

The Tower

April 2018

For Members & Friends of Zion Lutheran Church

Know Christ! Grow in Christ! Make Christ Known!



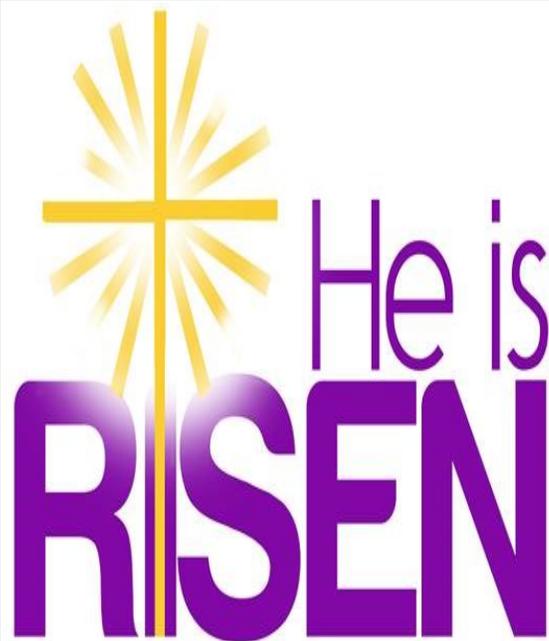
For more information about Zion's ministries scan this QR code to visit our website.



April Focus Statement

I know that my redeemer lives. Job 19:25

Season of Easter



The Easter season is a week of weeks, seven Sundays when we drink in the mystery of Christ's presence, mostly through the Gospel of John. The Easter season is about seeing: Christ risen, Christ present among us in the breaking of the bread, Christ's Spirit poured out on the church. The readings in Easter give flesh that Christ is alive by leading us through a different kind of birth narrative: the birth of the church, the risen body of Christ, born by water and the Spirit, as recorded in the book of Acts.

We need to hear these stories more than ever as we work out our own anxiety around the relevance of the church today. The same Spirit who enlightened and empowered these first witnesses of the resurrection has also been given to us in baptism. We too have "power from on high" to live as a countercultural community of God's people, bound together not by social or ethnic bonds but by the death and resurrection of Jesus.

The Day of Pentecost is not the beginning of a new season but the culmination of the fifty days of Easter. Pentecost is the day we all come together as a sign of God's reconciling Spirit. This Spirit transforms us into a community with open doors, peace, forgiveness, and making sure that no one among us is in need.

Strategic Plan

There are four main parts to Zion's Strategic Plan. They are Education, Worship, Service and Leadership/Stewardship Development for the next three years. We are in the midst of exploring each of the four parts. This month's focus is Service.

Pastor Vicky will oversee the service goals for Zion's Strategic Plan. There are six goals:

1. Achieve Service as the defining characteristic of Zion.
2. Identify local service opportunities where Zion can build deep, long-term relationships and those relationships receive the majority of time/attention/resource.
3. Enhance Zion's role as a leader in Ann Arbor among faith communities for Care of the Earth.
4. Work with community leaders to identify the "next big thing" for Zion.
5. Expand VBS to include an afternoon option with day camp staff to reach more from the community.
6. Continue to evaluate the needs of Zion's community and discern new ministries to better provide for ongoing pastor care and ministry within the membership of Zion.

The Good Neighbor Program

The Good Neighbor Program is a new ministry at Zion formed to meet the needs of Zion members and neighbors who are in need of limited home repairs. It is our mission to know the needs of our community and to do our best to have a willing heart to serve the kingdom of God by being a blessing to the people of our community and their needs.

We are researching the needs of our community and asking those who have needs to call the church office 734-994-4455 to share the help needed and contact information. We will be sending teams of servants out on April 14 from 9AM to noon. We are also collecting donations of supplies, like LED light bulbs and batteries. More servants are needed to do this ministry. Please call the office to find out more information. There will also be a sign-up sheet at the Welcome Desk.

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).

April Lectionary

- Apr 1:** Acts 10:34-43, 1 Corinthians 15:1-11, Mark 16:1-8
Apr 8: Acts 4:32-34, 1 John 1:1-2:2, John 20:19-31
Apr 15: Acts 3:12-19, 1 John 3:1-7, Luke 24:36b-48
Apr 22: Acts 4:5-12, 1 John 3:16-24, John 10:11-18
Apr 29: Acts 8:26-40, 1 John 4:7-21, John 15:1-8

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 St Joseph's Village on Friday, April 27 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.

Zion Concert Series

2017-2018 Season

Don't miss our last concert of the season:

Wartburg College Choir
Monday, April 23rd at 7PM
Suggested donation: \$10

Wartburg alumni are invited to join us for light refreshments before the concert and fellowship with other alumni at 6:30PM in Stellhorn Lounge.

Wartburg College Choir - Host Families Needed

The Wartburg College Choir from Waverly, Iowa (one of our ELCA colleges) will present a concert at Zion Lutheran Church on Monday, April 23rd at 7PM. The 80-person choir is in need of host families for Monday night. The students will be paired in twos (two can share a double bed). They will be fed dinner at the church before the concert. Host families will be responsible for providing breakfast and a sack lunch. They will need to be dropped off Tuesday morning at Zion.

We also need help serving the meal, ushers, and help with the reception after the concert. If you are interested in hosting, helping with the event, or have questions, please contact Natalie Downs: ndowns@zlc-aa.org.

