



# THE VISITOR FROM ZION

NEWSLETTER OF ZION EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN RAHWAY

MARCH 2015

RAHWAY, NEW JERSEY

VOLUME 65, ISSUE 3

## A Message from Council President, Kevin Brown

Greetings Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

I wanted to take a moment of your time to introduce myself and advise you of my recent appointment as the Congregation's Council President.

Rather than bore you with my personal spiritual journey or past involvement in Zion's missions or programs such as church council, chair of finance, choir member and Stevens minister, I would prefer to detail the plan for assuring the success of Zion's future, which I recently outlined to the church council.

The premise for the plan is that the future of Zion is coming whether we're prepared for it or not!

Based on years of participation in council meetings and reviewing the Church's finances in depth, it is my observation that currently we are POORLY prepared for the future. The glaring reason is that we have had NO PLAN, no central focus for our missions or our resources (fiscal, structural or human).

The plan of any church or business is to fulfill its mission statement. How many of you are truly familiar with Zion's mission statement? LOVE GOD, LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR, TELL THE WORLD! This is the abbreviated/amended version.

Zion's mission statement is as follows:

***"Boldly proclaim the Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, inspiring people of God in our congregation, our homes, our communities and throughout the world"***

Zion's mission statement is its heart and soul, defining its reason for being and inspiring congregants to believe that change is possible!

In any event, my expectation is to develop a plan for Zion's future, with GOD'S help and the help of a newly energized council and many concerned and inspired congregants.

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### WORSHIP THIS MONTH

#### SATURDAY EVENING SCHEDULE

5:00 PM .....Worship with Holy Communion

#### SUNDAY MORNING SCHEDULE

9:00 AM .....Adult Education

9:45 AM .....Children's Sunday School

10:00 AM .....Worship with Holy Communion

11:15 AM .....Fellowship Hour

#### LENTEN MID-WEEK

#### WEDNESDAY WORSHIP SCHEDULE

6:30 PM . Dinner with Operation Warm Heart

7:30 PM ..... Lenten Worship with Prayer

**Message from President** *continued from page 1*

The plan will serve as an opportunity to get underneath the mission statement and see how it plays out in the programs and activities that constitute our church's day-to-day activities. It will be an opportunity to draw on the passion and commitment and inspiration that are clearly evident in Zion. One of the most valuable aspects of the plan will also be an opportunity to review current programs and take stock of what is working well, what can work better and what is missing. Without a clear understanding of the current state of affairs, it's hard to think critically about what we're best positioned for going forward and what changes in programs and services we may need to make.

Among the components of the plan:

**Executive Summary:**

A quick overview of what services, missions, programs and activities we're looking to accomplish. What problems are we solving? What are our solutions? Who/what is the target market (who are we serving)?

Key financial highlights.

Other prominent components of the plan will be:

**Marketing:**

The plan to reach our market (how will we advertise?)

**Services / Activities:**

Whom are we looking to serve? What makes Zion GREAT! Details of current and future programs.

Present strengths and challenges. What problems are we solving?

In summation, we will develop a strategy complete with milestones, metrics, tactics, activities, a budget, individual and collective responsibilities, task assignments, dates, deadlines and ongoing details regarding money in and out!

**You are cordially invited to the next council planning session on Thursday, March 5, at 7:30 pm in the Education building.** Please feel free to forward your suggestions for enhancing the future of Zion. We will review services, fund raising, evangelism and many other aspects of full filling our mission statement.

GOD'S PEACE,

W. Kevin Brown

**Pastor's Message**

Dear sisters and brothers in Christ,

Repent and believe. In Mark's Gospel, these are the first words that Jesus says after he is baptized. Repent and believe are the words that Jesus feels called to speak after having been dragged by the Holy Spirit into the wilderness. Repent and believe are the summary of Jesus' sojourn in the wilderness with the wild beasts and angels. After Jesus is tempted by Satan, after Jesus is tested by the embodiment of all that is wrong in the world, after it seemed as though Jesus' trial in the wilderness could not get any more difficult, Jesus arose out of the wilderness leaving the wild beasts and Satan behind him proclaiming, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God has come near; repent and believe the good news."

