

Zion Messenger

A Monthly Publication of Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church--Elgin, ND

Volume 36, Number 3

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March 2024

Greetings, brothers and sisters!

During this Lenten season, we continue on our journey with Jesus to the cross. I hope and pray that you are able to use this time well. Take the time to reflect on your life, regrets, hopes, miracles in your life, forgiveness and understanding you have received or given, and the love that you have in your life.



Too often, people have regrets when their life is at an end. The type of regrets that I am referring to are the ones where we wished we had mended bridges and made peace with a loved one we hurt. Relationships with one another can become strained at times, especially family relationships. When we say or do things that we find too difficult to apologize for, we risk taking it to the grave with us. I don't think we realize the damage we do by letting these relationships remain unhealed. Forgiveness helps both parties involved to heal.

Forgiveness

²¹ Then Peter came up and said to him, "Lord, how often shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? As many as seven times?"

²² Jesus said to him, "I do not say to you seven times, but seventy times seven" (Matthew 18:21-22 RSV).

I don't think we really want to be standing in front of our God saying that we know He told us to forgive one another, but we didn't want to because it hurt our pride.

We are blessed in a variety of ways. The very basics are food, shelter, and clothing. It is usually in hindsight that we can see the times when we have been blessed, the people who have done kind things for us. Perhaps they held out their hand in friendship, or they helped us when we really needed someone. It could have been a meal, or a ride, a phone call, or just some random act of kindness.

As you look back over your life, are there any times when something just happened at the right time and place, and you couldn't explain it? Perhaps you received a call right when you needed it and the timing could not have been any better? Maybe you happened to run into a person, just when you needed to talk with them. Did you encounter someone that needed the conversation you had with them? There are times when we can turn a corner in a store, run into someone at just the right time. The conversation you have with them could benefit either one of you or both. This can happen when you least expect it, and it may never happen again. It was a onetime blessing.

There are even times where we cannot see the positive in a situation. In some situations, this is understandable, especially when it is a loss of life. However, we can use our experience to be with someone who is going through the same thing we have gone through. I have known parents, who have

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Holy Week & Easter Worship Schedule

Palm Sunday, March 24, 9:30 - We celebrate Jesus' triumphant ride into Jerusalem surrounded by shouts of glory.

Maundy Thursday, March 28, 6:30 - We remember Christ's last meal with his disciples and his commandment to love one another.

Good Friday, March 29, 6:30 - We gather in solemn devotion as we hear the story of Jesus' passion, and we depart silently, anticipating His resurrection.

Easter Sunday, March 31, Sunrise Worship Service at 7:30, Easter Breakfast, then Worship at 9:30. Alleluia! Christ is risen! We celebrate the resurrection of Our Lord and sing praises to God!

WELCA News

Serving - Group 1 serves next.

Lenten Suppers - At 5:30 on Wednesdays beginning February 21, a meal of casseroles, bread, and bars will be served prior to 6:30 worship. The food signup sheet is on the narthex table. With no one expressing interest in attending Bible camp, supper proceeds will be used to purchase paper products for the Country Community Cupboard.

Easter Cards - Check out the beautiful Easter cards for sale in the Library. Only 50 cents for an individual card or \$5 a box!

Annual Dinner - Our Annual Dinner is planned for Sunday, April 7.

Donations - \$60 to Dakota Hill and to JMCC for bingo prizes. \$50 to Zion's copier fund.

Spring Gathering - Saturday, April 20, at English Lutheran Church in Hazen. More information will be forthcoming.

Synod Women's Convention - June 21 & 22 (Friday-Saturday) at Trinity Lutheran Church in Bismarck. The theme is Peace Like A River.

Next Meeting - The next meeting is Thursday, March 7, at 1:30.

Pastor's Message

(continued from page 1)

lost a child tragically, take the time to be with another couple when they find themselves in the same situation. They understand how they feel like no one else can. In giving them comfort and identifying with their pain, they can offer them hope. In this case, they are being a reflection of Christ to them.

