



**Vol. 21**

**March 2021**

**No. 3**

*For now the winter is past, the rain is over and gone. The flowers appear on the earth; the time of singing has come. Song of Solomon 2:11-12.*

Thank God, it is March, a time when we welcome the spring season. The weather is already getting warmer and the days are getting longer and brighter. I don't know about you, but as for me spring is a season I long for as we go through our long Minnesota cold winter, like children who long for Christmas. Therefore, it fills my heart with great joy to know that soon all this snow will melt away and be gone, and we will be able to enjoy our outdoor hobbies and activities.

Here in Minnesota, every conversation we have is dominated by weather. When we turn on the television and watch our local morning and evening news, the weather is often the dominant topic. Because Minnesota weather is very unpredictable, it is full of surprises. Today, if it is 39 above, tomorrow it can be 39 below. That is why we Minnesotans say if you don't like the weather, wait a minute.

I came from a country where the weather is the same year after year day and night. The average daytime temperature is almost always in the 70s or 80s and nighttime temperature is in the 50s and 60s. You can check it out using your smart phone and logging in to Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, Weather. That is what you would see any time you Google. Therefore, in Ethiopia, they don't often include weather in their news, because, no one would pay attention, since it hardly changes.

Weather has a big impact on our mood. Often, while freezing cold temperature makes us sad and depressed, warm and mild temperature makes us happier and smiley. I wonder if that is the reason they call Ethiopia the land of thousand smiles. Even though life is very hard for so many people because of poverty, their faces are often covered with smile.

This spring season is going to be very special for all of us. After being trapped indoors due to pandemic for such a long stressful time, it will be such a nice change to go out of our houses and relax and enjoy fresh air and renew our spirits. So, may God fill your heart with joy and wonder as you watch the nature around you blooming and flourishing with beauty again. Have a wonderful spring season.

Pastor Ale



- March 3, 10, 17 – 6:30 – Lenten Worship – in-house and Facebook Live – no supper
- March 13 – Set clocks ahead
- March 14 – Annual Meeting – after worship – in-house and Zoom
- March 28 – 8:30 -Palm Sunday worship
- April 1 – 6:30 – Maundy Thursday Worship – in-house and Facebook Live – no supper
- April 1 – First communion for fifth graders
- April 2 –12:00 noon – Good Friday Prayer Vigil
- April 2 – 6:30 - Good Friday Worship – in-house and Facebook Live
- April 4 – 8:30 - Easter Sunday worship



## President's Message

### Laura Rude

Dear Zion Family-

I hope this letter finds you in sound health and in good spirits. Thank goodness spring is getting closer with every passing day!

It's hard to believe we are already three months into our year. It's been a wild journey, but with God on our side nothing is impossible. I truly feel God's hand on our church and in our church. Don't get me wrong; I know the devil is trying to work his evil, but God is sovereign, and His will be done! I appreciate your patience and understanding as we navigate some tricky waters.

Our **annual meeting** is scheduled for **March 14**, directly following the 8:30 service. A separate letter will be sent with all the details. Please mark your calendars. Asking for your prayers for a good meeting with good discussion. The future of our church and church family are very important to me. I encourage attendance and participation. Together we will continue God's work in our church.



I also encourage everyone to attend our Lenten services. It's great to have Pastor Mark Helgeland as a guest speaker each week sharing his special message. I know it's a little different not getting a belly full of good food from the ladies of the church, but we will still have a spiritual feast!

I ask for your continued prayer, support and patience for all the church staff, the Council, board members, Sunday school volunteers and all the others that enable our church to THRIVE. We are very blessed. Praying the Holy Spirit continues to stir and move in our congregation. If you feel the Spirit nudging you to get involved in some way, shape or form please, take action. You will not regret it!

**1 John 4:4**, has caught my attention from several different sources over the past few weeks. I don't think it's a coincidence but a gently reminder from my Heavenly Father. **"Greater is He who is in you, than he who is the world."** AMEN!

