

# ZION LIFE NEWSLETTER

Volume 2, Issue 6

June 2013

## *Special Points of Interest:*

- **Bible Study,**  
Thursday mornings,  
10:30 am
- **Ministry Board,**  
June 4, 7:00 pm
- **Worship Cmte.,**  
June 6, 7:00 pm
- **W.E.L.C.A.,** June 8,  
10:30 am
- **Finance Cmte.,**  
June 10, 6:30 pm
- **Parson's Closet,**  
June 11 & 25, 10—1
- **Council Meeting,**  
June 13, 7:00 pm
- **Bold Café,** June 15,  
9:00 am @ Coby's Café
- **Fundraiser Night,**  
June 21, 5-7:30 pm
- **Food Pantry &  
Parson's Closet,**  
June 29, 9:00—12 pm

## *Inside this issue:*

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## From the Pastor's Desk

Last week I spent 5 days in Nashville, TN on study leave. First of all, I want to thank you for the opportunity to participate in the Festival of Homiletics. It was a wonderful time where we struggled with some extremely difficult questions about church, God, and ourselves.

Jonathan and I listened to a wide variety of preachers and professors, and many experts. They explained the state of the world around us - religiously speaking. They spoke about the cultural view of young and old toward the church and religion in general. Things were laid out honestly, and I am afraid fairly. It is clear that wider culture looks at the church with great disdain. I had to wrestle with the questions, if ours is a God of love, grace, mercy first, and forgiveness then why do "they" hate us so much? Why do so many people want nothing to do with

the church? Why do people think I am crazy for working in the church, let alone going to church? This rejection, at times felt like a personal rejection of me. A judgment against me. After all, there was a time when everyone went to church, and it was assumed that everyone knew who Jesus was. At



one time it was assumed good, but that is no longer the case. What went wrong?

It was the lecture with Brian McLaren that helped me see how people are thinking, but also why. While he laid out his thesis it dawned on me. It is not about me, or even us "Lutherans," or "Methodists," or

"Baptists," or name any group. Although these distinctions mean something to many of us (or at least some) at Zion and St Matthew's, they mean nothing to the people in our community.

What do I mean? As Brian McLaren says in his book, Why Did Jesus, Moses, the Buddha, and Muhammad Cross the Road,

*"so what happens when an Evangelical/Pentecostal pastor in Florida burns a Quran? Or when a famous Christian televangelist describes the tragic Haitian earthquake as God's punishment for Haitian sins? Or when a bizarre Baptist sect sends still more protesters to yet another military funeral holding up the same old "God hates fags" signs? Or when a hyper-Calvinist radio preacher predicts the world will end on May 21, 2011, and then on May 22 offers a fallback date in October, which passes*

## From the Pastor's Desk continued

*uneventfully as well? Or when some officials in the Catholic church secretly protect pedophile priests while refusing to consider ordaining married men or even celibate women?*

*You feel symptoms of CRIS [Conflicted Religious Identity Syndrome] twitching on your face, rumbling in your gut, and aching in your lower back. You think "give me some adjectives, quick, so I won't be identified with "that kind" of Christian".*

The problem is that our culture does not distinguish between "kinds" of Christians. So, though we see the "Evangelical/Pentecostal" in the description of the Pastor, and distinguish them from us, the world does not. They only hear Christian - in much the same way that we only hear Muslim, Jew, or Buddhist (even though there are many different kinds of Muslims, Jews, and Buddhists). We no longer live in a world that understands the distinction in that way.

Sadly, this distinction is only magnified when the people of the church look for church leaders who will simply tell them who to

hate. Matters are helped even less when the vast majority of people that come to church come to hear about or affirm who it is they should hate, or be angry at, in the name of Jesus. This is what so many people in our culture, who are outside the church, have come to expect of the Christianity and the church. It is no wonder that people like Anne Rice have decided to leave organized religion and instead follow Jesus. But what would happen, if instead of going through the day looking for what others do wrong or looking for something to report, we went through the day looking for a way to be a blessing or to just bless others? What would happen if you prayed a blessing for all the people you were upset with? Of course there is the possibility of blessing those sitting with and around you as you waited for your food in the restaurant. No, I am not talking about standing up and yelling at the top of your lungs. I am talking about simply saying a word of blessing, even to yourself for the people you encounter throughout the day.

