***The Messenger***

***A newsletter of Zion Lutheran Church ~ Ottawa Lake, MI***

***February 2020***

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***Ash Wednesday Service ~February 26, 2020***

Ash Wednesday and Lenten Begins February 26

Suppers will be served at 6:15 p.m. and Service will be at 7:00 p.m.

Services will be February 26 March 4, 11, 18, 25 April 1

Our theme this year will be: “The Message of Christ through the Book of Galatians”

***Lutheran Men ~Monthly Breakfast***

On  February 8, 2020, we will have our Lutheran Men Monthly breakfast. Breakfast will be served at 7:30 a.m. We will have a hot breakfast, devotion, and a Bible study. **Please come and feel free to invite a friend or neighbor.** It would be great to see you there!

 ***Zion Lutheran Church Council***

We will have our monthly Church Council Meeting after church on February 16, 2020.

***Women of Zion***

On February 24, 2020, the Women of Zion will have their monthly meeting at 2:00 p.m.

***Movie Night***

We will begin to have a Movie Night on February 28, 2020. We will meet at 6:30 for a light supper and then will watch a movie. If you don’t drive at night, pastor will be happy to pick you up so that you can attend. The first movie that we will watch is called, “WAR ROOM,.” If you have not seen this movie, it will be one that you don’t want to miss.

***Here is a little information about Overcomer***

 High school basketball coach John Harrison and his team face an uncertain future when their town's largest manufacturing plant shuts down unexpectedly. As hundreds of people move away, John reluctantly agrees to coach cross-country, a sport he doesn't even like. His outlook soon changes when he meets Hannah Scott, an unlikely runner who pushes herself to the limit. Inspired by the words and prayers of a new friend, John starts to train Hannah for the biggest race of her young life.

**ZION Lutheran Church**

**LCMC ~ Lutheran congregations in mission for Christ**

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**Pastor ∙ Jeffrey Geske**

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**Secretary ~ Sandy brady**

**(419) 410-9380**

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**custodian and organist~ Joseph extejt**

**For Your Information**

The following members give of their time to the leadership of this congregation. Please keep them in your prayers. If you have any questions, comments, or offers of help, please contact them.

**Chairman:** Dwight Gilliland

**Secretary:** Connie Sieler

**Treasurer:** Dennis Reitzel

**Financial:** Ron Clark

**Elders:** Ron Vincent and Lee Edignton

**Deacons:** Ben Schmidt and Bruce Ahleman

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**LCMC ~ WHO WE ARE**

**Free in Christ + Accountable to One Another + Rooted in Scripture and the Lutheran Confessions + Committed to the Great Commission**

**Prayers Are Important**

If you have an occasion to request a prayer, please call the church office. If you would like your request to be on our prayer chain, please call Sandy Brady (419) 410-9380 or Pastor Jeff at the church or on his cell phone (785)340-5635.

**Please Inform the Church Office. . .**

\*when a member of your family is ill or hospitalized or if they are discharged or moved to another facility.

\*when your address changes.

******\*when a new baby arrives.

\*when a family member marries or leaves home for college, or military

\*when planning a wedding to be conducted at Zion.

\*when a new family moves into your neighborhood.

\*when you are planning to be out of town.

\*when a brother or sister in Christ needs a visit from Pastor.



**OFFERING ENVELOPES FOR 2020**

Offering Envelopes are available for 2020. If you did not receive a box of envelopes for the New Year and want credit for your offerings for tax purposes in 2020, please contact Sandy Brady.

***From the desk of Pastor Geske….***

 Greetings to you in the name of Christ! A question I would like to ask you is, “Are you? Are you sharing the love of Jesus in your life? Our world is so filled with hurt and sorrow. Our world needs what we and our church have to give. What we have to give is Christ and His love, His hope, His forgiveness, and His eternal life. When I reflect on our world there seems to me to be so much apathy or indifference. Even in our own communities we can see and sense this to be true. God wants us to boldly be about sharing Christ with our world. God wants us to be in His Word and to reach our community, counties, and our state. Can I ask you to look around your neighborhood and find out how Zion could serve them and their needs as we seek to provide for their greatest need and that is a relationship with Jesus as Lord and Savior? Yes, in this day and age, there is such a need for the proclamation of Christ. Again, I am reminded of those words of Peter when he wrote, “But in your hearts set apart Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect,” (1 Peter 3:15 NIV)

 We want our families, our community, and our world to know Jesus as Lord and Savior. We want others to know that we are sinners in our thoughts, words, and deeds. I think about a conversation I once had with a brother in Christ. He shared me the story of a former pastor of his who was visiting with someone about the importance of church attendance and the person said that he wasn’t going to attend because the church is full of hypocrites. The pastor responded, “That’s where I want them.” The reality is, with sin in our world and its effect on our lives, we fall short. We don’t always do, say, or think what God wants us to, but the message that we focus on when we come together is that with God there is forgiveness and hope. God helps us to amend our sinful lives and comforts us with joy that is ours in Christ. We come together to focus again on these words of promise from the Psalm, “If you, O LORD, kept a record of sins, O Lord, who could stand? But with you there is forgiveness; therefore you are feared.” (Psalm 130:3-4 NIV)

