

LEADERSHIP LETTER FOR JUNE 6, 2021

Dear Zion Family,

This letter is being written over Memorial Day Weekend and during the week before the 33rd Synod Assembly of the Upstate New York Synod. Mark and I have been reading the 162 page Pre-Assembly Bulletin, the Upstate Updates, the biographies of the four nominees for Bishop, and biographical data of twenty-five nominees for Synod Council members, committee members, and Churchwide Assembly voting members. Additionally, we are learning about LUMI, the platform that will allow us to vote remotely.

The Bible verse to guide us during Synod Assembly is “You are chosen...called into God’s **light**.” 1Peter 2:9. Bishop John Macholz wrote in his report, “I believe the future is bright and hopeful and filled with the presence of the One who is calling us out of darkness into God’s marvelous **light**. It will not be easy nor will the transition be without its many challenges but it will be led by the Spirit who makes all things new.” Also, I have been reading and rereading Rev. Hoover’s sermon for Holy Trinity Sunday about Isaiah’s and our stories of holy moments, radiant **light**, **light** streaming down, the **light** of a baby’s smile, the holy **light** of love... It is a good to know that Zion Lutheran Church is part of and is connected to our synod and the ELCA.

WORSHIPING AT ZION IN JUNE

This **Sunday, June 6th**, our **Sunday Service will be offered in-person in the sanctuary as well as remotely** via Zoom, live streamed on our YouTube channel, and through the written Service of the Word, found later in this letter. To join the June 6th 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-bIPvxp62IA>

June 13th – remote only

June 20th ~ in-person in the sanctuary plus all the other ways

June 27th ~ in-person in the sanctuary plus all the other ways

PROTOCOLS TO KEEP IN MIND

- **We will be singing (with our masks on) aloud and together!**
- We will continue reciting the Creed, the Lord’s Prayer, the response to the Prayers of Intercession, and all other refrains aloud and together as a congregation.
- We will continue to wear face coverings, practice social distancing, and sanitize/encourage frequent hand washing when in Zion’s facilities, including the sanctuary.
- We will continue sitting in alternating rows to allow for social distancing given that we can easily do so with the number currently attending in-person services.
- Offering plates will remain at the entrance/exit doors of the sanctuary.
- We will NOT be sharing the sign of peace with physical contact.
- Please allow for social distancing when you exit the sanctuary. Take everything with you—tissues, papers, bulletins—when you exit at the conclusion of the service.
- For those who would like, fellowship following the service is now permitted. We will be using the Fellowship Hall on the lower level to start and will notify you when we will return to the Fireside Room.
- We will no longer be taking temperatures or asking the health questions when you arrive at the entrance. If you are not feeling well, we ask that you stay home and view the service remotely.

NEWS ABOUT PASTORS WE KNOW

When I heard from a member of Our Saviour that Pastor Roger has cancer, I reached out to Pastor Anita to find out more. Just this morning she sent me this message from Pastor Beiswenger: “You can report that I am receiving radiation therapy for a recurrence of prostate cancer two years after surgery. I feel fine, having completed 27 of 39 treatments, and am on the road downstate for Ryley’s 5th birthday. I am biking almost every day. Praying for successful outcome. Grateful for prayers. Prayer lists are fine.”

Both The Rev. Roger F. Beiswenger and the Rev. Norman J. Heid are being honored and recognized by our synod for reaching significant anniversaries in their ministry in the name of Christ. Pastor Heid celebrated his 60th anniversary of ordination on May 31st, and Pastor Roger will celebrate his 45th anniversary of ordination on June 20th. Congratulations!

ELECTING A BISHOP

Electing a bishop is one of the most important responsibilities in the life of a synod in the ELCA and the key responsibility of a Synod Assembly. As an election, it is a process governed by the constitution, bylaws, and continuing resolutions of the synod; however, it is also a call process. As such, it involves discernment, from the perspective both of individual potential nominees and of the Synod as a whole. Thus, engaging in prayerful reflection and seeking the guidance of the Holy Spirit are indispensable aspects of the process of nomination and election. This reminds me of Pastor Janet’s sermon on the Sunday we read in Acts about the disciples praying and casting lots to replace Judas with Matthias.

