



Vol. 20

February 2020

No. 2



2019 Annual Report
Pastor John Loyal Golv
Zion & Silver Creek Lutheran Churches

Whatever else we may wish to say, 2019 was a year of God's grace. Much of God's grace we know. We are able often to put names to gifts. Many times, we simply cannot. Every year gratitude to God must always come first.

Miracles have occurred here. We know who God is. We know how God is revealed. We know that God always cares, and always loves. God was revealed to us in bread and wine. God took us into his life in Holy Baptism. These are everyday miracles, so common as to become routine, but nonetheless these are revelatory miracles.

I have long believed that when the congregation's worship life is strong, all other ministries can be strong too. Our congregation's worship life is strong now with a good foundation to build upon.

There have been some supremely difficult times in 2019. Death at any age is always out of place, even when there is genuine hope in the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

There have been some supremely wonderful times too. With Redeemer Lutheran we welcomed Madison Crane as Director for Youth and Family ministry for our parish. It is my hope that cooperative arrangements like this one will open new ways to do mission together.

Zion Lutheran Church is healthy and strong. Lay leadership is healthy and strong. From my perch it is clear that careful, faithful, forward-thinking leadership is assumed and all but taken for granted. Leaders who are willing to lead and do what love requires are not common. Zion Lutheran Church is blessed with leaders who follow their Lord and chart the way forward with grace and prayerful consideration. As is always the case, the faithful church of the future will require that business as usual will not simply be repeated. Please do take time to offer ongoing support and encouragement.

I could not be more grateful to Zion Lutheran Church.

I will retire after worship on Sunday, April 19, 2020.

- February 16 – Flapjacks for Faith
- February 26 – Ash Wednesday
- April 10 – Prayer Vigil
- April 9 – Seder Meal
- April 12 - Easter



God's Creation Calendars For Sale

\$8.00.

See Kami or Madison to purchase

1982 – 2020

I find myself reflecting not only on the last year, but also on previous years. The strongest need I have now is the need to offer personal, heartfelt gratitude. I find that I am unable to offer complete thanks where complete thanks is due. I will never be finished with that task.

Having said that, more gratitude than can be expressed well is due to Cathy. But, my genuine gratitude is what I can give. Through my emotional, professional, and financial ups and downs she has been unfailingly constant.

More than is ever noticeable is required to be a pastor's wife.

Personal sacrifice, foreseen and unforeseen, is a general rule. No holidays, ever. Weekends on vacation, only. The spouse is preoccupied, nearly always. It seems often enough that church matters take first place even before family matters. It seems often enough that the husband's personal allegiance is to the church first, then to the marriage. Long set vacation plans can be interrupted at a moment's notice. The expectations of a pastor's spouse can be onerous and unfair, as well as humorous and glorious.

This is an example of what it takes. Having been asked, and asked again, and asked again (for private information) Cathy finally said, "You know, he doesn't tell me anything."

Faith in God has carried us our married life.

John 1:14 is the Incarnation. This passage has been inspirational for me from year one.

To see Jesus is to see God. To hear Jesus is to hear God. One incarnational miracle is this: our words can communicate God's Word. These words do what they say. The book most responsible for this is: *Introduction To A Theological Theory of Language*, by Gerhard Ebeling.

The glorious musical tradition of the Christian Church is endlessly inspirational and instructive. It always has the potential for surprising emotional and revelatory power. Instrumental trends come and go. Hymn preferences come and go. The Source is constant.

The people of **Rhame**, North Dakota, (1982 – 1985) and the members of First and Bethany Lutheran were patient with me, a young man, in my first call, a recent graduate of Luther Seminary. My head was full of academic theology. I was determined to do well for them. I was not aware of how patient they were, and had to be, at the time. Our first, Michael, was born in Hettinger.

The people of **Alvarado**, MN, (1985 – 1990) and the members of New Hope Lutheran, were led by people who were too far in front of everyone. They have their new building now, though I had no part in it. I learned that members determined to fight, will fight. I saw that even the most persistent ethnic traditions, fade. The “New Church” (ELCA) began in 1988. Our second and third, Sarah and Christopher, were born at United Hospital, Grand Forks.

