

To our Zion Family,

It is over a month since Pastor Janet gave us our Advent homework, yet I am still looking for signs of hope! This week, I am hopeful about the news of the vaccine. Although the supply remains limited and appointments are a hot commodity, I continue to see photos of nurses and essential workers receiving the vaccine, and this brings me hope. Now some essential workers and those who are 65 and older may register to get vaccinated. I am also finding hope in the passages that Mark shared last week, the Cherokee proverb and the Prayer of St. Francis. I printed both out and posted them on my wall – words that I need to hear again and again and again! This week we share opportunities to serve others, support the life of the church, and gain information about how to sign up for the vaccine and determine if you're eligible.

Announcements and updates:

-**This Sunday we will continue to our remote worship practice**, offering the opportunity to attend the service via Zoom, livestreamed on Facebook, or by using the printed Service of the Word, which you will find later in this mailing.

-To join this Sunday's service via Zoom, same log-in info as last week:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84354840714?pwd=TDJGTkwvSTBER2INb1o1Qzd6WGxDdz09> Meeting ID: 843-5484 0714, Password: 022654. Or by PHONE, One tap mobile, +16465588656, 84354840714#, 1#, 022654# US (New York) If you would prefer to view the service via livestream on our YouTube channel, you can do so by visiting our page at: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCWzOtbfCe2z7-bIPvxp62IA>.

-Based on the recommendation of the Task Force and council, **the January 31st service will be held via Zoom and service of the word**, not in person. This recommendation is based on high positivity rates in Oneida County, prioritizing the health of the congregation.

-**How can I get a vaccine appointment? Am I eligible?** Those over 65 and certain essential employees are eligible. These resources and tips were shared this Sunday during the joyful chaos: *To find out if you are eligible and sign up for an appointment:* <https://am-i-eligible.covid19vaccine.health.ny.gov/> *To sign up for an appointment in Oneida County:* <https://ocgov.net/>

-The Oneida County offerings are updated daily, typically between 6-8pm, based on the number of vaccines available. These fill very quickly, so it is good to check back periodically. SUNY Poly and the Fair Grounds in Syracuse also have slots, currently several months out. If slots are filled, it is good to check back periodically as there are sometimes cancellations that may allow you to secure an earlier appointment.

-**Our Annual Congregational Meeting will take place on Sunday, Feb. 7, 2021, at 11:00 AM**, following the 10:00 AM service and a few minutes of "joyful chaos." Given the risks of meeting in-person due to the continuing high COVID infection rate in Oneida County (and across the country), **this meeting will take place via the Zoom platform**. If you attend the 10:00 AM service that morning, you'll just stay on the Zoom link from the service to the Annual Congregational Meeting. For those who do not have access to a computer, you can attend this Zoom meeting by using your phone. To join, follow the same directions as for joining the service via phone. If you need assistance in understanding how to use your phone to connect, please call Sara at the office (315-732-4110) to let her know. Kristen Burson will call you and walk you through the steps to connect to this meeting using your phone. For those who would like, we will also make the meeting available on the big screen TV in the Fireside Room. We will require anyone wanting to participate in the meeting in this way to call Sara and reserve a spot in the Fireside Room. Masks and social distancing will be required. We want everyone to have the opportunity to attend.

-**The Annual Report for our Congregational Meeting will be available two weeks prior to Feb. 7th**. For those who receive the leadership letter electronically, we will email a copy of the Annual Report to you prior to Jan. 28th. (If you receive Zion correspondence via email but would like a hard copy of the Annual Report, please call

Sara.) Those who receive their Zion correspondence via the US mail will receive a hard copy of the Annual Report through the mail, as usual. If you have any questions, please call Sara at Zion's office (315-732-4110) or email Mark (mdthompsonphd@gmail.com) or Kristen (bursonkristen@gmail.com).

