

Leadership Letter for the Week of June 7th-13th

To Our Zion Family,

While I hate to admit it, there are times when I might not appreciate some of the wonderful things in my life as much as I should. This past Sunday I was reminded of this fact. For the first time since the restrictions associated with the pandemic were put in place, we sang in church. I'll say it again, WE SANG IN CHURCH!! The music during Sunday services and singing hymns with those in the sanctuary has always been one of my favorite things about Zion. Listening to this Sunday's anthem, *Heartsounds* by David Lanz, played by Marcus Corasanti, was such a peaceful experience. Joining others in the sanctuary in singing our opening hymn, *What Wondrous Love is This*, and the sending song, *A Mighty Fortress is Our God*, just felt so right. My goal is to keep that deep appreciation for the chance to join with all of you in song fresh and constant. And, I'll look forward to singing with all of you again at our next in-person worship service on June 20th!

Upcoming Worship Services

This **Sunday, June 13th**, will be our final week of remote only worship, at least for the foreseeable future. Pastor Eldon DeWeerth, will be our guest supply pastor. We anticipate offering our Sunday service each week in-person in Zion's sanctuary, assuming we can secure supply pastors.

To join the **June 13th 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>

Sunday Services on June 20th and June 27th

These Sunday 10 AM services will be offered in four ways: 1) in-person in the sanctuary, 2) remote via Zoom, 3) livestreamed on our YouTube, 4) by the written Service of the Word. Instructions for remote participation in Sunday services will continue to be included in the *weekly leadership letter*.

Synod Assembly Summary

The 33rd Assembly of the Upstate New York Synod of the ELCA took place this past weekend, June 3rd-5th, via Zoom. Laurel McCurdy and Mark Thompson represented Zion as voting members. Highlights:

-**Pastor Lee Miller, II** was elected to serve as the next Bishop for our synod, with a term that begins Sept. 1, 2021. He currently serves as the Senior Pastor at Holy Trinity Lutheran Church in Buffalo. Pastor Miller received his Master of Divinity degree from the Lutheran Theological Seminary in Philadelphia. His Doctor of Ministry degree is in process at the United Lutheran Seminary. He also currently serves as the Dean of the Niagara Frontier Conference. Bishop-elect Miller provided thoughtful and spirit-filled answers to all the questions posed in the process. He will make a wonderful new bishop for our synod!

-Representatives of the **Racial Justice Initiative and the Gender Justice Task Forces** presented reports on the important work and progress on both of these important issues.

-An inspirational presentation entitled *Proclaiming...Reforming...Celebrating 50/40/10 Years of Women's Ordination in the ELCA*. (The first woman was ordained in the ELCA 50 years ago, the first African American woman 40 years ago, and it was 10 years ago when the barriers for LGBTQIA persons to become ordained were removed.) **Pastor Marsha Irmer**, a person familiar to many of us at Zion, is now the female pastor with the longest tenure in the Synod!

-**Bishop John Macholz** reflected on his seven years as our synod's Bishop and was gracious in expressing his gratitude to the many rostered ministers, synod staff members, and Lutheran congregants across the synod that provided support and assistance during his tenure. Bishop-elect Lee Miller, II expressed his sense of feeling both humbled and honored in receiving the call to serve as our next Bishop. The remarks of both were heart-felt and touching.

-There are certainly more highlights that could be shared. Please ask Laurel or Mark if you are interested in hearing more about the Synod Assembly!

Other updates and announcements

-**The Task Force for Return to In-person Worship met on Tuesday, June 8th** to continue reviewing our current health and safety protocols for further revision as the restrictions for the pandemic continue to ease. We will keep you informed of additional changes to the protocols in next week's leadership letter, once approved by the church council.

-Our **church council meets next on Monday, June 14th**. If you have any issues you would like the council to address, please speak with one of the council members. Agenda items are requested by June 10th.

-Thank you to everyone who has signed-up as a volunteer for our in-person services. All the slots for June are filled! The sign-up sheets for July services will be posted in the Narthex when we return on June 20th. Please sign-up for a role periodically to lighten the load for all. Thank you!

In her sermon on the creation story this past Sunday, Rev. Janet reminded us that this is a story of God's grace and love for his people, both in our good times as well as when we defy God's commands due to our arrogance, self-interest, and ignorance. *"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."* The words of the song, *Your Love Never Fails* by Chris Quilala / Jesus Culture, remind us that our God loves us when we are at our best as well as our worst. *"Nothing can separate. Even if I ran away your love never fails. I know I still make mistakes, but you have new mercies for me every day. Your love never fails."* Here's the link if you have access to the internet-
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kSj2GwzeFcl>.

May you feel God's love this week and always. And, stay cool!

