

## Pentecost 19 Leadership Letter October 11, 2020

The wonderful colors of fall continue to envelop our region of New York and I, for one, am grateful to Zion members for the advice on seeing the fall foliage and have been reveling in this beauty of God's creation.

Here are some announcements and updates:

-We are planning for the first in-person worship service at Zion for Sunday, Oct. 25th, barring any unforeseen issues that might arise (e.g.- a second surge of the COVID-19 virus). We will continue an option over Zoom simultaneously.

- Please join us for worship this Sunday at 10:00 AM. This Sunday's worship service on the Zoom platform continues for those with internet access via computer, tablet, smart phone, or through the livestream of YouTube. Those who choose to may call in to listen from their phone. You can also continue participating in Zion's virtual Sunday 10:00 AM worship service by utilizing the Service of the Word template provided later in this newsletter. Feel free to use the Service of the Word at any time if you aren't able to join us in spirit at 10:00 AM on Sunday.

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

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84354840714?pwd=TDJGTkwwSTBER2lNb1o1Qzd6WGxDdz09> 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-bIPvxp621A>.

-This week we are keeping the Imobersteg family in our prayers as they mourn the death of Robert Imobersteg (<https://www.legacy.com/obituaries/uticaod/obituary.aspx?pid=196895483>)

This past Sunday Rev. Janet Hoover shared a wonderful sermon about the parable of the absentee landlord. The story reveals God's persistence. "The miracle is that God keeps at it—never gives up trying to reach us, teach us, touch us, change us. It is October—a time of harvest. But this is not just a harvest parable, it is a story of Easter celebration. Shortly after Jesus tells this story he is put to death. But even that isn't the end of the story. The death of the son isn't the last word. Sometime between Good Friday and Sunday morning, God rewrote the ending." This week, let's find ways to be good tenants of God's vineyards by being persistent in showing love and care to our community as God has shown to us.

Peace,  
Kristen Burson and Mark Thompson  
Church Council co-presidents

### Special Thanks

Please convey our thanks to our church family for prayers, telephone calls and expressions of concern and love. Continue to keep Rusty in your prayers as she is still undergoing chemo treatment.

-Bill Pentland

Pentecost 19 – October 11, 2020



SERVICE OF THE WORD  
GATHERING

**WELCOME**

**CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS**

Blessed be the Holy Trinity, ☩ one God, who creates, redeems, and sustains us and all of creation. **Amen.**

Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.

Faithful God,

**Have mercy on us. We confess that we are captive to sin and cannot free ourselves. We turn from your loving embrace and go our own ways. We pass judgment on one another before examining ourselves. We place our own needs before those of our neighbors. We keep your gift of salvation to ourselves. Make us humble, cast away our transgressions, and turn us again to life in you through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.**

God hears the cries of all who call out in need, and through his death and resurrection, Christ has made us his own. Hear the truth that God proclaims: Your sins are forgiven in the name of ☩ Jesus Christ. Led by the Holy Spirit, live in freedom and newness to do God's work in the world. **Amen.**

**THANKSGIVING FOR BAPTISM**

Alleluia! Christ is risen. **Christ is risen indeed. Alleluia!**

Joined to Christ in the waters of baptism, we are raised with him to new life. Let us give thanks for the gift of baptism. We give you thanks, O God, for in the beginning you created us in your image and planted us in a well-watered garden. In the desert you promised pools of water for the parched, and you gave us water from the rock. When we did not know the way, you sent the Good Shepherd to lead us to still waters. At the cross, you watered us from Jesus' wounded side, and on this day, you shower us again with the water of life. We praise you for your salvation through water, for the water in this font, and for all water everywhere. Bathe us in your forgiveness, grace, and love. Satisfy the thirsty and give us the life only you can give. To you be given honor and praise through Jesus Christ our Lord in the unity of the Holy Spirit, now and forever. **Amen.**

**Opening Hymn:** *O Jesus, Joy of Loving Hearts* #658, Verses 1 & 4 –Mary Senn

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

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

**Prayer of the Day**

Lord of the feast, you have prepared a table before all peoples and poured out your life with abundance. Call us again to your banquet. Strengthen us by what is honorable, just, and pure, and transform us into a people of righteousness and peace, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

**THE WORD**

**First Reading:** Psalm 23

**Second Reading:** Philippians 4:1-9

**Sermon:** *Joy, Life Lived in Excess* –Pr. Eldon DeWeerth

I am joyful and pleased to be here again with the friends in Zion community. I know we are still only communicating on-line by pictures, yet we share the common need to gather, to worship together and to focus on God's words, and to pray - for our community, the needs of others, and our national world. Even in the absence of a pastor, all these things are important for all of us. I will also be back one more time in November.

