

To our Zion family,

This past week, after a particularly busy stretch, I found myself sitting quietly at the side of a lake looking at beautiful white clouds set against the bluest of skies. A sense of calm and peace settled in just when I needed it. When there is so much swirling around to distract, raise my level of anxiety, and cause a sense of disequilibrium, I was grateful for that moment of peace. I hope you have chance this week to step away from all that may be disruptive and, instead, peacefully marvel at the beauty of God's creation.

## **Announcements and Updates**

### Sunday Worship Services

We are grateful to Pastor Anita Mohr and the Our Saviour congregation for including Zion congregants in their Sunday worship this past Sunday, Aug. 1<sup>st</sup>. We appreciate the warm welcome and fellowship. Zion congregants are again invited to join the Our Saviour congregation for Sunday worship on Aug. 29<sup>th</sup>, either in their sanctuary or via Zoom.

For the next three Sundays, Zion will worship in our sanctuary. Pastor Janet Hoover will lead our service on Aug. 8<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup>, with Deacon Patsy Glista presiding on Aug. 22<sup>nd</sup>. These services will be offered in-person, via Zoom, live streamed on Zion's YouTube Channel, on our Facebook page, and in the written Service of the Word.

To join this and every Zion Sunday service via Zoom, use the following link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84354840714?pwd=TDJGTkwvSTBER2INb1o1Qzd6WGxDdz09> , Meeting ID: 843 5484 0714, Password: 022654. Or by PHONE, +16465588656, 84354840714#, 1#, 022654#. If you are joining us on Zoom, please be sure you are on mute and that your video is turned off from 10 AM when the service commences until it ends and the "Joyful Chaos" begins. To join the service by Livestream on our YouTube channel, you can do so by visiting our page at: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCWzOtbCe2z7-bIPvxp62lA>

### Sad News to Share

It is with a heavy heart that we share the news that two of Zion's beloved members, Barb Reinshagen and Doris Berry, passed away this past week.

Friends and family of Barb are invited to attend Calling Hours at the Friedel Funeral Home on Oxford Road in New Hartford on Thursday, August 5<sup>th</sup> from 2-4 PM. Interment will be private.

Friends and family of Doris are invited to attend Calling Hours at the Friedel Funeral Home on Oxford Road in New Hartford on Thursday, August 5<sup>th</sup> from 4-7 PM. Friends and family of Doris are also invited to attend a Funeral Service at Zion on Friday, August 6<sup>th</sup> at 11 AM.

### Prayer Request

We ask that you keep Annette, Bobby Loomis's sister-in-law, in your prayers this week. Annette was just diagnosed with stage 1 melanoma and will be having surgery in Boston on August 17<sup>th</sup>.

If you ever have a prayer request you would like shared with the congregation, please contact Sara in the office so it can be included in our weekly leadership letter and the prayers of intercession during our Sunday worship services.

### Update on Zion's Call Process

Zion's call committee continues to work hard to find our next pastor. The committee recently reviewed the materials of a second candidate forwarded by the Synod, including viewing a sample of the candidate's sermons posted on Facebook, reading the individual's written materials (e.g.—resume/CV), and conducting an interview via Zoom. After careful review, the candidate was not considered to be a good match for our congregation and mission. Following that decision to continue our process, Jack Henke (call committee chair), Laurel McCurdy, and Mark Thompson (council co-presidents) met with synod representatives Julie Grindle and Dean Gail Wolling to discuss the process and how best to move forward. We ask for your continued prayers as we seek the right person to lead us in carrying out our mission at Zion. We are grateful to the call committee for their continued commitment and diligence.

### Next Church Council Meeting

The next church council meeting will take place on Monday, Aug. 9<sup>th</sup>. Although this may seem far too early to mention, we invite members of Zion's congregation to consider volunteering to serve on the church council, with a three-year term beginning in February. Feel free to talk with any member of the council to learn about the responsibilities and satisfactions of serving.

### Next Task Force Meeting for In-person Worship

Our next Task Force (TF) meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, Aug. 10<sup>th</sup>. While the safety protocols for COVID have been relaxed in recent weeks, the TF continues to monitor the recommendations from the CDC, along with the NYS and Oneida County Health Departments, given the virus variants (including Delta) which continue to pose a threat in some communities. The TF strongly recommends that all members of the Zion community get vaccinated and continue to practice social distancing and frequent handwashing.