Mind you, these are only some examples of God acting through people in our lives or God acting through us in other people's lives. When we have that inner voice telling us to do something for another person or urging us to do some act of kindness, think of it as being urged on by the Holy Spirit. God has, and still does, use people to answer prayers. We have countless opportunities to be a reflection of Christ. When you have the opportunity to share forgiveness, kindness, compassion, or love with someone, think very hard about it. You could be that light reflecting Jesus' love to someone who is in need.

When we are with God, what kind of life do we want to look back on with Him?

May God's mercy and love be the driving force in all of our lives.

Yours in Christ,

Rev. Michael S. HarriSon

Because Jesus Said So

One intriguing person in the Passion account is the thief on the cross whom Jesus promised a same-day entrance to paradise (see Luke 23:43). Pastor and radio host Alistair Begg says he can't wait to meet that man and ask how everything unfolded. "You were cussing [Jesus] out with your friend," Begg says. "You've never been in a Bible study. You've never been baptized. You didn't know a thing about church membership, and yet you made it!"

In a sermon, Begg pictured an imaginary angel at the pearly gates, growing frustrated during the sinful thief's entrance interview. After receiving no clear answers from the thief about doctrines such as justification, the angel finally asks, "On what basis are you here?" The thief simply replies, "The man on the middle cross said I can come."



Identification statement: Zion Messenger,
A Church Newsletter Published Monthly
March 2024

Contents not necessarily views of
Zion ELC or members.

Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church
400 2nd AVE NE
Elgin ND 58533

Offerings & Gifts - February (as of 2/27/24)		
	Undesignated	Attendance
February 4	\$1,917	71
February 11	1,930	93
February 14	554	51
February 18	1,809	87
February 21	242	21
February 25	2,527	93
February 28		
Total Undesignated	\$8,979	Avg Sun Attend: 86
Initial Ofrg Env	18	
Parish Ed Fund	1,545	
Memorials	450	
Air Cond Fund	8	
Sunday School	14	Avg SS Attend: 15

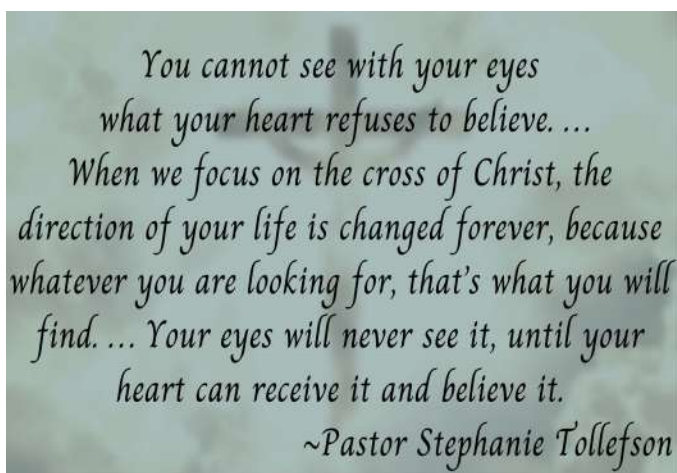
Income & Expenses - Year to Date		
Income	Undesignated	Other
\$18,323	\$16,019	\$2,304
Expenses	Budgeted	Designated Funds
27,774	27,747	27
Income vs Expense		
-9,451		

Are you a Thrivent Member?

Eligible members have until March 31, 2024, to direct dollars from 2023.

You can recommend where Thrivent distributes a portion of its charitable funds by directing Choice Dollars®. "Zion Lutheran Church" is a participating organization listed in the Thrivent Choice catalog. Be sure it's Zion in Elgin. It's an easy and much appreciated way to support our ministries.

Find more info at www.thrivent.com/thriventchoice or call 800-847-4836 and say "Thrivent Choice."



Pastor Tollefson is a pastor at First Lutheran Church, Fargo.

FIVE GIFTS OF DISCIPLESHIP ... during Easter

The season of Easter is an ideal time of the church year to emphasize LIVING OUR BAPTISM and discover the five gifts of discipleship. Easter celebrates the resurrection of Jesus. Jesus defeats death itself. He is risen indeed!

Easter propels us from the tomb and stench of death into a new life provided by Christ alone. Jesus lives again, but the story of his resurrection is not limited to his own single life. He lives, so others might live again. He lives, so we might be infused by the Holy Spirit to live as a new creation and in loving relationship with God.