-Zion will host our next **Red Cross Blood Drive** on Saturday, Jan. 23rd, from 9:00 AM-2:00 PM, in the Fellowship Hall. The Red Cross continues to need your help to maintain the local and national blood supply. Eligible donors with types O, A negative, and B negative blood are urged to make a Power Red donation, where available. Power Red donors give a concentrated dose of red blood cells during a single donation, allowing them to maximize their impact. The need for blood is constant, and only volunteer donors can fulfill that need for patients in our community. Nationwide, someone needs a unit of blood every two to three seconds, and most of us will need blood in our lifetime. Thank you for supporting the American Red Cross blood program! The sponsor code to schedule an appointment is ZionLutheran and the direct link to schedule an appointment is <https://www.redcrossblood.org/give.html/drive-results?zipSponsor=ZionLutheran>

-As a reminder, **the front door at Zion will be rekeyed within the next few weeks.** If you currently have a key and would like to request that a new key be issued to you, please call Sara at the office and submit your request.

-The **annual Synod Assembly for the ELCA Upstate New York Synod will take place from June 3-5, 2021.** This will be a *virtual* meeting. We need two members from our congregation to represent us. The meeting is typically filled with interesting talks and is a great chance to connect with others in our region. If you are interested, please contact Mark (mdthompsonphd@gmail.com) or Kristen (bursonkristen@gmail.com).

Pastor Eldon DeWeerth joined us from Chicago this past Sunday and shared a wonderful sermon on the call of Samuel. I have heard this story many times before, but this sermon brought a new perspective for me, challenging me to grapple with the relationship between Samuel and Eli. Eli held a position of respect and authority. Yet, God chose to speak to young Samuel, giving Samuel the weight of speaking truthfully and requiring Eli to listen with humility to God's word through Samuel. God continues to surprise! Eldon ended with a "prayer" from Godspell, in which I joined singing loudly (and likely off key - hooray for mute!!). This week, let's listen day by day for the ways that God is calling us to see more clearly, follow more nearly, and love more dearly.

Yours in Christ,
Kristen Burson and Mark Thompson
Church Council co-presidents

3 Epiphany



SERVICE OF THE WORD GATHERING

WELCOME

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

Blessed be the holy Trinity, ☩ one God, whose voice is upon the waters, whose mercy is poured out upon all people, whose goodness cascades over all creation. **Amen.**

Let us confess our sin, trusting in the abundant grace of God.

Holy God, you search us and know us. You are acquainted with all our ways. We confess that our hearts are burdened by sin— our own sins and the broken systems that bind us. We turn inward, failing to follow your outward way of love. We distrust those who are not like us. We exploit the earth and its resources and fail to consider generations to come. Forgive us, gracious God, for all we have done and left undone. Even before the words are on our tongues, you know them; receive them in your divine mercy. **Amen.**

How vast is God's grace! Through the power and promise of ☩ Christ Jesus, our sins are washed away and we are claimed as God's own beloved. Indeed, we are forgiven. In the wake of God's forgiveness, we are called to be the beloved community living out Christ's justice and the Spirit's reconciling peace. **Amen.**

Opening Hymn: *Jesus Calls Us; o'er the Tumult* Vs. 1 & 5 Hymn#696 –Kelli Watson

Vs. 1 Jesus calls us; o'er the tumult of our life's wild, restless sea, day by day his clear voice sounding, saying, "Christian, follow me":

Vs. 5 Jesus calls us! By your mercy, Savior, may we hear your call, give our hearts to your obedience, serve and love you best of all.

