



Eye on Zion

A Quarterly Newsletter for the People of Zion Lutheran Church

February-March-April
2023

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Seeking: Honest Questions for Deeper Faith

Pastor Joel Pancoast

There is a movement within American Christianity that identifies “seekers” as people who are new to church or to the Christian faith. These churches pay special attention to every aspect of their ministry to make



seeking:
honest questions
for deeper faith

communication don’t have words that are only used and understood by those familiar with church. Their buildings often look more like concert halls or community centers than traditional churches, and their worship and music reflect those more spaces and events as well. This is not a critique on the so-called seeker-friendly church; every different expression of Christian faith has its place in the broader body of Christ. Instead, this is an urging for each of us to recognize that all people of faith are seekers.

sure they are welcoming to those unfamiliar with church. They make sure their messaging and

Whether you set foot into a church for the first time or the thousandth time, whether you just heard about Jesus for the first time or have followed Jesus for many decades, you are a seeker.

Until we stand before the throne of God or until we achieve a complete and perfect faith, it is important to seek a deeper relationship and understanding of God, lest our knowledge of God end with the same understanding we gained from our childhood or early experiences of faith, no matter what age we started learning about God. As humans, we want to understand and know God more, but as Paul wrote to the church in Corinth, “for now we see in a mirror dimly.... Now I know in part....” (1 Corinthians 13:12). Paul reminds us that as seekers, we will never be able to see the entire picture of God, but we can get and give glimpses of God through receiving, giving, and experiencing sacrificial love. If our seeking does not point to

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Seeking: Honest Questions for Deeper Faith continued from page 1.

love, we're probably not experiencing God, because if there is one thing we can know about God, it is that God is love.

Lent is probably my favorite season in the church year, because it is a season that invites us to recognize ourselves as seekers. During Lent, we are invited to seek deeper relationships and engagement with God and each other. This isn't the real root of the word, but I like to say that LENT invites us to focus on God's unreLENTing love for us and for all creation.

During the season of Lent at Zion this year, there are so many opportunities for seeking. As you read through this issue of the "Eye on Zion," I hope you will find at least one opportunity to grow in faith and relationship. There are opportunities for growth and learning, such as Nourish, Wednesday "feed forward" Bible studies, the newly formed Biblical Justice Book Club, and more. There are also opportunities for growing in relationship and care, such as participating in any of our choirs, band, or other music; young adult gatherings; Stephen Ministry; or getting to know our new associate pastor Veronica Gould. There are opportunities for worship and growing in God's Word every Sunday, at Lenten midweek worship and small groups on Wednesdays, and all of Holy Week as we enter the holiest of seasons.

This Lent, I invite you to try out this spiritual practice of seeking. Ask questions, stay curious, and explore more deeply into the fullness of life and the heart of God. Our Sunday worship theme during the season of Lent is called "**Seeking: Honest Questions for Deeper Faith.**" The scriptures and themes for worship each Sunday and Bible study each Wednesday are full of stories of Jesus encountering people who are seeking, whether it's a new beginning, a different life, a deeper faith, or a renewed relationship. In each of these interactions, the seekers gain new perspectives in faith, even while mystery might grow.

During the Lenten midweek gatherings, we will be seeking understanding through the "**Miracles of Jesus.**" Pastor Paul Oman, a friend who is both a pastor and artist and who traveled with me to the Holy Land last year, will be literally showing us the meaning of the Gospel in our lives through his ministry called *Drawn to the Word*. As he tells stories from the Gospels, he will also paint the stories and draw our curiosity and seeking ever deeper into God's Word, giving us new insights into faith.



The last few years have been turbulent, and many of us are asking big questions about our lives, our faith, and the church. During this season, bring your questions and explorations. They may not always lead to answers, but they can help us find clarity, connection, wonder, balance, and new perspectives. Ask yourself these questions: What am I seeking? What is God seeking? What is the world seeking? Together, let us create a safe space to explore and to be drawn more deeply into the fullness of life and into the heart of God.

SEEKING: HONEST QUESTIONS FOR DEEPER FAITH—SUNDAY WORSHIP

February 22 (Ash Wednesday)	Is this the fast that I choose?	Isaiah 58:1-12; Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21
February 26	Who will you listen to?	Genesis 2:15-17, 3:1-7; Matthew 4:1-12
March 5	How do we begin again?	Genesis 12:1-4a; John 3:1-17
March 12	Will you give me a drink?	Exodus 17:1-7; John 4:5-42
March 19	Who sinned?	John 9:1-41
March 26	Can these bones live?	Ezekiel 37:1-14; John 11:1-45
April 2 (Palm Sunday)	Where are you headed?	Matthew 21:1-11
April 6 (Maundy Thursday)	Will you wash my feet?	John 13:1-17, 31b-35
April 7 (Good Friday)	Why have you forsaken me?	Matthew 27:27-50
* Dr. David Dunbar's "Journey to Golgotha" Cantata		
April 9 (Easter Sunday)	Who are you looking for?	John 20:1-18

DRAWN TO THE WORD: MIRACLES OF JESUS—MIDWEEK LENTEN GATHERINGS

March 1	Jesus Heals the Gerasene Demoniac (Mark 5:1-20)
March 8	Jesus Raises Jairus' Daughter and Heals the Woman with the Flow of Blood (Mark 5:21-43)
March 15	Jesus Feeds the 5000 and the 4000 (Mark 6:30-44 and Mark 8:1-10)
March 22	Jesus heals a paralytic let down through a roof (Matthew 9:1-8; Mark 2:1-12; Luke 5:17-26)
* Pastor Paul Oman, founder of Drawn to the Word, will be with us to paint live	
March 29	Jesus Heals a Man Born Blind (John 9:1-41)

LENTEN MIDWEEKS ARE BACK!