In one of the [Upstate Updates](#), this prayer for voting members was suggested. “Almighty God, giver of all good gifts, look on your church with grace and guide the minds of those who shall choose the bishop of the UNYS that we may receive a faithful servant who will care for your people and equip us for our ministries; through Jesus Christ Our Lord. Amen.” Please pray for us, especially on June 4th and 5th. Thank you.

May your days be peaceful,
Laurel McCurdy, council co-president

Zion Lutheran Church
New Hartford, NY
2 Pentecost



June 6, 2021

WELCOME

PRELUDE *The Lord's Prayer*, by Albert H. Malotte, arr. by Phillip Keveren -Marcus Corrasanti

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: *What Wondrous Love Is This* Hymn #666 - Marcus Corrasanti

Vs. 1 What wondrous love is this, O my soul, O my soul! What wondrous love is this, O my soul! What wondrous love is this that caused the Lord of bliss to bear the dreadful curse for my soul, for my soul, to bear the dreadful curse for my soul!

Vs. 4 And when from death I'm free, I'll sing on, I'll sing on; and when from death I'm free, I'll sing on; and when from death I'm free, I'll sing God's love for me, and through eternity I'll sing on, I'll sing on; and through eternity I'll sing on.

Prayer of the Day

All-powerful God, in Jesus Christ you turned death into life and defeat into victory. Increase our faith and trust in him, that we may triumph over all evil in the strength of the same Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

First Reading: 2 Corinthians 4:13-5:1

Gospel Reading: Mark 3:20-35

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. Hal-le-lu-jah.

The holy gospel according to Mark.

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

Third Reading: Genesis 3:8-15

Sermon: *Pictures From the Family Album* -Pastor Janet Hoover

The wonders of creation range from star-spangled heavens to butterflies gracefully dipping and soaring. They include thundering waterfalls, sweet-scented roses, bubbling brooks, howling wolves, clouds streaked with orange and blue as the sun dips below the horizon. The earth is full of amazing beauty, and this beauty has always captured the imaginations of men and women, filling them with awe, lifting their spirits, and at the same time stirring up questions. Thousands of years ago, people looked around and asked: Where did we come from? What are those lights in the sky and why do they stay up there? Why is the grass green and the sky blue? What keeps the waters from overflowing the land? Every group of people had their own explanations—most of them involving some violent action between one god and another. But there was a group of people who had a different belief. They knew Yahweh—God of love and grace— and they believed that, in the beginning, it was love and grace that went to work to shape a world. That truth is the truth of the Bible’s creation stories. The Bible offers two lenses for looking at creation. The first chapter of Genesis comes from the heart of a poet whose words paint a picture of wonder and beauty. The second view of creation—our text for today—comes from a storyteller. The details here are different, but the focus is the same. All that we can see comes from the heart of a loving God whose imagination shapes a world of incredible variety and color, who desires a relationship with humans, and whose patience and commitment are the ground of our being. This creation story reminds us of who God is, who we are, and what it means to be God’s people. The story of God and God’s people begin with grace. It describes a relationship of joy and peace. According to this story, God formed dirt into the shape of a man, performed some sort of heavenly CPR, and ...voila. A man thinks and walks and talks. God gives Adam almost unlimited freedom. The only restriction is that the tree of the knowledge of good and evil is off limits. Why? God knows, but just maybe it is a sign that God wanted this relationship to be one of openness and trust. Adam’s connection to God was not as a tightly strung marionette, but a matter of choice, and that means that God risked a wrong choice being made. As Adam engaged in the work of naming the animals, he must have noticed that he was singularly single, and so, God gave Adam a partner. We don’t know how many blissful days/weeks/years/decades Adam and Eve spent in Eden. But we do know when things began to deteriorate. While walking through the garden, Eve has a close encounter of a destructive kind. The serpent—a crafty creature- engages Eve in a theological debate about the love and power of God, and Eve falls for his line. She grabs a piece of fruit from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil (notice that nowhere is it described as an apple!?) Takes a bite and, believing that sharing is the best way to live, offers a bite to Adam. And as their eyes are opened, they see themselves as they are—vulnerable and naked—and they dive into the nearest bushes where they busy themselves by sewing together fig leaf loin cloths. They may know good from evil, but I’m not sure that recognition made them smart, for they somehow believe they can hide from God. That brings us to the first picture in our family album. As Margaret Hess describes it: Its sepia tones have faded, and we must look closely to sort it out. Adam and Eve stand in a tangle of flowering trees, bushes, and plants. Adam stands on the right, his body slightly turned in an effort to distance himself, and he appears to be speaking to someone just out of sight. Arm raised in an emphatic gesture; he points rigidly to the woman who stands on his right. Eve stares slack-jawed at him, as if stunned by his words, her long brown curls cascade over her shoulders covering her body in Lady Godiva fashion, and she gestures lamely toward the ground with her left hand. The photo has one word written across it: Shame. Once they had all they ever needed. Enough food and drink, enough work and rest, enough companionship. But they wanted more. Once they had all they could ever have wanted. Beautiful sights, sweet smells, pleasing sounds. But they wanted more. Once they had a God who gave them the freedom of the garden, who gave them just a few rules to keep them out of trouble. But they wanted more. They didn’t just want the beautiful garden to live in, they wanted to own the garden. They didn’t just want the sights and sounds and smells of the garden, they wanted to control the garden. They didn’t just want to enjoy God’s presence, they wanted to become God—to do whatever they wanted and make their own rules. Until...until it all went crash, and they lost everything. Everything. They lost the garden, and in some ways, they lost themselves. For their first response to shame was blame. Unable to bear the full weight of the responsibility for what they have done, they try to divert attention from themselves by pointing to another. Sound familiar? Most of us, deep down, know that we have acted in ways that work against God’s will for us. Most of us, deep down, know that over and over we choose actions that separate us from God and others. And most of us try to hide that from God and from ourselves by accusing others, pointing the finger at our neighbor, covering our brokenness with badly constructed and poorly fitted disguises. Much of our life is haunted by a sense of shame. That is why we need to look at the next picture in the photo album, for there we see God sitting with needle and thread stitching clothes for Adam and Eve. God the seamstress aches to give them a way beyond their humiliation, to offer them a sign to help them remember that their disobedience is not the final word in defining who they are. First and foremost, they are God’s beloved. Before