The people of **Hampton**, Iowa, (1990 – 1995) and the members of St. Paul Lutheran Church were at a high point in their journey. One service was not enough. Of the many good memories there one reaction to a sermon is one I will always treasure. After worship on the way out an English teacher looked me in the eyes and said, “...comes the poet.” Eventually, the facility in Hampton proved too small. Sarah and Chris started school here.

The synod staff of **Northeastern Iowa**, and Bishop Steve Ullestad (1995 - 2000) had to adjust to changing patterns of financial support. They did. The most effective congregational stewardship program in the history of the Lutheran Church, *Consecration Sunday*, was in its hey-day at the time. Successes using this program had the effect of making the new Director of Stewardship Education look good. There were several professional highlights during those few years.

Trinity Lutheran in **Lindstrom**, MN (2001 – 2005) was often an occasion for the harsh side of life. The time there ended with the associate forced to retire and me resigning without call. The ministries of this congregation have survived all this. They not only continued but in time, blossomed. Our children graduated here. Our daughter Sarah met her future husband here.

There were interim ministries at Christiania, south of Lakeville MN, the Holt parish, and Peace Lutheran in Fargo.

Zion Lutheran in **Thief River Falls**, MN (10/10/2010 – 4/19/2020) brought many aspects of life full circle. One of the former pastors at Trinity, TRF was a man by the name of Gjermund (Jerry) Thompson. I got to know him in his retirement home in Northfield, MN. I could not have known then that his son David, Associate Pastor at St. John’s Lutheran (in Northfield), who grew up in Thief River Falls, would be the one to ordain me at First Lutheran in Brookings, SD. David was a graduate of Lincoln High School, as was Professor Paul Sponheim, one of the most brilliant teachers and examples of faith that I have ever seen.

From Zion Lutheran I learned again what good people Christians can be. I learned again that God is at work in visible and non-visible ways. I learned again that God’s Word has the power to do what it says. I learned again (grudgingly) that it is not enough to do good work, it is also necessary to be seen to be doing good work.

Over and over again I have had to relearn that it is far too easy to get fully caught up in everyday matters. Opinions come and go. Points of view come and go. So do controversies, and arguments, and evaluations. One thing is constant.

A colleague always began a new congregational ministry by saying: “I will disappoint you.” To those I have disappointed I sincerely apologize. His comment does of course work both ways. As far as I am concerned all of that is past, forgotten and forgiven.

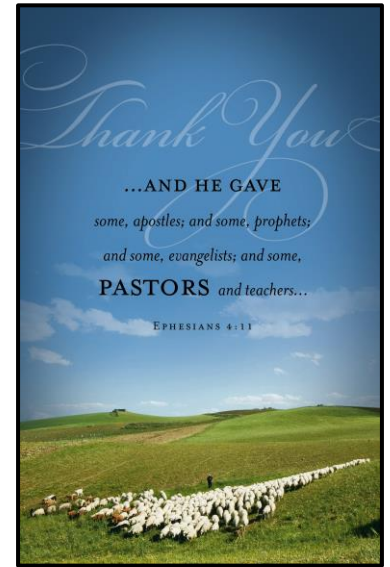
The Theodicy Question (How is it that God is good, given the existence of evil?)

This question has been a painful one life-long. No satisfying answer has ever emerged. Experiences in ministry have repeatedly forced the question in bald, supremely painful ways. There have been times when God seemed far away, or absent altogether. I have officiated at or attended funerals for children. The spiritual urge to make this make sense on our terms can simply be overpowering. The search for an answer to the why question has led me to several responses. None of the responses is sufficient. None of them will take the (very nearly unbearable) pain away. These are the responses that have upheld me. This first one is the best (for me). This is the answer to prayer that Paul got in 2 Corinthians 12:9: "...my grace is sufficient for you." Another is the answer that Job got when he wondered why (the answer from God, in paraphrase, "Who are you to ask?"). The third response when bad things happen; God makes introductions to the people we need to know. I believe that there is no final answer. I have seen again and again that faithful people do survive what seems unsurvivable at the time. The Gospel prevails. Life with God does continue. Blessings do continue. None of us continues alone, ever.

