

Welcome to Zion Lutheran Church's Online or At Home Worship!

To attend our weekly Sunday service via Zoom, please use the following link each week:
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84354840714?pwd=TDJGTkwwSTBER2lNb1o1Qzd6WGxDdz09> , Meeting
ID: 843 5484 0714, Password: 022654.

Or to join the meeting by PHONE, +16465588656, 84354840714#, 1#, Password: 022654#.

Our service is also available for viewing on Zion's YouTube channel:
<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCWzOtfCe2z7bIPvxp62lA>

**Please remain on the Zoom call after today's service and join us for the
2022 Annual Congregational Meeting.**

**If you are reading this from home and would like to attend, you can do so
by using any phone and calling the number from the Zoom link above.**

Announcements

Women of Faith: Sunday, March 27, 2022, 12:00noon- Faith, Sexism and Justice, A Call to Action. Women from the three area Lutheran congregations will gather in person at Zion for a brown bag lunch and program around the ELCA social statement, Faith, Sexism and Justice, A Call to Action, adopted at the 2019 ELCA Churchwide Assembly. Rev. Anita Mohr will facilitate our discussion on this social statement that relies on the Gospel promise of abundance, justice, and new creation in Christ to name the ways the sins of patriarchy and sexism harm all people, particularly women and girls, whatever their age or racial or gender identify. Watch for more information in the March newsletter.

Newsletters: Monthly newsletters will continue to go out on or around the last Friday of the month. As of now, we are still combining our weekly online/snail mail bulletin with the monthly newsletter. Those of you who either are, or previously were, receiving the bulletin via snail mail, will get their newsletter mailed. All others will receive theirs via email. If you no longer need to be on our snail mail list, please let Sara know. Thank you!

Zion Lutheran Church
7 Epiphany



February 20, 2022

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

Blessed be the Holy Trinity, one God, who creates us, redeems us, and calls us by name. **Amen.**

Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another. Most merciful God, we **confess that we have sinned against you and your beloved children. We have turned our faces away from your glory when it did not appear as we expected. We have rejected your word when it made us confront ourselves. We have failed to show hospitality to those you called us to welcome. Accept our repentance for the things we have done and the things we have left undone. For the sake of Jesus Christ, have mercy on us. Forgive us and lead us, that we may bathe in the glory of your Son born among us, and reflect your love for all creation. Amen.**

Rejoice in this good news: In Christ Jesus, your sins are forgiven. You are descendants of the Most High, adopted into the household of Christ, and inheritors of eternal life. Live as freed and forgiven children of God. **Amen.**

Opening Hymn: *Lord of Glory, You Have Bought Us, vs. 1 & 4 Hymn #707 –Kelli Watson*

Vs. 1 Lord of glory, you have bought us with your life blood as the price, never grudging for the lost ones that tremendous sacrifice; and with that have freely given blessings countless as the sand to the unthankful and the evil with your own unsparing hand.

Vs. 4 Lord of glory, you have bought us with your life blood as the price, never grudging for the lost ones that tremendous sacrifice. Give us faith to trust you boldly, hope, to stay our souls on you: but, oh, best of all your graces, with your love our love renew.

Greeting and Prayer of the Day

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

And also with you.

Let us pray. O Lord Jesus, make us instruments of your peace, that where there is hatred, we may sow love, where there is injury, pardon, and where there is despair, hope. Grant, O divine master, that we may seek to console, to understand, and to love in your name, for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

First Reading: *Genesis 45:3-11, 15*

Psalm 37:1-11, 39-40 (*read responsively by whole verse*)

Do not be provoked by evildoers; do not be jealous of those who do wrong.

For they shall soon wither like the grass, and like the green grass fade away.

Put your trust in the Lord and do good; dwell in the land and find safe pasture.

Take delight in the Lord, who shall give you your heart's desire.

Commit your way to the Lord; put your trust in the Lord, and see what God will do.

The Lord will make your vindication as clear as the light and the justice of your case like the noonday sun.

Be still before the Lord and wait patiently. Do not be provoked by the one who prospers, the one who succeeds in evil schemes.

Refrain from anger, leave rage alone; do not be provoked; it leads only to evil.

For evildoers shall be cut off, but those who hope in the Lord shall possess the land.

In a little while the wicked shall be no more; even if you search out their place, they will not be there.

But the lowly shall possess the land; they will delight in abundance of peace.

But the deliverance of the righteous comes from you, O Lord; you are their stronghold in time of trouble. You, O Lord, will help them and rescue them; you will rescue them from the wicked and deliver them, because in you they seek refuge.

