

The Tower

February 2018

For Members & Friends of Zion Lutheran Church

Know Christ! Grow in Christ! Make Christ Known!



For more information about Zion's ministries scan this QR code to visit our website.



February Focus Statement

When I am weak, He is strong.

Annual Congregational Meeting

February 4, 2018 during the faith formation hour (10:10AM) the congregation of Zion will gather in Piper Hall for our Annual Meeting. The agenda will include elections, reports, unveiling the Strategic plan and hearing from Pr. Jim & Pr. Vicky about plans for the coming year. A photo montage from 2017 will also be played. Written reports and year-end financials are available in the administrative office. Please join us for this important meeting.

Midweek Lenten Services – Hymns of Faith

Midweek services will be at noon and 7PM. The theme will be Hymns of Faith. We will explore 4 hymns each week and their composers. Come and learn what Paul Harvey would call “the rest of the story.” Join us as we sing and grow deeper in understanding of these old faithful hymns.

- Week One: Hymns of Comfort
- Week Two: Hymns of Prayer
- Week Three: Hymns of Community
- Week Four: Hymns of God
- Week Five: Hymns of Grace

Strategic Plan

There are four main parts to Zion's Strategic Plan. They are Education, Worship, Service and Leadership and Stewardship Development for the next three years. Each month for the next four months we will explore one of the four parts.

This month's focus is Education. Pastor Vicky will oversee the education goals for Zion's Strategic Plan. There are four goals:

1. Create a strategic education plan to reach all ages for enhanced faith formation that draws in our local community.
2. Encourage Zion members to participate in at least one faith formation activity annually.
3. Launch a periodic “dig deeper” inter-generational lecture, discussion, and fellowship activity with a renowned speaker with invitation to the community.
4. Launch at least one community-based education experience.

There are details available to help fulfill these goals. Members of Zion are invited to help accomplish them.

Lent 2018

February 14 - Ash Wednesday

- 6—8:30AM – Ash & Dash outside
- 12 noon – Service in the main Sanctuary
- 5PM – Service in the main Sanctuary
- 7PM – Service in the main Sanctuary

Wednesday Midweek Lenten Services

- 12 noon in the main Sanctuary
- 7PM in Yeager Chapel

March 25 – Palm Sunday

March 29 – Maundy Thursday

- 12 noon – Service in the main Sanctuary
- 7PM – Service in the main Sanctuary

March 30 – Good Friday

- 12 noon – Service in the main Sanctuary
- 7PM – Service in the main Sanctuary

April 1 – Easter—8, 9 and 11:11 am Services

Confirmation Update

This year our 6th-8th grade students and their families have begun a brand-new Confirmation journey. The first Sunday of the month, the families gather for a meal together at 12:30 PM, then the students head off for a lesson with one of the pastors and with our Youth Director, Nathan. The parents participate in their own learning with the other pastor. One lesson is covered at church and then over the course of the month, the parents lead their children in another lesson at home. Students are writing reflections on sermons and Bible verses each month as well. We are excited about the faith formation that is taking place.

On May 4 and 5, the 8th grade confirmands and their families will participate in an overnight off-site retreat at Michindoh Conference Center in Hillsdale, Michigan. What an exciting time to grow in their faith and in their relationships with others. Mark your calendars now: May 20 is Confirmation Sunday!

Worship Core Ministry

Calling All Musicians!

It's a great time to join a music ensemble at Zion.

- **The Rings of the Lord** (Handbells) needs you! We are in need of ringers!! The Rings of the Lord meets weekly on Thursdays from 5:45-7PM in the Sanctuary. We welcome ringers ages high school to adult. No ringing experience necessary. Music reading helps.
- **Chancel Choir** meets weekly on Thursdays from 7:30-9PM in the Sanctuary. We welcome singers ages high school through adult.

Singers and instrumentalists are also encouraged to provide Special Music throughout our weekly and festival worship services. If you are interested in sharing your music, please email Natalie Downs (ndowns@zlc-aa.org). Don't have time to sing or ring throughout the year? Consider joining us just for Holy Week! Contact Natalie for schedule and details. All are welcome!

Zion Singers

Zion Singers is a group of singers with daytime availability who come together once a month on a Friday to prepare and present a program of sacred, fun, and seasonal songs to residents at a local nursing care, assisted living, or hospice care facility. Our next outing will be at Atria Senior Living on Friday, February 23 at 2PM. Rehearsal in Music Room 1B at 12:45PM. All are welcome to participate! Interested in joining? Contact Natalie Downs: ndowns@zlc-aa.org.

Preaching Series for Lent

He's mastered shame and trademarked embarrassment. His lies wound, and his accusations sting. He'll build up your pride just to throw you down. Yes, the devil is strong, but there's one power he can't beat—and it's on your side. Learn how to answer "When the Devil Knocks."

In this series, we're going to prepare people to fight the daily battles they often don't know exist: the attempts by Satan to attack our mind with lies, our hearts with pride, and our souls with accusations. By the end of this series, attendees will have two main takeaways: awareness that we have an enemy looking to take us out every day, and confidence that we have the tools to fight from victory instead of for it.

- Feb. 18: The Deceiver. He's a liar—and he is really, really good at it. What lies has the devil tried to tell you? This week, we'll take a good look at how the devil's deceit tries to bring us down, and how we can stand strong against him.
- Feb. 25: The Destroyer. When the devil can't have our heart, he goes to his backup plan: destruction. He'll try to break you down until you're ready to cry out. But you can build something stronger than any of the devil's attacks.
- March 4: The Accuser. Have you ever been accused of being someone you're not? It's one of the devil's go-to tricks. But you're not who he says you are. You're who God says you are.

Part II of Lent will focus on how to hear the voice of God. When do you need to go back to the basics of remembering how God speaks to you? Where do you tend to look? How do you typically listen?

- March 11: Are we listening? God's First Language is Scripture.
- March 18: Six secondary languages that God speaks through in Scripture.