Welcome Core Ministry

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!

Family Life and Young Discipleship

8th Grade Confirmation Retreat

This year the students who are in 8th grade, along with their families, are invited to attend an overnight retreat at the Michindoh Conference Center in Hillsdale on May 4 and 5. The cost is \$75 per person and that includes all meals, lodging, education and entertainment. Please reserve your spot by April 15. An online payment link will be sent to all Confirmation families. If you have any questions, please contact Nathan D'Andrea at ndandrea@zlc-aa.org or Pastor Vicky Lovell at vlovell@zlc-aa.org.

¹ See what great love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! And that is what we are! The reason the world does not know us is that it did not know him. ² Dear friends, now we are children of God, and what we will be has not yet been made known. But we know that when Christ appears, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is. ³ All who have this hope in him purify themselves, just as he is pure.
- 1 John 3:1-3

Vacation Bible School June 18-22, 2018

9AM-NOON OR 8:30AM-5PM

3 YEAR OLD-
ENTERING 5TH
GRADE



NEW!
FULL DAY
OPTION

VBS 9-12 \$25/week or Full Day \$100/week

3 hours of Bible School programming:

Pastor Jim will lead all participants in learning the day's Bible Buddy, Bible Verse and Bible Song.

Your child will join children of their age group and be lead in activities including crafts, Bible Stories, music and games.

NEW FULL DAY OPTION

Full Day children will participate in VBS from 9-12. Afternoon activities will be with camp counselors from Living Water Ministries and include games, crafts, outdoor fun and more!

Must be entering Kindergarten to participate in Full Day. Bring own lunch & afternoon snacks will be provided.

Student Registration <https://tinyurl.com/AAZionVBS2018regstudent>

Staff Registration <https://tinyurl.com/AAZionVBS2018regstaff>

Questions? Contact Jessica Rudy AAZionVBS@gmail.com

Thank You & Congratulations

A special thanks goes out to all of our Zion musicians who performed in the Celebration Music at Zion Concert and during Holy Week. Thank you for sharing your time and talents for these special worship opportunities!

-Music Staff

¹ When the Sabbath was over, Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, and Salome bought spices so that they might go to anoint Jesus' body. ² Very early on the first day of the week, just after sunrise, they were on their way to the tomb ³ and they asked each other, "Who will roll the stone away from the entrance of the tomb?"

⁴ But when they looked up, they saw that the stone, which was very large, had been rolled away. ⁵ As they entered the tomb, they saw a young man dressed in a white robe sitting on the right side, and they were alarmed.

⁶ "Don't be alarmed," he said. "You are looking for Jesus the Nazarene, who was crucified. He has risen! He is not here. See the place where they laid him. ⁷ But go, tell his disciples and Peter, 'He is going ahead of you into Galilee. There you will see him, just as he told you.'"

⁸ Trembling and bewildered, the women went out and fled from the tomb. They said nothing to anyone, because they were afraid.
- Mark 16:1-8

Congregation Council

Congregational Meeting February 4, 2018—Highlights

Election of Leaders/Nominating Committee

Vickie Matthews, Council Vice-President and Nominating Committee member, presented the ballot. Vickie noted that Larry Groth's name did not appear on the ballot for the Mission Core Ministry, but he agreed in advance to run and his name should have been on the ballot. Vickie also noted that we have one opening for vice chair of Welcome Core Ministry. Pam Warwashana volunteered on the spot as a write-in candidate. Vickie also explained that according to our constitution, if there's only one candidate for each position, and no nominations from the floor, we can take a voice vote. Without further discussion, the congregation approved the slate of candidates by voice vote unanimously. Election results:

- Vice President: Vickie Matthews, 2nd term
- Council Members-at-Large:
 - Bob Thompson, 2nd term
 - Marc Warwashana, 2nd term
- Sarah Wentzloff, 1st term (appointed to finish Gordon Loll's term)
- Worship Core Ministry Vice Chair: Christy Nelson, 1st term (appointed to finish Sharon's term)
- Young Discipleship Core Ministry Vice Chair: Ken Utsunomiya, 3rd term
- Welcome Core Ministry Chair: Pam Sawin, 1st term
- Welcome Core Ministry Vice Chair: Pam Warwashana, (write-in candidate) 1st term
- Mission Core Ministry Chair: Larry Groth, 1st term
- Adult Discipleship Core Ministry Vice Chair: Peter Bertocci, 2nd term
- Support Ministry Positions
- IT Committee Chair: Tyler Dence, 1st term (Note: IT Committee Vice Chair: open)
- Personnel Team Chair Vice Chair: Valerie Lehmann, 1st term
- Building and Grounds Team Chair: Jim Love, 2nd term
- Financial Stewardship Team Vice Chair: Lisa Rhombes, 3rd term
- Endowment Committee Members-at-Large: Jeff Sova, 1st term, Karen Salamin, 1st term

Year End Financial Report

Bob Bertrand, Council Treasurer, presented. Zion ended 2017 with \$128K in our cash account, for day-to-day operations. Capital Projects reserve ended 2017 at \$386K, which is primarily from the Vogel bequest (to be used for capital improvements and large repairs). 2017 income was in-line with plan but \$53K better than 2016. 2017

expenses were unfavorable to plan by (\$25K). Spending was better than plan by \$61K prior to "Stewardship for All Seasons" spending of \$87K. Zion has ZERO debt. 2017 Endowment fund balance at \$2.8M vs \$2.5M in 2016, despite utilizing \$100K in 2017. 2017 member offerings of \$905K vs. last year of \$875K.

