



Vol. 21

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*Come now, let us reason together, says the Lord. Though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red as crimson, they shall be like wool. Isaiah 1:18*

Dear friends in Christ,

How is your walk with God so far? Are you where you ought to be? Are you heading in the right direction? Lent is a time of reflection on our human condition, a time when we examine our lives and see where we stand in our relationship with God. It is a time when we contemplate on what Jesus did for us on the cross. A time when we look ahead with hope to the day of our redemption.

In the past, our church took part in Round Robin during Lent. We enjoyed the opportunity of listening to our area pastors' sermons. This year, we decided to cancel the Lenten Round Robin due to COVID. We have also canceled the Lenten suppers we used to have prior to our worship service. I hope that all these changes won't discourage you from attending our Wednesday evening worship services.

Our Lenten worship service starts with Ash Wednesday on February 17 when we will have the imposition of ashes. Lenten sermon series are often geared toward helping us strengthen our relationship with our Lord. This year's sermon topic for Lent is, "Golf and the Spirit," my favorite subject. Rev Mark Helgeland is our preacher on this subject. Please join us.

Psalm 84:3 says, "Happy are they who dwell in your house! They will always be praising you." Oh what a joy it is to worship the Lord in his temple and live in fellowship with his people.

Pastor Ale

- February 3 – Senior Choir – 7:15
- February 10 – Senior Choir - 7:15
- February 16 – Parish Planning – 7:00
- February 17 – Ash Wednesday – Lenten Worship – 6:30
- February 17 – Senior Choir – 7:15
- February 20 – Articles Due for Newsletter
- February 24 – Lenten Worship – 6:30
- February 24 – Senior Choir – 7:15



- February 28 – Pathways Camp Sunday
- April 4 – Easter Worship



## **President's Message** **Laura Rude**

Greetings Zion Church Family

I trust that you all are enjoying our mild Minnesota winter thus far. We have had some breathtaking frosty scenes and mild temps. God is good, and we have so many things to be grateful for.

February, of course gets us thinking about Valentine's Day and doing something special for the ones we love. I'm reminded of how God's love is unconditional despite our many faults. A Helmut Thielicke quote states it best, "Our greatness rests solely on the fact that God in His incomprehensible goodness has bestowed His love upon us. God does not love us because we are valuable; we are valuable because God loves us." May we find peace in God's absolute love and promises of forgiveness and everlasting life.

I wanted to share with you one exciting project that is in the works- the upgrade of our website! The new format is being worked on along with content. It will give Zion a fresh new look online. If you have any interest in sharing your knowledge of web design or have content to share, please call the church office. More details to come!

At the time of writing this letter, I'm anticipating our upcoming Annual Meeting and the discussions that will take place. Due to COVID we needed to make an adjustment to have quorum and ensure all voices are heard. I'm very encouraged by the phone calls, questions and early returned ballots. Our church family is still active, caring, and faithful to the future of Zion. I'm eager to know the direction we want to take as a church family and together we will continue God's Work with Our Hands.

As we move forward, I ask for your continued prayer and support of the staff, council and the many volunteers that are hard at work to make Zion tick. Getting back to "normal" will be a winding road and the vision on how to get there may not always be clear. Let's keep the conversation ongoing, and together with God's help Zion's future will continue to be a thriving one!

God's Peace~  
Laura Rude



## Worship Together in the Sanctuary

Zion – 8:30 - Silver Creek – 10:00

Wear your favorite mask and follow guidelines.



## Worship Online

If you choose to worship from home, take advantage of the alternatives to in-house worship.

- KTRF radio – 1230 AM at 8:30
- Cable TV – Channel 3 – KTRF
- Log into Zion’s Facebook page – *Zion Lutheran Church – Thief River Falls* - and watch a livestream through Facebook Live.
- Log in to Zion’s webpage – [ziontrf.org](http://ziontrf.org) and listen to the service over the internet.



## Madison Crane

Director of Children, Youth, and Families

Zion and Redeemer Lutheran Churches

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Grace and peace to you, Children of God!

Looking back at the start to this year I see a lot of hope! As I am looking ahead, I see a lot of teamwork. That combination has me filled with optimism. There are a lot of opportunities coming up that we need to have open ears to hear ideas, hands willing to roll up sleeves and do some work, and hearts ready to pray!

