*Make a joyful noise to the Lord, all the earth! Worship the Lord with gladness! Enter into God’s presence with joyful song! Know that the Lord is God. The Lord made us, and we belong to the Creator; we are God’s people and the sheep of God’s pasture. Enter God’s gates with thanksgiving and the courts with praise! Give thanks to God, Bless God’s Name. For the Lord is Good; God’s steadfast love endures forever, and Gods’ faithfulness to all generations.*

-Psalm 100

Spring is supposedly already here. The astronomical season of spring technically started a day earlier this year than normal on the

20th of March. But we’ve had scant evidence of the season here— as my toddler looks mournfully out the window saying “snow, off! All done snow.” Yes, baby Z, I’m all done with the snow too, and if I new

 how to turn it off I would have done so.

 It is the same with the season of Easter. Technically Easter is

 already here every Sunday. That’s why we have Sundays IN Lent

 and not Sundays OF Lent. Lent is always forty days long, but if you

 tally the fullness of time we spend between Ash Wednesday and

 Easter you will always find it longer than exactly forty days. That’s

 because we don’t count Sundays during this fast. Every Sunday is a

 small intrusion of Easter, the resurrection hope in the midst of our

 Lenten journey. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness

 can never overcome Sundays. But sometimes we have scant evidence

 that Easter is there. How do we make a joyful noise to the Lord,

 and worship with gladness and rousing song when winter seems to

 have us still in its cold and blustery clutches?

Here the psalmist can help us, because Easter doesn’t depend

 on our faithfulness. Even if you cannot muster joyful shouts

 within yourself, or if your insides do not match the outsides of

 the bright festival Easter days to come. It is not because of our

 internal states that the Spring arrives. If you remain gloomy

 staring out the window, that will no more stop it being spring

 than it will hasten it along. The reason for the joyful shouts in

 this psalm, is not because we were able to make them. It isn’t

 about our ability to deduce it from the evidence. Rather, it is

 because God is good. God is steadfast and faithful, even when we

 are grumpy and blustery and cold.

And you belong to your creator. The most Joyful noise

that my baby makes are because Mama came down stairs, or because Papa is home! She belongs with us, and that is joyful when we are all there together. It is the presence of others:

of our parents, brothers and sisters, and our God, that

brings these sounds to our lips. It is the gathered community

of Zion that can give thanksgiving and a raucous song. It is God’s delight in us that gives Easter its meaning, not our delight (or lack thereof) in Easter. So don’t get hung up on whether it feels like spring or if you cannot muster a joyful shout on your own. The good news is, it wasn’t up to us anyway. God’s faithfulness to all generations will resound with these things. Sundays, Spring, and Easter will all arrive as surely as God’s love in Christ. Amen.

Congregation Council Highlights – March, 2023

* The treasurer’s report showed a February income of $11,625.95 and expenditures of $14,152.73.
* A thank you note was received from Shirley Leitbgeb thanking the congregation for the gift of windchimes.
* In his Pastor’s Report, Pastor Tommy thanked people for providing food for the Soup Suppers and for an increased attendance at Lenten Services.
* There will be a first communion class in April for all interested people, grades 3 through adult.
* Confirmation class will be June 12-16 (please note the change of date).
* Pastor made eight visitations/calls.
* The schedule for Holy Week services was reviewed.
* The Easter Breakfast will be held on April 9th beginning at 9:00 a.m.
* Snow removal during the month of March was done by Darrell Lee.
* YAKS is coming……..
* The position of church secretary will be advertised in the Advisor.
* Plans for a “Return to Zion” event were discussed.

**March Notes:**

Thank you to Darrell Lee who handled snow removal for the month of March.

The Isabella altar painting is framed and ready to hang. Thanks to everyone who worked on this project.

Make plans to attend YAKS events in August. What is YAKS???? Stay tuned!

The Congregation Council is making plans to invite people back to worship! Lots of things are going on at Zion! You are invited to take part in ALL the programs at church.

We are collecting email addresses of members. Please call Cyndee Miske with your email address or send it to the church office at:

office@zionlutheran-manistique.org

The Backpack Buddies program served **64** students in March. Thank you for your continued support of this vital program in our community.

If you would like a visit from Pastor Tommy or have a friend or relative in need of a pastoral visit, please contact the church office. Pastor makes home visits on Thursday afternoons.

TheApril **NOISY OFFERING** will be going to “Answer the Call”.

TheMarch **NOISY OFFERING** collected $38.73 for CBC.

