

Zion News

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The church in the heart of Penn Hills that is the heart of Penn Hills

August 2022



Pastor's Page

“First of all, then, I urge that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for everyone, for kings and all who are in high positions, so that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and dignity.” 1 Timothy 2:1-2

Politics is a broken, messy business. Early Christians were viewed as threats to the Roman Empire, because they would not worship the state gods of those around them. Many governments today still view Christians as dangerous for these same reasons. If Christ is our one true God, then the powers and authorities of this world cannot hold our ultimate allegiance. And that can be dangerous.

St Paul, himself a Roman citizen, wrote to assure The Powers That Be that Christians were in fact far from disloyal. On the contrary, pious Christians made the best of citizens. We obey civil laws, pay our taxes, care for the needy, and strive to uphold justice and good order. Paul and other early Christians argued that our loyalty to God did not dissuade us from doing our civic duties. From the beginning, Christians have viewed politics as a good, as a way to love and serve God by loving and serving our neighbor.

As you may have noticed, this is a midterm election year, and as the saying goes, “elections have consequences.” There are, I imagine, a great deal of political postings on social media. Posting about politics is not necessarily a bad thing, provided that we can do so respectfully. We have every right to express our opinions, especially on the matters that most directly impact us.

But—and this is putting things bluntly—nobody cares what we post on Facebook, Twitter, or any other way in which you communicate with the outside world. I’m not trying to be crass; I’m trying to offer a helpful alternative. Most folks have their political minds made up. We can engage in constructive dialogue, one hopes, but for the most part any political statements will resound from our already established echo chambers. (If we were to be totally honest, Christian social teaching contains plenty to scandalize both the Right and the Left.) Yet, I do know people who honestly want to hear our political opinions, and who, more importantly, are in a position to actually do something about them.

When I served in my first call in Montana, I served on the board of the Montana Association of Christians, which strives to be a voice for the voiceless in the halls of power, in particular in Helena (MT’s capital) but also in DC. So, take it from me: your representatives want to hear from you. Very few of their constituents ever bother to contact them, and so they are left to chase after inaccurate polls and party lines for guidance.

Every letter they receive—and I do mean a physical letter, not an e-mail—is assumed to speak for 100 others of the same opinion who never bothered to write. (As an aside, you can find the contact information for your U.S. Senators and House Representative at whoismyrepresentative.com). Of course, our government doesn’t have to share our faith in order to be good and honest. (Most of our Founding Fathers were Deists, but I digress...)

However, as we recite in the Apostles Creed, good government is a blessing from God. And in a representative democracy, we are called to participate and contribute as part of it. And, if sin didn’t exist in the world, then there would be no need for government. But in this broken world, we are stronger when we work together. Pray for our leaders. Be a voice for the voiceless. And go out with good courage, helping our representatives help those most in need.

Peace, Pastor Martha

Pastoral Care: If you know of anyone who is in the hospital or would like a visit and communion, please contact Pastor Martha at: 406-565-3592 or the Church office: 412-242-2626.

Deacon's Desk

I was in Target the other day, and yes the school supplies were out, and I know I'm that weird person who actually gets excited about such things. (Christmas ornaments are already in the Hallmark store and that depresses me.) And I know that most feel like summer just flies by, and is too short. Summer has been our period of rest, a time to slow down, plus it's too dang hot to move sometimes. Those lazy days by bodies of water and quality down time with family and friends are valuable to our physical and emotional health. The joys of street fairs and farmer's markets, fresh air and dripping ice cream cones, the fresh corn on the cob and spitting watermelon seeds is coming to an end. There is almost a sense of hurry to pour in all the stuff we wish we had squeezed into the hot summer lazy months. But there is something about school supplies that brings my inner-teacher great hope! Hope for all that is new and renewed. Our cycle of fall bringing on the new school and program year, helps us look ahead even though the vegetation only shows us symbols of death and decay. It also brings us an opportunity to see and try new things. I would like to invite you to take those chances on new ideas and activities as we head into fall.



Blessing of the Backpacks: We will have our annual Blessing of the Backpacks, Book bags, Lunch Totes.... whatever you carry to school or work on **Sunday, August 28** during outdoor worship.



Food Pantry

Last month (July) we helped 91 households through the Pantry. Thank you to all who were able to help out during Friday set up and Saturday distribution.

Attention Food Pantry Volunteers, we will hold a meeting on Thursday August 18 at 7 in the community room. At this meeting, we will review what's been working well this last years, what changes we need to make and what challenges we need to address. Come with your thoughts and ideas about moving ahead.



