

October 2011 NEWSLETTER

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"Coach's" Comments:

Every fall Zion Church engages in a stewardship campaign. In response we have members who say, "The Church is always asking for money." That statement is profoundly **untrue**. It is the **world** which always asks for money, **not** the church.

When did you last go to the grocery store and the cashier failed to ask you for money? Your mortgage company asks for money with unflinching regularity. If you live like most people, each month brings a new collection of bills. Are any of those bills from the church? No. Yet, who withholds a percentage of every dollar you earn. Your "Uncle" does that. The church does not!

There is no free lunch -- except **at** church. You can attend worship every week and not be charged admission. If you are sick, your pastor will visit you in the hospital. Where else can you get free counseling when you need it? Where will your children be married? Several hundred people receive a newsletter each month. None receives a subscription notice "asking for money," as with other periodicals.

What do you do when your loved one dies? What will it cost? The funeral home will certainly charge for its services. Your church will not. The church building will always be there when you need it -- clean, heated, and with a kitchen and nursery provided. You may make full use of it and never pay a dime. No one will even know whether you contribute or not.

You have to pay taxes to provide your children "free" public education, but your church operates an incredible Sunday school and youth program which gives quality Christian education experiences with absolutely no cost or obligation.

The church requires no set membership fee, no annual dues. It never sends its members a bill; a statement of your gifts, yes, but never a bill. Is there any other organization in the world that functions this way? I do not know of one. You see, the truth is the church "asks for money" **LESS** than anything else you can think of.

Money given to the church is money invested in God's realm. God is not poor. God has many servants who are glad to have a part in providing the ministry and mission of Jesus Christ through the church. They joyfully give more than their share because there **is** great joy in giving.

Consider this paradox: Compared to the government and bill collectors, the church **almost never** asks for money. Yet of all the things your money could be used for, very few, if any, are more important than what the church provides.

The church is here to share the love and joy of Jesus Christ. Our money goes to serve Christ as we continue to provide ministry and mission in Jesus' name to everyone, whether they can afford to contribute or not.

Yes, we need your money now. More than your money, we need your faith that the blessings you have received from God make it important that you give to Zion Church. We need your faith that your gifts **will** make a difference in the lives of people outside our congregation and among us. We need your faith that through your gifts care and compassion for others will be offered in the name and manner of Jesus Christ. That is why I tithe every year to Zion Church. How about you join me in giving generously to Zion next year?

*Grace and peace,
Gary*

1. The following is an edited version of what the Rev. Steve Rogers wrote to First Methodist Church of Panhandle, Texas.

Below are sisters and brothers in Christ who have experienced significant moments in their lives. Pray for these people that God's healing and/or joy may be theirs.

Prayer Corner Prayer Corner

Offer prayers of healing and/or hope for:

- ✠ *Nancy Vlastnik* who was hospitalized.
- ✠ *Betty Mrella*, who was hospitalized.
- ✠ *Ray Mrella*, *Betty's* husband, who was hospitalized.
- ✠ *Phyllis Bender* who had out-patient surgery.
- ✠ *Elsie Narczweski* who was hospitalized.
- ✠ *Bob Haslam* who had surgery and is recovering at home.
- ✠ *Howard Miller*, *Susan's* father, who has been hospitalized.
- ✠ those who suffer un- or under-employment.
- ✠ **FTPB*** *Dan* who is struggling with the death of his mother, financial problems, and several other complicating issues.

Offer prayers of joy and praise to God for:

- ✠ *Michael Aho* and *Amy Shevokas* (*Alice Smith's* niece) who were married by Rev. Stillwell on September 3.
- ✠ *Race Essl* who was home.
- ✠ those who are coming to know Jesus.

Offer prayers of sympathy, understanding and compassion for:

- ✠ *Mary Fiedler*, family and friends, as they grieve the death of *Otto Fiedler*, *Mary's* husband. *Otto's* funeral was September 17 in the sanctuary.
- ✠ *Armetta Alt* as she and her family grieve the death of *Armetta's* uncle,

Offer prayers for those who are in nursing care facilities and are home-bound, the homeless and hungry, those who represent our church and Lord in the Association, Conference, and abroad.

