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The Zion Spirit



"Grounded in Christ: Sent to be a blessing"

January 2019



The Theology of New Beginnings

With the New Year celebration comes the cultural push to consider getting a fresh start, perhaps even making a few resolutions. This can be a good thing if taken seriously. Any chance to step back and reflect can be useful. Any chance to rethink some of our less effective things and adjust to be more effective can be helpful. If the coming of the New Year spurs you to be more reflective and intentional, then use it wisely and well.

But as Christians, there is really no need to wait for this annual ritual. The chance to renew and restart is granted daily, not annually. In fact, the chance to renew is before us all the time – for we live in a world that needs renewal but it is embraced in an environment of grace by a gracious and loving God.

There is a saying that "time heals." But it is not always true. Sometimes, when I see someone really angry and frustrated by something and unable to get over it, I see armor being built and defenses being raised. If this lasts over time, the walls get thicker and the ability to heal takes longer – it is actually hindered by time and the failure to allow grace to do its work. Grudges are one common example of this kind of reality. Not dealing with it deepens the wound.

On the other hand, grace is always close by. In Christ, we are enveloped in a world that is shaped by grace. While God is not coercive, God is always wanting and ready to heal. God is pressing, pushing, and loving us all the time. Whenever we open up a space, grace slips in and starts to heal us.

Martin Luther called on us to remember our baptism each morning when we arise. It is a reminder that grace is ours and the trials and mistakes of the previous day are washed and forgiven. The day starts anew and if we are open, our lives can start anew as well.

So, if you have something you want to change, don't wait for New Year's Day to make a resolution. Open yourself up this morning, remember that you belong to Christ, and simply receive the grace that is yours in Jesus. And if something comes up throughout the year, remember that life is lived one day at a time, not one year at a time. Grace is enough for today and for each day. You will say "Happy New Year!" a lot over the first week of 2019. But remember, as Christians, "Happy New Day!" is always appropriate – all year long.

Planned Giving – January 12

Do you have a plan for what happens to your resources after you die? All of us, even if we think we don't have much, should have a plan for what we have and how it will be shared when we die. It makes it easier for those people who we love. It is good stewardship to think about it and distribute it where you believe God wants it to go. And if you don't make a plan and write it down, the state has a formula and will do it for you. So, do you want your resources to go where you want them to go or to let some state provided formula do it for you?



On Saturday, January 12th, we will have Tim Urness from the ELCA Foundation with us to share how each of us can develop a plan that fits our values, pays attention to the people and causes we love most, and does so in a caring and intentional way. We will begin at 11:30 AM and conclude with a light lunch. No matter how young or old you are, you should have a plan and think about this. It is the faithful and the loving thing to do.



January 6th is Epiphany – the celebration of the arrival of the magi to visit Jesus. It is a day when we are reminded that Jesus didn't come for just a few people. Jesus came for the whole world. This year, we will be more focused on reaching out, sharing Jesus with others, and inviting people to join us in worship and in other aspects of our church life together.

Zion is a place where many people find connections to God and other people in ways that change their lives. In addition, as a servant-based community of people, our capacity to enhance the lives of those around us is also strengthened when we invite others to join us in God's work. So, as 2019 begins, think and pray about how you can invite others to be a part of Zion's ministry and connect them to Christ in new ways.

Thank You from Erin and Jose's Families

The families of Erin Daubert and Jose Ramirez would like to say thank you to the people of Zion for being a part of their wedding day and for all the love and support they received as they prepared for the wedding. It made a big difference!

Congregational Brunch – January 27th

Each year we have a chance to look back on the year and give thanks for what God has done among us and through us. We have often had luncheons but this year we are trying something new – a brunch between services. We will begin at 9:30 sharp downstairs in the fellowship hall – and food will begin to be served at 9:20 so the line can begin and help us get everyone seated and enjoying the food as soon as possible.