Perhaps if we took more time to focus on what Jesus taught the world would look at Christianity differently:

**3" Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.**

**4" Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.**

**5" Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth.**

**6" Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.**

**7" Blessed are the merciful, for they will receive mercy.**

**8" Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.**

**9" Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.**

**10" Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.**

**11" Blessed are you when people revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account 12 Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.**



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## God-Driven Moments

One early spring day over a year ago, I walked by the Zion parsonage, where both Pastor Litzners were sitting on the porch. Since the two pastors had not yet been here six months and since I didn't really know them very well, I should have stopped to chat with them. However, "something" told me not to stop but to keep going to my destination, the local post office. When I got there, I ran into an old friend who really needed someone to talk to, even in a very busy public place. I became a shoulder for her to lean on as she was going through a tough time in her personal life. For her I was in the right place at the right time. Had I stopped to talk to the Litzners for even five minutes, I would not have been at the post office at the right time to listen to my friend. As I walked home later, I knew that the "something" that told me not to stop at the parsonage was God. Non-believers would say that my

being in the post office when my old friend was there was just a "coincidence," but I don't believe in "coincidence." I know that God acts in our lives every day, mostly and usually in small, seemingly unimportant ways. Two days after the May 5 CROP Walk, I had another "God-inspired" moment after I had delivered a CROP Walk thank you to the pastor at Cobleskill United Methodist Church. As I left the building, I noticed two people working in the soil around some trees and bushes near the wall of the sanctuary. When the woman heard the church door slam as I left the building, she turned, looked at me and said, "John, come here! This is my brother Tim. You were one of his teachers in high school." Tim and I shook hands and talked for a few minutes. I learned that he is now a professor at the University of Georgia, which uses a bulldog as its mascot, just as Cobleskill-Richmondville Central School does.

I told Tim that in my Dodge Caravan I have a University of Georgia foam cup holder, which I had bought years ago at a Zion trash and treasure sale. We both agreed that my having a cup holder from Tim's university was an amazing fact. I believe that God had me deliver that thank-you note to Pastor Pam Mikel Hayes at that time on that particular day so that I could connect with a former student of mine who graduated from Coby High in 1972, over forty years ago. Had I delivered that thank-you note to Pastor Pam on a different day, I probably would not have seen and spoken to Tim. On that Tuesday morning, I was clearly in the right place at the right time. Our lives are full of such "God-inspired" moments when amazing, almost unbelievable things happen. We just have to look for them. God is with us all the time. Sometimes He lets us know in subtle ways.

## Zion's Food Pantry

On Saturday, April 27, 2013 our Food Pantry served 41 households (98 individuals). Four households were present for the first time.

This month, we kept the red doors locked until 8:45 am to give volunteers a chance to organize and to say a prayer before we began. Volunteers entered by the side door. Thanks be to God for the ten volunteers that served. Our next Pantry Day will be May 25, 2013 and we will need volunteers to fill in for those who will be away. Our pick-up date for the Regional Food Bank will be May 15th and we will need volunteers to lift heavy boxes. Thanks to St. Matthew's Chapel for their donation of leftover chickens from their barbecue.

