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The Zion Spirit



"Grounded in Christ: Sent to be a blessing"

September 2021

Livestreaming Worship to Begin Soon

During the pandemic, our online worship became one of the ways to keep us connected to one another and able to worship during the crisis. As the pandemic shifts and we look at long-term worship and how to have both online worship that is effective and on-site worship where people gather physically, it is clear that with an all part-time staff we don't have the ability to sustain the amount of time and expenses that it takes to produce the kind of good quality online worship using the same methods we did when we were not also physically gathering. So that is leading to some changes.



We have a team of people who have been installing high quality cameras, all the cables and computer work needed to share worship while live in the sanctuary. We are adding new software to edit worship which will interface the slides on our screen with the captions online. It will be a high-quality worship experience and include people online in our on-site worship.

But it will also be quite different. Instead of edited segments produced and assembled ahead, the online people will be in a live event with the rest of us. Camera angles will change, music will change, and so will lots of other things. When we mess up, it won't be edited out – we will all see it and be a part of it. Grace will be needed!

In addition, the schedule will change. We will be sharing live worship from one of our live services – most often the later one – which means people online will find the schedule moving to match our on-the-ground service and not happening at 9:30. These may all be received as challenges and cause some stress for some participants used to what we currently do. But it will also include people in the same worship as the rest of the congregation and allow us to be more together in a live and shared worship experience while being a better use of the resources and staff time that we have to work with.

Watch for more info about this in the coming weeks – but we wanted to get you thinking now about this new online step forward.

Spiritual Practices Group – New Session Starts September 2nd

Our spiritual practices group will begin a new 7-week session beginning on Thursday, September 2nd at 10 AM and run through October 14. Each class will be held on Zoom. Spiritual practices are ways to be more attentive to the presence and work of God around us. They can help us notice what we might otherwise miss. A group like this can also share and help each other see and hear stories that inspire one another to see new things as well.



This session will explore a variety of Spiritual Practices using the Spiritual Practices Handbook, offering a new practice each week. Whether you have been part of Marlene's class in the past, or this is all new, you are welcome and encouraged to come and grow in your relationship with Christ.

Here is the Zoom link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82800309017?pwd=aENtcGFReVJxa08vVm5ockJUd3BmZz09>

Meeting ID: 828 0030 9017

Passcode: 753751

Sunday Education to Resume

Our educational options for Sundays will be resuming. So, our schedule will include Sunday School for kids starting on September 12th at 9:45. There will be Godly Play for pre-K and elementary aged kids and a youth class for older kids.

Class for Middle School/Sr. High will meet at 9:45, outside when weather permits.

Adult Education will also be resuming but will start on October 3rd. That will allow us to phase in adult education, have workers to help set up for outdoor worship at second service and then add the adult sessions which this year will begin each week at 9:45. Pastor Dave and Elizabeth Thames will be team teaching this group. Watch for details on our first unit for adult ed in our October newsletter!

Zion's Sunday School begins again in-person on September 12

We are excited to announce that after more than a year of Zoom Sunday School, Zion will once again begin Sunday School in-person. This will be our third year doing Godly Play.

Godly Play is a Montessori-based curriculum that allows children to:

- Listen to stories about God and our faith traditions. Stories are delivered by trained storytellers using special Godly Play materials.
- Wonder about how God is present in each story and in their lives.
- Play with the story materials because for a child, playing is learning and absorbing!
- Imitate the practice of communion while eating a snack "feast."

ABOUT GODLY PLAY at Zion:

- All children **MUST** pre-register this year. The registration form can be done online. The form is posted on Zion's website.
- Godly Play Sunday School will begin September 12.
- Sessions are from 9:45 to 10:30 am.
- If children do not arrive by 9:45 am, they will need to listen to the story behind the circle of children that has already been seated. So please be on time!
- Children ages 4 through 6th grade are welcome.
- A child's family member shall remain in the Zion church building during the Godly Play session, or an emergency contact form must be completed **AND** a family member shall pick up the child promptly at 10:30 am

Because of the COVID-related protocols at Zion:

- sessions will take place outside when the weather permits
- all staff will be wearing face masks
- all staff and children will be required to wear face masks when indoors
- all children will be seated 3 feet apart
- there will be designated and socially distant eating spots for children
- children will be escorted one by one to their family at the conclusion of each session

Of course as CDC guidelines change, all registered Godly Play families will be notified with updated protocols.



Please look to the Zion newsletter for the 2021-2022 Godly Play story schedule each month. The schedule for the month of September is below.

