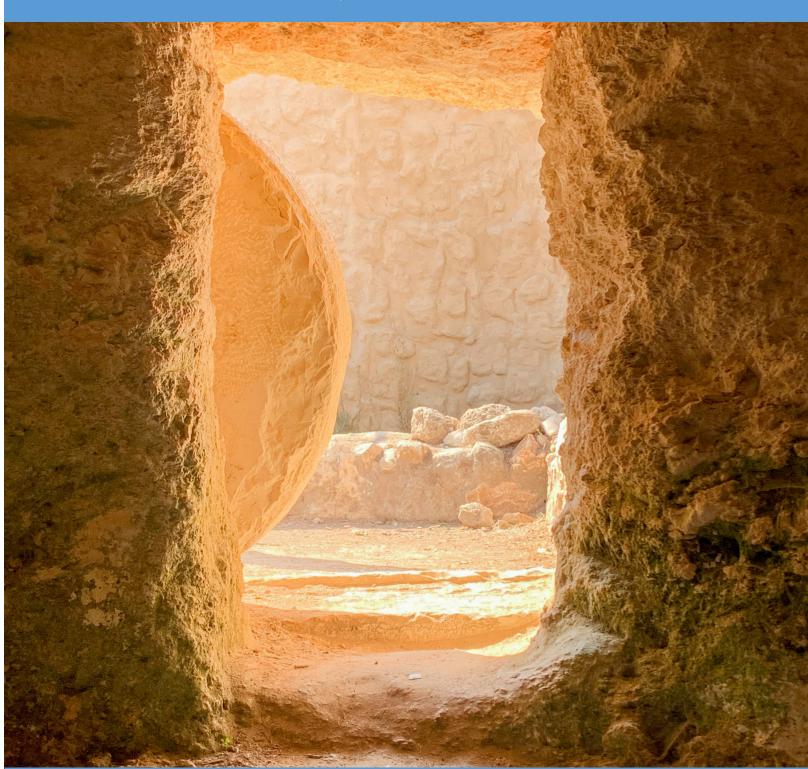
March 31, 2024 • Easter Sunday 8:00, 9:45 and 11:30 am





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.

THE RESURRECTION OF OUR LORD

"Alleluia! Christ is risen!" This Easter greeting rings out our joy every year. Because Jesus lives, we also live.

"Christ died for our sins," our reading from 1st Corinthians reminds us today. But the good news of God doesn't dwell in the tomb. The good news is that God's power was shown fully in raising Christ from the dead. The good news is that God's great love for us was also shown fully in raising Christ from the dead. Because Jesus lives, we also live.

Today begins the Season of Easter - a whole season in our church year is dedicated to remembering and celebrating the Resurrection of Our Lord. "Alleluia! Christ is Risen!" He is risen, indeed. Alleluia!

ON THE COVER

By Pisit Heng 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.

WELCOME Pastor Dan Heim

Please rise, as you are able, when directed.



Jesus Christ Is Risen Today



Text: Latin carol, 14th cent., sts. 1–3; tr. J. Walsh, *Lyra Davidica*, 1708, alt.; Charles Wesley, 1707–1788, st. 4 Music: EASTER HYMN, J. Walsh, *Lyra Davidica*, 1708

GREETING

Alleluia! Christ is risen!

Christ is risen indeed! Alleluia!

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. O God, you gave your only Son to suffer death on the cross for our redemption, and by his glorious resurrection you delivered us from the power of death. Make us die every day to sin, that we may live with him forever in the joy of the resurrection, through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

Please be seated.

WORD

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

CHILDREN'S CHAT

Pastor Dan Heim

FIRST READING: 1 Corinthians 15:1-11

¹Now I would remind you, brothers and sisters, of the good news that I proclaimed to you, which you in turn received, in which also you stand, ²through which also you are being saved, if you hold firmly to the message that I proclaimed to you—unless you have come to believe in vain.

