

Rev. Gary Hendrickson 320.360.9617
D.C.O Peter Keyes 320.232.3108

Zion Lutheran Church
411 - 3rd Ave. NE
Little Falls, MN 56345

Zion Steward



December 2020
Newsletter

Saturday Worship 6:30 pm
Sunday Worship 9:00am
Communion every weekend
Office hours vary during pandemic

Office Admin: Barb Johnson
Email: Zionlf@yahoo.com
Phone: 320-632-5792
Website: zionlf.com

ZION LUTHERAN CHURCH COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES – November 9, 2020

Attendance: Pastor Gary Hendrickson, DCO (Director of Christian Outreach) Peter Keyes, VP Barb Jelinski, President Carol Prozinski, Treasurer Don Stover, Evangelism Committee Rep. Nancy Christensen, Trustee Ben Messinger, Co-financial Secretary Peggy Dolney, Acting Recording Secretary Marilyn Husby

6:34pm - Meeting called to order by Vice President Barb Jelinski

Church Council meeting minutes from October 12, 2020 Approved with the following amendment

Evangelism Friendship Club outreach speaker Oct 16 talked about nurse practitioners not home health

PASTORS REPORT: Pastor Hendrickson: * 48 phone calls * Premarital counseling completed and Marriage of Jeremy & Stephany Johnson held Oct 7th in their Little Falls home * 1 Homebound visit * upcoming baptism of Liam Daniel Lipke Nov 22nd * Next Polka Praise Services: April 11,2021 and Sept 26, 2021 * Pastor's Circuit Meeting attended Nov 3rd and next meeting is at Zion December 8th * positive comments received re weekly e-mails for worship readings and sermon * Usual Office hours: Secretary Barb Johnson Thursday mornings, Pastor 2 hours each weekday morning. No transfers in or out

DCO REPORT: Peter Keyes: Sunday School: 25 packages/4 lessons of Sunday School materials targeting ages 3-11 years (39 children) mailed or handed out * Does not have phone numbers for most children * Looking for ways to interact with children ie having a coloring sheet contest * Ben Messinger reinforcing pastor's confirmation lesson with a review during Sunday School * Zion website has links to Zion sermons, other LCMS pastor sermons, and Vimeo links

TREASURER'S REPORT: Don Stover: Offerings year-to-date (YTD) under budget \$132,088 actual vs \$169,185 budget * 2020 YTD amount \$132,088 slightly over 2019's YTD amount of \$129,667 * 2020 YTD net cash flow after expenses is a positive \$22,431 due to COVID curtailed activities, delayed budgeted facility expenses, and pastor waived 3.5 months' s pay (\$8,258)

ELDERS: Report of Sheldon Prozinski read by Carol Prozinski: background checks performed on church financial personnel * Jerry Knafla, Peggy Dolney & Carol Prozinski know how to set up CD player for music with words during services * Elders recommend no pay increases for paid church members due to lowered giving, low inflation, and corona impacts * Elders starting process to research method of calling a pastor * Donated household goods are stored at old garage until sale can be held * Elders approve Mary Kay Harris to work with pastor and contact members * Membership applications sent to 3 people.

Council discussion: Noted that one person came without a mask to worship last Sunday * Our Zion Covid 19 Preparedness Plan says masks are mandatory * Elders and ushers should ensure worshipers wear masks

TRUSTEES: Peter Keyes: Trustees discussed the budget

YOUTH/EDUCATION: Peter Keyes: youth went to Arboretum scary trail

STEWARDSHIP: no report: last meeting was cancelled * next Door offering is for Gideons

EVANGELISM: Nancy Christensen: Christian Kindness program promoted at both worship services and the Confirmation class * Looking for new name for Friendship Club since some think need to belong. * Next speaker: Don Fitch Nov 13, 1pm regarding his time in WWII. Photos uploaded. The American legion wants Don to go to the studio and make a TV recording of the presentation. * December 11, 1pm speaker: Greg Valentine will tell his story about being a chaplain at the Morrison County sheriff's department * Jerry Knafla is checking into getting street sign with arrows pointing 4 blocks to Zion Lutheran * Sue Vosen is overseeing Blood drive Dec 1st * Nearby city bench is recently available for advertising-\$700 allocated if bench still available.