February Lectionary

- Feb 4** Isaiah 40:21-31, 1 Corinthians 9:16-23, Mark 1:29-39
- Feb 11** 2 Kings 2:1-12, 2 Corinthians 4:3-6, Mark 9:2-9
- Feb 14** (Ash Wed.) Joel 2:1-2, 12-17, 2 Corinthians 5:20b-6:10, Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21
- Feb 18** Genesis 9:8-17, 1 Peter 3:18-22, Mark 1:9-15
- Feb 25** Genesis 17:1-7, 15-16, Romans 4:13-25, Mark 8:31-38

Zion Concert Series

2017-2018 Season

Upcoming concerts (unless otherwise noted, all are in the Sanctuary with a free-will offering):

David Troiano, organ recital
Sunday, February 25th at 4PM

Achievers Women's Choir
from the Detroit School for the Arts
Saturday, March 17th at 4PM

Celebrate Music at Zion
Sunday, March 18th at 4PM

Wartburg College Choir
Monday, April 23rd at 7PM

Say It With Flowers



Observe an anniversary—Praise God—In memory of a dear one—In remembrance—Honor a friend—Proclaim love—Celebrate a birthday—Thank someone special—Just want to donate

Flowers add beauty to our worship and our lives. If you would like to donate altar flowers for a specific Sunday in 2018, please contact Ruth Huff at 734-665-3273. Please do not delay as dates have already been requested. Also, there are several times during the year when general funding is needed to purchase flowers, such as palms for Palm Sunday and carnations for Mother's Day. Donation envelopes for these purposes are available in the pew racks. Your flower donations are greatly appreciated!

Family Life and Young Discipleship



The 2018 Winter JAM will be taking place Sunday, February 11, 2018 at the Little Ceasars

Arena. This is an amazing show made up of all the biggest names in Christian music, including Skillet, Kari Jobe, kb, Jordan Feliz, building 429, and New-song! There is no need to buy tickets in advance. There is a suggested donation of \$15 per person, but no one will be turned away. The doors open at 5PM and the main show starts at 6PM. We will be going as a group from Zion, everyone is welcomed and encouraged to come and participate in this amazing night of worship!

Boy Scout Sunday

On Sunday, February 4, we will be celebrating Boy Scout Sunday in our services. Zion member Ben Yoder will be receiving his God & Family Award at the 9AM service. If you are a scout, you are invited to wear your uniform that morning and join in the fun.

First Communion Sunday, February 4

The fourth grade students and their families attended First Communion classes on January 21 and 28. On February 3rd they will participate in a three-hour retreat to help deepen their understanding of the Holy Supper. On Sunday, February 4th, they will partake in the Eucharist with their families for the first time. What a day to celebrate!

Also, check out:

- the First Communion Project Museum where the students will display their understanding through personal creations, and
- this amazing Faith Banner created by Peggy Hoffman to be used first on First Communion Sunday in February and subsequently at future Confirmations and graduations.



What's With All This Fundraising!?

Every three years, 30,000 high school youth and their adult leaders from across the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America gather for a week of faith formation known as the ELCA Youth Gathering. Through days spent in interactive learning, worship, Bible study, service and fellowship, young people grow in faith and are challenged and inspired to live their faith in their daily lives.

The theme for the 2018 ELCA Youth Gathering is "This Changes Everything." Our primary scripture is Ephesians 2:8 *"For by grace you have been saved through faith, and this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God."*



Grace is a foundational and distinctive piece of the Lutheran faith. This gift, undeserved and freely given, changes lives and perspectives as people realize they are enough because of what Christ has done, and are called into the world to serve their neighbor and share the good news.

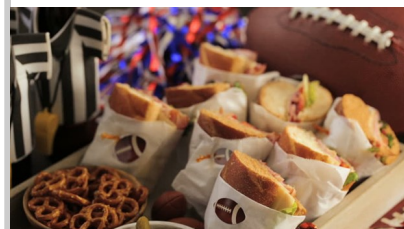
This year's Gathering in Houston, TX is going to be special as our service is much needed in the Houston area due to hurricanes that have devastated the city. The benefits of an event such as The Gathering are pivotal in the life of a student! This is something that should not be missed.

The cost per student is in the range of \$1,200-\$1,500. This includes airfare, hotel room for the week, transportation in Houston, and meals for the entire week. We are doing many different fundraisers throughout the year to raise money to help offset the cost of this trip. Any student who helps on the fundraiser will get a portion of the proceeds deducted from their balance. You can essentially work off the cost of the trip.

For more information on the Gathering please visit <http://www.elca.org/YouthGathering>. If you have any other questions about the Gathering or its cost, please call 734-994-4455 or email Nathan D'Andrea (ndandrea@zlc-aa.org).

Super Bowl Sunday Sub and Snack Sale

Sunday February 4, 9AM-12:30PM



Help Zion youth on their continued mission of raising funds for the 2018 ELCA National Youth Gathering in Houston, Texas. We have all your needs for your Super Bowl get together—sweet and savory snacks and dips, cookies, brownies and foot long subs! Perfect for taking home, or to a friend's party. Who wants to cook and prepare stuff on Super Bowl Sunday? Not a fan of football? Don't plan on watching the big game? No problem, you can still stop by our table and grab something for lunch!

Congregation Council

Council Meeting December 18, 2017—Highlights

Financial Report

- **Cash:** Available cash at the end of November was \$110,213. This is a big decrease from the end of October, a result of unbudgeted expenditures that Council approved in October, which totaled \$72,000 (\$33,700 for transportation, \$8,300 for Refugees, and \$30,000 for the Synod Capital Campaign). There is an additional \$15,000 (\$5,000 AV, \$10,000 Communication Support) that was approved, but yet to be spent. Cash in the operations account as of 12/15/17 is approximately \$98,000. We currently have sufficient cash on hand for the foreseeable future.
- **Income:** For the month of November contributions were \$62,704, which was \$1,227 less than was projected in the budget. This compares to contributions of \$62,493 in November last year. YTD, contributions are \$12,023 less than budgeted, but \$7,956 more than YTD last year.
- **Expenses:** Four ministries were over budget in November. Three ministries are over budget YTD. Overall spending was \$70,812 over budget for the month. Spending is \$5,788 over budget YTD.
- **Member Loans:** The one member loan outstanding for \$195,000 has been forgiven. This happened just last week. Zion is now debt free.
- **YTD Attendance and Offering (through Nov 30)**

	2017	2016	Variance
Attendance	14,494	14,051	443
-Including Bibleland	16,800	16,385	415
Offering (YTD)	\$776,038	\$768,082	\$7,956
Offering per Person	\$53.54	\$54.66	\$(1.12)

The Wholehearted Outpost

Danielle and Larry Groth presented a vision for The *Wholehearted Outpost*, a storefront on the street, offering restoration for mind, body, spirit. The space would be a public invitation to mindfulness and wholehearted living, and could offer smoothies, a gathering space for Bible studies or worship, a sauna, rhythm healing, athletic life coaching, Reiki, massage, meditation, and a spiritual direction. Some aspects of the Outpost could generate revenue.