³For I handed on to you as of first importance what I in turn had received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the scriptures, ⁴and that he was buried, and that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the scriptures, ⁵and that he appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve. ⁶Then he appeared to more than five hundred brothers and sisters at one time, most of whom are still alive, though some have died. ⁷Then he appeared to James, then to all the apostles. ⁸Last of all, as to one untimely born, he appeared also to me. ⁹For I am the least of the apostles, unfit to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. ¹⁰But by the grace of God I am what I am, and his grace toward me has not been in vain. On the contrary, I worked harder than any of them—though it was not I, but the grace of God that is with me. ¹¹Whether then it was I or they, so we proclaim and so you have come to believe.

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

Please rise, as you are able, and turn to face the cross as it comes down the aisle.

GOSPEL PROCESSION

Good Christian Friends, Rejoice and Sing!



Text: Cyril A. Alington, 1872–1955, alt.

Music: GELOBT SEI GOTT, Melchior Vulpius, 1570–1615

Text © 1952, ren. 1980 *Hymns Ancient & Modern*, admin. Hope Publishing Company, Carol Stream, IL 60188.

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GOSPEL: John 20:1-18

The Holy Gospel according to John. Glory to you, O Lord.

¹Early on the first day of the week, while it was still dark, Mary Magdalene came to the tomb and saw that the stone had been removed from the tomb. ²So she ran and went to Simon Peter and the other disciple, the one whom Jesus loved, and said to them, "They have taken the Lord out of the tomb, and we do not know where they have laid him." ³Then Peter and the other disciple set out and went toward the tomb. ⁴The two were running together, but the other disciple outran Peter and reached the tomb first. ⁵He bent down to look in and saw the linen wrappings lying there, but he did not go in. ⁶Then Simon Peter came, following him, and went into the tomb. He saw the linen wrappings lying there, ⁷and the cloth that had been on Jesus' head, not lying with the linen wrappings but rolled up in a place by itself. ⁸Then the other disciple, who reached the tomb first, also went in, and he saw and believed; ⁹for as yet they did not understand the scripture, that he must rise from the dead. ¹⁰Then the disciples returned to their homes.

¹² But Mary stood weeping outside the tomb. As she wept, she bent over to look into the tomb; ¹² and she saw two angels in white, sitting where the body of Jesus had been lying, one at the head and the other at the feet. ¹³ They said to her, "Woman, why are you weeping?" She said to them, "They have taken away my Lord, and I do not know where they have laid him." ¹⁴ When she had said this, she turned around and saw Jesus standing there, but she did not know that it was Jesus. ¹⁵ Jesus said to her, "Woman, why are you weeping? Whom are you looking for?" Supposing him to be the gardener, she said to him, "Sir, if you have carried him away, tell me where you have laid him, and I will take him away." ¹⁶ Jesus said to her, "Mary!" She turned and said to him in Hebrew, "Rabbouni!" (which means Teacher). ¹⁷ Jesus said to her, "Do not hold on to me, because I have not yet ascended to the Father. But go to my brothers and say to them, 'I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.'" ¹⁸ Mary Magdalene went and announced to the disciples, "I have seen the Lord"; and she told them that he had said these things to her.

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



Please be seated.

SERMON

Pastor Kathi Johnson

Day of Delight and Beauty Unbounded HYMN OF THE DAY 1 Day of de - light and beau-ty un - bound-ed, tell the the gos - pel news, 2 Day of de - light and beau-ty un - bound-ed, tell the news, the gos - pel Day of all won - der, day of all splen - dor, praise Christ spread! spread! Day of all won - der, day of all splen - dor, praise Christ en from the dead! Sing of the sun from dark - ness ap ris ris en from the dead! Sing now of mourn - ing turned in - to pear - ing; sing of the from bar - ren earth ing; seed green danc - ing; sing now the mys - t'ry, hope of our glo ry; of cre a tion, al - le - lu - ia! Sing of the sing with thanks - giv ing, al - le - lu - ia! Sing now of flow - ing; sing stream from Je - sus' side of the saints fast - ing turned in - to feast - ing; sing the Lord's fa wa - ter made ho - ly; sing of sal - va tion, al - le - lu - ia! last-ing for - ev - er; sing, all things liv - ing, al - le - lu - ia!