I’ve recently read some of Bob Goff’s work about loving all of God’s children and it made sense that building relationships of love begin three minutes at a time. Taking those 3 minutes and consistently connecting with a young person can truly be impactful. Those minutes could be a quick phone call to just check-in how the day is going, a positive conversation with the cashier at the check-out counter or take three minutes to pray for

someone who works with children. What can that relationship turn into after taking three minutes every day to share God's love with someone else? Experts say that it takes twenty-one days to form a new habit. Three minutes for three weeks totals up to be one hour and three minutes total that you could be sharing God's love in little (yet BIG ways!). This month is only twenty-eight days long. Start a new positive habit to share in God's love three minutes at a time, one day at a time. Martin Luther said, "God does not need your good works, but your neighbor does." By loving your neighbor you're also loving God.

Please take care of one another and yourselves.

### **Prayers to lift up:**

- Pathways Bible Camp's search for a program director
- Confirmation leaders and mentors,
- Sunday school teachers and superintendents
- Parents and adults that work with our youth
- All ministry leaders

### **Upcoming Events**

- **February 3** - 6:00 – 8 - 10 grade Confirmation Classes - Zoom
- **February 4 - 8** - Madison attending Extravaganza Retreat
- **February 9** - 5:15 - Christian Ed/Youth Board, - Zoom
- **February 10** - 6:00 - 8 - 10 grade Confirmation Classes - Zoom
- \*Sermon note/Acolyte service count Postcards sent out
- **February 14** – 9:30an - 6 - 7 grade Devotional - Zoom
- **February 17**- Ash Wednesday Worship
- **February 20** – 9:00-11:30 - Youth and Families of Churches Together - at Zion
- **February 24** - Lent worship
- **February 28** – 8:30 - Camp Sunday with Pathways



Upcoming  
EVENTS

## Silver Creek

Silver Creek held its annual meeting on Sunday, January 17, following worship. Thanks was expressed to the staff at Zion for their leadership during this difficult time. Our annual budget for 2021 was approved as submitted. Discussion was held on the possible purchase of a new heating system that would be more cost effective.



Election of officers resulted in the present members returning to serve another term. President: Roger Rupprecht, Vice-President: Mike Torgerson, Secretary: Kristi Housey, Treasurer: Virginia Swanson, Deacons; Clark Nelson, Roger Nelson, and Connie Stock, Trustees: Mark Swanson, Leland Nelson, and Bill Stock. Thank you for your dedication to Silver Creek; we appreciate your leadership.

We are still trying to confirm a date to welcome new members. If you know of someone interested in joining Silver Creek, let one of the officers know so they can get in contact with them. It is exciting to see our congregation grow.

WELCA will not be meeting in person until later in the year. We will continue to carry out our duties of cleaning the church and providing altar flowers. The months will remain the same as last year. A copy of this is posted on the bulletin board as a reminder.

Bev Rupprecht



There is light at the end of the tunnel! We need to remember in this crazy time where our light comes from. We are never alone; we are wrapped in God's Love!

There are a few words that I like to remember on those days that I do not have a peaceful heart or want to make sure I continue in the right mindset.

**Pray:** Anytime, anywhere, quietly or loudly, no format needed as God knows if you connect

**Grateful:** Gratitude helps see what is there instead of what is not there. Give thanks for the little and big parts of life. When we give thanks for everyday things, we make them visible again, instead of taking good things for granted. Research shows gratitude has many health benefits. Each day list at least three things you are grateful for. We all are blessed with Pastor Ale and staff along with members working hard to meet our spiritual needs through the airways and in person, meeting all CDC guidelines keeping everyone safe.

**Patience:** This is huge for many of us! Daylight hours are getting longer. Our winter weather as seen by different people is good/bad. Some are thrilled, or as I sympathize with the opposite that desire more snow to either enjoy their outdoor activities or operate their businesses. Education models? Covid -19 vaccine is on

the way. We are getting some vaccinations completed in the area. More will be coming! All these areas require patience which is challenging for all of us. We can do this because we have someone walking with us on this journey!

What should/can we do? Use the toolbox above and add a little humor. Humor can prime your brain for optimism. Pastor Ale, I bet, has a spare joke in his toolbox to share! Until the community gets vaccinated and guidance changes, please continue to protect yourself, family and neighbors by wearing a mask, washing your hands and practicing social distancing. Your help and compliance is still needed for a while.