Please join us for a community-forming evening together. Our schedule each Wednesday is:

5:00-5:45 p.m.	Soup Supper (show up anytime and soup will be ready for you)
5:45-6:45 p.m.	Small Group Conversations
6:45-7:15 p.m.	Holden Evening Prayer with Drawn to the Word

PAUL OMAN, artist and pastor, shares his Drawn to the Word artistic ministry with audiences ecumenically across the country. He served as a science teacher, then Lutheran pastor when, in 2011, he took up work as an artistic pastor full-time. Paul seeks to give new vision to God's Word by using the process of painting to captivate audiences in our visually oriented culture. Painting and drawing have been a part of Paul's life since childhood. Receiving national and international recognition for his work in watercolor, Paul uses this gift to proclaim the Gospel in unique and powerful ways that impact lives and inspire mission. Paul works in many settings, including congregations, schools, universities, seminaries, camps, prisons, nonprofits, and more. The larger-than-life sized murals are painted with acrylics on stretched canvas. Paul lives near Amery, Wisconsin, with his wife, Jana, and their children.



Pastor Paul Oman

Music Ministry

David Dunbar

Hello Zion!

A lot of great music is on the way this spring season at Zion, and I just wanted to take a moment and highlight a little of it for you.

Ash Wednesday, which is February 22, begins the season of Lent, and with it, our traditional mid-week Lenten services. Those will be every Wednesday evening in March, and this year we will be returning to the beloved Holden Evening Prayer liturgy by Marty Haugen. Amazingly, this will be my first time experiencing this wonderful music in worship, and I am looking forward to learning it and singing along with all of you who are planning to make the mid-week services a part of your observance of Lent this year.

On Thursday, March 16, the University Women's Choir of Colorado Christian University (pictured on page 5 of this newsletter) will be giving a concert at Zion. I asked the director of the choir, Laura Saunders, to tell us about her group and possibly give us a little "sneak peek" at the concert lineup, and here is what she wrote back to me:

The University Women's Choir is a select large ensemble dedicated to the performance of vocal masterworks from all musical styles and periods. University Women's Choir is an opportunity for students to grow in stewardship of God-given gifts and musical talents. Musical excellence and

well prepared performances are stressed. The University Women's Choir tours and records annually and presents multiple concerts each year.

The women will be singing Spirituals, encouraging anthems, songs from the Baroque time period, 21st-century pieces as well as an arrangement of a current praise and worship song. You are sure to be encouraged by the unified efforts of this group of women as they passionately pursue excellence to the glory of God!

I don't know about you, but I'm excited to hear this group! Watch for more details on the time for this concert as we get closer to March.

And finally, I am pleased to let you know that the chancel choir has agreed to perform one of my original compositions for Holy Week this year. The piece is called "Journey to Golgotha" and is a Good Friday choir cantata with piano accompaniment which I composed many moons ago (tweaking it here and there over the years). The whole work is performed in near darkness and is paired with projected images of Christ and others during that fateful last week. It will be the centerpiece of worship on Good Friday, which is April 7. I hope you will be able to come and experience it with us.

Thank you, and God Bless!

Children's Music Ministry

Noelle Bauman-Stucky

Greetings to the Zion community,

Your joy and light bring sustenance to those who need it during the cold winter months. Spring, warmth, and new growth is soon to be upon us, but this has been a very long and difficult winter. Though the time to stay inside and reflect is grounding, I stir for spring and all the celebrations that bring us together with one another and with our world.

When we join on Sundays, our services connect us through worship and praise. As we grow older with a church, the words and songs grow with us. I am so thankful to have church members, colleagues, and friends who will join in singing even when the song is new, or the words get twisted. Our society does not offer many ways that we can lift our voices together in a healing way, but those who attend church in person and online are experiencing that unity and connectedness. Whether you are part of an

organized choir or sing within the congregation, a camaraderie is felt by the oldest of members to the youngest. I feel incredibly lucky to sing with our stalwart church members and teach our youngest.

As I work with our youngest members, I look forward to diving into some of the music we cherish for Palm Sunday and Easter Sunday. We love to prepare anthems and instrumental music, but there is weight in learning the words and tunes to the ceremonial music of the season. Through the months leading to Easter Sunday, we will approach the liturgy and hymns in a way that tells the story of redemption and love in hope that the words and music will be instilled in the hearts of the children. They can carry the words and music in their hearts just as they carry the sense of community that embraces them at Zion. I look forward to the next few months making music and telling stories.



On Thursday, March 16, the University Women's Choir of Colorado Christian University will perform at Zion. Zion's own Maddie Elder is a member of this choir (front row, fourth from left).



COLORADO CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY
Grace and Truth

Highlights of Zion's 2023 Annual Meeting

Submitted by Amy Brauner

The congregation gathered on Sunday, January 29, 2023, for our annual meeting. We had 63 people gather in person with 26 screens on zoom.

Here are highlights from the annual meeting:

A “growth to mission” budget for 2023 was proposed and accepted by the congregation.

- The total budget for 2023 is \$605,217.
- The following areas increased:
 - ◇ Benevolence—\$6,069
(community outreach with the Local Service Committee)
 - ◇ Programs—\$15,425 (Intern program, Nourish, Faith Formation, VBS)
 - ◇ Admin & Property—\$5,510
(Internet speed increase, synod assembly, google suite email storage)
 - ◇ Salary & Benefits—\$15,496
(4.5% staff pay increase, two full-time pastors).

2022 giving ended in a \$37,460 surplus. The congregation approved to divide the surplus in the following manner:

- \$10,000 for Building Maintenance
- \$10,000 to Benevolence/Service
- \$5,000 to Faith Formation
- \$10,000 for the Intern Program
- \$2,460 for Lenten Midweek Programming.

We voted “yes” to extend a pastoral call to Veronica Gould as Associate Pastor.

- 2/3 vote of the people present is needed to call a pastor, and the vote ended in 95% yes to extend the call.
- Matches Zion's five characteristics: Education, Caring, Service, Cross-Generational, and Relationships.

As proposed by Long Range Planning's action plan, the Local Service Committee has been formed with five elected leaders. The goals of the committee are:

- Promote and support deliberate acts of kindness, mercy, compassion, service and love for our neighbors—those neighbors beyond our congregation who are suffering, marginalized, or vulnerable.
- Enlarge our circle of concern and meaningful engagement, by partnering with community organizations that align with our mission and vision.