Text: Delores Dufner, OSB, b. 1939

Music: IN DIR IST FREUDE, Giovanni Giacomo Gastoldi, 1556–1622

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PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

On this day of resurrection joy, let us offer our prayers for ourselves, our neighbors, and our world.

Each petition ends: God of grace, Response: **Hear our prayer.**

We offer to you these petitions and those we carry in our hearts, trusting in your abundant and ever-present mercy.

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

8:00 Intrada, by Robert Wetzler Ron Sweet, Trumpet

9:45 & 11:30 The Hallelujah Chorus, by G.F. Handel Chancel Choir

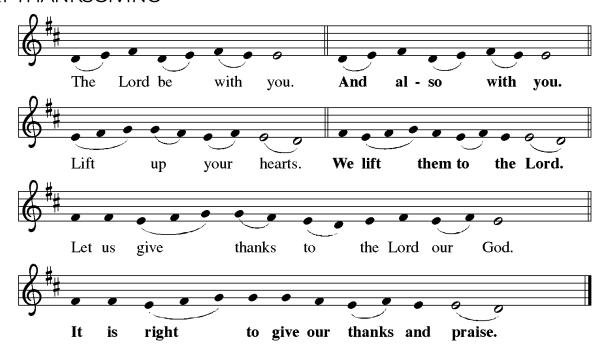
Please rise, as you are able.

OFFERING PRAYER

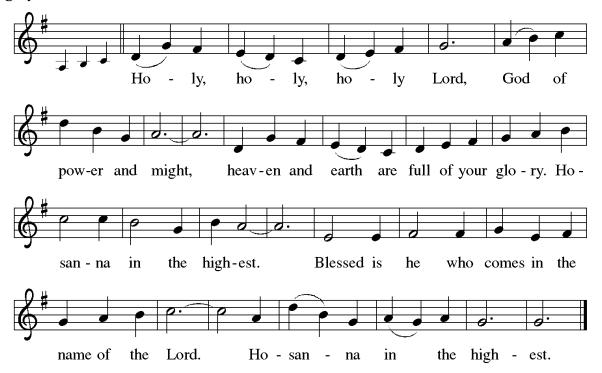
Let us pray. God of good gifts,

receive these and all our offerings as we present them in faithful service for the sake of your gospel. Prepare our hearts to receive you in this meal as you pour out your very presence through Christ Jesus, the wellspring of eternal life. Amen.

GREAT THANKSGIVING



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, for the glorious resurrection of our Savior Jesus Christ, the true Paschal Lamb who gave himself to take away our sin; who in dying has destroyed death, and in rising has brought us to eternal life. And so, with Mary Magdalene and Peter and all the witnesses of the resurrection, with earth and sea and all their creatures, and with angels and archangels, cherubim and seraphim, we praise your name and join their unending hymn:



Holy God, mighty Lord, gracious Father: Endless is your mercy and eternal your reign. You have filled all creation with light and life; heaven and earth are full of your glory.

We praise you for the grace shown to your people in every age: the promise to Israel, the rescue from Egypt, the gift of the promised land, the words of the prophets; and, at this end of all the ages, the gift of your Son, who proclaimed the good news in word and deed and was obedient to your will, even to giving his life.

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.

Therefore, O God, with this bread and cup we remember the life our Lord offered for us. And, believing the witness of his resurrection, we await his coming in power to share with us the great and promised feast.

Amen. Come, Lord Jesus.

Send now, we pray, ♣ your Holy Spirit, that we who share in Christ's body and blood may live to the praise of your glory and receive our inheritance with all your saints in light.

Amen. Come, Holy Spirit.