Jesus' movement from baptism, to wilderness, to temptation, to commitment, to God's nearness is paradigmatic of our life. We too are baptized. And, having been baptized as children or adults, what follows is one long journey in the wilderness. During our walk with the wild beasts and angels we are tempted and knocked down. And according to God's story, which is our story on account of baptism, God will meet us in our wilderness. God will guide us out of our time of trial and give us the words to confess, "The kingdom of God has come near; I repent and believe the good news." The pattern of baptism, wilderness, temptation, and confession is seemingly written into our DNA. Each of us has been claimed by God only to have what follows that claiming be a period of trial.

Zion Lutheran Church's sojourn in the wilderness has been long and unrelenting. Last year we lost many beloved members of the church. At the same time we were in the wilderness of the Education Building. And, just weeks after moving back into the church building, we have struggled with one of the coldest winters on record with snow, ice, and freezing rain nearly every weekend. January and February have been riddled with many temptations. Has God abandoned our church? Where is everybody? Does anyone care anymore? What will the future at Zion look like? Will there be one? It is times like this that provoke fear in the life of the church. This is the wilderness. It is a place of fear, temptation, feeling lost, and confusion.

Based on all of the metrics of worldly success, it would seem that perhaps our fear is justified. But based on God's story, which is our story, we confess that God is close to us in the wilderness. It is, after all, the first place that Jesus went after he was baptized. I believe Jesus went into the wilderness first to assure those who know the desolate terrain of the wilderness that God, despite worldly standards of priority, will go first.

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"The first will be last and the last will be first," after all. God's story tells us that after trial and temptation, after fear and confusion, after you have lost it all, God will be there with you. God chose the cross as the place of glory for a reason. The cross is a place of humiliation and abandonment by the world. This is a place with which God knows that God's people will be familiar. The cross in many ways is synonymous with wilderness. The expectations of what follows the cross are similar to the expectations of what follows wilderness sojourns – death. But we know this is not the case with God!

Imagine with me for a moment the first time anyone ever experienced winter. To such a person the cold and snow would appear to be a death sentence, not only to the plants, but also to people. Animals seemingly die off or disappear. Plants wither under the weight of the ice and cold. The wind rips leaves from the trees. Amidst the deep freeze a person would have to find a new form of shelter. Given the scarcity of plants and animals a person would have to find new ways of sustaining their diet. And, with the unrelenting chill, a person would have to find new forms of hope. To a person who never experienced winter before the cold would become the new normal. Questions would ensue: Has God abandoned me? Where have all the animals gone? What will the future look like? Will there be one?

You and I, having been through many winters, know the answers to these questions. Winter prepares the ground for new growth. Animals seek shelter and procreate to perpetuate their species. The plants "sleep" in order to fervently grow in the spring. And winter does not last forever. So it is with the wilderness. So it is with the cross. Zion's wilderness sojourn will not last forever. It, like all things, will end. And when it does there will be something new in store for us. The ground has been and is being prepared for us. God is up to something at Zion and is leading us to something new. And we, who have experienced many winters and springs, can advise the person going through their first winter that it will end. So it is with God who tells us in Mark's Gospel that Zion's wilderness period will end. When it does, we too will confess with Jesus, "The time is fulfilled, the kingdom of God has come near; repent and believe the good news." But the end of the wilderness period is not the end of God's story!