- September 12 – The Story of Covid
- September 19 – The Holy Bible
- September 26 – Parable of the Good Shepherd

Thank you to Zion's Godly Play Team: Rebecca Rizzo, Vicki Russell, Carrie Hand, Liz Eckstein and Allison Mikyska. This team signs up to lead and assist with Sunday School either as trained storytellers or as trained "Door People." Door People help children prepare to come into and engage in the special Godly Play space. If you are interested in being trained as a Door Person, or for any other Godly Play-related questions, please contact Dianha Ortega-Ehreth, Children and Family Ministry Coordinator, at dianha@zionelginil.org.

Kids Hope Mentoring Resumes Soon!

Each Fall we resume mentoring with kids at Lowrie School. A mentor commits to meeting with a child each week for one hour. Mentors check in, see how school is going, provide support, play games, share snacks and build a relationship with their assigned child. Mentoring is not hard – the key is dependability to support a child who needs some extra support.

On September 12th we will both recognize and bless our current mentors as they begin their work and issue a call for more people to mentor. If you are interested and feel God could use you to be a support for just one child, contact Tricia Grosser or Gudrun Dorgan and they will help you learn more about this!



Zion's Inclusion and Equity Team Website Page

This month, we have a new addition to the Equity page on our website. This month's video is called "**Is Meritocracy a Myth?**" We will be adding new items each week and a covenant that you are invited to consider signing. The page can be found at www.Zionelginil.org/equity



Taco Day on After Worship on September 12th!

Because the Lowrie “Back to School Event” had to be cancelled due to the school yard being torn up to put in a new sewer line, we have lots of good taco things and will be using them in some fun and creative ways.



This article invites you to Taco Day after worship on Sunday September 12th. It will be our fall kickoff for kids' Sunday School and also a day to focus on Kids Hope mentors. So we will also have lunch for everyone – tacos and chips! Stay after second service and enjoy a light lunch on the church lawn!

We will also be using taco items to have a Staff Appreciation Day featuring “Taco Tuesday” that week where we provide taco lunches for all the staff at Lowrie. And there will also be a Soup Kettle night in September where tacos are for dinner for our guests. Good stewardship means using what we have been given well and this plan is a good one to do just that!

Lowrie has rescheduled the “Back to School Event” for the spring to be an “end of the year” event instead. Watch for details then.

Zion Book Club

Twelve of us plus baby Jonathon had a nice evening/book discussion under the pergola at Zion. For all you readers please consider joining us. We have great discussions, insights, conversations and ideas and I always learn something.

We will be reading *Three Days the Search for the Boy Messiah* by Chris Stepien. Our next meeting will be on September 23 at 6p.m. at Zion weather permitting or inside if raining (please bring a mask). Kris Kovari is ordering the book and the cost is \$3.00 shipping included. She is ordering quite a few so let her know if you want a copy.

We hope to read a new release in October called *The Lost Apothecary* by Sarah Penner. We are hoping to get enough copies through the library. Since this is a new release it would be more expensive.

If you have any questions please contact Rebecca Rizzo or Linda Bailey

Elgin Team Garcia Baby #2

Dan and Mandy are expecting baby #2 in September. One year old Isaac is excited to be a big brother! Having a baby during “normal” times can be a lot. Having a baby + toddler during a 3rd (or is it 4th?) wave of a pandemic is new territory. There are two ways (other than prayers!) to help the Garcia's navigate their way through this new territory:

**#1. DELIVER FOOD TO THE GARCIAS**

To sign up to deliver a meal to the Garcia's which they anticipate to be their biggest need. There is an online calendar to help everyone coordinate who will deliver which meal. Go to:

<https://www.giveinkind.com/inkinds/N6S1O4F>

Or search for “Elgin Team Garcia Baby #2” at Giveinkind.com.

Note: DATES WILL BE ADJUSTED PENDING BABY'S ARRIVAL DATE. Information on requested food items are on the website.

Delivery instructions:

- Place your food gift in the MEAL IN plastic bin located by the Garcia's front door.
- Your dishes will be placed in the DISHES OUT plastic bin one week after drop off
- Please do not knock on the door -- it will make the dog bark and might wake up the baby!
- Prepared meals are preferred (instead of restaurant gift cards).

#2. SPRINKLE THE GARCIAS WITH A BABY GIFT

Please go to their online registry at www.babylist.com/the-new-one Some of these items may direct you to Amazon. Please have the item(s) shipped directly to the Garcia's at their home address: 104 N. Commonwealth, Elgin, IL 60123. Don't forget to go back to the Babylist registry to mark your item as “purchased.”

