

LEADERSHIP LETTER FOR JUNE 20, 2021

Dear Zion Family,

“And he will raise you up on eagle’s wings, bear you on the breath of dawn, make you to shine like the sun, and hold you in the palm of his hand;” that is what I have been singing since Kelli Watson lovingly played that beautiful hymn on her piano last Sunday. The shelter, the rock, the refuge, the trust, the faithfulness, the being held in the Lord’s hand, and the shining like the sun—are all bringing me through this week to this coming Sunday, the summer solstice, the first day of summer. June 20th is also Father’s Day—for some of us there will be memories of shelter, refuge, holding, faithfulness, and trusting. Skip to the last page of this document and you will see a sunset and a Father’s Day prayer that Sara found for us.

WORSHIP AT ZION DURING THE SUMMER

Last Sunday, at least thirty-eight congregants were together on Zoom and one person livestreamed our service on YouTube. **This Sunday, we have the opportunity to worship in person with the Reverend Janet Hoover presiding.** The Service of the Word and the usual online options are also available. To join the **June 20th service by Zoom:** <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84354840714?pwd=TDJGTkwvSTBER2lNb1o1Qzd6WGxDdz09> 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>

Seven summer services will be in the sanctuary and they will be offered in all the other usual ways, too. On June 27th, Rev. Jen DeWeerth will lead our **in-person** service. We are ever so grateful that Rev. Janet Hoover is willing to preside on three Sundays in July: the 11th, 18th, and 25th. She has also tentatively said she will preside on August 8th and 15th. Patsy Glista will preside on August 29th. We may be joining Pastor Anita Mohr at Our Saviour on July 4th, August 8th and 25th; specific plans will appear in later leadership letters.

LATEST DECISIONS REGARDING THE PROTOCOLS FOR ATTENDING ZION IN PERSON

(Council Met on Monday, June 14, 2021)

- **MASKS**—For now, Council has decided to err on the side of caution and ask that everyone continue to wear masks while inside our church. Many at Zion have strong opinions on both sides of this issue, and it would be beneficial to include more people in the discussion. The Task Force for Return to In-person Worship needs you to attend the next meeting on Tuesday, July 6th at 7:00 PM on Zoom to join in the conversation and also to look at the results of the recent relaxing of mask rules in NYS. Please ask Mark Thompson to email you the Zoom information. Council will meet again on July 12th to reexamine its decision in light of the research and sharing of all of our thoughts.
- **SOCIAL DISTANCING**—Please remember to stay six feet apart because social distancing is the key to staying safe from COVID-19.
- **GREETERS**—when you arrive, greeters will continue to note that you are in attendance and will be sure that you use hand sanitizer before touching the railing and when you get to the Narthex. Greeters will not need to wear gloves but will use hand sanitizer often.

- **USHER DUTIES**—Ushers will not need to wear gloves, but will use hand sanitizer frequently as they hand out bulletins, lift the communion covers, and restock the communion trays. **They will continue to monitor people leaving the sanctuary one row at a time.**
- **PEACE**—people may greet one another with a sign of Christ’s peace, but there will be no handshaking, hugging, or other physical contact.
- **BARRIERS**—the transparent screens at the front of the sanctuary will be removed.
- **HYMNALS AND BIBLES**—will be returned to the racks in the pews.
- **SINGING**—for now we will continue to sing only 2 verses of each hymn. Fully vaccinated soloists may sing.
- **SERMONS**—we will continue to include sermons in the weekly mailings.
- **COMMUNION**—Packets of Communion elements will now be available for people worshipping at home either virtually or with The Service of the Word. Contact Sara in the office (315.732.4110) to arrange pickup or delivery of the packets.
- **NURSERY**—it will remain closed for now.
- **OFFERING**—we will continue to place our gifts of money in the offering plates that are in the back of the sanctuary.
- **FELLOWSHIP**—we will continue meeting in the Fellowship Hall where it is cooler in the summer. Cold beverages will be offered if we have volunteers to be responsible for set up and clean up.
- **IN-PERSON COMMITTEE MEETINGS**—committees may meet in the Fellowship Hall where it is cooler and there is better air circulation.