*Thanks for your generous support of these organizations.*

We are looking for volunteers to help count the offering! Please see Cyndee Miske, Pastor Tommy or Linda Levin for more information. Thanks to all who are assisting: Mary Ansell, Jo-Nell Berger, Dorothy Brandstrom, Carla Flodin, Kaye Jarski, Pat Lamb, Linda Levin, Kay MacGregor, Brian Nelson, Kathy Peterson, and Cathy Wargo.

We need some help on our church committees! The work of the congregation is done most effectively through committees. We have the following committees: Worship and Music, Evangelism and Membership, Finance and Stewardship, Christian Education and Youth, Property and Personnel. Most committees meet once per quarter (four times per year). We need your ideas and your participation! Please contact Pastor Tommy, Linda Levin or leave a message in the church office if you are interested.

**Church Attendance Report**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Saturday | Sunday | Zoom | Mid Week |
| March 4/5/8 |  11 | 52 | 6  | 18 |
| March 11/12/15 |  11 | 54 | 8 | 21 |
| March 18/19/22 | 11  | 34 | 7 | 21 |
| March 25/26/29 | 7  | 37 | 9 | - |

**Join us for Bible Study**

**The Monday night Bible study group will be meeting at 6:30, every 2nd and 4th Mondays . Pr. Richter will be leading our study on the Gospel of John. We will meet in person in Augustana Hall. Be sure to wear your mask and social distance. If you have any questions about this opportunity for study, please contact the office.**

**Looking ahead….**

Holy Week Worship Schedule:

Palm Sunday – April 1 at 5:00 p.m. and April 2 at 10:30 a.m.

Maundy Thursday – April 6 at 7:00 p.m.

Manistique Ministerial Association Good Friday Service – April 7 at 1:00 p.m. First Baptist

Good Friday – April 7 at 7:00 p.m.

Easter Vigil – April 8 at 5:00 p.m.

Manistique Ministerial Association Easter Sunrise Service – April 9 at 7:00 a.m. at Lakeview Cemetery, Pastor Tommy is Preaching.

Easter Service – April 9 at 10:30 a.m.

The Congregation Council will be hosting an Easter breakfast on Easter Sunday, April 9th beginning at 9:00 a.m. The menu includes various egg dishes, muffins, fruit, juice, milk, and coffee. Welcome!

Confirmation class will be held June 12-16 (please note change of date). Confirmation class is for students in grades 7-12. Classes will be held at Zion.

A First Communion class will be held in April (Sunday, April 16 or Sunday, April 23). Anyone grade 3 through adult is welcomed to attend this class. Please contact Pastor Tommy or the church office if you are interested.