After I looked at the texts for this Sunday, I felt drawn to two of the scripture readings. I felt called to focus on only those two today. These two are so inspiring to me. They gave me joy & hope even in the overwhelming impact of the pandemic on all of us; the resulting difficulties brought about in our nation by endemic racism; climate change; and the California fires; the tearing apart of our culture & society by divisive political turmoil. We are not forgetting actions which are tearing down our democracy. I found myself lifted again by the “Good News” of God’s Word that can fill us and leave us with joy, peace, and hope for Zion’s future. These two portions of the scripture are:

\* The great comforting and fortifying words of Psalm 23, associated with David -

\* The inspiring love letter of St. Paul to the Philippians with the moving insights he has about Jesus and His meaning for our situation.

This Sunday, we have the opportunity to focus on the deep fears, pain, suffering, and conflicts which face us, our nation, & the world. We need to turn to our God for care, hope, and loving support. We need to ask how we can turn our worry to joy. But can we?

Psalm 23 is referred to as a trust psalm. A trust psalm expresses faith and confidence in God amid great difficulties, threats, and dangers. This psalm has been used time and again. We turn to it in times of death. I am sure I have recited its words at the bedsides of the dying, in funeral/ memorial services. My guess is it has been used by nurses and caregivers thousands of times during the pandemic. These beautiful words are often in our common memories.

As we recall this psalm, we do trust our God who provides us with all that we need - in so many ways, whatever our age, we need nourishment and guidelines for our lives. God is there for us. We trust our Lord and Savior. Our lives are flooded with the benefits of grace and hope every day. We need goodness and mercy with friends and enemies. We must have a safe house in the pandemic. Our home is with our God. The deep love, care, support, and wisdom that we see in the 23rd Psalm are passed along to strengthen and guide the church and its members. Psalm 23’s foundation of trust is passed along to Paul and the young church in Philippi. One thousand years later, Paul writes a soaringly beautiful letter based on trust in Christ. He seeks to lift the spirits of the young congregation that he started and cares for. Now Paul sees that they are in trouble, but he is in prison facing a death penalty for preaching the gospel, he can’t be with them, so he writes. It is hard to see how his words can be so moving, joy filled, & caring in those circumstances.

One brief comment. I am using only a small part of the Book of Philippians. I encourage you to read the whole short book in whatever version you have. Paul’s general message is that he wants his readers to know Christ, to draw always on Christ’s resurrection, to know Christ’s suffering for them and to become more like Christ. It is interesting that Paul begins his message to the Philippians by sharing a long list of his credentials as an apostle of Christ. Yet what he wants them & us to see in him, is that Christ is the source of his joy, peace, & hope. He wants them & us to remember that we are baptized into Christ and called to fully know Christ’s resurrection, his suffering for us, and also, like Paul, reach to become more like Christ in our calling as disciples. Paul challenges us to not see our worth in achievement, our position as leaders or followers, or having the most things in life. He calls us to have the mind to think & act like Christ.

What Paul is discerning for the body of Christ the Church is to have a heart and trust in God, who is at work in every person and congregation. In this letter of hope and joy, Paul invites his readers to “complete my joy”. Be of the same mind in Christ, have the same Love in Christ. Our text today seems to point us to the discovery that these intentions are our source of joy. Yet Paul is not writing this on an especially good day. From prison, Paul tries to resolve a church fight. The old saying goes that no one ever wins a church Fight. Two women are fighting (I didn’t make it up - 2 women - Paul did). Two esteemed leaders in the congregation & colleagues of Paul are having differences. Paul does not want to settle it & identify the issues. He just says they need to resolve their differences - and asks them to “Be of the same mind in the Lord.” (These questions arise in all congregations - are there differences between people & mission? Does Zion have any unresolved differences during this vacancy?)