This past Sunday's gospel was taken from John 6: 24-36. The final verse reads: *Jesus said to them, "I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never be hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty."* If we find ourselves hungering and thirsting for meaning, for connection, or for peace in our lives, let us remember the source who can satisfy all our needs. This past Sunday's gathering song, *I Am the Bread of Life*, captures this beautifully. If you have access to the YouTube, have a listen: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MzCg1FqLvUM>.

Peace and health in the week ahead,  
Mark Thompson, church council co-president

Zion Lutheran Church  
New Hartford, NY  
11 Pentecost



August 8, 2021

WELCOME

PRELUDE     *Pastoral, by George Blake*     *Kelli Watson*

CONFESSIONS AND FORGIVENESS

Blessed be the Holy Trinity, one God, the God of manna, the God of miracles, the God of mercy. **Amen.**

Drawn to Christ and seeking God's abundance, let us confess our sin. God, our provider, **help us. It is hard to believe there is enough to share. We question your ways when they differ from the ways of the world in which we live. We turn to our own understanding rather than trusting in you. We take offense at your teachings and your ways. Turn us again to you. Where else can we turn? Share with us the words of eternal life and feed us for life in the world. Amen.**

Beloved people of God: in Jesus, the manna from heaven, you are fed and nourished. By Jesus, the worker of miracles, there is always more than enough. Through Jesus, the bread of life, you are shown God's mercy: you are forgiven and loved into abundant life. **Amen.**

**Opening Hymn:** *O Jesus, Joy of Loving Hearts vs. 1 & 4*     *Hymn #658*     *-Kelli Watson*

**Vs. 1** O Jesus, joy of loving hearts, thou fount of life, the light of all: from ev'ry bliss that earth imparts we turn, unfilled, to hear your call.

**Vs. 4** O Jesus, ever with us stay! Make all our moments fair and bright! Oh, chase the night of sin away! Shed o'er the world your holy light.

**Prayer of the Day**

Gracious God, your blessed Son came down from heaven to be the true bread that gives life to the world. Give us this bread always, that he may live in us and we in him, and that, strengthened by this food, we may live as his body in the world, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

**First Reading:**     Psalm 84: 1-7

**Second Reading:**     Philippians 3:7-4:1

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Halle, Halle, Hallelujah

Hal-le, hal - le, hal - le - lu - jah.     Hal - le, hal - le, hal -  
- le - lu - jah.     Hal - le, hal - le, hal - le -  
lu - jah.     Hal - le - lu - jah.     Hal - le - lu - jah.

**Gospel:**     John 6:28:40

The holy gospel according to John.