Prayer Corner Prayer Corner

***Neighbors-in-Need* Special Offering – Oct. 2**

Imagine another world possible. How often have you or I said, "If I won the Lottery, I would give it to . . ." What **would** you do if you had a sudden windfall of cash? Most of us say we would use some of it to make the world a better place. We would give a large gift to the American Cancer Society, Humane Society, or the Church.

The ***Neighbors-in-Need*** offering allows you to imagine another world **AND** help to make it possible. Giving together, at Zion Church and through the whole United Church of Christ, we can collect gifts that together will allow us to make the world a better place for all.

Please read the enclosed flyer, watch for an offering envelope in the next edition of our newsletter, and plan on making a special gift of \$20 or more to ***Neighbors-in-Need***. Thank you.

***CROP* Walk – Sunday, October 2**

The hungry and homeless knock on the doors of the Food Pantry every week. They knock on our doors every month. One of the many ways we can help those whom Jesus is always telling us need to be our number one priority is by supporting the ***CROP Walk***. Whether you seek sponsors as a walker or are a generous donor, in both ways you help to feed the hungry in our community. Money raised by our ***CROP Walk*** is directed to the Food Pantry, thereby staying in our community.

If you are physically able, join the cadre of Zion walkers on Sunday afternoon, October 2. If you are not a walker, please pledge/give generously when asked by a walker. You can help our neighbors here through your gifts.

Looking Ahead

- **Neighbors-in-Need** All Church offering will be received on **October 2**. Please read the enclosed information and plan on a generous gift.
- Also on October 2, our annual **CROP Walk**. Sponsor someone today or walk yourself, but help out somehow.
- First Communion for our fifth graders will be part of **World Communion Sunday** observance on Sunday, October 2.
- Tuesday, October 4, 6:30 p.m. Board of Christian Education meeting.
- Monday, October 10, 7:00 p.m. Council meeting.
- Sunday, October 30, Memorial Sunday we will remember our loved ones who have died during the past 12 months.
- Sunday, November 6, Communion
- Sunday, November 20, Harvest Home Celebration
- Sunday, November 27, First Sunday of Advent

“Evil, suffering, and pain go unchecked when good people do nothing.”

☆☆☆

Fall Bible Study

Rev. Stillwell is offering a six-week Bible study, Sunday evenings, 6-8:30 p.m., beginning the first Sunday of October and concluding November 6. Participants will be examining 6 of the *Bad Girls of the Bible*. Participants are expected to read Genesis 1-3 for October 2 and come having decided whether Eve is willful or wise.

RAINBOWS

Children’s peer support group through life’s difficult changes of death, divorce and lost Group will meet every other Wednesday 5:30 – 6:30 pm St, Margaret Hospital, Room 129, First Floor, Spring Valley.

There is a schedule on the bulletin board downstairs in the hallway. They also need volunteers who are interested in becoming Rainbows facilitators.

LaSalle County Historical Society
42nd Annual BURGEOO Craft Festival
Sunday, October 9, 2011
Over 225 Craft Vendors, Burgoo Stew
Sandwiches, Live Music, etc.
See flyer on the bulletin board.

Women's Guild News:

The Women's Guild met September 1, 2011 at 1pm with 12 members and guests present. The hostess committee were the officers, Shirley Hamilton, Lois Wilmot, Rita Bingheim, secretary pro tem. Dona Ostermeyer assisted. Devotions were given by Shirley Hamilton. There were no minutes. Correspondence was read. The treasurer's report was given by Lois Wilmot. Shirley outlined the budget for 2011-2012. There was no old business. Under new business, Shirley distributed the year books for 2011-2012. Anyone interested in giving devotions should let Shirley know. After a short discussion it was decided to have secret pals but only to send cards. Get well cards were signed and sent to Nancy Vlastnik and Mae Fouth. A thank you was sent by the Women's Guild to Susan Stillwell for directing VBS and also to Jim Greening and Nicholas Miller who did the majority of the decoration and set up for VBS. Next meeting will be October 6th. It will be the annual general store. Please bring things to sell. The meeting closed with the Lord's Prayer.

Respectfully submitted by
Rita Bingheim, Pro Tem

Meet Martin Luther

On October 30, many Protestant churches will celebrate the Reformation, remembering how a group of pastors and teachers stood up to the powerful church leaders of their day and moved the church in a new direction. One of these reformers was Martin Luther.