Council discussion: Consider advertising for the 6:30pm Thanksgiving Eve Service since many churches don't have Thanksgiving services * Nancy will check in to this

OLD BUSINESS:

Incorporation status: Don Stover: Zion and MN Secretary of State status updated to currently accepted Section 317A status * Legal name with State of MN is: Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church, Little Falls, Morrison County, Minnesota * We can now DBA (do business as) Zion Lutheran Church of Little Falls or DBA as Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church of Little Falls * Banking changes will now be easier * Several other shorter names were already taken * Status update printed in the Morrison County Record

Constitution and Bylaws: Carol Prozinski: pending input from all boards

Church Council positions: President Carol Prozinski appointed Marilyn Husby as Acting Recording Secretary & Eugene Doucette as acting trustee * Elections to be held at January 2021 Voters Assembly

NEW BUSINESS:

2021 Zion preliminary budget: Don Stover: reviewed budgeting process for 2021 * Requests that all boards turn in their budget figures asap * Council will discuss and vote on the budget in December and present it to Voter's Assembly in January * In process of looking at future budget/financial needs regarding calling a pastor

Paycheck Protection Program (PPP): Don Stover: PPP loan forgiveness documents submitted to Small Business Admin (SBA) on Oct 29th * PPP loan for \$14,300 obtained last spring as part of government COVID relief program * If accepted and forgiven by SBA, amount becomes a free grant to Zion

Fellowship Hall use: Peter Keyes: The Board of Oasis (a non-profit board of community pastors and ministers) needs meeting space the 3rd Monday of the month from 5:30pm-6:30pm * Franciscan sisters meeting place is not available during the pandemic * No conflicts noted * They will follow COVID guidelines * Peter will sanitize * No council objections and permission granted

ADJOURN: Council Meeting adjourned by Barb Jelinski at 7:42pm followed by the **LORD'S PRAYER**

Upcoming Meetings: Church Council Meeting Monday, December 14, 2020 @ 6:30pm

Voter's Assembly Sunday, January 31, 2021 @ 10:15am

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Submitted for Zion Church Council Approval: Marilyn Husby, Acting Recording Secretary

Stewardship Corner

As my wife and I were moving into our home, we were told that we had voles living in our yard. "Voles? What are voles?" I asked. This city boy had never heard of voles, much less ever seen one. A neighbor explained that they are related to mice, but stubbier.

Although I had yet to see a vole, I believed they were there because my neighbor had seen them. Just because I had not spotted one didn't mean that they didn't exist. Sure enough, one night we flipped on the backyard light, and it was like the vole circus had come to town!

We face a similar challenge regarding faith. Sometimes, either consciously or sub consciously, we feel that if we can't see it, it's not there or isn't true. For example, no one has seen heaven. In fact, the apostle Paul tells us that heaven is so astounding that we can't even imagine it! But does that change the fact that heaven is there and waiting for us? No.

Jesus Christ is coming back to personally take us to heaven, a real and literal place where he will wipe every tear from our eyes, and there will be no more death or sorrow or crying or pain.

Need a Christmas gift? The ZLW and quilters are having a display of their quilts for two weekends. The first weekend after Thanksgiving Nov. 28 & 29 and the first weekend in December 5 & 6. The sizes and prices will be on the tags of each quilt. If interested stop by, there will be someone there to help you.



The Fiery Gospel

Luke 12:49 ⁴⁹“I (Jesus) came to cast fire on the earth, and would that it were already kindled!”