ARE YOU BEING CALLED TO...?

Rev. Eldon DeWeerth’s sermon gave several examples of people being called by God: David was called to live his life in service and praise as a shepherd and worshipper, Howard Taft was called to be a Supreme Court Justice, and young people like Malala Yousafzai and Greta Thunberg have been called to change our world. Many of us at Zion are not young and do not have the energy we used to have, but I am wondering if we can match some small needs to each of our unique gifts. Thank you for thinking about some of our needs:

- Join the Task Force
- Water the flowers in the flower boxes and in the Prayer Garden
- Volunteer to greet or usher
- You don’t have to wait to be asked- sign up to be a Worship Assistant one Sunday in the fall
- Linda Bennett has graciously volunteered to coordinate offering cold drinks in the Fellowship Hall after church, but we will need others to sign up for specific Sundays
- You are invited to join a group to plan joint activities with the people at Our Saviour and Trinity Herkimer
- Deliver Communion elements to people who cannot come to church

SPIRITUAL PRACTICE:

LOVING KINDNESS MEDITATION

(This was offered on our synod's website before Synod Assembly began)

The intention of the practice is to make space in your life to hold a variety of people to God. At the same time, the practice is intended to help you recognize the gift of lovingkindness.

Find a quiet place where you won't be interrupted. Take a few deep breaths and settle into the time and space.

First, hold in your mind's eye someone that you see on a regular basis, but don't know very well. You may not even know their name. Maybe it's a cashier at the grocery store or someone who walks their dog in your neighborhood. As you hold them to God, repeat these three phrases in your mind. Offer these thoughts as an intention for that person.

May you be healthy. May you know love. May you be at ease.

Next, hold in your mind's eye someone you love and care about deeply, As you hold them to God, repeat these three phrases in your mind. Offer these thoughts as an intention for that person.

May you be healthy. May you know love. May you be at ease.

Then, hold in your mind's eye someone you know who is sometimes hard to love, someone with whom you have disagreed with. You do not have to let go of that disagreement in order to see them as human and created by God, too. As you hold them to God, repeat these three phrases in your mind. Offer these thoughts as an intention for that person.

May you be healthy. May you know love. May you be at ease.

Finally, while still in this quiet place, take some time to focus on what your prayer is right now. With clear heart and mind, **lift your intentions for being part of creation to God.**

When ready, move into the next responsibility for your day.

May you be healthy, may you know love, and may you be at ease,
Laurel McCurdy, church council co-president

Zion Lutheran Church
New Hartford, NY
Pentecost 4



June 20, 2021

WELCOME

PRELUDE *Be Still, My Soul* by Jean Sibelius, arr. by Lee Evans -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: *Eternal Father, Strong to Save*, vs. 1 & 3 Hymn #756 -Kelli Watson

Vs. 1 Eternal Father, strong to save, whose arm has bound the restless wave, who bade the mighty ocean deep its own appointed limits keep: oh, hear us when we cry to thee for those in peril on the sea.

Vs. 3 O Holy Spirit, who didst brood upon the chaos dark and rude, and bid its angry tumult cease, and give, for wild confusion, peace: oh, hear us when we cry to thee for those in peril on the sea.

Prayer of the Day

O God of creation, eternal majesty, you preside over land and sea, sunshine and storm. By your strength pilot us, by your power preserve us, by your wisdom instruct us, and by your hand protect us, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

First Reading: Job 38:1-11

Second Reading: 2 Corinthians 6:1-3

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. Hal - le - lu - jah.

Gospel: Mark 4:35-41

The holy gospel according to Mark.