What immediately follows Jesus' long wilderness journey and confession of the nearness of the Kingdom of God are these words: "Follow me and I will make you fish for people." This is the rhythm of the church: baptism/death to wilderness to trial to confession to growth/evangelism and finally to new creation. Sisters and brothers, this is God's story; this is our story. The wilderness period will end, and like Jesus' wilderness journey ours will end with the confession, "repent and believe the good news," which will be followed by, "Come follow me!" God's story, then, is meant to be shared as the wonderful gift that it is because God knows that there is an end to every wilderness and winter and at its end lies a confession of faith that is meant to be expressed to others. Just as the ice will melt, the flowers will bloom, and winter will end, so too will our wilderness end and at its end there will be something new created by God for us. Grace and peace,  
Pastor

## Crabby Old Man

From Maria Blajsa

A while back, Pastor Pernini recounted an experience he had when he started his internship in hospital chaplaincy. Perhaps this poem will help you recall his story and also examine your thinking about elderly people.

What do you see nurses? ...What do you see? What are you thinking ...when you're looking at me? A crabby old man ...not very wise, Uncertain of habit ...with faraway eyes? Who dribbles his food ...and makes no reply When you say in a loud voice ..."I do wish you'd try!" Who seems not to notice ...the things that you do, And forever is losing ...a sock or a shoe? Who, resisting or not ...lets you do as you will, With bathing and feeding ...the long day to fill? Is that what you're thinking? ...Is that what you see? Then open your eyes, nurse ...you're not looking at me. I'll tell you who I am ...As I sit here so still, As I do at your bidding ...as I eat at your will. I'm a small child of 10 ...with a father and mother, Brothers and sisters ...who love one another. A young boy of 16 ...with wings on his feet, Dreaming that soon now ...a lover he'll meet. A groom soon at 20 ...my heart gives a leap, Remembering the vows ...that I promised to keep. At 25, now ...I have young of my own, Who need me to guide ...And a secure, happy home. A man of 30 ...My young now grown fast, Bound to each other ...with ties that should last. At 40, my young sons ...have grown and are gone, But my woman's beside me ...to see I don't mourn. At 50, once more, babies play 'round my knee. Again, we know children ...my loved one and me. Dark days are upon me ...my wife is now dead. I look at the future ...shudder with dread. For my young are all rearing ...young of their own, And I think of the years ...and the love that I've known. I'm now an old man ...and nature is cruel. 'Tis jest to make old age ...look like a fool. The body, it crumbles ...grace and vigor depart. There is now a stone ...where I once had a heart; But inside this old carcass ...a young guy still dwells, And now and again ...my battered heart swells. I remember the joys ...I remember the pain, And I'm loving and living ...life over again. I think of the years, all too few ...gone too fast; And accept the stark fact ...that nothing can last. So, open your eyes, people ...open and see Not a crabby old man ...Look close ...see ME!

Remember this poem when you next meet an older person who you might brush aside without looking at the young soul within. With God's help, we will all be there, too.

## Adult Education Opportunity on Sunday Mornings

Sundays at 9:00 AM in the Library

You are invited to join in a lively discussion and exploration of the matter of "Eucharistic Hospitality" with Kathryn Irwin.

Have you ever thought about who is welcome to receive Communion in our congregation? Have you ever wondered what the "rules" are or if there even should be any? Here is your chance to share your thoughts, hear what the Bible and the Church have to say about it, and help craft Zion's statement about who we welcome to our Sunday table.

More information can be found on Zion's website at <http://www.zionlutherannj.net/category/table-font/>



## Volunteer Opportunity at Community Food Bank of New Jersey

Saturday, March 14<sup>th</sup> – 9:00am – 11:00am

Join with other members of Zion to serve our brothers and sisters of our communities through giving our time at the Community Food Bank of New Jersey in Hillside. We may assist with a variety of tasks including sorting and re-packing food items, stocking shelves, helping in the thrift shop, assembling mailings, and sorting and packing new children's clothes.

Meet in the church parking lot at 8:15am. For more information, contact Marcia Eversley.



### "Bread of Life"

#### Ingredients:

1 <sup>1</sup>/<sub>3</sub> cup bananas

1 cup oil

<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> cup flour

1 tsp baking powder

### Banana Chocolate Chip Muffins

1 egg

1 cup sugar

1 tsp baking soda

6oz chocolate morsels

by Anita Waldron

Mix together all wet ingredients and add all dry ingredients. Stir in chocolate chip morsels. Bake at 350° for 15-18 minutes.

