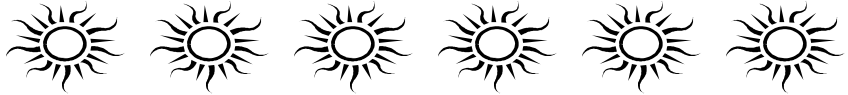


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THE VISITOR

Zion United Church of



Our Mission: Connecting People With God

Volume XX Issue 8 Aug 2010

FROM THE PASTOR'S STUDY...

It was the best of times. It was the worst of times.
- Dickens, A Tale of Two Cities

Yep. It has been that kind of week. And I believe that it deserves some theological reflection. We have all come through tough times, but how often do we really try to put it all in “God Terms”? Usually we use words that say, “I can do it myself!” We choose to ‘hunker down’, ‘pull ourselves up’, or ‘be strong’.

Last week started out nicely. Anthony was about to finish his training in Washington State, and would be flying home Friday. Shannon and I had plans to drive to Iowa the following week to see Dave, meet some people, and look at houses. It was a busy time, but fun. Everyone in my little family was doing uplifting things, and the future looked bright albeit a little chaotic.

Then late Wednesday afternoon I received a call saying that it looked like my mother had had another stroke. Good friends had Mom and Dad in hand, but I needed to suddenly change all my plans for the next couple of days while we figured out what was going on. Two days became four days. Four days of different doctors, different facilities, different tests. It all is a blur. She had indeed had a stroke, and things deteriorated by the hour, with little blips of recovery interspersed in it all. (As of this writing she has finally been moved from ICU to a step-down room. She should be moved to a re-hab facility in the next couple of days.)

“It was the best of times. It was the worst of times.” How many times have we thought that? We like to get our lives neatly organized in order to minimize the chaos that can swirl around us. But despite our best efforts that chaos sneaks in anyway.

It is because of this that the church, from ancient times onward, has used an anchor as a symbol for Christ. We don’t see that image so much anymore, but I’d like to reclaim it. Our forbearers understood that the seas of life could get rough, and certainly out of our control. An anchor can be used to dig into the water’s bottom, keeping the boat from floating away. Or an anchor can be used in deep water to help stabilize the boat. Life’s waters can get really deep, and sometimes really rough. And then all we can do is “hang on for dear life!” But to what should we cling?

Well, dear Christians, the answer is obvious. We turn to Jesus and “hang on for dear life”. The beauty is that we do not hang on alone. For other Christians are there steadying our hands, offering prayers, and love, and the occasional lunch. Dickens may have had the right idea. But because Zion, and other Christian friends like you, have helped our family to hang on, we know that it is truly ‘the best of times’.

In Christ’s service,
Pastor Susan

UPDATE: ZION'S CAPITAL CAMPAIGN & PROJECTS

Thank you to Zion's members and friends who have given a commitment to fund Zion's Capital Projects in the amount of \$713,000 over the next 3 years. To oversee the various capital projects to repair and improve our church building, a special "Building Committee" has been formed. The committee has been meeting and plans to complete the following projects:

1. Roof - Ventilation - Gutters - Downspouts - Work was completed: 5/14/2010
2. Furnaces - Estimates have been requested.
3. Electrical Inspection/update - Work was completed: 7/8/2010
4. Plumbing Inspection/update - Work was completed: 7/16/2010
5. Organ Repairs - Work began on 7/15/2010
6. Doors — Red Entry Doors, White Side Door - Estimates have been requested.
7. Stained Glass Windows - Estimates have been requested.
8. Brick & Tuck Pointing - Estimates have been requested.
9. Perimeter Drainage - to be addressed
10. Plastering - Estimates have been requested.

There is a listing of these capital projects on display in our Fellowship Hall. Stop and check the listing from time to time, to see the progress we are making in repairing and improving the church building.