The text points out that the need for love and joy resides in all our souls and struggles to come out. Paul’s joy springs out of God’s gift in Jesus Christ and our desire to be filled with this same joy. It is this “spilling out” quality of Christ’s life, death, & resurrection that accounts for the sense that brings us to a place that we can have that joy that life is filled to overflowing in who we are, what we do, and how we interact with others. This excess is the overflow of what cannot be contained within any one person. [The Message] Joy is Life in excess. This drives “a sense of all God’s wholeness, in Christ, everything coming together for good; will come to settle us down. It’s wonderful what happens when Christ displaces worry at the center of your life.” [The Message] This can be a great motivator for generosity, for hospitality, for the need to reach out, and to act for others’ needs.

I am faced with the question: what is the center of my life? Worry or Joy? What about your center? In the midst of all this pandemic (7 million cases of covid19, 200,000+ deaths); environmental disasters; long overdue racial issues; a divisive election; I hope for us to attend to these worries within ourselves and with others and hope that our hunger for joy is exposed.

We then can find a calm space and the will to come together, then to find and see the heart and mind for common ground and complete a new sense of joy together. The truth is that we badly need to see Paul's words to the Philippians as a call for our congregations and Christians all to embrace his list of challenges for us. How could you achieve these?

- having the same mind in Christ
- standing firm
- reconcile when there is disagreement
- having the same Love
- always rejoice
- don't be afraid of challenges
- don't worry - Christ is near
- don't be afraid - God is with us
- remember the peace of God which passes all understanding will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus

Let the people say with joy, AMEN, Let It Be So.

### **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: Give Me Jesus African American Spiritual, arr. Mary McDonald*

### **Prayers of Intercession**

With confidence in God's grace and mercy, let us pray for the church, the world, and all those in need.

Gracious host, fill your church with a spirit of joyous hospitality. We pray for bishops, teachers, church leaders, and all children of God as they invite others to your table of boundless grace. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Gracious host, as you set a table in the presence of enemies, so bless the efforts of diplomats, international peace workers, and world leaders who navigate conflict. May they proceed with dialogue and understanding, so that justice and peace prevails. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Gracious host, when we are quick to judge outward appearance, remind us how you clothe all in your mercy. We pray for ministries that provide needed clothing and other personal care assistance in this community. 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, healing for Norm, Rusty, healing for Jim following his surgery, the family of Robert Imobersteg, who passed away on October 1st, Claudia and Fran, Edie Marie, Suzee, prayers for Michael Gillece and family, as Michael recovers from surgery, the Nelson family, Your Neighbors clients, prayers for Ashley's baby, and Theresa, that the light of Christ may shine upon them with hope. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Listen as we call on you, O God, and enfold in your loving arms all for whom we pray, in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

### **Thanksgiving at the Table**

O God of justice and love, we give thanks to you that you illumine our way through life with the words of your Son. Give us the light we need, awaken us unto the needs of others, and at the end bring all the world to your feast; 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

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:** *Savior, Again to Your Dear Name* #534, Verses 1 & 4 -Mary Senn

Vs. 1 Savior, again to your dear name we raise with one accord our parting hymn of praise; once more we bless you ere our worship cease, then, lowly bending, wait your word of peace.

Vs. 4 Grant us your peace throughout our earthly life, our balm in sorrow, and our stay in strife; then, when your voice shall bid our conflict cease, call us, O Lord, to your eternal peace.

## Blessing

Mothering God, Father, ☩ Son, and Holy Spirit, bless you and lead you into the way of truth and life. Amen.

## Dismissal

Go in peace. Remember the poor. **Thanks be to God.**



The ELCA Women's Group will have a Zoom meeting in November. The topic will be Advent and Christmas. You might just learn an Advent craft. More information to follow. Keep your eyes on Zion's Weekly Newsletter.