Zion elected and welcomed newly elected leaders. The new leaders and the committees they will be serving on are listed below.

VICE PRESIDENT, COUNCIL—Erin Bachman (2nd term)

TREASURER, COUNCIL—Chas Farasyn

MEMBER AT LARGE, COUNCIL—

Steve Courts (2nd term)

Ron Christensen (completing Chas's term)

Chris West

YOUTH COUNCIL MEMBER—Gordon Kuhns

LONG RANGE PLANNING—

Joel Brauner (2nd term)

Carleen Blake

GIFTS AND ENDOWMENT—

Marthann Dahlen (2nd term)

Kathy Loken

LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT—Ron Buchholz

PERSONNEL—Debbie Joncas

AUDIT COMMITTEE—Janie Lichtfuss

FINANCIAL STEWARDSHIP—

Gene Elder

Judy Gustafson

LOCAL SERVICE COMMITTEE—

Linda Breen

Laura Dimmitt

Jacob Kuhns

Bill Kurtz

Ruth Sprain

SYNOD ASSEMBLY—Jim and Susan Linden

A Call Extended and Accepted

Joel Brauner

We are excited to welcome Veronica Gould as our new Associate Pastor! The Call Committee has been working diligently for the last year to find a pastor to call, and we believe that we have found a great match to lead and partner with us as we continue to live our mission.

The Call Committee hosted a few events in January to introduce everyone to Veronica. We had a meeting to discuss her gifts and skills and an in-person meet and greet with Veronica for the whole congregation. If you couldn't meet with Veronica, here's a little information about who she is and why she's such a great fit for Zion.

Veronica will be taking her first call when she joins us at Zion. She recently completed her internship in Dana Point, California, and spent three years before her internship serving as a Pastoral Resident. Veronica is originally from New Jersey and grew up in the church where Pastor Joel served his first call. Swimming, hiking, science fiction, and karaoke are a few of Veronica's hobbies.

At Zion, we like to describe ourselves with five characteristics: Education, Caring, Service, Cross-Generational, and Relationships. As the Call Committee got to know Veronica, we could see how well she would both fit into Zion but also challenge us toward living out God's mission for us.

Veronica has a personal passion for education as she double majored in Religion and Anthropology. This passion extends to her faith as she has been praised for her knowledge and ability to connect different themes and stories from the Bible. She's used that knowledge to connect with all generations while leading Bible studies, confirmation classes, children's messages, and young adult groups and while participating with the choir.



**Veronica Gould accepted the call to be Zion's new Associate Pastor.
Welcome, Veronica!**

But Veronica's gifts and passions don't reside only inside the church. Her compassionate heart and passion to connect with different cultures have led Veronica to reach out to the community around her. In the past, she has been a team member to plan an Afghani New Mission start. After tragic and violent events had shaken the community around her, Veronica helped organize an interfaith vigil to provide comfort.

We hope that everyone is as excited as the Call Committee to welcome Veronica Gould to Zion! We encourage everyone to meet and welcome Veronica, but also to accept a challenge. We spend so much time thinking about how Veronica can help our church, but we also need to think about how we can help Veronica. Please think about how you can welcome and support Veronica as she grows to become the pastor whom God has called her to be.

Welcome Zion's New Local Service Committee

Seeking to Share God's Abundance to Transform Lives through the Love of Jesus

Last year the congregation accepted a mission action plan put together from extensive focus group conversations that emphasizes many specific and tangible ways we as a community of faith will live into our mission to *share God's abundance to transform lives through the love of Jesus*. One of those actions is to create a Local Service Committee to help “promote and support deliberate acts of kindness, mercy, compassion, service, and love for our neighbors—those neighbors beyond our congregation who are suffering, marginalized, or vulnerable” (copied from the written goals of the committee).

Members of this new committee are as follows:

Liesl Begnaud

Linda Breen

Laura Dimmitt

Jacob Kuhns

Bill Kurtz

Ruth Sprain.

Each of these committee members has a gift for service and caring for neighbors in our community. We are grateful for their leadership and participation and look forward to seeing how this focus will create ongoing, sustainable opportunities for Zion to live into our mission.

Note, the goal and description do not say that this committee is called to *do* all these acts of service on behalf of Zion. They will be seeking ways Zion, as an expression of the body of Christ, can make the most meaningful impact to transform lives. They will consider our ongoing relationship with Family Promise, look at the possibility of renewing a regular commitment with Community Kitchen that was dropped during the pandemic, and look at new opportunities for service. Some of those new opportunities may include a Safe Park initiative for those experiencing homelessness and living out of their cars to have a safe place to park overnight, or work with other agencies in Northern Colorado that align with our mission. If you have ideas or ways we can live this out together, please communicate that with any member of the committee.

LEAP OF FAITH

A new Zion initiative promoting camaraderie through shared activities

Have you ever wanted to engage in an activity but just didn't quite have the nerve or opportunity to fully jump in? We are creating a platform for you to do just that! The event will be called Leap of Faith. The object will be for members of our congregation to introduce different activities that will create camaraderie among our congregation—confidence-boosting, cross-generational participation and opportunities for community engagement.

The plan is to have these activities commence throughout the month of April. Certainly other times could be set if organizing such events requires. Ideas might be: hiking, fly fishing, crocheting, singing with the choir, skydiving, a cooking class, or anything else one could think of to engage others.

Keep your eyes open for a bulletin board with sign-up opportunities. If you would be willing to create and lead a one-time event, please reach out to CINDY KURTZ or ERIN BACHMAN with any possible ideas.

Nourish

Joel Brauner

Nourish continues to provide a place for faith-filled discussions and growing relationships. In the last few months, we've discussed the book **Who Moved My Cheese?** and how we handle change in our everyday lives and our faith. In December, we talked about the language that cults use to draw people in and discussed whether the Christian church uses language in the same way. Last month, we used the mustachioed Ted Lasso as a jumping off point to consider the difference between optimism and hope.