# March Celebrations

## Birthdays

- 1 Georgia Hartnett
- 3 Nettie Baser
- 4 David Healey
- 4 Marie Jensen
- 6 Charlotte Zygo
- 11 Michael Ferdinandi
- 13 Hazel Thor
- 19 Sharan Waldron
- 20 Bill Gehring
- 21 Violet Stebner
- 21 Frank Fuzy
- 22 Barbara Brown
- 25 Norma Huber (Sr.)
- 26 Anthony Stratford Giarrizzo
- 26 Kyle Robert Murphy
- 26 Audry Hurst
- 27 Maria Blajs
- 29 Adam Peter Monte
- 30 Ryan Roos

## Wedding Anniversaries

- 19 Therese & Yogi Bera

## Baptismal Anniversaries

- 2 Annette Nielsen
- 4 Bill Hoepfel
- 15 Peg Hoepfel
- 18 Katy Andaluz
- 19 Shay Palmer
- 20 Josephine Lerant
- 22 Justin Racey
- 23 Tenley Rosky
- 31 Joan Breza

# Continuing in Need of Prayer

Therese Bear  
 Ursula Lochner  
 Carol Meadowcroft

Ted Meadowcroft  
 Ellie Ringled  
 Ryan Roos  
 Kathleen Silva

Lee Thor  
 Kathy Ward  
 Charlotte Zygo

Abby ----- friend of Marcia Eversley  
 Joe Alol ----- friend of Luann Albanese  
 Clara Andrews ----- friend of Edna Syvertsen  
 Debbie Beer ----- cousin of Cheryl Piccard  
 Joe Bera ----- brother of Yogi Bera  
 Andrew Born, USMC ----- nephew of Doug Sawler  
 Robin Brown ----- friend of Lee Thor  
 Holly Brown ----- friend of Cheryl Piccard  
 Carl Christensen ----- friend of Patrick Sawler  
 Richard DeNero ----- friend of Cheryl Piccard  
 Helen Deppe ----- sister of Gert Shackleton  
 Robert Deppe ----- nephew of Gert Shackleton  
 Mari Favire ----- friend of Cheryl Piccard  
 Ira Glover ----- friend of Marcia Eversley  
 Patricia Grant ----- friend of Cheryl Piccard  
 Charles Gritschke ----- nephew of Helen Gehring  
 Elanore Hintenach ----- mother of Tommy Hintenach  
 Dennis Hoover ----- friend of Gert & Bert Shackleton  
 Meg Keller ----- daughter-in-law of Grace Keller  
 Marilyn Kelly  
 Frieda Konopi ----- mother-in-law of Carolyn Konopi  
 Bernie Long ----- friend of Therese & Yogi Bera  
 Amy Martin ----- friend of Zion  
 Devon Matthews ----- friend of Cheryl Piccard  
 James McCabe ----- cousin of Cheryl Piccard  
 Barbara McDarby ----- friend of Therese & Yogi Bera  
 Ginny Mentzel ----- sister of Natalie Ford  
 Dori Miller ----- friend of Therese Bera  
 Daniel Nietzold ----- son of Kathy Ward  
 Michael Nicols ----- friend of Therese & Yogi Bera  
 Monica & John O'Brien ----- friends of Luann Albanese  
 George Policastro ----- friend of Therese & Yogi Bera  
 Rita Reddington ----- mother of Carolyn Konopi  
 Maria Ros ----- mother of Fr. Sal Ros  
 Marianne Sabol ----- cousin of Therese Bera  
 Francis Sawler ----- father of Patrick Sawler  
 Helen Spillar ----- friend of Gert & Bert Shackleton  
 Susan Trail ----- friend of Therese & Yogi Bera  
 Hugh Wallace ----- husband of Nancy Jean Wallace  
 Gary Webb ----- brother-in-law of Cheryl Piccard

### **We pray for our members at a distance and those unable to join us at worship:**

Gloria Anderson  
 Nettie Baser  
 Dot Cole  
 Margaret Felver  
 Arlene Hasbrouck

Grace Keller  
 Alexander Kitsakos  
 Harry McDowell  
 Bill Marbach  
 Henry Meyer

Helen Rokos  
 Richard Sillen  
 Henry Thoden  
 John Thompson  
 Dorothy Zehrer

### SUNDAY SCHOOL NEWS

The Sunday School made Valentines that were mailed to the shut-ins and those who have moved away. They were greatly appreciated.

