

July 30, 2023 • Ninth Sunday after Pentecost
9:00 and 11:30 am



Zion⁺ *lutheran
church*

WELCOME TO ZION

When we gather for worship, we're receptive to God's word and we rejoice in God's grace through song, prayer, and Holy Communion. The history of Christian worship is rich with rituals formed by generations. These traditions, prayers, and pastoral teachings help connect our lives with Christ. In our daily lives, we show God's love by serving our community, both locally and globally.

We are a group of believers seeking to respond to Christ's call to worship and serve, even as we wrestle with the big questions of life. We want you to know that you and your questions, faith, and doubts are welcome here!

HOW WE WORSHIP

The Holy Spirit gathers people around the means of grace: the Word of God and the Sacraments. From the table of Holy Communion where Christ comes with forgiveness, life, and salvation, God sends us out to share the good news and care for those in need. Our worship follows this pattern in four parts: Gathering, Word, Meal, and Sending. By its very nature, Lutheran worship is participatory and the service is contained within this bulletin. Worship leaders guide us through the service and our responses are printed in **bold type**.

We welcome children in our worship services! If needed, a nursery is available down the hall past the restrooms. The restrooms contain changing tables, as needed.

Throughout the service, members of Zion's music ministry offer their talents as an offering to God. Please receive their musical gifts as a time for prayer, contemplation, or praise of God rather than a performance to be applauded, so that we may worship God throughout our time here together.

GREEN SEASON

The Sundays following Pentecost take us through the summer months and into the fall. These many months take us through many of the stories during the ministry of Jesus. We will also spend a significant portion of the Green Season hearing portions of Paul's letter to the Roman church. The purpose of these readings is to encourage us to grow in our faith in Christ - like the growth of a green plant - little by little, each day.

In the heat of summer, we transition our liturgy somewhat to remember our baptisms. During the Gathering Hymn today, the pastors will sprinkle the congregation with water as a tangible reminder of baptism. This Rite of Asperges, as it is called, comes from the Latin translation of Psalm 51: "Asperges me, Domine, hyssopo..." or "Sprinkle me with hyssop, O Lord..." This psalm is an ancient plea for God to remember us with mercy and cleanse us from sin.

ON THE COVER

Photo by Nathan Dumlao on Unsplash

Zion Lutheran Church

9944 Leslie Road • San Antonio, Texas 78254 • 210-688-3090 • zion@zionsa.org

GATHERING

The Holy Spirit, the Comforter, gathers us in worship.

PRELUDE

Wash, O God, Our Sons and Daughters, setting by John Carter

WELCOME

Pastor Dan Heim

THANKSGIVING FOR BAPTISM

Joined to Christ in the waters of baptism, clothed with God's mercy and forgiveness, let us give thanks for the gift of baptism.

Holy God, fountain of living water, source of mercy, tender and mighty, you are clothed with majesty and splendor. Your steadfast love fills the earth.

Your steadfast love fills the earth.

Your love flows through water, satisfying the thirst of all living things, sustaining life, nourishing and delighting us. We bless you for the gift of water. Your steadfast love fills the earth.

Your steadfast love fills the earth.

Your love flows through the water of baptism joined to your life-giving Word: your well of mercy and cleansing flood, your sea of deliverance from death into life, your healing river washing sin away, your living water springing up to eternal life. Your steadfast love fills the earth.

Your steadfast love fills the earth.

Shower us with your Holy Spirit. Fill us with your love. Clothe us and all your people with grace. Embolden us to do justice and help us to love mercy. Guide us to walk humbly with you, whom we thank and praise, through Jesus Christ, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, now and forever.

Amen.

During the Gathering Hymn, the pastors sprinkle the congregation with water as a reminder of baptism.

GATHERING HYMN WITH ASPERGES Wash, O God, Our Sons and Daughters



1 Wash, O God, our sons and daughters, where your cleans-ing wa-ters flow.
2 We who bring them long for nur-ture; by your milk may we be fed.
3 Oh, how deep your ho-ly wis-dom! Un-im-ag-ined, all your ways!



Num-ber them a-mong your peo-ple; bless as Christ blessed long a-go.
Let us join your feast, par-tak-ing cup of bless-ing, liv-ing bread.
To your name be glo-ry, hon-or! With our lives we wor-ship, praise!



