

# Through Zion's Window

February 2023

Dear friends in Christ,

February is upon us, which I just realized means that I have been your pastor for four years already. Yikes, it seems to me that I just started here but looking back I realize we've been through a lot together. Of course, the one thing that stands out about these four years is the pandemic that threw so much of our lives into chaos. We've recovered and are moving forward.

But February isn't really about the years I've been here; instead, we remember that the season of Lent is upon us.

The Lenten season begins February 22<sup>nd</sup> with Ash Wednesday. According to the ELCA website, "Ash Wednesday is the Wednesday of the seventh week before Easter and the first day of Lent. The day is named for the practice of imposing ashes, a practice which many Lutheran congregations have found to be a very meaningful part of the Ash Wednesday liturgy." Many people find the idea of marking our foreheads with the sign of the cross in ashes weird. When we were out in Seattle Starr, our son John and I would go out to dinner after Ash Wednesday Services, usually to Applebee's. We'd walk in and get many strange looks and then we'd remember that we still have that sign on our foreheads. Nobody, not even the waiters/waitresses, ever asked about them but I'd bet some people wondered what that mark was all about.

Ashes symbolize several aspects of our human existence: Ashes remind us of God's condemnation of sin, as God said to Adam, "Dust you are and to dust you shall return" (Genesis 3:19). Ashes suggest cleansing and renewal. They were used anciently in the absence of soap. On Ash Wednesday ashes are a penitential substitute for water as a reminder of our baptism. Ashes remind us of the shortness of human life, for it is said as we are buried: "earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust." Ashes are a symbol of our need to repent, confess our sins, and return to God.

So, ashes are a symbol both of judgment and condemnation and of cleansing and renewal. And the ashes used here on Ash Wednesday, mixed with a little water, are a reminder to us that even as God condemns sin he loves the sinner and that in Baptism an opportunity for new life and renewal has been given to each of us.

I invite all of you to join us on Ash Wednesday; I invite you to receive the sign of the cross made with ashes on your forehead as a sign of your repentance and renewal in the grace of God; and I invite all of us to walk the Lenten journey together. To remember we are fallen and broken, condemned in sin. To repent, to turn from our sinful self-centered ways, and follow after Jesus. Like Jesus, let us place God in the center of our lives so that we too can say, "... yet not my will, but yours be done." (Luke 22:42) And, most importantly, to remember that we are forgiven and beloved children of God. To God be the glory, forever and ever. Amen.

*Pastor Doug*



**Church Council Meeting January 8, 2023,** The meeting was called to order by President Jerry Liesener. Devotions were led by Franklin Wolter.

**Reports:**

Secretary's report: The minutes were approved.

Treasurer's Report: The report was approved. The endowment fund gained back some of the money which it lost earlier in the year.

Pastor's Report: Pastor Doug thanked the council for all the help during the

holiday season. The funeral for Roger Kopfer will be at Zion on Thursday, January 12<sup>th</sup>. The funeral for Art Hall will be Friday, January 13<sup>th</sup> at 10:00 at Zion.

**Ministry Reports:**

Parish Ed: Christmas program went well.

Worship: No changes at this time.

Evangelism: the practice of giving out a bag of candy, peanuts, fruit, etc. was brought up. Maybe we can do this next year.

Missions: the food pantry has appreciated all the donations from Zion and other churches in the area. Zion will continue working the blood drive and bread and roses. We will also continue to support what we are currently doing in Haiti, even though the political climate there is tenuous. The first fellowship breakfast is planned for Saturday, Jan. 14<sup>th</sup>.

Stewardship: Most of the pledge and time and talent forms have been returned. However, several packets which were mailed were not returned. This is something which needs to be looked into in the future.

Building and grounds: the window in the narthex was replaced. The estimate to fix the retaining wall behind the church building will cost \$3000.00.

**Old Business:**

The council discussed the proposed budget for 2023. It has been adjusted for the increased costs, etc. it was approved by the council. Besides the repair for the retaining wall, the paved area next to the back doors on the lower level will be redone.

The council approved the job description for the church secretary.

After the annual meeting, the new council has to figure out who will do each of the ministry tasks.

**New Business:**

The annual meeting is set for February 12<sup>th</sup>, 2023. All reports for 2022 are due in to the Church Secretary by February 1<sup>st</sup>, 2023

Council nominations; We are still looking for people to fill various council positions. Lester and Carol Schuett are interested in doing something with missions. Sally Schoenike would consider filling an unexpired ministry term. Mary Lee Petersen will be contacted for doing worship. At LEAST two more people are needed to replace the people who are going off the Council this year. Three people would be ideal.