Second Reading: *1 Corinthians 15:35-38, 42-50*

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Halle, Halle, Hallelujah



Gospel: *Luke 6:27-38*

The holy gospel according to Luke. **Glory to you, O Lord.**

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

Sermon: *-Pastor Rick Klafehn*

For a second week in a row, we say, really, Jesus? Really? It's hard enough to be civil to my enemies, how in the world can we love them? Is Jesus just saying this, so we confess we are sinners and need God's help and forgiveness? Is Jesus just a pie-in-the-sky idealist, a dreamer? Does he not understand this world where hate and evil rule, where abuse and violence can occur even in the most intimate relationships, where guns and tanks and walls and missiles seem more necessary every day?

It is so easy to be cynical or dismissive of Jesus. His words just do not seem practical, realistic, or safe – on the global scale or in our own personal relationships. We tend to think of love as an emotion, a feeling. A more accurate translation of the Greek may be love as an action, something one does, as the next phrase says, do good to those who hate you. Jesus is not asking us to have warm, fuzzy feelings towards our enemies; hug or shake hands with them; like them; or approve of their choices and actions. He does not expect us to keep living with those who harm us, abuse us, or hurt us. Jesus is not even telling us to talk to them!

We cannot control or change what other people do or say or think, especially those who don't like us or who oppose us. We are responsible only for ourselves. And we don't have to let others control our actions, provoke us into hurtful, revengeful responses of retaliation for what they have done to us.

Jesus calls us instead to respond as children of God: do good to those who hate us, bless them not curse them, pray for those who abuse and hurt us. We don't have to be doormats and accept hurtful words or abusive and bully behavior. We don't have to suffer in silence. We *can* speak up and protect ourselves, so we no longer are hurt or abused, treated unfairly, or taken advantage of, but we don't have to seek to harm them in return, return violence for violence, or get revenge and retaliate. Jesus calls us to act with self-control, and to treat them better than the way they treat you. To love our neighbors, even our enemies, means to care for them the way we care for ourselves. *"Do to others as you would have them do to you."*

Today's first lesson is the story of Joseph's emotional reunion with his brothers. Joseph's whole story is worth reading. His brothers intended to kill him, but sold him instead into slavery. They lied and told their father he died. In Egypt Joseph was falsely accused of rape and spent years in prison, until Joseph helped the Egyptian pharaoh understand a dream that warned of widespread and devastating famine. The Pharaoh made Joseph the second most powerful person in Egypt. During the famine his brothers journeyed to Egypt and sought Joseph's help, unaware he was their brother. Joseph had justification, opportunity, and power to wreak revenge on his brothers for all the evil they did to him. For a little while Joseph made their lives miserable, but in the end choose to work reconciliation and brought their families to Egypt to live.

Our angry, polarized, distrusting world need lots of healing and reconciliation. What can we learn here about reconciliation?

First, reconciliation is God's will and possible under the right conditions, even after a long time. God rescued Joseph, put him in a safe place, and raised him to new life, second in command in Egypt. When we are safe and protected

from harm, because that also is God's will, and when there is genuine mutual desire between injured parties, there can be reconciliation. We don't have to let our relationships be bound forever by the past.

Second, reconciliation requires facing and telling the truth, no matter how difficult or painful it may be. Joseph discloses and reminds his brothers the wrong they did to him. He tells the truth about their hurtful behavior. He also is honest about the present. The situation is dire. The drought and the famine will not soon end.

When relationships are damaged or broken, there can never be healing or moving forward, until one deals with the truth, and the wounds of the past and their effects on the present and the future are openly and honestly faced. Wounds leave forever scars (even the risen Jesus in his new body still bears scars from his wounds). Yet we do not have to hold each other captive to past hurts, to anger, to resentment, and to desires for revenge and misfortune on those who hurt us. Reconciliation never means relationships resume the way they were before. Reconciliation means we free ourselves and one another for a new relationship in God's new future.

This also is true if we want reconciliation in our own country, anger and polarization to end, and reconciliation among the nations. We must courageously face the truth, even when it makes us uncomfortable and hurts, just like Archbishop Desmond Tutu's Truth and Reconciliation Commission helped South Africa face the evils of racism and apartheid, and bring restorative justice and healing to their land.

Third, just as Jesus says that love is more than a feeling and involves real deeds, so also reconciliation requires not just words, but tangible and real actions to make things right again. Joseph sent his brothers to get their father. He arranged for his whole family to live in Egypt so they would not fall into hunger and poverty. His brothers followed through. Reconciliation happens when all the parties do their part to build a new relationship.

