

February *The Zion Herald*

“Proclaiming Zion’s Good News”

Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church February, 2004



**ASH WEDNESDAY
SERVICE
WEDNESDAY
FEBRUARY 25TH
7:00PM
JOIN US AS WE BEGIN OUR
OBSERVANCE OF THE
LENTEN SEASON WITH
THE IMPOSITION OF
ASHES AND HOLY
COMMUNION.**



**CONGREGATIONAL
MEETING
WEDNESDAY, MARCH 3RD
DINNER 6:15PM
MEETING 7:00PM
ON THE AGENDA:
1. COUNCIL ELECTIONS
2. REVIEW OF CHURCH
MISSION
PLEASE NOTE THE CHANGE
OF DATE. THE DATE WAS
CHANGED TO MARCH 3RD DUE
TO THE REGULARLY
SCHEDULED MEETING
FALLING ON ASH
WEDNESDAY.**

Greetings to Zion's friends and members:

The New Year is now well under way, but that doesn't mean that we can't take a moment to reflect on our successes in 2003. The Church Council did just that at our January meeting. We began with a well-focused devotional led by Brian Kay (which so impressed me with its timeliness that I asked that he share it with the wider congregation by allowing me to include it on our web site as the opening article on the "newsletter" page). The Council then took a look at some numbers that offered a good deal of encouragement because of the record of accomplishment we are beginning to enjoy. Overall both average attendance at worship and congregational financial support continued the pattern of improvement that was evident as we moved through 2002.

[See the rest of the Pastors comments on the Pastors Page](#)

Pastor Sherwindt

OPENING DEVOTIONAL FOR CHURCH COUNCIL JANUARY 2004 MEETING (LED BY BRIAN KAY)
PSALM 105: "OH, GIVE THANKS TO THE LORD!"

HOW SHOULD WE END 2003? Let us heed the wonderful advice of the psalmist who wrote Psalm 105: *"Oh, give thanks to the Lord! Call upon His name; Make known His deeds among the peoples! Sing to Him; sing psalms to Him; Talk of all His wondrous works! Glory in His holy name. Let the hearts of those rejoice who seek the Lord."* [Psalm 105:1-3] The psalmist offers at least six different suggestions as to how we may conclude this past year.

1. **"Give Thanks to the Lord"** But of course, we must give thanks to the Lord for all His blessings poured out on us in 2003! Without the Lord's blessings, we would not have survived the year, let alone consider the growth that we have seen here at Zion! It would be wrong of us NOT to give thanks to the Lord!
2. **"Make known His deeds among the peoples!"** What a challenge this word is! Let us determine to speak of what the Lord has done in our midst! Let us speak of how He has so graciously blessed, month after month- throughout the whole year!
3. **"Sing to Him..."** One great expression of our appreciation of the Lord is to "sing to Him." How our hearts must naturally desire to worship and praise the Lord for who He is and what He has done for us!
4. **"Talk of all His wondrous works"** Many are the wondrous works of the Lord. Let us take time to have a quick review of the many wondrous works of the Lord. Let us just highlight three things!
 - a) He continues to work his miracles at Zion on a daily basis.
 - b) People have come to salvation in Christ at Zion in 2003!
 - c) He has provided for all our needs! From a financial and spiritual stand point.

5. "Glory in His holy name" Let us be challenged to end the year and begin another glorying in His holy name indeed! There is so much to rejoice in.

6. "Let the hearts of those rejoice who seek the Lord" Are we seekers of the Lord? Then our hearts would surely rejoice in all that God has been doing in our midst! Let us end 2003 on a high note of rejoicing!

LET US LOOK FORWARD TO A GREAT NEW YEAR! The beginning of a new year is a time for reflection and evaluation---a time to think about what has gone before, and to look ahead to what is to come. It is a time for renewal, for a new start, for beginning again. For many people it is a sad and lonely time. Perhaps past months brought heartache, trial and pain. Perhaps there has been sorrow and bereavement, and separation from loved ones. These troubles make it difficult to start our afresh. Perhaps the months ahead are full of foreboding, filled with the prospect of difficult mountains to climb and deep rivers to cross. We can sometimes face the beginning of a year with fear rather than with hope.