The Apostle Paul in his letter to the Romans writes,

"Therefore we have been buried with him by baptism into death, so that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in the newness of life. For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we will certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his." (Romans 6:4-5 NRSV)

Baptism and Easter have always had a strong connection. As Christianity spread in the early church, the weeks before Easter were used to instruct and prepare people for their upcoming baptism at the Easter Vigil—the night before Easter Sunday. The liturgy of Holy Baptism beautifully describes this new life in Christ Jesus:

"God, who is rich in mercy and love, gives us a new birth into a living hope through the sacrament of baptism. By water and the Word, God delivers us from sin and death and raises us to new life in Jesus Christ. We are united with all the baptized in the one body of Christ, anointed with the gift of the Holy Spirit, and joined in God's mission for the life of the world." (Evangelical Lutheran Worship, page 227)

Of all seasons of the year, the weeks of the Easter season lend themselves to focus on "Living our Baptism." What does it mean to "join in God's mission for the life of the world"?

LIVING OUR BAPTISM 7 Texts for 7 days or 7 weeks

- What does it mean to have a life in Christ?
- Romans 5:10-11
 - Romans 5:17-18
 - Romans 6:4
 - Romans 6:22-23
 - Romans 8:2
 - Romans 8:6
 - Romans 8:38-39



Western North Dakota Synod Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

God's work. Our hands.

February 16, 2024

Rev. Mike HarriSon
Zion Lutheran Church (12616)
PO Box 56
Elgin, ND 58533

Dear Zion Lutheran Church,

Grace and peace in the name of our Savior Jesus the Christ!

Jesus says, "You are witnesses of these things." (Luke 24:48)

As part of the Western North Dakota synod, you and your congregation are called to be witnesses of the good news of Jesus, the savior of the world.

As the western North Dakota synod, here are a few small examples of the ways we witnessed to good news of Jesus in 2023 ...

... by supporting seminarians, pastors, deacons, and synod authorized ministers who serve alongside us in mission and ministry.

... on college, university, elementary, middle, and high school campuses and bible camp ministries that provided thousands of opportunities for worship, prayer, service, and fellowship.

... joining our sisters and brothers in Christ in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in the Central African Republic in joyous centennial celebrations in Minneapolis/St. Paul and across the countryside of Central Africa Republic.

... through new partnerships that are building new ministry opportunities within congregations and parishes across our synod.

... in church basements with gifted leaders who are carefully listening to the Spirit's voice as we give thanks for all that God has done through our congregations and wonder what God might be calling us into next.

Thank you for being a witness to the good news of Jesus! Zion Lutheran Church's 2023 Mission Support was \$2750. Simply stated, none of the work God calls us to do as church is possible without you. You are a gift for which this church is incredibly thankful.



Mission Support is the portion of a congregation's weekly financial offering that's shared with Western North Dakota Synod and the ELCA. Without your congregation's Mission Support, the work of the church that God is calling us into would not be possible.

Enclosed with this letter is a certificate of appreciation and a unique look at how your Mission Support dollars called "giving to the penny." Again, thank you for your congregation's generosity. And thank you for being part of the ministry and mission of the Western North Dakota Synod!

Serving in Christ Together,

The Rev. Craig A. Schweitzer
Bishop, Western North Dakota Synod – ELCA

enclosures: Mission Support certificate of appreciation
 Giving to the Penny



Offering to the Penny

Congregation: Zion Lutheran Church (12616)

City, State: Elgin

Your Congregation's 2023 Mission Support was: \$2,750.00

Your 2023 Mission Support funded: 50% Synod Ministries, 50% Churchwide Ministries.