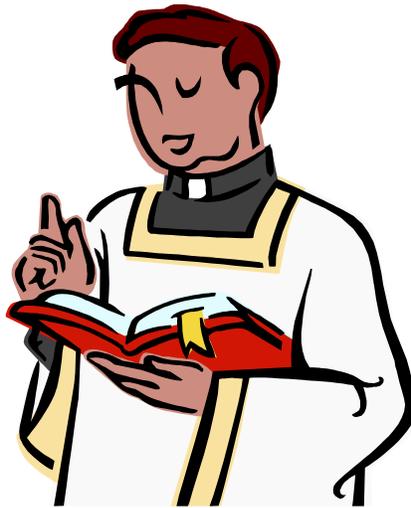
Sandy Deems,  
Food Pantry Coordinator



## From the Council President...

How did we get where we are today? I'm sure many of you have done genealogy to find out where your ancestors came from, what does our family tree look like? My mother did a lot of research on our family tree, back to the Mayflower. At our last Manna and Mercy Bible Study, we watched a DVD on Martin Luther. I have read about Martin Luther, know about 'Reformation Day' when he nailed the 95 Theses on the church door, but this DVD hit home for me. Here was a man that really stood up for what he felt was a disservice to the common person. It started when he saw many, many ordinary poor people buying God's mercy by purchasing indulgences to guarantee the forgiveness of sin. Thesis 86 states: *'Why does the Pope, whose wealth today is greater than the wealth of the richest Crassus, build the basilica of St. Peter with the money of poor believers rather than his own money.'* [Wikipedia] He truly believed in God's Grace. We could see the pain and struggle he went through to stand up for what he believed in. He never wanted to leave the Catholic Church, he just questioned the teaching and practices of the Catholic leaders. We Lutherans not only have Jesus Christ as our savior, we have Martin Luther who under-

stood the teachings of Jesus and stood up for those who couldn't or didn't know the true word. He translated the Bible so we today have our own bible and can read God's word. It reminded me of Jesus going into the temple and turning over the tables. When I read my bible the next morning, I said a prayer of thanks to Martin Luther for giving me the oppor-



tunity to have my own Bible, read it and listen to God's word through Jesus, and all the disciples that followed. I also realized that Lutherans were born from Change. It was a hard decision for Martin Luther, he really struggled, but when he stopped and listened to God, he knew change was necessary to bring us, you and me,

back to what God wanted us to believe, God's Grace.

I've only been a Lutheran for 45 years, never went through confirmation or learning the Luther's small catechism. Manna and Mercy bible study has really taught me what it is to be a Lutheran Christian. If you would like to see the DVD, contact Pastor Sara to borrow it. Also, Daniel Erlander's [Baptized, We Live; Lutheranism As A Way Of Life](#) is an excellent book to learn more about our Lutheran beliefs.

I know we are all dealing with change, change in our families, work place, community and our church. I'm not saying we need to change for the sake of changing. What I have learned and still learning, is I need to listen to God for direction. [Prayer is the answer.](#) We all need to pray every day, asking God to open our heart and minds to see the correct direction. Martin Luther was very intense with his praying, we just need to give God 5 to 10 minutes a day. Is that too much to ask?

Judith Warner

Council President

PS: I was thinking...what if Martin Luther's last name was 'Warner, Tator, Fisher, Wilson', just saying....We could be Tatorans, LOL

## Events Committee

The Events Committee hosted Taco Night on May 17 and served 30-40 people. We were happy to welcome Zion/St. Matt's members as well as people from the community. We would also like to take this opportunity to thank all those who donated food as well as those who helped with cooking, serving, and clean-up. The committee is busy brainstorming ideas for our next fundraiser, which we plan to host on Friday, June 21 from 5-7:30. Stay tuned for more details in the upcoming weeks.



## W.E.L.C.A. Circle News

At Spring Assembly, Dianne Klafehn presented a program about Cherish our Children.

**Cherish Our Children** is a national community of Lutherans dedicated to preventing the sexual exploitation of children through prayer, education, relationship-building, and action.

[www.cherishchildren.org](http://www.cherishchildren.org).

The Women of the ELCA of the Upstate New York Synod boldly chose to make this ministry the focus of their Family Mission in 2008. Women across the Synod work together, encourage and support one another in this calling with the help of National Director Amy Hartman.

The heart of Cherish Our Children is the bold people who pray, speak out, and act on behalf of children in the congregation and community. We will continue to grow with God's loving hand to guide us.