Join our prayers with those of your servants of every time and every place, and unite them with the ceaseless petitions of our great high priest until he comes as victorious Lord of all. Through him, with him, in him, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, all glory and honor is yours, almighty Father, 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

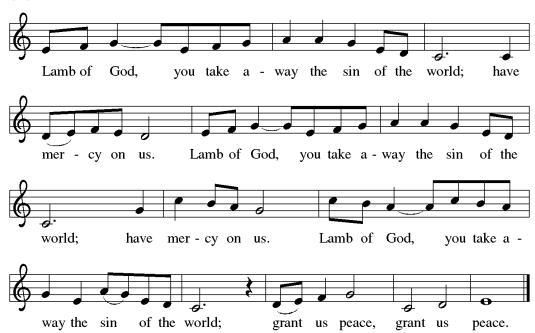
These are the gifts of God for you, the beloved people of God.

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



COMMUNION HYMN

Bread of Life from Heaven



Text: Susan R. Briehl, b. 1952
Music: ARGENTINE SANTO | BREAK NOW THE BREAD, Argentine traditional, refrain; Marty Haugen, b. 1950, stanzas
Text and music © 2001 GIA Publications, Inc., 7404 S. Mason Ave., Chicago, IL 60638. www.giamusic.com. 800.442.3358.
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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. Life-giving God, in the mystery of Christ's resurrection you send light to conquer darkness, water to give new life, and the bread of life to nourish your people. Send us forth as witnesses to your Son's resurrection, that we may show your glory to all the world, through Jesus Christ, our risen Lord. **Amen.**

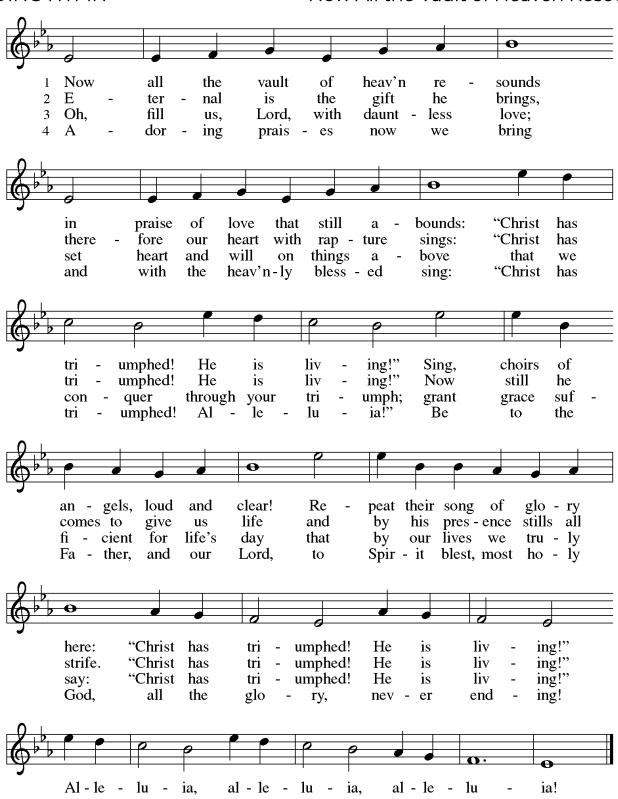
SENDING

God blesses us and sends us out in peace.

BENEDICTION

The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord make his face to shine upon you with grace and mercy. The Lord look upon you with favor and \maltese give you peace.

Amen.



Text: Paul Z. Strodach, 1876-1947, alt.

Music: LASST UNS ERFREUEN, Geistliche Kirchengesänge, Köln, 1623

Text © 1958 Service Book and Hymnal, admin. Augsburg Fortress.

DISMISSAL	
Alleluia! Christ is risen	!
Christ is risen indeed	! Alleluia!
Go in peace and share	the good news.
Thanks be to God.	
POSTLUDE	Fantaisie from Hommage a Frescobaldi, by Jean Langlais
A) /A II A DI E EOD DDA	VED
AVAILABLE FOR PRA	YER service, Stephen Ministers are often available to pray with you at the altar rail. All prayers
and conversations are confid	