Weave them gar-ments bright and spark-ling; com-pass them with love and light.
God, re-new us, guide our foot-steps; free from sin and all its snares,
We your peo-ple stand be-fore you, wa-ter-washed and Spir-it-born.



Fill, a-noint them; send your Spir-it, ho-ly dove and heart's de-light.
one with Christ in liv-ing, dy-ing, by your Spir-it, chil-dren, heirs.
By your grace, our lives we of-fer. Re-cre-ate us; God, trans-form!

Text: Ruth Duck, b. 1947

Music: BEACH SPRING, *The Sacred Harp*, Philadelphia, 1844

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GREETING

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God,
and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

And also with you.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray. Beloved and sovereign God, through the death and resurrection of your Son you bring us into your kingdom of justice and mercy. By your Spirit, give us your wisdom, that we may treasure the life that comes from Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

Please be seated.

WORD

God speaks to us in scripture reading, preaching and song.

CHILDREN'S CHAT

Pastor Dan Heim

FIRST READING: 1 Kings 3:5-12

⁵At Gibeon the LORD appeared to Solomon in a dream by night; and God said, "Ask what I should give you." ⁶And Solomon said, "You have shown great and steadfast love to your servant my father David, because he walked before you in faithfulness, in righteousness, and in uprightness of heart toward you; and you have kept for him this great and steadfast love, and have given him a son to sit on his throne today. ⁷And now, O LORD my God, you have made your servant king in place of my father David, although I am only a little child; I do not know how to go out or come in. ⁸And your servant is in the midst of the people whom you have chosen, a great people, so numerous they cannot be numbered or counted. ⁹Give your servant therefore an understanding mind to govern your people, able to discern between good and evil; for who can govern this your great people?"

¹⁰It pleased the Lord that Solomon had asked this. ¹¹God said to him, "Because you have asked this, and have not asked for yourself long life or riches, or for the life of your enemies, but have asked for yourself understanding to discern what is right, ¹²I now do according to your word. Indeed I give you a wise and discerning mind; no one like you has been before you and no one like you shall arise after you."

Word of God, word of life. **Thanks be to God.**

PSALM 119

Refrain

Michel Guimont



Lord, I love your com - mands.

Your will is wonderful indeed;
therefore I obey it.
The unfolding of your word gives light
and teaches the simple. R.

I open my mouth and I sigh
as I yearn for your commands.
Turn and show me your mercy;
show justice to your friends. R.

Let my steps be guided by your promise;
let no evil rule me.
Redeem me from those who oppress me
and I will keep your precepts. R.

Let your face shine on your servant
and teach me your decrees.
Tears stream from my eyes
because your law is disobeyed. R.

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SECOND READING: ROMANS 8:26-39

²⁶The Spirit helps us in our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we ought, but that very Spirit intercedes with sighs too deep for words. ²⁷And God, who searches the heart, knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God.

²⁸We know that all things work together for good for those who love God, who are called according to his purpose. ²⁹For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn within a large family. ³⁰And those whom he predestined he also called; and those whom he called he also justified; and those whom he justified he also glorified.

³¹What then are we to say about these things? If God is for us, who is against us? ³²He who did not withhold his own Son, but gave him up for all of us, will he not with him also give us everything else? ³³Who will bring any charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies. ³⁴Who is to condemn? It is Christ Jesus, who died, yes, who was raised, who is at the right hand of God, who indeed intercedes for us. ³⁵Who will separate us from the love of Christ? Will hardship, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? ³⁶As it is written,

“For your sake we are being killed all day long;
we are accounted as sheep to be slaughtered.”

³⁷No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. ³⁸For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, ³⁹nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Word of God, word of life. **Thanks be to God.**

Please rise, as you are able.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia,
al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.
Repeat alleluia
Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of e - ter - nal life.

GOSPEL: MATTHEW 13:31-33, 44-52

The Holy Gospel according to Matthew. **Glory to you, O Lord.**

³¹[Jesus] put before [the crowds] another parable: “The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed that someone took and sowed in his field;³²it is the smallest of all the seeds, but when it has grown it is the greatest of shrubs and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and make nests in its branches.”

³³He told them another parable: “The kingdom of heaven is like yeast that a woman took and mixed in with three measures of flour until all of it was leavened.”

⁴⁴“The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which someone found and hid; then in his joy he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field.