In all: 5 congregations, 1 synod staff position, 3 interims, 6 associate pastors, 7 youth directors, and many, many good and faithful people.

I will retire after worship on Sunday, April 19, 2020, with gratitude to all.

At the end of one ministry is often the prospect of another. I have had last Sundays many times. This time however, there is no new call to describe. I will begin another phase of ministry in the name of Jesus Christ, but not a parish ministry.



HELP US OUT, PLEASE

Zion is in the process of updating member information. If you have contact information such as addresses, home phone, cell phone or email addresses, please email the information to ziontrf@mncable.net or call 681-32896.

Chelsey Abrahamson, Morgan Alby, C J Annis, Ashley and Tammee Bacon, Aaron and Cammy Bahner, Chase Bakke, Kelsey and Wyatt Bannerman, Karen, Lisa, Valerie Basher, Joe and Pam Bauer, Zachary Bauer, Ray and Carol Baughman, Kyla Bays, Gene and Katrina Bedard, Benjamin Beito, Brittany Beito, Dawn Brekke, Stephanie Benson, Tim Benson, Kimberly Berg

Scott Carlson, Steven Carlson, Dan Carpenter, Stephanie Clow, Tera Collins, Dennis Comstock, Karen Comstock, Trisha Curry, Michael Dahle, Nicolas Daley, Adam Dallmann, Kayla Decowski, Kim Decowski, Tyler Decowski, Alec Dicken, Mitchell Dicken, Kelsey Dimmen, Gregory Dossier, Hunter Duffney, Erica Emmans

Dawn Benke, Steve Bergland, Christopher Blankenfeld, Sophie Bolter, Paul Borchert, Shirley Borgen, Mark Borsheim, Arica Braaten, Kelly Braaten, Brett Bandon, Joel Bren, Debra Breuer, Gil Breuer, Matthew Breuer, Mary Broten, Trudi Brown, Steve Burslie, Karlee and Susan Burstad, Betty Bustrack, Jason Carlson



President's Message

Laura Rude

Dear Zion Church Family-

Already the year is off to a fast and furious pace. So many events have already taken place in our church and of course the weather has been as unpredictable as Pastor Ale's jokes! (Just kidding Pastor Ale) The promise of better weather is encouraging as we turn the calendar forward.

As I contemplate how this year will be for us as a church, I always come up with more questions than answers. This is a very humbling feeling and one that requires patience and a lot of FAITH. I do not know what future will bring but I hope and pray that together we will come together as a church family and have good conversation to make the best decisions we can for our future. There is always comfort in knowing who really does hold the future in His hands. Leaning on Him will always and forever be essential in our journey.

Recently, I was lucky enough to be involved in leadership training at my work and I was exposed to a some very inspiring content. One quote that really resonated with me with was "Don't try to be the best in the world. Be the best for the world." This spoke loudly to me as Christian in a world full of pain and hopelessness. **How can I be that "best" for someone in their world?** Most often it's just by the simplest unselfish act of kindness. Jesus asks us to love our neighbors as ourselves. Are we living that out? How will you show up for the world around you? This should be the 'Call to Action' in our everyday! Praying the love of Jesus surrounds us and inspires us to be that beacon of Light in a world that so desperately needs it!

Your continued prayers for God's guidance and clarity as the Council and Boards try our best in leading the church in the direction that God would have us to go. Our mission is still to spread God's Word and Love to the world. As always please make sure and check out the rest of the Newsletter for events to support, promote and attend. Invite a friend, neighbor and/or stranger to church. There is a Faith Family waiting for them!

Humbly in Christ's service-

Laura Rude



Madison Crane

Director of Children, Youth, and Families
Zion and Redeemer Lutheran Churches

To build a bigger table is the goal of our synod. Did you know that? What happens at tables? Gathering. Conversation. FOOD. At mealtimes, maybe your family prays a special thanksgiving.

