

ZION LIFE NEWSLETTER

Volume 4, Issue 7

July 2015



Ways to get involved at Zion/St. Matt's:

- ♦ **Summer Food Program,** Mon. — Fri., 11 — 1 pm daily beginning July 6 and running through August 21
- ♦ **Stephen Ministry,** Tuesday mornings, 8:30 am
- ♦ **Lifetree Café,** Wednesday evenings at Pizza Shack, 6:00 pm
- ♦ **Bible Study,** Thursday mornings, 10:30 am
- ♦ **Food Pantry & Parson's Closet,** Saturday, July 25, 9—12, volunteers are always needed to shop for food, pick up and transport orders from the Regional Food Bank truck, stock the shelves, and assist with filling the orders.



HAPPY 4TH
OF JULY

The President's Paragraph

I don't know about you, but July has always been one of my favorite months, mostly because Pam will be on summer vacation from Cobleskill-Richmondville High School. However, other good things will happen too. Although we won't have our traditional free Friday evening community meal in July, we will have the free Monday through Friday community lunches, for both adults and children, starting on July 6. Organizer Judy Warner always needs help, both with volunteers and donations of cash, food and drink. Judy recently told me that the lunches will come from C-RCS with the same sandwich menus that we used last summer, so Summer 2015 is lookin' good already!! Why don't you join us for lunch at Zion?

John Jarvis

2015 Council President

Letter from the Presiding Bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

June 18, 2015

It has been a long season of disquiet in our country. From Ferguson to Baltimore, simmering racial tensions have boiled over into violence. But this ... the fatal shooting of nine African Americans in a church is a stark, raw manifestation of the sin that is racism. The church was desecrated. The people of that congregation were desecrated. The aspiration voiced in the Pledge of Allegiance that we are “one nation under God” was desecrated.

Mother Emanuel AME’s pastor, the Rev. Clementa Pinckney, was a graduate of the Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary, as was the Rev. Daniel Simmons, associate pastor at Mother Emanuel. The suspected shooter is a member of an ELCA congregation. All of a sudden and for all of us, this is an intensely personal tragedy. One of our own is alleged to have shot and killed two who adopted us as their own.

We might say that this was an isolated act by a deeply disturbed man. But we know that is not the whole truth. It is not an isolated event. And even if the shooter was unstable, the framework upon which he built his vision of race is not. Racism is a fact in American culture. Denial and avoidance of this fact are deadly. The Rev. Mr. Pinckney leaves a wife and children. The other eight victims leave grieving families. The family of the suspected killer and two congregations are broken. When will this end?

The nine dead in Charleston are not the first innocent victims killed by violence. Our only hope rests in the innocent One, who was violently executed on Good Friday. Emmanuel, God with us, carried our grief and sorrow – the grief and sorrow of Mother Emanuel AME church – and he was wounded for our transgressions – the deadly sin of racism.

I urge all of us to spend a day in repentance and mourning. And then we need to get to work. Each of us and all of us need to examine ourselves, our church and our communities. We need to be honest about the reality of racism within us and around us. We need to talk and we need to listen, but we also need to act. No stereotype or racial slur is justified. Speak out against inequity. Look with newly opened eyes at the many subtle and overt ways that we and our communities see people of color as being of less worth. Above all pray – for insight, for forgiveness, for courage.

Kyrie Eleison.

The Rev. Elizabeth A. Eaton
Presiding Bishop
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

RACIAL JUSTICE RESOLUTION

A Resolution creating a racial and social justice task force brought by the Rev. Imani Dodley

WHEREAS The Church as the body of Christ is called to reflect and respond to the community in which it tells the Story, and

WHEREAS The ELCA's 1993 Social Statement on Racial and Social Justice says, "Racism - a mix of power, privilege, and prejudice—is sin, a violation of God's intention for humanity. The resulting racial, ethnic, or cultural barriers deny the truth that all people are God's creatures and, therefore, persons of dignity. Racism fractures and fragments both church and society.", and

WHEREAS local needs of the Upstate New York Synod call for local action more contextual than relying solely on a church-wide task force; therefore be it

RESOLVED that synod council create a task force to report to the synod council and bishop's office to address racial and social justice and create opportunities for engagement around the issues of racial, cultural and ethnic diversity within our synod, conferences and individual congregations; and be it also

RESOLVED that such a task force would partner with congregations, conferences, synod council, and the bishop's office to review our systems, tell our stories and develop various processes to promote the inclusion of underrepresented members of our communities across the synod. The Committee on Reference and Counsel moves the resolution and recommends its adoption.