Even though Luther was born to humble parents (his father was a copper miner), he was sent to good schools and graduated from the university in 1505. His father wanted him to be a lawyer and Luther agreed.

One day, Luther was caught in a fierce thunderstorm. A lightning bolt struck near him and a loud crash threw him to the ground. Luther cried out in prayer to St. Anne: "Save me! If you spare my life I will become a monk!" Luther survived the storm and entered the monastery, eventually became a teacher at the university in Wittenberg.

But Luther was troubled. He thought of God as someone who was always angry with and he began to suffer because of these thoughts. One day while reading Paul's letter to the Romans, Luther had a new idea about God. He understood that God loved him, not because he deserved it, but because God was gracious and merciful. There was nothing Luther or anyone else could do to "deserve" God's love – it was a gift of grace. From then on, he felt free.

Luther disagreed with some of the church's teachings. For example, people were told that they had to pay money to the church in order to escape punishment for their sins. On a long sheet of paper he 95 reasons that this practice was a bad idea and nailed the paper to the door of the church. This was a common way to invite people to a debate, but Luther got in big trouble.

The Holy Roman Emperor asked Luther to take back all that he had written. Luther said, "No! I cannot go against Scripture and reason. My own conscience is captive to the Word of God... Here I stand. I cannot do otherwise."

Luther and his followers were condemned for their beliefs and Luther became an outlaw. Fortunately, Prince Frederick the Wise of Saxony was a friend. He had Luther kidnapped and taken to Wartburg castle to protect him from arrest. Luther grew a beard and pretended he was "Knight George." He could go about the village but he could not return to his home for fear of the authorities. While in the castle, Luther translated the Bible into the German language. Now everyone in Germany was able to read it.

Eventually Luther was allowed to live in freedom. He got married and raised a family. Luther wrote many songs and hymns that are still used today. He also used art to teach about God's love

People today who follow Luther's teachings are known as Lutherans. Luther never wanted to start his own church; he only wanted to reform the church he loved. He started a movement that would eventually lead to

the many Protestant denominations we have today.

Christian Education News:

The meeting was called to order on August 16th. There were no minutes from the previous meeting. The treasurer's report was read, bills were presented for VBS and curriculum for the fall.

Teachers for the coming year are Nursery – 2nd, Hanna Daugherty and Tanya Ware, 3-5, Brittany Bejster, 6-7 Michelle Fupler. New board members are Terri Kelly and Leian Breuning.

New Business: The calendar for the rest of 2011 was set as follows: Rally Day, September 11, Sunday School will begin at 9:00 am. Bibles were given out during worship to 4 children going into 3rd grade.

Mitten Tree Mission Project: October 9 – November 6, Harvest Home Sunday with the children participating November 20, Advent Workshop December 11, Sunday School Christmas program December 18. No Sunday School on December 25 and January 1. Attendance at worship as families is encouraged.

A letter was sent out to the children with the schedule and an invitation to come back for the new church year. The Nursery-2nd grade class will moved to the south room from the middle room so it can be made more appealing for the child red and conducive to learning.

The next board meeting will be September 6th

Meeting closed with praying the Lord's Prayer.

MITTEN TREE BEGINS OCTOBER 9TH. Remember to bring mittens, scarves, hats, etc.

CHURCH COUNCIL NEWS;

The meeting was called to order on September 13th Motion made to correct an amount of hours paid to do some window glazing. Motion made to then accept August 2011 Council Minutes. Motion carried to approve changed council minutes.

Motion to August Treasurer's Report. Motion carried. Motion to accept and approve all pending bills. Motion carried.

Correspondence: Discussed community service hours. Discussed Church Mutual policy survey/form: Pilgrim Park camp requests donations for pool fund. Discussed removing internet service due to Dex bill has increased.

Boiler Fund Update: \$26, 820 Total

Attendance for August 8/7-53, 8/14-60, 8/21-36, 8/28-49 average of 46

Christian Education Rally Day discussed; Advent workshop will be done by Hanna, 3 Christmas programs have been ordered.

Pastoral Care: Visited 9 in nursing homes, 1 home visit, sent 8 birthday, 5 get well, 1 anniversary and 7 sympathy cards

History: Meeting will be held in October.

