

From the Pastor's Desk

Blessed Are You Who Bear the Light

I have been part of a small group of pastors that meet for a time of contemplation, reflection, and support since before Covid. We are led in this spiritual reflection time by a pastor facilitator. We begin by checking in on how we are doing. Next, she reads a reflection. We each spend time writing whatever comes into our minds and then we take turns sharing about what we wrote and contemplated. The others first listen and then offer what they notice, hear, observe, and feel. There is never any judgement, fixing, or advice. We finish each person's turn with a prayer for them. The experience has proven to be life-giving and well worth my time. I share with you a meditation that our facilitator read to us in one session.

Blessed Are You Who Bear the Light

Blessed are you who bear the light in unbearable times, who testify to its endurance amid the unendurable, who bear witness to its persistence when everything seems in shadow and grief.

Blessed are you in whom the light lives, in whom the brightness blazes—your heart a chapel, an altar where in the deepest night can be seen the fire that shines forth in you in unaccountable faith, in stubborn hope, in love that illuminates every broken thing it finds.

A Circle of Grace

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(Formatting changed to fit this space)

Before reading on, you might want to consider re-reading the meditation and reflecting on it yourself. What connects with you, our church, our world?

I won't share with you my full eight minutes of writing, but I will share some of my thoughts. At first, I was overwhelmed with the feeling of not living up to all these ways of being blessed. And then as I reflected on all that I and the congregation I was serving have been through, yes, we do bear light in unbearable times. I imagine that the same can be said for this congregation, Zion, and some of your personal journeys. We have navigated hard things – endurance to be sure. We have not succumbed to the shadows of all the brokenness but have clung to a persistence that continues to nurture our faith, care for others, and move us forward. I believe that healing the wounds in this congregation, and through Zion's worship and ministry together we are blessed to bear God's light.

Secondly, it brought me comfort to think of my heart as an altar. In the Old Testament the altar is a place of sacrifice and repentance. Today it is a place where I am called to stand in leadership of God's holy people of Zion. The altar is a space where God's grace, love, and mercy in Christ's body and blood are poured out for me (and you) in all that we fear, and lack, and don't live up to. It offers newness and hope that we can't instill on our own. It is the fire of the Holy Spirit that burns in our lives, that will illumine the brokenness with the light of Christ's love.

Good people of Zion, in these new days you have welcomed and been a blessing to me. The light of Christ shines through you in your ministry to the community and world. And in these tender days of healing and moving forward, know that God's light "shines forth in you in unaccountable faith, in stubborn hope, in love that illuminates every broken thing it finds."

Bless you for bearing the light,
Pastor Elizabeth Martin

Women of Zion

We are having a planning meeting on Friday, September 15, 2023, at 1:00 PM in the church library. Please consider coming with your ideas for the next year. We will be discussing end of year events for First Step Daycare, the Baby Bank schedule and events/speakers for next year. Hope to see you there!! All are welcome.

Painting Event

Saturday, October 14, 2023, 9am-11:30am

Canvas painting – 11x14 fall picture. This event is a fundraiser designated to the “Helping Hands” organization which Zion is a part of in our community. We have Debbie Cooper, a retired artist from Michaels, who will be directing and helping us with the painting. This is open to all age groups and to your friends and neighbors. The cost of the painting is \$25.00, this includes a canvas and all paints, brushes and any other supplies are needed. You will have the opportunity to have some fun and fellowship as you paint your fall picture and help out an organization that helps so many people. Breakfast treats will be provided as well. Please sign up to help us plan.

Thank You

Thank you to the Women of Zion that helped organize the welcome breakfast for Pastor Elizabeth on Sunday August 20th. Many committees and individuals contributed to a very successful and blessed morning. Thank you to all who helped with set-up, food preparation, serving and cleaning up. The Fellowship Hall was filled with laughter and conversations. Many hands make light work.

Tom, Sara Lee and Jennie-O will be returning in October. Watch for the surprise!!!!

