

Zion Herald

Issue 4

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2020

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Would you like to be added to Zion's email list? Invitations to online worship services & special events and congregational updates are sent on a regular basis. Email the church office, zionhbg@comcast.net, to begin receiving church emails.

Dear Members & Friends of Zion,

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

And behold, a lawyer stood up to put him [Jesus] to the test, saying, "Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?" ²⁶ He said to him, "What is written in the Law? How do you read it?" ²⁷ And he answered, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind, and your neighbor as yourself." ²⁸ And he said to him, "You have answered correctly; do this, and you will live." ²⁹ But he, desiring to justify himself, said to Jesus, "And who is my neighbor?" ³⁰ Jesus replied, "A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and he fell among robbers, who stripped him and beat him and departed, leaving him half dead. ³¹ Now by chance a priest was going down that road, and when he saw him he passed by on the other side. ³² So likewise a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side. ³³ But a Samaritan, as he journeyed, came to where he was, and when he saw him, he had compassion. ³⁴ He went to him and bound up his wounds, pouring on oil and wine. Then he set him on his own animal and brought him to an inn and took care of him. ³⁵ And the next day he took out two denarii^[c] and gave them to the innkeeper, saying, 'Take care of him, and whatever more you spend, I will repay you when I come back.' ³⁶ Which of these three, do you think, proved to be a neighbor to the man who fell among the robbers?" ³⁷ He said, "The one who showed him mercy." And Jesus said to him, "You go, and do likewise."

- Luke 10:25 – 37, English Standard Version

As a result of spending more time at home, I am now better able to answer, "Who is my neighbor?" in my actual neighborhood. For several weeks, those of us who share an alley have been gathering weekly (with proper distancing) for social time on the evening when we put out our trash cans. People have been checking on those who live next door and many have been recipients of neighborly care. For some of us, our sense of community around home has expanded during this time of pandemic. These connections may bring opportunities to pray for others and to share our Christian faith in meaningful ways.

In addition to community ties, I have heard stories of renewed connections with family and friends located miles away. Some hold weekly zoom conversations. Others set up ongoing group text conversations. And the same is true for the church family Zion. Almost every

time I speak with a parishioner, they let me know about a fellow member who has recently group text conversations.

Jesus expands our sense of neighbor, beyond geography or family ties. In the parable of the “Good Samaritan,” a neighbor is one who actively cares for a stranger in need, even one who may be perceived as an enemy.

As the first-century theologian Tertullian observed, strangers in the ancient world—who had been conditioned by their culture to distrust and despise one another—had one compelling reason to join the early Christian church. As they looked in on the small gatherings of people who were once strangers to each other, they were astonished to see “how the love one another.” - from Healing the Heart of Democracy, Parker J. Palmer

Prior to COVID-19, my literal neighbors were actually like strangers to me. After spending time with them, listening to them and sharing with them, they have become friends. Getting to know my neighbors has led to celebrating joys with them and to us assisting one another when we become aware of another’s need.

Everyone is our neighbor. Yet today, we often feel like we are living in very unneighborly times. Due to limits on gatherings, we now have less opportunities to interact with strangers whom we may get to know, to love, and to serve. As we continue to practice social distancing, I encourage us to engage in meaningful listening and conversation with those we do not know well. Blessed friendships may blossom as we follow our Lord’s teaching to love our neighbor.

In Christ’s Service, Pastor Karin

Caring for Neighbors in Need

Many are experiencing financial hardship during this time of pandemic. I am encouraged to know that many of the Zion church family are personally assisting neighbors, family, and friends with basic supplies. When staff are in the building, they have distributed food, clothes, and toiletries to those in need. To support those community who are going without daily bread, Zion supports and encourages the support of the following organizations.

Bethesda Mission <https://www.bethesdamission.org/>

Central Pennsylvania Food Bank <https://www.centralpafoodbank.org/>

Christian Churches United of the Tri-County Area <https://www.ccuahbg.org/>

Downtown Daily Bread <https://pinestreet.org/ministries/downtown-daily-bread/>

The Salvation Army Harrisburg Capital City Region
<https://pa.salvationarmy.org/harrisburg-pa/Home>

LOOKING AHEAD

Due to uncertain conditions and frequently changing restrictions, Zion plans to maintain online worship services and fellowship on Zoom on Sundays and Wednesdays.