Criminal Justice Resolution 2015

WHEREAS, offenders face great obstacles when they return to society which make it difficult to secure housing and employment resulting in a recidivism rate higher than the U.S. average: in 2011, 51.7% of released prisoners returned to prison within three years versus the national average of 43.3%;

WHEREAS, because budgets cuts have eliminated services and educational programs that would prepare inmates for their reentry to society;

WHEREAS, Lutheran Advocacy connects faith with public life, endeavors to further God's work in our world by advancing the common good, and represents a valuable tool to members of the ELCA as we do advocacy;

WHEREAS, the Social Statement on The Church and Criminal Justice: Hearing the Cries was adopted in 2013 at the 13th biennial Churchwide Assembly and gives direction for action; therefore be it

RESOLVED, that congregations be encouraged to read and study the Social Statement; and be it further

RESOLVED, that congregations and members discuss how they might serve those involved in the Criminal Justice system, whether offenders or victims; and be it further

RESOLVED, that congregations become acquainted with the criminal justice ministries provided by LSSA; and be it further

RESOLVED, that members of congregations be encouraged to join Lutheran Advocacy in order to engage in this ministry more effectively; and be if further

RESOLVED, that members of congregations encourage their lawmakers to support criminal justice legislation that focuses on the restoration of offenders to society and to oppose punitive measures that make it difficult for offenders to make successful returns to society.

The Resolution calls for the following implementing actions:

1. To call upon members of this church through steadfast prayer, discernment, Christian education, ministry efforts and public action to share the gospel of God's love in Jesus Christ as they hear the cries, offer hospitality, accompany and advocate on behalf of those whose lives are caught up in or committed in service to the criminal justice system;
2. To call upon members, congregations, synods, social ministry organizations and churchwide ministries to advocate intentionally and creatively for system reform consistent with the principles and recommendations set forth in this social statement;
3. To encourage ELCA congregations to work with victims, victim advocates and victim support organizations, to grow in sensitivity and response to the harm caused by crime, and to grow in awareness of restorative justice practices;
4. To encourage ELCA congregations to become intentional sites of ministry and action for the incarcerated and their families, possibly in ecumenical collaboration, and with special attention to re-entry ministries and to preferential hiring for ex-offenders, as appropriate.

Fair Wage Resolution 2015

WHEREAS the Upstate New York Synod the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America has in the past and continues to maintain a sustained commitment to bearing witness to the Gospel of Jesus Christ regarding social as well as individual brokenness; and

WHEREAS the witness of Holy Scripture in both the Old and New Testaments commands worshippers of Israel's God to practice justice and equity in the treatment and payment of laborers (Deut. 24:15); whereas in proclaiming the Kingdom of God in parables, Jesus used the transformation of the economic realities of unfair wage distribution to illustrate the unsettling effects of its coming into our midst (Matthew 20.1- 16); and

WHEREAS the Lutheran theological tradition, following Martin Luther's teaching of the priesthood of all believers, teaches the dignity of every human vocation as a potential place for exercising baptismal ministry (see Tyler Atkinson on Ecclesiastes); (Deut.24:15, etc); and

WHEREAS we as the church in this place are confronted with a kairos moment, in which fast food workers and those organizing them have asked us to amplify the voices of those who seek help in climbing out of poverty by petitioning the Governor of the state and corporations therein to pay a livable wage; Therefore, following in the footsteps of our Synod's mission statement, we the Upstate NY Synod of the ELCA hereby resolve to:

PRAY FIRST: commit ourselves as a synod, in our respective conferences, and in our congregations, to offer prayers on behalf of both the workers, their employers and the government, asking God to provide wisdom for a just and peaceful response to the request for a livable wage;

WALK TOGETHER: commit to discerning, as a synod, within our conferences, and in our individual congregations, to prayerfully examining our own patterns of consumption; to seek out and patronize whenever possible those businesses that do pay their workers livable wages; and to identify and listen to members of our communities who, as employees of the fast food industry, have stories to tell about their struggles and their hopes and needs;

CHANGE LIVES: submit the attached letter to NY Governor Andrew Cuomo and to the Wage Boards being convened across the state, urging them to listen to the voices of the workers, and to advocate for a livable wage of \$15/hour for all employees of the fast food industry; and, where deemed appropriate by congregations, to attend local Wage Board hearings, rallies in support of workers, or other acts of accompaniment and solidarity.

Letter from the Upstate New York SYNOD Bishop Macholz

June 22, 2015

Governor Andrew Cuomo
State Capitol
Albany, New York 14224

Dear Governor Cuomo,

Greetings of grace and peace on behalf of the 176 congregations and over 60,500 baptized members of the Upstate New York Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. It has been our honor and privilege to share in the labor, in our respective spheres of leadership, to create a society where human life and potential can flourish. Thank you in advance for all that your administration has done for the people of New York.

As a “resurrection people who pray first, walk together and change lives,” we Lutherans believe that the Good News of God’s work of bringing about a new creation touches and transforms every aspect of human life. In particular, the founder of our theological tradition, Martin Luther, elevated human work and labor in all its vocational forms as places where persons might exercise the ministry of serving one another in love in the midst of every day life. Work thus carries with it great potential for the realization of human dignity and creativity.

It is in light of this conviction of the dignity of human work, and of Holy Scripture’s constant calling for fairness and justice for those engaged in it, that we write to you requesting that you support a fair and living wage of \$15/hour for those employed by the fast food industry in New York State. We share a conviction that poverty is a grave social condition that requires the combined efforts of church and state to eradicate. By providing these workers with a fair and livable wage, we not only provide a helping hand to those choosing the road of employment in their escape from poverty; we also dignify that work, enabling others to feel hope in the possibility of following in their footsteps.