Looking Ahead

Pastor Jim presented a slide show of events from the past year. Pr. Jim talked about the Strategic Plan Executive Summary. He asked what will Zion be known for in the next 5 years? The church with the big white pillars? Or will they know us by our love? He mentioned a video of a community of people living in a trash pit in Paraguay. A musician came and asked them to create instruments from the trash. They created an orchestra. The musician said, it's not about the instruments, it's about the people. (There's videos on YouTube – Google "Paraguay garbage orchestra"). That's what our ministry is about: lifting up people and letting them make music. Pastor Vicky hopes the video inspires us to get involved. We are trying to do multi-generational events. Please help our youth get to Houston, by clearing their fundraising table upstairs (they were selling snacks for the Super Bowl). We are re-launching the coffee cart. We are putting it at Recycle Ann Arbor, and we won't be selling coffee, but giving it away, and hoping people will make a donation. Who knows what God has up His sleeve? We couldn't have imagined all that.

Closing Prayer

Pr. Vicky closed the meeting with prayer about transformation, and that God is in control, some risks work out, and some don't, and we will learn along the way. Loosen our grip, let us see the vision you have for us and that we can be sent into the world to do what you've sent us to do. Thank you for Nathan, for Nina. Inspire us to pour into our children and young families. Thank you for sending your Spirit to shake the walls, for the leaders you've put in place. Inspire us to imagine.

Council Meeting February 20, 2017—Highlights

Financial Report

- Cash: Available cash at the end of January was \$122,472. Cash in the operations account as of 02/16/18 is approximately \$107,000; sufficient for the foreseeable future.
- Income: For the month of January contributions were \$56,028, which was \$13,999 less than was projected in the budget. This compares to contributions of \$69,695 in January last year. Some members made contributions before the end of the year in 2017 due to the tax law changes. It is estimated this added around \$20,000 or more to our income in 2017, and may be reflected (negatively) in our 2018 income.
- Expenses: Overall spending was \$969 under budget.

Congregation Council (cont.)

- Pledges: Bob T. also reported that we have 77 pledges totaling \$346,817 as of noon 2/20/18. In 2016, we had 156 pledges totaling \$561,885. In 2017, we had 118 pledges totaling \$498,495. Council discussed ideas for encouraging others to turn in pledge cards. Finance and Stewardship Committees are disheartened by the trend.
- YTD Attendance and Offering through Jan 31

	<u>2018</u>	<u>2017</u>	<u>Variance</u>
Attendance (YTD) *	1,102	1,189	(87)
-Including Bibleland	1,359	1,528	(169)
Offering (YTD)	\$56,028	\$69,695	\$(13,667)
Offering per Person	\$50.84	\$58.62	\$(7.77)

* There were 4 Sundays in January 2018 and 5 Sundays in January 2017

Custodial Assistant

Pastor Jim and Pastor Vicky have been experimenting with giving part-time work to people in our community, one at a time. These are people that are recently out of homelessness, now have their own apartments, and are looking for work. We are paying them \$10/hr for jobs such as shoveling snow and vacuuming carpets, from the custodial budget. (If we were to hire a professional to shovel snow, it would be \$60/hr.) These are not official employees. Pastor Jim would like to continue to offer this work as it provides hope and dignity to these individuals. Council approved Pastor Jim and Pastor Vicky to continue to offer these hourly jobs to individuals.

Waymaker Fund Proposal

Last month, we established a Waymaker Fund and seeded it with \$10K. The guiding principles are that the funds cannot go to something already in the budget, and the money can only be used for a new, outward-looking endeavor; however, "operating procedures" are needed. Pastor Jim is looking for a small group of people to create guidelines so that we spend it fairly. When someone has an idea, we should be ready; our policies should already be documented. We should know in advance how we would determine whether it's a gift or a loan, how to report it to the congregation, what we want the recipient to document and report, etc. Chris, Dan, Pr. Jim, and Bob B. volunteered to be part of this task force.

Strategic Plan

Now that we have a strategic plan with so much in it, Pr. Jim believes we should create a team to hold us accountable. Pr. Jim is looking for a member of Council plus some other people in the congregation to be part of this team. Council discussed whether the mutual ministry teams could serve this purpose, but it was thought that this is a distinct role: support for pastors vs. support for the strategic plan. Council had several ideas for such a team, including potentially the original Vision Team convened by Pr. Barry Ludwig.

Letter from the Bishop

Pr. Jim read a letter from Bishop Don Kreiss. He thanked Zion for the gift to the Rise Up Campaign (\$30K) and would like to join us in worship in the near future. By participating in the Rise Up Campaign, Zion has access to resources, including the Living Every Day as a Disciple (LEAD) Program. The goal of LEAD is to be able to write a grant proposal to the synod, which is the result of donations from congregations. Council discussed whether this is similar to the visioning process we've already done, and whether the synod's process for choosing proposals could inform our process for the Waymaker Fund.

Van Painting

Pr. Vicky said we are waiting until the weather improves. Council discussed whether or not this has been voted on in the past. Council approved the funding for the graffiti artist for the van.

Coffee Cart

Pr. Vicky said more help is needed to make this work, particularly people who can drive the coffee to the Reuse Center. Coffee has to be brewed at Zion because we're the commissary kitchen. Every other Saturday, it's being taken care of, but on the other Saturdays, Nathan and Pr. Vicky have been doing the driving, which is not sustainable.