Mark Thompson, church council co-president

Church Notes

Communion- For our worship service participants who are attending from home by reading the Service of The Word- Please call Sara in the office or send a note to the church if you would like to pick up Communion packets. Please let Sara know if you are unable to get to the church, and we will do our best to deliver them you. If you would like to volunteer to deliver Communion packets to those who are unable to get to the church, please let Sara know and she will keep you updated on anyone who needs this service. *Thank you!*

For those of you asking to send well wishes to Pastor Roger and Kathy Beiswenger, their address is:
16 Canterbury Road, New Hartford, NY 13413

Garden Ministry- Thank you to everyone who has contributed so far and helped maintain the planters by the parking lot doors, the playground, and the Prayer Garden (on the corner of French and Burrstone Roads - where the white stone cross is). 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 by the downstairs door. Donations of black mulch are also appreciated. Please contact Kim Marscher, kmarscher@yahoo.com, if you have questions. Thanks for your help!!

Zion Lutheran Church
New Hartford, NY



3 Pentecost | June 13, 2021

WELCOME

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: *Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing, vs.1 & 3* Hymn #807 –Kelli Watson

Vs. 1 Come, thou Fount of ev'ry blessing, tune my heart to sing thy grace; streams of mercy, never ceasing, call for songs of loudest praise. While the hope of endless glory fills my heart with joy and love, teach me ever to adore thee; may I still thy goodness prove.

Vs. 3 Oh, to grace how great a debtor daily I'm constrained to be; let that grace now like a fetter bind my wand'ring heart to thee. Prone to wander, Lord, I feel it; prone to leave the God I love. Here's my heart, oh, take and seal it; seal it for thy courts above.

Prayer of the Day

O God, you are the tree of life, offering shelter to all the world. Graft us into yourself and nurture our growth, that we may bear your truth and love to those in need, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

First Reading: 1 Samuel 15:34-16:13

Second Reading: 2 Corinthians 5:6-17

Gospel: Mark 4:26-34

Sermon: -Rev. Eldon DeWeerth

Good morning, brothers and sisters in Christ, at Zion. It has been a while since I had the privilege to zoom with you. I hope that this time is the last zoom and you will be able to gather together fully in the pews from now forward. We give thanks for vaccines and masks that have given us a chance to beat this covid19. We mourn for the 600 thousand who lost their lives and their families and friends who grieved their loss.

We also give thanks for all the frontline workers and leaders who will be changed forever in the fight to save lives. We also are thankful for leaders who took the pandemic seriously & kept our country on track in the fight to beat this global virus.

It doesn't take much time to see that this struggle with the Covid 19 virus involved people who were asked to become leaders in this struggle – leaders from Our Presidents to scrub nurses– Governors to ambulance drivers. Our nation needed every person to even wear a mask. The pandemic needed everyone to lead, from the family to the Congress. Every individual or institution made a good or bad contribution in leading our nation out of this pandemic. We know then, why we led the world in deaths and disruptions. This has led to a great deal of discussion about leadership in our country - what our

motivations were. In our Old Testament lesson today, from over 3000 years ago, we discover that fighting over leadership is not new. After the nation of Israel returned to Palestine it was ruled by 12 tribes. God chose to place the united Israel under a king. God chose Saul as the first king & Samuel anointed him as leader. The struggle for leadership now takes a radical turn, beginning at an ending.

Some persons desire authority influence and responsibility and desire power to achieve a specific goal and take on the mentality of leadership in order to see those goals and plans realized. Others may be attracted to the attention-perceived affirmation of being a recognized leader in a specific sphere. The role feeds ego and offers a measure of personal validation. Still others have the mantle pressed upon them despite their desire for a more anonymous, quiet leadership. This is seen as responding to unique calling.

William Howard Taft was the 27th president of the United States and the 10th Chief Justice of the Supreme Court. He is the only person to serve in both offices. He didn't want to be president. Only the urging of his politically savvy wife, Nellie Taft, and the endorsement of his predecessor, Teddy Roosevelt, led him to assume the office. Ultimately, his wife and closest advisor suffered a stroke and was impaired and unable to be his close support in his presidency. Roosevelt was bitterly disappointed in the Taft Administration and ran against him in the next election. Both men lost, making way for Woodrow Wilson's victory. Eight years after his defeat for an office that didn't suit him, Taft was appointed to the position on the Supreme Court, a position that called him all along.

This week's Old Testament text begins with an ending. The relationship between Saul and Samuel (who, at God's leading, had anointed Saul king) had ruptured. And Samuel grieves his loss of Saul even before his death, even before he died.

Saul didn't lose a popular vote. He was rejected by the sovereign God. God's permissive YES become a NO, because of Saul's actions, attitudes, & behaviors. Saul was not the only bad king that Israel had, but he was the First King, so God decided to replace him. The transition from Saul to David raises more drama than Roosevelt and Taft.

The drama came not only from young David's reluctance, but also from his presence, potential, and possibility. His family fails to recognize that he could actually fill the role of a king.

Samuel comes to have a purification ritual for the family and meet & greet with the sons of Jesse. He fears what Saul will do if he finds out that God desires to replace him. Even Jesse is in the dark about what Samuel is doing.

