

ZION LIFE NEWSLETTER

Volume 2, Issue 12

December 2013

Special Points of Interest:

- **Hammerstone Bible Study**, Tuesday afternoons, 2:00 pm
- **Morning Prayer**, Wednesday mornings, 8:00 am
- **Zion Bible Study**, Thursday mornings, 10:30 am
- **Advent Family Night**, December 1, 4:30 pm
- **Zion Christmas Decorating**, December 7, 8:30 am
- **Holiday Parade**, December 7, 5:00 pm
- **Parson's Closet**, December 10, 10—1
- **Food Pantry & Parson's Closet**, December 21, 9:00—12
- **St. Matthew's Christmas Program**, December 21, Dinner @ 6:00, Program @ 7:00
- **Christmas Eve Service**, December 24, 5:00 @ St. Matthew's, 8:00 @ Zion

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New Stephen Minister Training Class Set to Begin

Caring ministry at Zion Lutheran Church will be expanding soon as people are getting ready to begin Stephen Minister training in January. At the completion of their training in June, the trainees will be commissioned as Stephen Ministers. They will then join Pastor Sara in providing one-to-one care to individuals experiencing difficulties in life.

"Stephen Ministry training combines sound theological principles with contemporary psychology," says Pastor Sara, who, along with Stephen Leaders Eilene Fisher and Carol McGuire, will teach the class. "The training is top-notch. The skills our Stephen Ministers learn and practice prepare them to provide a very high level of Christian caregiving. The training is intense because it explores some serious life issues, but it is also a growth-producing, and enjoyable experience." The 50 hours of Stephen Ministry training is broken down into twenty 2 ½ -hour sessions that will be held on Monday Evenings. Among the training topics are.

- * Feelings: Yours, Mine, and Ours
- * The Art of Listening
- * Distinctively Christian Caring
- * Assertiveness: Relating Gently and Firmly
- * Maintaining Boundaries in Caregiving
- * Confidentiality
- * Ministering to Those Experiencing Grief
- * Caring for People before, during, and after Hospitalization

"Before the Stephen Leader training," says Eilene Fisher, "I expected to learn a lot about caregiving, but I didn't anticipate the personal and spiritual growth I experienced. Looking back, perhaps what I enjoyed most was the close Christian community formed with everyone in our training class. Our trainees are in for a really neat experience."



This will be the first training class at Zion Lutheran Church. More than half-million people have gone through Stephen Ministry training in more than 10,000 churches world-wide since the ministry began in 1975.

"We're definitely part of something big," says Carol McGuire. "The impact of Stephen Ministry on our congregations has the potential to be big. People whose needs might otherwise slip through the cracks can come face to face with Jesus' love through their Stephen Minister. Our new class will help us touch that many more lives with the Gospel."

As we prepare to begin, please lift up the training class and instructors in your prayers over the coming months and watch for regular training class updates in the newsletter and Sunday bulletins. If you are interested in becoming a Stephen Minister please fill out an application. They are located on the church website: zion-cobleskill.org or you can find them in the back of the sanctuary at Zion and on the table near the entrance to the sanctuary at St Matthew's.

Community Wide Christmas Collaboration 2013



November 2013

Dear Community Member;

In our community many families struggle to put food on the table, gas in the car and buy clothing for their children. Families are facing unemployment, financial challenges and have difficulty financially caring for their families. Many families are still impacted by the floods in 2011 and some are still not back in their homes. Families face a particularly hard winter this year.

A collaboration of organizations has begun to plan for the holiday season of 2013. Catholic Charities, Schoharie County Head Start, Community Maternity Services, SALT, Schoharie County Chamber of Commerce, and a number of churches and organizations have formed an association to help families through the holidays. The "Communitywide Christmas Collaboration" has been established to address the need for assistance that is greater this year than those before.

The collaboration has one point of entry for people to apply for help, and one location to mail a tax deductible donation. We will also be accepting gift cards and inviting merchants and businesses to participate by donating gift certificates or services.

We ask for your help in assisting the collaboration in helping families with children have a Christmas. This collaboration is a service that is meant to fill in the gaps for people who otherwise would not receive any assistance with the holidays, or their needs cannot be met through normal channels. Please call or donate.

How to donate: Send a check or gift card to SCCDC-Christmas 114 Lark St Cobleskill, New York 518-234-7521. Donations of money and gift cards accepted.

How to Apply for Christmas Assistance: Catholic Charities 489 W. Main St. Cobleskill, New York. Applications will be taken on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays, December 2-13, 2013 from 10-2. For more information please call 518-234-3581.