They have scouted out a potential storefront where this could happen, a commercial space in Dexter of 2,200 sq ft. It could have moveable furniture so the space would be flexible. The front of this space could be retail with a smoothie bar, the middle could serve as a gathering space for meditation and worship, and the back would have private rooms for personal healing. Local lease costs are \$9-12 per sq ft at a strip mall; \$15-26 per sq ft for a Main St. type location. The space they have in mind would be \$27K rent per year.

Council asked about the capital investment required and the fixed operating costs, and discussed the strategic value of this proposal. This would be a non-profit, via Zion. It would need staff to run it but Danielle and Larry envision it as a mission of our church that people would be involved with, similar to the way Cultivate in Ypsilanti is run, with a couple of employees and the remainder staffed by volunteers (Cultivate is a non-

profit coffee and beer house that serves as a meeting place for many different groups and donates profits for hunger).

Danielle and Larry requested \$2000 to contract with a local architect, to help develop the site plan concepts and estimate the start-up investment required. The group discussed whether hiring an architect is the next step. Danielle and Larry asked whether Council would support this idea, and if so, they would return with an actual estimate of costs.

After Danielle and Larry left the meeting, Council discussed the proposal and next steps for consideration. Council discussed what would Zion's involvement be; is it a business Zion runs, or is it a loan? Cultivate in Ypsi is willing to talk to us about what to avoid. We discussed the mission of the Outpost and what it might take to get support from the congregation.

Council will review the material that Danielle and Larry presented. Bob B. has a template used to develop costs (e.g., how much is rent, electric, gas, water, maintenance, employee pay, professionals, what kind of revenue would we have, etc.), which he will give to Dan to share with Danielle and Larry. Dan will compile specific questions from Council about the proposal for Danielle and Larry.

Upcoming Elections April 2018

Vickie presented information about the upcoming ballot in April, noting that several of the current chairs will be stepping down and need replacement. There is general agreement within Council that chairs and vice chairs of committees should be recruited from within the committees. It was noted that the Endowment Committee elects their own vice chair and chairperson. They also send Vickie nominations for new members. This is functional and maybe could serve as a model for other committees. Council approved having a committee drive in April, where each committee would have a table in the Welcome Center, so people can find out about what they do. The time and duration of this event will be determined, after talking to a potential person interested in being volunteer coordinator.

Strategic planning

Mike Ward will present the plan to the congregation at a time to be determined. Further discussion tabled.

Website

The website coordinator is waiting on feedback from us. Council's to-do item is to look at the websites. We have the funds for the update.

Mobile Ministry

Pastor Jim explained that we have a contract with Tesco in Toledo, OH for \$57K for a 15-passenger van (base is a Ford) with a wheel chair lift & luggage rack. The vehicle should be built mid-late January. It will have a 3-year warranty and it will be insured under our umbrella policy. The logo on the van will be separate discussion at next Council meeting. Since its maximum capacity is 15 passengers, its drivers will not need a commercial driver's license.

ALICE Training

We had several people attend ALICE training (how to deal with an intruder/active shooter) at the Washtenaw Sheriff's department. Next step will be for Buildings and Grounds to participate in a free security check with the Ann Arbor Police Department. We may need to train people.

From Pastor Jim

Quirky Calendar Coincidence

For you have no delight in sacrifice; if I were to give a burnt offering, you would not be pleased. The sacrifice acceptable to God is a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise. - Psalm 51:16-17

This year, Ash Wednesday falls on February 14, Valentine's Day. And Easter is on April 1, also known as April Fools' Day. For the record, the last time there was a confluence of these dates was 1945 and the Detroit Tigers won the World Series against the Chicago Cubs.

Ash Wednesday marks the start of the traditional season of Lent, a 40-day period that leads to Easter and has its roots in Jesus' 40 days in the wilderness. It is a period of reflection, prayer and penance.

Easter marks the day of Jesus' resurrection.

So this year, Christian couples around the world might celebrate their love this month with smudges of ash on their foreheads.

And a prank or two could infiltrate Easter egg hunts in April.

This Lenten Season, I want to encourage you to join me and try a different kind of hunger, a different kind of fast. What if we spend the 40 days of Lent focusing on decrease? You could fast from one or more of these: regrets, sorrow, avoidance, stinginess, apathy, a meal, not caring, comparison, discontentment, or criticism.

The Reverend Alexander Schmemmann reminds us, "The purpose of Lent is not to force on us a few formal obligations, but to soften our heart so that it may open itself to the realities of the spirit, to experience the hidden thirst and hunger for communion with God."

This is a quirky calendar coincidence that hasn't happened in decades and it will be many decades before it occurs again. Come walk the 40 days of Lent and thirst and hunger for communion with God.

Pastor Vicky's Corner

February...the month of love. Have you noticed how most retailers look like they've taken a bath in the color red and been accessorized with hearts? Since the New Year, love has been in the air and we are reminded to spoil the ones we love.

So...how are you spoiling Jesus? You do love him, right? Of course we know that Christ spoils us lavishly with grace, mercy and forgiveness. When we look in the mirror and see a broken person, Jesus looks at us and sees a wonderfully and beautifully created child made in his very image. When we can't forgive ourselves for the mistakes we have made, we are reminded that our God is a God of second chances. When our time on this side of the grave comes to an end, we are promised an eternal resting place that has been perfectly prepared specifically for us by Christ. These are only a few of the ways that our Creator chooses to spoil us. Now back to the original question – how are you spoiling Jesus? Have you ever considered this question?

Mother Theresa says, "I cannot love God in words only: my heart has to express it, my hands have to express it, and my feet have to express it. It is not how much we do but how much love we put into the action that matters to Almighty God and that is love for God – that God keeps on loving the world through each one of us, through the work that has been entrusted to us." If you are interested in spoiling Jesus, ask yourself if you have given your whole heart to God and your neighbor?

