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The Zion Spirit



"Grounded in Christ: Sent to be a blessing"

March 2018

Christ has died;
Christ is risen;
Christ will come again.

The Gospel is About Death and Life (Not Just Life)

One of the most important ideas in Christianity is often overlooked. It is easy to get caught up in the love God has for us and the life that God desires for us. We can easily begin to forget that Jesus didn't come to be among us just to live here. He also came to live among us so that he could die here. Death is a part of life. It was true for Jesus. It is true for us.

This is the central message of Easter: true life comes when we let go of the lives we manufacture for ourselves (Luther called it "dying to our old self") and receive as a gift the new life that comes as a gift. In our baptisms we honor the cross of Jesus by being joined to the death of Jesus. In being joined to his death, we are assured of being joined to his resurrection. But without being connected to death first, there is no resurrection. You can't resurrect something that is already alive! It has to die first.

This kind of dying and rising is the basic form of the gospel. Jesus lives and dies and models for us the path to dying and living as well. In 1 Corinthians 15

Paul talks about this and urges us to trust that where we are to go, Jesus has already gone before us and he is the first fruits of what we shall be as well. Because Christ has died and risen, we have nothing to fear. Even the powers of sin and death have lost their grip on us.

This kind of life happens at two levels. The first is a metaphor for how we live now. The second is a promise for how we shall be when it is our turn to die.

Metaphorically, all of our life is a chance to cling to something or let go of something. A helpful teacher named Richard Rohr talks about life in two parts. In the first part we become clearer about who we are and achieve some sense of wholeness, confidence and capacity. If life goes well for us we will feel some sense of accomplishment and even pride in what we are. We are growing up.

But hopefully at some point, the journey takes a turn when we become mature and enter the second

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part of life. This may happen at any time but usually equates with "middle age" for people in some way. Midlife crises may be an expression of this shift happening. Here our confidence turns more humble. We are more aware of life as less about accomplishing in ways that give us pride and more about gift and acceptance. We are better able to accept the realities of life and more able to risk in order to make meaningful contributions to the world. It is at this point that we are more able to "die" to something in order that something else might "live."

Some people "grow up" earlier while some people never get to the second part of life after decades. This spiritual journey is one of achieving life, then dying to the life we have created in order to receive the new life that is a gift from God in Christ. The season of Lent each year calls us to recommit to dying and rising. The world wants us to simply cling to life. But Christ calls us to die and rise and in so doing discover a life filled with more meaning.

Inquirer's Classes

Membership at Zion is a chance to step up in your commitment to a faith community as a part of your journey as a disciple of Jesus. We have two classes coming up in March for people who want to learn more. Let Pastor Dave or Deacon Marlene know if you'd like to attend:

- ♦ Lutheran 101 (March 5th at 7:00 PM) – This class is an overview of the basics of the Lutheran faith in a memorable and accessible way. Participants will also get a free copy of Pastor Dave's book, Lutheran Trump Cards as a gift for attending.
- ♦ Zion 101 (March 19th at 7:00 PM) – Zion is an active place with lots of ways to grow, participate and serve in the church and in the wider community. Come learn about the history of Zion and what we are up to now!



Wednesdays in Lent

Lent is a chance to go deeper in faith and to learn more about some aspect of our faith life and our walk with Christ. This year's theme is "Radical Sending" and it will feature a mix of teaching by Pastor Dave, a video series, and discussion. Class begins at 6:45 PM each night. After class at 7:30 PM there will be a service of evening prayer each week. Classes are each Wednesday in March up until the last week in March when the schedule will change for Holy Week.



Holy Week Schedule

Holy Week honors the last week of Jesus' life as he entered Jerusalem and went to the cross. Zion has a variety of meaningful ways to experience and participate in this important time of year. Here is a schedule of this year's Holy Week worship and activities:

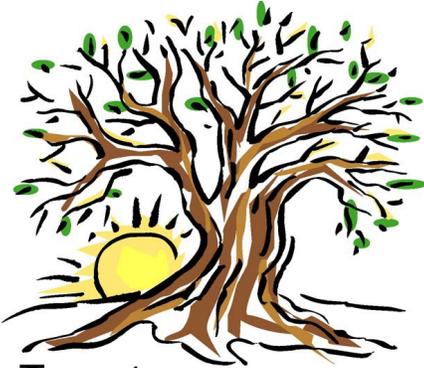
- ♦ Palm Sunday (March 25th) – Morning worship with Procession of the Palms at 8:30 and 10:45 AM
- ♦ Maundy Thursday (March 29th) – Evening meal with communion at 6:30 PM
- ♦ Good Friday (March 30th) – Good Friday Tenebrae at 7:30 PM
- ♦ Easter Morning (April 1st) – Worship at 6:30, 8:30 and 10:45 AM. Breakfast and egg hunt at 9:45 AM