Prayer of the Day

Almighty God, by grace alone you call us and accept us in your service. Strengthen us by your Spirit, and make us worthy of your call, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

First Reading: Jonah 3:1-5, 10

Second Reading: 1 Corinthians 7:29-31

Gospel: Mark 1: 14-20

Sermon: *And So It Begins* –Pastor Janet Hoover

It was a day like any other day. The breezes off the lake brought a cooling caress to the men on the shore—men for whom the smell of fish and the rhythm of the nets was in their blood. These men knew how to work hard. They knew how to watch the skies and the weather. They knew the currents and the depths of the lake. And on this day, they were doing what they knew best. They were fishing when their concentration was broken by the sound of sandals slapping against the rocks which covered the shore. They looked up and there he stood. They exchanged quick glances with each other. You know the look—uh-oh, I wonder what he wants?! They didn't know him well, but everyone had heard of him. For wherever he had gone, this Jesus of Nazareth had a way of stirring up a crowd—ruffling the feathers of some and calming the fears of others. Now he stood in front of them, and the fishermen prepared themselves for some pronouncement, some story about God and God's kingdom. Imagine their surprise when he said, simply: Follow me. This was not the way things were supposed to work. In this time, rabbis didn't seek students. Students sought rabbis. Teachers waited for people to come to them and they interviewed them carefully before deciding whether or not to take them on as disciples. No self-respecting rabbi would ever have gone out to recruit his own followers, and if he had, he wouldn't have picked the first four people he met—especially four uneducated fishermen. But that is not what intrigues me the most. What captures my attention is their response. He

called. They followed. Period. There were no negotiations, no questions about benefits or salary. They just dropped their nets and went. This story always startles me with its brevity of invitation, command, response. The absence of details and motivations is frustrating, but at the same time it keeps our focus where it belongs. This is not a story about the faithfulness of these men. It is not an account of their wisdom or insight. Instead, it is a miracle story as full of God's power as the feeding of the five thousand or the healing of the paralyzed man. This is not a story about the power of human beings to change their lives. This is a story about the power of God that walks right up to a quartet of fishermen and makes from them more than they ever dreamed they could be. And in that God-drenched moment, the miracle occurred. Their lives began to flow in the same direction as God's life. This is a story about God and about God's ability not only to call us, but to use us...our hands, our hearts, our voices, our minds...to serve, to spread good news, to offer grace and mercy. Through the amazing love of Christ, the lives of four fishermen were changed and they set off on a great adventure of healing and teaching and learning. But they are not the only characters in the drama. There is one other person—standing off in the shadows—who also demonstrates a willingness to change. James and John, we are told, are the sons of Zebedee. Zebedee's life is also turned upside down that day. In Jesus' day, sons naturally followed their father's line of work...carried on the family business. No doubt, Zebedee gave thanks to God each day for two sons to take some of the heavy load off his back. No doubt Zebedee breathed a little easier knowing that he had two sons to take care of him as he grew older and frailer. And then—here comes this Jesus fellow and now he has a choice. It would have been easy for him to forbid his sons to leave their nets. He could have asked them to ignore the invitation, to honor the responsibilities they had. But he lets them go. This, too, is a form of discipleship, isn't it? Sometimes disciples embark on new ventures and new challenges. Sometimes disciples stay right where they are. Sometimes discipleship involves moving and sometimes it is living so that others can move. In both cases, however, there is a change. Barbara Brown Taylor writes: To be part of the kingdom may mean changing even while staying put. It may mean letting others go and taking on more responsibility where you are. Sometimes following may mean casting the same old nets in a new way or for new reasons. It may mean doing something different with the fish you catch or spending the money they bring at market in a different way. It may mean reorganizing the whole fishing business so that the drifters down at the pier have work to do. The possibilities for following are endless. Sometimes they are big and dramatic. Sometimes they seem almost too small to mention. But as we open ourselves to God, as we give ourselves over to the flow of God's will, the gates of the kingdom will open wide and we will know the wonder of God's grace.