At Nourish, we continue to welcome everyone of all ages. Youth have a great time connecting at the Kids Program while adults enjoy the conversations mentioned above. The youth also have faith-filled discussions about the same themes, but also enjoy fun activities like wrapping each other up to make toilet paper snowmen or Hot Wheels tracks that run throughout the church.

Every Nourish begins with a meal and you don't need to RSVP. So come and join us on the following dates and topics. If you have any questions, reach out to JOEL BRAUNER.

February 11	What is Love? (and how our definition of love has changed over time)
March 11	Genealogy (led by a certified genealogist)
April TBD	Topic TBD
May 13	Topic TBD

Funding ELCA World Hunger and KidsPak in Loveland through the King Soopers Rewards Program

Last spring, King Soopers changed their rewards program. Forty-four Zion households are enrolled in the new program, and we are receiving about the same amount of money. This money funds ELCA World Hunger and KidsPak in Loveland.

(See the related article on page 23 of this newsletter.)

Register your card or telephone number online, one time.

1. Visit the King Soopers website www.kingsoopers.com or just Google King Soopers. Each person in your family with a card must register each card.
2. On the Home Page, find the "Savings & Rewards" drop menu.
3. Click on "King Soopers Community Rewards."
4. Click on the blue "Enroll Now."
5. Click on the "Create an Account."
(If you already have a digital account with King Soopers, skip to step 7.)
6. You will need an email address, password, your name, and your Soopers card number (on the back) or your telephone number (Alt. ID).
7. Then, select your organization: Zion Lutheran or use code RJ303.
(Beware: There are several "Zion Lutherans." Find Zion in Loveland.)

Refugee Update

Will Reents, Core Team member

I am pleased to report that Hassib, our Afghan refugee, is doing well. He has been promoted to working days and weekends instead of nights. Hassib has two Afghan refugee roommates who share expenses plus he plans to go to college. Hassib had his asylum interview on November 4, 2022, and awaits hearing whether he's been accepted; to get an answer often takes six or more months. Of course, he misses his family who are now living in an apartment in Germany. A Reunification Assistance Act has been written by congress but it's uncertain when or whether it will be enacted. Meanwhile, Hassib is proactive in looking for all possible ways to be reunited with his family. We still have funds to pay for flights for his family if he is granted asylum status. Hassib has been so pleasant to assist, so appreciative, so patient, and so hopeful. He has been an inspiration to all of us on the team.

The three ELCA (Evangelical Lutheran Church in America) churches in Loveland, Colorado, were invited to a Ukrainian dinner on January 15, 2023, at which \$3,000 was raised to buy communication equipment such as cell phones, PCs, and television monitors for use in Ukraine. The harrowing stories presented by Ukrainians at the dinner beckon us to help them and other refugees.

Since Hassib's status may not be clarified for many months, the core team plans to explore other ways to help refugees, yet saving all our present funds for flights for Hassib's family.

Stephen Minister Training Begins

Angie Elder

On Wednesday, March 1, Stephen Ministry training will begin for a group of laypeople from our congregation. Over the next 3 months, these future Stephen Ministers will receive extensive training in Christian caring skills. Some of the areas they will cover include listening effectively, addressing feelings, confidentiality, using the resources of Christianity, being assertive, and a number of topics dealing with specific life crises. Throughout, the training will emphasize the theology of caring for the whole person.

Following the training, these

men and women will be commissioned as Stephen Ministers to carry out ministries of caring within our congregation and community, with people experiencing hospitalization, grief, divorce, job loss, and many other life crises. Working under the guidance of the Stephen Leaders and our pastors, our newest Stephen Ministers will extend the capacity of our congregation to care for one another.

The people who are participating in this Stephen Ministry training and committing to serve as Stephen

Ministers at Zion are:

Jennifer Barela
Linda Breen
Ron Christensen
Susan Samuels.

Please keep these people in your thoughts and prayers as they receive this training for caring ministry. If you have questions about Stephen Ministry training and caregiving, please contact one of Zion's Stephen Leaders, ANGIE ELDER or LAURA DIMMITT, or speak to one of the pastors.

***Christ caring
for people
through people.***



Together in sharing hope and water

A Madagascar Health and Water Update

Pastor Doug Cox, Executive Director, Global Health Ministries

In the far south of Madagascar, an island off the east coast of Africa, your partnership with Global Health Ministries continues to make a difference. During the final months of 2022, a large concrete water tower was erected to elevate a 5,000-liter water tank, one of three pilot sites where wells had

been drilled in the fall. The reason for elevating this tank is primarily to create natural water pressure based on gravity as water flows down to spigots where the population can gather to fill buckets and barrels for drinking water and irrigation. Water is life, and in this

region the drought they've experienced for over four years now, has claimed thousands of lives and continues to threaten all those without access to clean water.

The work continues as solar panels for a submersible pump in the well are being placed atop a tall post (over 20 feet high). The reason to elevate these solar panels is all about security

within a context where extreme poverty threatens everyone. The temptation is palpable for someone to steal solar panels and sell them for a quick gain, in spite of the long-term loss for the whole community. A high post, and a covenant made by the community to guard all the property for the shared good of everyone, are major components to the sustainability of these efforts.



Water pressure based on gravity allows water to flow down to spigots where the people fill buckets and barrels with life-saving water.



The hair of these young girls has a red tinge indicative of their being malnourished. Irrigation surrounding this well will help produce crops.

Visible in the hair of these young girls is a red tinge, a clear sign of malnutrition. By the end of February, however, over thirty land owners will be implementing drip-irrigation techniques surrounding this well and two others. The crops resulting will be among the first in years, and will be a vital step in reducing the number of people facing malnutrition. Food will be available once again, for these girls and many others!

Thank you for your partnership in prayers for the people of south Madagascar and your financial gifts to make these efforts possible. Along with thousands in southern Madagascar, I thank God for you.