Since Jesus is no longer walking the streets of this earth, he chooses a new way to touch the needy, the sick, the poor, the "other." Jesus walks today through the steps of you and me to show the world His Father's love. If you want to spoil Jesus, radiate the love in which you are saturated. Get out of your comfort zone and notice God's children...all of them. Stretch yourself to share love with people who look, smell and think differently than you; who aren't from your usual circle; who normally you would just ignore. Realize that as you look into the eyes of your neighbor, there is Jesus.

Give it a try! Spoil Jesus by sharing His love with all people and you will be amazed at how Christ will turn that act of love around to be a blessing for you too! He's funny like that...he has this spoiling thing down pat.

Love big!

Adult Discipleship

Adult Education Classes for February

February 11, 18, 25: Martin Luther King—The Struggle for Civil Rights in America.

We will continue our study of the Civil Rights movement of the 1960s in America. Our first two classes in February will examine the courageous actions of the "Freedom Riders" who boarded buses in Washington D.C. and rode them into the deep south to protest segregation. Our final class will be dedicated to discussing what we have learned about the struggle for Civil Rights, and what lessons we as Christians can take from this movement and apply to our own lives today. 10:10-11AM in Piper Hall.

February 11 & 18: Elder Abuse

We have invited Ms. Diane Fenske, a social worker who specializes in elder care, to speak with us about caring for our elders. Her classes will focus on a number of issues involving elder abuse, and how we can be aware of these issues in our loved one's lives. Led by Diane L. Fenske LMSW (School of Social Work, Eastern Michigan University). 10:10-11AM in Classroom A.

February 25 and March 4 : The Four Gospels' Passion Narratives

The Gospel writers center much of their attention on the last week of Jesus' life. About a fourth to a half of the Gospels' material has to do with the incidents surrounding Christ's death and resurrection. This is the primary reason the writers wrote the Gospels. This two week class will look at the four gospels and compare their accounts of the passion narrative of Jesus. How are they similar? How are they different? What does this mean for us today? Led by Pr. Jim. 10:10-11AM in Classroom A.

Thursday Midweek Bible Study

In the Beginning - Creation, Fall and Flood - Genesis Chapters 1-11

The opening chapters of the Bible lay the foundation for the entirety of scripture. If you do not understand the opening chapters of the Bible - you will not understand the Bible!

Within the opening chapters of Genesis we are introduced to God and our relationship with Him. We are told what it means to be human, the reality of sin and its consequences, God's ongoing love and care for his creation—in particular, humankind, plus much more that we will cover.

Classes run from Thursday, February 8, 2018, through March 22, 2018 (the week before Holy Week). We meet in the upstairs Sunday School room from 1:30-3PM, with a break for some goodies. We would love to have you join with us, and please invite your friends and neighbors to join with you - we love to see more and more people "in the Word!" Classes are led by Pastor Walt Schmidt.

Mission Core Ministry

Ugandan Missionaries Update

There are so many exciting things happening with our partners in ministry in Kampala, Uganda. Zion has provided support to two missionaries: Elia Musasizi, a young and passionate minister, and Mama Sara Sebyala, a devoted mother who has adopted over 500 children in a twenty year span. In the past six months, Elia has started two churches, sent four orphans to school, built a pharmacy, organized a sports ministry, hosted multiple medical mission days, organized a large crusade and trained twelve new pastors to continue to reach areas where Jesus is not yet known. He has invited Pastor Vicky to Uganda this summer to lead a training for the new pastors so they can then go out and multiply their clergy team to have greater impact in the region.

In addition to Elia's ministry, Mama Sara is actively working on The 50 Child Project, which is a movement to adopt 50 more children to love, feed, educate, teach and raise in a Christ-loving home. She is adding cows and pigs to her already-existing chicken farm and will use this farm as a revenue generator and work skills training place for her children and the community. Her visit to the US gave her many new ideas that she is implementing back in Kampala.

This summer a group will travel to Uganda for a ten day trip. The exact dates will be determined by the group. This will include 2 days of travel to Africa, three days of service to each of Elia and Mama Sara's ministries, and 2 days travel home. If you are interested in learning more, please contact Pastor Vicky Lovell at vlovell@zlc-aa.org for more details. If you would like to make a monetary donation towards the trip or the missionaries, please let Pastor Vicky know. Thank you for keeping these friends in your prayers. God is on the move and Zion is active on God's mission in the world!

God and Grub

Our Wednesday chapel and lunch for our Zion family and community continues to be a wonderful outreach ministry. If you are not able to attend on Wednesdays at noon, how about blessing the crowd with a meal instead? We typically serve 25 people each week. You can sign up at the Welcome Center or let Pastor Vicky know of your interest at vlovell@zlc-aa.org.

Mission Core Ministry (cont.)

Trying to Start Over After Incarceration

Every year, 700 citizens are released to Washtenaw County from jail or prison. Of these, roughly half will be reincarcerated within three years. Why? It isn't that we don't know how to help people, but that we continue to do so through our penal system, as opposed to other institutions, including non-profit organizations and faith communities.

A Brighter Way is a Washtenaw County organization working through Avalon Housing, supported by Zion, that helps folks released from jail or prison with the ability to get the education, substance abuse treatment and re-engagement with families and community members that they need, along with practical resources for employment and housing to get their lives back on track once and for all.

A Brighter Way is hosting a benefit concert on Thursday, February 8 at the Ark (tickets available for \$15, pre-sale only at www.theark.org). For more information about A Brighter Way (including opportunities to provide mentoring, employment and housing resources, financial support or friendship), please go to www.abrighterway.org.

Blood Drive—Monday February 19

Zion is hosting the next American Red Cross blood drive on Monday, February 19, from 1 - 6:30PM in Piper Hall. If you have not given since Christmas, you are eligible to donate that day. You may sign up at the Red Cross website www.redcrossblood.org and enter *Zionlutheran* as the sponsor. Or, you may sign up on Sundays in the Welcome Center at Zion, or contact Mary Pearson (marpear@gmail.com) or Deborah Weber (662-7781) to schedule an appointment.

Here are a few of the many reasons to give:

- Approximately 36,000 units of red blood cells are needed every day in the U.S.
- The average red blood cell transfusion is approximately 3 pints; however a single car accident victim can require as many as 100 pints of blood.
- The blood used in an emergency must already be on the shelves before the event occurs.
- ...and don't forget the home-made cookies!

Financial Stewardship

2017 Stewardship Results

Because of the generosity of Zion members, Zion was able to achieve major ministry goals in 2017. Listed below are some of these major accomplishments. We are profoundly thankful to all who contributed in both small and big ways to these goals, particularly as we dream about what new ministry goals we might accomplish in 2018 with your help.