SEARCH COMMITTEE

Searching for Zion's New Pastor

Thank you to everyone who expressed an interest in serving on our Search Committee. The committee has been formed and elected its Chairman - Hal Brueseke. Members of the committee are: **Harold Brueseke**, Lay Member; **Becky deBruyn**, Lay Member; **Fred Goldstein**, Worship Ministry; **Beth Green**, Education Ministry; **Rhonda Meece**, Evangelism; **Rick Muhlbeier**, Elder; **Cheryl Nellis**, Fellowship Ministry; **Don Olson**, Missions Ministry; **Nancy Philabaum**, Stewardship; **Jan Raymond**, Property Committee; **Judy Waldo**, Lay Member; and **Sandy Weides**, Elder. Rev. John H. Krueger, Conference Minister is assisting the Search Committee. Pastor Susan Sickelka has also met with the committee. A profile or description of our congregation is being prepared. There is a poster charting the Search Committee's progress in the Narthex. A survey about the "Leadership Expectations" was distributed. If you received a yellow or blue survey, please fill it out and return it to the attention of our Search Committee at your earliest convenience. Thank you.

Please remember to return your "Leadership Expectations" survey. If you did not receive one, feel free to request one from the church office.

OUTDOOR WORSHIP AND PICNIC
Sunday, August 8, 2010
Bring a Friend!

Do you have friends or relatives you have been meaning to invite to church? Here is a wonderful opportunity to enjoy worship and fellowship together at Zion. Outdoor worship is planned for Sunday, August 8, followed by a picnic and activities for the kids. So invite your friends of all ages to come with you or meet you at church.

HELPING HAND CART FOCUS:
NORTHERN INDIANA FOOD BANK
August & September

We are collecting the following non-perishable items for the Food Bank:

- **Canned Fish and Meat**
- **Canned Vegetables and Fruit**
- **Cooking Oil**
- **Dry Pasta and Sauce (plastic jar)**
- **Fruit Jelly**
- **Juice (boxes or cans)**
- **Dried Beans**
- **Macaroni and Cheese**
- **Mayonnaise**
- **Meat helper boxed mixes**
- **Pancake/Waffle Mix**
- **Peanut Butter**
- **Rice**
- **Snacks**
- **Soup**
- **Baby Formula**
- **Baby Diapers & Toiletries**
- **Personal Care Items**

You may also send a check to the church and indicate in the memo filed that it is designated for "Food Bank."

Baptisms

On Sunday, July 18, 2010, Rev. Bill Wassner officiated at the baptisms of Erin Kereszturi and Sarah Kereszturi. Erin and Sarah's parents are Jason and Corinne Kereszturi.

Wedding

On Saturday, July 31, 2010, Trish Kretchman and Ryan Gardini were married at Zion UCC, with Ted Stanley officiating. Congratulations Trish and Ryan!

MONDAY NIGHT BIBLE STUDY

*Meets at 6:00pm in Parlor
on designated Mondays*

AUGUST 2: Bible Study

AUGUST 30: Bible Study

Contact: Judy Waldo
email: judywaldo@att.net



A WORD FOR LAY CHRISTIANS

by Wesley J. Wildman and Stephen Chapin Garner
copied from The Alban Roundtable Blog - 2010-03-22

Your pastoral leaders and your churches would be lost without you. Without you, there is no community. . . . Without you, the church is a lifeless shell. The measure of the church's success is directly related to how you, the lay members of your community, love one another and live out your faith in your daily lives.

Remember that Jesus' call was not to a bunch of ordained clergy. Jesus called fishermen, businessmen, hated tax collectors, feared soldiers, mothers, widows, prostitutes, the able-bodied, the infirm, people with faith, and people without faith. Jesus' call was for everyone to follow him. You have as much right to follow Jesus as anyone else. Your pastor, your church council, your bishop, your church boards do not have a higher claim on Jesus than you do. So take your role in the church and in the world very seriously.

What does that involve? Love, tend to, and work to strengthen your pastor, your church, and your church leadership. Help your community to keep its focus. When you sense that something is amiss, speak up and make your case lovingly. Too often when the going gets tough, lay people get going and hightail it right out of the church. Church is messy; community is messy; life is messy. You can't get in the habit of running from it because the mess will follow you until you deal with it. Remember, the church is yours, and you are the church. Stick with the body of Christ in sickness and in health — in plenty and in want — in joy and in sorrow — as long as you live.

This calling to faithful unity and participation can be challenging for (many) Christians because we are not always easily identified or categorized. We can become frustrated in church, because we don't feel we fit. We are not always sure where to find our place. We do feel lost at times, and it is hard to believe that any of our well-dressed, well-pressed and well-spoken neighbors in the pew next to us are as confused as we are, but in fact many of us feel lost in the middle. Most of us are uncertain about our faith, at least some of the time. We are searching for something we have yet to find. We try to follow Jesus; we try to love God; we try to love our neighbors; and we fail much of the time. But that is not a reason to quit. We are aware that we are lost in this life, and we engage in Christian community in the hope of being found.