Gift and Endowment Education Series

The Gift and Endowment Committee seeks to champion generosity and good stewardship at Zion.

The committee manages Zion's Endowment Fund, which provides opportunities for ministry beyond the regular operating budget. They also provide educational opportunities for people to learn how to be generous beyond their regular giving and even beyond their lifetime, whether to Zion or any other purpose they believe in and are passionate about.

To that end, the Gift and Endowment Committee is offering a series of presentations and seminars throughout the year. Though the exact dates are not all set, they will be between the worship services on Sunday mornings from 9:40 to 10:40 a.m.

On February 12, Tina Kvitek, the regional gift planner for the Rocky Mountain Synod (ELCA) will be offering a presentation on planned giving. Planned giving is a donor's intention to contribute a

gift to an organization that will last beyond the giver's lifetime. Unlike an annual gift (an outright gift made for current use), a planned gift is for the future. One surprising aspect of planned giving is that you do not have to be incredibly wealthy to make these kinds of plans.

We will offer other presentations in late April, in the fall, and early next year. Topics will include End of Life Planning, Funeral Planning; Long-Term Care, Healthcare, Elder Law, and Estate and Will Planning. If you have other topics that might interest you, please let one of the Gift and Endowment Committee members know.

Sandy Bilstad
Kristin Blundell
Marthann Dahlen
Randy Davis
Kathy Loken.

Gift and Endowment Committee Seeks Your Input for Great Gift Away Generosity

Great Gift Away is an opportunity through Zion's Endowment Fund to both share God's abundance and invest for future ministry opportunities outside of the regular operation budget. In anticipation of a birthday or anniversary, you may have received letters from the Gift and Endowment Committee giving thanks for this milestone in your life and inviting you to give thanks to God for each year of your life by contributing \$1 (plus or minus) to the Great Gift Away Fund for each year being celebrated.

Each year, the Endowment Committee invests half of these contributions into the Endowment Fund, ensuring that we can embrace a healthy, long-term, mission-oriented identity for many years to come. Of the other half of these funds contributed each year, it is the goal of the Gift and Endowment Committee to invest in ministries within both the congregation and the broader community. However, in the interest of sharing God's abundance, most often these gifts are shared outside of the congregation.

Last year, Great Gift Away funds were awarded to Northern Colorado Youth Orchestra and Dine Out With Heart. The gift to the youth orchestra allowed them to provide scholarships to make sure that any child who wants to learn and create music has the opportunity. The gift to Dine Out With Heart allowed Philo to help reduce hunger and food insecurity in our community. In previous years, Great Gift Away

Seeking Your Gifts as a Sunday Volunteer

Sunday Morning

For worship, we need ushers, readers, greeters, and altar guild. If you are interested in serving in these areas, please find LINDSEY WALTER or RONDA BUCK and they will schedule a time convenient for you.

If your children are interested in serving as an acolyte, reach out to the office; we will find a time that works for you to train them.

We are always looking for people to open the building and make coffee so Scott Sprain and Larry Huddle can have some well deserved time away. If you are interested in learning more about this opportunity, speak to SCOTT SPRAIN, LARRY HUDDLE, or LINDSEY WALTER.

If you are considering any of these Sunday morning volunteer tasks but want to know more, contact the church office. We can give you an idea of what each volunteer opportunity requires.

Kids in Christ

Kids in Christ has always been a wonderful way of sharing the faith to all generations in worship at Zion.

From a sixth-grade youth to a 78-year-old adult, and everyone in between, worshippers of all ages have helped lead Kids in Christ.

If you are interested in helping with this ministry, contact LINDSEY WALTER or PASTOR JOEL.

No extensive Bible knowledge is required. We will help you.

And the Kids in Christ of all ages will appreciate different perspectives and voices in worship.

Gift and Endowment Committee Seeks Your Input for Great Gift Away Generosity continued from page 12.

has supported many other agencies, such as Alternatives to Violence, Habitat for Humanity, Project Self-Sufficiency, KidsPak, and more.

The Gift and Endowment Committee is asking for your suggestions and nominations for agencies, ministries, or businesses that make an impact in the world. If you have any suggestions, please contact the church office.

Thank you for sharing your generosity through Great Gift Away. Through your gifts, we are able to share with others and more deeply embrace our mission to *share God's abundance to transform lives through the love of Jesus.*

Gifts Bestowed at Baptism

Baptism at Zion is a beautifully spiritual event for which Zion provides commemorative gifts to its newly baptized contained in a handcrafted faith chest. The gifts include a candle to be lit each year in celebration of the baptismal birthday, a cloth with the image of a seashell, an actual shell, a Spark Story Bible, a baptismal booklet, and a prayer shawl.

For more than 15 years, JIM VOSBERG designed and built the chests but now has passed that torch to ZACH and ROB HUFFSMITH. Thank you Jim for your years of service. Thank you

Zach and Rob for your time and talent creating a new faith chest design. Thank you SUSAN OSBORN for creation of the cloth. Thank you AMY BRAUNER, PAM STEVENS, and Zion's prayer shawl ministry for the shawls.



Huffsmith-designed faith chests.

Among Members and Friends

At Rest in Our Father's House

Deane Steine who died November 6, 2022.

*Ginger Klein who died December 9, 2022.
Ginger's funeral service is scheduled for
Saturday, March 25.*

Arlene Meyer who died December 18, 2022.

*Mary Jo Haack who died January 12, 2023.
A service for both Mary Jo and Mel will be
Saturday, April 22.*

Cliff Knobloch who died January 26, 2023.

Myrna Miller who died February 5, 2023.

Prayers for Those Who Grieve

Harriet Colton at the death of her son Steve.

*Donna Snell at the death of her sister-in-law
Shirley.*

Craig Wilson at the death of his mother Eloise.

Prayers of Thanksgiving

*We rejoice with Helen and Roger Weidelman at
the birth of their great-grandson Preston
Thomas.*

Joyous Celebrations of the Gift of Baptism

*Mikayla Agustin Lince, baptized on December 11,
2022.*

Liliana Huffsmith, baptized on December 25, 2022.