Please Help, Families are in Need!
(Tax receipts are emailed or sent USPS)

E.H.A.S.

You may ask, what in the world is E.H.A.S. ? EHAS is a focus on the story that God has written in your life experience. Think of a time when you felt God's presence, work, touch, or mystery. Take time to jot some notes, write it down. It can be as simple as feeling God's presence in a quiet moment, or while gathering with friends. It can be feeling God's touch in a letter or a card. Any time that you felt God's presence, work, touch, or mystery. What was it like? How did it affect, transform, or change you?

As Lutherans, it is easy for us to think that we do not have a story to tell when we encounter others. There is not a huge focus on a specific "conversion experience," so it is easy to say I do not have one. For many of us, faith is an everyday event that we have encountered since early childhood. It is easy for us to think we do not have anything to say. That is not true, Everyone Has A Story. Everyone has a time when they have felt God's presence, God's work, God's touch, and/or God's mystery? It may have been for a brief moment or it may have been a very distinct experience. What is your experience? We are looking for E.H.A.S. moments in your life. We look forward to hearing them as you begin to share, but first it is up to you to recognize where they might be.



I LOVE THE PROLOGUE
IN JOHN! IT'S SO
MYSTERIOUS -- IT'S
PERFECT FOR
CHRISTMAS!



WWW.AGNUSDAY.ORG

A LONG TIME AGO
IN A GALAXY
FAR FAR AWAY...



YEAHHH -- THAT'S
THE WRONG
PROLOGUE.



JOHN 1:1-14

© WETZSTEIN 11.12.21

St. Matthew's Matters



The Ministry Board at St. Matthew's Chapel, hereafter referred to as the "MB", held its monthly meeting on November 4.

Barb Cousineau started the business part of the meeting with comments about our Giving Thanks service on November 23. She added that we need to invite other area churches and reminded us to avoid sitting together at the meal and to sit with visitors.

Tom Collins wanted to do something for outreach to the local community. The MB decided to collect hats, gloves, and mittens during Advent for a program called "Keep a Child Warm".

Pam Kostbar-Jarvis raised the question about the canticle "Let the Vineyards Be Fruitful." Should we sing the song when there is no Communion? Pastor Sara said that we could.

Pastor Sara told us that her three children will again be in the annual Sunday School Christmas program, this year scheduled for December 21. Suzanne Graulich will direct. John Jarvis announced that he would burn the bees' nest in the charcoal grill before storing it behind the storage shed.

Pastor Sara closed the meeting with a discussion of the life cycle of churches. She then had the MB members create a short list of three questions to ask:

1. What do you want our church to be or do?
2. What do you think of when you hear the words St. Matthew's Chapel?
3. If St. Matthew's Chapel closed, would the closing matter to you and the community?
4. Ask the questions "What can our church do for you?"

In service to Christ and His Church,

John Jarvis
MB Secretary



Holiday Happenings

Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church with St. Matthew's Chapel will be participating in a few community and church events between now and Christmas. Mark your calendars and plan to check out the following events:

Advent Family Night with Dinner to be held at Zion on Sunday, December 1st at 4:30.

Zion Christmas Decorating on Saturday, December 7th at 8:30 am. Come help us Deck the Halls & Walls of the Church!

Cobleskill Holiday Parade on Saturday, December 7th at 5:00 pm. Zion will have a float in the parade. Also, the Christmas Trees in Veteran's Park will be lit at this time. Stop by and check out Zion's tree!

St. Matthew's Chapel Christmas Decorating on Saturday, December 14, the time to be announced. Again, come help us Deck the Halls & Walls of the Chapel!

"Messiah" Community Choir Christmas Concert on Sunday, December 15th at Zion.

AED Polar Express with Santa on Saturday, December 14th from 10 — 11:30 am. Bring the kiddies to listen to Santa read the Polar Express and then visit with him over cookies and hot chocolate.

St. Matthew's Christmas Program with Dinner on Saturday, December 21st. Dinner will begin at 6:00 followed by the Christmas Program at 7:00 pm.

Christmas Eve Services: St. Matthew's at 5:00 pm, Zion at 8:00 pm. Plan to come celebrate the birth of Jesus on Christmas Eve.



ELCA wishes to thank Zion for the recent gift of \$170 to ELCA World Hunger. Your faithful generosity makes a life-changing difference for people in need around the corner and around the world. Your gift is greatly appreciated!

Nominating Committee

At the Congregational Annual Meeting we will be electing 3 members for our council. As you consider serving on our Council, please review the attached section from our constitution on the responsibilities for the leadership of our congregation.