Note: Of this amount, \$1,500 was budgeted; \$1,250 was a Mission Endowment Fund Disbursement. vr

	<u>Amount</u>
Your contribution to Synod Ministries:	<u>\$1,375.00</u>
Luther Seminary	\$96.25
Campus Ministry	\$151.25
Operations/Facilities	\$522.50
Synod Ministries: <i>Care of congregations and rostered leaders, call process, candidacy, communications, stewardship, congregational renewal developing leadership, events, affiliated ministries, finances and administration.</i>	\$605.00
	<u>\$1,375.00</u>

	<u>Amount</u>
Your contribution to Churchwide Ministries:	<u>\$1,375.00</u>
<u>Growing the ELCA in the USA</u>	\$325.13
Proclaim Jesus; start, renew, and empower congregations to witness and serve their communities; develop resources for faith, discipleship, prayer and worship.	
<u>Global Mission & Interfaith</u>	\$254.21
Send missionaries; train leaders; support companion churches in 80 countries; work with LWF; seek unity and dialogue, developing ecumenical partnership	
<u>Churchwide Ministries & Governance</u>	\$272.30
Coordinate with synods; provide resources; maintain constituent database; HR; offices; archives; receive gifts; governance -CWA, council, bishops, boards.	
<u>Support and Develop Leaders</u>	\$201.10
Support the 7 ELCA seminaries, 26 colleges and universities, youth events; recruiting and supporting rostered, lay, and retired leaders, engaging all baptized in ministry.	
<u>Communications, Technology & Strategic Planning</u>	\$139.25
Connect members; branding & messaging; analyze trends; improve ministry for today.	
<u>Stewardship</u>	\$96.39
Teaching and encouraging stewardship education; interpret ELCA mission; fundraising	
<u>Justice and Advocacy work</u>	\$86.63
Develop social statements & resources; equip members to advocate; social ministry.	
	<u>\$1,375.00</u>

**Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church
Council Meeting
February 11, 2024**

Present: Terry Bentz, Sydney Richardson, Virginia Rivinius, Doug Rivinius, Travis Friedt, Chris Gathright, Pastor Mike Harrison, Stephanie Lince, Bridget Winkler, Rhonda Haas, Jim Zimmerman, Ronae Hochhalter, Kenny Friedt. Absent: Brandy Fuchs, Tabitha Zimmerman, Kayedenn Rivinius, John Schock, Jackie Seibel, Blake Ulrich.

Meeting was called to order by President, Stephanie Lince, with a prayer.

Secretary's Report: Motion made by Terry Bentz and seconded by Doug Rivinius to approve the January minutes. Motion carried.

Treasurer's Report: Motion made by Kenny Friedt and seconded by Jim Zimmerman to approve the report. Motion carried.

Pastor's Report: Bible study will be starting Wednesday @ 10:00 am, looking at doing evening bible study; one Sunday out of the month at Dakota Hill for a service, looking at doing bible study at Dakota Hill; finished last class for first communion.

Correspondence: Received notice the church has two CD's that are coming due at the end of February. Motion made by Doug Rivinius and seconded by Ronae Hochhalter to roll both into 6-month CD's. Motion carried.

Committee Reports:

1. **Mission Endowment Fund** – No update.
2. **Parish Education** – No update.
3. **Property** – Doug Rivinius's neighbor Pete Gilmour will come to the church when weather gets nice to look at the property. Altar lights still needing to be changed to LED, will need the scissor lift from the school to change the lights.

Old Business:

1. **Property Insurance** – Virginia received a call from Andrew Roth at Dakota Community Bank on Friday that the church policy is in place. The church made a payment of \$1,911 on the Church Mutual policy but will be receiving a refund of the unused portion of the premium.

Jim Zimmerman, Doug Rivinius, Ronae Hochhalter and Bridget Winkler left the meeting as outgoing Council members.

New Business:

1. **Election of Officers** - Motion made by Kenny Friedt and seconded by Rhonda Haas for Terry

Bentz as Council President. Motion carried. Motion made by Kenny Friedt and seconded by Pastor Mike Harrison for Travis Friedt as Vice President. Motion carried. Motion made by Terry Bentz and seconded by Chris Gathright for Sydney Richardson as Secretary. Motion carried. Motion made by Sydney Richardson and seconded by Rhonda Haas for Chris Gathright as Treasurer. Motion carried.

2. **Authorized Signatures on Bank Accounts** – Motion made by Sydney Richardson and seconded by Kenny Friedt to have Terry Bentz, Chris Gathright, & Virginia Rivinius to be authorized signers on all bank accounts at First International Bank & Trust.
3. **Committees** – Tabled until next council meeting.
4. **Lent and Easter Services** – Every Wednesday starting February 14th, food at 5:30 with service to follow at 6:30. Sunrise service at 7:30 with regular service at 9:30.