 Yes, with Christ, forgiveness, eternal life, and strength to live each day are given through His Word and the Sacraments. We come to church because God calls us to gather, to grow, and to go. We gather to worship. We grow in His Word. Then we go by His command to reach out with His love. Jesus says, “Go into all the world and preach the good news to all creation.” (Mark 16:15 NIV)

 I look forward to seeing each of you gather, grow, and go to share His love. Reflect again on your life, I pray that you understand that God’s desire and will for you is to be in His house about His work and living your life sharing the love of Jesus.

In Christ,

Pastor Jeffrey D. Geske

**Sunday Morning Bible Class**

*Please come and join our interesting study of the Word of God!*

**Join Us as we reflect on some of the amazing hymns that we sing on Sunday morning.**

**We will explore the rich treasures of encourgament and teaching found in the Church’s hymns.**

**Newsletter Article – February 2020**

Of the three things a person is not to talk about in polite company – religion, politics, and money – the church is called, in one way or another, to talk about all three. Perhaps this is the reason why teaching about stewardship often seems to be an afterthought. It’s something that happens only out of necessity when financial constraints are already nipping at the heels.

There is a more excellent way. Stewardship shouldn’t be the kind of teaching that comes up only when there is a financial crunch. It should be part and parcel of the ongoing instruction of Christians as they live out their faith in their vocations – members of their family, their society, and their church. This teaching touches upon every facet of our lives; it stakes a claim upon our time, our presence, our prayers, and our possessions.

Stewardship begins with the acknowledgment that we are stewards. A steward is a manager of someone else’s possessions. In Christian stewardship, we recognize, according to the Apostles’ Creed, that God is the owner of all things as the Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier. And in His fatherly divine goodness and mercy, He gives us what is His to manage here below.

The principal virtue for stewards is faithfulness. As St. Paul wrote to the Christians in Corinth:

“Moreover, it is required of stewards that they be found faithful.” (1 Cor. 4:2)

Stewards must manage that which belongs to the owner according to the owner’s wishes. That is what it means to be faithful in stewardship.

That raises a question: How are Christian stewards to be faithful in their managing of what God has entrusted to them to manage? In other words, what are the specific duties of a Christian steward?

This depends upon what God has revealed in His Word for each of our vocations in life as those in a family (fathers, mothers, husbands, wives, children), society (governors or citizens), and the church (pastors or laity). The Table of Duties from *Luther’s Small Catechism* lays this out in helpful and orderly way.

Let’s look just at what the laity (hearers as it is labeled in the catechism) owe their pastors:

“In the same way, the Lord has commanded that those who preach the gospel should receive their living from the gospel.” (1 Cor. 9:14)

“Let the one who is taught the word share all good things with the one who teaches. Do not be deceived: God cannot be mocked. A man reaps what he sows.” (Gal. 6:6–7)

“Let the elders who rule well be considered worthy of double honor, especially those who labor in preaching and teaching. For the Scripture says, ‘You shall not muzzle an ox when it treads out the grain,’ and, ‘The laborer deserves his wages.’ ” (1 Tim. 5:17–18)

“We ask you, brothers, to respect those who labor among you and are over you in the Lord and admonish you, and to esteem them very highly in love because of their work. Be at peace among yourselves.” (1 Thess. 5:12–13)

“Obey your leaders and submit to them, for they are keeping watch over your souls, as those who will have to give an account. Let them do this with joy and not with groaning, for that would be of no advantage to you.” (Heb. 13:17)

We can see that the Lord commands hearers to support the work of the ministry with the gifts God endowed them – their time, their presence, their prayers, and their possessions. This is the means by which God blesses His people with His gifts: the ministry with the support of those whom they serve, and the hearers with the work of the ministry.

St. Paul expounds upon this further in his letters to the church at Corinth. He instructs them to give regularly (1 Cor. 16:1–2), proportionally (1 Cor. 16:1–2; 2 Cor. 8:12), and generously (2 Cor. 8:20) of our first-fruits (1 Cor. 16:2) with a spirit of eagerness (2 Cor. 9:2), earnestness (2 Cor. 8:7), cheerfulness (2 Cor. 9:7), and love (2 Cor. 8:23).

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All of this teaching is set forth squarely within the context of stations to which God calls us. This is always appropriate for the church to speak because it instructs God’s people in how they are to live out their faith as His stewards under those who are created, redeemed, and sanctified by Him.

 *(--From the LCMS website)*

**WE BELIEVE, TEACH, AND CONFESS**

***From Luther’s Small Catechism***

***BAPTISM***

**Second**

*What benefits does Baptism give?*

It works forgiveness of sins, rescues from death and the devil, and gives eternal salvation to all who believe this, as the words and promises of God declare.

