



The PEAL of Zion

Newsletter of Zion UMC: Batavia
July 2024

Rev. Tshishinen Mpoyo
262-225-2316

As June transitions into July, our neighborhoods begin summer clean-ups, and our thoughts turn to themes of freedom, independence, and liberty. With the approach of our country's annual 4th of July celebration, we often reflect on the outward expressions of our freedom. "Freedom" is undeniably a crucial word in our modern world and a cornerstone concept in our nation. It can be a contentious term, as interpretations vary widely. However, its fundamental importance remains unquestionable. Having grown up in the Democratic Republic of God and traveled extensively, I've witnessed firsthand where freedom is scarce. In French, there's a saying: "freedom ends where mine begins." That means, know your limits, don't cross into mine. The Bible places significant emphasis on freedom. The Old Testament recounts God's liberation of His people from slavery in Egypt, while the New Testament focuses on freedom from sin, death, and the devil. Paul's letter to the Galatians (5:1) is recognized for its exploration of freedom, often labeled the "Epistle of Freedom." Reflecting on Galatians, it's worthwhile to consider the freedom that Christ offers, a freedom central to the gospel. What does freedom mean for a Christian? Jesus claims in John 8, "If the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed." Galatians 5 begins powerfully with: "For freedom Christ has set us free. Stand firm, therefore, and do not submit again to a yoke of slavery." "Christ has set us free, not solely for political liberty, though important, but for spiritual freedom. It liberates our conscience, fostering joy and fearlessness in the face of impending judgment. This freedom, for which Christ sacrificed, is profound and immeasurable. It reconciles us with God through forgiveness of sins, a freedom we commemorate weekly. It starts with acknowledging our bondage to sin and culminates in the revelation that Christ died for us, securing God's forgiveness. Indeed, Jesus liberates us from the chains of sin, death, and the devil, enabling us to become new creations. As we prepare to move in Fall, we are launching a prayer group dedicated to weekly intercession for the church, families, community, and church property. Everyone is invited; meetings will be held every Wednesday at 6 PM. This prayer time is to keep the connection between us and God, so that we can experience the freedom that the Lord has given us in Him through Him. Paul understood the precariousness of this gift of freedom and cautioned us to stand firm, lest we regress into bondage of sin. It's a faint but real risk. In Galatians, he warns against returning to the yoke of slavery (Galatians 5:13): "For you were called to freedom, brothers and sisters; only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for self-indulgence, but through love become slaves to one another." Therefore, let us stand firm and not submit again to the yoke of slavery. As we enter July, let us not only celebrate our national freedom but also meditate on the deeper freedom offered through Christ. May we cherish and responsibly exercise our freedoms, guided by love and service to one another. In this season of reflection and celebration, let us remember that true freedom is found in Christ, the freedom that liberates our souls and empowers us to live in accordance with God's will. As we gather for festivities, may our hearts be open to the profound spiritual freedom that transforms lives and communities. May this freedom in Christ resonate deeply within us, shaping our actions and relationships, as we strive to live in the fullness of God's grace, and reflect the transformative power of Christ's sacrifice.

Birthdays

Greeters
July 7 Ralph & Lynne Oppeneer
July 14 Bill & Terri Yoho
July 21 Bonnie Reddy & Brenda Acker
July 28 Jim & Linda Klug

July 1 Amy Dekker
Madison Ruege
6 Norb Kraemer
Edlynn Edwards
8 Nathan Hartmann
9 Gayle Yoho
10 Nicholas Dekker
Faith Wilson
Jane Yoho
15 Charles Bindrich
Mariann Hartmann
16 Ann McChain
17 Sylvia Yoho
18 Linda Klug
19 Etta Siebenaler
22 Nicholas Hartmann
28 Kelvin Hinz

Liturgists

July 7 Lynne Oppeneer
July 14 Gwen Heimermann
July 21 Linda Gerlach
July 28 Terri Yoho

Greeters & Liturgists

If you are unable to greet or read on your Sunday please try to switch with others or contact the office as early as possible.

Anniversaries

July 6 Rob & Val Kilburn
7 David & Brenda Eisentraut
12 Norb & Janice Kraemer
15 Bill & Terri Yoho
19 Chris & Linda Gerlach
30 Adam & Treylee Hahn

Summer Service Time!

Church service is now at 9:15
Don't be late!



Please let the office know if we missed your anniversary or birthday? Month, day, and year (which we never publish) helps when putting into our system.

GOT MILK?

Zion is still supplying all of the funds for the purchase of milk through the Food Pantry. The demand is UP! Thank you to all who help fill this need. Please mail milk fund donations to Zion.

The Interfaith Food Pantry is located at 310 Center St, Adell, WI
Call the Food Pantry at 920-447-2293 for appointment.



The Empty Pew

It is hard to imagine a time when churches did not have air conditioning, running water, cushioned chairs or pews. A church where there was a bucket of water in the corner with a dipper that everyone shared. The windows would be opened in the heat and people would crowd together for warmth in the winter. If you had to use the bathroom, you would have to make the long journey to the outhouse. Yet with all of these inconveniences, Sundays use to be a time when people gathered at the church house to hear God's Word. Many churches didn't have Sunday School or youth programs and everyone was in the sanctuary to worship, hear God's Word, and be together. Pews were filled and I heard a lady this past weekend say she remembered when there was no more room in the church, people gathered outside by the windows and doors to hear the preacher preach the Word. God was a priority. Family was a priority.