The goal of Lutherans within our ELCA synod in Northwestern Minnesota is to be including and nourishing. How I see those two goals in a family and youth ministry looks a bit like this:

The disciple Andrew, only named in scripture about a handful of times, yet he *introduced* people to Jesus. One of those times, he found a boy with bread and fish, and through Jesus Christ fed 5,000. Not five. Not fifty. Five thousand. All Andrew did was bring a boy and food to Jesus, and the miracle of feeding thousands happened.

Communication. How do we let others know we want to connect with them, if we don't talk with them. Talking at or about someone won't do you much good, unless you express your interest in connecting to them directly. Get out of ruts and into a healthy routine. It's easy to be on a screen all the time. Be intentional about putting your phone down when talking to someone. Put phones away at the dinner table. Some tips to get conversation going would be to ask what the best, least favorite, and anticipated part of someone's day was.

Nourishment. That doesn't mean just your mom's famous hotdish- not limited to in depth conversation that shows care and stretching our comfort zones. We have many gifts and skills to extend the table that already exists, and if we share the invitation and introduce others to Jesus as Andrew did, we may see the blessing of feeding five or five thousand with the gifts we have to share with one another.

I just finished reading *So the Next Generation Will Know*, a book about preparing young Christians for a challenging world including technology, communication, and how young peoples' constantly changing world. If you interact with anyone in Generation Z (those born between 2000-2015), I highly recommend this book filled with Biblical guidance to young people exploring their own faith. If we extend the invitation to young people, include them in a nurturing conversation about what faith is, and listen to what they have to say, we will each show our love in Christ!



WELCA - February 11

All women of Zion are invited to the WELCA meeting on Tuesday, February 11, at 10:00 a.m. Join us for food, fellowship and Bible study.

Responsibilities for the month are: Program - Rebekah; Hostess - Dorcas; Hospitality - Lydia. For visitation we will be delivering carnations to our homebound members

Please have two ladies from each circle to help with the delivery of flowers.

Board meets at 9:00 a.m.



Lenten Supper Schedule

WELCA circles will again serve a meal each Wednesday evening before the Lenten service. The schedule is:
February 26 (Ash Wednesday) - Anna Circle - macaroni hot dish
March 4 - catered - potatoes & ham

March 11 - Dorcas - chicken ala king
March 18 - Elizabeth - tater tot hot dish
March 25 - Rebekah – stew
April 1 - Sarah - chili
April 8 - No supper
April 9 - (Seder meal) – Lydia

Silver Creek

The few members that braved the weather on Sunday, January 19, held a successful annual meeting, enjoyed a potluck and packed away the Christmas s trimmings. Anyone who would like a copy of the annual report can pick one up at the church. We had another year filled with blessings for our congregation. Thanks goes out to officers who serve so faithfully and continue to accept the leadership challenges for the coming year.



We have received notification from Corrie Oliver that she will no longer be available to serve as our organist on a regular basis. She has been so faithful and truly appreciated. We thank Connie Stock for agreeing to take on this responsibility. We know she will do a nice job but would like some help when she is unavailable. We ask that our members to talk to pianists to see if they would consider being a sub for Silver Creek.

Council will have its regular meeting after services on February 9.

WELCA will be quilting at 1:00 pm on Wednesday, February, 12, and continue on Thursday, February 13 at 2:30 This way we can spend more time quilting and less time with setup and cleanup. We have a lot of tops that need to be tied and hope to have some willing hands to get as many as possible completed. Our regular meeting will begin with a light supper at 5:00 pm on Thursday, February 13. Business meeting and Bible Study will follow. Our lesson is *Friend or Foe*, #5 in the *Women and Identity* book.

Program booklets for WELCA will be available as soon as they are printed.

Let's not forget February 14 is Valentines Day. *Let us love one another because love is of God.* 1John 4:7

Bev Ruprecht



Zion Lutherans Parish Planning Council Minutes January 20, 2020

The Parish Planning Council meeting was called to order by President Laura Rude at 5:31 pm. In attendance were Laura Rude, Pastor John Golv, Pastor Ale Tulu, Tim Numedahl, Bonnie Yost, Barbara Overbye, Madison Crane, Dennis Yost, Darlene Hulteen, Marijo Nabben, Sharon Jorde, Mike Spears, Glenice Johnson and Deb Holtan.