New Member Engagement

Sharon asked if Natalie Downs could be included in the new member class, to get more people interested in singing with the choir. Both pastors said yes.

Sanctuary Congregation

Bryan Weinert has asked Council to discuss whether we want to learn more about becoming a sanctuary congregation. He has asked if we would approve the creation of a task force to gather information. Council discussed whether the congregation should vote on this before the task force is created, but it was thought that the task force would need to assemble information for the congregation to consider. The congregation would need information to make this decision. Any recommendation from the task force would be voted on by council, and subsequently by the congregation. Council approved creation of the task force to gather more information.

Leadership Retreat

A leadership retreat is being planned for April, for the new chairs and co-chairs of the committees.

SE MI Synod Assembly

The SE MI Synod Assembly will take place May 11 & 12 at Tabernacle Missionary Baptist in Detroit. Some Council leadership needs to be there. We need two lay representatives, and Dan and Bob T. can go.

From Pastor Jim

Encouragement

*But encourage one another daily, as long as it is called "Today," so that none of you may be hardened by sin's deceitfulness.
- Hebrews 3:13*

I long for consistency in my life, but often my busy schedule takes its toll and then things start to be neglected. My plants in my office often suffer from my neglect. It doesn't take but a few days of forgetting to water them for the soil of my plants to get crusty and hardened. My neglect isn't obvious immediately but in time, as the plants' leaves fall to the ground, telling the story of my neglect.

Of the many warnings we have of sin's effects on our lives, this warning from the New Testament letter of Hebrews is most poignant. The author warns of hardened hearts and the need for persistent encouragement. Sin's worse lie is that it promises relief while we grow blind to deceitfulness, accusations and destruction of our unguarded hearts.

As Christians we are to be connected to Christ first and foremost. God uses brothers and sisters in Christ to keep us connected. We are made to be in community. We are to care for other people's spiritual health, helping them fight against sin. In this Easter season the scripture lessons tell of the Holy Spirit creating the church, the gathered people of God. God's Easter people are called to encourage one another daily while it is still "Today." We need to be consistent, purposeful, unrelenting in giving encouragement. We all need encouragement so that sin doesn't harden us.

Daily encouragement needs to be intentional with friends as we daily follow Jesus. As Lutherans we are called to stand on grace alone, rely on scripture alone, walk by faith alone, hope in Christ alone and live for God's glory alone. We are called to speak forgivingness, to speak encouragement for weariness, to speak of friendship for the daily faithful walk.

When we encourage one another it is like bringing water to thirsty soil. The Easter season is our time to be intentional as brothers and sisters to exhort and encourage, build up and bear with, remind and reprove each other. To live in community is to be accountable to each other. It is to live out the Love of Christ. I came across a quote by Dave Toyce, "We make a living by what we get. We make a life by what we give." Our life in Christ is centered on giving forgiveness, sharing love, and encouraging one another. How will you make encouraging others a priority in your life? The Easter season gives us fifty days to make it a priority.

Pastor Vicky's Corner

We have all heard the old adage "April showers bring May flowers." It's easy to look forward to the days when little white buds sprout on the trees and colorful flowers peek out from the ground. We get excited when the drab colors of winter give way to the brilliant hues of the new life of spring. Ah, when I close my eyes I can almost feel the sunshine on my face!

But wait. First we need the showers, maybe even some heavy rain. And with the rain often comes a storm or two. If we are lucky, we may make it through a spring without any major storms but chances are there will be days when the winds pick up and branches are blown down, days when we get mud between our toes and water droplets on our eyeglasses, and, of course, days when our hair will be flattened by the constant spitting from the sky. Those days are not nearly as fun or beautiful as the flower-filled, sun-in-your-eye, blue skies kind of days...but they are necessary.

In life, one of the ways that God communicates with us is through our pain. It is in the moments of our darkest skies when we remember that we have a power greater than us, a God who calms the storms. Just as the flower needs the rain water for it to grow, we need to encounter suffering for our faith to grow. It is in our distress that we call out to the Lord. It is in times of trouble that we can be amazed at how ever-present our God is. If we always had blue skies, we just might forget who colored the sky in the first place.

The next time you find yourself facing a problem, why not say this, "Thank you, Jesus, for your love. I look forward to growing closer to you in this time of need. I can't wait to see how you hush this storm!" Then head on out and dance in the rain!

Psalm 107:28-31 –

*²⁸ Then they cried to the Lord in their trouble,
and he brought them out from their distress;*

*²⁹ he made the storm be still,
and the waves of the sea were hushed.*

*³⁰ Then they were glad because they had quiet,
and he brought them to their desired haven.*

*³¹ Let them thank the Lord for his steadfast love,
for his wonderful works to humankind.*

Adult Discipleship

Adult Education Classes for April

April 8, 15, 22, 29: *The Implications and Ethics of Biotechnology*

Bob Thompson will host a series of discussions that will allow us to explore the societal and ethical implications of several new advances in science. During this series we will cover topics such as the strategies used to teach ethics to young scientists, how scientists alter genes to address genetic causes of disease, and what is artificial intelligence and why might I care? In addition, Dr. Jody Platt (University of Michigan) will join us as one of our outside speakers. Dr. Platt is an expert in the ethical, legal and social implications of genetic and newborn screening. Led by Bob Thompson, Piper Hall.