The greatest test of (some Christians) occurs when you face conflict and difference in your community. Can you sit next to someone who will vote oppositely to you on the question of gay marriage and still move forward together to celebrate Communion? Can you participate in a bible study or faith discussion group and genuinely strive to understand in depth the person who has a different view of salvation through Christ than you do? It is so easy to shut the door in the face of such disagreements. But that is when you and the church both lose. Church can't be only about comfort and agreement, and that is doubly so for the liberal-evangelical church, with its Christ-centered commitment to radical inclusiveness and the principle of agape love. Divine love shines when you stay connected, especially when it feels like a major effort to do so. Strive for the spiritual maturity to place love ahead of personal comfort, and your church's witness will flourish.

- continued -

A Word for Lay Christians - continued

The second greatest test (for some Christians) is whether you will commit yourself to the practices that build up the church and your faith. In particular, will you look for educational opportunities within your congregation and strive to deepen your understanding of your faith? Will you encourage your church to centralize practices such as the Eucharist that bind differently minded people together in the name of Christ? It takes work to learn, and it is often uncomfortable to have our existing beliefs broadened and to make new discoveries. But committing to the journey of learning is part of discipleship, and it can be incredibly exciting if you stick with it.

If we have a dream for ... evangelical laity, it would be for you to know that you are not alone. There are countless people of faith who struggle just like you do, who are filled with longing just like you are, and who desire a Christ-centered and radically inclusive community just like you do. the more you speak your faith, share your vision for your church, and take leading roles within your community, the more room you will make for people who find themselves lost. You don't have to remain lost in the middle. You can be found in the middle, too, and learn to feel at home there.

Note: This article is copied from The Alban Roundtable blog, published by The Alban Institute on 3/22/2010.

“And I have other sheep that are not of this fold: I must bring them also. And they will heed my voice, so there shall be one flock, one shepherd.” - John 10:16

PRIDE IN THE PARK

The GLBT Resource Center will hold its third annual “Pride in the Park” on Sunday, August 29 from 1:00 to 6:00 pm at 100 Center in Mishawaka. Zion will be one of more than 30 non-profit and for-profit vendors with informational booths.

The activities for the day will include a live band, karaoke, writer's workshop, drag show, bingo, and for the kids — face painting, games, and a magician. Food will be available to purchase.

The purpose of this event is to bring the community of GLBT folks, allies, friends and families together to share, learn and celebrate.

Please plan to attend, enjoy the festivities, spend some time in our booth, and bring the entire family.

- Don Olson (Note: Don Olson, Elder and Member at Zion UCC, passed away on July 30, 2010)

AUGUST MINISTRY VOLUNTEERS

- Deacons** 1, 8, 15 Bill Liskow and Don Zutter
 22 & 29 Bill Liskow and B. Wagoner

- Greeter** Hilda Bare

- Ushers** 1 L. Navarro & Donna Wagoner
 8 G. Marti & L. Navarro
 15 G. Marti & L. Navarro
 22 G. Marti & L. Navarro
 29 Cathy & John Bair

- Welcome Hosts** Karen Malling

- Acolytes** (Acolytes resume in Fall)

- Liturgists** 1, 8, 15 & 29 Laura Navarro
 22 Lowell Markley

- Communion Servers** Maureen Wildey
 Bill Wildey

- Audio** Rick Muhlbeier

- Visual** Julie Niedbalski

- Altar Paraments** Jan Raymond

- Coffee Hosts** 1 Karen Malling
 8 (Church Picnic)
 15 Marcie & Rick Muhlbeier
 22 Matt & Dana Forsythe
 29 Board of Elders

