



# Zion Lutheran Monthly



## January 2013

### Reflections on Tragedy

I'm writing my monthly newsletter article earlier than usual, on the 19<sup>th</sup>, to be exact. You'll be a day (or so) away from celebrating the New Year when you read this, but I am still just under a week away from celebrating Christmas as I write. It was only five days ago that twenty school children and six adults lost their lives at Sandy Hook Elementary School.

Predictably, the muzzles have come off of those who do not want to let a good crisis to go waste, using the December 14<sup>th</sup> tragedy to advocate for what they were advocating for on December 13<sup>th</sup>. More gun control. More mental health resources. More guards. More security. More vigilance. (An aside: if you need to use an event that is the exception to the rule to make the case for your point of view, in my opinion, you just lost the argument.) The Sandy Hook tragedy, I think, is different from other widely-reported, incomprehensibly senseless tragedies in that, unlike the thinking that followed Columbine, Virginia Tech and Aurora, people this time readily acknowledge that we cannot absolutely prevent a recurrence.

What was interesting to me was the response of the Christian community. Instead of speaking with a unified voice, (we'll call them) opinions were all over the map. Candles made to look like angels were lit in memory of the departed. Christian pastors gave those killed a free pass to eternal life because the manner in which they met their untimely demise. One ministry colleague posted that "evil and death did not take 26 lives; God took 26 lives from evil and death." God was said to be there to bind up the broken-hearted, but Jesus was nowhere to be found. So what should the Christian response be to a tragedy like Sandy Hook? How do we process something so horrible that, if you are like me, you are afraid to actually sit down and ponder what happened—and what it must have been like for those involved? I think there are several things we, as Christians, can say to those who ask and to those who will listen that will help them (and us) come to grips with the events on the 14<sup>th</sup> of December.

First, what happened was an unimaginable tragedy. We saw evil win. We saw what Scripture calls the "wages of sin" and the "last enemy" deal a crushing blow to 26 families.

Second, what happened, while tragic, is not final. God will raise the dead when Christ comes again. It is not wise to call those who died at Sandy Hook "angels"; it is not unwise to say that they are only "sleeping." What evil accomplished on the 14<sup>th</sup> of December, Christ will un-do on a day known only by the Father.

And lastly, it is not the manner in which those 26 teachers and students perished that will determine their eternal destiny; it is the work of Christ. Christ Jesus, whose Father watched him die at the hands of depraved, wicked, deranged people, is the reason why those 26 teachers and students will stand on the last day and be welcomed into eternal blessedness. He is the reason why we can mourn in hope. He is the reason why we can say what he did when confronted by the grieving sisters of the deceased Lazarus: "your brother will rise again."

Sorry to cover such a heavy topic in my monthly newsletter. Lord willing, this space will be filled with happier news in the months to come. I hope my words, as they reflect the gospel and the hope we have in Christ, were helpful and timely. God be with and bless you and your family.

In Christ,  
Pastor Duncan

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*From all of us  
at Zion  
Lutheran  
Church!*

# THE YEAR AT ZION THAT WAS...

This year started off with a "baby". Thomas Walter McLellan was born at 1:28 p.m. on Wednesday, January 25<sup>th</sup> and weighed in at 9 pounds 9 ounces and was 22 inches long. We thank God for blessing all of the "Zion babies" born in 2012.

This was another very busy year for the members and staff of Zion. Below are just some of the highlights from the past year of community-supported ministries.

We saw an increase in our community **Outreach** support throughout the year. One of the key ministries that Zion supports is the Bridgeville Area Food Bank. We helped to assist 100's of needy families in the local community this year. Other areas of support: Pittsburgh Community Lutheran High School, Lutheran for Life, provided Good Shepherd Lutheran Church in New York support for super storm Sandy, World Relief, South Fayette Chili Cook-off (first place), Oktoberfest, Harvest Fest, and Community Free Car Wash. These are just some of our efforts.

Our **In-reach** activities were numerous: Pirate Game, Golf Outing, Bowling, Body and Soul Boot Camp, Monday Night Football, Interaction Group events, numerous Bible Study and the commission of eight Stephen Ministers.

The **Youth Ministry and Early Childhood** activities continue to grow. We saw an increase in the number of preschool students. The preschool has created a number of new programs. For example: Pre-Kindergarten enrichment class that focuses on math, music and language arts, "Moms Morning Out" program, and a third preschool classes which is a first for Zion.