THIS WEEK AT ZION

Scan QR code for this month's calendar



Sunday, March 31—Easter Sunday

Worship in person	8am	Sanctuary
Worship in person	9:45	Sanctuary

Worship in person and online 11:30 Sanctuary & YouTube

Monday, April 1

Church Campus Closed

Tuesday, April 2

9		
Exercise Group	9am	Church 2
Staff Meeting	11am	Breakroom
Game Group	12:30	Fellowship Hall
Lutheran Men in Mission Planning Mtg	6:30	Fellowship Hall
Handbell Choir	6:30	Sanctuary Balcony
Children's Choir	7pm	Ministry Center 1
Youth Choir	7pm	Music Apse
Warriors Anonymous	7pm	Church 2

Wednesday, April 3

<u> </u>		
High School/Elementary Mentoring	7:15am	Nichols Elementary
Crafty Bunch	9:30	Ed Bdg Craft Room
Weight Watchers	9:30	Church 2
Wednesday Worship	1&	Historic Chapel
wednesday worship	6:30	mstoric chaper
AA Meeting	7pm	Family Life Center 202
Al-Anon Meeting	7pm	Family Life Center 101
Chancel Choir	7:15	Sanctuary

Thursday, April 4

Quilting for Lutheran World Relief	9:30	Fellowship Hall
Weight Watchers	9:30	Church 2
Memorial Service for Dorothy Rode	10am	Sanctuary
Dinner Out	6:30	Off Campus—Box St.
Fiesta Flutes Rehearsal	7pm	Church 2

Saturday, April 6

Weight Watchers	7:30& 9:30am Church 2

Sunday, April 7

Suriday, April 7		
Women of Zion	8:30	Gazebo, Narthex
Worship in person	9am	Sanctuary
Faith Formation Hour for all ages	10:15	Various Rooms
Worship in person and online	11:30	Sanctuary & YouTube

Page 18

Worship Support

Altar Guild

Mary Jo Goldenbaum, Susan Johns, Suzi Lockamy, Joe & Susan Noonan Carrie Schmitzer, Karen Sturdivant, Carolyn Thronson, Karen Umlang

Crucifer

9:45	Kevin	Kretzsc	hmar
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11:30 Josh Elkin

Book Bearer

9:45 Jenn Kretzschmar

Lay Readers

0.00 Karen Omnang	8:00	Karen	Umlan	g
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9:45 Kevin Hoag

11:30 Eileen Spehr

Communion Servers

8:00 Laura Knoll, Karen Umlang

9:45 Rachel Cannady,
Bonnie & Brinkley Harrell,
Don Jones, Suzi Lockamy,
Melanie Murray, Bev Rosel,
Amy Swanson

11:30 Bonnie & Brinkley Harrell

Livestream

Steve Johnson, David Umlang

Sound

Scott Van Doren

Ushers

Allen Cockrell,
Audrey & Caleb DeHart,
Kim & Mike DeHart, Pam Gammage,
Mary Jo & Paul Goldenbaum,
Dan Graham,
Bonnie & Brinkley Harrell,
Bruce & Linda Krueger, Irvin Moss,
Carolyn Pfeiffer, James Sturdivant,
David Thamm

Upcoming Memorial Services

Memorial Service for Dorothy Rode Thursday, April 4, 10am at Zion

Memorial Services for Vernon Enderlin Saturday, April 13, 11am at Zion

Music Rehearsals

Handbells

Tuesday Balcony 6:30pm

Children's (Gr 2-5)

Tuesday 7-7:45pm MC-1

Youth (Gr 6-12)

Tuesday 7-8pm Apse

Chancel (Adults)

Wednesday 7:15pm Sanctuary

OFFICE CONTACT



Mon-Thur 8:30am-5:00pm Friday close at 3:00pm



210-688-3090



zion@zionsa.org



Website zionsa.org



Facebook zionsa



Instagram @zionsatx



9944 Leslie Road, 78254

Bible 101: Bible Studies from a Lutheran Perspective

2nd and 4th Thursdays - 9:30am Led by Pastor Eileen Spehr in the Fellowship Hall on April 11 & 25. Series will continue with new topics.