Pastor Ale led the council in prayer.

The minutes from the December 17, 2019 meeting were presented. A motion was made to accept the minutes. The motion was approved.

Treasurers Report: Discussion was held on the proposed budget for the upcoming year. Pastor John's last Sunday will be April 19th. Barbara pointed out that the worship budget has been adjusted for the Sundays when the need arises to have a fill-in pastor. The budget for utilities was also adjusted due to rising costs. Continuing Education was lowered due to the fact that we will be down to one pastor. Adjustments were made in salaries to bring them up to 2019's synod guidelines.

A lengthy discussion was held on what the future holds for Zion because of the budget. The council feels that there's a need to have group discussions about the upcoming changes that might have to be made. Discussion was also held on moving the semi annual meeting from June to September. In the past one of the issues is to have a quorum since attendance drops during the summer months. This will be presented at the annual meeting on Sunday January 26th. It was also pointed out that we need to be very mindful of our sister church, Silver Creek. All agreed that the council will need feed back from the congregation.

A motion was made and accepted to present the 2020 Proposed Budget as it stands to the congregation at the annual meeting on January 26, 2020. The motion was seconded and carried.

The Treasurers Report was presented and was filed for audit.

Youth and Family Supervisory Session: The report of the session which was held on January 19, 2020 was presented to the council. A motion was made for approval of the \$500 moving allowance and increase in Madison's salary from \$37,500.00 to \$39,000.00. The motion was seconded and was approved.

Stewardship: Dennis reported that the board did not meet. They will meet again in February.

Worship: Sharon reported that the board did not meet.

Properties: "The trees are down!" Lights have been fixed through out the church. The ice machine in the kitchen has been taken to be repaired. They are looking at putting a heater in the nurses' office. Two windows in the "quilter's room" were broken. The window has three panes and the two outside ones are the ones that were broken. No repairs will be done until the weather is warmer.

Evangelism and Lay Ministry: New Member Recognition Sunday, sixteen adults and six children were recognized. 50-70 people attended the potluck afterwards. Discussion was held that we have just one "New Member Sunday" in a year with the thought of holding it in February of 2021. The board would like to help promote the Hotdish Cook Off this spring. The board still has plans on presenting "Effective Parenting in a Defective World".

Christian Ed and Youth – and – Youth and Family: Madison presented the report which included the following: The bible that is presented at baptisms will be handed out by one of its board members. There are three new Facebook pages. One for Little Lambs through 5th grade, one for 6th-8th grade and one for 9th-12th

grade. Each will have a different “administrator”. Family events will be one per quarter. The upcoming Family Event will be baking Valentine cookies. There will be a signup sheet and a \$5.00 donation for this event. Any leftover cookies will be brought to the Law Enforcement Center. A weather cancellation policy plan is being looked at trying to make it more efficient.

Parish Fellowship: Glenice reported they are working on “tweaking” the funeral policy with the funeral home. Fees from the funerals go to WELCA which is now their biggest way of raising money since they no longer do the Syttende Mai Supper. The money from these fees helps to keep the kitchen going and supplied. Zion prefers that Zion’s Sharing Servants serves at funerals held here. The month of December is still in need of leaders. Parish Fellowship covered this past December’s duties.

WELCA: Glenice reported that at their December Tea, Christmas cards were given to the shut ins and at the nursing homes. Now in February they will deliver carnations to the “in town” people along with a card and will send a card to people outside of town. The Circles will be serving the Lenten Suppers. This is becoming more and more challenging so more are opting to have the main dish catered. The youth will help again with the clean up after the suppers. Any monies left after expenses are taken from the suppers will go to the youth towards camp expenses. The women would also like to explore updating the downstairs bathrooms, asking Properties to look at what it would cost. Zion will host the Synodical meeting in September.