The Preschool's annual fundraisers were the Spaghetti Dinner Preschool Art Show & Bake Sale and the 15<sup>th</sup> Road Rally helped purchase the new playground equipment that was installed in December. We continued to actively invite the preschool children to participate in church activities like the Harvest Fest, Oktoberfest, etc.

The Camp Cilca Mission Trip (SUMMIT) was a rewarding ministry opportunity for all. If you are looking for a personal or family experience to serve your Lord consider the 2013 mission trip to Camp Pioneer the Adirondacks and Lake Placid. Mark your calendar for C.A.L.M. from July 28 – August 3, 2013.

The Choir continues to grow. The children provided a wonderful Christmas message of the birth of our Savior Jesus Christ. We completed the reading the "Bible in a Year" and placed new bibles in the pews. One of our key focus areas in 2013 worship services will be to memorize one Bible verse or passage every week.

We continued to show strong **Stewardship** with another balanced budget and no carry-over expenses from the previous budget year. This was accomplished throughout the year with increased giving, special financial gifts and strong expense management. The preschool continues to be self-funded and shows strong growth. The future growth for the preschool is bright. God does amazing things when you put your trust in him. We continue to use the Kingdom Fund to support both internal and external ministries.

The Audio/Video committee recommended a **Technology** upgrade to the sound system throughout the church including the sanctuary, undercroft and nursery. Zion's website continues to under take continuous improvements with increased audio and video content in the support of our members and community. The next major objective is to replace the phone systems with a state of the art phone and voice mail system infrastructure.

On-going maintenance to **Church and Parsonage Facilities** occurred throughout the year. So what did we do this past year. Installed a new sound system, new storage facility, trimmed and pruned trees on the property, setup a new classroom and moved the romper room to undercroft, plus many of small maintenance projects. Our custodian has completed a number of projects that would have required a contractor in the past.

We also established a number of committees: Audio and Video, Annual Budget Development, Fellowship, Financial Review of the Books, Long-term Assessment Survey, Search for new Officers and Board Members and Sanctuary Carpet Replacement.

On behalf of the Church Council, I want to thank the congregation (volunteers behind the scenes), Sunday School and Pre-School director, teachers and aides, staff, officers and Pastor for their time, talent, prayers and gifts in support of growing the ministry of Zion. We thank our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ for using Zion to share the Good News. These efforts have helped to *"Build the Light of Zion and Let the SON Shine Out!"*

Happy New Year

Bob Schmidt

Chairman

# Women's Bible Study - New Year - New Study

## Life Principles From Women of the Bible

EVE.....	following God after failure
SARAH.....	a woman of faith
MIRIAM.....	trusting God with your position in life
RAHAB.....	a fresh start with faith
DEBORAH.....	the battle is not yours, but the Lord's
RUTH.....	following our kinsman-redeemer
HANNAH.....	bringing our barrenness to the Lord
ESTHER.....	useable to God, wherever He places us
THE VIRTUOUS WOMAN.....	life lessons from Proverbs 31
MARY AND MARTHA.....	seeing what is eternal
MARY, THE MOTHER OF JESUS.....	the journey of a bondservant
THE BRIDE OF CHRIST.....	the bride of Christ



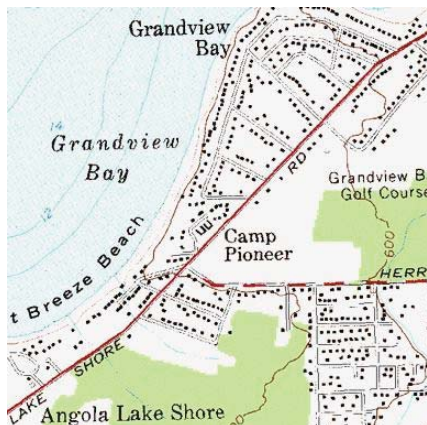
Through a detailed study of each of these noteworthy women of the Bible, you will learn that God has called today's woman to play a significant role in society, in the home, and in the church. You will learn from their mistakes and discover that the blessings of God are heaped upon the woman who faithfully trusts the Lord in all situations.

All woman are welcome, bring your friends! This is an excellent study for women who are new to Bible study as well as women who are seasoned in their scripture studies! Contact Alissa McLellan at [alissamclellan@yahoo.com](mailto:alissamclellan@yahoo.com) if you have questions. A sign-up sheet is located in the narthex of the church. Please sign-up so that a book will be reserved for you! (Book's cost \$10.00)

\*We will be starting on Wednesday Jan. 16 and will take a break during Lent, we will return to our study after Easter.