There will be a sign up sheet for people to bring fruit, coffee cakes, etc. Pastor Dave and Deacon Marlene will provide the main dish – a variety of egg casseroles. Plan to come and give thanks for the many people who have helped Zion have a wonderful year and enjoy food and fellowship as well!

**Slide Show – Turn in your pics by Jan 7 to Rachel**

Part of our annual gathering each January includes a slide show celebrating and looking back over the year. If you have pictures to contribute, please send them in to Rachel Schneider who will be compiling the show. Her email address is leftypeep@gmail.com and she needs the pictures by January 7th. Thanks!

New Council Installation – January 6th

Our new church council begins its work in January. We will install them during worship on January 6th. This year's council will include Valann Reddington, president emeritus; John Dvorak, president; David Russell, vice president; Catherine O'Connell, member at large; Mark Sayle, member at large. Sue Ledbetter will continue as treasurer. We give thanks to Dan Garcia and Jennifer Leatherby whose terms concluded. Both were excellent leaders and made a real difference in the work we do at Zion. Thanks!

Christmas Program Thanks

Each year we have a Christmas program and this year's was wonderful. Using the Godly Play method of telling the story, the kids were able to take big parts in reading and building a nativity scene during worship. Music from kids and adults interspersed to help enhance the story and invite participation. This year's attendance was the highest ever for a Christmas Program and people were excited and touched by the wonderful telling of the Christmas story. Thanks to all who made this

If you have concerns or joys to share, please call the church office at 847-888-2882 and press 2 to place a request on the prayer line.



BIBLE READINGS

January 6

1 Kings 2:1-4 (sermon text)
Luke 3:1-6

January 13

1 Kings 12:1-11 (sermon text)
Luke 2:25-35

January 20

1 Kings 17:8-16 (sermon text)
Luke 9:18-20

January 27

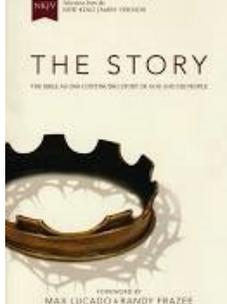
Isaiah 53:6-11 (sermon text)
John 1:29-34

February 3

Jeremiah 21:8-14 (sermon text)
Matthew 23:37

The Story Resumes

Over the Christmas holidays we have a three-week break from reading *The Story*. We'll resume with our reading the week of December 30th with our first class and sermon resuming on January 6th. We have done 12 chapters so far, a bit over a third of the way through. We'll be finishing the Old Testament and soon begin the New Testament. If you haven't got involved, this is a great time to jump in. Ask Pastor Dave or Deacon Marlene for a book if you need one – we still have a few copies available!



Martin Luther King Day



Youth Group to Attend Martin Luther King Event

Our youth group will be attending the 2019 City of Elgin Dr. King Youth Leadership Conference on **Monday, January 21, 2019 at the Ed Schock Centre of Elgin noon**

to 4:00 PM. This event is free and lunch will be provided.

The program will include inspirational keynote speaker, Jeron Shelton, a speech contest featuring area youth, dance performances and spoken word performances. Recognition will be given to the 2019 Dr. King scholarship recipients who will tell their stories to everyone.

Please let Dianha Ortega Ehreth or Deacon Marlene know if you can attend. More details to come.

Financial Report

Nov	Income	Expenses
General	\$16,304	\$16,474
Building Fund	\$1047	\$868
YTD	Income	Expenses
General	\$202,915	\$211,121
Building Fund	\$12,933	\$8,680

JANUARY VERSE OF THE MONTH

(Jesus) said to them,
"But who do you say that I am?"
Peter answered,
"The Messiah of God."