HOW SHOULD WE PREPARE FOR 2004? Let us once again consider the advice of the psalmist in the following text. "*Seek the Lord and His strength; Seek His face evermore.*" [Psalm 105:4]

1. Let us determine to seek the Lord more diligently in the New Year
2. Let us endeavor to discover more of His strength
3. Let us make a great commitment to "seek His face evermore."

To walk into a new year is to walk into the unknown. It is to traverse new paths, and to walk along new roads. But he who holds the future knows what the future holds. And the Jesus Christ who is untarnished and unchanged with the passing of the months has promised to walk alongside his people wherever they may be. Let us look forward to 2004 with an even greater faith in the Lord. May the New Year prove even more glorious! May the Christ, the only Lord and Savior, be our guide in 2004.

From The Editor...*

"He sternly ordered and commanded them not to tell anyone, saying, "The Son of Man must undergo great suffering, and be rejected by the elders, chief priests, and scribes, and be killed, and on the third day be raised." Then he said to them all, "If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross daily and follow me. For those who want to save their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake will save it." Luke 9:21-24

Uh-Oh! It's almost Lent again! It's that pesky little season that seems to sneak up on us so quickly! There we are joyously celebrating Christmas and the New Year, festivities abounding,

and then, wham, we're hit by Lent. We go from singing some of the most joyous hymns of the church year to singing hymns with the cadence and words of a funeral dirge. And then there's the message. The message no longer reflects "good news of great joy", it reflects tough lessons, foreboding, and, ultimately, death. It's no wonder that Lent is not most Christians favorite church year season.

I often overhear people talking about Lent. Usually it's in the form of the question "What are you giving up for Lent?". Yes it's quite true that Christ gave up his life to save ours, and thanks be to God for that! However, every Lent, I'm reminded of one of our former Pastor's sermons. It came during the time that I was in high school and often felt ashamed that I didn't give up anything for Lent. Pastor Lutz's sermon that Sunday stated that, yes, Christ did give up his life, but he also "took up his cross" for us. With that Pastor Lutz explained that we should not **give up** anything for Lent, instead we should **take up** something! Now he did not mean taking up tennis or golf, eating chocolate or going out to dinner more frequently, but he did mean taking up something worthwhile. Something along the lines of helping our neighbors, volunteering at a food bank, visiting shut ins, helping in the community, etc... We were not just to take this up for Lent, however, we were to take this up permanently. It made sense! Giving up something for 40 days seemed to pale in comparison to Christ's ultimate sacrifice. Taking up something good and worthwhile for, perhaps, a lifetime seemed to be a little more appropriate.

Thankfully we are saved by grace through faith and not by doing good works, or most of us, myself included, wouldn't have a chance at salvation. However, Christ still commands us to help our neighbors. So as Lent approaches, what are we going to take up? Helping others is a great way to add some happiness to a more than somber church season.

The Peace of the Lord be with you,

Lei

Editor



NEWS FROM ZION SUNDAY SCHOOL

In January we finished studying the Beatitudes and the Golden Rule. The children made beautiful blessing boxes to help them remember the beatitudes and to remind them of all of their blessings from God.

As we begin a traditional classroom format in February, we will be studying all about God's love and how we can share that love. There will be 4 classes grouped by grade level, and each class will have two teachers that lead the lesson each week.

Easter is approaching, so we will also begin working on the children's Easter Program in February. This year's program is called "The Easter Pageant that Almost Wasn't". It is a fun program that tells the Easter Story. The Easter Program will be done on Palm Sunday (April 4th) at both services. The children will practice for the program during Sunday School (we will study our lesson during the first part of the hour, and finish with play practice).

If anyone is interested in helping with Sunday School or the Easter Program, please contact Debbie or Lisa. We are grateful for any help you can give!