Painting at the Apartment: We are in the home-stretch of getting the apartment ready for rental. We are in need of painters and laborers. We are having a painting day on August 9th from 9am-12pm. **Please let Marc Schuler know if you are interested in helping - 412-738-5709.**

We are also looking for anyone that would be interested in changing light bulbs to LED in the Gathering Space and Community room. Please let Marc Schuler know if you can help. Thank you.

ZION COUNCIL 2022

Pr. Martha Hanssen – President
Kathy Gaberson – Vice President
Lauren Fitzroy – Council Secretary
Tony Lamorte – Financial Secretary
Sue Clydesdale – Stewardship Secretary
Charlotte Murray – Treasurer
Marc Schuler – Property
Ashley Faas
Sue Baumann

Pat Pope
Chris Dippold
Rhonda Pope
Joe Balaban
Jeannette Christensen
Tom Felmley
Mark Mauro
Kathy Conrad

Financial Status as of June 30, 2022



Zion's 2022 Current Expense Budget is \$286,431. For the first time this year, our monthly income exceeded our monthly budget by \$4,109. This is great news! It is due to the \$7,600 income from the Boys & Girls Club for the summer that went into our General Operating Fund that is used to pay our budgeted accounts. Not only do we have more money in the bank, but we have lovely young children gracing our

hallways! The balance in the checking account (the General Operating Fund) is \$46,209 which is much better than last month at \$41,593. Looking at January through June, our total budgeted expenses have exceeded our income by \$10,659, so this month was a real boon. Our income from member donations is still averaging about \$2,500 a month less than what it would take to pay all our bills without the extra income we are getting from the efforts of the Task Force for Generating Income. Please do your part by keeping your Faith Promise and making regular donations to Zion. If you are traveling this summer, please consider making your weekly or monthly donation before you go.



On Thursday July 14th, we hosted our ELCA Global missionaries, Pr Christie and Steve Maniso-Saari for a potluck dinner and presentation of God what is up to at their ministry site, St Andrews Refugee Services (or StArs) in Cairo, Egypt. (Thank you to all who came and provided a dish to share with the Manisto-Saari's – they greatly appreciated the warm hospitality and chance to dine on "good ol' fashioned" church potluck fare.

If you wish to learn more about the ministry in Cairo, you can check out their website, <https://www.stars-egypt.org/>, as well as the booklet of information in the Gathering Space. There were also talks that night about a potential Zion mission trip to Cairo at some point in the next couple of years, so stay tuned for that!



Thomas Child Care and Learning Academy Updates: Since the congregational vote on Sunday July 3rd, steps continue to progress forward towards compiling a lease agreement with TCC & LA. Legal assistance has been retained through Sitko Bruno (thanks to a referral by Lauren Hauser Hearn) with funds

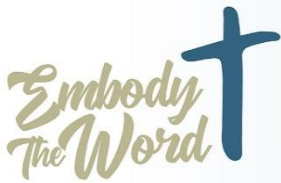
being distributed (per church council's approval) from the Thrivent Choice Fund. These funds will be replenished upon the receipt of the first months' rent. We also recently had our inspection done by the boro with minimal changes needed to be made. If you have further questions, please reach out to members of council and/or members of the income generating task force. Thank you again for your support as we continue to move towards a new partnership between Zion and the TCC&LA.



Anniversary Open House Recap: Great weather, great fellowship, fun games and yummy Rita's ice...makes for an awesome Community Anniversary party.

It was a beautiful summer evening...sunny but with a nice semi-cooling wind as we celebrated on the front lawn with members and friends from our community. It was a nice evening to sit and share memories and updates with fellow members. We met some of our neighbors and treated the campers from the Boys and Girls club to some yummy Rita's ice (the favorite flavor was a mixture of Swedish fish and blue raspberry). Everyone was entertained by the music from our resident DJ, Tom Felmley. The corn-hole competition was fierce...not sure who won but there was lots of loud cheering. Yard Yahtzee and Jenga weren't quite as intense, but the noise as the Jenga tower fell was deafening! The walk in front was adorned with some beautiful and creative chalk work and for those of you young enough to remember, bubbles flowed like a Lawrence Welk show.

Thank you to all who came, and all who helped out. It was a terrific way to celebrate Zion's 75th anniversary with our friends, neighbors and the youngsters using our facility. (General consensus was we should do this every year...so stay tuned!) Here are some pictures from the fun time had by all. Debbie Rall



2022 ELCA
CHURCHWIDE ASSEMBLY
August 8-12, 2022
Columbus, Ohio

ELCA Churchwide Assembly: Every 3 years, voting members representing congregations from each of the 65 synods gather with Churchwide officials for the Churchwide Assembly meeting. This year, the assembly will be held August 8th – 12th in Columbus, OH. (As an aside, Andrew Sabol and Pastor Martha are 2 of the voting reps for Conference 4 of the SWPA synod.) Please keep all voting

delegates in your prayers as they gather to discuss on make decisions as part of the wider church.