Luke 9:20



Feb. 9—Chili Cook-off

Feb. 12—Zion 101 Class

Feb. 19—Healing Service

Feb. 23—Spiritual Gifts Workshop

March 2—Spaghetti Dinner

March 6—Ash Wednesday

March 13-April 10—Midweek Lent Class/Prayer

April 18—Maundy Thursday

April 19—Good Friday

April 21—Easter

June 16-21—Confirmation Camp

Soup Kettle Schedule



2019 is a chance to redesign the schedule for the Soup Kettle. It has been a bit confusing and the new schedule is much simpler than the old one! Starting in January we will be doing the first Tuesday of each month. We will also do the fifth Tuesday when those appear

throughout the year. That means we do 16 Tuesdays a year – the same number as before. But the new schedule will mean everyone can keep track of when it is and we hope that means more people can and will get involved. People can come early to help prep and set up or later to help serve and clean up. There is plenty of work for all. Talk to Joann Hartmann (JoHartmann1@comcast.net) to find out more about getting involved!

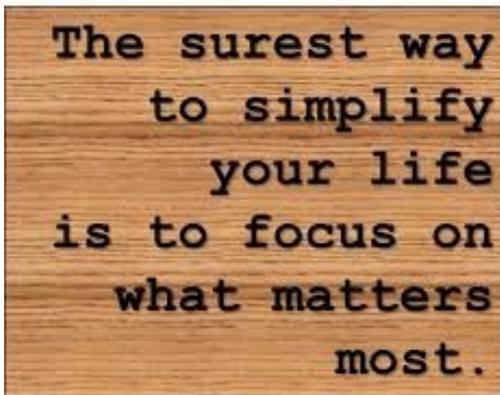
Befriender Ministry

Zion's Befriender lay ministry group is moving along well. Our group is made up of 8 caring, dedicated and well-trained Befrienders. Currently, 10 members of Zion have regular visits with Befrienders. We hold monthly meetings where we reconnect, plan, support each other, and pray for our ministry.



The final Healing Service of 2018 was held on Tuesday, December 11th at 6:45 pm. Along with Pastor Dave, our group has decided to hold Services of Healing

As part of our 2019 plan, we will be training more Befrienders in January and February. The specific dates are TBD.



Nalaxone Training

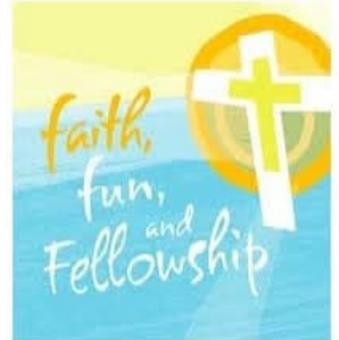
The current opioid overdoses crisis can hit almost anywhere. Young people get hooked recreationally as they try drugs. Older people sometimes start with a prescription and become addicts through that path. What that means is that we can often be surprised where an overdose can happen.

Kane County has been working to help deal with a situation and has distributed Nar-Can nasal sprays to organizations that deal with the public. Pete and Bev Breskovich attended the training for Zion. Now they would like to help others understand it and be more ready should something happen at Soup Kettle, in AA groups, or in worship or some other setting. It is safe and easy to use and it can save a life.

There is a signup sheet in the narthex. If you have already been trained, please sign the list and let us know. If you'd be willing to be trained, sign up and check that column as well. Thanks!

Fellowship Team to be Formed

We are starting a Fellowship Team to help provide oversight and planning for fellowship events for all ages. This team will be brainstorming some ideas in January as 2019 kicks off. If you are interested in being on this team or have questions, please contact Deacon Marlene.



Making Sundays Happen

You have all been doing a great job using the new system of worship leadership—thank you to all who are making this work so well. We've had another request for training, so there will be a training on February 23rd from 11 AM—Noon for those who want training for any of the roles on Sundays. Thanks again to all who make Sundays happen at Zion!

<p>SUNDAY SCHEDULE</p> <p>8:30 a.m. Worship/ Holy Communion</p> <p>9:45 a.m. Sunday School</p> <p>10:00 a.m. Adult Education</p>