Game Group

Tuesday, April 2 at 12:30pm

Come for table games and daytime fellowship for all ages. Meet in the Fellowship Hall on the first and third Mondays. Contact Algine Perry through the church office if you have questions.

Dinner Out

Thursday, April 4, seating at 6:30pm

Box St. (@ La Cantera Pkwy)

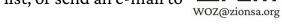
Extend your Easter Celebration with us at Box St - brunch all day at a new location for 2024. RSVP today to Dave and Doris Newman at 210.859.7860 or ddnewman@mac.com.

Women of Zion

Tuesday April 9

WOZ Bible Study & More. Join in activities and fellowship with other women in the congregation. Fellowship, service projects with a Bible study on the second Tuesday at 10:00am in the Fellowship

Hall. All women are invited! Scan the QR code to get on the mailing list, or send an e-mail to WOZ@zionsa.org.





Men's Fellowship Dinner

Third Monday, April 15 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 lmm@zionsa.org if you need more details.

Zion Zippers

Monday, April 8, 6pm, Fellowship Hall The seniors' Zion Zippers, will meet in Fellowship Hall to enjoy a potluck meal. Attendees are requested to bring a little extra food to share, as there will be 6 - 8 additional guests this month. The guests will be flamenco dancers who are graciously donating their time to entertain us! Come join the fun and enjoy their lively performance.

Crafty Bunch

Wednesdays at 9:30

The Crafty Bunch meets in the Education Building on the west side of Leslie Road. Enter at the double doors, behind Churches 1 and 2. The craft room is the first room on the right. Bring your own project to work on.

Quilting for LWR

1st and 3rd Thursdays at 9:30am

Come on out on the first and third Thursdays of the month at 9:30 in the Fellowship Hall. Contact Diane Stewart through the church office if you need more details.

The durable quilts we make are sent all over the world to be used as bedding, room dividers, and shelter. If you can't make it to the quilting meetings, quilt tops can be sewn at home at your convenience. Fabric is provided.

The LWR Quilters are always in need of new and gently used twin size and larger fl at sheets for quilt backing. Sheets can be dropped off at the Fellowship Hall during any quilting time.

STAFF CONTACT	Day Off
Pastor Kathi Johnson Senior Pastor	Monday
kjohnson@ZionSA.org	
Pastor Dan Heim Pastor, Youth and Fami dheim@ZionSA.org	<i>Friday</i> ly
Suzie Wyatt Administrator swyatt@ZionSA.org	Thursday afternoon
Rob Mikulski Music Director rmikulski@ZionSA.org	Monday
Sammy Mikulski Theatre Director theatre@ZionSA.org	Monday

2024 CONGREGATION COUNCIL

Bud Halstead	President
Allen Cockrell	Treasurer
Chris Jones	Vice President
Erica Macha	Secretary
David Umlang	At Large
Rachel Williams	At Large
Shiloh Love	At Large
Pr. Kathi Johnson	Senior Pastor
Pr. Dan Heim	Pastor

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.



https://secure.myvanco.com/YJYN/campaign/C-12GYC

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June 17-21 and/or June 24-28

For those entering Kindergarten

through grade 7 in Fall '24. Youth-led daycamp, developing young leaders through hands-on activity with the Bible, worship, art, STEM, games, drama, snacks and more. Disciple Campers (6th & 7th graders) are further challenged with off-site service and learning projects with our mission partner, Nichols Elementary School.

Cost is \$125 first camper, \$115 for each additional sibling. Before/after care \$25 per hour. Use this QR to register. Scholarships are available.



Update to Zion's Recycling Collection

Zion is currently collecting ONLY aluminum cans in the swing-top collection barrel in the south (cemetery side) parking lot, next to the shed. For the health and safety of our volunteers:



Please empty, dry, and crush aluminum beverage cans, without any food or beverage residue that will attract vermin.



Do not include plastic-lined cans, steel cans or other metal in this swing-top aluminum can collection barrel.



Do not put paper, plastic, food or any other trash in this swing-top aluminum can collection barrel. A trash can is provided nearby for everything else.



ELCA NATIONAL YOUTH GATHERING FUNDRAISERS



NOLA Celebration!