Stewardship: Stewardship Sunday will possibly be November 13, Help is needed for Stewardship Committee.

Missions: Arnie Watkins states Relay for Life raised \$3,080. Discussed Harvest Home and Labor of Love.

Minister's Report: Rev. Stillwell states his church computer crashed. Motions made and seconded to purchase a new computer and software for \$800. Motion carried. Discussed need for a strong stewardship program. Discussed building & ground issues(Rug needs cleaning, touch-up painting, gutters need cleaning. Rev Gary to attend a workshop Oct 5-6 for boundary training. Made many visits. 2 1st year confirmation students.
(Continued)

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Youth Minister reported about the CROP Walk Oct 2nd, Someone needed to chaperone, Prairie Assoc meeting on Nov. 5th, National Youth event in July 2012 at Purdue, cost \$425 per person double occupancy, Spirit Camp will be 7/16-7/21/12; Youth hope to attend Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dream coat in December. Discussed game/Wii night for youth and game/card night for adults.

Old Business: Building and Maintenance – still looking for fence sections.

New Business: Auto accident on Grant Street by uninsured driver-hit pole and broke off guide wire \$841.28 to replace electrical box. \$196 for Kettman to restart A/C. Damaged sections also repaired. Insurance deductible is \$1,000. A motion was made to move \$15,000 from money market fund into general fund. Motion carried. New clocks are needed in the Sunday School rooms. Christian Ed. Board will address.

Adjournment: Motion made and seconded to adjourn.

Respectfully Submitted,
Diana Thompson, Secretary

Daily Devotional: “These Days” for October/December is available in both the large and regular print in the narthex and on the literature table in the fellowship room.

**WILL YOU WALK WITH US
CROP HUNGER WALK – ending
hunger one step at a time.**

OCTOBER BIRTHDAY'S

1. Mark Bejster
3. Norman Fupler
Leah Wilmot
7. Michelle Johnson
Ryan Ploch
8. Kristen Eustis
11. Klaire Wilmot
12. Dona Ostermeyer
13. Stephanie Heilstedt
22. Doris Talbot
25. Becky Wicinski
Nathan Tipton
Olivia Bergagna
26. Bill Becker
27. Anna Coutre'
Billie Ann Vlastnik

Greeters for October

2. Irma Gallagher, Armetta Alt
- 9 Brant and Megan Baltikauski
16. Bill and Billie Ann Vlastnik
23. Ryan and Elecia Lindenmeir
30. Bill and Terri Kelly

Communion Committee for October

Billie Ann Vlastnik
Marian Benedict

Liturgists for October

2. Terri Bergagna
9. Katie Grosenbach
16. Johnathan Thompson
23. Arnie Watkins
- 30 Sheryl Kuzma

Ushers for October

- * Barry Breuning – Head Usher
- Larry Butkus
- Terri Kelly
- Pam Beck
- Bill Janz
- Norman Fupler

OCTOBER ANNIVERSARIES

7. Bill and Sue Johnson
11. Richard and Marjorie Ploch
12. Bill and Norma Nevicosi

Fellowship for October

- 2. Terri Jacobson, Sheryl Kuzma
- 9. Terri Bergagna, Cheryl Grosenbach
- 16. Beth Coutre' Cyndi Thurman
- 23. Sue Ryan, Michelle Fupler
- 30. Billie Ann Vlastnik, Lori Rynke

Child Care for October

- 2. Tanya Ware, Brittany Bejster
- 9. Allison Ploch, Debra Baltikauski
- 16. Jerilynn and Kevin Visocky
- 23. Tony and Beth Coutre'
- 30 Julie Rietgraf, Elecia Lindenmeir

Acolytes for October

- 2. Ella Ware, Mary Kuzma
- 9. Savanna Rietgraf, Asya Rietgraf
- 16. Anna Coutre', Abby Coutre'
- 23. Matthew Jacobson, Johnathan Thompson
- 30. Eric Sobin, Reid Rynke

Drivers for October

- 2. Jim Greening 223-1858
- 9. Roger Rynke 224-3872
- 16. Gerry Koehler 223-5806
- 24. Dona Ostermeyer 223-1446
- 31. same as above