*Which are these words and promises of God?*

Christ our Lord says in the last chapter of Mark: “Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned.” [**Mark 16:16**]

Bringing Christ to the Nations and

the Nations to the Church

"The Lutheran Hour," which began in 1930, is now heard on more than 1,300 radio stations around the world. "The Lutheran Hour," hosted by Dr. Rev. Michael Zeigler, is the world's oldest continually-broadcast Gospel radio program. This weekly half-hour program proclaims the message of Jesus Christ to all people and serves as a bridge, linking them to the Church. Listen to the Lutheran Hour on Sundays at 10:00 a.m. at FM 99.5 KAWZ or AM 1560 WWYC or anytime at [www.lhm.org](http://www.lhm.org)

### **February 2020**

February 2
**"Gold Without Glitter"**
Speaker: Rev. Dr. Michael Zeigler
Without the fire of the refiner's forge, there can be no glittering gold. And so it is with us. You are more precious to God than gold. But, like gold, you and I need refining.
(Genesis 42)

February 9
**"Break Through the No-Go Zone"**
Speaker: Rev. Dr. Michael Zeigler
Sometimes, the difference between then and now, between what used to be and what is, comes in a single moment, a defining act. We call that a breakthrough.
(Genesis 43-45)

February 16
**"Families and Joseph's Tears"**
Guest Speaker: Dr. Dean Nadasdy
(Genesis 50:15-26)

February 23
**"TBD"**
Speaker: Rev. Dr. Michael Zeigler

**THRIVENT NEWS . . .**

If you would like more information about Thrivent, its products, or its fraternal functions, please contact our area representative Greg Durivage in Maumee, OH at (419)-740-4193.

If you are a Thrivent Member, please consider using a Thrivent Action Team to support our ministry here at Zion..

**What is a Thrivent Action Team?** **Thrivent Action Teams** make it easy to live generously. **Thrivent** provides promotional resources and seed money to jump-start your fundraiser, educational event or service project. Your **team** provides the people power to bring it to life.

***It’ Time!!! Direct Your Choice Dollars!***

If you’re a Thrivent Financial member, you may be eligible to participate in Thrivent Choice® and recommend where some of Thrivent Financial’s 2020 charitable outreach funds go. The deadline to direct Choice Dollars® is March 31!

Here’s what to do:

1. Call 1-800-THRIVENT  or visit the Thrivent Financial website to find out if you have Dollars you are eligible to direct.
2. To direct Choice Dollars® to Zion Lutheran Church. you can do so online or over the phone – but you must direct Choice Dollars® by March 31st!

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**Food Bank~**

**Thank you for your generous help** with our Food Bank. If you have any question or would like to help in any way, please contact Rick Keck at (734) 854-4710. The Food Bank serves families and individuals on the second and fourth Tuesday of the month from 10:00 a.m. until noon.

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***Home Visits*** *Please sign up for Pastor Jeff to visit you. Over the next several months, Pastor Jeff will be making home visits to get to know our members better. Please be open for a home visit and sign up at church.*

***BIRTHDAYS AND ANNIVERSARIES***

We would like to wish Happy Birthday and Happy Anniversary to the following individuals who are celebrating this February. If you are not listed or you know someone not listed, please contact Sandy Brady or Pastor Jeff.

6 Amy Reitzel

12 Shirley Prond

13 Jared Bieber

14 Russel Bieber

18 Melvin Sieler

19 Redeana Vaughan

20 Brenda Blum

21 Lee Edington

26 Bruce Ahleman

27 Joanna VanSteenkiste

28 Sandy Gilliland

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**We wish he following couples a very Happy Anniversary!**

**February 13 ~ Jason and Samantha Junkins**

**February 18 ~ Russell and Sheri Bieber**

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**Flowers on the Altar** ~ If you would like to place flowers, please sign up in the hallway by the restrooms.

For the Month of February, the following have signed up:

2 Gilbert Olrich

9.

16. Kay Stewart

23.

**Community Rewards Program**

Do you shop at Kroger? If you do, you can sign up for their Community Rewards Program and Kroger will give back to Zion money every quarter. Go on Kroger's website and sign up under Community Rewards. If you need help or don't have an email address check with Pastor Jeff. *(Our code is NC512)*

**A Little Humor**

The minister was preoccupied with thoughts of how he was going to ask the congregation to come up with more money than they were expecting for repairs to the church building. Therefore, he was annoyed to find that the regular organist was sick and a substitute had been brought in at the last minute. The substitute wanted to know what to play. "Here's a copy of the service", he said impatiently. "But you'll have to think of something to play after I make the announcement about the finances." During the service, the minister paused and said, "Brothers and Sisters, we are in great difficulty; the roof repairs cost twice as much as we expected, and we need $4,000 more. Any of you who can pledge $100 or more, please stand up." At that moment, the substitute organist played "The Star Spangled Banner." And that is how the substitute became the regular organist!