Publications: Darlene reported the board is working on the church’s website and will be meeting with someone this coming Friday. Talk has started on a new church directory coming in 2021. So work is being done on updating membership information.

Pastor Ale: February 27th will be the annual meeting here at Zion for the area pastors.

Pastor John: Pastor John submitted his report pointing out that the Commissioning Worship for Madison will be at Redeemer on Wednesday the 29th at 6:30 p.m. Looking ahead, Ash Wednesday is February 26th. Lenten services will again be in a Round Robin forum. There are six parishes, eleven churches with seven pastors. The theme for this year will be picked this coming Thursday.

Vice President Tim Numedahl: Tim handed out a copy of an article he found on churches that are growing that he found interesting and as an FYI to the council. The meeting was adjourned at 7:10 p.m. following the Lord’s Prayer.
Respectfully submitted by
Deb Holtan, Council Secretary.

Sixteen adults and six children became part of Zion’s family on January 12. Please welcome:

Nick Beito
Lana Christianson
Teri Forsberg
Alecia Hunt, Jacie and Rlyin
Brad and Kyla Klaven, Jaycee and Nolan
Steven Janzow and Chaslin Magner
Larry Korpi, Jr.
Amber Meier and Abby
Gen and Lynae Nesland
Deborah Ford and Raymond Nelson



Zion welcomes new members at any time during the church year. Recognition Sunday will be held once a year.

Reminders - Evangelism/Lay Ministry Board

Lenten Worship beginning on Ash Wednesday, February 26
12th Annual Prayer Vigil on Friday, April 10
Effective Parenting in a Defective World between services in March
Home Communion – Call church office

No February Reminders:

March Reminders:

March 1 -

NEW!

- ✝ 8:30am Service: Little Lamb – 1st Grade will sign during the service.
- ✝ 10:30am Service: 2nd Grade – 5th Grade will sign during the service.

April Reminders:

April 12 -

- ✝ NO SUNDAY SCHOOL/Easter Sunday

Please join us on Facebook!

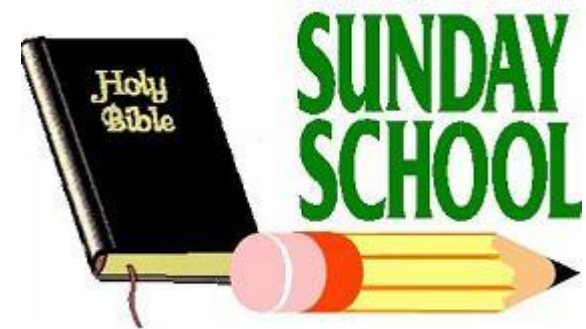
- ✝ **Facebook:** Zion Lutheran Church Sunday School – TRF
- ✝ We would also highly suggest joining the **Zion Lutheran Church Youth – Thief River Falls** page to stay up to date on all youth events.

If you have any questions about Sunday school, please call Becky (218-686-5563) or Davina (218-689-4965)

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**February 2 - Middle School Youth Event**

- SUPER Games! Before the Big Game
- Learn why we play for God's team, and strengthen our faith! Redeemer 3:00 – 5:00



**February 9 - PreK-5th Grade Youth Event**

- Movie at Zion in Youth Room
- 3:00 -5:00 pm

**February 9 - Middle School Youth Group**

- Redeemer in Youth Room
- 5:30 - 7:30 pm

**February 13 - Family Event**

- Sweet Time - Bake cookies. We will decorate extra cookies to deliver to Law Enforcement that will be working on Valentine's Day.
- Devotional about God's love
- Sign up sheet is on Madison's door
- \$5.00 fee per family to cover the costs of baking supplies
- 

**February 16 – Flapjacks for Faith**

- 

**February 16 – 17 - Middle School and Senior High**

- (6th-12th grade) are invited to join Trinity, Redeemer, and Zion Skiing/snowboarding/tubing at Buena Vista.
- Registration due by February 10

**February 22 - 23 – Senior High Youth Gathering at Luthercrest Bible Camp**

**February 26 - Senior High Youth Group**

- Zion in Youth Room
- 7:30 - :00 pm in Youth Room!