Online Worship Schedule

Sunday 10:15am, Prelude begins at 10:10am
3rd Sunday Communion

Wednesdays 12:10pm, Prelude begins at 12:05pm
1st Sunday Communion

Communion Information: Those wishing to commune during online worship are invited to intentionally prepare for communion prior to the start of the service. Prayerfully bring the elements of bread and wine or grape juice to where you will be worshipping. If you need assistance to obtain proper elements of bread, wine or grape juice, please contact the pastor. Since the fullness of the sacrament is present in one of the elements, you may commune with bread or wine/grape juice and simply bow in prayer as the other element is raised in worship. Please consume the elements or return them to the earth following the service. The bulletin will also include a prayer for spiritual communion for those who are not participating in distance communion. More information about distance communion is available on the church website.

Opportunities to Serve in Worship: There are opportunities to serve in online worship as lector (reading Scripture lessons) and providing special music. Please contact Pastor Karin to volunteer.

Thanks to those currently serving in worship: Zion expresses it's appreciation to Catherine Germann, our Tech Minister, who is creating beautiful slides and running our online Zoom worship services; to Jeff Springer who is recording music for worship; to Norma Swain who is providing music for Sunday worship, both by playing piano and by procuring recordings of guest vocalists and musicians; to Judy Atticks who plays the prelude for WOW (Worship on Wednesday); to those who are serving as lectors on Sundays; to the choir, whose recordings are providing anthems; and to Pastor Keith Eslinger who has served as online supply preacher and worship leader.

Outdoor Worship Opportunity

Judy Atticks has graciously offered for Zion to hold an outdoor worship service in her spacious and shaded backyard. We will be monitoring the weather in order to schedule this event. Notification will be communicated through group email and by phone.

Planning for Wednesday In-Person Evening Prayer & Communion

Pastor Karin is tentatively planning for an in-person evening prayer service with Holy Communion. This will be a brief spoken service. There will be the opportunity for those who wish to serve as eucharistic ministers to families and neighbors to take consecrated elements with them at the conclusion of the service. Details will be communicated by group email and will be on the church voicemail and website.

PB & Jesus Bible Study, Tuesdays at 12:10pm, beginning on September 1, on Zoom

Pastor Karin will lead this study from 12:10-12:50pm. The first meeting is on the Biblical topic of Sabbath-Keeping. At this first meeting, there will be an opportunity to discuss books or passages from the Bible or Biblical themes for future studies.

Additional Zoom Fellowship Possibilities

As we seek to stay connected in these interesting times, additional monthly Zoom gatherings are being explored. One possibility is monthly “Table Talk” gatherings, one at noon and one in the evening to accommodate varying schedules. Luther enjoyed food, drink, and lively faithful conversation about a variety of topics with colleagues and friends. We could bring a favorite beverage with us in front of the screen and explore topics such as music, books, film, and current events from a Biblical perspective. Other fellowship gathering ideas are welcome. Please reach out to Pastor Karin. Check your email and the website for upcoming events.

Home and neighborhood gatherings for prayer, with proper social distancing, are encouraged; especially meeting outdoors as cooler fall weather comes! Devotional materials are available on the church website or can be mailed upon request.

Annual Meeting on September 27

The council is planning to conduct the Annual Meeting on Zoom directly following the 10:15am worship service. The items on the agenda are: approval of the 2019 Annual Meeting minutes, election of council members, and approval of the 2020-2021 budget. As per Zion’s constitution, voting members have the option to vote by absentee ballot. More details will be mailed to voting members prior to the meeting.

Council Meetings

August 24 & September 28, at 6:30pm on Zoom

Note of Appreciation: Many thanks go out to Zion’s staff, council members, and lay leaders continue to work faithfully on behalf of the church family. Council members have held several extra meetings to prayerfully guide the congregation through these changing times. The office administrator keeps us connected through group emails and website updates. The financial secretary and treasurer continue to make deposits and pay our bills. Special cleaning projects are underway while we are out of the building.