they brought the fruit to their lips, they were God's beloved. And that will always be true. Maybe, as they tug at their new clothes, their memory will be jogged. They have to leave the garden, it is true. But they don't leave God. Their fig leaves of shame are replaced by garments of grace, and wherever they go, God is there before them. Barbara Brown Taylor writes: This is a story about God and about humankind, about a choice and its consequences. It is one of the family stories that tells us things about ourselves we need to know. It tells us not only how we fail—we already know that very well—but also how we survive. For Adam and Eve went on to fashion a future after they exited Eden. They had to leave a place where nothing had ever been broken, where there were no chips or dents or scars, a place where everything was still whole and holy and pleasing to God. Their days of peace and plenty were gone for good, but they got by. They managed to build first an altar and then a home, to bake bread from the wild wheat of the field and to bear children. Using the pieces of their broken past, they made a life for themselves and for their descendants in the world outside of Eden, a world where we continue to live today. It is a world of chips and dents and scars. Even where we have glued it back together, you can still see the cracks, but in its own way it is lovely, a mosaic of many colors, a mended work of art, a reminder of the God who is willing to work with broken pieces and who calls us to do the same. As Sibley Towner says—this is a story about every human being rebelling against the commandments of God and thus discovering alienation and despair. It is a powerful rendition of a reality all of us know full well—the truth that life is a pilgrimage from innocence to maturity, through a land fraught with the dangers of loving and hating, growing powerful and cowering in humiliation, living, and dying. This is a story about God and the ways God responds to human drama. Whether stumbling or arrogant, short-sighted, or far-reaching, bold, or fearful, we belong to God. Our fig leaves are pitiful and leave us feeling vulnerable and exposed. What we long for—and what we receive— is finery of God's own making. This is a story of promise, failure, blame, guilt, forgiveness, healing, hope—a story about us and about our God who did not create us just once, but goes on creating us forever, putting our pieces back together so that we are never ruined—never entirely and never forever. This is a story about God, whose name is not only Yahweh, but Emmanuel...God with us, and who will not leave his beloved creatures to their fate, even when they defy him to his face. Even when they run away and hide. Even when they deny and betray. Even when they thrust a spear into his side. This is a story that begins in grace and ends in grace, our promise that God is good, and that God's steadfast love endures forever. In the beginning, God breathed hope and promise and light into being, at the end, God's arms wait to embrace and welcome. And always...wherever we go...we go with 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.