We sometimes speak of the kingdom of God as something that will happen later...a time in the future when sin will be no more, when suffering and grieving will be no more. But that's not what Jesus says. He says that it is now-today. All we have to do is live as if we believe that it is true. In the midst of heartbreak and violence, he calls us to live as if love can make a difference, to trust in goodness, to give ourselves for others without fear of being taken advantage of. Jesus taught this and lived it, and he calls us to be a part of the same great adventure. Kingdom life is an adventure with many unknowns, discussions over which turn to take on the road, visits to strange places, introductions and farewells, and much looking back and taking stock. As we say yes to Jesus, we become part of a journey that began long before we got here and shall continue long after we are gone. The life of faithfulness is a journey, a moving from place to place. God's kingdom is not about sitting down and staying put. It is traveling, getting up, and going somewhere. To paraphrase that great author, Dr. Seuss: You're off to great places, you're off and away. You have brains in your head, you have feet in your shoes. Here's the good news—you're not alone, and you know what you know, and you know the one who'll decide where you'll go. There are some risks. It is an experience of exhilaration and energy, but at the same time it is an experience of anxiety and fear and reluctance. Again from Dr Seuss: I'm sorry to say so, but sadly it's true. That bangups and hang-ups can happen to you. You may come to a place where the streets are not marked. Some windows are lighted, but mostly they're dark. There are places you could sprain both elbow and chin. Do you stay out? Do you dare go in? Jesus called his disciples to get up from what they were doing and follow him, to become citizens of a new kingdom. He didn't promise them safety from the problems of the world. He didn't promise an easy path. He did promise them life—abundant and eternal, a life they would find only when they were willing to set aside their own agendas. The promise is adventure, surprise, challenge, joy, new identity as citizens of a kingdom where each person is loved and valued, where the language is praise and wonder, where what I do—what you do—may not lead to fame and fortune, but will be a part of God's work of light and peace and love. Jesus comes with an invitation to be part of a new people who make a difference because they see something that can't be seen without Jesus— a new world in which people are faithful to their promises, love their enemies, tell the truth, respect the poor, and through all this, testify to the amazing power of God. It's one thing to say yes to Jesus; it's another to live it out on a daily basis. To keep a heart of faith when the headlines scream at us with words of war and disaster, to love even when that love is not returned, to continue to reach out with compassion when you have been taken advantage of and rejected. That's why we need each other...to lift our spirits when they droop, to support with encouraging words and prayer, to work with. Remember, Jesus called four men...not one. And those four became twelve, and that number grew and grew. Jesus doesn't call us to do it all by ourselves, but to be part of a community of travelers, journeying together. Even now, God is busy—working to invade the

most desperate lives with the light of hope. One day, there you are logging in to the computer, checking your news apps for the 20th time, washing dishes, sitting in another zoom meeting, shoveling snow, and something grabs hold of your heart. And you know— you know you are being called to lay down your nets, your agendas, your schedules, your tightly held resentments and prejudices, your carefully designed map of the future, to pick up Christ's ways of forgiving, sharing, caring, accepting, loving.

And when you do, when you say yes, the miracle happens. You can feel your life, like the needle of a compass— swing around in the direction of God's mercy and grace. Each one of you is being called to follow Christ. That call may involve new forms of service, new insights through prayer or study, new people to love. All of us are called to live faithful lives—lives that begin with a summons to follow and continue in a movement which leads more and more deeply into the life of the world, a pilgrimage characterized by living for others, loving the world for Christ's sake, giving one's resources and skills and passion and love and life itself for the cause of Christ. It's not easy. But as we journey, we will find ourselves in a world where even the shadows of death and suffering are pierced with light, places where we find a confidence and trust that shrinks our fear, places where love permeates our heart and soul. God calls us to follow, and as we lay down our net, as we say yes...oh, the places we'll go. We will find ourselves in a world where even the shadows of death and suffering are pierced with light, places where we will find a confidence and trust that shrinks our fear, places where love permeates our heart and soul. Out there, things can happen and frequently do to people as brainy and footsy as you. And when things start to happen, don't worry, don't stew. Just go right along. You'll start happening, too. The home of God is here with us. God, himself, is with us. All praise and thanks be to God for God is good, and God's steadfast love is forever. Amen.

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. Amen.