God's Peace~  
Laura - Zion President



**Lenten Services**  
**Wednesdays at 6:30**  
**No Supper**

On Ash Wednesday, we as Christians began our forty-day journey with our Lord to the cross and tomb in preparation of the joyous celebration of Christ's Resurrection on Easter Sunday.

In the past Zion has participated in a Lenten round robin of messages from local ELCA pastors. This Lenten season because of the Covid pandemic, the round robin has been cancelled as well as the dinners before Lenten worship.

Lenten worship will still be held on Wednesday nights at 6:30, both in-person and via Facebook Live. Pastor Mark Helgeland, former pastor of Redeemer Lutheran Church, will be sharing his messages entitled *Golf and the Spirit*.

**Zion's 12<sup>th</sup> Annual Good Friday Prayer Vigil**  
**Friday, April 2**

**PRAYER VIGIL**

It is our hope that after having to cancel last year's Good Friday Prayer Vigil, we are able to go forward with our annual event on Friday, April 2nd! The invitation is open to all, and I hope that with the uncertainty of this past year, you will prayerfully consider coming to this year's vigil. I think this year more than ever, we all need this time for prayer!

The vigil starts at noon. In the past we have had people sign up for a time slot. This year come when you can. We will break for the Good Friday evening service and then continue with the vigil after that service. Usually the time spent is twenty minutes, but you are more than welcome to stay longer.

This is a time of reflection, prayer and meditation. There will be booklets available for use during this time. I guarantee you will leave with a different outlook than when you came. You are more than welcome to bring a friend.

Questions please call or text me, Deb Holtan, at 686-3758, or 449-4645.

**Madison Crane**  
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Grace and peace to you!

As we are now in the same month that a year ago, our lives became greatly impacted by the Covid-19 Pandemic. In a year that's been like no other, it has had me reflecting on growth and change. This pandemic has created opportunities to be creative, flexible, extend grace, and try new things out (which some worked out and some didn't), yet we learned much!

There seems to be a glimmer of hope that we may be finding our new normal sooner, rather than later. That glimmer of hope I feel now is feeling like those early morning captains' practices for sport seasons I remember from the athletic days in high school. Moving and pushing the comfort levels of the muscles in a body takes a lot of consistency, determination, teamwork, and learning. It is not always fun or easy, and let me tell ya, it doesn't always look so graceful- but it's a work in progress!

At the beginning of a new sports season, there's new training methods and a lot of sore muscles from being worked in new ways. So it's been a year since the season of the Pandemic came upon us. Hebrews 12:1-2 tells us to lay our weights down at the foot of the cross and run with endurance looking to Jesus...who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God." Traditionally a race means that the quickest time to complete a distance is typically the desired outcome, I think God created us to work *all* of our muscles and (crazy enough) *enjoy* the race and slow down!

So let's put down the weights (busy schedules, labels, sorrows, uncertainties) at the foot of the cross and get uncomfortable stretching those muscles to enjoy a run with endurance. As a church we are trying new ways to stay connected in Jesus Christ. We need to understand the pains of learning through failing or missing the mark, help us grow stronger and run the race with grace. Please keep our youth and families in your prayers as they too are learning new ways to reach goals and build endurance in Christ.

## Silver Creek

What a beautiful Sunday morning, I am glad we were able to be back to in-person worship after the past couple weeks in the deep-freeze. It was great to see so many being able to worship and commune together once again.

Looking forward to spring and activities that go with the nicer weather. We have scheduled our spring-cleaning day on April 8th, so mark your calendar. Our raffle quilt is almost ready to bring to the quilter, and we are anxious for everyone to see it. We missed this fundraiser last year.

At council meeting, a committee of Leland Nelson, Clark Nelson and Mark Swanson were selected to work on getting bids for new furnace. The next council meeting will be held after services on March 21st.

Once again this year, we are invited to join Zion for Wednesday Lenten Services at 6:30 pm either at Zion or by joining their Facebook Live. Also a reminder if you can't join us on Sunday for services, Zion's service is available on KTRF or Facebook Live.