*Sophia and Evelyn Grover, baptized on February 5,
2023.*

We Keep in Prayer

*Zion offers up prayers
for those in need—
for members, for friends,
for community, for our country,
and for the world.*

Prayerful Warmth and Comfort

Thank you for the lovely prayer shawl. What a thoughtful and lovely gift! It is well timed too. He is in rehab and right now is not progressing as well as we had hoped. But he is strong and may yet rally. The shawl will be a comfort and reminder to me that life is basically good and all things rest in that all-knowing goodness. Thank you so much!

Thank you! Your kindness is no small thing. I want to thank you for your loving gifts of the prayer shawls you have given to us sisters as one of us is being put in long-term care. All prayers are greatly appreciated.

Thank you! We thank you for the thoughtful prayer shawl. He is using his daily as a lap blanket, and it's doing a great job keeping him warm in this cold weather. He is getting better and is grateful for your thoughts for him. Thank you for your prayers and thoughtfulness.

Among Members and Friends

I know I'm late, but I want to thank everyone for their kindness, cards, and memorials in the loss of Mike. He truly loved all the Zion friends and loved to tease many. A huge thank you to Andrea for her beautiful message. We are truly blessed by each one of you.

Linda Tegeder

Zion Serves a Grateful Community

Sons of Norway

We are so grateful for the use of your building for our meetings. Thank you so much!

Stein Fjell Lodge

McKinney-Vento Team

Thank you for your valued partnership with the McKinney-Vento Team here at Thompson School District.

Erica, Leah, Shelly, and Jane

Gamma Chi

Thank you so much for the use of your beautiful building for our recent Mah Jongg tournament. We raised over \$2,000 to be donated to the Larimer County Food Bank,

[Enclosed was a \$100 donation to Zion Lutheran Church.]

Lisa Weeks

Gamma Chi Chapter of ESA

[Epsilon Sigma Alpha Sorority]

KidsPak

Our deep appreciation for the King Soopers quarterly check. KidsPak has experienced record-breaking demand. Early November, 669 food bags went home to Thompson students. Your support is essential to our mission. Our capital campaign has started, and we hope to be in the new building in late 2023 if the community supports KidsPak.

Tom Carrigan

To everyone at Zion,

Thank you for all the prayers, meals, texts, and calls during the past five months while I was receiving chemo and radiation treatments for Thymic cancer. Marty and I are truly blessed to have such an amazing support system!

Marty and Carolyn Schultz

Snack Happy—College Students/Young Adult Care Packages

Thank you so much for all the snacks!! They were very delicious and much appreciated.

Bailey

Thank you for the snacks! They are perfect for the long classes. You can never go wrong with a little snack! Autumn

Thank You Letters to Zion

- November 7, 2022—From Loveland Community Kitchen for a donation of \$375.
- November 18, 2022—From Christ the Servant (CTS) Lutheran Church for a donation of \$1,187.50 to the CTS Marshall Fire Designated Fund.
- December 6, 2022—From Sky Ranch Lutheran Camp for a gift of \$550.
- December 15, 2022—From House of Neighborly Service (HNS) for a donation of \$100 and for faithful ministry to the community and support of HNS.
- December 19, 2022—From Loveland Habitat for Humanity for a donation of \$631.33.
[From the Thanksgiving worship and pie auction with Zion, King of Glory, and Trinity Lutheran Churches.]
- December 31, 2022—From Loveland Community Kitchen for a donation of \$175.
- December 31, 2022—From Loveland Community Kitchen for a donation of \$600.

An Update on our Monroe Outreach Partnership

Lindsey Walter

[As editor of the newsletter, I am reading this update for the first time and learning of the extraordinary ways in which Zion has extended its support to the Monroe community, meeting critical needs. Thank you, Lindsey, for coordinating our Monroe outreach and submitting this update so all our readers can know that we are truly living into our mission of sharing God's abundance to transform lives of others through the love of Jesus.—Linda Sterner]

Through our ongoing commitment to the Monroe community, we have expanded our support to them this year to meet their increased special needs.

- We are now helping teachers connected with Monroe at the Family Center.
- We provided a heater for one family staying in a garage.
- We provided clothes and blankets for three families who are staying in cars and an RV.
- Days Gone By donated twelve kids' bikes to Zion, and we were able to connect the bikes with children in need at the Family Center and Monroe.
- We are providing monthly snacks for twenty classrooms, because students are not receiving snacks from assistance programs and their families cannot provide the snacks themselves.
- We provided about 200 Ensure drinks requested by the school counselor because kids are not having nutritional snacks. She just requested another 250.
- We provided soup for the teachers on parent/teacher conferences night.
- New this year, we provided chili for the teachers and families of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (DHH) program connected to Monroe.
- We provided additional family gifts at Christmas time to employees at Monroe who also have struggled financially.



Zion provided more than a trunkful of gifts to Monroe at Christmas time.

Monroe Multicultural Family Fun Night and Pozole Meal

Friday, April 28, at 4:00 p.m.

At Zion

Tickets \$5 per person

Join us for a delicious pozole and tamale dinner as we celebrate cultural diversity with Monroe Elementary School. This year Monroe and the Family Center will be providing carnival games, door prizes, face painting, loteria, and many other fun activities in and outside the building. All proceeds go to future cultural events within the PTO (Parent/Teacher Organization) and Family Center.



Face painting will be among the activities on the Monroe multicultural family fun night.

The Monroe Community is Grateful for Zion's Outreach

For the soup:

Thank you so much for feeding us on these busy conference days. We so appreciate you! Everything was delicious!

You did it once again! Absolutely delicious! Many thanks!

Thank you for always taking such good care of us!

You are amazing! Thank you for everything.

Thank you for all the delicious food!

Thank you so much!! The soups were amazing! We are so fortunate to have you!

Thank you for the wonderful treats!

What a wonderful treat! You all rock!!

We appreciate you so much! Thank you.

Gracias! Everything was delicious as always!

For the chili:

Thank you! Great treat on a cold day.