Some ideas we might use at Zion:

- Promote and make *Little Dresses for Africa* which help prevent children (both boys and girls) from being abducted.
- Introduce a Bear and Blanket/Comfort Cuddles Program where knitted/crocheted prayer blankets and stuffed teddy bears and other animals are given to hospitals, police stations, etc. to comfort child victims of trauma.
- Form a prayer chain for children.
- Pray for 2-3 children by name each Sunday.
- Pray for a child on the baptismal birthday.



Our W.E.L.C.A. group is currently working on a quilt to enter in the Fair. At our next meeting on June 8, we hope to tie it off.

Sandy Deems,  
W.E.L.C.A. Leader

## Personal Care Kits

When LWR distributes Personal Care Kits, it's often to people who have lost everything. In the wake of an earthquake, or having fled from violence as their homes were overtaken, they clasp a towel from a faraway place, with a bar of soap, a toothbrush...and washing up, they know that they have not been forsaken by the world.

The very simple gesture of giving a Personal Care Kit can give someone the encouragement to start anew, starting with a bath. **YOU CAN SHARE GOD'S GRACE AND LOVE BY PROVIDING THAT SIMPLE COMFORT.**

What to Include: Please do not add other items or leave out any of the items listed. All items should be new and in good condition. Do not enclose the Kit or any of its contents in plastic bags.

- ◆ One light-weight bath size towel between 20"X40" and 52"X27", dark color recommended
- ◆ One sturdy comb, remove packaging
- ◆ One metal nail clippers—attached file optional, remove packaging
- ◆ Two bath-size bars of soap—4 to 5 oz.—in original wrapping
- ◆ One adult-size toothbrush in original packaging—multi-packs may be used by sealing an individual toothbrush in a business-size envelope; no plastic bags or wrap.



**WRAP ALL THE ITEMS IN THE TOWEL AND TIE SECURELY  
WITH RIBBONS OR YARN**



## St. Matthew's Matters

The Ministry Board at St. Matthew's Chapel, hereafter referred to as the "MB," began its monthly meeting on May 7, 2013 at 7:03 pm. Eight members attended. The meeting began with a discussion of an excerpt from Isaiah 40. Among the topics discussed were the following:

- which setting to use during worship
- the possibility of a tone chimes choir at the Chapel
- the possibility of a September outdoor service at the Chapel, with a BBQ to follow, with a menu of burgers, dogs, beverages and dessert--all provided by the Chapel
- wearing red on the day of Pentecost
- planting red flowers in our garden on that day
- cancelling the traditional Mother's Day brunch and moving it to the Day of Pentecost
- providing special cups, napkins and plates for the June 19 SSCS baccalaureate
- donating \$300 from the recent chicken BBQ to SALT's Unmet Needs fund
- donating all unsold chicken from the BBQ to the Zion food pantry
- Barbecue 2014 topics: tents up? halves grilled on site? halves grilled by Rex?
- postponing the 2014 BBQ till 2015?
- participating in the Sharon Springs Memorial Day parade in free tee shirts from Team Red, White and Blue
- possibility of making or buying two banners for that parade
- finding a person to do the Chapel's serving schedules after Jackie moves away
- Pastor Sara being away for a week for pastoral education
- Taco Night on May 17

The monthly meeting ended at 8:17 with the Lord's Prayer.

John Jarvis,  
Ministry Board secretary



*ELCA World Hunger would like to thank Zion for the recent gift of \$80. To neighbors near and far who live with hunger and poverty, gifts like yours bring not only help, but hope. Thank you. Your gift brings us another step closer to ending hunger in our world.*

## Worship Committee

Now that we are in the longest season of the year, Pentecost, we will be using Setting 10 in the ELW for our liturgy. Setting 10 consists of using familiar hymns for the various sections of the liturgical music. We have used this before and folks have commented they liked the opportunity to sing different hymns during liturgy. We expect to use this setting through summer.

Thanks to all who brought red plants to decorate the sanctuary at both church sites on Pentecost Sunday May 19. The plants have been placed in the ground around each church.

Janice Ashford has agreed to be the person to schedule worship service participants at Zion. If you are scheduled and cannot fulfill your duties on a given Sunday, we ask that you please find your own replacement. If you are interested in becoming a server, let Janice know, we will be happy to have

you come on board and provide any necessary training.