Communicating during the time of COVID-19. We are sending **group emails** to provide updates. If you are not receiving the emails and would like to add your email address to this communication, please email the **church office (zionhbg@comcast.net)**. The **voicemail greeting for the church office (717-234-4064)** and the **church website (www.zionharrisburg.org)** are frequently updated. The church office voicemail and email (information above) are checked regularly. Pastor Karin is available by phone, text, and/or email. Contact the church office for details.

Office Hours: Monday, 9-11am The office administrator, Deitra Jones, plans to be in the office at this time to answer phone calls, sort mail, and other office responsibilities.

Assistance with Shopping for Supplies. There are members on the East and West Shores who have offered to pick up groceries, prescriptions, or other life-sustaining supplies for those in need. Contact the church office or Pastor Karin.

Church Offering. We thank all who continue to generously support ministry at Zion. Contributions can be mailed to the church office:

Zion Lutheran Church, 15 S. 4th Street, Harrisburg, PA 17101

Worship at Bethesda Mission Men's Shelter on 2nd Sundays at 7:00pm

August 9 & September 13

Pastor Karin and Todd Pejack and volunteers from Zion and St. Timothy Lutheran Church in Camp Hill bring a monthly worship service of Holy Communion to the Men's Shelter.

This outreach ministry resumed last month. Adjustments in conducting the service have been made and safety protocols are in place for the protection of clients and volunteers. Around fifty men attended last month. For more information or to volunteer, please contact Pastor Karin or Todd.

3rd Friday Fallout Shelter Inspirational Coffee House ZOOM PARTY!!!

Friday, August 21, 6:30pm—8:30pm

Friday, September 18, may meet outdoors at Zion or at another location

For those seeking spiritual refreshment at the end of the week, come join us for live music, poetry, prayer, and more. Online open mic opportunities for those wishing to share their talent in meaningful and uplifting ways.

The guideline for participating live at the Zoom Party is Ephesians 4:29 "Let no corrupting talk come out of your mouths, but only such as is good for building up, as fits the occasion, that it may give grace to those who hear." At the Zoom Parties over the past months, we have been blessed to hear from returning favorites and new participants. We welcome recorded music and presentations. Email Pastor Karin at the church office (zionhbg@comcast.net) for details. The link and call in information to attend will be emailed closer to the event, and will also be available on Zion's website: www.zionharrisburg.org

Coming and Goings: Anna Royer, our previous organist, has transferred her membership back to Zion. Kim Yunez and her family have moved to North Carolina. The church office can provide for current contact information.

Prayer List

Persons with acute need of prayer for physical and/or spiritual healing (upcoming surgery/procedure/tests; recovery from recent illness or surgery /procedure /tests):

Sharon Barrow, Paul Bernard, Betty Cooper, Roy Sapp

Persons in need of prayer for long-term physical and/or spiritual healing: Tom Adamson, Carol Dietrich, John Dietrich, Patrick Drisgill, Kelly Grubbs, Nancy Eshenour, Deb Eslinger, Jim Helman, Deitra Jones, Jim Jordan, Margret Jordan, Heather Kates, Susan Kichman, Ken Kline, Mary Koch, John Lundsted, Chase Michelsen, Mark Megoulas, Sonia Murphy, Hazel Noggle, Janice Pickering, Kasey Ramer, Susan Rinehold, Josh Rohrbach, Sara Rohrbach, Danielle Saylor, Alex Sheaffer, Barbara Simpson, Charles Springer, Bill Shultz, Lien Ngoc Thieu, Matthew Straub, Sally String-Wilson, Bud Wisman, Judy Wisman, Marissa Wisman.

If you have asked that someone be placed on our prayer list will you please let us know when prayers have been answered or the need has changed. Please call or email the church office.