April 8, 15, 22, 29: *The Making of the New Testament: The Contributions of Paul*

These four classes will offer a look at how the New Testament came to be. Each session will begin with a 30-minute video featuring the lectures of Prof. Bart Ehrman (from "The Great Courses" series), followed by a discussion of the video. Prof. Ehrman's first lecture discusses why certain writings were included in the New Testament while others were not. His next three lectures examine the oldest writings included in the New Testament—the letters of Paul. Join us for this four-week course on the making of the New Testament! Class discussion leader Ron Delph, Classroom A.

Coming in May...

Sunday, May 13, *Images and Symbols at Zion*

Join us in the worship area (properly called the nave) at 10:10AM as Carol Brodbeck leads us in an examination of the many symbols and their meanings. Have you ever wondered what is the symbolic meaning of the descending dove above the altar? The four steps leading up to the chancel? The one step leading up to the sanctuary? The altar railing? The number of pillars? The colors? The Apostolic Coat-of-Arms windows? Come and see your church adornments with new eyes and enrich your worship experience.

Zion Reads

For our common read this winter, we have chosen James White's work, *The Rise of the Nones: Understanding and Reaching the Religiously Unaffiliated*. In this work James White, senior pastor at Mecklenburg Community Church in Charlotte, NC, shares with us his thoughts on why within the past two generations, millions upon millions of Americans have turned away from attending church, yet still believe in God. Who are these people, who when asked their religious affiliation, check the box titled "None"? What has caused this shift in American culture? And most importantly, what can we, as a congregation, do to reach these people?

Books may be purchased for \$12 at the Welcome Center Desk on Sunday, April 8, 15 & 22.

Discussion time led by Pastors Jim Debner and Vicky Lovell, will be Sunday, April 29 and May 6, 3—4:30PM in the Gathering Room.

Mission Core Ministry

SOS Community Services Receives ELCA Hunger Grant

The SOS Community Services is one of Zion's partners in mission in Ypsilanti. Last June, Zion wrote a letter of support for an ELCA World Hunger, Domestic Hunger Grant to support the food pantry at SOS. In March, SOS received a \$2,500 Hunger Grant from the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. We are thankful that the ELCA is partnering with us in supporting SOS Community Services as a shared commitment toward a just world where all are fed. This award will help SOS respond to 725 requests for food. Every year SOS responds to more than 30,000 requests for food, ends homelessness for 70 families with children and ensures that more than 5,000 people not feel so alone.

Mama Sara Update

Our dear friend, Sara Sebyala from Uganda continues to work hard on The 50 Child Project. She has vowed to take in 50 orphans while giving them an education, proper nutrition, and a loving Christian home. As of now, she has 14 children in her care until she can raise more funds. The cost of educating these children is very high. If you are interested in helping Mama Sara to care for these children, please contact Pastor Vicky and she will assist you in doing so.

Uganda Mission Team

On July 18 – 28, 2018 a group from Zion will be heading to Kampala, Uganda for an action-packed ten days of sharing God's love. We will be working with Mama Sara's orphans, leading a pastor training workshop, speaking at a conference, and visiting villages to share the love of Christ. If you would like to be a part of this trip or if you would like to make a donation to sponsor a person who is going, please see Pastor Vicky. Keep an eye out for the many fundraisers the team will be sponsoring over the next few months.

Mission Core Ministry (cont.)

Circles Washtenaw County

In 2017, Friends in Deed launched a new program to serve impoverished people in Washtenaw County. It's called "Circles." The mission of Circles is "to inspire and equip families and communities to resolve poverty and thrive."

Circles strives to break the cycle of generational poverty by creating circles of support and connections with people who are committed to real change--in their own lives and in the community. So much of our success is tied up in who we know--not just people in power, but people who know other people. Knowing that relationships matter and connections matter, the Circles program matches a person in poverty (the Leader) with at least two middle or upper income partners (Allies) for at least 18 months to form a support system.

The partnered Circles meet weekly to share a meal and work on a plan for each Leader. This social capital opens doors in ways that people in poverty simply do not have on their own.

Circles Washtenaw County began to meet in the Fall of 2017, initially working with 12 Leaders. So far this year, the matched Circles have been working on their Leader's plans. As a result, several Leaders have applied for living wage job. Best of all, one of the Leaders found her dream job as an editor at a publishing company in Detroit!

Does any of this sound exciting to you? Do you feel a call to work with people in a program that does more than just alleviate a crisis by providing food, shelter or short-term job training? Would you like to help in a program that lifts and keeps people off of poverty permanently?

Circles has many volunteer opportunities and is currently orienting new volunteers as it plans for its second year of operation. Two of Zion's small groups have been volunteering to make and serve the weekly meal occasionally. There are childcare needs and needs for additional Allies as new Leaders begin the program. And, there are many teams charged with various administrative and outreach tasks to keep the program running.

The next Volunteer Orientation is on Tuesday, April 3 from 7-8PM at St. Luke's Lutheran Church on Washtenaw. For more information, you can visit the Circles website at www.friendsindeedmi.org/circles OR contact Suzanne Van Dam at suzanne@friendsindeedmi.org OR call Suzanne at 734-340-9042.