People will say, "It was a simpler time back then." Was it? People worked hard from sun up to sun down, most families were fortunate to have one car, and most items were handmade. Yet with everything they had to do on any given day, they made time for God and church.

Unfortunately today, it seems God and church is no longer a priority in too many families. The empty pew is becoming more common in churches throughout our nation. I have heard it said the church needs to change with the times, the church needs to cater to the people, the church needs more programs, the church.....

Whatever happened to the thought of the church raising disciples and ministering to the community? Whatever happened to the church being a place where people came to greet one another to share the Word of God and to encourage one another in a life of holiness and righteousness? Whatever happened to people wanting to serve instead of being served?

The empty pew breaks my heart. Are people just too busy for God or do they just not care anymore? Either way, as more and more churches close their doors and people begin to remember when there use to be a place where God's people would gather, one day when all the church doors are closed, maybe then, just maybe, people will once again rediscover their thirst to know who God is and to be with one another for worship and prayer.

WE NEED YOUR HELP!

You may have seen a clipboard being passed through the pews lately. This is because we are looking for people to be involved in being ushers, being a greeter occasionally, reading scripture, bringing flowers for the altar, or providing special music. Perhaps our area of greatest need is for youth or adults to help with the computer Power Point during the service or handling the Facebook Live camera to record the service. All these jobs are easy, and people are ready to show you the ropes and make you feel comfortable. Questions? Please talk to Worship Committee Chair, Wendy Bemis, or Lay Leader, Terri Yoho, or Pastor Tshishinen if you want to learn more.

1 Peter 4:10 tells us, *As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace.*

Let's use our talents and gifts to do good and to serve one another. Taking on a new or expanded role at Zion is a wonderful place to start! See you in church this summer.

Terri Yoho, Lay Leader

Zion UMC Trustees June 20, 2024

Present: Ray Hartmann, Barb LaFleur, Sonja Zimmer, Dion Degnitz, Dick Bemis Jr,

Opening prayer:

Secretary's Report: Approved

Treasurer's Report: Approved

Old Business:

Dusty Kuehl has been doing the lawn as needed.

Cascade Septic has pumped the septic tank. The cover has a crack that we were told should be okay.

Jesse has sprayed the entire lawn for weeds.

Bill Yoho fixed the sanctuary window – Falls Glass Co.

New Business

Council has been working with Pastor Mpoyo about camera updates.

Window trim on north (back) side of church needs some painting. Dion and Ray will do that.

Barb got a new exit sign for the Fellowship Hall for back hallway. We will install.

We need to purchase some water softener salt.

Thanks to everyone that showed up before the June meeting to clean out the garage.

Looks much better!.

Next meeting August 15th at 6:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted: Dion Degnitz

MIDWEST

disaster relief • education



MISSION

health • micro business

SENDING HOPE AND EMPOWERMENT AROUND THE WORLD AND AROUND THE CORNER

Midwest Mission Center Zion UMC 2024 Volunteer Trip

Please consider volunteering at the Midwest Mission Center. We have six positions reserved for Tuesday, September 17th through Thursday, September 19th. To date we have three individuals committed. The experience has been very gratifying for those from Zion UMC who have volunteered during the last couple years. The volunteer work is suited for all ages over 18 years of age. The registration cost is \$30 per individual. We need to have our volunteers committed and the registration paid by July 17, 2024. Other costs will be two night motel accommodations, food and gas to travel. Contact Larry Huiras for details about the trip.

ZION CEMETERY ASSN. ANNUAL MEETING

The Zion Cemetery Assn. held its annual meeting on Saturday, June 22nd. We are pleased to say that the cemetery is well cared with mowing done by Brett Schultz and the board overseeing larger maintenance issues. Our endowment is sufficient to keep maintenance up to date. Many other church cemeteries are not this fortunate. We are considered a mission and ministry of Zion UMC, but are separately incorporated.

Updated cemetery guidelines have been posted in the cemetery.

If you are interested in purchasing a lot, please contact our sexton, Jay Lenderts, at the church office, 920-994-4510. Church members receive reduced pricing of \$100 per lot, while non-members pay \$300.

Save The Date

September 24, 2024

The Northeast District - Circuit 12 Laity Committee is cordially inviting you to a special event and dinner to welcome our new Circuit 12 pastors and to celebrate the congregation members of our Circuit.

This event is **FREE** and open to all Circuit 12 United Methodist clergy and congregation members.

Please watch future church newsletters, announcements and bulletins for further information and RSVP details.



Zion's Upcoming Events

- July 9 SPRC meeting 6:00
- July 16 Ad Council meeting 6:30
- July 26 Jay out of office
- July 28 Krystal Goodger speaking
- July 29 Start of VBS 2024
- Aug 4 VBS Program



Zion UMC Finance / Council Meeting Minutes
June 18, 2024

Present: Linda Gerlach, Rev. Tshishinen Mpoyo, Wendy Bemis, Shirley Dekker, Terri Yoho, Barb LaFleur, Stacy Hron

Mark/Finance-Reviewed statements left by Mark.