Birthdays & Anniversaries

August Birthdays

Michael Reynolds 08/04
Glenn Weikert 08/06
Jim Helman 08/07
Janet Shultz 08/07
Deitra Jones 08/17
Bill Shultz 08/21
Drew Dunn 08/23
Judy Reynolds 08/26
Bailey Dunn 08/29

August Anniversaries

Farid and Kim Yunez 08/02
Keith and Debra Eslinger 08/06
John and Dixie Geistwite 08/24

September Birthdays

Michael Megoulas 09/12
Dixie Geistwite 09/13
Dena Lavender 09/15
Bud Wisman 09/19
Margaret Leedom 09/26
Ann Pacey 09/30

September Anniversaries

Irv & Nancy Eshenour 09/02
Todd and Sandy Wisman 09/17
Lee and Judy Atticks 09/23

CARD SHOWERS DURING COVID

During this time when we are unable to meet together or visit in person, we are making a special effort to support our homebound members and those without family or a support network in the area on their birthday. We invite you to brighten their day with a birthday card. It will be a surprise, because recipients' newsletters do not contain this announcement.

Jim Helman (08/07)

19 S. 4th Street, #200

Harrisburg, PA 17101

OPERATION CHRISTMAS CHILD 2020

We are collecting items for the shoebox ministry by Samaritans Purse, and we need your help to make this project a success. Last year you packed 50 boxes, this year lets make it 51. Not only do the boxes contain toys, school supplies, accessories, crafts, but also the good news of Jesus Christ. Lots of joy is spread to the children who receive the boxes, The boxes will be packed with joy in our hearts and prayers for the children as we assemble each one.

How can you help:

There is a list of suggested items for boys and girls and certain ages. If you would like to purchase the items for a box please contact me, and I will send you the age and gender list you would like . This list will help you in making decisions on what to buy. If you can't get out to shop, some of our members will be happy to shop for you. you can send me a check or cash and we will spend it wisely and prayerfully.

You can go on line and get more information and stories about the boxes that have been distributed in the past at samaritanspurse.org

Even though the pandemic has changed many things, the joy in the hearts of little children when they get a surprise gift always lifts their spirits. We can give them this gift this Christmas,

Items need to be available by the end of October. The boxes will be packed the following week and shipped by the middle of November.

Because Zion's building is closed most of the week, we are designating two homes, one one on the East Shore (Judy Atticks) and one on the West Shore (Pastor Karin) as drop-off locations. Judy's information is listed below. Call Pastor Karin at 717-761-4797 to arrange dropping off items at her house.

If you have any questions, please call Judy Atticks at 717-564-0798 or e-mail her at ljatticks@yahoo.com or send a check to Judy Atticks 6441 Shatto Drive Harrisburg PA 17111

The article below is the eleventh in a series about spiritual practices illustrated by stained-glass windows in our worship space. The articles were written as part of one of the classes in the Doctor of Ministry Program from which Pastor Karin recently graduated. The article has been updated.

Great Commission: Jesus With Us Always

Now the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain to which Jesus had directed them. And when they saw him they worshiped him, but some doubted. And Jesus came and said to them, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”

– Matthew 28:16-20 English Standard Version



In the window portraying the “Great Commission,” we see the resurrected Lord with his hand raised in blessing toward the disciples. A few are in postures of worship, with hands folded in prayer. Matthew’s gospel, we read that “some doubted.” Maybe, for them, it was too good to be true that Jesus was risen, even though they saw him with their own eyes.

If we hear in Holy Scripture that the disciples in Jesus’ presence experienced doubt, should we be surprised that doubt may be part of the faith journey for us? Maybe doubt creeps in during periods when we feel distant from God. Bible scholar and minister, Renita Weems, in her book, *Listening for God: A Minister’s Journey Through Silence and Doubt*, writes about her struggle in this way:

I had to fall in and out of love with God a thousand times before I finally figured out that it was all right to fall in and out of love a thousand times, that just because God is silent doesn’t mean that God is absent.

As Christians in the Lutheran tradition, we believe that we are saved by grace through faith in Jesus Christ and that this “most certainly true,” whether we feel it or not. And there will be times when we don’t experience God as being close to us. It’s OK to talk about it. In the Psalms and in Job, the faithful pour out their honest struggles and place them directly before God. That precedent can ground us when we lovingly take time to listen to and to pray with those who may be experiencing doubt as they walk with the Lord. I am very grateful to caring sisters and brothers in the faith who walked with me when I struggled in my faith journey. Their presence with me reminded me that Christ is indeed with us always. May the Holy Spirit guide us and strengthen us to actively accompany each other through the happy and, especially, through the hard stretches of our earthly pilgrimage.