- \$60,000 for a new van. The new van will help with the transportation for several ministries, Youth trips, getting folks to services on Sundays and the God and Grub ministry. Keep your eyes open because the van should arrive at Zion and be put into service by the end of January!
- \$5000 for new microphones to be used in the services. Wireless microphone technology must be updated to prevent cell phone interference. These new microphones will enable all members to hear the audio during worship which is crucial to our community.
- \$8000 for refugees. Zion will continue to work with Washtenaw Refugee Welcome to support refugees past the three months that current support is given.
- \$11,000 for communication to help spread the word of God's work and what we are doing at Zion, out in the community and in the world.
- \$30,000 for the Bishop's capital campaign. The SE Michigan Synod has a major initiative to raise up leadership, both lay and rostered that will benefit us and strengthen those who journey together with us.

Financial Stewardship 2018

Has the light of Epiphany re-lit your way to Jesus? Have you considered how you can be a Waymaker and spread the Gospel of the Lord? If so, the Financial Stewardship Committee would like to remind you to prayerfully consider your commitment to the work of Waymaking at Zion for 2018.

As we consider the voyage and gifts of the Magi this Epiphany season, we ask you to consider that in the oldest church known to exist, "70 Beloved by God" carried the light of Jesus 200 years after his resurrection. God saw those 70 through their ups and downs, and now 37 million congregations worldwide carry His light into the world. Zion is one of those congregations, and an exceptionally blessed one.

How much easier is our daily life than those 70? How can we use the gifts we have been given at Zion, in Ann Arbor, and in our peaceful and affluent country to make a way for others? How will we commit ourselves to outreach and Gospel-spreading beyond Zion? Are we willing to sacrifice our time, prayer, and financial gifts in 2018 to help Zion be a community of Waymakers?

The committee asks you to prayerfully consider this as you consider a financial commitment in 2018. Watch your mail for commitment cards and bring them to worship on Sunday, Feb 11, when we will celebrate our past fulfilled commitments and make a joyful statement of commitment to making a way with a shining light, so others can find Jesus, in 2018.

Welcome Core Ministry

Website Redesign for 2018

Zion's website will be going through a redesign in 2018. We are working with Lori Bugler who is a communications specialist for churches and has her own website design company. Here are the questions she is asking our worshipping community:

1. Who are your primary audiences for the website?
2. What is the primary purpose for your website (welcoming for visitors, information, education, faith formation, etc.)?
3. What are the non-negotiables for the website, things we absolutely should include?
4. Who will be the primary contact(s) for questions and resources for the website?
5. What navigation menu items do you find particularly helpful when looking at other church websites?
6. What are 3-4 church websites you really like, and what do you like about them? Following are four very different congregations' websites for consideration:

www.sojoy.org
www.lordoflife.org
www.lordoflifedbq.com
www.lutheranchurchofhope.org/west-des-moines

Online Directory

If you haven't yet had a chance to have your photo taken and want to be included in the online photo directory, you can simply send the following information to Joanne Dence (joannedence74@gmail.com): a recent photo (JPG format), name(s), children's names (if applicable), address, phone number, email address (required for mobile access).

Please note you can include all or just some of the contact information but at the very least, we will need your email address so we can send you the detailed instructions on how to download the directory to your smartphone. Whatever information you send will be included in the directory. You can also access the directory from the Zion website. It is password protected, so once you are in the directory, you can call the church office for the password. To ensure everyone's privacy, only members can be included in the directory. If you are already in the directory, and any of your contact information has changed, please forward the new information so we can make the appropriate updates.

Name Tags

"Therefore welcome one another as Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of God." - Romans 15:7

Welcome Core Ministry invites you to request a name tag if you do not already have one. It is nice to be able to greet someone by name and to identify potential visitors when they are not wearing one. How do you get one? Simply fill out the green form that can be found on the magnetic board in the Welcome Center and give it to the volunteer at the visitor's desk. By the following Sunday, you can find your name tag alphabetically organized on the magnetic board outside the sanctuary. Just remember to put your name tag back before leaving each Sunday. Thank you and we look forward to greeting you by name!

Thank You

Thank you Zion! You have been most generous. The ELCA Good Gifts received \$8,809.93 for 3.56 water wells. This amount includes \$132.32 collected in red barn banks from Bibleland children. As many as 1750 families will now have safe water. Women and children who spent several hours each day fetching water can reallocate their time to school, work, and family.

Other ELCA gifts were given, including 10 piglets, 17 sets of chicks, 1 cow, 13 sets of honeybees, 9 goats, 2 family farms, 1 fruit-tree seedling, 1 share of a community vegetable garden, 1 microloan for a woman, 1 school fees for a girl, 2 school supplies for a child, 2 refugee welcome supplies, 1 blanket, 1 set of vaccinations for a child, 1 mosquito net, 1 clinic visit for a child and a generous donation towards fighting hunger. These gifts totaled \$4,510, and the ELCA Good Gift grand total was \$13,319.93. These gifts changed lives! *Thank you, thank you, thank you!* - Ruth Huff

Thank you for once again embracing the Foster Care Christmas program. This year, you and your friends and family, provided gifts for 112 individuals who are currently experiencing foster care, 31 Blavin Scholars (UM students who experienced foster care as teens) and two children of Blavin Scholars. In many cases, you alone provided all the gifts an individual received, so we are so thankful for your generosity and thoughtfulness when selecting gifts. Rest assured we are very careful with your offering and use every sale, coupon, reward, etc. that we can to make the most of every dollar!

Your gifts make a huge difference to these children and young adults! For example, last year we learned that one Blavin Scholar had never received a Christmas gift prior to getting a gift from Zion; he was very appreciative of his first gift! We heard of another student who was able to complete several class projects using the books he received from a Zion member. This year we were again able to provide bikes for some individuals! Three were for the Blavin scholars to help them get to class. These are just a few examples of what a difference your gifts make in these young people's lives.

It is our great joy to oversee this program. We truly could not make it happen without each of your contributions. Again, thank you. And we look forward to seeing you all again - in October in our finest Christmas dresses! With gratitude
- Chris and Allison

Member Caring Ministry

Valentine's Mason Jar

The Encouragement Event for February is on the 6th at 4:30PM. This is open to men and students also. We will be creating a simple Valentine gift to give as encouragement for someone who needs it. Come with a friend. \$7 will cover the expense of the project. Please let Barbara Debner know if you are coming and want more than one jar.