MARCH 2018

| Sun | Mon | Tue | Wed | Thu | Fri | Sat |
|--|--|--|---|---|--|--|
| | | | | 1 07:00 PM- Apostolica Ch (Library) | 2 Office Closed 08:30 PM-AA | 3 09:30 AM-Prayer Shawl 10:00 AM-AA 04:00 PM-Spaghetti Dinner 08:00 PM-AA |
| 4 08:30 AM-Worship 09:45 AM-Sun. School 10:00 AM-Adult Ed 10:45 AM-Worship 01:00 PM-Apostolica Ch (Library) 04:30 PM-AA Dist 22 | 5 07:00 PM- Lutheran 101 | 6 05:30 PM-Soup Kettle 08:00 PM-AA | 7 Office Closed 05:00 PM-Praise Team 06:00 PM-Choir 06:45 PM-Class 07:00 PM-AA 07:30 PM-Lenten Service | 8 10:00 AM- Befriender 07:00 PM- Apostolica Ch (Library) | 9 Office Closed 08:30 PM-AA | 10 10:00 AM-AA 08:00 PM-AA |
| 11 Daylight Time Begins 08:30 AM-Worship 09:45 AM-Sun. School 10:00 AM-Adult Ed 10:45 AM-Worship 01:00 PM-Apostolica Ch (Library) | 12 | 13 05:30 PM-Soup Kettle 06:45 PM-Mem Svc, Paul McCam- mon 08:00 PM-AA | 14 Office Closed 05:00 PM-Praise Team 06:00 PM-Choir 06:45 PM-Class 07:00 PM-AA 07:30 PM-Lenten Service | 15 07:00 PM- Apostolica Ch (Library) | 16 Office Closed 08:30 PM-AA | 17 St. Patrick's Day 10:00 AM-AA 08:00 PM-AA |
| 18 Newsletter Articles Due 08:30 AM-Worship 09:45 AM-Sun. School 10:00 AM-Adult Ed 10:45 AM-Worship 01:00 PM-Apostolica Ch (Library) | 19 07:00 PM- Zion 101 | 20 10:00 AM-Ladies Bible Study 05:30 PM-Soup Kettle 08:00 PM-AA | 21 Office Closed 11:00 AM-EHN Meeting 05:00 PM-Praise Team 06:00 PM-Choir 06:45 PM-Class 07:00 PM-AA 07:30 PM-Lenten Service | 22 07:00 PM- Apostolica Ch (Library) | 23 Office Closed 08:30 PM-AA | 24 10:00 AM-AA 01:00 PM-Mission Trip Prep Mtg 08:00 PM-AA |
| 25 Palm Sunday 08:30 AM-Worship 09:45 AM-Sun. School 10:00 AM-Adult Ed 10:45 AM-Worship 01:00 PM-Apostolica Ch (Library) | 26 | 27 05:30 PM-Soup Kettle 08:00 PM-AA | 28 Office Closed 06:00 PM-Praise Team 07:00 PM-Choir 07:00 PM-AA | 29 06:30 PM- Maundy Thurs Ser- vice 07:00 PM- Apostolica Ch (Library) | 30 Office Closed 07:30 PM- Good Friday Service 08:30 PM-AA | 31 10:00 AM-AA 08:00 PM-AA |

Lent – What is It?

The word "Lent" comes from an old English word for "spring." The season developed as a way to orient followers of Jesus toward the cross and Easter.



Lent

Early church use of Lent moved toward a season of catechism and preparation for baptism. People desiring to become a part of the church would spend 40 days in deep study and preparation. They would learn about Jesus and his work. They would be prepared to profess

faith in Christ and be baptized at the Easter vigil. Easter would then be the chance for them to join the church and they would receive communion on Easter morning for the first time.

Today, Lent is a season of discipline as well. But for many of us reading this article, we will already be inside the life of the Christian church. Yet we can take extra time to study, pray, read scripture and assess our walk with Christ. Lent can be a season of preparation for us as well.

Intergenerational Cross-Cultural Learning Experience

A reminder for those interested in going to the immersion trip to the Native American Reservation, Spirit Lake Nation in North Dakota June 16-23. Applications are due by March 4. If you would be interested in a Superliner Room on Amtrak, submit your application ASAP and we'll work with you on the price of the room. These Amtrak prices are constantly fluctuating, so the cost will be dependent upon when it is booked. Here are the dates for the past and upcoming monthly preparation meetings: Sunday, Feb 25, 2-5 PM; Saturday March 10, 1-4 PM; Sunday, April 15, 2-5 PM and Sunday, May 20, 2-5 PM. Be sure to mark your calendars! This experience will be an important way to learn things from a different perspective that we often learn in our history books! Questions? Contact Dianha Ortega-Ehreth at dianhae@gmail.com or 773-860-0588, or Deacon Marlene.