May Gods Love be with us all and give us strength to meet the challenges of each day

Vaccine information available: [Minnesota Covid19 Response/Covid19](#)



### Zion Lutheran's Parish Planning Council Minutes January 5, 2021 - Via Zoom

The special meeting of the Parish Planning Council was called to order at 7:06 pm. In attendance were Laura Rude, Tim Numedahl, Barbara Overbye, Dennis Yost, Sharon Jorde, Mike Spears, Teri Forsberg, Glenice Johnson, Darlene Hulteen, Marijo Nabben and Deb Holtan.

Madam President led the council in a word of prayer.

After a very lengthy discussion a motion was made to put on the ballot to vote at the annual meeting for the congregation to say yes or no to putting a call committee together for one pastor. A letter with an explanation will be included with the ballot. The motion was seconded and carried.

The council will meet again in one week on January 12th.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:19 pm following the Lord's Prayer.

Respectfully submitted by  
Deb Holtan, Council Secretary





**Zion Lutheran's Parish Planning Council Minutes  
Via Zoom  
January 12, 2021**

The Parish Planning Council meeting was called to order by President Laura Rude at 7:09 pm.

In attendance were Laura Rude, Pastor Ale Tulu, Tim Numedahl, Madison Crane, Barbara Overbye, Dennis Yost, Sharon Jorde, Darlene Hulteen, Penni Nelson, Teri Forsberg and Deb Holtan.

Pastor Ale led the council in prayer.

The Secretary's report was presented. A motion was made to accept the minutes as presented. The motion was seconded and approved.

Discussion was held on the proposed budget which included the financial report for the month of December. It was decided that the amount for the organist/pianist salary is too low compared to other congregations. A motion was made to increase the fee for the organist/pianist from \$45.00 to \$60.00 per Sunday. The motion was seconded and carried. With the approval of the motion, the organist/pianist salary was increased by \$1,000.00

The Treasurers Report was filed for audit.

Pastor Ale reported that it's Zion's turn to help with delivery of the Meals on Wheels. Koni Johnson is the person to contact if wanting to help. January 6th is Zion's turn to host the area Ministerial Group. Thief River Falls Chief of Police Marissa Adams and Deputy Chief Jaeger Bellows will be guest speakers. Law enforcement wants to be able work with the ministerial group in different situations such as car accidents or a death. The Ministerial Group is making plans for Lent hoping to do the round robin again.

Madison Crane reported she's attended a Recharge Virtual Youth Ministry Event. Extravaganza 2021 is coming up February 4-6th. This is a youth ministry leader retreat. Coming up on February 20<sup>th</sup> there will be a Youth & Family of Churches Together planning session which will be help at Zion. January 24th the "Little Lambs" will get their pins at the 8:30 service having been postponed from September.

Penni Nelson reported that Silver Creek would be holding their annual meeting this coming Sunday January 17th.

Darlene Hulteen reported for Publications Board that the new website is soon ready to go. They are looking for information from each of the boards to put on the website.

The council decided that for now the distancing due to the Covid issue will stay the same. The council will visit this subject again at February's meeting. The letter to the congregation discussed at the special meeting on January 5th along with a ballot will be mailed on January 18, 2021.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:34 pm following the Lord's Prayer.

Respectfully submitted by  
Deb Holtan, Council Secretary

*"By this all men will know  
that you are my disciples,  
if you love one another."  
John 13:35*

*The Lord's Prayer*  
*Our father who art in Heaven,  
hallowed be thy name.  
Thy kingdom come.  
Thy will be done on earth as it is in Heaven.  
Give us this day our daily bread,  
and forgive us our trespasses,  
as we forgive those who trespass against us,  
and lead us not into temptation,  
but deliver us from evil.  
For thine is the kingdom, and the power,  
and the glory, for ever and ever*  
*Amen*

## **Sunday School News**

**Don't Forget!!** Every Sunday Becky and Davina will post a NEW Sunday School video with that week's lesson. The lesson will be up from Sunday through the following Saturday, so families have time to review it as many times as they want! The previous week's lesson does have to be removed prior to us posting a new week's lesson (due to copyright laws) so make sure you watch the video while you can!