Thank you for blessing our families with chili on a cold evening and supporting our Deaf and Hard of Hearing program.

Thank you for all that you do for MES!

Thank you for all the delicious food! Yummy! Thank you for the delicious chili!!

Thank you for the delicious chili and for all of your support as always!!

Thank you so much for all the yummy chili! It made our celebration wonderful!!

Thank you for supporting our deaf and hard of hearing students!! The chili was delicious!

Thank you for the delicious chili.

Thanks so much for the delicious dinner and supporting the DHH.

Thanks for the delicious food!

Thank you for the chili and endless love and support you give our children.

Steve Courts Retires for a Second Time!



Steve and Stephanie Courts

Steve and Stephanie Courts have been members at Zion for about four years, and in that time they have made a significant impact at Zion and on their broader community as they both seek to make the world around them a better place. Stephanie was a nurse working with cancer patients. Steve had recently retired as an executive director for YMCAs in Minnesota, but Steve's heart for working with people led him to work again, this time as the Northern Colorado Coordinator for a nonprofit organization called A Little Help.

Some people around Zion may be familiar with A Little Help, which pairs volunteers with older adults to help them age well in their homes. Zion has participated in Service Saturdays with A Little Help and has worked with them for several years for our God's Work Our Hands days. We also have several members who receive help from volunteers through A Little Help. It is a great organization that helps Zion on both ends of service—giving and receiving!

Steve has been a blessing for many in our community, and we wish God's blessing on both Steve and Stephanie as he retires for a second time. Thank you, Steve, for your great work and leadership to make Northern Colorado a better place for everyone!

Fiction on the right; Nonfiction and Christian Readings on the left!

Bookworm here!

The library is full of new books—all wonderful and better organized, as I am working hard to sort and file them. Please come by and look them over—better yet, check them out!

All the books for the afternoon book club are on that *special* shelf, ready for its members to check them out!

And check out the *front* shelf with books of special note.

Reading is always fun!

See you soon.

Bookworm



Save the Date
Zion is having a tea party!

May 6 at Zion
2:00-4:00 p.m.

*Come and celebrate
In the classiest way;
Why not feel like royalty
If only for the day?*



You are invited to
a Tea Party!

Delicious snacks!
A variety of teas!

Bring your wonderful self.
Bring your daughter.
Bring a friend.

Look for sign-ups coming soon.

New Member Discovery—Honest Questions for Deeper Faith

People who are not familiar with church membership often ask why they should “join” a church. A church isn’t a country club, and unlike most clubs you won’t get any added benefits by joining. Everything we do as a church is always open to anyone, whether it’s worship and education, service, baptism, confirmation, Holy Communion, funerals, or anything else. The church’s mission and vision are committed to sharing God’s abundance with all people. So why become a member at a church? At Zion, we encourage people to join as members when they want to make a commitment to be a part of Zion’s mission and vision in a different, more focused way.

We offer opportunities for people to explore the possibility of joining Zion twice a year. This spring, our new member conversations will be in February, and it is a perfect time for these conversations since the theme for Lent invites us to ask honest questions for deeper faith. So bring your questions and come to know more about Zion’s mission and ministry in the world around us, or how you fit in or how you can participate. If you plan to attend, contact the church office or Pastor Joel. The following two dates outline the process of joining Zion as a member; however, if you are unable to make these dates, talk with the pastors to arrange alternative opportunities.

**This is a
perfect time
for these
new member
conversations
since the
theme for Lent
invites us to ask
honest questions
for deeper faith.**

Sunday, February 19, at 9:40 a.m.—New Member Discovery Conversations

Join us during the faith formation hour to talk with the pastors and others considering membership about Zion’s mission and ministry, as well as topics of Lutheran Christian identity. We will begin the process of spiritual gifts discovery, identifying how the Bible identifies and defines spiritual gifts.

Sunday, March 5, at 5:00 p.m.—New Member Connections Dinner

Join Pastor Joel and other Zion members to explore how God might be calling each of us into the ministry of Zion with our unique set of gifts. This dinner will connect you with ministry opportunities and people who can help you get connected into the life of the church.

If you are already a member, this is a ministry of hospitality and teaching that we want to share with you. If you are interested in helping to provide the dinner or connecting with those considering membership, please contact Pastor Joel.



**Come to Camp
for an
unforgettable time!**

Sky Ranch offers our youth a Christ-centered outdoor ministry experience that is meaningful and memorable.

2023 Sky Ranch Dates

Confirmation Intensive (Middle School)—June 25-30

Rendezvous (High School)—July 30-August 4

All Ages (Lower and Upper Elementary)—July 30-August 4

A half week is available for younger ages.

Campership/Scholarship

Zion can help! Cost should never be a factor.

Paper applications are available in the church office or filled out online at zionloveland.com.

Paper applications are due by March 4.

Camp Paperwork and Deposit

The Participant Release form and deposit are due by March 30.

The forms can be found at skyranchcolorado.org or picked up in the office.

Contact the church office if you have any questions regarding the registration process..

First Communion Instruction

At Zion, children receive their first communion when the parents, children, and pastor all discern that they are ready. Some children may receive first communion at preschool age or even younger, while others may receive first communion when they are in middle school. There is no right or wrong age for first communion.

If you are wondering if your child is ready to receive communion, check in with Pastor Joel, but one of the best signs is if your child shows interest in receiving communion or feels left out when others receive and they cannot yet.

First communion instruction involves both the child and at least one parent, grandparent, or faith parent

who promises to continue the discussion at home that is started in class. Please let us know if you and your child plan to attend so that we can make sure we have enough materials and enough teachers for the different age groups participating. Children usually receive their first communion at Maundy Thursday worship, which is Thursday, April 6, at 7:00 p.m. this year. However, if that does not work in your schedule, we will work something out with you.

First Communion Instruction

Sunday, March 26, 12:00-2:00 p.m.

Sunday, April 2, 12:00-2:00 p.m.