Per the ELCA website: The ELCA Churchwide Assembly, the primary decision-making body of the church, is a process of communal spiritual discernment. When the ELCA Churchwide Assembly convenes, its voting members meet with confidence in God's grace around word and water, wine and bread, to carry on their work on behalf of the entire church. Over the course of the assembly, voting members:

- Hear reports and review the work of churchwide officers, leaders and units;
- Receive and consider proposals from synod assemblies;
- Elect officers, board members and other leaders as specified by the constitution or bylaws;
- Establish ELCA churchwide policy;
- Worship together;
- Adopt a budget; and
- Conduct other business related to the ELCA churchwide organization.

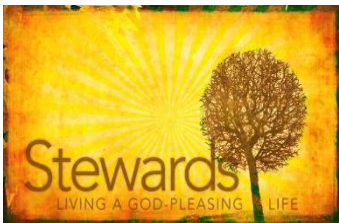
To follow along, check out: <https://www.elca.org/churchwideassembly> to view materials ahead of time and to be directed to live-stream options from the assembly.



Sunday School Brainstorm Session: Are you a parent, grandparent, or caregiver of a Sunday School aged child? (pre K-5th grade)? If so, you are invited to join Deacon Amy and other teachers for a brainstorm session after worship on Sunday August 14th to discuss what Sunday School could look like for the upcoming school year! Please join in and bring your ideas!



Jazz Sunday at Zion: During Outdoor Worship on August 28th, we will hold our annual Jazz Sunday! Join us on the back lawn for worship set to a jazz theme along with guest musicians for our time together! Then, afterwards, stay for a time of picnic and fellowship outside on our back lawn!



WE LIVE OUR LIFE AS STEWARDS

Stewardship is the way that we use all of our resources-ourselves, our time and our possessions to love God and our neighbor.

A Christian steward is obedient

Christian stewards obey God by setting aside a part of all their income for others.

Spiritual meaning of obedience to God

The Christian meaning of obedience is the act of submitting (obeying) to the commands (laws) of God, the highest authority, creator and Father of mankind. If you have faith in God and believe Christianity is true, obedience is the practice of living by faith, obeying the teaching of the Bible.

Bible quotes about obedience

“If you love me, you will keep my commandments.” John 14:15

“As obedient children, do not be conformed to the passion of your former ignorance.” Peter 1:14

“But I do as the Father has commanded me, so the world knows that I love the Father, Rise, let us go from here.” John 14:31



Extra Hymnals: In an attempt to clear out spaces around the church to prepare for future uses of space, we have discovered an overabundance of ELW, LBW and WOV hymnal supplements around the congregation. If you have interest in having any of these at home (or wish to take those with your nameplate or the nameplate of a loved one/friend inside of them), please do so by the end of July. After that time, we will attempt to donate to other congregation(s) and/or remove them from the building. Thank you!

Education for Ministry: How much of the Hebrew Bible have you studied? If you hear Old Testament stories what image or thoughts occur to you? Were they crystallized in childhood Sunday School lessons? How about digging deeper in a one- year survey? We are all called to ministry. You are invited to attend Education for Ministry sponsored locally by Calvary Episcopal Church in Shadyside. We meet Thursday mornings from 9:30-Noon via zoom for 36 weeks. Chris Dippold and Rhonda Pope graduated from all four years of the program. The website is: <https://theology.sewanee.edu/education-for-ministry/>. I have been with the program since 2010. Feel free to contact me for more information. [Diane Santoriello@gmail.com](mailto:Diane.Santoriello@gmail.com)

Newsletter Deadline: Do you have an idea for an article, update on a project, or a photo from a Zion event or a shout-out or thank you? We would love to have it! All articles are due by the 20th of each month. Please send them via e-mail to: julie@zionpennhills.org.



HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO ALL
THE AUGUST BIRTHDAYS!



8/1 Robert Page
8/1 Debbie Welsh
8/6 Evelyn Lam
8/6 Jean Pletcher
8/9 Nancy Fabel
8/10 Pamela Bostwick
8/13 Megan Houghtelin
8/16 Carol Dugan
8/21 Ian Dolney
8/27 Todd Morris
8/30 Gavynn Thompson
8/30 Andrew Sabol

8/2/75 Carl & Casey Haftl
8/6/17 Gabriela & Ben Hershman
8/15/97 Kurt & Stacey Kalkstein
8/24/56 Stan & Maryan Yoder
8/29/15 William & Kelly Stolp
8/30/08 Tristan & Kara Albrecht
8/30/14 Katie & Bryan Kozak