If you would like to give the Garcia's a different baby gift that is not included in their registry, please bring the wrapped gift to Zion Sunday worship and let Dianha Ortega-Ehreth know. She will be gathering all “bonus” gifts and delivering them to the Garcia's after September 12.

Art of Peacemaking After School Program Resumes September 14

Now that all children in the community are back to in-person school, we are once again opening up our after-school program at Zion starting September 14. This is one major way that Zion engages in our community, and in our neighborhood in particular.

The Art of Peacemaking is a program for children to:

- Be creative and link creativity to peacemaking skills for today's world
- Enjoy free play and organized games that build social/emotional development skills
- Become familiar with Zion staff and volunteers

About The Art of Peacemaking at Zion:

- Children must be registered (paper form or online form on Zion's website) – one per family
- Families pay only a \$5 deposit fee per child
- Children must be in 1st through 6th grade to participate
- Program will be held every Tuesday from 2:30 – 4:00 pm (total 90 minutes).
- We can accommodate up to 15 children depending on how many volunteers commit to helping
- Dianha Ortega-Ehreth and Allison Mikyska will staff each Tuesday's after school program. Volunteers can sign up to rotate. The more volunteers we have, the less number of Tuesdays each volunteer will need to sign up for!

If you are interested and available to volunteer, please contact Dianha Ortega-Ehreth, Children and Family Ministry Coordinator, at dianha@zionelginil.org.

The Art of Peacemaking

Centro de Informacion Annual Benefit Gala "Pillar of Hope"

For the past several years, Zion has supported Centro de Informacion by being a sponsor at their annual gala which raises much needed funds for their work in the Elgin area. Their mission is to empower Hispanics with the ability to effectively integrate into our greater community through the facilitation of information, education, citizenship and well-being. As a congregation working to connect with our Hispanic neighbors and to be a welcoming place, our council has supported this sponsorship by inviting Zion folks to contribute toward the sponsorship.

This year the gala will again be online on September 30 at 6:00. Zion has committed to supporting Centro at the sponsorship level of \$1200, which includes advertising for us in the Hispanic community. We are inviting donations from you to make an extra donation to Zion to help us cover this amount.

A note from the Grzybowski family missionaries in Poland to the people of Zion

Dear Friends at Zion,
Greetings from Poland! Thank you very much for your gift of money for our ministry! We appreciate your kindness!
Our ninth grandchild was born on August 11th!
May God draw all of us closer to Himself!
Jurek & Karol :-)

September Lessons and Verse of the Month**September 5**

Psalm 51:15-17

Luke 12:13-34 (sermon text)

Theme: "It is never too early to be generous"

September 12

Theme: The goodness (but not perfection) of creation

Genesis 1:1 – 2:4a (sermon text)

John 1:1-5

September 19

Theme: God provides – a foreshadowing of Jesus

Genesis 21:1-3; 22:1-14 (sermon text)

John 1:29-34

September 26

Theme: God's commitment to connect heaven and earth

Genesis 27:1-4, 15-23; 28:10-17 (sermon text)

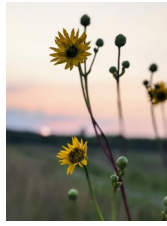
John 1:43-51

VERSE OF THE MONTH

God blessed the seventh day and hallowed it, because on it God rested from all the work that he had done in creation. (Genesis 2:3)

Thank You For Your Offerings!

We are thankful that the people of Zion are so committed to this place doing God's work and doing it well. You are all doing amazing work and you need to hear a big "well done good and faithful servants!" As you know, it is helping Zion participate in God's work.

**Upcoming Birthdays**

Happy Birthday to our friends with upcoming birthdays! If you have an upcoming birthday and are not on this list, please email Allison in the office at zionelgin@yahoo.com. Thanks!

Vicki Russell – September 4
 Cheryl Juris – September 4
 Deacon Marlene – September 5
 Richard Fellows – September 5
 Elizabeth Thames – September 6
 Dave St. John – September 9
 Elise Brevik – September 17
 Sam Ehreth – September 18
 Kyria Leatherby – September 19
 Kailey Fellows – September 20
 Joanne Cork – September 27
 Mandy Garcia – September 28
 Dave Russell – September 28
 Niels Dorgan – September 29
 Kris Kovari – September 30



September 12—Taco Day after Worship
September 12—Zion Sunday School and Adult Ed resume in-person
September 30—Centro de Informacion Gala

thanks!