

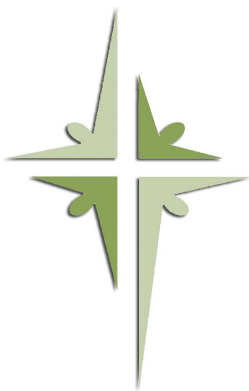
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Zion Lutheran Church & School



April 2024

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**Loving, Inspiring
and Equipping to
Engage Our
World.**

A Message from Pastor Oedewaldt

Alleluia! Christ is Risen! I hope you all had a blessed Holy Week and a wonderful Easter celebration. It was good to see many of you gathered around our Lord's Word and Sacraments in church on Holy Thursday, Good Friday, and Easter Sunday. Sometimes our sinful flesh can make going to church seem like a burden, and that feeling might be amplified during important times of the church year when there are a lot of services held and things going on at Zion. But when the sinful flesh wants a break, we find rest in the Lord and in His gifts. We drag our flesh to our usual pews so that God's Word can flood into our ears. We force our flesh to kneel, to confess our sins, and to be forgiven. We march our flesh to the altar week in and week out, as often as the Lord's Supper is offered, to strengthen our faith and preserve us in body and soul to life everlasting.

As I am writing this, it's raining outside. It's raining hard. And it's dark. It all makes me think of the three times in John's Gospel after our Lord's resurrection when he appeared to His apostles. The first is the Gospel reading for the second of easter from John 20. It's a familiar story. The disciples are hiding in darkness in a locked upper room in Jerusalem because they are afraid of the Jews. Their hearts are dark. Their minds are dark. They don't know what to do or what might be done to them. But then the Light of the World, Jesus Himself, comes and stands in their midst. He says, "Peace be with you." He absolves them of their sins, gives them the Holy Spirit, and grants them His peace from God. The Light shatters the darkness. The second time was similar to this, but Thomas was there this time. Jesus shows the doubter the marks of His nail-pierced hands and spear-torn side and tells Thomas to believe. The Light shatters Thomas' darkness. Then Jesus speaks about you and all Christians when he says, "Blessed are those who have not seen and yet believe."

The third time in John's Gospel when Jesus reveals Himself to the apostles after His resurrection might not be so familiar to you. You can read it in John 21, but here is a summary. Some of the disciples have returned to their old vocation: fishermen. They fished all night but didn't catch a thing. Jesus appeared to them by the Sea of Tiberias, granted them another miraculous catch of fish, and invited them to join Him for breakfast. Jesus provides everything for His people. He even forgives Peter, turning the denier into a confessor with His threefold question, "Do you love me?" Jesus won't let them go back to their old vocation. He says, "Follow me," as He makes them fishers of men. The Light of the world won't let them sit in darkness

It's still raining outside. The clouds are ominous. It's still dark. But Christ Jesus is risen. The Son has risen, and a new day has dawned on creation. The dawn from on high has broken upon us to shine on us sinners who dwell in darkness and the shadow of death and to guide our feet into the way of peace (Luke 1:79). The Light of Christ is among us. He processed into the church on Easter Sunrise. He absolves our sins through His Office of the Keys instituted in that locked upper room (John 20:22-23). His forgiveness spoken through the pastor every Divine Service as we kneel to confess our sins is "just as valid and certain, even in heaven, as if Christ our dear Lord

dealt with us Himself” (Small Catechism). The Peace of the Lord is held before your very eyes as Jesus invites you to His Holy Supper to receive His body and blood to strengthen you in faith toward God and in fervent love for one another. These are the gifts of God to silence your apathy and strengthen you in the battle against your sinful flesh. Jesus provides everything for His people. Receiving His gifts is always a joy, never a burden. The Light of Christ shatters the darkness of sin, death, and the devil. You are at peace with God because of the Son’s work for you. Alleluia! Christ is Risen!

Hymn of the Month – LSB 709, The King of Love My Shepherd Is

Perhaps no other text in Holy Scripture has had more hymns based upon it than Psalm 23. We have at least three such hymns in our hymnal (709, 710, 711). *The King of Love My Shepherd Is* certainly can be considered one of the best. John Ellerton, author of two hymns in our hymnal (886, 917) once described it as “the most beautiful of all the countless versions of Psalm 23.” Sir Henry Baker wrote this hymn to emphasize Christ and the Gospel in the psalm. This hymn emphasizes the trust in Jesus with which the Christian faithful live. Yet Baker makes evident that trust is never free-flowing. It lives or dies on the basis of the object of such trust, and there is no greater object to trust in than Jesus Christ our Good Shepherd, the shepherd of Psalm 23. This is the hymn of the day for the fourth Sunday of Easter.