Larry/Circuit 12 & DOC Items-Circuit 12 – Sept. 24 – Save the date as the laity committee is inviting all clergy and congregations to participate in a dinner to welcome the new pastors in the circuit at St. Lukes in Sheboygan. Also Rev. Mpoyo has been invited to be the leader of Circuit 12. Sheboygan Community Café July 22 10:30-2:00 Dick Bemis, Teri Treichel, Larry and Nadine Huiras will be assisting with serving lunch. Midwest Mission Sept. 17-19 trip from Zion. There are 2 openings available for this trip. Scheduling a DOC meeting soon

Pastor's Items- Rev. Mpoyo shared she has always had a prayer group for the church in her congregation and would like to start an in-person group in addition to the prayer chain; Terri checked with a few on dates and times, suggests Wednesday nights. Rev. will be calling with some invites to start the group. Rev. and Terri have been doing home visits and have been going well. Ernie and Betty would welcome our prayers. She is working toward setting up monthly visits and communion for all. We discussed shifting gifts for shut ins to another holiday such as Thanksgiving or Easter instead of Christmas to share with them at other times of the year, and will raise with DOC. Discussed having a media team for worship so we have consistent presence on Facebook and streaming. Discussed the potential to shift time of service to 9:15 year-round. This would allow for Sunday School and confirmation after church, along with fellowship time. Need to have a conversation with Sunday school team and musicians first. Also poll the congregation, potentially by putting together a mailing to explain the proposed plan, the rationale, and gather their feedback.

Wendy/Worship- Worship is trying to get folks involved in the service. Sending around sign-up sheets to have people sign up for greeting, camera, usher, PowerPoint. We need to find a way for people to be comfortable with what they are signing up to do and fills all our needs for worship. Want to make more updates to Facebook and include more pictures from service or events and get them uploaded (scholarships, etc). Discussion on camera set up and improving that so we don't need a separate person and it provides better video experience as well. When we don't have a camera on during service, we hear from people who are missing it. Rally Day – second Sunday in Sept., we will highlight our ministry with each committee participating to share what each is doing throughout the year; Wendy has a list of groups to have to potentially have tables, displays or other ways to share what we are doing.

Shirley/Youth Items - VBS planning underway, looking to figure out who will be assisting with teaching and kids that will be in attendance.

Terri/Lay Leader- 175th Anniversary for Zion in 2025, discussed what was done at 150-year anniversary; proposing Rally Day 2025 for the celebration, would give us enough time to put a directory together, invite Bishop, DS and past pastors and put together a good event. Suggesting hot dogs and Pot Luck to simplify menu for Rally Day, discussion on who would be our guests and who we would invite for Rally Day – members we haven't seen, neighbors; how we might reach out to them to invite – can we get a group to make call; need to ask Jay for a list of folks that are members that we haven't seen in a while (Stacy will ask Jay to get it)

Barb/Trustees- Meeting on Thursday this week. Bill fixed the broken window. Straightening up the garage

Stacy/SPRC- Pulpit supply looking good for pastor's vacation, would still take assistance for Aug 18. Putting together a reimbursement policy as suggested by conference. Discussed annual conference and pastor's items (already mentioned above)

Respectfully Submitted, Valarie Kilburn

Notes From Parish Nurse

Nancy Eberhardt, RN

Dear Friends of Zion UMC,

Greetings in the name of our Merciful Savior, Redeemer, and Physician! I hope you are able to spend some time enjoying your family and friends, and the blessings which come to us in the summer. This month I would like to share some thoughts with you on finding and keeping a Healthy Balance in our Lives. This is a tough one for me since I am cleaning out my home to downsize. So I have to listen to my own message carefully.

What is the Relationship Between Health and Balance?

Actually, wholistic health refers to a process of wholeness that exists when there is balance among our different dimensions (physical, emotional, spiritual, social, vocational, and environmental). As Christians, we believe that balance is only possible when we base our life on Christ; the spiritual dimension is our real essence. In John 10:10 we read, "...I have come that they might have life, and have it to the full". It seems that often we try to create our own "full life" and find ourselves over-committed, under-appreciated, fatigued, frustrated and out of balance. We need to find the "full life" and balance that only Christ can give.

How Can I Keep My Life in Balance?

There are several specific approaches we can use to nourish this gift of balance. First, we can consider our current life in terms of energy investment, values, and priorities. Are we 'spending' our life in activities that have eternal consequences? Second, we can develop an action plan, if we would like to spend our energy and time in a different way. To be helpful, the plan would need to identify what needs to be changed, what it needs to change to, and how the change will be made. Third, we can live our changed lives with the confidence that "...He who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus" Philippians 1:6.

Is Your Life in Balance?

Jesus speaks to us with these words, "Peace I leave with you; My peace I give you... Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid" John 14:27. May your days be blessed with Jesus' peace, wholistic health and balance.