Bev Ruprecht



## 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.



### Zion Lutheran's Parish Planning Council Minutes Via Zoom February 16, 2021

The Parish Planning Council meeting was called to order by President Laura Rude at 7:02 p.m. In attendance were Laura Rude, Pastor Ale Tulu, Tim Numedahl, Madison Crane, Barbara Overbye, Sharon Jorde, Darlene Hulteen, Mike Spears, Glenice Johnson, Penni Nelson 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 printed. The motion was seconded and approved.

Barbara Overbye reminded the council that the church is working under a proposed budget. Barbara brought up the PPP (Payroll Protection Plan) suggesting that the council be proactive in asking what the next step with this program is. Laura said she would contact the person at Northern State Bank that is helping with this program. The loan from savings has been paid back.

The Treasurers Report was filed for audit.

Pastor Ale reported that on Thursday February 11th, the Annual Conference Meeting was held via Zoom with Bishop Tesch attending the meeting. The mission statement is "Wholly Devoted". The Bishop asked those in attendance to thank their congregations for their support with the Synod's budget. Synod Assembly takes place virtually on May 22, 2021. The meeting will take place from 9:30-4:30. The Church Wide Assembly is in Columbus, Ohio this August. The two elected people from our area are Pastor Linda from Oklee and our own Madison Crane. There will be no Round Robin this year. Pastor Mark Helgeland has written a sermon series entitled "Golf and the Spirit". He will preach his series over the five weeks of lent. A motion was made to pay Pastor Helgeland \$500.00 for assisting with the Lenten services. The motion was seconded and carried.

Madison Crane reported that the Program Executive Director from Pathways and the director from Luther Crest met via zoom. They gave an update on what their summer schedule is looking like. Camp Sunday is February 28th here at Zion. Confirmation classes will not meet during lent, but confirmands are required to participate either in person or virtually during the Lenten services. Madison reported she attended the Extravaganza Event held a couple of weeks ago. In doing so she was able to get a discounted membership which will give her access to tons of resources in pdf form. 1st Communion Classes will take place in person March 21st and 28th. There will be no Seder Meal. The Youth and Family of Churches Together meeting for this coming Saturday has been postponed allowing a time when Trinity can be included. Pathways annual meeting will be March 21st from 3-4:30 pm.

Penni Nelson reported that they had to cancel their last two Sunday worship services due to the cold weather. They had a New Member Sunday!

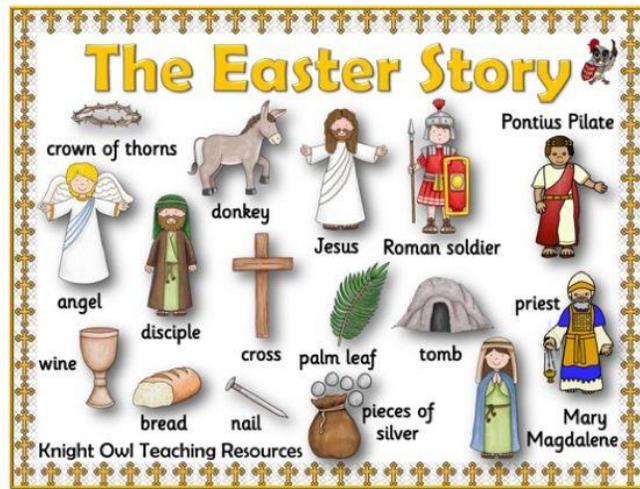
Glenice Johnson gave an update on the progress concerning the updates on the constitution.

Darlene Hulteen gave an update on the progress of the church's new website. To start with the site will be very simple.

After a very in-depth discussion on the upcoming annual meeting, it was decided that the meeting will take place on Sunday March 14th following the 8:30 worship service. It will be highly recommended that church members attend in person if at all possible, with the option of joining the meeting via Zoom. A letter will go out to the church members explaining this. Laura will again contact the bishop to help clarify questions that still remain.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:03 pm following the Lord's Prayer.

Respectfully submitted by  
Deb Holtan, Council Secretary



## Sunday School News

Every Sunday Becky and Davina 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!

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.

All updates & 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.