**Glory to you, O Lord. The Gospel of the Lord. Praise to you, O Christ.**

**Sermon:** *The Race of Your Life*     *-Pastor Janet Hoover*

Paul's letter to the Philippians is a mixture of comfort and challenge, encouragement and exhortation. And today's passage contains a little of all of these, for even as Paul reassures us that we don't have to earn our place in God's heart—that we are accepted and loved not because of what we do, but because of who God is—without missing a beat he continues with a call for us to get up and get busy! We are made right with God by faith, that is true, but that doesn't lead to life in a rocking chair, to a form of retirement in which we sit back and watch the world go by. Instead, our trust in God's love for us is the first step in a process in which we are continually shaped and formed into the people God has created us to be. I don't know if you watched the Olympics or not, but I'm pretty sure, if Paul were alive today, he would be glued to the television... marveling at the strength and endurance and skill of the athletes. More than once, Paul uses sports metaphors to describe the Christian life. Christ has begun a new thing and it is now unfolding—but that doesn't mean a life of ease. It is a matter of putting one foot in front of the other, stretching our muscles, deepening our breathing, moving ever forward toward... Well, Paul doesn't tell us exactly what waits for us at the finish line, but assures us that the peace and joy of Christ is worth all effort. Many people want a spiritual journey that more closely resembles a quick trip to the corner store than an epic adventure. A simple faith with a few helpful teachings of Jesus. Cornelius Plantinga writes: *Some people expect very little from salvation, and they get what they expect.* They expect God's salvation to cure a few of their bad habits and to help them live more decently. They expect God to watch over them until they die and go to heaven. Others seem to expect too much—or, at any rate, too much too early. These people expect sinlessness or the wealth of heaven or rest from their labors... NOW. Paul delivers a different message as he urges us to move and change and grow and become. Our journey is not about perfection, he says... it's not about leading a perfect life or acting perfectly, but it's a matter of process and becoming. The mature Christian isn't one who has all the answers, but one who knows they don't have all the answers, who knows they haven't made it yet, who knows they are still on their way. Trust in God's grace didn't make Paul less active, but set him free to run without watching his feet, without counting his steps, without competing against others. And he urges us to join him as we move up out of the darkness, out of anxiety and guilt and regret into the fresh air of hope and promise. He knows it isn't easy, for there are a couple of barriers to our running with joy. First, we try to do it on our own. Paul encourages us to remember that, while we are participants in a great adventure, a race that requires persistence and courage and dedication on a path that is demanding with unexpected twists and turns, we are never alone. We work so hard, worry so much, agonize and struggle to succeed, and all the time we have what we need—the grace of God. The other problem that so many of us encounter is our tendency to keep looking back. Again, Paul reminds us that our past accomplishments, victories, successes, have helped to shape us, and that is good. But if we spend valuable time looking back and trying to hold on to the past, we will stumble and walk into walls and miss the beauty that is all around us. And often it is not the good times we see over our shoulder. It is the failures and defeats. By returning our attention to those inglorious, ineffective events of yesterday, our energy is sapped from facing the demands of today. Rehearsing those wrongs, now forgiven in grace, derails and demoralizes us. Paul says—forget the past, for it is like scrupulum. A scrupulum is a small, sharp pebble. It doesn't look like much, but when it gets lodged inside your shoe—well... it hurts, and it slows us down, and it cripples us. So it is when we allow the past to work into our spirits... we are plagued with the intermittent agonies of imagined guilt. The race is all about grace, Paul says. Grace—the power of God that moves in and through us, is more than a ticket to the sweet bye-and-bye. It is the fuel that keeps giving, that picks us up when we fall, that strengthens our weak knees, that keeps our lungs filled with energy. The fuel that enables us to run, walk, limp, dance our way into God's future. Grace enables us to move forward—not worried about what we have been or what we might have been. Not worried about finishing first or last, just moving toward home. Not worried about who is better or stronger or faster, but taking time to offer a hand to one who is struggling or admitting that, at times, we too need a helping hand. Often our race begins even before we take our first step... with our baptism. Like a runner wearing a number, we are marked by Christ's love, identified as one of those whose journey, while marked from time to time with struggle and hardship, will never be separated from the strength of Jesus Christ. Every moment of our life through childhood and adulthood, each day ... there will be more to learn and see and do. More to understand and experience, new opportunities to grow and love. Those who live in and for Christ always have a future, are always on the way to realizing their full potential in Christ. We can press on confidently, knowing Christ is not yet finished with us but is continually shaping us in truth and grace, renewing us with hope. Who will win the race? The good news is that there is not a winner, but each one of us has already received the prize of eternal life. And the journey itself is part of the celebration. Do you feel discouraged? Anxious? Worn out? Let Paul's words infuse you with new energy. Words echoed by Eric White: *God, you call us to ventures of which we cannot see the ending, by paths as yet untrodden, through perils unknown. Give us faith to go out with courage, not knowing where we go, but only that your hand is leading us and your love supporting us.* Our journey leads to a cross, but the cross isn't the end; instead, it is the door into life abundant and eternal. And the winner's circle is filled with the faithful of every time and place who hung on during tough times, who sang songs of praise as the shadows fell, who loved and served with joyous courage. And there is a place there for you. May you go from here ready to continue the adventure. Taking each step trusting in the goodness of God. To God be all thanks and praise.

## Apostles' Creed

I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died and was buried; he descended to the dead. On the third day he rose again; he ascended into heaven, he is seated at the right hand of the Father, and he will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting.

*ANTHEM: Andante, by Derek Kieran -Kelli Watson*

## Prayers of Intercession

Rooted in Christ and sustained by the Spirit, we offer our prayers for the church, the world, and all of creation.

