

7 Pentecost  
Leadership Letter for the Week of July 5th-11th

To Our Zion Family,

On July 4th, Pastor Anita and the Our Saviour congregation welcomed members of our Zion congregation to join them in Sunday worship as we had no supply pastor to lead worship at Zion. Eleven members of our Zion congregation joined the worship service in the beautiful Our Saviour sanctuary, with another eleven Zion households worshipping by Zoom. We appreciate the warm welcome extended by the Our Saviour congregation. It was my first time in the Our Saviour sanctuary—what a wonderful place for worship! We welcome the opportunity to join the Our Saviour congregation again at their worship on Aug. 1st and Aug. 29th. We have been looking for opportunities to connect with both the Our Saviour and Trinity, Herkimer congregations. This combined congregation worship service is a wonderful way to start and further our relationship building with local Lutheran churches!

Updates and announcements:

Upcoming Worship Services

Sunday Worship at 10:00 AM for July 11th, 18th, and 25th is offered in-person at Zion, along with remotely via Zoom, livestreamed via YouTube, on our Facebook page, and the written Service of the Word, included later in this leadership letter..

To join the service via Zoom, use the following link:

<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>

Facebook- the recorded service can be viewed at any time during the week on Zion’s Facebook page, which is found at Zion Lutheran Church, New Hartford, NY.

Other Announcements and Updates

The Task Force (TF) for In-person Worship, along with members of the church council, met with members of the Zion congregation via Zoom on July 6th to hear feedback about the current COVID safety procedures, including the requirement for face coverings while in our building and at the Sunday service. 18 Zion members attended to express their opinions. After the Zoom meeting, the TF continued to meet separately and prepared recommendations for the church council to consider at their next meeting.

The next church council meeting will take place on July 12th. Agenda items will include a review of the TF recommendations for COVID restrictions at Sunday morning worship, consideration of a proposal for the purchase of equipment to meet current and future technology needs (e.g.—Zooming from the balcony rather than from the front of the church), and issues related to a current tenant in the parsonage.

The YMCA began their summer program in the Fellowship Hall. The program has 42 children enrolled. The summer program will run through the first week of September.

Members of the Zion, Our Saviour, and Trinity, Herkimer congregations will be meeting to discuss ways in which our three congregations might make more regular connections and potentially join in projects and initiatives that would help further the missions of all three Lutheran congregations. Laurel McCurdy and Fran Holzberger are representing Zion during these initial meetings. If you have interest in joining Laurel and Fran for these conversations or have ideas, please contact Laurel (lemccurdy@gmail.com).

I appreciated Pastor Anita's sermon this past Sunday, July 4th. She reminded us that our God is not only the God looking down lovingly on the United States, but also on all nations on earth. "For God so loved the world that he sent his only begotten son..." (John 3:16). The second verse of the sending song, We All Are One In Mission, can help us think about our personal "mission statements" as Christians, citizens of not only the United States, but also the world: "We all are called for service, to witness in God's name. Our ministries are different, our purpose is the same, to touch the lives of others with God's surprising grace, so every folk and nation may feel God's warm embrace." Let us work for peace and justice for people in our local community and beyond. As we are so often reminded, God's work, our hands.

Wishing you peace and good health,

Mark Thompson, church council co-president

Zion Lutheran Church  
New Hartford, NY  
7 Pentecost



July 11, 2021

**WELCOME**

**PRELUDE:** *Morning Song*, by Chester Norman -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:** *Just a Closer Walk with Thee* vs. 1 & 3 Hymn #697 -Kelli Watson

**Vs. 1** (Refrain: *Just a closer walk with thee, grant it, Jesus, is my please; daily walking close to thee, let it be, dear Lord, let it be.*) I am weak but thou are strong: Jesus, keep me from all wrong; I'll be satisfied as long as I walk, let me walk close to thee. Repeat Refrain.

**Vs. 3** (Refrain: *Just a closer walk with thee, grant it, Jesus, is my please; daily walking close to thee, let it be, dear Lord, let it be.*) When my feeble life is o'er, time for me will be no more; guide me gently, safely o'er to thy kingdom shore, to thy shore. Repeat Refrain.