Thanks goes to Beverly Stoughton, Rose Swanhall, Camille Grace, and Pastor Sara who have helped with the music at Zion while our organist Carol McGuire recuperates from surgery.

On September 8 we are planning an outdoor worship service which will include our summer picnic. We will gather at St. Matthew's for a 10 AM service. This will be the only service for the day so please mark your calendar now. More details will follow. We hope to see you at the picnic.

Respectfully submitted,

Bob Holt  
Worship Committee Chair



## CROP Walk A Good Event for Local Lutherans



On May 5, eleven churches participated in the second Schoharie County Aggie Scott Memorial CROP Walk. Although only two of those churches were Lutheran, those two did very well on that beautiful, sunny May afternoon.

Each year the Golden Sneaker goes to the church or group that

turns in the most money on CROP Walk Sunday. This year, the Golden Sneaker went to Helderberg Evangelical Lutheran Church of Berne, which turned in \$1,412. That amount was 20.5% of all the money turned in that day. Helderberg Evangelical also earned a certificate for being the church with the second-largest number of walkers.

John Jarvis of Zion earned a certificate for turning in the second largest amount of money, \$553, most of which came from Zion and some more from St. Matthew's. John wants to thank the sixteen people who gave him money for the hunger walk.

As usual, Zion served as a rest area for CROP Walkers. Mrs. Liz Tessarik, who runs the food pantry at Catholic Charities, supervised the rest area with her 11-year-old daughter. On CROP Walk Sunday 2013, 93 participants turned in \$6884.97. A quarter of that money will go to the food pantries at Cobleskill United Methodist Church and Catholic Charities of Schoharie County. Zion will host the 2014 CROP Walk.

John Jarvis,  
Arrangements Committee,  
Schoharie County Aggie Scott  
Memorial CROP Walk

### Thank You!

*On behalf of our entire family we would like to say thank you to the entire Zion congregation for your thoughts and prayers, cards, phone calls and for the beautiful floral arrangement for the funeral of our wife, mother, grandmother and sister Patricia J. (Mamrosch) Holt. Thank you also to Janice Ashford, Lisa Borggreen, Camille Grace and Pastor Sara for helping with the luncheon after the funeral. Your kindness is very much appreciated by all of us as Pat has entered the Kingdom Triumphant. May God Bless You All. Milton, Bob, Chris, Jennifer, David Holt; Sandy & Martha Mamrosch.*

### Parson's Closet

The Parson's Closet makeover is complete. My sincere appreciation goes to Adrienne Madison who provided the paint, purchased fabric, and made the curtains. I also want to express my gratitude to Eilene Fisher and her painting crew and to André for the clothing rods.

Thank you all for the bright and cheerful room!

Janice Ashford,  
Parson's Closet Coordinator



**Thank You to the Zion Congregation for allowing the CROP Walk the use of the building as a rest area during the Walk.**



## Serving Schedule for June and July

### St. Matthew's Chapel

Date	06/02	06/09	06/16	06/23	06/30	07/07	07/14	07/21	07/28
<b>Acolyte</b>	Seth Keller	Allen Graulich	Karl Graulich	Seth Keller	Karl Graulich	Emma Litzner	Karl Graulich	Seth Keller	Allen Graulich
<b>Reader</b>	Tom Collins	Janet Lynk	Barb Cousineau	Pam Kostbar-jarvis	Tom Collins	Pam Kostbar-jarvis	Suzanne Graulich	Joan Jozitek	Jean Bakkom
<b>Greeter</b>	Pam Kostbar-jarvis	Dawn Thompson	Janet Lynk	Jean Bakkom	Barb Cousineau	Dawn Thompson	Janet Lynk	Jean Bakkom	Barb Cousineau
<b>Ushers</b>	Lara & Allen Graulich	Barb Cousineau & Jean Bakkom	Pam Kostbar-jarvis & John Jarvis	Dawn Thompson & Janet Lynk	Courtney & Robert Keller	Tom & Suzanne Collins	Omer & Barb Cousineau	Pam Kostbar-jarvis & John Jarvis	Janet Lynk
<b>Communion Assistant</b>	Pam Kostbar-jarvis	Barb Cousineau	Lara Graulich	John Jarvis	Barb Cousineau	Barb Cousineau	Lara Graulich	Pam Kostbar-jarvis	John Jarvis
<b>Bell Ringer</b>	Seth Keller	Allen Graulich	Karl Graulich	Seth Keller	Karl Graulich	Emma Litzner	Karl Graulich	Seth Keller	Allen Graulich

