
A Message from Pastor Mark Luepke

“Worship Services and Gatherings in May”

Dear Fellow Members and Friends of Zion Lutheran Church,

Shall we say it together? *“Oh, what strange days these are!”* So many aspects of our lives have been affected by the covid-19 pandemic and its accompanying governmental actions and our desire to keep ourselves and others safe and well. For some, the pandemic has brought about inconvenience and irritation. For others, there has been anxiety, fear, loss of income, illness, and even death. Some of the changes the pandemic has brought about in our lives will be temporary, some will hang around for a while, and some may very well be permanent.

One of the changes for us has been not being able to physically gather together for worship. Thankfully, we have been able to gather “together” via the radio airwaves and worship service podcasts on KROS. These times of worship have been a blessing. But we long for the day when we can get back together again in times of worship, receiving God’s gifts through Word, Sacrament, and the fellowship of the believers.

Governor Reynolds has now issued a revised pandemic proclamation for a number of counties in the state of Iowa that allow some businesses and areas of life to be re-opened. However, even so, some restrictions remain in place and certain precautions must be adhered to. One of the restrictions that remains is that no more than ten people may gather together in any location or venue through May 15.

However, recognizing that some constitutional concerns have been raised by some in regards to disallowing the members of religious organizations to gather together in worship, the governor has made an exception for spiritual and religious organizations.

We DO want to gather together! However, with a concern for our people, their families, and our communities, the leadership of the congregation has chosen to abide by the guidance to limit our gatherings – at least through Friday, May 15. **So, we will NOT YET be gathering together for worship in the sanctuary of Zion Lutheran Church in the next two weekends – May 2/3 or May 9/10. We DO hope to gather together in worship on the weekend of May 16 and 17.** (We will let you know if there is any change in this hope and plan.)

When we gather in the sanctuary again, there are some things that will need to be different – at least for a while. There will be social distancing as we gather in the sanctuary – as well as before and afterwards. We will be figuring out different ways to share the Lord’s

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Supper and to receive the offering. There may be a good number of folks who decide to wear masks. And there will be a number of individuals who will not (and should not) yet come back to worship in the sanctuary. Some of you will need to stay at home for a while longer – for your sake and for the sake of others.

So, for now, let us continue to worship together – apart. Let us continue to pray for each other. And pray for so many who are in need throughout our communities, state, country, and world. And pray for those who are directly caring for and serving those in need.

May you know God's gifts of peace and health in these days.

Pastor Mark Luepke

Financial Peace University Online

Many of us feel like we are living in the Twilight Zone with all that is happening regarding the coronavirus and the social distancing. One of the ways that makes the whole situation difficult is if you have been living paycheck to paycheck and now one spouse or family member is not receiving that check. Financial Peace University will guide you and show you how to get out of that rut and to survive during tough times.

Whether you want to prepare for income changes or reach your money goals, Financial Peace is the program that teaches you how to:

- pay off debt
- budget
- save money
- give generously

You can watch the 9 video lessons online and have access to FPU material for a year by signing up online at www.daveramsey.com/fpu. The cost is \$129, paid with debit card or direct payment. By taking the course online, you will have the latest and updated information, plus you can participate from the comfort of your home. By including your children in the viewing and discussion of the video lessons, you will provide a learning experience that could last a lifetime. If you have any questions, call Diane Cassaday at 243-3416.

2020 Vacation Bible School

Due to the uncertainty surrounding us, the decision has been made to cancel Vacation Bible School for the summer of 2020.

Stay tuned for any possible children / youth gatherings that may be held this summer.

Zion Child Care & Preschool

Huge shout out to our child care staff!!! Most of the time, our line of work is not necessarily mentioned when talking about essential employees. Without our staff, parents would not be able to go to work!

We have remained open throughout the COVID 19 pandemic and plan to stay that way. We have a lot of essential workers that utilize our child care services even during these scary times.

We have had to make a few changes for our daily operations. We now take the temperature of each child and staff when they come in the door, we have parents drop off at the front door so they don't have to walk through the building, we have to make sure we have under 10 people per room, and we are cleaning and sanitizing a ton!!

Our numbers have dropped dramatically because most of our parents are fortunate enough to be able to work from home. Our staff have taken advantage of their "free time" in a work day to deep clean the building, clean carpets, organize the basement, work ahead on activity calendars, online staff training, etc. Our staff are truly amazing and we couldn't be more proud of them!!

Our week long spring break for preschool turned into a very loooooong break!! We are really hoping that we are able to come back this school year even if it's just for a few weeks! Our preschool teachers have taken on a whole new role trying to provide educational materials remotely. We have had packets of activities for our children and their kiddos. Teachers have also had lots of meetings online and have also set up a few different ways for families to communicate with them.

Our preschool registration for the 2020/2021 school year will soon be starting. In order to attend our 3 year old program, the child must be 3 by September 15, 2020. Our 3 year olds meet Monday, Tuesday, and Thursday each week. In order to attend our 4 year old preschool program, children must be 4 by September 15, 2020. All children that live in Iowa and are 4 years of age qualify for the 4 Year Old Voluntary Preschool Grant with the CCSD and State of Iowa -tuition is FREE! Please let us know if you would like a space! 243-9393

Second Sunday Supper

Zion will serve a Second Sunday Supper on May 10. It will be quite different from our usual dinners. We will be serving a cold lunch and handing the sack lunch to our guests. This will take place in our parking lot. Our meal will be a ham sandwich, wrapped cheese, carrots, celery, an apple, and a wrapped Rice Krispie bar.

We will prepare the sack lunch on May 10 from 2 until 4 p.m. We will distribute the bags from 4 until 5 p.m. If you choose to help just show up in the kitchen at 2 p.m.

Cynthia Pederson
Carol Gruhn

Laurie Kuehl
Judy Carstensen

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OFFICE HOURS

Monday through Friday
9:00 a.m.— 3:00 p.m.
Subject to circumstances