Adjournment – Motion made by Sydney Richardson and seconded by Rhonda Haas to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried.

Sydney Richardson
Council Secretary

Highlights from the Annual Meeting

The annual congregation meeting was held on Sunday, February 4, 2024.

The proposed amendments to the constitution and bylaws and new continuing resolutions were approved by the congregation. The bylaws and continuing resolutions were incorporated into the constitution per Synod recommendation.

Council members elected were Travis Friedt, Chris Gathright, Rhonda Haas, Jackie Seibel, John Schock, and Blake Ulrich.

Members elected to serve on the Nominating Committee were Ronae Hochhalter, Stephanie Lince, Doug Rivinius, Bridget Winkler, Jim Zimmerman, and Tabitha Zimmerman.

Brianna Ricks was elected to serve on the Mission Endowment Fund Committee.

No delegates were elected to attend the Western North Dakota Synod Assembly, which is in Watford City May 31-June 2 this year. Therefore, the council, in accordance with the constitution, shall seek representatives.

The budget of \$157,673 was approved for 2024.

Abbreviations

- A - Acolyte
- AG - Altar Guild
- C - Communion
- L - Lector
- G - Greeter



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	
<p><i>In his great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,</i> <i>1 Peter 1:3</i></p>						<p>1</p> <p>Hazel F Arla R</p>	<p>2</p> <p>AG: Chelsey L Stephanie L</p> <p>Jackson L</p>
<p>9:30 Worship 10:30 S School / Confirmation / Fellowship</p> <p>A: Axel L: Shayli C: Stephanie G: Jim & Patty</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Brinley S</p>	<p>4</p>	<p>5</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Neil S</p>	<p>6</p> <p>5:30 Supper 6:30 Worship</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Robin B</p>	<p>7</p> <p>12:30 Bible Study 1:30 WELCA</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Doug K</p>	<p>8</p>	<p>9</p> <p>AG: Marie K Cheryl W</p> 	
<p>9:30 Worship 10:30 S School / Confirmation / Council Meeting / Fellowship</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Linda K Faith U</p>	<p>A: Zane L: Kay C: Becky G: Doug & Joleen</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Steve W</p>	<p>12</p>	<p>13</p> <p>5:30 Supper 6:30 Worship</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Alexis B Velvet F Shawn L Cassie R</p>	<p>14</p> <p>12:30 Bible Study 1:30 Fellowship at Dakota Hill</p>	<p>15</p>	<p>16</p> <p>AG: Misti H Cyndy Z</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Fiona F</p>	
<p>9:30 Worship 10:30 S School / Confirmation / Fellowship 1:30 Worship at D. Hill</p> <p>A: Mykayla L: Joy C: Bridget G: George & Chris Aaron F</p>	<p>18</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Todd A Shaylee F</p>	<p>19</p>  <p style="text-align: right;">Jeanette B</p>	<p>20</p> <p>5:30 Supper 6:30 Worship</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Mike S</p>	<p>21</p> <p>12:30 Bible Study</p>	<p>22</p>	<p>23</p> <p>AG: Ruby K Jackie S</p>	
<p>9:30 Worship 10:30 S School / Confirmation / Fellowship</p>  <p style="text-align: right;">Andy R Sally Z</p>	<p>A: Landon E L: Lance C: Yvonne G: Ruby, Reuben</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Mason Z</p>	<p>26</p>	<p>27</p> <p>L: Patty C: Ronae</p>	<p>28</p>  <p style="text-align: center;">Maundy THURSDAY</p> <p>6:30 Worship</p>	<p>29</p>  <p style="text-align: center;">Good FRIDAY</p> <p>6:30 Worship</p>	<p>30</p> <p>AG: Doris F Patty Z Ronae H</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Tate R</p>	
<p>7:30 Sunrise Worship 8:30 Breakfast 9:30 Worship</p> 	<p>7:30 A: Otto L: Jace C: Shayli G: Bree, Ryan</p> <p>9:30 A: Ivy L: Eric C: Jill G: Twyla, Robin</p>	<p>Alleluia! Christ is Risen!</p>					