We all know what the word Gospel means—the Good News. The Good News that Jesus Christ died on the cross in our place so that all who believe can spend an eternity in heaven with the Triune God. But the word Fiery does not convey anywhere near the same assurance to us. Usually, fiery brings forth visions of judgment—of hell itself—the fiery pit—the vengeance of God upon all sinners—the just desserts of one's actions. Jesus came to save us—that is the Gospel—and he came to bring fire on the earth—thus, the Fiery Gospel.

The terminology used by Jesus was not at all unfamiliar to the ears of those who first our text. The prophet Malachi had foretold that the Lord would come like a refiner's fire (3:2). To us, the meaning of “the refiner's fire” may have lost some of its clarity. Simply put, the purpose of this kind of fire was to purify something. When used in relation to the children of God, it would mean to purify or to refine them. Fire would be a synonym for—mean the same thing as—the trials and tribulations that believers face. Every time we face one of them successfully, our faith is strengthened—our faith is purified and refined. While God tempts no man (Jas 1:13), He allows afflictions and enticements in our lives and promises to provide us with the strength to overcome them or give us a way of escape (1 Cor 10:13).

In the same manner that fire purifies and refines the children of God, that same fire consumes and destroys the ungodly (Mal 4:1). Most Jews had no problem with that statement because they interpreted this to mean—Gentiles only. After all, they were the descendants of Abraham. They had nothing to worry about. Today, we have those who believe that if a person is a member of any church, he/she has nothing to worry about. Well, we know how wrong that kind of thinking is. Heritage or simple church membership will save no one—only the blood of Jesus can save. Those who refuse Jesus' offer of salvation will be consumed by the never-ending fire. The Fiery Gospel is Good News to the believers and Law—Judgment to those who reject it.

Peter tells us that believers are not to be surprised when trials—that is, fires—come into our lives (1 Pet 4:12). These things are to be expected. No one ever told us that being a Christian was going to be easy. Rather, we must go through many hardships to enter the Kingdom of God (Acts 14:22). Jesus said, “Blessed are you when men hate you, when they exclude you and insult you and reject your name as evil, because of the Son of Man” (Lk 6:22). All this we have been told beforehand so that when it happens, we will not be taken unaware.

Jesus is the Great Divider. When Jesus was only eight days old, it was prophesied that he was destined to cause the falling and rising of many in Israel (Lk 2:34). Some believed that Jesus was the Messiah of God, but others did not. The great division comes with this statement, “Whoever is not with him is against him.” (Lk 11:23) Push comes to shove over Jesus. The lies of Universalism—that a loving God wouldn't let anyone go to hell—and the belief of the automatic salvation of every person of Jewish heritage are exposed by the Apostle Paul when he writes

that the unbelievers in the world will “perish because they refused to love the truth and so be saved” (2 Thessalonians 2:10). Only believers will be saved!

Yes, it is true that Jesus came to cast fire on the earth. Fire purifies the believers and consumes those who reject Jesus Christ. Our Lord came to save all men—and through his suffering, death, and resurrection, he did. He is the Savior of the world, but some choose to perish in the eternal fire through their unbelief and rejection of the Lord. Because Jesus came, there is a division in homes, countries, and in our world. A division between those who believe and those who do not. The Fiery Gospel purifies and saves, but it is a death warrant to unbelievers. The Good News is that Jesus has commissioned us to tell every living being that He has overcome the division between God and man and offers salvation to each—and every sinner. The Fiery Gospel is judgment only if man chooses the fire and rejects the Christ.

Advent is...

...the anticipation of the coming of our Lord. Too often we think of Advent as a time to prep for Christmas. Gift buying and home decorating, party planning, school vacation, travel plans, and family gatherings. This year Christmas may look a little different, our world has been shaken up by an unseen bug, the virus behind Covid-19. We have been asked to restrict our family gatherings to only those with whom we currently live. We may not be able to live up to the expectations of the glorious Christmas celebrations of the past. But could it be that we have lost the true meaning of Christmas and also that of Advent... the anticipation of the 2nd coming of our Lord.