Young Adults Seeking Belonging

ALYSSA HART has been serving on the interim faith formation staff team since June, working with middle school, high school, and young adults, and helping with the children's program at Nourish. Her contributions have been invaluable for all ages, but we especially want to highlight the work she has done to keep communicating with young adults from Zion and bringing them together. In December, ten young adults gathered to share food and drinks and company. In February, eight gathered for games at The Flipside in downtown Loveland.

In addition to her work, JANICE EHLERS took the lead for a second semester to send care packages to college students who are away from home. Our list of young adults is imperfect, but we have been adding more. If you know of a young adult who would like to receive a care package from the congregation, or a young adult who is nearby and would be interested in gathering occasionally with other young adults, please make sure we have their name and contact information so we can include them.



Young adults gather in December, thanks to Alyssa Hart's (fourth from the left) leadership and coordination.



All are smiles during an unexpected team-building exercise to change a car battery!

Salvation Army Bell Ringers



JACOB, JESSICA, GORDON, and JOSIAH KUHN; ELLIOTT PANCOAST; LORA and LILY PATRICK; and PAM STEVENS. Thank you all!

Thank you to Zion's volunteers who rang the bells around Christmas for Salvation Army's red kettle campaign. All of the funds received return to the community to help those in almost any kind of need. On December 20, the following volunteers rang the bells in teams to make a difference in our community: GWEN BOSWELL; LINDA BREEN; JANICE EHLERS; ANGIE and MADDIE ELDER; BEILYNN GEISS; JUDY GUSTAFSON; EILEEN HUDDLE; JAMIE and LINDA JUERGENSEN; CAROL KIMBLE;



Christmas Day Breakfast Church

The 2022 Christmas season was unique in that Christmas Day fell on a Sunday. We knew that worship attendance may not warrant keeping our regular schedule for two services, and besides, with it being Christmas Day, we should do something different and special. So for Christmas Day worship, we had a “breakfast church.” Thanks to so many people who contributed to the breakfast, we truly had a feast!

The simplest form of “church” is a table where people are gathered for a meal, while giving thanks to God for these gifts, asking for God’s help, finding mutual support and consolation from one another, and being filled with the goodness of God. The idea of worshipping together around a meal is not new to the Christian church. The earliest Christian communities gathered not only for Holy Communion; they also gathered for a feast of love, giving thanks for God’s abundance in food and in community. In the best possible light, these things happen at any table we come to for a meal with others. So when we gather for “breakfast church” or “dinner church,” the hope is that it is a starting point for each of us to reconsider our own tables, whatever they may look like and whoever may be gathered, as worship in your own household.



Zion’s Christmas Day breakfast church was well attended.

And more than breakfast at Christmas Day church



The baptismal font and faith chests were in place for a special Christmas Day event.

On this Christmas Day, Lilliana Huffsmith was baptized.



Let your light so shine!

King Soopers and Thrivent Choice

Did you know that if you have a King Soopers card or Thrivent Financial products, you can share free money with Zion from those businesses that will support mission opportunities beyond our operating budget? Every year, the council designates the direction of these funds we receive. If you are interested in making a difference through purchases, products, and services that you already participate in, we encourage you to consider linking your accounts to Zion.

Thank you for considering these two options to support ministries of benevolence and faith formation beyond our regular budget and overall to provide ministry opportunities that share God's abundance and transform lives.



For every King Soopers loyalty card that is linked to

Zion, Zion receives a portion every time it is used for groceries or gas. If you are a King Soopers customer and have not linked your card to an organization, consider doing so by going online to <https://www.kingsoopers.com/i/community/community-rewards> or visiting customer service at your grocery store.

(See the article on page 9 of this newsletter for how to link your card or telephone number one time online.)

Once you link your card to an organization, all you have to do is shop at King Soopers and swipe your shopper's card.

Since most of the funds received are from grocery shopping, the council designates these funds to hunger programs, so for 2023, all King Soopers dollars received by Zion will be sent equally to ELCA World Hunger and KidsPak.



If you have Thrivent Financial products,

you may be eligible to direct Thrivent Choice dollars to many different organizations.

Each year, Zion receives anywhere between \$2,000 and \$4,500.

Last year, Thrivent Choice dollars helped provide scholarships for children and youth to participate in ministries that they otherwise may not be able to afford.

For 2023, the council has designated these funds to go toward the new Local Service Committee formed by the mission action plan.

You can designate your Thrivent Choice dollars by going online to <http://thrivent.com/thriventchoice> or by contacting your Thrivent financial representative.



**Evangelical Lutheran
Church in America**

God's work. Our hands.

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YouTube: Zion Lutheran Church Loveland

Issue 2/23

Change of Service Requested

Join Us in Worship

8:15 a.m. Traditional Worship
In Person or Zoom

10:45 a.m. Contemporary Worship
In Person or Zoom

Our Mission:

Together we share God's
abundance to transform lives
through the love of Jesus.

Our Vision:

Living in God's boundless
love, in Christ we envision a
future where church and
community are one.

**Celebrate Your Faith—
Renew Your Spirit—
Love One Another**

Important Dates Related to Newsletter Content (Read the Articles for Details)

February 11	Nourish— <i>What is Love</i>
February 12	Planned Giving Presentation
February 19	New Member Discovery Conversations
February 22	Ash Wednesday
March 1	Stephen Ministry Training Begins
March 4	Sky Ranch Campership/Scholarship Applications Due
March 5	New Member Connections Dinner
March 11	Nourish— <i>Genealogy</i>
March 16	Colorado Christian University Women's Choir at Zion
March 22	Pastor Dan Oman at Zion to Paint "Live"
March 26	First Communion Instruction
March 30	Sky Ranch Camp Participant Release Form & Deposit Due
April 2	Palm Sunday; First Communion Instruction
April 6	Maundy Thursday; First Communion Recipients
April 7	Good Friday; Dr. David Dunbar Cantata
April 9	Easter
April 28	Monroe Multicultural Family Fun Night and Pozole Meal
May 6	Zion Tea Party
May 13	Nourish

Schedules of Recurring Activities

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