ANTHEM Here I Am, Lord, by Daniel Schutte, arr. by Lloyd Larson -Kelli Watson

Prayers of Intercession

Guided by Christ made known to the nations, let us offer our prayers for the church, the world, and all people in need.

For the church throughout the world, for pastors and teachers, for deacons and deaconesses, and for musicians and servers, that all proclaim the good news of God's reconciling love, let us pray. **Have mercy, O God.**

For those who provide leadership in our cities and around the world, for nonprofit and nongovernmental organizations, for planning commissions and homeless advocates, that God inspire all people in the just use of wealth, let us pray. **Have mercy, O God.**

For our congregation and community, for families big and small, and for the organizations that meet here during the week, that God's steadfast love serve as a model for all relationships, let us pray. **Have mercy, O God.**

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, Gail, comfort for Patsy and the friends and family of Norm, Claudia T., Bill & Rusty, David Hunter, Don & Wanda, comfort for the family and friends of Peggy Joslyn, Joyce Maher, Edween Ham, healing for Steven and Cody, Claudia & Fran, Beth, Edie Marie, Suzee, Ed and family, prayers for Michael Gillece and family, Your Neighbors clients, Theresa, and our country, that the light of Christ may shine upon them with hope. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Merciful God, hear the prayers of your people, spoken or silent, for the sake of the one who dwells among us, your Son, Jesus Christ our Savior. **Amen.**

Thanksgiving at the Table

Holy One, the beginning and the end, the giver of life: Blessed are you for the birth of creation. Blessed are you in the darkness and in the light. Blessed are you for your promise to your people. Blessed are you in the prophets' hopes and dreams. Blessed are you for Mary's openness to your will. Blessed are you for your Son Jesus, the Word made flesh. 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. Let us proclaim the mystery of faith. **Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.** With this bread and cup, we remember your Word dwelling among us, full of grace and truth. We remember our new birth in his death and resurrection. We look with hope for his coming. **Come, Lord Jesus.** Holy God, we long for your Spirit. Come among us. Bless this meal. May your Word take flesh in us. Awaken your people. Fill us with your light. Bring the gift of peace on earth. **Come, Holy Spirit.** All praise and glory are yours, Holy One of Israel, Word of God incarnate, Power of the Most High, One God, 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.

Closing Hymn: *Songs of Thankfulness and Praise 1 & 2 Hymn#310 -Kelli Watson*

Vs. 1 Songs of thankfulness and praise, Jesus, Lord, to thee we raise; manifested by the star to the sages from afar, branch of royal David's stem in they birth at Bethlehem: anthems be to thee addressed, God in flesh made manifest.

Vs. 2 Manifest at Jordan's stream, prophet, priest, and king supreme; and at Cana wedding guest in thy God head manifest; manifest in pow'r divine, changing water into wine; anthems be to thee addressed, God in flesh made manifest.

Blessing

God the creator strengthen you; Jesus the beloved fill you; and the Holy Spirit the comforter keep you in peace.

Amen.

Dismissal

Go in peace. Be the light of Christ. **Thanks be to God.**



Dear Zion Family - thank you for all the prayers, cards, meals, and words of encouragement during the months of Norm's illness. We so enjoyed reading the cards while he was in the hospital and ill at home. Thank you, also, for the many expressions of condolence in the days since his dying. Whether you sent a card, joined us for his memorial service via Zoom, or stopped at the funeral home, please know that we and I have felt God's love being shared.

May all God's children throughout the world know the peace of Christ, that passes all understanding. Patsy.





Our congregation mourns the passing of Margaret “Peggy” Joslyn, who joined her husband, the Rev. Paul D. Joslyn, in the church triumphant on January 16, 2021. We extend our deepest sympathy and prayers to her children: David and Jan Joslyn, John and Susan Joslyn, Sarah and Randy Anderson; to her grandchildren; and to her extended family and friends.