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

Sermon: *Fear Factor* -Pastor Janet Hoover

This is one of the most well-known of Jesus' miracle working stories. Crashing waves and a dark sky shattered by occasional bolts of lightning, a small ship on a large lake tossed helplessly about, panicked men clinging desperately to the side of the ship. From the earliest days, the sea was recognized as barely controlled chaos. When all was calm, it was a source of food and beauty and peace, but when the winds blew, well, the mysterious depths took on a life of their own. The disciples were fishermen—men of the water, well aware of the peril. Scripture doesn't record their reaction when, late in the day, Jesus told them to get in the boat and go across the lake. I suspect there was some mumbling and shaking of heads. After all, who would willingly take off after dark to sail across the waters? But Jesus speaks and the disciples follow, only to find themselves right in the heart of a storm. The disciples are afraid, justifiably afraid. They try with everything they can think of to protect themselves from the maelstrom, but their strength is soon exhausted, and in the face of possible destruction, the disciples do what most of us do when there is a big problem—they look for someone to blame. And there, sound asleep, is Jesus. How dare he be so calm when they are so worried? After all, this midnight excursion was all his idea. Why did he set sail at night? Why didn't he check with the weather service? And, above all, how dare he be so calm when they are so worried? The least he can do is share their fear. They allow their fears to overwhelm them. They allow their fears to drown out the love of Jesus. They need some sign from him that he still cares. They need it now. And they are not shy about letting him know. They give voice to their panic: We're going to die! Wake up! Do something! Don't you care? Slowly Jesus rises and turns to the sea. Be still, he says, calm down. Then even as the waters still and the winds hush, Jesus turns to the disciples: Don't you get it? Have some faith. It's easy for us to criticize these men. To shake our heads in disbelief at their blindness. And yet, this story was not recorded so that we could rejoice in our own superiority, our understanding, our great faith. It is here to help us grapple with our own doubts and struggles. If ever there was a story in the New Testament that is our story, it is this story of Jesus in the boat with us. For the storms rage all around us, and they are frightening and fearsome. Winds gather around us. All those things which we fear most—the fear of failure, of rejection, of change, of commitment, the fear of the future. And the fear which underlies all others—the fear of death and dying. There are the cold bleak winds of sorrow, grief, and worry. Friends move away or we must leave them, relationships change, and, where there was once intimacy and trust, there is now distance. We are also surrounded by the turbulence of political scandals, economic reversals, and natural disasters. Violence—not just in the Middle East and places “over there,” but in the streets of our cities and towns. And then the tsunami that hit us with Covid. We would like to think that, as we follow Jesus, we will know only success and happiness. But the reality is that Jesus' faithful followers know sorrow and loss, anguish, and pain. Having Jesus in the boat with us doesn't guarantee a storm-less existence. It's one thing to embark on the adventure of discipleship; it is another to continue to hang on when the boat rocks and the waves come crashing in. All too often, we confess Jesus as Lord, listen to his teachings, and then try to protect ourselves. Through defenses of education and investments, through technology and hard work, we seek to control the storms. And yet, the winds that come are powerful and they wear us down. All too often, we focus so intently on the danger that we miss the calming, ever-present love of Christ. As the apostle Paul writes: Whether we live or die, we are the Lord's. Ultimately, the storms have no real power. We can focus on the dangers and perils around us, or we can face the storm with heads held high, confident in God's love. While the storms rage around us, we are in the boat with Christ. God may not shield us from the wind and waves, but God is with us in the midst of them. I believe in that, with all my heart and soul. I have staked my life on that promise, but I also know that, when the storms come, it is easy to slip into despair and panic. In fact, sometimes it is our faith and commitment to God that takes us right into chaos. The closer we are to Jesus, the more we have to confront the storms of persecution and hatred. The closer we are to Jesus, the more real the cross becomes. In the Bible, God is always asking people to go somewhere, to do something new. To begin work for which they feel unprepared and unqualified. And, as they move forward, a lot of the time problems arise. Seldom is there a smooth and easy flow into the next stage of the journey. We would like to think Jesus keeps us out of the storm. We'd like to think that, as Christians—as we live close to Jesus—we would be immune from circumstances that batter and threaten. Or at least we wouldn't have to face as many. But most of us know that isn't the reality. We cry out for reassurance, for some sense that, even in the confusion of life, we aren't alone. God knows that, so over and over God is at work to show us how much we are loved. Through scripture and music, through people reaching out and the beauty of creation, God says over and over and over: You are my beloved people. I love you. Trust me.