Reminder: We have made the decision to continue with online Sunday school for the balance of the 2020/2021 Sunday School year. If you have any questions, please let Becky or Davina know.

Our videos will be shared via a YouTube link on both our [Facebook Page](#) as well as [Remind](#).

Parents – Please make sure you like our Zion Sunday School Facebook Page as this is where all Sunday Class Videos will be shared!!

- **Facebook:** Zion Lutheran Church Sunday School – TRF

If you don't have Facebook, please make sure you sign up for Remind!

- **Remind:** @ziontrfss

All updates and information will be shared via these two options.

If you have any questions about Sunday School, please let Becky (218-686-5563) or Davina (218-689-4965) know.



**"All are from the dust,  
and to dust all return."**

Ecclesiastes 3:20, ESV



**Ash Wednesday Service**

## Why Do Lutherans Receive Ashes on Ash Wednesday?

From the blog - *Life Through Lutheran Lenses (Seeing and Understanding Life Through Lutheran Eyes)*

Many non-Lutherans wonder why their Lutheran friends or family members wear ashes on their forehead at the beginning of Lent. Are they showing off? Are they trying to stand out? Is it some weird secret church ritual? What does it mean? Should I get them too?

There are three reasons why Lutherans go to church to receive ashes on Ash Wednesday. First, the ashes remind people of their sinfulness. Second, the ashes remind people of their mortality. Third, the ashes remind people that they have been redeemed. Let's unpack this a bit.

Since ancient times, God's people have used ashes as a sign of humble repentance (e.g. Jonah 3:5-9; Job 42:6; Daniel 9:3; Matthew 11:21; Luke 10:13). This tradition was carried on by the early church and remains an important tradition today. When one willingly goes up to a pastor and receives ashes on his/her forehead, they are admitting that they are sinners in desperate need of salvation. They are admitting that they have sinned not only against their neighbors, but against God Himself. The ashes demonstrate that without God, all people are spiritually dead. The ashes remind the wearer of their need to repent and confess in order to be turned back to God. The ashes demonstrate our pleading that the Lord would purify us. The ashes serve as a tangible and visible sign of our failure to love God as much as He loves us.

The receiving of ashes on Ash Wednesday also remind people of their mortality, which is the direct result of God's condemnation of our sin. God said to Adam, "You are dust and to dust you shall return" (Genesis 3:19). Ashes serve as a solemn reminder that the price of sin is death. Man cannot escape death. Often, people today feel as if they are invincible. It's easy to feel like we're at the top of the world, capable of doing anything that we desire. We keep ourselves busy doing "good" things but fail to recognize that in reality we are dead men walking. People don't like to think about death. Our culture has seemingly sterilized death. We make every attempt to avoid death. Death is uncomfortable. And, that's why ashes are so important. They are the physical reminder that God created man from the dust of the earth and one day all men will return to the dust of the earth. Ashes to ashes and dust to dust. The ashes force us to remember that we are merely mortal and that God alone is sovereign and reigns for all eternity.

Ashes also tell us the good news of the Gospel! You see, ashes aren't just smeared randomly or haphazardly across people's foreheads. The ashes are given in the shape of the cross. In receiving the ashes, we remember that our Lord Jesus took on the fullness of our humanity. He who was sinless became our sin. Jesus the Christ was crucified on a cross. He was crucified for you. He descended into hell where he endured the fullness of the wrath of God on your behalf. Then Jesus conquered death through His resurrection. He was resurrected for you. In doing so, He has taken the ashes of our past and created in us new life, allowing us to live forever in the holy presence of God! He has redeemed His children, making us clean and new. Through the cross of Christ, the power of death has been destroyed. Through the cross there is life. The cross-shaped ashes on our foreheads proclaim the good news that sin and death have been conquered through the cross of Christ.

In many Lutheran Ash Wednesday services, the Lord's Supper immediately follows the receiving of ashes. We, who were once dead in our sins, we who deserve to die, come to the Lord's Table literally wearing the cross of Christ. Here, at the Lord's table, those who have humbled themselves before the Lord, who have admitted their sin, who know they deserve death, are instead given the new life that is only found through the body and blood of our loving Lord Jesus. Here, at the Lord's table, those marked with the cross of Christ are raised up, strengthened through God's mercy, love, and grace, and sent forth into the world to proclaim the good news!