It all centers on Jesus. In the first stanza, the phrase “I am His and He is mine forever” recalls the words of Jesus in John 10:14, “I am the good shepherd. I know My own and My own know me.” In stanza 2, the “living water” coupled with “my ransomed soul” allude to Holy Baptism, in which one puts on Christ (Galatians 3:27). The “food celestial” refers to Christ’s body, the bread from heaven, in the Eucharist (John 6). This is further emphasized in stanza 5 where the shepherd “spreadst a table in my sight” and bestows grace and delight in what flows “from Thy pure chalice.” The third stanza is phrased in such a way to clearly call to the singer’s mind Jesus’ parable of the lost sheep (Luke 15:3-7). Above all, there can be no greater comfort than that of the crucified Christ in stanza 4. The shepherd’s rod and staff become the wood of the cross before our eyes. In Jesus’ crucifixion, we see how closely “Thou art with me.” The emphasis on life in this hymn – living water, verdant pastures, unction, grace, etc. – displays the new life that comes by the cross of Christ that we receive in Holy Baptism and in the Blessed Lord’s Supper.

Board of Stewardship

The Board of Stewardship is sponsoring the Crisis Center for the months of March and April.

Please help us to support this well deserved organization by bringing in nonperishable food items as this is what they currently are in need of. Please place your donations in the tub in the narthex hallway that is marked Crisis Center.

Thank you in advance for your generosity in supporting them.

LWML News

The LWML Decatur Spring Gathering will be Saturday, April 27 at St John Flatrock, 12912 Franke Road, Monroeville. Registration: 8:45 Speaker: 9:00 AM - Pastor Donald Sauls and Sandy Sauls from Compassionate Ministries Network Inc. (a not-for-profit charity dedicated to poverty relief and aid in Southern Adams County). In-gathering: peanut butter, spaghetti sauce, beans (canned or dried), canned vegetables and fruit, tomato products, noodles, canned tuna, canned chili, Hamburger and Tuna Helpers, Jello, pudding, cake mixes, soup, ketchup, mustard, salad dressing, soap, toothpaste, toothbrushes, body wash, and paper towels. Feel free to meet at Zion at 8:15 a.m., if you would like to car-pool to Flatrock.

Registration is now open for the LWML Indiana District Convention in Danville, IN June 21-23, 2024. Registration forms can be found at lwmlindiana.org or in The Good News. Questions, contact Marilyn Bulmahn at 260-919-5007. Each congregation in the Decatur Circuit can send two voting delegates.

Zion Endowment Campaign

Dear Members of Zion Lutheran Church and School:

It is once again time for our **Lutheran Foundation School Matching Fund** program. This year our 2024 goal is \$17,500. This Lutheran Foundation program triples every dollar that you donate up to \$17,500. Therefore, if we meet our goal, there would be \$17,500 coming directly back to the school to use immediately in the form of grant money. The next \$17,500 goes into a restricted investment fund. The remaining \$17,500 goes into a restricted matching investment fund. These 2 restricted funds allow for Zion to use the dividends from these investments for eligible school needs.

Over the years, Zion Lutheran Church and School have benefited greatly from this program. Since 2009, we have raised \$206,000 and have been able to redirect \$115,528 of the fund dividends back into the school for various programs and projects. In addition, since 2016, we have successfully met our fundraising goals which resulted in direct grant payments to our school now totaling \$138,000.

Your support of this program has allowed the school to use dividends to fund the purchase of 4 necessary HVAC systems, Cafeteria tables, multiple National Youth trips, I-Pads, classroom white boards, new computers, new student desks, and various other items not included in the school budget. In addition, new exterior lighting around Zion campus in 2023.

Zion students will be the future leaders of our church and school. Your contribution will ensure a continued solid learning environment for them to thrive. Please keep in mind that all contributions you make will continue to provide dividends for years to come. With your generous help we can achieve our goal again this year.

Since we are not mailing green letters to your home, you will instead have 3 easy ways to contribute:

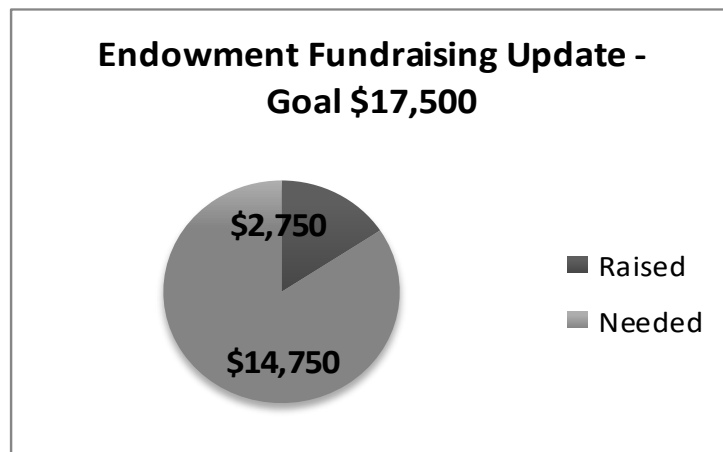
- 1) **Endowment Online Giving** is set up on Zion's website by clicking the "Zion Online Offering" button and choosing Endowment fund.
- 2) **Designated offering envelopes** available in your own contribution envelope box.
- 3) **Green envelopes** can be found in the back of church in the narthex.