Sunday, April 21, 8am-1pm Fellowship Hall Beignets, fruit and coffee breakfast, jambalaya and hot dogs lunch, Mardi Gras masks, beads and activities for children.

Car Wash
Sunday, May 12, 8:30 am – 12 pm
Drop off your car and youth will wash during worship or Faith Formation hour.



In July, 22 Zion youth and 5 adults will go to New Orleans for the triennial gathering of ELCA youth.

The trip costs \$1200 per person, and we have set a goal of raising half of that through Zion fundraisers, with participants paying the remaining \$600.

(The Fall Craft Fair got us off to a nice start with about \$5,000 raised!)

As you are able, please come out and support the trip at any or all of these fundraisers!

Free will offering will be accepted for each.

MARCH 31, 2024 EASTER SUNDAY



Christ is risen. Alleluia!

DAILY BIBLE READINGS

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

Sunday	John 20:1-18	The tomb is empty
Monday	Acts 10:34-43	God shows no partiality
Tuesday	1 Corinthians 15:1-11	Christ died for our sins
Wednesday	Hebrews 12:1-12	The example of Jesus
Thursday	John 1:1-5	In the beginning was the Word
Friday	Romans 5:1-5	Being acceptable to God
Saturday	Psalm 118:1-2, 14-24	Give thanks to the Lord
Sunday	John 20:19-31	Come and see and believe

SCRIPTURE VERSE FOR THIS WEEK

Early on the first day of the week, while it was still dark, Mary Magdalene came to the tomb and saw that the stone had been removed from the tomb. John 20:1 (NRSV)

PRAYERS AND BLESSING

A Prayer for the Week:

Living God, we thank you for your Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, who has conquered sin and death for us through his death and resurrection. Amen. Christ is risen! Alleluia.

Mealtime Prayer:

Dear God, for this gift of food and for the resurrection of Jesus Christ we give you thanks for your steadfast love that endures forever! Amen.

A Blessing to Give:

May the risen Christ bless you with hope and joy.



MARCH 31, 2024

HYMN OF THE WEEK

Jesus Christ Is Risen Today



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:

- What is something you hope for but wonder if it will ever happen?
- What makes Easter important to you?

DEVOTIONS



Read: John 20:1-18.

Mary came to the tomb early in the morning when it was still dark. The darkness versus light theme is found from the beginning of the Gospel of John, "The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it." (John 1:5) When we gather in worship on Easter Sunday, we expect light and beauty to fill the sanctuary. That is not the story of the first Easter in the Gospel of John. It includes more references to death and the tomb than the other three Gospels. Death and darkness are realities, even on Easter. There is confusion and misunderstanding, including Mary not recognizing Jesus and two of the disciples not understanding that Jesus "must rise from the dead" (v. 9). Perhaps John wants us to dwell a little longer on the reality of death and darkness that surrounds us, even today. A closer look at the frailty and sorrows of life and our own misunderstandings makes the message of Christ's resurrection stand out all the more. It might just make Easter even brighter, our hearts even warmer, and our hope even stronger. Christ is risen! Alleluia.

Discuss: What is hard for you to understand about the resurrection?

Pray: Almighty and everlasting God, for your glory and power over sin and death we sing your praises now and forever through Jesus Christ, the one who died so that we may live forevermore. Amen.

SERVICE



Jesus calls us to serve our neighbor in love. Based on the Daily Bible Readings and theme for this week, how can you give hope to someone going through a tough time?

RITUALS AND TRADITIONS



Alleluia means "praise the Lord." The word Alleluia is traditionally not used and is "buried" during Lent. It is resurrected on Easter. Light all seven candles of the seven votive candles shaped like a cross that have been used during Lent. Consider using the candles as a centerpiece for Easter dinner. Write the word Alleluia on post-it notes or index cards. Place them around the candle cross.

Say: Christ is risen; He is risen, indeed! Alleluia.

Then pray: This is the day the Lord has made. Let us rejoice and be glad in it. Amen. (Psalm 118:24)