## C.A.L.M.

Our Mission Trip for 2013 will take us to Camp Pioneer (a Lutheran Camp in Angola, NY), the Adirondack State Park in Upstate New York, and Lake Placid (home of the 1980 Winter Olympics). The plan is to leave from Zion mid-afternoon on Sunday, July 28<sup>th</sup>. We will work at Camp Pioneer for three and a half days. Work options include manual outdoor labor or assisting a group of special needs children enjoy camp and receive the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. We will spend Thursday afternoon traveling to Lake Placid where we will spend the night. On Friday some of us will spend the day in Lake Placid, enjoying the beauty and touristy attractions of the scenic home of the 1980 Winter Olympics. Some of us will spend the day hiking in the High Peaks, enjoying the beauty of creation first-hand. Depending on the consensus of the group we will either drive back to the 'Burgh through the night, or spend the night and leave mid-morning to arrive back at Zion late in the evening on Saturday.



The cost for this trip includes program at Pioneer, lodging and meals. It does not include food in Lake Placid or any expenses incurred in Lake Placid or on the road. Drivers will have their program fee at Pioneer waived. The cost will not exceed \$200 per person or \$400 per family. And speaking of families, all are welcome and encouraged to attend CALM (which stands for **C**amp Pioneer, **A**dirondack, **L**ake Placid **M**ission Trip).

If you are interested in going on CALM, there's nothing you need to do now; our first Interest Meeting will be in March. See you then!

# COMING IN 2013...

In 2011 we studied the Gospel of John together.

In 2012 we read the Bible together.

And in 2013 we are going to be memorizing a verse (or passage) of the Bible each week! The verses chosen summarize the basics of the Christian faith and will be a helpful resource for you in your walk with Christ and as you bear him witness to your friends. The sermons in 2013 will explain and expound upon the verses you memorized so that you not only know what the verses say, but also what they mean.

We have a list of verses for you in this Newsletter, the worship bulletins, and on our church website ( [zlcb.org](http://zlcb.org) ).



# Thank You!

*Dear Members of Zion Lutheran Church,*

*Thank you so much for your amazing generosity to us. We cannot express how thankful we were to receive financial assistance from you. It has helped us immensely with seminary expenses. Adam is beginning the second quarter of his second year and is really enjoying his classes and the community here in St. Louis. I am loving the opportunity that I have to spend my days with second graders and teach them about Jesus' love for them. We are truly very blessed and are thankful to be a part of the congregation of Zion as it works to spread the Gospel and further God's kingdom. Thank you again for your kindness to us!*

*May God bless you as you prepare to celebrate our Savior's birth!  
-Adam and Rachael Steinbrenner*



- 1 Lois Klemash
- 3 Frank Ivancza
- 4 Christine Chilcott
- 4 John Eckels
- 5 Steve Dilbert
- 5 Gloria Godfrey
- 6 Jay Gardner
- 6 Decklan Pasquini

- 6 Sue Radovich
- 6 Joseph Walsh
- 6 Julie Walsh
- 7 Thomas Bicusky
- 7 Luke Lemonovich
- 12 John Buerkle
- 12 Ronald Valentino
- 13 Debra LaJeunesse
- 14 Shirley Bicusky
- 14 Barbara Oechslein
- 16 Paula Gardner
- 16 Jacob Hartman
- 16 Mary Lou Neill
- 18 Riley Becker
- 19 Vickie Buzzelli
- 19 Diane Shuman
- 20 Carol Schrag

- 22 Jessica Boyle
- 23 Tim Sheldon
- 24 John Derosa
- 24 Will Schrag
- 27 Callista Chilcott
- 28 Molly Oelschlager
- 28 Alissa McLellan
- 29 Sara Gielarowski
- 31 Lillian DallaPiazza
- 31 Theodore Siek



## Anniversaries

- 7 Mark and Laurie Coleman 2006
- 20 Michelle and Gary Jenkins 1990
- 26 Susan and John Stone 1974
- 28 Jim and Mary Lou Neill 1967
- 31 Darren and Jennifer Eliker 1998

