THE MESSZIONGER

EAST AND WEST ZION
LUTHERAN CHURCHES
ELCA
32150 290th Street
Hancock, MN 56244-9616
Pastor Steve Carmany
E-mail: zionparish@hcinet.net
ezwzpastor@hcinet.net
Church Office: 320-239-2430
July and August 2020

"Summer Worship Plans for July & August"
(Decided together by the church councils of all three congregations)

>Our three churches **will not hold in-door services** during July and August, due to the many risks that would still be present for a majority of our church members. Hopefully by fall we can re-evaluate and create ways to meet again indoors.

>We will continue to host our **Sunday, 10am Lived Streamed Worship Services**, and we will make **Audio Recordings on CD's** of our weekly worship services, for those who are not able to access our on-line ministries.

>Also, together, our three congregations are going to begin holding **Wednesday Evening, 7pm, Outdoor Worship Services,** starting July 8th. These will be held at the Swift Falls Park, except on July 15th, when it will be held outdoors on the Zion Parsonage property. These will be very casual, ½ hr. services, and will include communion and singing and a brief message. Come as you are, bring a lawn chair or sit at a picnic table with those you came with. Also, invite others!!! A group of members from all 3 congregations are planning these services carefully, so that everyone who attends will be safely distanced and protected; but will also get to enjoy the gifts of in-person worship again! If you would like to share some special music, or participate as a reader, please contact the church office.

The On-Line 'Daily Prayer Moments' to Continue

Our live streamed prayer ministry, known as "Daily Prayer Moments," will continue to be aired on Facebook, Monday – Friday, at 10am.

These are 5 to 7-minute presentations, which include: music, images, scripture and time for personal prayers. Since they are posted on our Facebook pages, people can access these at any time, day or night, and enjoy the chance to spend some time in conversation with God .

Feel free to share these Facebook addresses with others you know.

PASTOR'S POSTS

So, who have you talked to recently about the ministries going on **at** our three churches? Have you mentioned anything to folks you work with, or socialize with, or you are related to, or you have just casually interacted with sometime?

And are there a few folks you still think you would like to tell them about what is happening, or is planned to happen soon, **at** our churches?
I ask you this, because it many ways it is a rather interesting question to consider, especially in-light of our current worshiping and gathering situations.

>For instance, we have long been used to thinking that our congregation's main ministries revolve around our church buildings, haven't we? **"Being <u>at</u> church",** has meant getting up on Sunday morning, driving to a building, perhaps sitting in your favorite pew, seeing people you know pretty darn well, and taking part in a familiar worship service.

>And we have assumed it was the 'pastor's job,' to get new people to 'come **<u>to</u>** church', or to **<u>be</u> church as they** check on the elderly, or offer a listening ear to people in our communities and in our churches.

>However, for these past four months, "**being <u>at</u> church**" has perhaps meant: logging into your computer or laptop or watching our services on your TV…… or putting the recorded worship CD in your player…… then maybe sitting back in

your favorite chair or couch with a cup of coffee… serving yourself communion…. and being very 'at home' in your own worship experience.

>And **"being <u>at</u> church"** recently has perhaps meant:

*Calling the church office answering machine and listening to a daily one-minute devotion, 7 days a week….and telling others about it….

*Or, participating in the "Daily Prayer Moments" that are live streamed at 10am, Mon-Fri……and 'sharing' those posts with your Facebook-Friends…..

>Or, "**being <u>at</u> church"** has meant giving a neighbor, or someone you know, a phone call just to check in with them and brighten up their day…..

*Or, gathering up the kids in your household, and together watching the live streamed, "Family Sunday School," that was offered in the school year on Sunday mornings.

It is interesting how this time of 'distance worship' and 'distance ministry' has provided us with countless ways to actually '**shorten the distance'** between us and God and one another, and others in our communities!

It is also interesting how we just might find that some of our future ministry efforts, such as our upcoming **Wednesday Evening Outdoor Worship Services**, provide ways for many others to experience God's presence in their lives.

I invite you to consider what God has been revealing to you in these past four months, in regards to growing in your own faith, and being an 'inviter' to others, and having

'church' actually **<u>be</u>** wherever God's people find themselves on any given day!

Peace In Christ – Pr. Steve

Just Pick Up the Phone!

Our phones have become great tools for ministry during these days of Covid-19 concerns:

***Phone Message Ministry, 7-days a week:** Simply call the church office and listen to a new devotion message, recorded each day by 10am….. SOTH Office #320-843-3408 / Zion Office #320-239-2430.

***Phone a neighbor:** Every member of our three congregations continues to be encouraged to take a minute every now and then, to call someone in your neighborhood you think might appreciate a listening ear.

***Phone a member of our three churches:** Surprise someone, young and old, with a call out of the blue. You never know what it might mean to members of your church , and our partner churches, to get a call from you!

Live Streamed Family Sunday School – Break For Summer!

There will not be an 11am, Sunday School, live streamed on Facebook during the months of July & August. The Sunday School ministry plans for the fall will be re-evaluated in August.

Get a CD of the Sunday Service Each Week!

Did you know that audio recordings are being made every week of our Sunday services? Yes, and copied onto CD's, for anyone to have mailed to them, or to come pick up. Simply call the church office and leave a message, requesting to be put on the list of a weekly CD!

Coming Soon….

Website and Facebook Page for West Zion

Dylan Reese has been working to design a website page for West Zion. Our new website will include pictures of our church, information about our ministries, the cemetery records, and links to the recorded livestream Daily Prayers and Sunday worship services. It should be activated within shortly. We'll let you know when it is up and running!

West Zion also has a Facebook page which is available now. Search for West Zion Lutheran Church and make sure that you "like" us. Invite others with connections to West Zion to "like" us also.

If anyone has recent pictures of activities in our church, please send them to Dylan to be included on the website and Facebook page. Thanks Dylan for all your work on this project!