When Peggy Smith and Paul Joslyn united at Atonement Lutheran Church, Syracuse, on June 9, 1956, they formed a dynamic pastoral couple whose intertwined lives spread Christianity’s joys, inspiration, and comfort to all they encountered.

Zion’s former office manager, Helga Morrison, who worked with the Joslyns, described their marital bond: “You can’t talk about Paul without mentioning Peggy. They supported each other in every chapter of their lives. Zion benefited from their involvement in all aspects of congregational life. We were fortunate. You rarely see this in churches today. The word ‘team’ describes their marriage perfectly.”

After their wedding, the Joslyns served Atonement Church, where Paul was Assistant Pastor under his father, the Rev. Dr. John M. Joslyn. Following a ministry at Good Shepherd Lutheran, East Glenville, Peggy and Paul came to Zion in 1978. They retired in 1994. During Paul’s active ministry, Peggy also enjoyed a career as Director of the District Office of State Senator James Donovan.

We remember Peggy Joslyn for many reasons. She brought her beautiful voice to Zion’s choir, as well as to community choruses in the Utica and Lewis County areas. She was extremely active in our Lutheran Church Women, served as President of the Upstate LCW and as a delegate to national LCW conventions, and was the first woman to be elected Secretary of the Upstate Synod. And, in 1994, she co-chaired a successful \$1.6 million fund drive for Lutheran Care in Clinton.

Most important, however, we remember her as our dear friend “Peggy” - a wonderful, warm, welcoming person whose love and enthusiasm for Christian life embraced and blessed Zion Church for sixteen vibrant, productive years. And as we smile, over and over, when we recall our rich memories of Peggy Joslyn, now with her beloved Paul, we reaffirm the reality of the resurrection.

Prayer for the Inauguration on January 20, 2021

From Bread for the World

Almighty and Sovereign God:

As our nation undergoes this presidential transition, we pray: "Thy Kingdom Come."

May your Holy Spirit instill in our president the righteousness, values, and principles of your kingdom to exercise the sacred trust of administering the nation.

Give our new president, his administration, and Congress the ability to honor you by doing what is right, fair, and just for all citizens, especially the poor, hungry, and marginalized.

We ask that all the people in our nation, irrespective of race, gender, ethnicity, or religious faith be treated with dignity.

We pray for the wholeness, health, integrity, soundness, welfare, security, prosperity, harmony, and justice of all the citizens of our nation.

Help our nation develop a foreign policy that fosters peace, justice, equality, and freedoms that can advance the development, rights, and privileges of our global neighbors.

CHAMBER MUSIC SOCIETY of UTICA
ANNOUNCES OUR
2020-2021 VIRTUAL CONCERTS



NEAVE TRIO
VIOLIN, CELLO & PIANO
PERFORMING
ASTOR PIAZZOLLA

WINDSYNC
WIND QUINTET
PERFORMING
J.S. BACH, BUXTEHUDE & HOLST

AVAILABLE FOR STREAMING
SUNDAY • 24 JANUARY 2021 • 2:30 PM
THROUGH
SUNDAY • 31 JANUARY 2021 • 2:30 PM
VIA CMSU WEBSITE
WWW.UTICACHAMBERMUSIC.ORG
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QUESTIONS? CMSU.INFO@GMAIL.COM or (315) 794-9741

OUR NEXT CONCERT : CELLIST ADRIAN DAUROW + BERLIN COUNTERPOINT
PERFORMING : REGER + MOZART & CONNESSON
21 MARCH 2021 • 2:30 PM • THROUGH • 28 MARCH 2021 • 2:30 PM

Church Office Notes:

Statements: Ed Grove and Gloria Cifonelli will be working on the year end statement of offering. Anyone who would like to request a statement, please call or email the office, or call Gloria.

Envelopes: There are quite a few remaining envelopes in the downstairs coatroom. Please call Gloria (315-735-8077) if you are unable to pick them up and she will arrange for them to be sent to you.

thank you!