"Overcoming poverty is not a gesture of charity. It is the protection of a fundamental human right, the right to dignity and a decent life."
- Nelson Mandela

Soul Café Update

Have you stopped by the Ann Arbor Reuse Center yet to see the new mobile ministry coffee cart? Soul Café is a donation-based drink cart that is located within the Reuse Center. The purpose of the cart is to offer folks in recovery or transition a place to develop job and leadership skills. The cart has been well-received at the Center. People are loving it! If you would like to purchase a Soul Café sweatshirt for \$30, a t-shirt for \$15 or simply make a donation to this worthwhile cause, please see Pastor Vicky Lovell. 100% of your donation is used to directly support the recovery community.

¹⁹ On the evening of that first day of the week, when the disciples were together, with the doors locked for fear of the Jewish leaders, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you!" ²⁰ After he said this, he showed them his hands and side. The disciples were overjoyed when they saw the Lord.

²¹ Again Jesus said, "Peace be with you! As the Father has sent me, I am sending you." ²² And with that he breathed on them and said, "Receive the Holy Spirit. ²³ If you forgive anyone's sins, their sins are forgiven; if you do not forgive them, they are not forgiven."

²⁴ Now Thomas (also known as Didymus), one of the Twelve, was not with the disciples when Jesus came. ²⁵ So the other disciples told him, "We have seen the Lord!" But he said to them, "Unless I see the nail marks in his hands and put my finger where the nails were, and put my hand into his side, I will not believe."

²⁶ A week later his disciples were in the house again, and Thomas was with them. Though the doors were locked, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you!" ²⁷ Then he said to Thomas, "Put your finger here; see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it into my side. Stop doubting and believe."

²⁸ Thomas said to him, "My Lord and my God!" ²⁹ Then Jesus told him, "Because you have seen me, you have believed; blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed."

³⁰ Jesus performed many other signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not recorded in this book. ³¹ But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.
- John 20: 19-31

Member Caring Ministry

Mason Jar Encouragement Event



On Sunday, April 15 at 10:10AM during Bibleland, students will create a jar to give to someone needing encouragement. Each interested student will write a note and create one gift in a jar to give away to some one needing encouragement (created for parents, or grandparents, or a neighbor, or teacher, or a special friend in their life).

Monetary donations for supplies on this "Sunday Cookies of Encouragement" are welcome. Questions: email Barbara at babdebner@gmail.com.

Zion SISTERS in Christ 2019 Retreat Planning

A team of women will meet on May 15th in Stelhorn Lounge at 7:15PM to plan our spring 2019 Women's Retreat. This one-hour meeting will discuss our theme, fees and the schedule. Your input is encouraged. Circle this new ministry in your prayers and join in the planning. Registration for SISTERS (Support, Inspire, Serve, Teach, Encourage, Respect and Share) in Christ will begin in February.

Step by Step Walkers

The Step by Step walkers are meeting on April 8 (for an hour) starting in the Welcome Center around 1:15PM. Walking the church neighborhood will be enjoyable (weather permitting).

On Wednesday, April 25 we will meet at Zion parking lot (weather permitting) around 3PM to walk downtown Ann Arbor. Please allow 2 hours.

On Sunday, May 6 we will meet in the Welcome Center at 1:15PM and walk over to Arbor Farms Market on Stadium and back.

Email Barbara Debner (babdebner@gmail.com) if you wish to walk at a different time or are planning to join us on April 8, April 25, or May 6. Keep moving forward and find time to enjoy fellowship with another walker. Getting outside to see God's Creation change from brown to green will be fun this spring.

Love Lives Here Bible Study

We have scheduled meetings to study *Choose Joy* at 6:30PM on April 8 and May 13 at Barbara Debner's home. Bring your bible and a copy of *Choose Joy* by Kay Warren (if you have it). Enjoy fellowship and a light snack. We will watch a short video followed by discussion. We will lift our prayer concerns too. New women are always welcome. Email Barbara with questions or to get her address.

Memorial Garden Update

If you have been thinking about honoring a loved one who is buried elsewhere, a Memory Brick placed in the Garden may be a good way to do so. We invite you to check out the bricks in the Garden, once the snow is melted. There are four sections of bricks, each clearly marked. The four sections are for interments, memory, pastors and donors.

Forms for purchase of a Memory Brick are found in the rack outside the office, and the deadline for purchase of bricks for this spring is April 15th. Completed forms with a check of \$150 for each brick may be turned in to Diane. If you wish assistance with this process, please contact Gladys Knoll at (734) 780-7507 or gladysknoll@yahoo.com.

³⁶ While they were still talking about this, Jesus himself stood among them and said to them, "Peace be with you."

³⁷ They were startled and frightened, thinking they saw a ghost. ³⁸ He said to them, "Why are you troubled, and why do doubts rise in your minds? ³⁹ Look at my hands and my feet. It is I myself! Touch me and see; a ghost does not have flesh and bones, as you see I have."

⁴⁰ When he had said this, he showed them his hands and feet. ⁴¹ And while they still did not believe it because of joy and amazement, he asked them, "Do you have anything here to eat?" ⁴² They gave him a piece of broiled fish, ⁴³ and he took it and ate it in their presence.

⁴⁴ He said to them, "This is what I told you while I was still with you: Everything must be fulfilled that is written about me in the Law of Moses, the Prophets and the Psalms."