**Enjoy our 24<sup>th</sup> recipe exchange provided to us by chef Jon Daly**

## **FUN & EASY HALLOWEEN RECIPES FOR THE KIDS!**

### **Candy Corn Popcorn Balls**

Prep time: 15 minutes, Ready in 15 minutes, Makes 15 Servings

#### **Ingredients:**

- ¼ cup butter or margarine
- 1 (10.5 oz) bag JET-PUFFED miniature marshmallows
- 1 (3 ounce) package JELL-O Brand Gelatin, any flavor
- 12 cups (3 qts) popped popcorn
- 1-cup candy corn

#### **Directions:**

1. Microwave butter and marshmallows in large microwavable bowl on HIGH 1 ½ to 2 minutes or until marshmallows are puffed. Stir in gelatin until well mixed.
2. Pour marshmallow mixture over popcorn and candy corn in large bowl. Mix lightly until well coated. Shape into 15 balls or other shapes with greased or wet hands. Wrap each ball in plastic wrap and tie with raffia or ribbon, if desired.

### **Witches Hats**

#### **Ingredients:**

- 32 Kisses milk Chocolates, unwrapped
- 1 package (11 ½ ounces) fudge-striped shortbread cookies (32)
- 1 tube (4.25 ounces) orange or red decorating icing

#### **Directions:**

1. Attach 1 chocolate candy to chocolate bottom of each cookie, using decorating icing.
2. Pipe decorating icing around base of chocolate candy

## **ZION ENDOWMENT FUND ANNUAL DISTRIBUTION FOR 2020**

Zion's Endowment Fund has approximately \$15,300 available for distribution in 2020. One fourth of the total distribution will go to each of the following categories:

- (1) Community outreach programs
- (2) Special ministries of Zion
- (3) Missions of the ELCA
- (4) Zion Capital Projects

To be considered for a grant, submit a Zion Lutheran Church Grant Application Form describing your organization and what the funds will be used for to:

Zion Lutheran Church  
630 French Rd  
New Hartford, NY 13413  
Attn: Endowment Distribution  
Or send via email to [office@zionuth.com](mailto:office@zionuth.com)

The Grant Application form is available from the church office. There is a link to the form in the Endowment Fund article on the church web site at: <http://www.zionlutheranny.org/Zions-Permanent-Funds>  
Deadline for receipt of the form is November 1, 2020. All applications will be considered at the November 2020 Endowment Committee meeting. Recipients will be notified in writing and checks will be sent in late November/early December 2020.

### **ZION ENDOWMENT FUND OVERVIEW**

Zion's Endowment Fund was established in 1985 for the purpose of enhancing the mission outreach of Zion Lutheran Church apart from the general operations of the congregation. The Fund welcomes gifts from Zion and Utica community members. Gifts can consist of memorials, bequests in wills, charitable remainder and other trusts, charitable gift annuities, assignment of life insurance and transfer of property, such as cash, stocks, bonds, or real estate. To-date, most gifts have been from bequests in wills. Planned giving is one method of providing end of life gifting of one's wealth to the Zion Endowment Fund.

### **YEARLY DISTRIBUTIONS**

The Endowment Fund by-laws require that yearly distributions be made from the Fund. The distributions are divided among the following: one-quarter each to; community outreach, missions of the ELCA, special ministries of Zion Lutheran Church and Zion capital projects. The Endowment Fund Committee makes recommendations to the Church Council and Zion's congregation concerning the charitable distributions. Some past recipients include; Community Food Bank, Your Neighbors, Family Nurturing Center, Canstruction, Lutheran Homes Foundation, Vanderkamp, KEYS Program and Foothills Rural Community Ministry.

### **HISTORY OF GIFTS RECEIVED AND DISTRIBUTIONS**

In the thirty-five years of its existence, the Endowment Fund has received gifts and bequests of about \$200,000. Over this same period, distributions from the Fund now exceed \$280,000. The Endowment Fund expects to distribute approximately \$15,300 this year.

### **CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE FUND ARE WELCOME**

Contributions to the Zion Endowment Fund need not be just in the form of bequests in wills or trusts. Cash or checks, in any amount, in memory of a loved one or in honor of someone special, would be appropriate and welcomed. Our hopes and expectations are that additional gifts, coupled with Fund earnings, will cause the Fund value to increase so that Zion may play an ever-larger part in fulfilling its mission in the world. Your endowment gift would be a part of that process.