⁴⁵“Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant in search of fine pearls; ⁴⁶on finding one pearl of great value, he went and sold all that he had and bought it.

⁴⁷“Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a net that was thrown into the sea and caught fish of every kind; ⁴⁸when it was full, they drew it ashore, sat down, and put the good into baskets but threw out the bad. ⁴⁹So it will be at the end of the age. The angels will come out and separate the evil from the righteous ⁵⁰and throw them into the furnace of fire, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

⁵¹“Have you understood all this?” They answered, “Yes.” ⁵²And he said to them, “Therefore every scribe who has been trained for the kingdom of heaven is like the master of a household who brings out of his treasure what is new and what is old.”

The gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, O Christ.**

Please be seated.

SERMON

Pastor Kathi Johnson

Please rise as you are able.

HYMN OF THE DAY

Be Thou My Vision



1 Be thou my vi - sion, O Lord of my heart;
2 Be thou my wis - dom, and thou my true word;
3 Rich - es I heed not, nor vain, emp - ty praise,
4 Light of my soul, af - ter vic - to - ry won,



naught be all else to me, save that thou art:
I ev - er with thee and thou with me, Lord.
thou mine in - her - i - tance, now and al - ways:
may I reach heav - en's joys, O heav - en's Sun!



thou my best thought both by day and by night,
Thou my soul's shel - ter, and thou my high tow'r,
thou and thou on - ly, the first in my heart,
Heart of my own heart, what - ev - er be - fall,



wak - ing or sleep - ing, thy pres - ence my light.
raise thou me heav'n - ward, O Pow'r of my pow'r.
great God of heav - en, my trea - sure thou art.
still be my vi - sion, O Rul - er of all.

Text: Irish, 8th cent.; vers. Eleanor H. Hull, 1860–1935, alt.; tr. Mary E. Byrne, 1880–1931
Music: SLANE, Irish traditional

APOSTLES' CREED

Let us now confess our faith using the words of the Apostles' Creed:

I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried; he descended to the dead. On the third day he rose again; he ascended into heaven, he is seated at the right hand of the Father, and he will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic* church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

**catholic: universal*

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

The Spirit of the Lord is poured out upon us in abundance; so we pray for the church, the world, and all that God has made.

Each petition ends: God of grace.

Response: **Hear our prayer.**

Since we have such great hope in your promises, O God, we lift these and all of our prayers to you in confidence and faith; through Jesus Christ our Savior.

Amen.

SHARING OF THE PEACE

The peace of Christ be with you all.

And also with you.

Please be seated.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Please check the back pages of this bulletin for additional announcements.

MEAL

God feeds us with the presence of Jesus.

OFFERING

At this time, we give our offerings with thanksgiving to God. These offerings support the mission and ministry of Zion, including the care of those in need. To give online, please visit ZionSA.org. Children are invited to come forward during the music and place their offerings in the jar to the left of the Chancel area (near the Sacristy door). During the offering music, the pastor sets the table with the elements for Holy Communion. Please know that this is the Lord's table, and all are welcome to receive Communion.

OFFERING MUSIC

*The Lone Wild Bird, setting by Gwyneth Walker
Amy Mikulski, soloist*

Please rise, as you are able.

OFFERING PRAYER

Let us pray. God of mercy and grace,
the eyes of all wait upon you, and you open your hand in blessing. Fill us with good things at your table, that we may come to the help of all in need, through Jesus Christ, our redeemer and Lord. Amen.

GREAT THANKSGIVING

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy, that we should at all times and in all places give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God, through our Savior Jesus Christ; who on this day overcame death and the grave, and by his glorious resurrection opened to us the way of everlasting life. And so, with all the choirs of angels, with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven, we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow - er and might,
 heav - en and earth are full of your glo - ry. Ho - san - na in the
 high - est. Bless - ed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Ho -
 san - na in the high - est. Ho - san - na in the high - est.

You are indeed holy, almighty and merciful God. You are most holy, and great is the majesty of your glory. You so loved the world that you gave your only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but have eternal life. We give you thanks for his coming into the world to fulfill for us your holy will and to accomplish all things for our salvation.

In the night in which he was betrayed, our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks; broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying: Take and eat; this is my body, given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it for all to drink, saying: This cup is the new covenant in my blood, shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin. Do this for the remembrance of me.