- C12.04.** The Congregation Council shall have general oversight of the life and activities of this congregation, and in particular its worship life, to the end that everything be done in accordance with the Word of God and the faith and practice of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. The duties of the Congregation Council shall include the following:
- a. To lead this congregation in stating its mission, to do long-range planning, to set goals and priorities, and to evaluate its activities in light of its mission and goals.
 - b. To seek to involve all members of this congregation in worship, learning, witness, service, and support.
 - c. To oversee and provide for the administration of this congregation to enable it to fulfill its functions and perform its mission.
 - d. To maintain supportive relationships with the pastor(s) and staff and help them annually to evaluate the fulfillment of their calling or employment.
 - e. To be examples individually and corporately of the style of life and ministry expected of all baptized persons.
 - f. To promote a congregational climate of peace and goodwill, and, as differences and conflicts arise, to endeavor to foster mutual understanding.
 - g. To arrange for pastoral service during the sickness or absence of the pastor.
 - h. To emphasize partnership with the synod and churchwide organization of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America as well as cooperation with other congregations, both Lutheran and non-Lutheran, subject to established policies of the synod and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.



- i. To recommend and encourage the use of program resources produced or approved by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
- j. To seek out and encourage qualified persons to prepare for the ministry of the Gospel.

I would ask each of you to spend this time in prayer, asking God for guidance, to determine if you would like to be in a leadership role of our congregation. To be a member of the council comes with the responsibility to be involved within our church. At a minimum as leaders, attendance to weekly services, special services, and fund raising and non-fund raising activities performed at both Zion and St. Matthew's. As leaders we set the example of what it means to be a baptized member of Zion by sharing our faith, being involved in our mission. We have three seats available, all ending their first terms. The council has established a nominating committee to establish a slate of individuals for us to vote on in January. It should not be a situation where people are convinced to serve, as it has been in the past. It should be a conscious decision after spending time with God in prayer asking if this is his will.

The Chairman of the committee will be announced in our weekly bulletins. Ending their first 3 year term: Robert Holt, Lisa Borggreen, and Carol McGuire.

Judith Warner
Council President

Zion's Food Pantry

On Saturday, November 23, 2013, our Food Pantry served 49 households (133 individuals) with 6 households coming for the first time. By the end of the day our shelves were pretty much empty. We also packed 10 Thanksgiving Baskets which were delivered or picked up. A big thank-you to the 16 volunteers who served. God is good and does provide.

The next pick-up from the Regional Food Bank will be on December 11, the time to be announced after order is placed on December 4. The Food Pantry will be open on Saturday, December 21, 2013. We will also pack Christmas Baskets that day. Volunteers will be needed. Donations are appreciated.

Sandy Deems
Food Pantry Coordinator



Thank you for all you do!

At this busy time of year, you may not hear “thank you” as often as you would like. Please understand that your hard work is appreciated and that you are heroes to all of us here at the Food Bank, and to those you serve.

The following poem was written by a pantry client: please know that you are appreciated more than your clients will ever express. Thank you for doing what you do.

“THANK YOU...for giving, without making me feel like I am taking;
Thank you for understanding that we all fall on hard times and bad days;
Thank you for looking me in the eye instead of down your nose at me;
In the time we have known each other,
you all have let me into your hearts as I have all of you;
My heart has been opened to the lessons you have taught me:
Patience, Understanding, and Hope.
I am better for knowing each of you;
Stronger than I may have ever believed, willing to give to others as you have to me;
So graciously, with dignity and charity.”

And from the Food Bank, thank you for all the work you do every day feeding people in need. Together we help feed nearly 250,000 different people a year, a number which seems to keep growing. This year, you and other agencies ordered more food and other supplies than ever before. We expect annual distribution to exceed 29 million pounds. Thank you for being part of this record level of service.