⁴⁵ Then he opened their minds so they could understand the Scriptures. ⁴⁶ He told them, "This is what is written: The Messiah will suffer and rise from the dead on the third day, ⁴⁷ and repentance for the forgiveness of sins will be preached in his name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. ⁴⁸ You are witnesses of these things. ⁴⁹ I am going to send you what my Father has promised; but stay in the city until you have been clothed with power from on high." - Luke 24:36-48

Other News

LLM Update

Winter is loosening its grip on southeast Michigan, and I am excited to be involved in the last set of classes in my program of study for Licensed Lay Ministry in the Southeast Michigan Synod of the ELCA.

After a brief break in January 2018, my classmates and I began meeting again in February to study Church History. Following the 2017 activities for the 500th anniversary of the Reformation, I wasn't quite sure what to expect. I was pleasantly surprised to see the instructor was an old friend, whom Nancy and I had met 20 years ago at Trinity Lutheran Church in Midland, MI. Dr. Ken Grant and his wife Pastor Denise Grant had been in a small group with us when we lived there in the late 1990s. Dr. Grant teaches at U of Detroit Mercy, and is very engaging. History is not only about the past; each of us is a witness to history in our own lives and in the parishes where we serve. Each congregation has its own history, which is part of the history of the Church.

Our next class is scheduled to begin shortly after Easter, and run into May 2018. We will be studying the New Testament, and learning from Pastor Dennis Bux who taught us the Old Testament in the spring of 2017. He has retired, but not lost his love of and passion for a rigorous study of the Scriptures. We will talk about what is behind the text (the time and place of the author); what is in the text (the original language and how we understand those words); and what is in front of the text (each of us today, what experiences have shaped us, and how we understand God's Word).

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 August 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.
- Dale Eckart

Voices of Children: Be the Change

The Interfaith Round Table of Washtenaw County will present this year's unique interfaith music event - Voices of Children: Be the Change. Given the current climate in our country and in celebration of the sacredness of the planet, here is a beautiful way to show our support for diversity, gratitude and inclusion. This year's four children's choirs are from the Hindu Chinmaya Mission, Temple Beth Emeth, St. Clare's Episcopal Church and The First Unitarian Universalist Congregation. There will be an opportunity to donate to the work of the IRT.

Date: Sunday, April 22, 2018, 4PM (doors open at 3:30)

Location: Genesis, 2309 Packard Street (Temple Beth Emeth and St. Clare's Episcopal)

For more information, call 734-424-1535 or email gbrides@umich.edu.

³² All the believers were one in heart and mind. No one claimed that any of their possessions was their own, but they shared everything they had. ³³ With great power the apostles continued to testify to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus. And God's grace was so powerfully at work in them all ³⁴ that there were no needy persons among them. - Acts 4:32-34

Reaching Across Differences: Conversations that Matter in Today's World

The political storm that has visited the United States over the past few years has exposed a number of social crises. One of these crises is our society's ongoing struggle to truly hear each other and to help each other discern what sits at the heart of our beliefs, our fears and our desires for a wholesome life. What are some deep listening and inquiry practices that can bring us closer together rather than further apart?

The Interfaith Round Table of Washtenaw County invites you to come explore and practice conversations that will expand our ability to listen more deeply and discover what truly matters at the core of any conversation. How can we reflect each other's sacredness in ways that can help each of us see our true beauty and each other's heart's desire to thrive and live a blessed life?

Four Tuesday evenings in April (3,10,17,24): 7—9PM

Themes: four core attributes (trust, hope, love and clarity/light)

Approach: self-examination, small and large group discussion (all materials provided)

Location: Lord of Light Lutheran Campus Ministry, 801 S. Forest, Ann Arbor

Facilitator: Rev. Susan King, IRT Co-Director

Cost: \$40 (includes all materials)

Some have asked, "How do I talk with people who see life from such a different place from what I see it?" Others have said, "I just want to be a better listener." And still others wonder, "Are there better ways to connect with those who don't think like me, look like me or practice like me?" For all of the above, this course is just right for you. Reserve a place by registering via email at gbrides@umich.edu.

APRIL CALENDAR

Sunday, April 1 "CHRIST IS RISEN!"

7:45 AM Coffee Time/Welcome Center
 8:00 AM First Light Worship/Sanctuary
 9:00 AM Sola Worship/Sanctuary
 11:11 AM Ignite Worship/Sanctuary

Monday, April 2

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, April 3

8:00 AM Uganda Bible Study-via Skype/Pr. Vicky's office
 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

Wednesday, April 4

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
 6:45 PM Praise Band Rehearsal/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, April 5

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

Friday, April 6

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

Saturday, April 7

Sunday, April 8

7:45 PM Coffee Time/Welcome Center
 8:00 AM First Light Worship/Sanctuary
 9:00 AM Blood Pressure Clinic/Counseling Office
 9:00 AM Sola Worship/Sanctuary
 10:10 AM Bibleland/2nd floor
 10:10 AM JAM/Youth room
 10:10 AM C+C/Omega room
 10:10 AM Adult Discipleship/Piper Hall
 10:10 AM Adult Discipleship/Classroom A
 10:10 AM Families with young children/Alpha room
 11:11 AM Ignite Worship/Sanctuary
 12:30 PM Confirmation class/The Gathering
 2:00 PM P.E.G./Piper Hall
 4:30 PM Grace Place/Youth Room
 6:30 PM Love Lives Here/Debner Home

Monday, April 9

6:30 AM Men's ChristCare/Sunday Spot
 10:00 AM Samaritan Counseling/Counseling Office
 6:00 PM Ann Arbor Fiber Arts/Piper Hall
 7:00 PM Kesler Small Group/Omega Room