WOMEN'S AUXILLARY OF ST. LUKES

This is the time of year when we collect your \$1 (or any amount you wish to give)

membership contribution which helps the residents of St. Luke Lutheran Community. Please use the small envelope, included in this newsletter, and place it in the specially marked basket here at Zion, or give it directly to Ruth or Betty. Be sure to put your name on the envelope. Thank you.

In Christ we serve,
Ruth



NEW BOOKS IN THE RESOURCE CENTER

The Message by Eugene H. Peterson

Having trouble reading the Bible? Think you should read the whole thing but you can't get past the first page of Genesis? Then this Bible's for you! *The Message* is a Bible in everyday contemporary language that is easy to read and understand. Check it out in the Zion Resource Center!

Christmas in Germany

No other country has shared more of its Christmas tradition with the rest of the world. The celebrations in this book are from the classic German novel **BUNDERBOOKS** by Nobel Prize winner Thomas Mann. You can discover centuries old German traditions as well as the ways Germans celebrate today. You will also find a Christmas menu, music and crafts.



I would like to thank everyone for their visits, cards and prayers, and especially Pastor Sherwindt for his visits, during my stay in the hospital.

Elsie

Dear Rev. Sherwindt,

The purpose of this letter is to express, in a small way, our gratitude for your gift of \$100 to St. James Lutheran Church. Your donation will help us to continue Mission, Outreach and Ministry in our community.

We remain in Christ's command,
Rev. Mims, Pastor



Great news, we are starting the Elderberries back up! Who, or what, are the Elderberries? This is the older adult LYO group, which is adults 60 years and older getting together for great Christian fellowship. We are planning a St. Patrick's Day event with our homebound members on Saturday, March 13th from 1-3pm. Please mark your calendars! There will be more details in the next newsletter. If you have any questions about the Elderberries, or the St. Patrick's event, please contact Darlene.



FOOD OF THE MONTH CLUB CEREAL

January was the start of Zion Food Pantry's "Food of the Month Club". Many individuals have found that is a very easy club to belong to. There are no sign up fees or monthly dues. You do not have to show a card with which to participate, and every member of your family can enjoy the warmth of belonging. We have no late fees and no restrictions on quantity. Then you may ask "What is the catch?" We have two rules: quality is more important than quantity, and if you wouldn't eat it do not expect someone else to.

We started January off with requesting jelly, and the response was overwhelming. The Food item for February will be Cereal. Please keep in mind when purchasing cereal that a child will more than likely be eating it.

Peace be with you,
Shirley, Margaret and all the hungry folks
the people of Zion are feeding



WEST KNOLL NEWS

Gold, frankincense and myrrh were the three gifts the Magi brought to our Lord Jesus at his birth. How wonderful to be able to give such gifts to the greatest gift the world will ever know!! As we all know, gifts can be given in many different forms. Senior Independence/MRDD participants and staff have received many gifts this year from church members/volunteers. Zion Lutheran has given so freely of your time and talents. It is a blessing to know so many people that have chosen to make a difference in the lives of other fellow human beings. Pastor Mark, Charles, Mabel, Ruth, Cindy, Edna, Chuck, Pat, Carole and Helen to name a few, have brought such joy and much needed help to our organization. Thank you !!!!!!!!

We have been busy beavers, and have expanded our program area to include many new facets of learning for our seniors. Bible study, mathletics, world history, Spanish lessons, journal and poetry writing will prove to be challenging and positively rewarding!! Some of the other fun activities we'll be enjoying this month are: visiting the Canton Car Museum, the Palace Theatre, Parklane Bowling and shopping at the Hartville Flea Market for some post Christmas shopping and lunch at the "Kitchen".

This year has brought such happiness!! As every new year begins, we find ourselves

with a renewed sense of hope, a renewed spirit and a clean slate!! God bless us everyone!!