The Lenten project for the Sunday School this year will be "Make A Joyful Noise." The can will be at the altar every service during Lent. So start saving your coins and bring them to church every week and put them in the can and "MAKE A JOYFUL NOISE." Everyone is welcome to participate.

God bless you,

Anita L. Waldron, Sunday School Superintendent

### SECOND FRIDAY CUPCAKES

Thanks to all who contributed cupcakes that were delivered to Second Presbyterian Church on Friday, February 13: Marge Speidel, Cathy Jones, Donna Murphy, and Annette Nielsen. Thanks to Carolyn Konopi and Roseanne Tremarco for delivering them. Anyone may contribute. They are much appreciated. Thank you very much also to all the anonymous people who contributed plastic bags or paper products or their prayers! All of this is much appreciated.

The next opportunity to help with this faithful mission is **Friday, March 13<sup>th</sup>**. Please drop off a batch of 24 cupcakes **between 1:00 and 2:00 PM** at the Parish Office or call the office for a special arrangement.

### SEWING GROUP

The sewing group meets on the first and third (sometimes the fifth) Thursday of each month in the Education Building. Our next meeting times are **March 5<sup>th</sup>** and **March 19<sup>th</sup> at 10:00 AM**.

### WOMEN OF THE ELCA

Our next meeting is on **Monday, March 9<sup>th</sup> at 12:30 PM**.

### ALTAR GUILD

The Altar Guild is looking for additional people to serve for one month a year. Call the church office to sign up.

### VISITOR NEWS

*Visitor* submissions should be emailed to the church office (secy@zionlutherannj.net). If you do not have access to the internet you may still submit a hard copy. Please keep us up to date on your events. The deadline is the third Sunday, which is **March 15<sup>th</sup>**. Remember: if at all possible, please email your news.

### FINANCIAL UPDATE

Through January 31, 2015, Current Operating Expenses exceeded Current Operating Income by (\$29,028.27). Current Operating is the line item in Zion's budget designated for common expenses such as salaries, repairs, supplies, etc.

### MEDICAL SUPPLY CLOSET

If you would like to borrow walkers, crutches, canes, etc., please call the church office.

### DONATEABLE ITEMS

CAMPBELLS SOUP LABELS for Navajo Lutheran Mission, Rock Point, AZ



Please save your Campbell's Soup Labels proofs of purchases! The labels are used to purchase vehicles for the Mission and are very valuable, as in the past they have been able to redeem these points in exchange for

four 15-passenger vans (worth 1.5 million labels each!), and two 7-passenger mini vans for employee use. Although Campbell's no longer has the 15-passenger vans, the Mission is still able to purchase smaller vans and educational equipment, such as overhead projectors, computers, and playground equipment.

The Campbell's Soup program will only be accepting the bar code portion from the labels. Instead of saving the labels from Campbell's, Swanson's, V8, Prego, and Franco American products, they now just require that the UPC (bar code) insignia be sent. (Any bar code whose number begins with 51 or 14 or any with the Labels for Education will qualify). If the bar code has dotted lines around or near it, cut on the lines.

For more information, see <http://www.nelm.org/support-the-mission.php>

SODA CAN TABS for children in need



Save the tabs from your soda cans. The saved tabs will be sent to Florida in gallon milk jugs. Each jug will provide \$100 worth of free medical care to children in need.

A box is in the back of our worship space labeled "Can Tabs." For more information call Carley Lesinski at 732-388-9044.