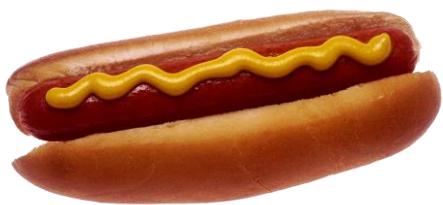
Attention ALL Zion Youth

 The youth room is almost ready, we just need some final touches. Please join us **Wednesday, September 20** for some painting and pizza fun. We will be painting pictures to hang on the walls in the youth room. The activity will be led by former Belvidere Art Teacher, Jill Mosbach. Each youth will receive their own canvas to decorate. Jill will help sketch out designs as needed. The fun will start at 5:30 with pizza and we will paint after that. We will also meet on **Sunday, September 24**, after Church/Sunday School to finish and hang pictures. All materials and food will be supplied! Just bring your paint shirt and plan on having some fun! Please contact Jody Archer 815-978-1691 to let her know if you can make it. We want to make sure we have supplies for everyone!



Confirmation Class

Inviting all 7th and 8th graders to join in confirmation. We begin with a parent/student orientation on Sunday, September 17th, at 10:20 a.m. Class will meet about twice a month on Sundays for about 1.25 hours. Please contact Pastor Elizabeth if you are interested.



Community Meal

With the August Community Meal taking place the week of the Boone County Fair, we weren't sure what the turnout would be. Well, the attendance was great, as 78 people had dinner that night. That was 25 more than last year's Fair week meal.

Those 78 people gobbled up 112 hotdogs, about 20 pounds of chicken-pasta salad and three 9 x 13 cakes all within an hour's time. Special thanks to Kris Enright and Wanda Watts for sharing their culinary skills that day. The chicken-pasta salad that Kris made got rave reviews, and the three cakes that Wanda baked quickly disappeared from the dessert table.

Thank you to these volunteers who took time away from attending or helping at the Fair in order to make this meal possible: Marilee, Lillian, Kris, Wanda, Marge, JoAnne, Terry, Judy, Dawn, Kathy, Sharon, Nancy, Larry and Delaney.

The next meal will be Wednesday, September 13.

John Enright



Food Truck

Thank You to the 32 volunteers that helped on Saturday, August 5th with our 5th Northern Illinois Food Bank truck of 2023. This time, there were 10 new volunteers that came to help with this important event for the Boone County community!



The volunteers who helped to unload, package and load into vehicles included: Jody Archer, Gene Berg, Larry & Nancy Brendum, Dawn Calkins, Alicia Downey, Jen Downey, Ken Downey, Kevin Ekberg, Joanie Ekberg, John Enright, Deana Foley, Stella Foley, Eva Marie Foley, Emsley Foley, Arlyn Groen, Marie Hagen, Kathy Hansen, Sarah Hansen, Brian Heisz, Darel & Connie Magnuson, Jeanne & Keith Marnen and Quim, Terry Miller, Marge Olson, Amy Ortiz, Delaney Paulson, Nadiya Reininger, and Gary & Sharon Yunto. These 32 individuals packed 17 different grocery items for giveaway that helped 196 families with 699 individuals including 223 children and 103 elderly with their food insecurity from the Boone County and surrounding area.

Our next food truck is scheduled for September 30th. If you are interested in helping and have not helped in the past, please let Mandy know.

Gary Yunto

Zion Shirts

The first order of shirts are in. If you ordered and have not received it yet, it is in the office. If you didn't get a chance to order the first time, we will place another order in September. Please let Mandy know what color polo and size. \$25. You can also get a dark or light blue denim shirt. Short sleeves are \$35 and long sleeves are \$40.





Sunday School News



Summer is going by fast and here are several dates to mark on your calendar.

Let Your Life's Light be a Window to Christ

Everyone is invited to join the Sunday School Staff and students to make a sand art-Stained Glass Window on **September 10th**. As Sand Art can be rather messy, we will be making them outside after church. There will be simple patterns and more complex ones. We will also have crayons, markers and colored pencils if you would rather use those. The finished pictures will then be displayed on the bulletin board next to the Fellowship Hall.

Sunday School students will be able to register on September 10th or on Rally Sunday Sep. 17th.

Rally Sunday/ First Day of Sunday School will be September 17th. There will be a Blessing of Students and Teachers during the church service. This includes all students and teachers, not just those in Sunday School. This will be followed by Rally Day/Sunday School starting at 10:15.

Come Join Us for Both of these Fun Days!!

Leader Needed

We are still in need of a Sunday School Leader for the older kids. You would be working with students in third – sixth grades. They are a great group of kids!! Become part of the Sunday School team. We will work with all schedules. If you have any questions contact Pat Castro at 815-520-5660.