AUGUST BIRTHDAYS

- 2 Julie Lundin-Shadinger
- 4 Susan Miller
- 5 Almo Bolen
- 5 Aiden Lucido
- 8 Devin Grose
- 10 Roberto Taylor
- 10 Mariah Guillaume
- 12 Virginia Richardson
- 13 Rachel Troeger
- 15 Cheryl Nellis
- 16 Jacqueline Hecox-Tigue
- 16 Rene Grose
- 18 Caleb Oneese
- 19 Arthur Bradley
- 19 Bryan Hives
- 20 Max Jena
- 21 Fred Goldstein
- 22 Mildred Lind
- 25 Andrew Nielsen
- 26 Keri Niedbalski
- 27 Lowell Markley
- 27 Zach Schroeder
- 28 Colleen Tonge
- 28 Anna King
- 30 Betty Riedel
- 30 Bob Richardson
- 30 Jason Nielsen

Apollos Offering
Supporting New Church Starts

**“I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the growth.”
 - 1 Corinthians 3:6**

During the month of August, each year we ask each member of the Indiana-Kentucky Conference to give a least five dollars to support the work of new church starts.

Please plan to support this offering. You may mark your check memo for “Apollos offering.” Thank you.

<u>Worship Attendance</u>		
July 4	72	
July 11	73	
July 18	107	
July 25	88	

Newsletter Deadline
 Deadline for articles for the September issue of *The Visitor* is Sunday, Aug 15. Submitting articles earlier would be even better.

JUNE 30, 2010 TREASURER'S REPORT

	<u>June '10</u>	<u>June '09</u>	<u>% Change</u>
Offerings for operations	\$ 71,001	\$ 76,133	-7%
Offerings for benevolence	<u>12,382</u>	<u>9,214</u>	<u>34%</u>
<i>Total regular offerings</i>	83,383	85,347	-2%
Mission Possible donations	106,119	987	n/a
Other income	<u>8,095</u>	<u>9,362</u>	<u>-14%</u>
<i>Total income</i>	<u>197,597</u>	<u>95,696</u>	<u>106%</u>
Personnel expenses	55,158	50,815	9%
Property expenses	22,327	23,298	-4%
Benevolence expenses	18,603	15,268	22%
Mission Possible expenses	68,276	8,865	670%
Other expenses	<u>14,090</u>	<u>8,835</u>	<u>59%</u>
<i>Total expenses</i>	<u>178,454</u>	<u>107,081</u>	<u>67%</u>
Surplus (deficit)	19,143	(11,385)	
Less Mission Possible, net	<u>(37,843)</u>	<u>7,878</u>	
Operating surplus (deficit)	<u>\$ (18,700)</u>	<u>\$ (3,507)</u>	
Fund balances:			
Unrestricted	52,170		
Mission Possible	148,218		
Temporarily restricted reserves	111,364		
Permanently restricted reserves	<u>48,643</u>		
Total fund balance	<u>\$ 360,395</u>		
Summary:			
General offerings continue to be down significantly - 10% below budget and 7% under 2009.			
This has been partially offset by property expenses being below budget. However, this could easily change quickly. Consequently, we expect the 2010 deficit to be equal to or worse than budgeted. Without any improvement, the deficits will begin to negatively impact our operations in the next 6-12 months.			

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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Sunday Worship 9:00 am
Fellowship Time 10:00 am
Sunday School 10:30 am

Church Office Hours
Monday-Friday
9:00 am—1:00 pm

Zion UCC Board of Elders

John Bair
Rich Cullar
Beth Green
Sue Goldstein
Rick Muhlbeier
Cheryl Nellis
tba
Nancy Philabaum
Beth Sargent
Diane Tiser
Sandy Weides
Maureen Wildey

We're On The Web!
<http://www.zionsb.org>

“Connecting People With God”



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SUNDAY, AUGUST 1 - The Whitlock Festival - Bremen

APOLLOS OFFERING

Aug 8 - Outdoor Worship & Picnic

Our Church Community

Ministers	Every Member of the Congregation
Pastor	Rev. Susan Sickelka (Cell Phone: 574-248-0121)
Music Director	Misty Grubbs
Organist	Sarah Schubert
Administrative Assistant	Pauline Mudis
Bookkeeper	Jan Raymond
Custodian	Mark Hildabridle
<u>Board of Elders Officers</u>	
President	Beth Green
Vice President	tba
Secretary	Nancy Philabaum
Treasurer	Rich Cullar



“The Visitor” is a monthly publication of Zion United Church of Christ. News and articles for “The Visitor” must be submitted to the Church Office no later than the second Sunday of each month. Sunday bulletin announcements must be in the Church Office by noon each Wednesday.