Sometimes that trust is put to the test. Several years ago, a friend invited me to go white water rafting with her. Now, to many of you, this may not sound like a big deal. For many, white-water rafting is a fun family outing. But I entered the experience with some fear and trembling. I like the water, but am happier observing it from the deck of a cruise ship. Yet I knew that it was important to try new things and to trust God in that newness. And, my friend assured me that she had never gotten wet when she didn't want to. So, I said yes. Driving up to the Black River, I was torn between terror and exhilaration, which shifted toward the terror end when I listened to those gathering rejoice in the fact that recent rainfall had raised the water level so the rapids would be even more exciting! But before I could turn and run, I was life-jacketed and helmeted, handed a paddle, and settled into one of several rafts. My anxieties faded as the beauty of the day and the surroundings worked their way into my consciousness. The sun was shining, the breeze was cool. People around me were laughing. Each one of the rapids got my adrenaline racing—but it felt good. Until we got to “The Cruncher.” Since this was a category 5, we paused a moment for instructions on how to move through it—the guide warned us that, if we ended up in the water, not to let our legs dangle, as we might batter them against a rock, and, if we “went swimming,” to head toward the left, as on the right were a series of underwater caves into which we did not want to be swept. And then we took off. As we hit the swirling water, he hollered directions which I followed exactly—tucking my paddle in, grabbing hold of the cord on the side of the raft, and ducking my head. I can still feel the force of the water, forcing my fingers one by one off the cord before I spilled into the churning water. I couldn't believe it. I had trusted God—taken a risk—and now I was being tossed helplessly about. I knew to avoid the dangerous caves, but I didn't know up from down, and I didn't know right from left. I truly felt that I might drown. Helpless, out of control, all I could do was pray to God to keep me free from pain and to let the end come quickly. Even as I was gasping for breath, however, I began to relax and feel fear slip away to be replaced by a sense of calm. And then I heard from somewhere up above a voice...I sometimes imagine what that moment of entry into God's glory will be like. I've imagined many scenarios, one of which is to hear the voice of God calling: You're home. Well done, good and faithful servant. Come in and rest.

But what I heard was a deep and strong and commanding voice saying: Swim hard. Swim Hard. Not exactly what I wanted to hear, but as I focused on the voice and oriented myself toward it, I found myself shifting from the maelstrom into a more gently flowing current. When I could open my eyes, I saw that the voice was coming from one of the kayaking guides, who then instructed me to grab hold and he moved me toward the shore.

There was no miraculous stilling of the waters, but this was every bit as wondrous to me as what the disciples must have experienced, for I learned a lot about myself and about God. I learned that, even when forces beyond my control knock me around, that it is possible to find the peace of Christ. I learned that, even when life tosses us into situations for which we are unprepared, God gives us what we need. I learned that, we can become so frightened we can totally forget that we are wearing a life jacket and are surrounded by guides and fellow travelers ready to lend a hand. Back to Mark. Did you notice what happened in the story? At the beginning, the disciples are terrified by the storms outside. At the end, they are in awe and fear of Christ, whom even the wind and waves obey. Maybe that is where we are. Sometimes living in fear and apprehension about the storms that are raging outside, which can change our lives and destroy all that we have built to protect ourselves, sometimes afraid of what may happen if Jesus moves powerfully and redemptively into our midst. For then we will be changed. The storms out there—Christ in here. Neither will leave us where we were. To choose Christ means that we may, from time to time, have to swim hard, but it is also good to know that, no matter what happens, there is nothing—no power, no storm, nothing that can pull us from his arms. In that is our confidence and hope. Thanks be to God.

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.

Prayers of Intercession

Let us come before the triune God in prayer.