I have a friend who believes we are in the final days of life on this earth. She believes that Christ's return could be any day now. She is waiting with eager anticipation for Jesus Christ to come in all His glory to gather His children and all of the saints for that day of resurrection and celebration as we together enter the gates of heaven in triumphant praise. Some might consider her to be a “religious fanatic” and avoid engaging in conversations with her. They are more interested in the reality of life on earth than they are in life in the here-after.

Our Christian faith demands that we have balance of both... living for Jesus Christ here on earth by sharing His love with others and living with the expectation of life eternal in heaven after our Lord and Savior returns to bring us into His kingdom.

God promised to send a Savior... he came to earth as a baby born of Mary. He also came into Jerusalem as a humble king riding on a donkey in fulfillment of another promise. He died and rose from the dead to pay the price for our sins and give us the sure hope of salvation, the promise of resurrection and eternal life. He will be coming again ... so we wait for His return... in advent anticipation.

Peter Keyes (Director of Christian Outreach)



Christian Kindness Evangelism Project: Everybody please participate!

This is for ALL AGES from youth to elderly

Christian kindness offers an opportunity to share God's Love in a gentle way. During this Covid pandemic there are opportunities to be kind. In response, you may say "You are welcome" but then remember to deflect the praise to God. Say something to bring God/Jesus to mind and verbally give God the credit for bringing you to the place where you can do a kind act in Jesus name. If you bring God/Jesus into your response, it can create a "God just showed up in my life" moment for the recipient. Community people, Christians, church members, family members, friends, and non-believers need Christian Kindness in Jesus name. We are all helpers for Jesus!

All ages: Please report your acts of Christian Kindness either by church phone: 320-632-5792, by email: (Zionlf@yahoo.com (Zionlf stands for Zion Little Falls), or by bringing your own pen and writing on the Christian Kindness poster board in the church lobby. (please: no names)

We will publish how many Christian Kindness acts were reported but will not include names. We may also anonymously mention some of the acts of Christian kindness to give ideas and encouragement to others. (In the future we may choose a Church wide Kindness project.)

A few ideas for Christian Kindness:

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|---------------------------------|--|
| Volunteer for anything | Give something away |
| Send a letter, call a shut-in | Give a gift to someone not expecting it |
| Provide a free service | Cook a meal, deliver meals on wheels |
| Seek out the lonely or grieving | Give somebody groceries, give away stamps. |
- Do something nice for a family member, friend, neighbor, stranger

Conversation starters suggested: Let God guide you

- "God wants me to let you know that He loves you"
- "This is an act of Christian Kindness" "God bless you"
- "I want to bless you because I have been blessed by God"
- "I am sharing God's free love and grace with you today"
- "I am showing God's love to you in a practical way"

Galatians 6:9 – Let us not become weary in doing good.....



WOMEN'S MONDAY MORNING BIBLE STUDY

Mondays, December 7 and 14 at 9:00 a.m.

Women's Monday Morning Bible study will continue meeting on Mondays, December 7 and 14 at 9:00 a.m. in the Fellowship Hall, studying "Psalms: Conversations with God." We need to wear masks, social distance, and bring our own Bibles. Study materials are provided. Contact Barb Jelinski (632-3435) if you have any questions. We will not meet on Monday, December 28.

LUTHERAN WOMAN'S QUARTERLY BIBLE STUDY

Monday, December 21 at 9:00 a.m.

The Lutheran Woman's Quarterly Bible study will meet on Monday, December 21 at 9:00 a.m. in the Fellowship Hall, wearing masks, and social distancing. The study, "We've Got Good News to Tell," is found on p.20 of the Fall 2020 LWQ. Hope you can join us!