Pollinator Garden



If you have not gone back and looked at the pollinator garden that the kids planted in May, walk back and take a look. All the beds are doing well this year, despite the drought and some erratic watering. We have Mexican sunflowers and regular sunflowers in one tub, Zinnias, Cosmos, Bachelor Buttons, Cleomes and Marigolds in the kids tub. They also planted a tub with The Three Sisters, a native American planting of beans (we did a dried bean), squash (butternut) and corn. We also have a wildflower tub.

Pioneer Luncheon

Pioneer Club



Must be that Summer is coming to a close. We will start meeting again on Monday, September 11th with a noon potluck lunch. (Served at noon-please try to arrive a few minutes early). Chicken will be provided (for a small donation) and please bring a dish to share. Also bring your own table service. Coffee & water provided. Program for the day will be John Enright entertaining us with “Name That Tune!” Would love to have several show up and play along! This is open to all Zion members & guests. We always love having new faces join us. Hope to see you there!

Patti Lee



Zion Scholarships 2023

“Pastor Otto and the Scholarship Committee awarded 6 Zion scholarships. Pastor Otto, our guest minister, remarked that he had baptized most of the individuals. Afterwards, the families enjoyed fellowship with the congregation. Best wishes for continued success and may you walk with our Lord Always and Everywhere.”



In conjunction with the Witness Committee, we are in the early planning stages of getting a Prayer Ministry started at Zion. After meeting recently with Pastor Martin, we have a few ideas we would like to share with you.

Starting in September we will be sharing a weekly devotional that can be read and perhaps reread throughout the week. This will be sent out in an Eblast on Mondays. It is our hope that you will find meaning and encouragement to start out your week. If you should read additional devotionals and come across one that has touched you, we would love you to share them with us so we can share them with our congregation.

Our committee is devoted to sharing the goodness of our God. First, “thinking about you” cards will be sent out to those we have addresses for on the prayer list printed in the bulletin. There are also inspirational cards placed in the fellowship pads to be read each week. It is our hope that you will take these words of wisdom with you and spread their message with those you meet. In addition, the prayer request mailboxes have been placed at the back entrance as well as by the door being used by our community outreach programs.

A special gift will be forthcoming to give the opportunity to keep daily prayer in your life and help you focus on the goodness of our God. Never underestimate the power of prayer!

We would also like to encourage anyone who may have other ideas to reach out to us. Even better, please join our committee. We would love to have you and your ideas.

Respectfully,

Kris Enright and Michelle Ernest



Thank you for the welcome brunch! The food was delicious, and it was nice to share conversations. We look forward to getting to know you better and are blessed to be in ministry alongside you. Your generosity and welcoming is greatly appreciated.



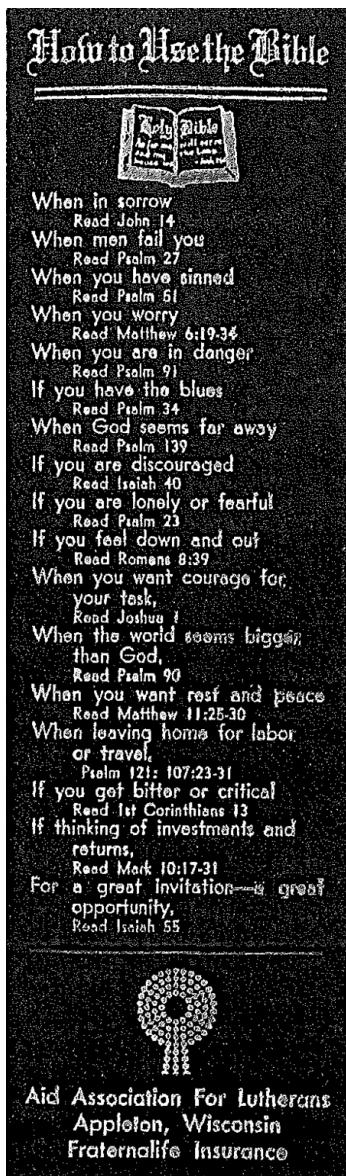
Pastor Elizabeth and Wayne

Dear Women and Men of Zion,

Thank you so very much for the wonderful luncheon that you provided for Linda's funeral, as always the food was delicious. Linda knows firsthand all the hard work that goes along with providing a funeral luncheon. A special thank you to Alicia for acolyting, Rodney for ushering, Dan for all the special music, Mandy for all her clerical help, and Pastor JoAnna Patterson for the wonderful service. All of your hard work, kind words, support, and love is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

The Family of Linda Meyers



Happy Birthday from your Zion Family!