For as often as we eat of this bread and drink from this cup, we proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.

Remembering, therefore, his salutary command, his life-giving passion and death, his glorious resurrection and ascension, and the promise of his coming again, we give thanks to you, O Lord God Almighty, not as we ought but as we are able; we ask you mercifully to accept our praise and thanksgiving and with your Word and Holy Spirit to bless us, ✠ your servants, and these your own gifts of bread and wine, so that we and all who share in the body and blood of Christ may be filled with heavenly blessing and grace, and, receiving the forgiveness of sin, may be formed to live as your holy people and be given our inheritance with all your saints.

To you, O God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, be all honor and glory in your holy church, now and forever. **Amen.**

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Let us pray as Jesus taught us:

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, forever and ever. Amen.

INVITATION

These are the gifts of God for you, the beloved people of God.

Please be seated.

COMMUNION

Jesus welcomes all to this holy meal! Children who commune should be assisted by adults who are with them. Those who do not wish to receive Holy Communion are invited to come forward to receive a blessing. If you are unable to come forward, please notify an usher and we will bring the sacrament to you. Gluten-free wafers are available; please ask the person serving bread. White grape juice is available in the center of the communion tray for any who are unable to drink wine. After taking Communion, please return to your seat for singing and prayer.

LAMB OF GOD

Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world; have mer - cy on
us. Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the
world; have mer - cy on us. Lamb of God, you
take a - way the sin of the world; grant us peace.

COMMUNION HYMN

Jesus, Priceless Treasure

1 Je - sus, price-less trea - sure, source of pur - est plea - sure,
 2 In thine arm I rest me; foes who would mo - lest me
 3 Hence, all fears and sad - ness, for the Lord of glad - ness,

tru - est friend to me: ah, how long I've pant - ed, and my heart has
 can-not reach me here. Though the earth be shak - ing, ev - 'ry heart be
 Je - sus, en - ters in. God, who dear-ly loves us, from all tri - al

faint - ed, thirst - ing, Lord, for thee! Thine I am, O spot - less Lamb;
 quak - ing, Je - sus calms my fear. Light-nings flash and thun - ders crash;
 saves us, gives sweet peace with-in. I have borne this world - ly scorn;

no - thing in this world can hide thee, naught I ask be-side thee.
 yet, though sin and hell as - sail me, Je - sus will not fail me.
 still in thee lies pur - est plea - sure: Je - sus, price-less trea - sure!

Text: Johann Franck, 1618–1677; tr. Catherine Winkworth, 1827–1878, alt.
 Music: JESU, MEINE FREUDE, Johann Crüger, 1598–1662; arr. hymnal version
 Arr. © 2006 Augsburg Fortress.

After communion, we rise and share in blessing and prayer.

BLESSING

May the true body and blood of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you always in God's grace. **Amen.**

PRAYER

Let us pray. Gracious God, in this meal you have drawn us to your heart, and nourished us at your table with food and drink, the body and blood of Christ. Now send us forth to be your people in the world, and to proclaim your truth this day and evermore, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

SENDING

God blesses us and sends us out in peace.

BENEDICTION

The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord's face shine on you with grace and mercy.

The Lord look upon you with favor and ✠ give you peace.

Amen.

SENDING HYMN

God of Grace and God of Glory

1 God of grace and God of glo - ry, on your peo - ple
 2 Lo! The hosts of e - vil round us scorn the Christ, as -
 3 Cure your chil - dren's war - ring mad - ness; bend our pride to
 4 Save us from weak res - ig - na - tion to the e - vils

pour your pow'r; crown your an - cient chur - ch's sto - ry;
 sail his ways! From the fears that long have bound us
 your con - trol; shame our wan - ton, self - ish glad - ness,
 we de - plore; let the gift of your sal - va - tion

bring its bud to glo - rious flow'r. Grant us wis - dom, grant us cour - age
 free our hearts to faith and praise. Grant us wis - dom, grant us cour - age
 rich in things and poor in soul. Grant us wis - dom, grant us cour - age,
 be our glo - ry ev - er - more. Grant us wis - dom, grant us cour - age,

for the fac - ing of this hour, for the fac - ing of this hour.
 for the liv - ing of these days, for the liv - ing of these days.
 lest we miss your king - dom's goal, lest we miss your king - dom's goal.
 serv - ing you whom we a - dore, serv - ing you whom we a - dore.