Serving Schedule for December 2013 & January 2014

Date	12/01	12/08	12/15	12/22	12/29	01/05/14	01/12/14	01/19/14	01/26/14
St. Matthew's Chapel									
Acolyte	Karl Graulich	John Jarvis	Lara Graulich	Karl Graulich	Allen Graulich	Emma Litzner	Allen Graulich	Lara Graulich	Emma Litzner
Reader	Tom Collins	Omer Cousineau	Janet Lyrnk	Joan Jozifek	John Jarvis	Pam Kostbar-Jarvis	Barb Cousineau	Joan Jozifek	Omer Cousineau
Greeter	Janet Lyrnk	Allen Graulich	Jean Bakkom	Pam Kostbar-Jarvis	Barb Cousineau	Jean Bakkom	Omer Cousineau	Barb Cousineau	Pam Kostbar-Jarvis
Ushers	Tom & Suzanne Collins	Janet Lyrnk & Jean Bakkom	Suzanne & Allen Graulich	Pam Kostbar-Jarvis & John Jarvis	Omer & Barb Cousineau	Tom & Suzanne Collins	Janet Lyrnk & Jean Bakkom	Suzanne & Allen Graulich	Pam Kostbar-Jarvis & John Jarvis
Communion Assistant	Lara Graulich	Barb Cousineau	John Jarvis	Lara Graulich	Pam Kostbar-Jarvis	Barb Cousineau	John Jarvis	Pam Kostbar-Jarvis	Allen Graulich
Bell Ringer	Karl Graulich	John Jarvis	Lara Graulich	Karl Graulich	Allen Graulich	Emma Litzner	Allen Graulich	Lara Graulich	Emma Litzner
Zion Lutheran Church									
Acolyte	Judith Warner	Eilene Fisher	Rich Churchill	Rose Keller	Judith Warner	Lisa Borggreen	Rich Churchill	Eilene Fisher	Rose Keller
Reader	Sandy Deems	Rich Churchill	Camille Grace	Eilene Fisher	Karen Scott	Rose Swanhall	Frieda Thorington	Sandy Deems	Rich Churchill
Greeter	Eilene Fisher	Lisa Borggreen	Rose Swanhall	Judith Warner	Eilene Fisher	Leon Beaver	Eilene Fisher	Teddy Beaver	Brian Swanhall
Usher	Deb Nadeau	Henry Mau	Brian Swanhall	Lisa Borggreen	André Nadeau	Henry Mau	Rose Swanhall	Deb Nadeau	Eilene Fisher
Communion Assistant	Eilene Fisher	Bob Holt	Judith Warner	André Nadeau	Lisa Borggreen	Bob Holt	Judith Warner	André Nadeau	Lisa Borggreen
Elevator	Henry Mau	Ed Eldredge	Eileen Fisher	Henry Mau	Ed Eldredge	Eilene Fisher	Henry Mau	Ed Eldredge	Eilene Fisher
Altar Guild	Karen Wilson & Frieda Thorington								

Zion Lutheran Church 615 E. Main Street, Cobleskill, NY 12043 518-234-3381
www.zion-coby.org

December 2013

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 WORSHIP St. Mat's Svc. 9:00 a Zion Svc. 11:00 am Decorate float Advent Family Night with Dinner 4:30 pm	2	3 Vacation Lunch Pro- gram Mtg. 10:00 a Hammerstone Bible Study 2:00 pm	4 Morning Prayer 8:00	5 Bible Study 10:30 am	6 Pastor's Sabbath	7 Zion Christmas Dec- orating 8:30 am
8 WORSHIP St. Mat's Svc. 9:00 a Zion Svc. 11:00 am	9 Finance Cmte. 6:30 Boy Scouts 7:00 pm	10 Parson's Closet 10—1 Hammerstone Bible Study 2:00 pm	11 Morning Prayer 8:00	12 Bible Study 10:30 am Council Mtg. 7:00 p Photo Club 7:00 pm	13 Pastor's Sabbath Head Start 11:30—4:00	14 St. Mat's Church Decorating (TBD) Polar Express with Santa, 10—11:30 am
15 WORSHIP St. Mat's Svc. 9:00 a Zion Svc. 11:00 am	16 Boy Scouts 7:00 pm	17 Hammerstone Bible Study 2:00 pm	18 Morning Prayer 8:00	19 Bible Study 10:30 am	20 Pastor's Sabbath	21 Food Pantry & Par- son's Closet 9—12 St. Mat's Christmas Program Dinner @ 6:00 Program @ 7
Messiah Concert 4:00	23 Boy Scouts 7:00 pm	24 Hammerstone Bible Study 2:00 pm Christmas Eve Svc. St. Mat's @ 5:00 pm Zion @ 8:00 pm	25 Christmas Day 	26 Bible Study 10:30 am	27 Pastor's Sabbath	28
22 WORSHIP St. Mat's Svc. 9:00 a Zion Svc. 11:00 am						
29 WORSHIP St. Mat's Svc. 9:00 a Zion Svc. 11:00 am	30	31 Hammerstone Bible Study 2:00 pm	January 1, 2014 	January 2 Bible Study 10:30 am	January 3 Pastor's Sabbath	January 4

Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church
with St. Matthew's Chapel
615 E. Main St.
Cobleskill, NY 12043



*Join us for our Christmas Eve Services:
St. Matthew's Chapel @ 5:00,
Zion @ 8:00 pm*

Jesus

is the Reason
for the Season.

*Wishing you and your family
a very Merry Christmas and
a blessed New Year!*