**Prayer of the Day**

O God, from you come all holy desires, all good counsels, and all just works. Give to us, your servants, that peace which the world cannot give, that our hearts may be set to obey your commandments; and also that we, being defended from the fear of our enemies, may live in peace and quietness, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

**First Reading:** Psalm 27

**Gospel:** John 15:9-17

The holy gospel according to John. **Glory to you, O Lord. The Gospel of the Lord. Praise to you, O Christ.**

**GOSPEL ACCLAMATION**

Halle, Halle, Hallelujah



**Second Reading:** Philippians 1:1-26

**Sermon:** *-Pastor Janet Hoover*

One of my personal goals for 2021 is to immerse myself in Paul's letter to the Philippians...a fairly short letter which is written during stressful times and yet radiates joy. A text for these strange and troubling times. And so, for the next few weeks I'll be taking you along with me as we detour a bit from the lectionary and explore Paul's words to the church in Philippi and to us. Paul—follower of Christ, apostle to the Gentiles, preacher, missionary. Paul's writings—preserved in Scripture—have shaped Christian understandings of discipleship and faith for generations. Paul angers some, confuses others. He challenges and provokes, comforts and encourages. Paul is one of the most fascinating characters in our family tree. And Philippians is one of his most amazing letters, written while he is in jail. Yet, despite his own personal hardships and sufferings, it is alive with joy and praise. But before we talk about his letter, let's go back a few steps and see what has brought Paul to this place. Paul has been an active proclaimer of the gospel...missionary of Jesus Christ to Jews and Gentiles alike. He has logged hundreds of miles and scattered seeds of grace and hope, trusting that God will make something of his efforts. He had seen much of the world, but he had not yet been to Rome and, before he died, he longed to go there, to meet brothers and sisters in faith and share his gospel message with them. But, before he could get there, events began spiraling out of his control, and it appeared that his door to Rome was firmly closed. He was falsely accused of desecrating the temple in Jerusalem and nearly beaten to death before Roman soldiers from the local garrison intervened. The garrison commander wasn't sure what to do with him, so he promptly sent him—in chains—to Felix, the governor of Caesarea. Felix was also puzzled, but his solution was to do nothing, so Paul's case was left dangling for two years, meaning Paul remained imprisoned until Felix was replaced by Porcius Festus. Festus, too, was unwilling to make a decision and tried to send Paul back to Jerusalem to be tried there. Paul, however, could outstubborn even Roman might. Demanding his rights as a Roman citizen, he insisted on appealing his case before Caesar himself. Several months and a shipwreck later, Paul arrived in Rome—not in triumph as he had hoped, but as a prisoner. For two more years he lived under house arrest—awaiting his day in court. It was during this time of false accusations, unlawful arrest, and unfair imprisonment, that Paul sent this letter to the church in Philippi. He begins by acknowledging his love and appreciation for them. Read Philippians 1:1-11. These words let us know how close Paul and these people were, and his arrest frightened and worried them. They worry about Paul. They worry about their own safety. And they worry about the possibility that the gospel itself could be destroyed. Paul writes to reassure them, to comfort and to challenge them to keep on sharing Christ's good news. Read Philippians 1:12-26 - Paul begins his reassurance by letting the Philippians know that, as far as he is concerned, his imprisonment is not simply the result of his proclamation; instead his imprisonment is a means of proclamation. His life in chains has actually brought the good news to people who might otherwise never have heard it—Roman soldiers and officials who watched and listened to everything Paul said and did. Paul might be in bonds, but the gospel is not. Instead, Paul's words of confident hope, his attitude of joyful trust—begin to influence all around him, and the gospel begins to spread. Paul has also heard stories about the courage of his fellow Christians who, inspired by Paul's courage and faith, themselves begin speaking out and working as missionaries to others. Don't you see, Paul trumpets, the gospel is advancing among unbelieving guards and Roman officials. It is advancing through the new courage of the church and, even though there are those whose motives are less than pure, at least they are bringing the light of Jesus Christ into all the dark places of the world. Paul's message to the Philippians is also a message for us, for we are no strangers to suffering. A common mindset is that those who trust in Jesus Christ are exempt from suffering. Paul reminds us that, in fact, wherever there is suffering—there Christ is. To be a disciple of Jesus Christ is to remember that, wherever we are, we can serve God. Whatever happens to us can be used to witness to the steadfast love of God. What really matters is this: Christ is being proclaimed...from pulpits and prison cells, in comfortable sanctuaries and homeless shelters, through Facebook and Zoom. The mission of the church is to be messengers of joy, even when it appears that our cause is hopeless. Marj Carpenter—former moderator of the PCUSA—traveled the world on behalf of the church and was a strong advocate for mission work, even in the face of resistance and a chorus of: Now is not a good time to give to missions. Three stories from this remarkable woman—and her observations of what it means to spread the good news in spite of trouble and suffering. What it means to witness with words and deeds, even in the face of impossible odds. What it means to be the church. In 1989, she was invited to join Christians in Cameroon who were celebrating their 125th anniversary. She writes: On Sunday, there were so many people that they had to hold the celebration outside. They put the communion table outside of the church, and 40,000 Cameroon Presbyterians sat up on the hillside. Eight choirs sang and they rattled things and played drums and danced. Finally, it got quiet and there was just a single drum with a single beat in the background. I looked up to see what was happening, and I saw a long line of Cameroon preachers processing in one by one, singing "The Church's One Foundation is Jesus Christ Our Lord." As I flew back home, she says, I took a pencil and I subtracted 125 from 1989...and I got 1864. I thought...no way could we have started a mission field in 1864. Talk about a time that wasn't a good time—that's when Presbyterians were killing Presbyterians and Lutherans were killing Lutherans and brothers were killing brothers in our country. It was the worst time in the history of our land. So when I got back home, I looked up the minutes of the General Assembly of 1864 and I read this: The world is watching us in our travail to see if