### Zion Lutheran Church

<b>Acolyte</b>	Judith Warner	Eilene Fisher	Rich Churchill	Eilene Fisher	Christina Keller	Judith Warner	Rich Churchill	Eilene Fisher	Rich Churchill	
<b>Reader</b>	Karen Scott	Rose Swanhall	Frieda Thorington	Margaret Angle	Janice Ashford	Rich Churchill	Sandy Deems	Camille Grace	Eilene Fisher	
<b>Greeter</b>	Eilene Fisher	Janice Ashford	Helen Mackey	Brian Swanhall	Judith Warner	Eilene Fisher	Janice Ashford	Helen Mackey	Rose Swanhall	
<b>Usher</b>	Rose Swanhall	Deb Nadeau	Lisa Borggreen	Judith Warner	Janice Ashford	Brian Swanhall	Deb Nadeau	André Nadeau	Lisa Borggreen	
<b>Communion Assistant</b>	Janice Ashford	André Nadeau	Bob Holt	Judith Warner	Eilene Fisher	Henry Mau	Janice Ashford	Bob Holt	Judith Warner	
<b>Elevator</b>	Ed Eldredge	Everett Merrill	Eilene Fisher	Henry Mau	Ed Eldredge	Everett Merrill	Eilene Fisher	Henry Mau	Ed Eldredge	
<b>Altar Guild</b>	Sandy Deems					Eilene Fishers				

**Zion Lutheran Church 615 E. Main Street, Cobleskill, NY 12043    518-234-3381**  
[www.zion-coby.org](http://www.zion-coby.org)

**June 2013**

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1 Property Cmte, 12:00
2 St. Matt's Service 9:00 am Zion Service 11:00 am	3 Pastor's Sabbath Day	4	5	6 Bible Study 10:30 am	7	8 W.E.L.C.A. 10:30 am
Backstreet Recital 2-7p	Boy Scouts 7-- 8:30 pm	11 Ministry Board 7:00 p		13 Worship Cmte. 7:00 p		
9 St. Matt's Service 9:00 am Zion Service 11:00 am	10 Pastor's Sabbath Day	Parson's Closet 10—1	12	13 Bible Study 10:30 am	14	15 Bold Café 9:00 am @ Coby's
	Finance Cmte, 6:30 p Boy Scouts 7-- 8:30 pm			Council Meeting 7:00 Photo Club 7:00 pm		
16 Father's Day St. Matt's Service 9:00 am Zion Service 11:00 am	17 Pastor's Sabbath Day	18	19	20 Bible Study 10:30 am	21	22
	Boy Scouts 7-- 8:30 pm		Baccalaureate 6:30pm @ St. Matt's Historical Society 7:00			
23 St. Matt's Svc. 9:00am Zion Svc. 11:00 am	24 Pastor's Sabbath Day	25 Parson's Closet 10—1	26	27 Bible Study 10:30 am	28	29 Food Pantry & Parson's Closet 9—12
30 St. Matt's Svc. 9:00am Zion Svc. 11:00 am				Photo Club 7:00 pm		

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

**Food Pantry Schedule  
June—December 2013**



**Saturday, June 29, 9—12 pm  
Saturday, July 27, 9—12 pm  
Saturday, Aug. 24, 9—12 pm  
Saturday, Sept. 21, 9—12 pm  
Saturday, Oct. 26, 9—12 pm  
Saturday, Nov. 23, 9—12 pm  
Saturday, Dec. 21, 9—12 pm**