ZLW MEETING

There will not be a ZLW meeting in December, but we will plan to meet again on Monday, January 18, 2021 at 10:00 a.m.

CARD SENDING PARTY

Monday, December 7 at 10:00 a.m.

Following the Monday Morning Bible study on December 7, we will meet at 10:00 a.m. to have a Christmas card sending party. If you would like to help with this activity, wear your mask, bring a pen, and join us in the Fellowship Hall. Materials will be provided. Social distancing guidelines will be followed. This activity is one way we can share God's love with others at this "socially restricted" Christmas time.

NO FALL BAZAAR THIS YEAR, BUT YOU CAN STILL HELP

At the September ZLW meeting, it was decided to not have the annual fall bazaar this year, due to COVID-19. Because of that, the ZLW realizes that there will be a budget shortfall, since the bazaar is the main fundraiser of the year. So, it was decided to have a "**VIRTUAL BAZAAR**" this year. That means that if you typically would have made any kind of donation to the bazaar (crafts, food items, soup ingredients, etc.), or purchased any items at the bazaar, we are asking you to consider making a monetary donation to the ZLW this year. Those monies will help fund the many local projects to which the ZLW contributes, such as Hands of Hope, Oasis Share-a-Meal, Local Elementary Schools, Little Falls Health Care Center, St. Otto's, and Lutheran Island Camp Camperships. If you wish to make a donation, put your money or check (made out to the ZLW) in an envelope (Attention: Nancy Peterson) and put it into the offering plate or Nancy Peterson's church mailbox during the month of December. You can also mail it to Zion Lutheran Church, Attn: Nancy Peterson, 411 3rd Ave. NE, Little Falls, MN, 56345. Any donations are appreciated and will allow us to continue helping with community needs. Thank you!

DECEMBER 2020					
DEC		ELDER	USHERS	READERS	ORGANIST
5	COM	Greg Rausch	Marie Holey Jennifer Hanson	Jennifer Hanson	Carol Prozinski
6	COM	Jerry Knafla	Eugene Doucette Dennis Hollermann	Barb Jelinski	Carol Prozinski
12	COM	Craig Bohnsack	Mark Hengemuhle	Duane Schmidt	Peggy Dolney
13	COM	Sheldon Prozinski	Marcel Bellefeuille	Katie Schumann	Peggy Dolney
19	COM	Greg Rausch	Mike Beseman Julie Dancer	Duane Schmidt	Carol Prozinski
20	COM	Craig Bohnsack	Ben Messenger	Amanda Dawson	Carol Prozinski
24	C EVE	Sheldon Prozinski	Peter Shirley Marcel Bellefeuille	Sheldon Prozinski	Carol Prozinski
25	C DAY	Jerry Knafla	Marcel Bellefeuille Ben Messenger Wayne Ganz	Jerry Knafla	Peggy Dolney
26	COM	Sheldon Prozinski	Duane & Shirley Schmidt	Sheldon Prozinski	Peggy Dolney
27	COM	Craig Bohnsack	Wayne & Bing Ganz	Kayla Bohnsack	Peggy Dolney

Anniversaries in December

Danny & Kandy Saulter December 3

Peter & June Brutscher December 26

Birthdays In December

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|----------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| 1 Jerry Knafla | 13 Vanessa Ganz | 24 Matthew Molitor |
| 1 Louise Walter | 13 Julie Miller | 26 Emma Bohnsack |
| 3 Blake Stumpf | 15 Jack Hughes | 28 Ronald Neuhring |
| 4 Tara Pauly | 20 Noah Bollig | 29 Thomas Novak |
| 5 Spencer Roe | 21 Linda Nuehring | 30 Daniel Miller |
| 6 Sue Vosen | 22 Sarah Brutscher | 30 Aubrie Retka |
| 7 Don Sorenson | 22 Judy Larson | |
| 8 Elizabeth Dickmann | | |
| 13 Gary Dickmann | | |

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