we're serious about the global mission and the Great Commission. And three missionaries were named to go to Cameroon. Then Marj writes: I sat there quietly for a long time and finally pulled down the minutes of the Presbyterian Church of the Confederacy. Under "Foreign Missions Report" it said: Our backs are to the wall and our homes are being burned and our churches destroyed, but we must send another missionary to Brazil. And it named that missionary. In the worst of times, courage and joy prevailed, and the gospel was preached, and lives were changed, and the church continues. The second story tells that, in the early years of the 20th century, Presbyterians spent millions of dollars sending missionaries to China...but by the 1930's—after many missionaries were arrested and some killed, those who could be saved were brought home. The church wept and wailed and, as Marj says: We gnashed our teeth about all the money we had wasted in China. And we didn't just weep and wail that year, we wept and wailed every year. Every time it would come up that we needed money for anything, somebody would eventually get up in a meeting and say, "Oh, if we just hadn't wasted all that money in China. We spent millions of dollars and now the church is gone. But the church was never gone—decades later on the very first Sunday it was able to "go public," there were 16,000 baptisms...16,000 baptisms and at least a half million Christians who had never given up. Marj was in China soon after this and says: We were in Shanghai in a former Methodist Church. There were 4,000 people there that day. The communists had knocked out all the stained glass, but there's something very powerful about a hole in the wall that is shaped like a cross. The people in that church were singing. They didn't have hymnals, but they were singing hymns mission workers had taught them. The church had been silenced for decades, yet they remembered the words to the hymns...and we didn't, Marj says. They were singing "In the Sweet By and By." It had been so long since we had sung that hymn that we couldn't remember the words. I told the two preachers on either side of me, "We've got to sing anyway. Just make up words and sing anything. They won't know." Nobody cared...but I always thought they picked the next hymn especially for us: "Hallelujah, Hallelujah, Hallelujah!" I guess they figured we could get through that one. In the worst of times, courage and joy prevailed—and the gospel was preached—and lives were changed—and the church continues. The third story took place in the 1990s, when Marj went with a contingent to Yugoslavia. A reformed Hungarian church just inside the border of Serbia had invited them to visit, but the state department, saying the war was too hot, refused to issue them visas. However, when they got to the border, one of Marj's Hungarian Christian friends said: Do you want to go to Serbia tonight? You mean you can get us visas? she asked. That's not exactly what I said, he replied...but the guards are Hungarian. I am Hungarian. We can get you over the border, and if you go straight to the village and back, you'll be fine. And so they decided to chance it. Marj writes: It was already getting dark, and as we crossed the border and drove toward the village, it got darker and darker. It was a cloudy and cold night. There were no stars out and no moon. There was also no electricity because it had been cut off in the war. It was one of the darkest places I've ever been in the world. We stopped at each intersection and looked down the road for the church steeple—supposedly the only one in town. An idiot ought to have been able to find that, but we had gone to almost the last intersection without seeing it. My friend said: Marj, if we don't find it, we have to go back. We can't drive around in a country in the dark and the cold in the middle of a war without visas. But when we got to that final intersection, people were standing out in the road holding small, lighted candles. I don't know how long they had been standing there. But I do know it was 5 degrees. We slept cold that night in a nearby church camp. They served us soup, and I asked one woman who spoke a little English: How long would you have waited for us in the road? She answered simply: Until you came. I had this horrible thought: What if we had not come? I could just see them out in that cold saying, "Look down the road and see if you see them coming. Light another candle. She also informed me that it was against the law to ring their church bells. I told her it was all right, but, in the morning as we walked right down the middle of the road to that church, somebody with courage began to ring that bell. And they rang that bell and rang that bell. They were saying to all the world: We are the church of Jesus Christ in the world. And I know this. As long as people have that kind of courage, the courage to stand out in the dark and the cold holding a small candle, as long as they have the strength to ring their bells, so we, too, must keep taking the gospel into all the world. Letting courage and joy prevail, preaching the gospel so that lives are changed, and the church continues. That's our job you know. Sharing God's love, proclaiming the amazing grace that surrounds us with words and songs, with actions of faithfulness and kindness, gentleness and mercy, offering light and love to a world starving for hope. Maltbie Babcock wrote the following—a poem which echoes Paul's call to courage. Be strong. We are not here to play or drift, we have work to do and loads to lift. Shun not the struggle—face it, 'tis God's gift.