The story of David's calling by God is a critical turning point for God's leadership paradigm. During the sanctification/blessing of Jesse's clan, David's chores with flock symbolizes metaphysically his great future. It is not clear whether David was clear about what was happening. He had not been included in any of the festivities while Samuel was sanctifying Jesse's family. David is doing other work in the world during the sacrifice. David tended his sheep. His calling meets him in his vocation as a shepherd. Most of all God sees, even as others discount him, he is doing the work he clearly needs to do. He brings other gifts than Saul & other Kings and their skills for war & fighting. David cares for the least and his musical skills come into play. And the focus is on Jewish words of praise & glory for their God.

David transforms, shifts the model from ruler, autocrat & power broker to serving - taking care of others, attending the needs of the poor, the least of these brothers and sisters. It is no wonder that God now chooses a leader who is perhaps a model for Jesus, the Son of God, who is the Son of David and the Good Shepherd who tends God's people.

God sees David as one who will change the model of King from ruler to shepherd and worshipper in the life of Israel. God is calling again to his people to seize the moment and center their lives in service and praise. God does not want another Saul, where personality and power seem to rule. God chose a leader for the moment and the future.

How often do we have expectations for leaders based on superficial considerations and overlook the unique gifts, though unexpected, that match our needs? In fulfilling church leadership roles, how often are we rotating and recycling the same group of people that we know will say yes, rather than discerning whom God may have particularly situated in our midst for the moment? Who is not invited to the consideration table or is unseen in the lineup for participation and leadership?

In a world of unique challenges, do we miss young people and their energy? I believe that God is using several young people today to change our world.

The youngest recipient of the Nobel Peace Prize, Malala Yousafzai, was born in a culture-like so many others-that often devalues her gender but to a family that was determined she would have every opportunity available. When the Taliban determined that girls could no longer go to school, Malala became an advocate for education for girls, having been influenced by her father, an educator himself and her first and greatest advocate. As a result, she was targeted and shot to silence her voice. But the attempt to eliminate her only served to elevate her. The world learned her name, her family relocated, and Malala Yousafzai became an advocate for educating girls around the world. The silencing amplified her. She

wasn't the leader anyone expected, but her journey prepared and led her to the moment that needed her vision, gifts, courage, and perspective.

Another one of God's workers is a young girl from Sweden who has moved world leaders and spoken at the UN. Her voice was critical in Paris, urging the world leaders to act on cutting greenhouse emissions & other environmental issues when she was barely a teenager - Greta Thunberg.

And the voice of the young daughter of George Floyd saying, "My daddy is going to change the world."

I believe that my world is being changed by so many young people every day. There are no age requirements for Responding to God's Call. Leaders aren't meant to be perfect. They maintain their full humanity—God's call does not come with divinity or superpowers. It comes with God's abiding, leading, and directing. Accepting the call of God is choosing to trust God and follow God in such a way that those who follow the human leader, follow the Divine One who anoints and appoints.

God continues to speak through the voices of Students in Florida about the dangers of guns and who can purchase them. (Background checks). The majority of youth are for greater peace and justice in our world. Young people are the Unexpected Leaders of the moment and the future.

Despite David's many tragic shortcomings, God never rejects him or his leadership. Even when David seems to give up on himself, God calls him back and reaffirms the call. The unexpected king would have a reign categorized by the unexpected. Twists and turns mark his story. He abuses his position, but at his heart, which is what God evaluated, David doesn't seek power. He pursues God, and through his unexpected leadership he trusted in God, leaned upon the wisdom of the Holy One, and walked in the ways of the One who is truly Sovereign. And maybe, that's the most unexpected part of his leadership.

"To handle yourself, use your head; to handle others, use your heart." – Eleanor Roosevelt

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: On Eagle's Wings, words and music by Michale Joncas ·Kelli Watson

Prayers of Intercession

Let us come before the triune God in prayer.

Holy God, you plant the seeds of faith in every nation. Enliven your church, so that the good news of your grace may root and grow throughout the world. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Judge of nations, we pray for our leaders and those in power. Grant them the ability to regard those under their charge with humility, dedicating their lives in service to others. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Sovereign God, this house of worship belongs to you. We give thanks and pray for our church musicians. We dedicate to you the joyful noise that comes from this place; the cries of children, the melody of voice and instruments, and the songs from our hearts. 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, Pr. Roger, Gail, Patsy, the Asian community, 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. Hear us O God. **Your mercy is great.**

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

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.

Closing Hymn *Spread, Oh, Spread, Almighty Word, vs. 1 & 4* Hymn #663 -Kelli Watson

Vs. 1 Spread, oh, spread, almighty Word, spread the reign of God the Lord. Send forth our Creator's call, heaven's gifts extend to all.

Vs. 4 Lord of harvest, great and kind, rouse to action heart and mind; let the gath'ring nations all see your light and heed your call.

Blessing

The blessing of God, who provides for us, feeds us, and journeys with us, be upon you now and forever. **Amen.**

Dismissal

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



Marigolds brightened Andrew and Elizabeth Wetzels' monuments in Forest Hill Cemetery on Memorial Day weekend. Pastor Andrew was an avid gardener whose flower beds by his home on Whitesboro Street delighted many observers. Zion members reconsecrated the Wetzels' final resting places as part of their 175th anniversary celebrations in 2017.