For the church of Christ in all its diverse forms. For mission developers, new mission starts, and all communities of faith exploring new models of ministry for the sake of the gospel. For congregations facing difficult decisions about their future. God, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

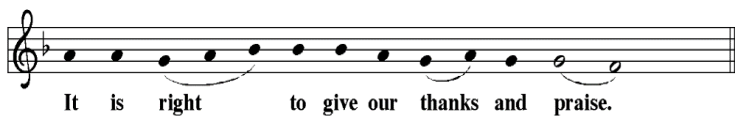
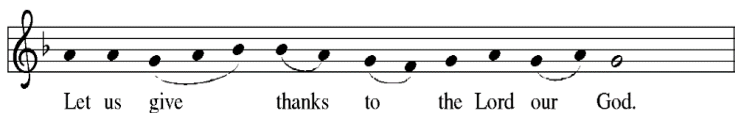
For the health and well-being of creation. For shade trees that provide refuge from the hot summer sun. For lakes, rivers, and oceans contaminated by pollution and all who lack clean water. God, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

For this assembly gathered around your table, we pray. For those among us who bake bread and prepare the vessels for our communion celebration. For those who bring the food from this table to those who are homebound or hospitalized. God, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Listen to the cries of your people waiting patiently for your healing hand and comforting Spirit, especially those who suffer with chronic pain and all cancer patients, Pr. Mary Etta, Wesley Williams, Rosemary, comfort for the family and friends of Barb Reinshagen, comfort for the family and friends of Doris Berry, Carole, Gail, Pr. Roger, Patsy, Claudia & Fran, Ed and family, prayers for Michael Gilleece and family, and Theresa, that the light of Christ may shine upon them with hope. God, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

We lift these and all our prayers to you, O God, confident in the promise of your saving love; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

## THE GREAT THANKSGIVING DIALOGUE



## PREFACE

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy.... and join in their unending hymn.

## HOLY, HOLY, HOLY

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow'r and might,  
heav-en and earth are full of your glo - ry. Ho - san - na. Ho -  
san-na. Ho - san - na in the high - est. Bless-ed is he who  
comes in the name of the Lord. Ho-san - na in the high - est.

### Thanksgiving at the Table

Holy, mighty, and merciful Lord, heaven and earth are full of your glory. In great love you sent to us Jesus, your Son, who reached out to heal the sick and suffering, who preached good news to the poor, and who, on the cross, opened his arms to all. In the night in which he was betrayed, our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks; broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying: Take and eat; this is my body, given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me. Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it for all to drink, saying: This cup is the new covenant in my blood, shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin. Do this for the remembrance of me. Remembering, therefore, his death, resurrection, and ascension, we await his coming in glory. Pour out upon us the Spirit of your love, O Lord, and unite the wills of all who share this heavenly food, the body and blood of Jesus Christ our Lord; to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit, be all glory and honor, now and forever. **Amen.**

### The Lord's Prayer

**Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.**

### INVITATION TO COMMUNION,

Christ has set the table with more than enough for all. Come!

### PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Jesus, Bread of life, we have received from your table more than we could ever ask. As you have nourished us in this meal, now strengthen us to love the world with your own life. In your name we pray. **Amen.**

### Blessing

The blessing of God, who provides for us, feeds us, and journeys with us, be upon you now and forever. **Amen.**

### Sending Song *Be Thou My Vision* vs. 1 & 4 Hymn #793 -Kelli Watson

**Vs. 1** Be thou my vision, O Lord of my heart; naught be all else to me, save that thou art: thou my best thought by day and by night, waking or sleeping, thy presence my light.

**Vs. 4** Light of my soul, after victory won, may I reach heaven's joys, O heaven's Sun! Heart of my own heart, whatever befall, still be my vision, O Ruler of all.

### Dismissal

Go in peace. You are the body of Christ. **Thanks be to God.**

**Postlude:** *Cry Aloud and Shout*, by Benton Price -Kelli Watson

*Teapot floral arrangement for Peggy Joslyn*



*All the tables at the reception after the memorial service for Peggy and John Joslyn were decorated with floral arrangements in teapots.*

*The people of Forest Presbyterian Church in Lyons Falls encouraged us to take one with us, a gift from them to us.*