Be strong. Say not, "The days are evil. Who's to blame?" And fold the hands and acquiesce—oh, shame. Stand up, speak out, and bravely, in God's name. Be strong. It matters not how deep entrenched the wrong, how hard the battle goes, the day how long; faint not—fight on. Tomorrow comes the song. Be strong. May the grace and peace of God and the Lord Jesus Christ be with you in your living and in your loving.

**ANTHEM:** *El Shaddai, Words and Music by Michael Card* -Kelli Watson

## Prayers of Intercession

Let us come before the triune God in prayer.

Awesome Creator, you steadfastly tend to the smallest of seeds and the mightiest of sycamore trees. Spring up green growth from the earth, nourish the growth of fruit, grain, and other crops, and bless the work of farmers and laborers. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

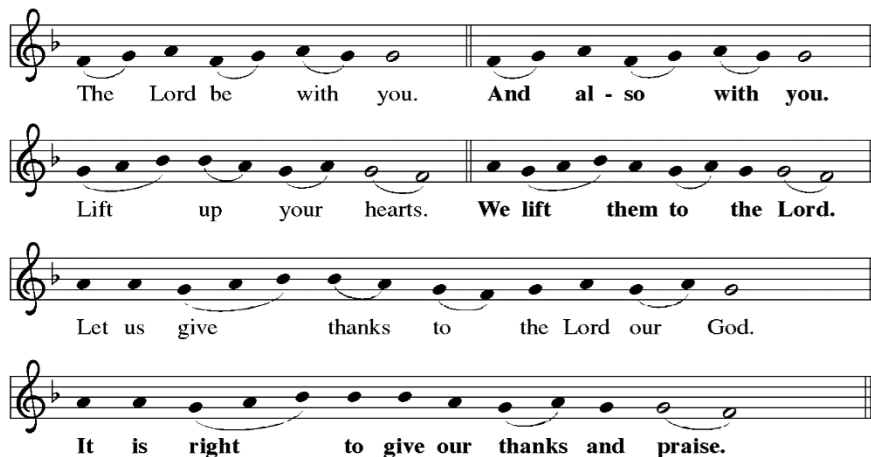
God of strength, you are near to those who endure difficulty. Comfort all who are survivors of violence, guard the refugee and the immigrant, and protect all those who are victims of prejudice and discrimination. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

God of love, we pray for this holy house and all those who worship here. We pray especially for those whose efforts behind the scenes often go unnoticed; for the Sexton, for our office staff, God's Housekeepers, and for all of our volunteers. 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, comfort for the family of Claudia Trad, 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. 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** *Faith of Our Fathers, vs. 1 & 3 Hymn #812 -Kelli Watson*

**Vs. 1** Faith of our fathers, living still in spite of dungeon, fire, and sword. Oh, how our hearts beat high with joy when-e'er we hear that glorious word. Faith of our fathers, holy faith, we will be true to you till death.

**Vs. 3** Faith of our fathers! We will love both friend and foe in all our strife; proclaim thee too, as love knows how, by saving word and faithful life. Faith of our fathers, holy faith, we will be true to you till death.

### **Dismissal**

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

**Postlude:** *March from "Athalia", Felix Mendelssohn, arr. by Lee Ellis -Kelli Watson*

## ***Announcements***

The 2021 Altar Flower chart is now in place on the bulletin board in the Narthex. Anyone interested in fresh altar flowers, please sign at the proper date on the calendar and call Sara or Gloria at 315-735-8077.

We would like to highlight in our summer newsletters the hard work that all of our children & young adults have been doing during these past 15 months of COVID. If you wish to share your child's efforts, please send in a picture (*optional*) and a note to Sara. We want to celebrate all the good news of our church family. Thank you!

## ***Notes of Gratitude***

Thank you to everyone who sent me a birthday greeting. It was really nice. And thank you to Laurel for the candy bar! -From Jayden

Thank you to everyone who sent me a graduation card for 8<sup>th</sup> Grade! And thank you to Laurel for the candy bar! And to Bob and Bonnie Loomis- that was a really nice card. -From Isabel

Thank you for the Birthday greetings! Thank you, Laurel, for the paper products, what a great idea! - From Sara



Thanks to everyone who helped garden at Zion!