Text: Harry E. Fosdick, 1878–1969
 Music: CWM RHONDDA, John Hughes, 1873–1932

DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Serve the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE

Prelude in F, by J.S. Bach

AVAILABLE FOR PRAYER

Immediately following each service, Stephen Ministers are often available to pray with you at the altar rail. All prayers and conversations are confidential.

Worship Support

Altar Guild

Doris Enderlin, Susan Johns,
Mary Ann Schmitt, Sharon Solanik,
Amy Swanson, Carolyn Thronson,
Marcy Wilburn, Gina Williams

Lay Readers

9:00

Scott McKenzie

11:30

Shannon Rios

Cantor

Amy Mikulski

Communion Servers

9:00

Bonnie Harrell, Linda Hoffman

11:30

Chris Jones

Livestream

Steve Johnson, Kevin McGee

Sound

Scott VanDoren

July Ushers

9:00

LeShea Clabough, Kevin McGee,

Dave and Doris Newman,
Karen and James Sturdivant,
Russell and Susanne Warren

11:30

Chris Berg, Audrey DeHart,
Caleb DeHart,
Kim and Mike DeHart

THIS WEEK AT ZION



Scan QR code for
this month's
calendar

Sunday, July 30

Worship in person	9am	Sanctuary
Worship Camp	10:20	Sanctuary
Worship in person and online	11:30	Sanc & YouTube

Tuesday, August 1

Exercise Group	9am	Church 2
Warriors Anonymous	7pm	Church 2

Wednesday, August 2

Crafty Bunch	9:30	Education Building
Weight Watchers	9:30	Church 2
AA Meeting	7pm	FLC 202
Al-Anon Meeting	7pm	FLC 101

Thursday, August 3

Quilting	9:30	Fellowship Hall
Weight Watchers	9:30	Church 2
Dinner Out	6:30	Max & Louie's NY Diner

Saturday, August 5

Weight Watchers	7:30 & 9:30	Church 2
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Sunday, August 6

Worship in person	9am	Sanctuary
Worship in person and online	11:30	Sanc & YouTube

Blessed Change Sunday today!

Bring your cash or check to drop it in the wishing well today in the Narthex! (Online giving is also available.)

This month's offering will support the work of Haven for Hope right here in San Antonio. Curious about the services they provide? Visit HavenForHope.org.



Interested in Serving in Worship? Come to Worship Camp!

We welcome hundreds of people to our campus on Sunday mornings, and we'd love for you to help provide that welcome! If you'd like to serve as an usher, communion server, and/or lay reader, come to Worship Camp today at 10:20am.

This is for everyone - whether you've been serving a while or are learning something new. Questions? Reach out to Pr. Kathi via email or phone.

Zion's Dinner Out

Thursday, August 3, 6:30pm

You are invited to join in fellowship and a meal at Max and Louie's New York Diner, 226 W Bitters, Suite 126 - adjacent to Santikos Embassy Theatre.

RSVP by July 30 to Dave or Doris Newman at 210-859-7860 or ddnewman@mac.com.

Zion Zippers

Monday, August 14, 6pm

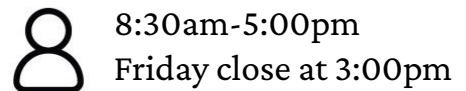
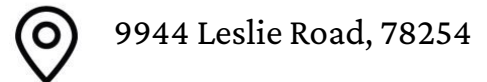
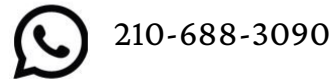
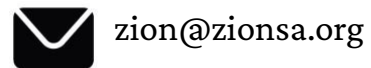
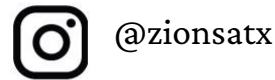
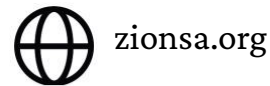
The next social will be the a potluck. The program will be conducted by Jane Paccione, who's associated with the San Antonio Area Foundation. She grew up in England and will be giving a presentation on "The History of High Tea."

Game Group

August 7 at 1:00pm

Come for table games and daytime fellowship for all ages. Meet in the Education Building.