Tuesday, April 10

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 Band/Sanctuary

Wednesday, April 11

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
 6:45 PM Praise Band Rehearsal/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, April 12

7:00 AM Men's ChristCare/Sunday Spot
 9:00 AM Activity Day/Piper Hall
 9:30 AM Mom's Bible Study/Omega Room
 5:45 PM Rings of the Lord Rehearsal/Sanctuary
 7:30 PM Chancel Choir Rehearsal/Sanctuary

Friday, April 13

7:00 PM High school lock in/Youth Room

Saturday, April 14

10:00 AM Friends in Deed/The Gathering

Sunday, April 15

7:45 PM Coffee Time/Welcome Center
 8:00 AM First Light Worship/Sanctuary
 9:00 AM Sola Worship/Sanctuary
 10:10 AM Bibleland/2nd floor
 10:10 AM JAM/Youth room
 10:10 AM C+C/Omega room
 10:10 AM Adult Discipleship/Piper Hall
 10:10 AM Adult Discipleship/Classroom A
 10:10 AM Families with young children/Alpha room
 11:11 AM Ignite Worship/Sanctuary
 1:00 PM ICPJ Meeting/The Gathering
 4:30 PM Grace Place/Youth Room

Monday, April 16

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

Tuesday, April 17

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, April 18

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
 6:30 PM Knit 2 Together/Stellhorn Lounge
 6:45 PM Praise Band Rehearsal/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, April 19

7:00 AM Men's ChristCare/Sunday Spot
 9:30 AM Sarah'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 Rehearsal/Sanctuary
 6:30 PM Mission Core Ministry/Stellhorn Lounge
 7:30 PM Chancel Choir Rehearsal/Sanctuary

Friday, April 20

5:00 PM InterPlay Life Practice/Creation Station
 5:30 PM Girl Scouts/Piper Hall

Saturday, April 21

8:00 AM InterPlay Life Practice/Creation Station
 9:00 AM InterPlay Life Practice/The Gathering
 2:00 PM Girl Scouts/Piper Hall

Sunday, April 22

7:45 PM Coffee Time/Welcome Center
 8:00 AM First Light Worship/Sanctuary
 9:00 AM Sola Worship/Sanctuary
 10:10 AM Bibleland/2nd floor
 10:10 AM JAM/Youth room
 10:10 AM C+C/Omega room
 10:10 AM Adult Discipleship/Piper Hall
 10:10 AM Adult Discipleship/Classroom A
 10:10 AM Families with young children/Alpha room
 11:11 AM Ignite Worship/Sanctuary
 4:30 PM Grace Place/Youth Room

Monday, April 23

6:30 AM Men's ChristCare/Sunday Spot
 10:00 AM Samaritan Counseling/Counseling Office
 5:00 PM Wartburg College Choir Dinner/Piper Hall
 6:00 PM ELCA Youth Gathering/The Gathering
 7:00 PM Kesler Small Group/Omega room
 7:30 PM Wartburg College Choir/Sanctuary

Tuesday, April 24

8:00 AM Uganda Bible Study-via Skype/Pr. Vicky's Office
 10:00 AM Samaritan Counseling/Counseling Office
 7:00 PM Five Miles More Rehearsal/Sanctuary

Wednesday, April 25

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
 6:45 PM Praise Band Rehearsal/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, April 26

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
 7:00 PM Human Trafficking/The Gathering
 7:30 PM Choir Rehearsal/Sanctuary

Friday, April 27

12:45 PM Zion Singers Rehearsal/Music Room #1
 2:00 PM Zion Singers Off-Site

Saturday, April 28

9:00 AM WELCA Meeting/Stellhorn Lounge

Sunday, April 29

7:45 PM Coffee Time/Welcome Center
 8:00 AM First Light Worship/Sanctuary
 9:00 AM Sola Worship/Sanctuary
 10:10 AM Bibleland/2nd floor
 10:10 AM JAM/Youth room
 10:10 AM C+C/Omega room
 10:10 AM Adult Discipleship/Piper Hall
 10:10 AM Adult Discipleship/Classroom A
 10:10 AM Families with young children/Alpha room
 11:11 AM Ignite Worship/Sanctuary
 1:00 PM P.E.G./Piper Hall
 4:30 PM Grace Place/Youth Room

Monday, April 30

6:30 AM Men's ChristCare/Sunday Spot
 10:00 AM Samaritan Counseling/Counseling Office
 5:00 PM Ruth's Small Group Cooking/Main Kitchen
 6:00 PM RIC Meeting/Alpha Room
 6:15 PM Loss Recovery Support Group/Alpha Room
 6:30 PM Weber's Small Group/Stellhorn Lounge

The Tower

Zion Lutheran Church
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Ann Arbor, Michigan 48103

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April 1, 2018

March Life Passages at Zion

BAPTISMS:

WEDDINGS:

FUNERALS: *Dorothy Kahkonen; Barbara Putman*

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: Pam Sawin, Pam Warwashana
Adult Discipleship: Ron Delph, Peter Bertocci
Young Discipleship: Tom Clifford, Ken Utsunomiya
Member Caring: Dianne Daily, Laura Girbach
Missions: Larry Groth, Layale Weinert

Support Ministries

Personnel: Dave Werner, Valerie Lehmann
Building & Grounds: Jim Love, Bill Lehmann
Financial Stewardship: Nick Rogers, Lisa Rombes
IT: Tyler Dence, 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.