Staff and Participants at Senior Independence Adult Day Center/MRDD

DON'T FORGET

Tai Chi is also available at Zion! Currently, Dave has classes at 6pm on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays, plus 8am on Saturdays. Please contact Dave at 330-353-1099 for class availability and openings.

NEWS FROM MELANIE, ZION'S MISSIONARY

Hello everyone! It's been a while since I wrote my last update. In the past two months or so lots has happened. I've become accustomed to my surroundings and the wonderful people I work with, and yet still every day I'm still learning and experiencing new things.

The last weekend in November we had family day here. Masses of people were packed into our small gathering room. In the morning we had a service, then a guest speaker, then a few presentations of additions to be made to the building and programs in 2004, and to close the "ceremony" my dancing group performed. This group is made up of 20 residents, 10 male-female pairs, and the rehearsals are absolutely hilarious and so much fun. There is also a home funded by the same organization in the main town of Guestrow here where most of these people come from, and their housing is for those who are capable of living and doing things more on their own and go to work regularly in the workshops. After the opening in the morning, the families of the residents then got to visit their living quarters and to buy a variety of things they have made in the craft room, ranging from candles to Advent calendars, and also got to make ornaments and other decorative things for Christmas with them in the craft room.

My second seminar, December 8-12, suddenly came upon me, during which we all once again played lots of "get to know each other" games, told all about our work and the joys and frustrations of it, and also had a few speakers where we did a lot of small group activities. Our main theme was Christmas, so we did a lot of crafts, talked about our childhood memories of Christmas and what it really means to us, and even acted out the play in small groups, in full costume. I was Joseph, and it was quite amusing. I felt more at ease this time, and overall it was much better for me.

A week before Christmas the church choir that I am in had a beautiful Christmas concert with the Neubrandenburg Philharmonic Orchestra in the main church in Guestrow. It was completely sold out, with about 620 in attendance. I'm not used to church choirs having such elaborate concerts, but it was wonderful, and the repertoire was challenging and well received by the audience. The Friday before Christmas was also the Christmas festival here where I work, where the play was done outside and afterwards all the residents celebrated in their "families." It's a very important festival for a lot of them, since many don't go home or get a visit for Christmas, so they can celebrate it with the people they live with and the staff members that work with them that they know well. I also had a visit from a good friend a week before Christmas, which I enjoyed. On Christmas Eve I began the celebration at 3pm by singing with the choir in the first of three services that evening, two with the adult choir and one with the youth choir. Both of the churches were wonderfully decorated, with large Christmas trees and candles, and filled with the warmth of people's joyous singing and the wonderful music. Then afterward I had dinner with my supervisor, her family and her parents, sang Christmas carols, and

exchanged gifts. And on Christmas Day I went with her family to visit her sister's family and tons of other relatives there for a Christmas day dinner. We told a lot of stories, sang lots of carols, and had a lot of fun. I felt the amazing warmth and kindness coming from these people and thanked God, that I could experience such a wonderful Christmas so far away from home.

My work in general is still going very well. My main responsibility is to work with the groups in the craft room, but every Monday I also go swimming with 1 or 2 of the residents, every Tuesday accompany one of them into town so they can go shopping, every Friday I help put together a service for about 20 of the residents, and usually every other weekend I work with a group of twelve men. There I mainly help to prepare meals and take them on walks, play games with them, etc. They're a really fun group to work with, although at times difficult and challenging. It's always a new experience each time I work with them. The situation for most all the residents is that their relatives come to see them and sometimes take them home only on holidays, and those who are over 60 mostly don't have any relatives left. I think about that and it makes me realize how important it is to them that I am there, and that the smallest thing that I do or say can mean so much to them, and for that I am very happy that I am here.

My time here already has gone by so fast. I enjoy the newness that comes with each day, the happiness that I bring to these people when I work with them, and the new perspective and joy that they give me when I am with them. For this New Year I am challenging myself to constantly be more patient, to be more loving, to seek a better understanding of my work here, and to constantly seek God's will for my life.