CONTACT



STAFF DAY OFF

Pastor Kathi - Monday
kjohnson@zionsa.org

Pastor Dan - Friday
dheim@zionsa.org

Rob Mikulski - Monday
rmikulski@zionsa.org

Sammy Mikulski - Monday
theatre@zionsa.org

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Your generosity empowers Zion's Ministry

From Sunday morning worship to feeding families for the holidays, collecting clothing for local charity or relief supplies shipped hundreds of miles, to friendships fostered worldwide with simple hand stitches.

Because you kindly share your time, lend your skills, and support your ministry financially, Zion's impact reaches far beyond the four walls of our sanctuary. On behalf of everyone we're able to help, thank you for your contribution.

For more ways to support Zion's mission, scan this QR code.



Staff Update

During the summer, if you have information for the bulletin and/ or Z-mail, please contact Megan via email, Publications@ZionSA.org. You can also phone Karen Sturdivant in our Church Office, 210-688-3090.

Women of Zion

Join in activities and fellowship with other women in the congregation. Scan the QR code to get on the mailing list, or send an e-mail to WOZ@zionsa.org.

Women of Zion Events

Tuesday August 8, WOZ Bible Study & More. Fellowship, service projects with a Bible study on the second Tuesday at 10:00am in the Fellowship Hall. All women are invited!



WOZ@zionsa.org

Women of Zion and Lutheran World Relief School Supplies Collection

Sundays, August 6, 13, 20

Here are the following items to be collected:

- 70-sheet spiral notebooks (wide ruled or college ruled)
- ruler (inches and centimeters included)
- pencil sharpener
- pair of blunt scissors
- unsharpened pencils
- black or blue ballpoint pens (no gel ink)
- 16 or 24 box of Crayola crayons
- 2 1/2-inch eraser



Please read this list carefully when purchasing your items. Place your items in the red bins in the Narthex or Gazebo.

You may also wish to donate financially - please indicate in the memo line on your check that it is for LWR School Supplies.

Thank you for your donations to this annual event!

Men's Fellowship

Third Monday, August 21 at 6:30pm

All men are invited to meet at Sea Island (11715 Bandera) for food, thoughtful study, camaraderie, and all YOUR ideas for Men's Ministry! Contact David Umlang at imm@zionsa.org if you need more details.



Habitat for Humanity Work Days

September 9 & 29

Great News! We have the dates for Zion workdays. We have the honor of "RAISING THE WALLS" Saturday, September 9, 2023! That means when we arrive, we will only see a foundation and we are done, the frame of the house will be up and ready to be made into a home. And thanks to our generous giving, we have also donated \$5,300 to this endeavor!

We are seeking Adults and Youth age 14+ (Habitat requirement) to help raise the frame. In addition, we need volunteers to prepare at least 30 lunches for the workers on site as well as volunteers to provide bottled water and other supplies for lunches, drivers for a carpool, and making phone calls. There will be an another volunteer opportunity on Friday, September 29.

Online sign-ups are available (see newsletter). Please email Matt Iwanicki at Mkiwanicki@yahoo.com with any questions.

Zion is a Stephen Ministry Church!

We like to think of summer as being a relaxing, enjoyable time.

But hurts, struggles, crises, and problems don't take a

vacation. Many

times, our difficulties seem even worse during the summer because everyone else seems to be enjoying life while you are feeling down.

If you are experiencing a difficult time—emotionally, spiritually, or relationally—you don't have to suffer alone. Our Stephen Ministers are trained caregivers, ready to listen, care for and encourage you, pray with and for you, and provide one-to-one Christian care to help you through whatever it is that you are facing. It's free. It's confidential. And it will make a difference in your life!

To find out more about Stephen Ministry for you or someone you know, talk with one of our Stephen Ministry Leaders: 210-688-3090.



Summer Reflection

Pastor Kathi Johnson

I was reading something recently that asked me to incorporate gratitude throughout my day. Gratitude is so important, especially as people of faith. Gratitude helps us stay grounded in reality; gratitude helps us consider our lives in light of all the ways that God takes care of us. Sometimes we compartmentalize gratitude into November - the month in which we literally celebrate a day called "Thanksgiving." But giving thanks really isn't bound to a calendar - or at least, it shouldn't be.