ANTHEM: Heartsounds, by David Lanz -Marcus Corrasanti

Prayers of Intercession

Let us come before the triune God in prayer.

God of all people, we pray for harmony among the nations. Cast out from us unclean spirits of greed and fear, that we may work in solidarity with one another for the common good. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

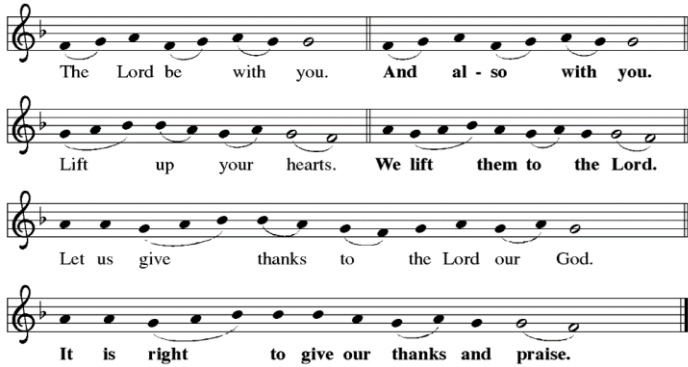
God of abundance, we pray for those who are oppressed or in any need. Encourage those who have begun to lose heart. Strengthen and renew us with your Spirit. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

God of righteousness, we pray for this holy house of worship. Set our gaze upon things eternal, that in thanksgiving for your mercy, we may extend grace to more and more people. 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, Pastor Roger, Gail, Patsy, Bill, Lyla, Claudia & Fran, Edie Marie, Ed and family, prayers for Michael Gilleece and family, Theresa, and our country, 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

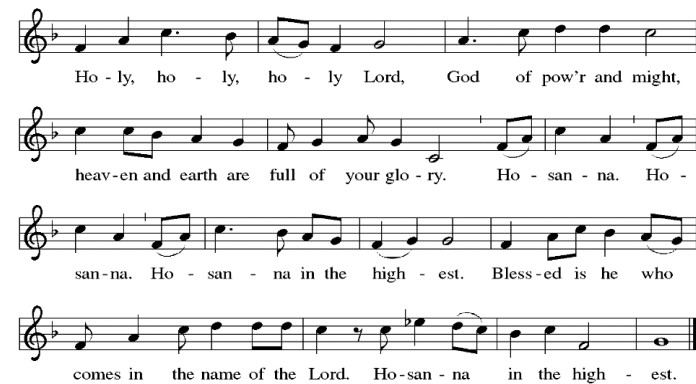


The Lord be with you. And al - so with you.
Lift up your hearts. We lift them to the Lord.
Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
It is right to give our thanks and praise.

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: *A Mighty Fortress is Our God vs. 1 & 4 Hymn #504 -Marcus Corrasanti*

Vs. 1 A mighty fortress is our God, a sword and shield victorious; he breaks the cruel oppressor's rod and wins salvation glorious. The old satanic foe has sworn to work us woe! With craft and dreadful might he arms himself to fight. On earth he has no equal.

Vs. 4 God's Word for ever shall abide, no thanks to foes, who fear it; for God himself fights by our side with weapons of the Spirit. Were they to take our house, goods, honor, child, or spouse, though life be wrenched away, they cannot win the day. The kingdom's ours forever!

Dismissal

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

Postlude: *Blessed Assurance* -Marcus Corrasanti

Garden Ministry - To make our church more inviting, we maintain flowers in the planters by the parking lot doors, the playground, and the Prayer Garden. When you see some bright, sturdy plants, please bring them to Zion by Sunday, June 13th, and you can either plant them, or leave them on the cart in the downstairs coat room. Donations of black mulch are also appreciated. Please contact Kim Marscher (kmarscher@yahoo.com) if you have questions. Thanks for your help.



While walking in Florida, Karen Toepp and Janet Bagnall found what looks to be a banyan tree!