Step by Step Walkers

The Step by Step walkers are inviting you to keep moving during these winter months. Join us for a walk. We are meeting on Feb 4th at 1:30PM at the JC Penney mall entrance and walking for an hour around the halls of Briarwood in Ann Arbor. Then on Thursday Feb 22nd at 3PM we are meeting at Zion to walk outside (weather permitting) or inside for an hour. If you are interested in more information let Barbara Debner (babdebner@gmail.com) know.

Love Lives Here Bible Study

Our next women's bible study date for the Love Lives Here group meeting is February 11th from 6:30-8PM at Barbara Debner's home in Ypsilanti (weather permitting). Bring your bible. Enjoy fellowship and a light snack. We will "Choose Joy," focusing on a resource by Kay Warren. If the weather is tricky, call Barbara at (860) 919-4421 before you come.

Washtenaw Men's Retreat 2018

The topic for the 2018 Washtenaw Men's Retreat will be *Crossing Reformation Spirituality with a Wobbly Church*. Pastor Dennis Bux from Christ Lutheran Church in Monroe, Michigan will be our presenter. The dates are Friday, February 9 - Sunday, February 11. We encourage men of other congregations to join us - please feel free to spread the word! The weekend schedule was published in last month's *Tower*.

The retreat will be held at the Weber Center in Adrian, Michigan, Friday evening through Sunday mid-morning. The cost for a single room for 2 nights and 4 meals is \$175 (checks payable to Zion Lutheran Church); if you are unable to afford the full amount, partial and full scholarships are available. Sign up at the Welcome Desk at Zion, or by contacting this year's coordinator Steve Johgart, stevej1@mac.com or 734-904-4936. Please join us! God loves you, and so do we.

Zion Women's 2019 Retreat Planning

Plans have begun to create a weekend retreat for all women at an exciting conference center in 2019. Watch for the dates to save!

There is still time to be part of the leading team that will meet at least three times this year. At our January team meeting we discussed a theme, a target number, our goals for the event and a fun location. During the March meeting we will select a speaker, start to set the fees, delegate or set up communication needs, round up small group women leaders and begin ironing out other details.

Join the planning team on March 20th at 7:15PM for an hour in the Stellhorn lounge. Voice what kind of 2019 Spring Retreat will bring you growth and rest.

Prayer Team Update

Do you know that Zion has a prayer team? We pray, talk about, organize and participate in all kinds of prayer here at Zion. You are welcome to join us on the first Monday of each month from 6-7PM in the Omega room. Other reminders:

- Prayer request lanterns are located toward the front of the sanctuary. Request cards are available in the pews.
- Anointing prayer is available Sundays at the 9 and 11:11AM services. Come and share praise, joys or concerns with a member of the prayer team.

Special Seniors Lunch

The first Special Seniors Luncheon of 2018 will be on Saturday, February 17, 2018. We are excited to tell you that we have arranged for Ann Arbor author, John U. Bacon, to be our speaker. Many of you know him for his books about UM sports, and may have heard of his latest book about the Halifax explosion and its ties to UM hockey. So invite your friends to come with you to enjoy his presentation.

We will meet in Piper Hall, 12-2PM, and there will be a delicious lunch, starting at noon. Although the decor will be red and white for February (we all need bright color for mid-winter!), feel free to wear your UM Maize and Blue.

³⁴ Then he called the crowd to him along with his disciples and said: "Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. ³⁵ For whoever wants to save their life will lose it, but whoever loses their life for me and for the gospel will save it.

- Mark 8:34-35

Other News

LLM Update – Dale Eckart

I am writing this update in the days close to the national holiday remembering the birthday of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Our coursework included a class last winter (Jan-Feb 2017) on Christian Discipleship, where we read a book that contained many sermons of Dr. King. I shared some of those insights with the Zion folks in Ann Arbor on two Sunday mornings, during our faith formation time. Both the preparation and the teaching of the class were moving reminders of Dr. King's deep faith, his cogent and powerful theology, and the call to act in response to the Gospel.

I kicked off my LLM activities in 2018 by participating in the annual interview event on the first Saturday in January. This gathering is a time for graduated LLMs to come back, meet with the Advisory Committee that reports to the Southeast Michigan Synod, and to talk about ongoing needs and challenges. As an LLM student preparing for internship, I wanted to take this opportunity to talk with a member of the committee about my thoughts and plans, and to give feedback on the academy/coursework portion of the training.

I have made plans to conduct my internship at Zion Lutheran in Chelsea, MI, which is a smaller congregation in our synod located close to my home. Many of the congregations in our synod that may need an LLM are smaller, and our bishop and his staff have talked about how many are having trouble affording a full-time ordained pastor. LLM's can help extend the reach of part-time pastors and provide ministry of Word and Service to those congregations. My internship will begin in the fall of 2018.

Thank you all for your prayers and support as I journey through this program, and find my way to helping serve our Southeast Michigan Synod and Christ's larger church in the world.

Thrivent Choice Dollars®

Grant funding from Thrivent Financial through its Thrivent Choice® program can help support organizations you care about. Eligible Thrivent Financial members who have Choice Dollars available have until March 31, 2018, to direct any remaining 2017 Choice Dollars. Help support Zion—go to www.Thrivent.com/thriventchoice to direct your dollars or call 800-847-4836 and say "Thrivent Choice" after the prompt.

Since the program's inception in 2010, Zion has received \$34,640 in Thrivent Choice Dollars. For more information, please contact Emmeline Weinert (emmeline.weinert@thrivent.com).

Volunteer Opportunities

Easter Egg Hunt Organizer

After 13 years, Carolyn King is stepping down from organizing the annual Zion Easter egg hunt. We need a new person to take over. She is happy to help this person get started, and she has a notebook with all of the information needed. She reports that it is the most rewarding job she has ever had! The Saturday before Easter is always her favorite day of the year because of this event.

The egg hunt this year will be Saturday March 31 at 4PM. If you have questions or are contemplating this opportunity, please contact Carolyn (csgiving39@comcast.net). It is well worth every second of planning.