As I face two weeks away from you all, starting with my surgery on August 1, I am incredibly grateful for you all. I'm sad to say that not every pastor has such a supportive and loving congregation when they need to take time off for medical reasons. The people of Zion - YOU! - have expressed nothing but care and concern for me (and for Steve, too). Thank you for giving me yet another reason to love working here!

I look forward to being back among you in mid-August, just in time to head into a busy fall. Our program year starts back in stages in late August, Wednesday Worship services resume in September, our Church Picnic & BBQ is on October 15 (mark your calendars) - and those are just the highlights! As a congregation, we have so much to look forward to - and so much to be grateful for.

I invite you to spend the next couple of weeks keeping note of something you're grateful for each day. Maybe write it on your calendar, or in your planner, or note it in your phone. Big things, small things, whatever. For what do YOU give thanks to God?



**JULY 30, 2023
NINTH SUNDAY
AFTER PENTECOST**



Solomon's prayer for justice and understanding.

DAILY BIBLE READINGS

These passages are related to the Lectionary texts for this Sunday.

Sunday	Matthew 13:31-33, 44-52	Parables of the kingdom
Monday	1 Kings 3:5-12	Solomon's prayer for wisdom
Tuesday	Romans 8:26-39	God's love in Christ Jesus
Wednesday	Isaiah 30:18-26	God's promise to Zion
Thursday	Amos 5:10-15	Choose good instead of evil
Friday	Luke 6:37-42	Judging others
Saturday	Psalms 119:129-136	The glories of God's law
Sunday	Matthew 14:13-21	Jesus feeds the five thousand

SCRIPTURE VERSE FOR THIS WEEK

"Give your servant [Solomon] therefore an understanding mind to govern your people, able to discern between good and evil." 1 Kings 3:9a (NRSV)

PRAYERS AND BLESSING

A Prayer for the Week:

Come Holy Spirit, come Lord Jesus, give us your truth that we may judge with your steadfast love and mercy for all. Amen.

Mealttime Prayer:

Dear God, for this food we thank you, and for your wisdom, understanding, and mercy we pray to you. Amen.

A Blessing to Give:

May the Lord's face shine on you and teach you God's ways. (Psalm 119:135)



JULY 30, 2023

HYMN OF THE WEEK

*God of Grace and
God of Glory*



taking **+**
faith
home

WEEKLY MILESTONES

Take a moment to tell or think about a recent mountain high and/or valley low in your life.

CARING CONVERSATIONS



Discuss in your home, small group, or use for personal reflections:

- When you have a conflict with someone, are you able to see the situation from the other person's perspective? Explain.
- What makes it difficult to be a fair judge of other people's thoughts and actions?

DEVOTIONS



Read: 1 Kings 3:5-12.

Humans have proven throughout the ages that they can explain away any thoughts and actions. Our own sense of truth and justice can be hurtful and unfair. We know how we can try to fool ourselves and others. Solomon also knew this, so he prayed to God for "*understanding to discern what is right*" (1 Kings 3:11b). The Hebrew literally says, "to hear justice." That is, to let Solomon's mind perceive and hear real justice on behalf of others. This is a daring prayer that puts others before his—and our own—interests. Our imperfect sense of justice and truth needs the humility of Solomon to recognize that God's truth stands out from our own. A good example is when the disciples heard the many parables of Jesus. Perhaps the greater wisdom would have been to acknowledge that they really did not understand them (Matthew 13:51).

Discuss: When have you prayed for wisdom and understanding?

Pray: **God of justice and truth, give us a humble heart that we may see and judge people with mercy and understanding that dares to love others through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

SERVICE



Jesus calls us to serve our neighbor in love. Based on the Daily Bible Readings for this week, how might you serve others humbly and with understanding from their viewpoint?

RITUALS AND TRADITIONS



Jesus told parables to teach people. A parable is a story to explain a moral or spiritual lesson. Matthew 13:31-33, 44-52 includes five different parables that Jesus told to the disciples. Each time, he begins by saying, "*The kingdom of heaven is like ...*". Choose to read one of the five parables and then think or talk about what Jesus is telling you about the kingdom of heaven.

Pray: **Dear God, thank you for Jesus who teaches us about the kingdom of heaven. Help us to take time to learn and to tell others about what Jesus has taught us. Amen.**



In addition to *Taking Faith Home*, celebrate milestones in your daily life as an effective faith formation tool. Go to: www.milestonesministry.org