You are close to the brokenhearted and near to those in distress. We pray for those who are experiencing oppression. Liberate us from the systems and chains that bind us. Remove the barriers that separate us from one another. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

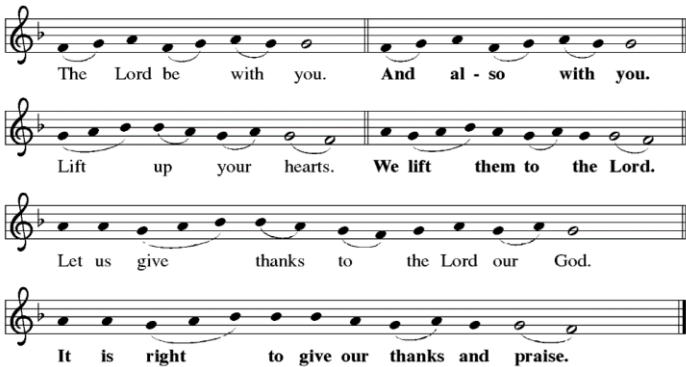
You dwell with us in this faith community. We pray for our leaders and elders. Grant them knowledge, patience, and kindness, that through their leadership you may be exalted in this assembly. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Your love endures in all situations. On this Father's Day, we pray for those who are fathers or wish to be fathers, for those with broken or strained relationships, for those who are missing their fathers, and for fathers who have lost children. Bless and strengthen them. Lord, 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, Gail, Pr. Roger, healing for Carole, Patsy, Claudia & Fran, Edie Marie, Ed and family, prayers for Michael Gilleece and family, and Theresa, that the light of Christ may shine upon them with hope. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

We lift our prayers to you, O God, trusting in your abiding grace. **Amen.**

THE GREAT THANKSGIVING DIALOGUE

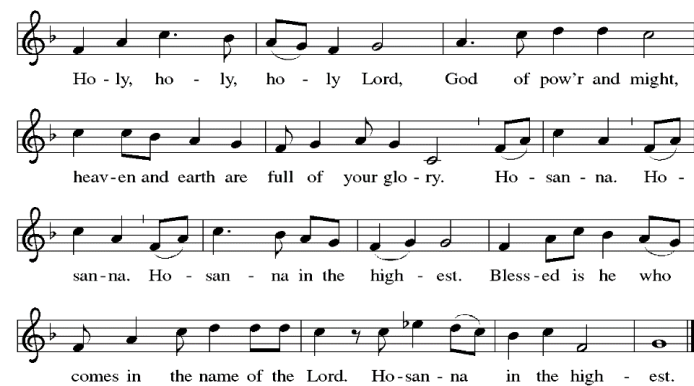


The Lord be with you. And al - so with you.
Lift up your hearts. We lift them to the Lord.
Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
It is right to give our thanks and praise.

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 *My Life Flows on in Endless Song, vs 1 & 4* Hymn #763 -Kelli Watson

Vs. 1 My life flows on in endless song; above earth's lamentation, I catch the sweet, though far-off hymn that hails a new creation. No storm can shake my in-most calm while to that Rock, I'm clinging. Since Christ is Lord of heaven and earth, how can I keep from singing?

Vs. 4 The peace of Christ makes fresh my heart, a fountain ever springing! All things are mine since I am his! How can I keep from singing? No storm can shake my in-most calm while to that Rock I'm clinging. Since Christ is Lord of heaven and earth, how can I keep from singing?

Dismissal

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

Postlude: *Chorus of Praise*, by Joseph Barnby, arr. by Stewart Landon -Kelli Watson

Attention parents & guardians with graduating students: Please send us your well wishes & photos of the graduate in your life so that we can recognize them in our upcoming newsletters! It has been a difficult year, so if you wish to acknowledge a child, whatever the grade level, please email your requests to Sara at office@zionluth.com. Thank you!



Happy Father's Day!!



Father's Day Prayer

THINKING OF YOU ON FATHER'S DAY,
AND OFFERING A *prayer*
THAT GOD
WILL KEEP YOU ALWAYS,
IN THE *shelter* OF HIS CARE—
MAY HE GUIDE YOU IN YOUR DAILY WORK,
BLESS EVERYTHING YOU DO
AND GRANT YOU ALL THOSE *special* JOYS
THAT MEAN THE MOST TO YOU.