# Service Participants

# January

Greeters & Acolytes			
DATE	TIME	GREETERS	ACOLYTES
January 6	8:00 AM 10:30 AM	Brent & Marianne Miller, Millie Thielet Jim & Marylou Neill	Anthony Vallelunga Mitchell Fitzgerald
January 13	8:00 AM 10:30 AM	Clara Hayes Dan & Tracey Harris & family	Missy Radovich Sydney Harris
January 20	8:00 AM 10:30 AM	Dawn Geregach & family Brian & Megan Pasquini & family	Grant Geregach Josiah Ackerman
January 27	8:00 AM 10:30 AM	Bill & Melaine Becker John & Kari Gresh & family	Joshua Gielarowski Jennifer Fitzgerald
February 3	8:00 AM 10:30 AM	Bill & Carol Schrag Rose Steranko	Anthony Vallelunga Ryan Harris
February 10	8:00 AM 10:30 AM	Joyce Wood Rob Oelschlager	Missy Radovich Mitchell Fitzgerald
February 13 Ash Wednesday	7:00 PM		Joshua Gielarowski

<b>ELDERS</b>	Jay Anderson, David Hutula
<b>ALTAR GUILD</b>	Elsie DallaPiazza Mary Hutula
<b>USHERS @ 8:00 am</b>	Carl Bauer, Gene Koop, Ron Meier, Jack Oelschlager
<b>USHERS @ 10:30 am</b>	Neil Ackerman, Sam Dragan, Kari Gresh, John Gresh

# February

<b>ELDERS</b>	Michael Sterba, John Gielarowski
<b>ALTAR GUILD</b>	Sara Ali
<b>USHERS @ 8:00 am</b>	Kathleen Conn, Bill Schrag, Janet Zreliaak, Larry Zreliaak
<b>USHERS @ 10:30 am</b>	John Buerkle, Joe Gielarowski, Simon Martin, Andy Weldon

If you are unable to participate on the assigned date, please find your own substitute and notify the church office (412) 221-4776 or secretary@zlcb.org of the change.

## STEPHEN MINISTRY

**Eight members of Zion Lutheran were commissioned on December 16<sup>th</sup> to be Stephen Ministers. Having completed 50 hours of training, Stephen Ministers serve others by providing Christ-centered care. We are excited to match Stephen Ministers up with people who would benefit from such care. If you, or anyone you know, could benefit from a listening ear and a trained caregiver, contact Pastor Duncan. Your information will be kept strictly confidential.**



## After the Basics...

Our study on the Basics of the Christian Faith on Sunday morning is nearing its conclusion. After we conclude with our study on the Lord's Supper, we are going to have Ph.D. (and Zion member) Ted Siek teach a short series on Creation Science. This Sunday School series will be ideal for people who are interested in Apologetics (defending the faith), engage people who believe differently than we do about the origins of the universe and life, who have children in public schools—or any school that teaches evolution as fact, or who are interested in learning more about how God made the world and everything in it. See you in Sunday School!!

# Zion Lutheran Church

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Visit **ZLCB.ORG**

For updated information throughout the month.

**The Rev. Duncan McLellan**

# Youth News

## SUPPORT OUR TROOPS!



Each February, Zion's Sunday school chooses a project that reaches out to the local community and beyond. This year the Sunday school has chosen to collect items for our troops overseas through the non-profit organization, Operation: Stars and Stripes. Items will be collected now through mid-February and then packaged by the Sunday school children. We are asking Zion's congregation members and day school families to join us in our mission to support our troops and their families. Further details will be announced in the January bulletins or at <http://www.zlcb.org/>.

## Notes From the Preschool

Happy New Year from the Preschool!

2013-2014 registrations will be underway this month. Registration packets are in the office. If you know anyone who has a 2-5 year old, and is interested in preschool, please send them our way. I am available to answer any questions and to give a "guided tour" through our beautiful facility.

Our beautiful facility now also includes a beautiful new playground. When you get the chance, check it out. Our school children are anxiously awaiting Spring and warm days to try out all of the new equipment.

Stay-tuned for the February newsletter with continuing news from the school.



Zion Lutheran Church

Early Childhood

Center



# ANNOUNCEMENTS



## FOOD BANK

Collection for this month's Bridgeville Area Food Bank is **Sunday January 13**. The "item of the month" is Packaged Meals (Hamburger Helper, Rice-a-Roni, etc.). You are also welcome to help at the Food Bank every third Saturday of the month between 7:45 and 12:00 at Bethany Presbyterian Church.