If the LORD guides you to contribute, please make checks payable to "**Zion Endowment-Matching Fund**". Your contributions are tax deductible. The deadline is Sunday, **May 19th**

"You shall surely give him, and your heart shall not be grieved when you give to him: because that for this thing the LORD your God shall bless you in all that you put your hand to." Deuteronomy 15:10

Please feel free to contact any member of the Zion Endowment Committee with any questions or comments.

*Shaun Braun 223-8689 | Angie Bultemeier 223-9484 |
Bryan Saalfrank 433-3696 | Mike Grimm 403-5956 |
Kathy Brown 728-2220*



ZION SCHOOL NEWS

Upcoming Dates:

April 15-26:
NWEA Spring Testing

Friday, May 3rd:
Last day of PreK

Sunday, May 5th:
Confirmation Service—10:30 am

May 13-17:
Washington DC Trip—7th/8th Graders

Monday, May 20th:
Field Day—All grades

Wednesday, May 22nd:
Last Day of School

PTL News

PTL News Meeting will be held on a as needed basis instead of monthly this year. Look for updates on our facebook page/ remind this year! If you have any questions, PTL can be reached via email at ptlziondecatur@gmail.com or on our facebook page Zion Lutheran PTL. We look forward to another great year!

Scrip Information

SCRIP NEWS: The Zion Church and School Scrip program has completed their earnings for this year. Everyone can participate in the Scrip program --> Purchase Gift Cards and earn a rebate back! Orders can be turned into the church box (by doors), school office, or easily purchased through the website (RaiseRight.com) or App (RaiseRight). Zion's Enrollment Code is: 54AB42437836 or Contact Audra at ScripZion@gmail.com with any questions.

All school news, such as calendars, menus, and newsletters can be found online at www.ziondecatur.com. Be sure to stay up-to-date! And follow us on Facebook at Zion Lutheran Church & School.



We are thankful for another year of God's blessings to those who are celebrating **birthdays and anniversaries in April!**



Connections & Lamp Newsletter Deadlines

Just a reminder to those wanting to submit information to either publication:

Connections: *information/articles will be due by the end of Wednesday each week*

Lamp Newsletter: *information/articles will be due by the 20th of each month*

Community Happenings

Area Churches & Dinners— There are LOTS of dinners and events happening this month! Please be sure to check out the Narthex bulletin board for ALL the information!

Adams County Senior Center— Monday-Friday: 8:00 am-4:00 pm there are safe, secure and warm walking halls, doors are open for shooting pool, reading, games or puzzles, and 11:00 am-3:00 the gym is available for pickleball (organize your own group, first come, first served). See the flier in the Narthex for dates on Bingo, Euchre, Artists and MORE!

Youth Event

There will be an ALL Youth event on Sunday, April 28th in the afternoon. We are still nailing down details, but hope to have them ironed out soon. Stay tuned to the Connections or the Remind App for those details!

LWML Thank You

The ladies of Zion's Missionary Society (LWML) would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who contributed to our Lenten Food Drive for The Concordia Theological Seminary Food Co-Op. Your response was overwhelming, and very much appreciated. Special thanks to the students of our school for their support. The last of three loads of food was delivered to the seminary on April 2, 2024, and will be a blessing to many seminary families. Thanks again for your generosity!

Office Hours & The Lamp

I will be out of the office for around 2 weeks (min.) beginning April 26th. Volunteers will be in sporadically to answer phones, but regular office hours will not be in effect.

There will be **NO** May Lamp. Important announcements can be turned in to the church office to be added to Connections during the month of May.

June & July Lamp will be combined as always.

Easter Flowers

Thank you to those who sponsored Easter flowers this year. You are welcome to take your flowers after services this week—some are near the altar, and some are in the Narthex on the glass case near the door. Please be kind and take only the ones with your name, and kindly leave the plastic tray for future use.

Gardening Angels

Starting again late Spring or early Summer the Gardening Angels Committee will be removing the old bushes and replacing with all new landscaping in front of the church on Monroe St.