Fourth, Joseph was faithful to God and found God to be present in his life, even behind the scenes, working all things together for good for those who love God, even the evil, hurtful, and unfair things his brothers and others did to him.

And that is God's promise in Jesus, innocent of all wrong, who sought only the good of others, but falsely convicted of crime and executed on a cross. God raised him from the dead three days later, and Jesus rose with reconciling words of forgiveness and peace, first for his disciples and followers, and then for you and me and all the world through them.

Reconciliation is a gift of the Holy Spirit, in God's time, and in God's way, if not in this lifetime, then when Christ comes again in glory to make all things new, and in heaven. Reconciliation is God's gift and promise, planted in us by faith in Jesus, that we may bear fruit, love even our enemies, and to do good to those who hate us. Christ's reconciling spirit will make all things again new. He promises new life and resurrection. Amen.

ANTHEM: Be Not Afraid, by Bob Dufford -Kelli Watson

APOSTLES' CREED, (Please stand, if able.)

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

The Spirit of the Lord is poured out upon us in abundance; so we are bold to pray for the church, the world, and all that God has made.

You teach us to love our neighbors and enemies alike. Encourage your church to follow the leading of your love, especially when it is risky or difficult. Help us to show mercy just as we have first received mercy. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

Your people cry out for mercy. Console hearts that long for forgiveness. Mend broken relationships. Heal bodies that suffer chronic pain or illness. Strengthen and deliver all whose spirits are troubled. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

You bind us together into one family. Teach us to forgive one another and to resolve conflicts with humility and patience. Bless families of all shapes and sizes, and show love to those who are lonely or grieving. God of grace, **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, Matt, Gail and Chuck, Sara, and Theresa, that the light of Christ may shine upon them with hope. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

Since we have such great hope in your promises, O God, we lift these and all of our prayers to you in confidence and faith; through Jesus Christ our Savior. **Amen.**

Thanksgiving for the Word

Praise and thanks to you, holy God, for by your Word you made all things: you spoke light into darkness, called forth beauty from chaos, and brought life into being. For your Word of life, O God, **we give you thanks and praise.**

By your Word you called your people Israel to tell of your wonderful gifts: freedom from captivity, water on the desert journey, a pathway home from exile, wisdom for life with you. For your Word of life, O God, **we give you thanks and praise.**

Through Jesus, your Word made flesh, you speak to us and call us to witness: forgiveness through the cross, life to those entombed by death, the way of your self-giving love. For your Word of life, O God, **we give you thanks and praise.**

Send your Spirit of truth, O God; rekindle your gifts within us: renew our faith, increase our hope, and deepen our love, for the sake of a world in need. Faithful to your Word, O God, draw near to all who call on you; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit, be honor and glory forever. **Amen.**

The Lord's Prayer:

Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us.

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.

SENDING

Blessing

God, who leads you in pathways of righteousness, who rejoices over you, and who calls you by name, bless your going out and your coming in, today and forever. **Amen.**

Sending Song: *God, When Human Bonds are Broken, vs. 1 & 5 Hymn#603 -Kelli Watson*

Vs. 1 God, when human bonds are broken and we lack the love or skill to restore the hope of healing, give us grace and make us still.

Vs. 5 Give us faith to be more faithful, give us hope to be more true, give us love to go on learning: God, encourage and renew!

Dismissal

Go with Christ into a weary world. Share the good news. **Thanks be to God.**

**Thank you for “Zooming with us”!
If you are reading this from home, thank you for doing so!**

Please enjoy a little belated Valentine humor courtesy of the ELCA 😊

Pentecost is red,
Advent is blue.
Liturgical colors
look great on you.



Roses are red,
Reformation is too.
I've got 95 reasons
to fall for you.



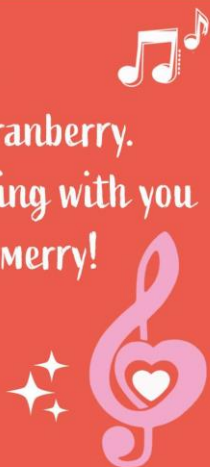
Roses are red,
church has a steeple.
I count you among
my favorite people!



Roses are red,
church is on Zoom.
Join me for coffee
in a breakout room?



Roses are red,
hymnals are cranberry.
When I'm singing with you
my heart is so merry!



Roses are red,
violets are blue,
lilies are white,
(... was I supposed to
order altar flowers?...)

Anyways, I love you so much.

