Chairman	Tom Weinrich
Vice-Chairman	Todd Stonacek
Secretary	Sherri Krueger
Financial Secretary	Rod Voelker/Mark Luebe
General Treasurer	Greg Warneke
Mission Treasurer	Mike Baumann
Board of Elders	Rick Sirek (Chairman) Brian Blecher Doug Cromwell Andy White Mike Krueger John Meier
Board of Trustees	Dennis Watts (Chairman) Eric Vanness Gerald Hixson Ruth Weinrich Brady Bretschnieder Tami White
Board of Education	Brandon Hamilton (Chairman) Casey Krueger (Vice Chairman) Laura Benes (Secretary) Ryan Babel Tyler Krueger Jodi Beacom



Lenten Devotions from Lutheran Hour Ministries

1. ***Man of Sorrows, People of Joy*** paints a revealing picture of Jesus as He winds His way to the cross. Using Matthew's Gospel as its source, we see Jesus as teacher, healer, comforter, and Savior. Our Lord Jesus, though divine in nature, took on human form and thus became intimately acquainted with our grief and sorrow (see Isaiah 53:1-6). That God would send His Son to bear our sins and die on our behalf is testament to God's unbounded love—a love that declares believers innocent through the Savior's triumphant resurrection. *(This article is from the LHM website.)*
2. These devotional booklets are available in the narthex on the desk and on the counter. Use them for personal and/or family devotions. They provide a Biblical devotion based on the Gospel of Matthew...**Man of Sorrows, People of Joy!**
3. These devotions are also available on your computer, I-Pad, and/or cell phone.
4. Go to www.LHM.ORG/devotions
5. ***LLL—MC Meeting Time***
6. Your LLL—MC (Lutheran Layman's League—Mission Connection) has moved their meeting time to 2:00 p.m. on the second Thursday of the month. Join us at our March meeting date of 03/09/2023 at 2:00 p.m. We need your membership! Please consider joining us! We have a Bible study, meeting, and light delicious luncheon /social time. The LHM Learn program is designed as a personal Bible study, but Zion's LLL—MC has chosen to use these personal LLL Bible studies as a group Bible study. On March 9th we will continue the second lesson on the topic; **The Wisdom of God. Our February study was based on Job 28:12-28. Come and join us!**