We have a 5th donor that will match up to \$250.00, so for every \$1 you give, they will give \$1. If you would like to contribute to this cause please make checks payable, in designated envelopes, to "Zion Lutheran Church Gardening Angels." You may also go to the church website at www.ziondecatour.com and select 'Gardening Angels' under giving options. Please contact Joan Fortman with questions at (260) 724-3955 or (260) 223-0998.

The Gardening Angels Committee



Thoughts on Stewardship

Whose Is It Anyway?

If you have ever bought or sold a house, you are acquainted with the concept of a “title search.” Before you can sell your house, and before anyone else will feel comfortable putting down the money to buy it, you have to prove that you really own it. So a title company looks through the public records to ensure that you bought it from the person who really owned it, who bought it from the person who really owned it before that, all the way back to the earliest records of your state, including when your state was only a territory or colony of England.

Peak into a preschool classroom during playtime and you’ll see a simplified version of this. A child starts playing with a ball, but another child says, “That’s mine: I had it first.”

You can’t understand the Seventh Commandment without understanding this concept of ownership or title. As the Small Catechism puts it:

You shall not steal. What does this mean? We should fear and love God so that we do not take our neighbor’s money or possessions, or get them in any dishonest way, but help him to improve and protect his possessions and income.

Your neighbor’s possessions are his: you don’t have a right to take them. And likewise, your possessions are yours. Ownership and property rights are foundational to any functioning society.

But there is something deeper to know about ownership, and that is the question of who has the title and ownership to you? Paul says, “Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, whom you have from God? You are not your own, for you were bought with a price” (1 Cor. 6:19–20).

If you yourself are owned by God, then of course everything that you own, you really only possess by God’s leave: all of it, at bottom, belongs to Him since you belong to Him. For you were bought with the blood of Christ.

This notion is the foundation of all Christian stewardship. It all belongs to God. It should all be used for things that bring honor to His name, blessings to our neighbors and the extension of His kingdom.

Treasurer’s Report

ALLELUIA! HE IS RISEN!

How are we doing?

At the end of the first quarter year-to-date revenue is very similar to this time last year— a minimal difference of \$3000. Expenditures have increased \$22,000. The increase is due to the \$10,000 contributed to the Siberian Lutheran seminary and to the Legacy project at the Fort Wayne seminary, an increase in compensation, and an increase in the repairs and maintenance account.

Overall expenditures are less than the MFP allowance with the exception of the Board of Trustees. Their expenditures are just shy of \$7000 over the allowance. Some of this will correct as the year progresses.

March 31 bank balance: \$249,923
Accounts Payable: \$ 13,985

The designated funds account for the latchkey program is showing a deficit of \$641.74 as of March 31. That represents a loss of \$315 for the current school year. For the same time frame last school year there had been a gain of \$764.57. Since there was no increase in expenditures (Compensation and payroll taxes) there has evidently been a drop in the attendance. In March of 2022 there was an increase in the charge which was helping to reduce the deficit. However, the increase is no longer sufficient.

**Were the whole realm of nature mine,
That were a tribute far too small.
Love so amazing, so divine
Demands my soul, my life, my all.**

ZION SERVANT SCHEDULE FOR APRIL

ALTAR CARE	Diane Irwin, Jan Hurst
ELDERS	Shaun Braun, Mike Miller
ORGANIST	Carl Risch

8:00 AM WORSHIP

DATE	April 7	April 14	April 21	April 28
ACOLYTES	Onalee Krueckeberg & Audrey Grimm	Kadyn Sanders & TBD	Cohen Bluhm & Griffin Bluhm	Tori McCullough & Audrey Grimm
POWERPOINT	Elder on Duty	Elder on Duty	Elder on Duty	Elder on Duty
SOUND	Elder on Duty	Elder on Duty	Elder on Duty	Elder on Duty
NURSERY	<i>Open during service- not staffed</i>	<i>Open during service- not staffed</i>	<i>Open during service- not staffed</i>	<i>Open during service- not staffed</i>
USHERS	Steve Fuelling, Brandon Bultemeier, Michael Bluhm, Jared DeArmond, Keith Harvey			

10:30 AM WORSHIP

DATE	April 7	April 14	April 21	April 28
ACOLYTES	Makenna Rich & Colby Koldyke	Victor Byer & Deyton Colclasure	Aubree Geerken & Lexy Harvey	Onalee Krueckeberg & Jaxon Blythe
POWERPOINT	Elder on Duty	Elder on Duty	Elder on Duty	Elder on Duty
SOUND	Elder on Duty	Elder on Duty	Elder on Duty	Elder on Duty
NURSERY	<i>Open during service- not staffed</i>	<i>Open during service- not staffed</i>	<i>Open during service- not staffed</i>	<i>Open during service- not staffed</i>
USHERS	Jay Teeter, Matt Monroe, Brian Monroe, John Marbach, Luke Marbach			



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