As you continue to convene Wage Board meetings across New York State in the next few months, we are committed to praying for you and all those charged with discernment and decision making in this process. Thank you, not only on our behalf, but on behalf of our fellow citizens and Christians working in the fast food industry, for your careful consideration and for your decisive action on their behalf.

In the name of Jesus,

Bishop John Stanley Macholz

JSM/kmn

Attachment

cc/e-mail: Synod Council
Rev. Matthew Nickoloff, mnickolo@gmail.com

Monthly Serving Schedule for July 2015

Date	07/05	07/12	07/19	07/26
St. Matthew's Chapel				
Acolyte	Barb Cousineau	Pam Kosubar-Jarvis	John Jarvis	Karl Graulich
Reader	Joan Jozifek	Helen Roberts	Jean Bakkom	Pam Kosubar-Jarvis
Greeter	Omer Cousineau	Jean Bakkom	Pam Kosubar-Jarvis	Barb Cousineau
Usher	Suzanne Collins	Barb Cousineau	Tom Collins	Suzanne Graulich
Communion Assistant	Pam Kosubar-Jarvis	John Jarvis	Barb Cousineau	Allen Graulich
Bell Ringer	Barb Cousineau	Pam Kosubar-Jarvis	John Jarvis	Karl Graulich
Zion Lutheran Church				
Acolyte	Emma Litzner	Isabella Philipp	Emma Litzner	Isabella Philipp
Reader	Sandy Deems	Rich Churchill	Eilene Fisher	Carol McGuire
Greeter	Brian Swanhall	Leon Beaver	Judith Warner	Teddy Beaver
Usher	Eilene Fisher	Henry Mau	Jeff Markley	Brian Swanhall
Communion Assistant	Vern Hall	Vern Hall	Vern Hall	Vern Hall
Tray	Isabella Philipp	Emma Litzner	Isabella Philipp	Emma Litzner
Empty Tray	Ava Philipp	Charlotte Litzner	Gabriel Litzner	Ava Philipp
Bell Ringer	Charlotte Litzner	Gabriel Litzner	Ava Philipp	Charlotte Litzner
Elevator	Jeff Markley	Eilene Fisher	Henry Mau	Jeff Markley

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

July 2015

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1 Lifetree Café 6:00 at Pizza Shack	2	3 Office Closed Pastor's Sabbath Day	4 Independence Day 
5 WORSHIP St. Mat's Svc. 9:00 Zion Svc. 11:00 Choir Practice 10:15	6 Summer Lunch Program 11—1 Workforce 1:15—4 Finance Cmtee 6:30	7 Stephen Ministry 8:30 Summer Lunch Program 11—1 Workforce 1:15—4 Ministry Board 7:00	8 Summer Lunch Program 11—1 Workforce 1:15—4 Lifetree Café 6:00 at Pizza Shack	9 Bible Study 10:30 Summer Lunch Program 11—1 Workforce 1:15—4	10 Pastor's Sabbath Day Summer Lunch Program 11—1 Workforce 1:15—4	11
12 WORSHIP St. Mat's Svc. 9:00 Zion Svc. 11:00 Council Meeting 12:15	13 Summer Lunch Program 11—1	14 Stephen Ministry 8:30 Summer Lunch Program 11—1	15 Summer Lunch Program 11—1 Lifetree Café 6:00 at Pizza Shack	16 Bible Study 10:30 Summer Lunch Program 11—1 Photo Club 7:00	17 Pastor's Sabbath Day Summer Lunch Program 11—1	18
19 WORSHIP St. Mat's Svc. 9:00 Zion Svc. 11:00 Choir Practice 10:15	20 Summer Lunch Program 11—1	21 Stephen Ministry 8:30 Summer Lunch Program 11—1	22 Summer Lunch Program 11—1 Lifetree Café 6:00 at Pizza Shack Historical Society 7:00	23 Bible Study 10:30 Summer Lunch Program 11—1	24 Pastor's Sabbath Day Summer Lunch Program 11—1	25 Food Pantry & Parson's Closet 9—12
26 WORSHIP St. Mat's Svc. 9:00 Zion Svc. 11:00	27 Summer Lunch Program 11—1	28 Stephen Ministry 8:30 Summer Lunch Program 11—1	29 Summer Lunch Program 11—1 Lifetree Café 6:00 at Pizza Shack	30 Bible Study 10:30 Summer Lunch Program 11—1	31 Pastor's Sabbath Day Summer Lunch Program 11—1	August 1

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

St. Matthew's Ministry

There were many topics discussed at the June 9 Ministry Board meeting, including the successful May chicken BBQ, John Monser's painting of the exterior of the Chapel, the phone that gets the Chapel up to code, Fathers' Day food, Karl Graulich's Confirmation and a combined service at Zion in September. Coming events at the Chapel include our annual ice cream social, to be held later in the summer, and the planting of flowers in front of the church. Those flowers will come from Jean Bakkom's garden.

In service to Christ and His Church,
John Jarvis, MB secretary



**Good Luck Litzner family
competing in the
National TaeKwonDo
Championships! You are
already winners in our
book!!**