September 1-Savannah Hensley
September 2-Sapphire Watts
September 3-Lois Graves
September 3-Elleney Ogan
September 4-Avery Beever
September 4-Brad Ogan
September 6-Linda Zediker
September 7-Kathy Hansen
September 7-Lorraine Carmichael
September 9- Caspian Downey
September 10-Nick Larson
September 11-Joyce Johnson
September 12-Tammy Zastrow

September 12-Wanda Watts
September 12-Mile Obilade
September 12- Chelsea Lopez
September 13-Aarron Minson
September 15-Alex Johnson
September 18-Imogene Brandt
September 19-Mason Fast
September 19-Brenda Tobin
September 21-Tanya Hoemke
September 21-Jeff Ernest
September 24-Beth Hong
September 29-Gordon Rubeck
September 29-Kora Wick



From the Treasurer:

General Fund

07/2023	Beginning Balance	\$ 8,476.92
	Total Income	\$124,529.42
	Total Expense	\$115,910.80
	Balance	\$ 17,095.54

Building Fund

07/2023	Beginning Balance	\$ (7,923.91)
	Total Income	\$ 23,028.00
	Total Expense	\$ 1,214.45
	Balance	\$13,889.64

In July the Finance Team voted to move \$100,000.00 from the checking account to a new savings money market account that has a higher interest rate. The money from the sale of Pearl Street House Fund was moved to the General Fund to complete this transaction.

General Fund Reserve Savings (new Account)

July13-July31	Beginning Balance	\$100,000.00
	Income (interest)	36.83
	Expenses	0.00
	Balance	\$100,036.83

Staff

Rev. Elizabeth Martin
Intentional Interim Pastor

Mandy Minson
Administrative Assistant

Ken Anderson
Council President

Dan Albrecht
Choir Director

Pat Castro
Sunday School Director

Diane Vorndran
Financial Secretary

Sharon Yunto
Treasurer

Worship Schedule

Sundays at 9:00am
Thursday's at 7:00pm

Find Worship Videos at
www.zionbelvidere.com

OR

On Facebook at
[ZionBelvidere+](https://www.facebook.com/ZionBelvidere/)

Council Members

Term Through January 2024

Ken Anderson
Kris Beever
Rodney Brandmire
Jen Downey
Jeff Ernest
Deana Foley

Term Through January 2025

Jody Archer
Doug Shiloh
Gary Yunto

Term Through January 2026

Gretel Baird
Melody Johnson
David Schumann

Texts for the Month of September

September 3

Jeremiah 15:15-21
Romans 26:1-8
Matthew 16:21-28

September 10

Ezekiel 33:7-11
Romans 13:8-14
Matthew 18:15-20

September 17

Genesis 50:15-21
Romans 14:1-12
Matthew 18:21-35

September 24

Jonah 3:10--4:11
Philippians 1:21-30
Matthew 20:1-16

September 2023						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
OFFICE HOURS Monday-Friday 9am-1pm					1	2
3 Sunday Worship @ 9am	4 OFFICE CLOSED	5 Worship/Music 5pm	6 Sewing/Quilting 9:00am Bible Study 9:30am	7 7:00 pm – Worship	8	9 Baby Bank Open House 9am-12pm
10 Sunday Worship @ 9am Sand Art Stained Glass	11 Pioneer Lunch 12:00pm AA Meeting 5pm Witness 6pm	12 Council Reports Due	13 Sewing/Quilting 9:00am Bible Study 9:30am Baby Bank 4pm-6pm Community Meal 5pm-6:30pm	14 7:00 pm – Worship	15 WOZ Meeting 1pm	16
17 Sunday Worship @ 9am Back to School Blessing Rally Sunday Sunday School Resumes Confirmation Parent Meeting 10:20am	18 AA Meeting 5pm Shiloh Meeting 6pm-8pm	19	20 Sewing/Quilting 9:00am Bible Study 9:30am Youth Painting/Pizza Party 5:30pm Council Meeting 7:00pm	21 7:00 pm – Worship	22	23
24 Sunday Worship @ 9am Youth Room Project after service	25 Tidings Articles Due	26 AA Meeting 5pm	27 Sewing/Quilting -9:00am Bible Study 9:30am	28 Barnabas 6pm 7:00 pm – Worship Holden Sundae	29	30 Food Truck 10am-11:30am