Parish Nurses

The Parish Nurse Health Care Ministry is looking for new members. If you are a nurse, please consider joining this ministry. This is a caring ministry which assists in meeting the physical, emotional, and spiritual needs of others, with a goal of health and wellness. Some of the programs that we offer include a monthly blood pressure clinic, a yearly flu shot clinic, a medical equipment loan program, meals and rides for members as needed, CPR/AED training, weekly monitoring of the AED and many other services. The Parish Nurses are a wonderful group of women and participation does not require a huge time commitment. We meet three times a year and share the responsibilities. If you are interested in joining this ministry, please feel free to contact the church office to let them know of your interest, or speak with any of the Parish nurses. - *Anne Scherba, Parish Nurse*

Van Drivers Needed

We are looking for volunteers to support Zion's Mobile Ministry. If you are able to drive the church van on Sunday mornings for people in need of a ride to a worship service, contact Pr. Jim or Pr. Vicky with your availability.

Peace Neighborhood Center

Peace Neighborhood is looking for after school help (meal prep and serve) on the 1st & 4th Thursdays and the 2nd Tuesdays. Please sign up in the Welcome Center.

FEBRUARY CALENDAR

Thursday, Feb 1

7:00 AM Men's ChristCare/Sunday Spot
 12:00 PM Thursday Ladies Cards/Stellhorn Lounge
 5:45 PM Rings of the Lord Rehearsal/Sanctuary
 7:30 PM Choir Rehearsal/Sanctuary

Friday, Feb 2

12:30 PM Friday Women's Bridge/Stellhorn Lounge

Saturday, Feb 3

4:00 PM 1st Communion Retreat & Dinner/Piper Hall

Sunday, Feb 4

8:00 AM First Light Worship/Sanctuary
 9:00 AM Sola Worship & 1st Communion/Sanctuary
 10:10 AM Bibleland/2nd floor
 10:10 AM Annual Meeting/Piper Hall
 10:10 AM Families with youth children/Alpha room
 10:10 AM C+C/Omega Room
 11:00 AM Korean Baptist Church/Yeager Chapel
 11:11 AM Ignite Worship & 1st Communion/Sanctuary
 4:30 PM Grace Place/Youth Room

Monday, Feb 5

6:30 AM Men's ChristCare/Sunday Spot
 10:00 AM Samaritan Counseling/Counseling Office
 12:30 PM Monday Women's Bridge/Stellhorn Lounge
 6:00 PM Prayer Team Meeting/Omega Room
 7:00 PM Ruth's Small Group/Stellhorn Lounge

Tuesday, Feb 6

8:00 AM Uganda Bible Study via skype/Pr. Vicky
 10:00 AM Samaritan Counseling/Counseling Office
 5:30 PM Personnel Meeting/Church office
 7:00 PM B&G Meeting/Creation Station
 7:00 PM Life's Lesson Book Club/Stellhorn Lounge
 7:00 PM Five Miles More Rehearsal
 7:00 PM IT Committee Meeting/Church Office

Wednesday, Feb 7

10:00 AM Samaritan Counseling/Counseling Office
 12:00 PM Mid-week worship/Yeager Chapel
 12:45 PM God & Grub/Youth Room
 6:00 PM Way of Life/Omega room
 6:00 PM Family Matters/Creation Station
 7:30 PM Al-a-teen meeting/Omega Room
 7:30 PM Al-anon meeting/The Gathering
 7:30 PM Alcoholics Anonymous/Piper Hall

Thursday, Feb 8

7:00 AM Men's ChristCare/Sunday Spot
 9:00 AM Activity Day/Piper Hall
 9:30 AM Mom's Bible Study/Omega Room
 4:00 PM Compassionate Communication/Creation & Gathering
 5:45 PM Rings of the Lord/Sanctuary
 6:30 PM Mission Core Ministry/Stellhorn Lounge
 7:30 PM Choir Rehearsal/Sanctuary

Friday, Feb 9

8:00 AM Compassionate Communication/Creation & Gathering

Saturday, Feb 10

8:00 AM Compassionate Communication/Creation & Gathering

Sunday, Feb 11

8:00 AM First Light Worship/Sanctuary
 9:00 AM Sola Worship/Sanctuary
 10:10 AM Adult Discipleship/Piper Hall

10:10 AM Adult Discipleship/Classroom A
 10:10 AM Bibleland/2nd floor
 10:10 AM JAM/Youth room
 10:10 AM C+C/Omega Room
 10:10 AM Families with young children/Alpha Room
 11:11 AM Ignite Worship/Sanctuary
 2:00 PM Reynolds/The Gathering
 4:30 PM Grace Place/Youth Room
 6:30 PM Love Lives Her/Debner Home

Monday, Feb 12

6:30 PM Men's ChristCare/Sunday Spot
 10:00 AM Samaritan Counseling/Counseling Office
 4:00 PM Ruth's Small Group/Kitchen
 6:00 PM Ann Arbor Fiber Arts/Piper Hall
 6:15 PM Loss Recovery Support Group/Alpha Room
 7:00 PM Kesler Small Group/Omega Room

Tuesday, Feb 13

8:00 AM Uganda Bible Study via Skype/Pr. Vicky's office
 9:30 AM Good Thyme Garden Club/The Gathering
 10:00 AM Samaritan Counseling/Counseling Office
 7:00 PM Five Miles More Rehearsal/Sanctuary

Wednesday, Feb 14 *Ash Wednesday*

6:30 AM Ash & Dahs/Outside
 10:00 AM Samaritan Counseling/Counseling Office
 12:00 PM Ash Wednesday Worship/Sanctuary
 12:45 PM God & Grub/Youth Room
 5:00 PM Ash Wednesday Worship/Sanctuary
 6:00 PM Way of Life/Omega Room
 6:00 PM Family Matters/Creation Station
 7:00 PM Ash Wednesday Worship/Sanctuary
 7:30 PM Al-a-teen meeting/Omega Room
 7:30 PM Al-anon meeting/The Gathering
 7:30 PM Alcoholics Anonymous/Piper Hall

Thursday, Feb 15

7:00 AM Men's ChristCare/Sunday Spot
 9:00 AM Sara's Circle/Stellhorn Lounge
 11:00 AM International Neighbors/Piper Hall
 1:00 PM Ruth's Circle/Stellhorn Lounge
 5:45 PM Rings of the Lord/Sanctuary
 7:30 PM Choir/Sanctuary