BIBLE READINGS for March

March 4

Psalm 17:1-7
John 18:12-27 (sermon text)

March 11

Psalm 145:10-13
John 18:28-40 (sermon text)

March 18

Psalm 146
John 19:1-16a (sermon text)

March 25

Psalm 24
John 12:12-27 (sermon text)

April 1

Psalm 118:21-29
John 20:1-18 (sermon text)

MARCH VERSE OF THE MONTH

Jesus said, "Very truly, I tell you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains just a single grain; but if it dies, it bears much fruit."

John 12:24



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.

Watch Your Thermostat

Having experienced frigid temperatures in December and January we may not feel like global warming is a reality. But because we are having a cold and snowy winter doesn't refute the fact that the globe is warming as we continue to pump carbon dioxide and other gases into the atmosphere. Global warming doesn't just mean warming--

which is why "climate change" has become a trendier term among researchers. Most scientists agree that we need to differentiate between weather and climate. The National Atmospheric and Oceanographic Administration (NOAA) defines climate as the average weather over at least a 30-year period. While the globe is becoming hotter on average, the temperature increase can have paradoxical effects. Global warming may be partly to blame for especially harsh winter weather in some places while it is very warm somewhere else. The earth's natural green house layer is being transformed, mainly by the burning of fossil fuels. This pollution makes the layer thicker, which traps more heat. NOAA reports that recent decades have been the warmest since at least around 1000 AD, and that the warming we've seen since the late 19th century is unprecedented in that time. Until we shift over to greener energy sources, global warming will be a problem, regardless of how warm or cold it is outside our house. If nothing else, we should all keep in mind that every time we keep the thermostat down a bit, we help slow global warming.



Financial Report

| January | Income | Expenses |
|---------------|----------|----------|
| General | \$20,975 | \$22,670 |
| Building Fund | \$1,300 | \$868 |

Youth Group

This month, the youth group will meet on Sunday, March 11 following the late service, about noon – 2:00. We'll enjoy lunch at Zion, plan the Easter breakfast, make some dog toys for the Anderson Animal Shelter and play games. If you have some old t-shirts at your home, bring them along and we'll use them in making the dog toys.

Coming up April 27 and 28, we'll be joining Holy Trinity Lutheran Church in an overnight in Chicago. The theme will be Science and Faith. We'll be at the Lutheran School of Theology on Friday night. Saturday will include a visit to the Museum of Science and Industry. Stay tuned for more details. Be sure to save the dates!

Godly Play – A New Way to Work with Kids

We are paying very close attention to the ways that we encounter young adults and their families. A big part of this is working with children. How can we best engage kids in ways that help them learn that God loves them, teaches them the basics of the biblical story, and encourages them to come back again and again to learn more?

A new approach to children's ministry on Sunday mornings is called "Godly Play." This approach to working with kids creates a Montessori environment where things are done in groups of kids on the floor



listening to stories and in learning stations where kids pick how they will respond to the story and interact using a variety of options to draw, paint, color, build a craft or some other creative option. Kids then share with others what they have done,

now having options and working in ways that best suit their skills, interests, or mood that day.

If you are interested in being a part of the group that explores this option, please see Pastor Dave, Deacon Marlene or council member Dave Russell.

Cafe Zion – March 4th

Each year Cafe Zion is one of the things that people start talking about early. The buzz is in the air again as people are getting excited about the chance to enjoy a great meal and invite the community in to Zion’s facility. Funds are raised in a free will offering and there are often some matching funds. The funds are then used to help defray building maintenance and repair costs which allow us to continue to share the space with other community groups like SWAN, AA Groups, etc. who benefit from good quality space being available to them



As always, there will be a great Italian meal with salad, soup, pasta, meatballs, sauce, bread and great desserts. It will be a feast and you can help provide items by signing up to donate needed things on the sheet in the narthex and then placing them in the donations box.

Also, there is a need for people to set up, cook, wash dishes, serve and bus tables, and cleanup afterward. There is a team of people working on this. Andy Flores is once again the chairperson. If you’d like to help or have questions check with Andy.

Finally – invite your friends, family and neighbors to come! It will be fun!

Kid’s Hope USA

Our Kid’s Hope mentors continue to impact the lives of 10 young people in our community each week. We will have a meeting for all mentors on Thursday, March 15 from 4:30 – 6 at Dave and Marlene’s home. See you there!



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



REMEMBER

Set your clocks ahead one hour before going to bed on Saturday, March 10.



- April 1 – Easter!
- April 21 – Workday
- June 8 and 9 – Synod Assembly
- June 10 – Church picnic
- June 16-23 – Intergenerational Cross-Cultural Learning Experience
- Sept 29 – Workday
- Oct 6 – Blessing of the Animals

Zion to Host EHN – March 21

Zion joined the Elgin Hispanic Network last year as a part of our desire to be better connected and more visible to the wider community. This year, Dianha Ortega Ehreth is the president of EHN as well, so we have great connections there! Zion will be



hosting the March meeting and providing lunch for about 50 community leaders when they meet. Please pray for this new work and relationship!