USED EYEGLASSES for the Lion's Club program



Please bring them to Zion and put them in the box in the back of our worship space. Many thanks!

For more information, see <http://www.lionsclubs.org/EN/how-we-serve/sight/eyeglass-recycling.php>

**EASTER LILIES 2015**

**DEADLINE: March 29, 2015**  
**For information: 732-388-1815**

I/We wish to order \_\_\_\_\_ Easter Lilies for Easter decorating in Zion Church. Information for publication, please print all information clearly:

In memory of: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

In honor of: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Relationship: \_\_\_\_\_

Given by: \_\_\_\_\_

Envelope # \_\_\_\_\_

Number of plants ordered @ \$7.50 \_\_\_\_\_

\$7.50 X TOTAL number of plants = \$ \_\_\_\_\_ (enclosed)

To be picked up \_\_\_\_\_ or For a confined member \_\_\_\_\_

**PLEASE DO NOT MAIL IN CASH**

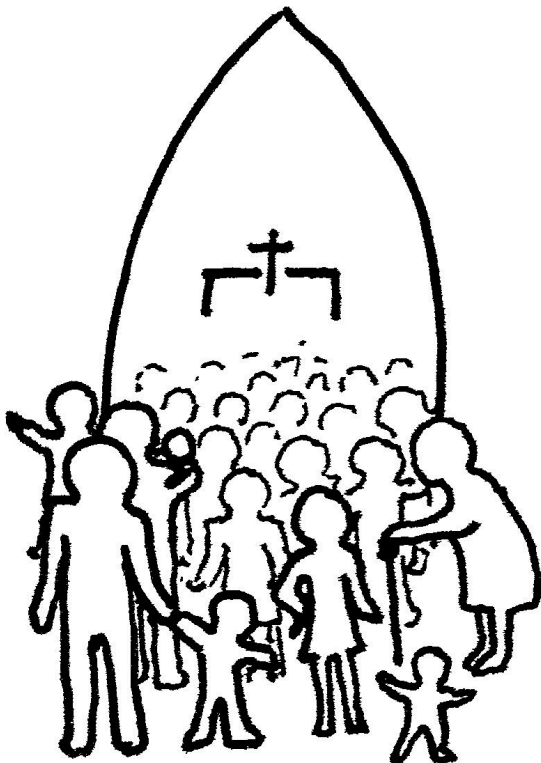
Cash or check payable to Zion Lutheran Church

Place in PINK Special Purpose envelope marked Easter

Flowers then put in the Offering Plate at any service or mail

to the Parish Office:

Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church  
215 Elm Avenue  
Rahway, NJ 07065-3220



## Congratulations to Zion's Congregation Council for 2015

- Kevin Brown..... President
- DJ Lesinski ..... Vice-President
- Vi Stebner ..... Secretary
- Robert Shackleton ..... Finance
- Harold Engstrom ..... Evangelism
- Katie Finnerty ..... Fellowship
- Patrick Sawler ..... Property
- Kathleen Silva ..... Social Ministry
- Marcia Eversley ..... Stewardship
- Nancy Jean Wallace..... Worship & Music
- Anita Waldron ..... Youth & Family
- Barbara Brown
- Kip Palmer

**Zion Lutheran Church**

**215 Elm Avenue**

**Rahway, NJ 07065**

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*Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church*

RAHWAY, NEW JERSEY

**ZION EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH**

*New Jersey Synod*

*Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*

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E-Mail: [secy@zionlutherannj.net](mailto:secy@zionlutherannj.net)

**Saturday Worship at 5:00 PM**

**Sunday Worship at 10:00 AM**

*Holy Days as Announced*

**The Parish Staff**

*Ministers: The People of Zion Church*

*The Rev. Carmine Pernini, Pastor*

*Patricia Ogarek, Parish Secretary*

*Dr. Brian F. Dallow, Director of Music*

*Frank, Sexton*

*Mr. Kevin Brown, Congregation President*

**LOVE GOD, LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR, TELL THE WORLD!**

**MARCH 2015**