Friday, Feb 16

Saturday, Feb 17

12:00 PM Zion Special Seniors Luncheon/Piper Hall

Sunday, Feb 18

8:00 AM First Light Worship/Sanctuary
 9:00 AM Sola Worship/Sanctuary
 10:10 AM Adult Discipleship/Piper Hall
 10:10 AM Adult Discipleship/Classroom A
 10:10 AM Bibleland/2nd floor
 10:10 AM JAM/Youth room
 10:10 AM C+C/Omega Room
 10:10 AM Families with young children/Alpha Room
 11:11 AM Ignite Worship/Sanctuary
 12:30 PM Schultz/Stellhorn Lounge
 4:30 PM Grace Place/Youth Room

Monday, Feb 19

6:30 AM Men's ChristCare/Sunday Spot
 10:00 AM Samaritan Counseling/Counseling Office
 11:00 AM American Red Cross Blood Drive/Piper Hall
 6:30 PM Weber's Small Group/Stellhorn Lounge
 7:00 PM Ruth's Small Group/Omega Room

Tuesday, Feb 20

8:00 AM Uganda bible study via Skype/Pr. Vicky's office
 10:00 AM Samaritan Counseling/Counseling Office
 7:00 PM Council Meeting/The Gathering
 7:00 PM Five Miles More Rehearsal/Sanctuary

Wednesday, Feb 21

10:00 AM Samaritan Counseling/Counseling Office
 12:00 PM Mid-week worship/Sanctuary
 12:45 PM God & Grub/Youth Room
 6:00 PM Way of Life/Omega Room
 6:00 PM Family Matters/Creation Station
 6:30 PM Knit 2 Together/Stellhorn Lounge
 7:00 PM Lent Worship/Chapel
 7:30 PM Al-a-teen meeting/Omega Room
 7:30 PM Al-anon meeting/The Gathering
 7:30 PM Alcoholics Anonymous/Piper Hall

Thursday, Feb 22

7:00 AM Men's ChristCare/Sunday Spot
 9:30 AM Mom's Bible study/Omega Room
 5:45 PM Rings of the Lord Rehearsal/Sanctuary
 7:30 PM Choir Rehearsal/Sanctuary

Friday, Feb 23

12:30 PM Zion Singers/Music Room #1
 6:00 PM Middle school bowling/Off site

Saturday, Feb 24

Sunday, Feb 25

8:00 AM First Light Worship/Sanctuary
 9:00 AM Sola Worship/Sanctuary
 10:10 AM Adult Discipleship/Piper Hall
 10:10 AM Adult Discipleship/Classroom A
 10:10 AM Bibleland/2nd floor
 10:10 AM JAM/Youth room
 10:10 AM C+C/Omega Room
 10:10 AM Families with young children/Alpha Room
 11:11 AM Ignite Worship/Sanctuary
 4:00 PM Organ Concert/Sanctuary
 4:30 PM Grace Place/Youth Room

Monday, Feb 26

6:30 AM Men's Christ Care/Sunday Spot
 10:00 AM Samaritan Counseling/Counseling Office
 7:00 PM Kesler Small Group/Omega Room

Tuesday, Feb 27

8:00 AM Uganda Bible Study via Skype/Pr. Vicky's office
 10:00 AM Samaritan Counseling/Counseling Office
 6:30 PM Worship Core Ministry/Church office
 7:00 PM Five Miles More Rehearsal/Sanctuary

Wednesday, Feb 28

10:00 AM Samaritan Counseling/Counseling Office
 12:00 PM Mid-week worship/Sanctuary
 12:45 PM God & Grub/Youth Room
 6:00 PM Way of Life/Omega Room
 6:00 PM Family Matters/Creation Station
 7:00 PM Lent Worship/Chapel
 7:30 PM Al-a-teen meeting/Omega Room
 7:30 PM Al-anon meeting/The Gathering
 7:30 PM Alcoholics Anonymous/Piper Hall

The Tower

Zion Lutheran Church
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January Life Passages at Zion

BAPTISMS:

WEDDINGS:

FUNERALS: *Lillian Holtfreter*

NEW MEMBERS:

Elected Ministry Leaders

Congregation Council

President: Dan McConnell (dmcconnell@zlc-aa.org)
Vice-Pres: Vickie Matthews (vmatthews@zlc-aa.org)
Secretary: Laura Berry (lberry@zlc-aa.org)
Treasurer: Bob Bertrand (bbertrand@zlc-aa.org)
At Large: Chris King (cking@zlc-aa.org)
Carrie Morton (cmorton@zlc-aa.org)
Bob Thompson (rcthompson@zlc-aa.org)
Sharon VanRiper (svanriper@zlc-aa.org)
Mark Warwashana (mwarwashana@zlc-aa.org)
Sarah Wentzloff (swentzloff@zlc-aa.org)

Core Ministries

Worship: Steve Johgart, Christine Nelson
Welcome: Joanne Dence, Karen Salamin
Adult Discipleship: Ron Delph, Peter Bertocci
Young Discipleship: Tom Clifford, Ken Utsunomiya
Member Caring: Dianne Daily, Laura Girbach
Missions: Mark Gunderson, Layale Weinert

Support Ministries

Personnel: Dave Werner, Diane Hunt
Building & Grounds: Jim Love, Bill Lehmann
Financial Stewardship: Nick Rogers, Lisa Rombes
IT: Ray Vanderbok, TBD
Endowment: Marcus Hunt, Jill Goldstein

Staff

Senior Pastor	James Debner
Associate Pastor	Vicky Lovell
Finance Manager	David Beck
Office Administrator	Diane Rinehart
Youth Discipleship Leader / Family Life Ministry Coordinator	Nathan D'Andrea
Bibleland Coordinator	Nina Johnson
VBS Coordinator	Jessica Rudy
Director of Choirs & Special Music	Natalie Downs
Organist	Elgin Clingaman
Organist Emerita	Carol Muehlig
Contemporary Worship Leader	Alison Hendricks
Sound Operator	Tyler Dence
Worship Media Coordinator	Eddie VanRiper
Resident Custodian	Chris LeVasseur
Weekend Custodian	Max Wojewski
Wedding Coordinator	Emmeline Weinert
Nursery Care Givers	Anna Dupke, Anna Peters, Lizzy Peters
Librarian	Carleen Vanderbok

Email addresses for staff may be found at our website:

www.zlc-aa.org

Office phone (734) 994-4455

Please submit news items to tower@zlc-aa.org by the 10th of the preceding month.