Little Free Library-\$300.00 was approved to cover the expenses over the coming year.

Snacks and Crafts-So far, everything is going well. \$300.00 was approved to cover any incurred expenses.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:55am We closed with the Lord's Prayer.

Respectfully Submitted: Mike Johnson, Council Secretary.



On February 12, 2023 we will be have our Annual Meeting after Worship. We will be approving a budget for 2023 and be reviewing the previous year.



## Adult Education



Adult Education will be from 10:00-11:30 at Zion, every 1<sup>st</sup>- 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesday. Now is a great time to join in! Zoom attendance is also an option if needed. Contact Pastor or the office to get set-up with a link. All are welcome! We are currently doing a text study on the weekly scriptures, readings are available in the narthex.

Sunday School will be held sometime in January. Stay tuned for more details. Plans are being made. Lily Mireau, Gina Altreuter, and Michelle Nord have taken over the leadership of this ministry. Thank you ladies for all you do for the kiddos!



For ordinary announcements, notes, or updates the best way to contact the church is via phone or email. Adeline is in the Zion office on Wednesdays. She is also in the office at Cross on Thursdays. Contact info is below:

Church Number: 920-474-7234

Office Email: [crosszionparish@outlook.com](mailto:crosszionparish@outlook.com)

Or: [zionashippun@wi.twcbc.com](mailto:zionashippun@wi.twcbc.com)

\*\*\*Both emails are valid and go to the same inbox.

If it is an emergency and you need immediate assistance from the office, please call or text Pastor on his cell at 262-490-8737. If he doesn't answer right away, please leave a voicemail. Thank you!



Pastor will be at Whelan's Fridays from 10-12. Join him for fellowship and conversation. All are welcome! In the event of any changes Pastor will update you via Facebook.

We will be providing coffee each week after worship. If you would like to bring in treats, please do.



If you are interested in participating in the baking of our Communion bread each week, a sign-up sheet is available in the narthex on the bulletin board. It's a great way to participate.

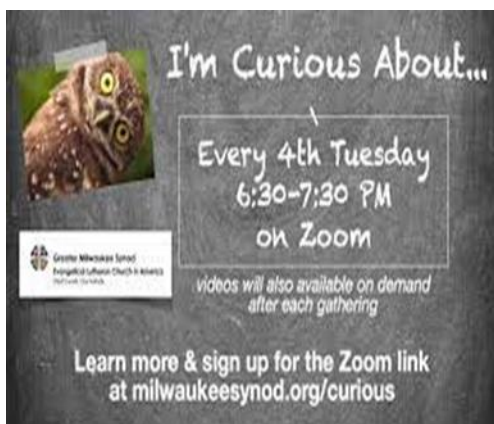
Please  
Pray  
for...



Ellen Braunschweig  
Shirley Chatfield  
Carly Ostrom  
Peyton Wolter  
Tom & Donna Meotke  
Ross & Jacob Kopfer  
Patrick Jones  
Rachel Zwiig  
Shirley Koeppel  
Marlee Smith  
Carol Schuett  
Larry Rather  
Bonnie Katzfey  
Kimberly Anders (friend of Bonnie)  
Melissa S. (friend of Carrie)

If you are a knitter or crocheter and would like to help out, Zion is resuming our prayer shawl ministry. Directions are attached at the back of the newsletter. This ministry is coordinated by our Missions Committee via Christine Seidschlag.





Our synod's Mission Table will host an hour-long, monthly gathering on Zoom for Christians who want to dream together about where God is leading the Church.

New topics each month, every 4th Tuesday from 6:30 - 7:30 pm, via Zoom. Come, hear inspiring reflections from others. No experience is needed. All voices are welcome.

Contact Rev. Matthew Short at [matt@milwaukeesynod.org](mailto:matt@milwaukeesynod.org) with questions.

On February 12<sup>th</sup>, we will be celebrating Soup-er Bowl Sunday. On this day we will be collecting a "noisy offering" during Worship towards the food pantry. Please plan on bringing food and/or monetary donations with you to worship. We will have bins placed in the Worship area with the football teams in the Super Bowl on them. We ask that you place your donations in whichever teams bin you want to win the game.



Mark your calendars. Zion will be hosting a blood drive on March 13<sup>th</sup>. Sign-ups are posted in the Narthex for Volunteers. Shifts start at 12:00pm. Thank you!

February 26<sup>th</sup> Zion will be hosting a Chili and Pie Auction from 10:00-1:00pm. Mark your calendars and dig out those recipes!



February 9<sup>th</sup> there will be another community snacks and crafts night at Zion. See flier attached for more information.