**Upcoming Scripture Readings**

**April 2** —Sunday of the Passion

Isaiah 50:4-9a, Psalm 31:9-16, Philippians 2:5-11, Matthew 26:14-27:66

**April 9** —Resurrection of the Lord

Acts 10:34-43, Psalm 118:1-2, 14-24, Colossians 3:1-4, Matthew 28:1-10

**April 16, 2023**—Second Sunday of Easter

Acts 2:14a, 22-32, Psalm 16, 1 Peter 1:3-9, John 20:19-31

**April 23**—Third Sunday of Easter

Acts 2:14a, 36-41, Psalm 116:1-4, 12-19, 1 Peter 1:17-23, Luke 24:13-35

**April 30**—Fourth Sunday of Easter

Acts 2:42-47, Psalm 23, 1 Peter 2:19-25, John 10:1-10

**Easter Plants and contributions to the Floral Fund have been given in memory/honor of**

The joy of Easter from Naomi Fletcher

Elmer & Jean Flodin and Roy Laux from Tom & Carla Flodin

Jeana Russey from James & Rev. Eleanor Russey

Loved Ones and our Lord Jesus Christ from Ken & Bonnie Groh

Loved Ones from Teddy Nelson

Bob Panek from Lila Panek

Loved Ones from Mary Ansell

Loved Ones from Joanne Nelson

Loved Ones from Anna Sjogren & Elsa Couch

Charles Miske from Cyndee Miske

Loved Ones from Thomas Graham

Our Mothers-Martha & Rebecca from Larry & Rebecca Peterson

Loved Ones from Kathy Peterson

Bill & Lois Bellville from Marie Bellville

Pastor, Ann & Zephyr from C

Shirley and Frank Leitgeb from Kay MacGregor and Linda Levin

John M. Curry from Brian Nelson

Our Parents – Nila Hoag & Dennis Nowotny

Jeanne Gundersen’s 98th Birthday from Johanna Worley & Richard Ekstrom

**Gifts to our congregation have been given in memory of**

**Robert Barr** from Daniel & Kathy McDonough

For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven.” ~Ecclesiastes 3:1 Dear Northern Great Lakes Synod, What time is it? In our Synod Office, we have two clocks on the conference room wall, one set to Eastern Time and the other to Central Time. Between the two clocks is the above verse. I find this to be a helpful reminder, not only that our Synod spans two time zones, but that all things have their time. And God’s time, or rather God’s timing, plays a part in what our time will hold. So what time is it for you? In your life? In your congregation’s life? In the life of the Church? In the context of our changing culture and world? As I look back on the times of my family, we are now past the season of small children and the rhythm of school activities, events, and sports. I am glad for the time we spent watching games, choir concerts, piano lessons, and so much more. I’m both sad and relieved that I don’t have to sit on the bleachers in a windy blizzard anymore, trying to distinguish the boy and the ball on a gridiron covered with falling snow. These seasons of life pass, and while we’re glad to have had them, we know that time does not stand still. We expect that there will be different seasons in a lifetime. It is more difficult, I think, to witness the end of a season that has spanned generations. When a congregation closes, it is easy to feel not only deep grief, but a sense of failure, that somehow the current generation has not done what is necessary. But what if that community of faith has accomplished all that was needful in its season? No congregation that was founded by the apostles in the first century is still in existence. Those communities of faith served for a time, the time that was given to them. And they accomplished what was needful for their time, planting seeds of future churches and future faith. For everything there is a season; for people, for churches, for Shining with the Light of Christ in the Northern Great Lakes Synod Page 2 Northern Light institutions. I grieved along with you at the announcement that Finlandia University will begin to end. The impact on the community, the blow to its economy, to its sense of self and pride, can hardly be estimated. It is a huge loss. And yet, I find it helpful to put this loss within the context of Ecclesiastes. For Finlandia, its season is over, along with hundreds of other small colleges and universities that also will close because they cannot withstand the challenges and realities of our time. This is not the result of some failure or lack of creative strategy or dedicated effort. This simply is. Finlandia’s season is completed. And what remains is to end with grace and gratitude for all that was accomplished during its time. We celebrate the vision of its founders, the education excellence, the nurturing of character and integrity of so many students, the dedication of faculty, staff, management, coaches, and more. No one and no thing lasts forever; not people, not congregations, not institutions. Kingdoms and nations rise and fall. Indeed, it is when something has existed for generations that we expect it to outlive us also. But this generation may well witness the end of many things whose seasons will be complete during our time. Consider the rotary dial phone, the 35 mm film camera and the end of Kodak, the manual typewriter, cassette tapes, and the whole polyester fashion debacle of the 1970’s. These things that were so essential to their time are not only obsolete now, but they only exist in antique shops, thrift stores, and dusty garage boxes. By the grace of God, our ministry efforts of the past, and those that will end in our time, will plant seeds for future churches and future faith. The assets of one whose season is ending will provide new life for one whose season continues for future ministry. The work of Christ and God’s purposes are far bigger than any single person, congregation, or institution. God in Christ Jesus is in the business of new life, and has a particular flair for new life after death. As the season of ministry ends for beloved efforts, traditions, congregations and institutions, God brings new life, new energy, new possibilities, new opportunities. So we contribute what we can, we participate as we are able, in the time that we have been given, to further the work of Christ that we know will continue long after we are gone. Yours in Christ, Bishop Katherine Finegan “The church of Christ in every age beset by change, but Spirit-led, must claim and test its heritage and keep on rising from the dead.” ~Evangelical Lutheran Worship, Hymn #729

**CONTACT US:**

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**Secretary:** Cyndee Miske

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**Musician:** Linda Levin

**Choir Director:** Rebecca Peterson

**Custodian:** Pat Toennessen

**Congregation Council**:

Linda Levin, President

Donna Mott, Vice President

Cyndee Miske, Secretary

Jo-Nell Berger

Ken Groh

Ruth Jones

Todd Kangas

Janet Krueger

Peter Mathson

Bonnie Moody

Teddy Nelson

Rebecca Peterson

Naomi Fletcher, Treasurer

Cyndee Miske, Financial Secretary

 A congregation of the Northern Great Lakes Synod

of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.