



The Zion Flame

September 2021

Zion Lutheran Church
7215 Valley View Rd. Ferndale, WA

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Pastor Becky Langholz

Dear family in Christ,

Each September, our denomination (the ELCA) encourages its congregations to participate in service and community outreach in what is called “God’s Work, Our Hands” Sunday. In addition, Zion’s Evangelism committee recently resumed meeting again for the first time since COVID began in March of 2020. Kids are also headed back to school, and we are aware that many families are struggling. Though the pandemic is still with us, we are reinvigorated to be present to our community and helping those in need as best we can. We all desire to share the healing love of Jesus Christ with our hurting world (from our Church’s mission statement). There are many ways to be involved. In your weekly household shopping, consider adding an item or two for our long-standing baskets for Ferndale’s Food Bank and “Other Bank” (hygiene and household supplies). I often like to buy an extra jar of peanut butter and a package of diapers. As a parent, I know how quickly a family can use up these two items! From now until October 10th, we will also be collecting new or slightly used coats and other cold-weather items for people in need in Whatcom County.

Zion is also starting a new on-going effort. We’ll be collecting bottled water for the Interfaith Coalition’s CAST (Coffee and Sandwiches Together) program. Since 1999, CAST volunteers have been serving food and drink and distributing hygiene supplies to those who need them in downtown Bellingham. While we know the pitfalls of plastic water bottles, we’d encourage you to pick up an extra case of water when you can. Rosemary Meyers can answer more questions about this effort.

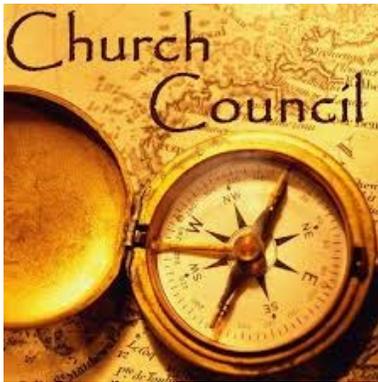
We also continue to be involved in the Family Promise Program with partners Christ Lutheran and United Church of Ferndale to support local families experiencing homelessness. During the pandemic, the program acquired more housing for families, so they no longer rotate and stay in churches. But churches like ours continue to supply meals and groceries. Our next week of responsibility will be September 20th so stay tuned for details. Zion’s quilters will also begin again to work their magic on Thursday mornings starting soon. As we like to say, if you can tie your shoes, you can help quilt! Speak to Brenda Bannerman if you are interested.

And these are just some of the “official” church activities to tap into. Then there the innumerable, daily ways that you show love to one another, to your families, your friends, your neighbors, your communities and beyond! Through gestures big and small, you are the hands and feet of Jesus. It is my hope as your pastor that our time together as church will strengthen and equip you for all that God calls. Also, if you have a need, please don’t be shy in asking for help. Your church family wants to support you. We have all been there, and we will be in need someday again. Life is full of give and take. Near and far, many yearn for the love of Jesus. In response, we are called to roll up our sleeves and get involved. Whether you can give of your time, talent or money, your generosity and open hearts are sincerely appreciated and make a difference. Thank you for all you do. May God bless our future efforts together.

In Christ,

Pr. Becky Langholz

Pr. Becky is regularly in the office on Monday and Thursday mornings from 9am-12pm.
She can also be reached by cell phone: (360) 393-6630 or by email: pastor@zionlutheranwhatcom.org



Pr. Becky is in the church office Mondays & Thursdays from 9am-12pm. She is also working from home and can be reached on her cell phone: (360) 393-6630 or via email at pastor@zionlutheranwhatcom.org Fridays are her day off; only emergency or prayer chain calls/texts on Fridays, please.

Pr. Becky will not be in the office on Monday, September 6th in observation of Labor Day. She can always be reached on her cell phone: (360) 393-6630.

The Church Council will meet on Wed. September 15th at 4:30pm this month. Agenda items and reports for the meeting will be due by Weds. September 8th.

Financial Information (through July 2021):

General Fund Balance: \$34,500.25

Special Fund Balance: \$7,275.96

Thrivent Mutual Fund Balance: \$22,905.02

For the year 2021:

Receipts: \$57,063.00

Expenses: \$45,055.08

Net: \$12,007.92

Thanks to the hard work of Treasurer Ken Quinn, our second PPP loan in the amount of \$12,185 (not listed above) was officially forgiven in August 2021.

Connect with Zion online: Resources for worship and reflection are available on our church [YouTube channel](#). We also live-stream the worship service there each Sunday at 10am.

As the COVID landscape keeps shifting, we ask folks to please abide by State and County guidelines for masking and other safety protocols while at church events. As you know, an indoor mask mandate was re-instituted for all on August 23rd. We pray to God for health, patience and compassion as the pandemic continues, and we trust in the power of God to see us through hard times.

Martin Luther, writing during the Bubonic plague of the 1500's:

"I shall ask God mercifully to protect us. Then I will fumigate, purify the air, administer medicine, and take medicine. I shall avoid places and persons where my presence is not needed in order to not become contaminated, and thus perchance inflict and pollute others, and so cause their death as a result of my negligence. If God should wish to take me, he will surely find me. But, I have done what he has expected of me, and so I am not responsible for either my own death or the death of others. If my neighbor needs me, however, I shall not avoid place or person, but will go freely. This is a God-fearing faith because it is neither brash nor foolhardy, and does not tempt God." - Martin Luther



From the Bishop

The Spirit September 2021

On August 1, 2021 I began my third year in the office of bishop for the Northwest Washington Synod. It is my pleasure and joy to serve God and to journey with you through this office. I am thankful for your partnership, your understanding, your forgiveness, your passion, and your faithfulness. We are living in a time of great turmoil and great opportunity. We are living in (to use a much-overused word) unprecedented times. What does this mean for us as individuals? The Northwest Washington Synod? The ELCA? The Body of Christ?

Many of us feel **grief**. Grief at what once was but is no longer. Grief that the world keeps changing around us and we cannot figure out our place or our sense of call in the middle of so much shifting. It is difficult when the world feels rocky and unsteady. It is hard to understand that what we often took for granted is no longer. Recently I visited my hometown in eastern Washington. The town is half the size it was when I was growing up. As I walked through the downtown, businesses that have been there for decades are gone. Boarded up. Abandoned. My world felt rocked. And I grieved. What do you grieve?

Many of us feel **anger or resentment**. We divide ourselves into camps. We use the words, “us” and “them” and act as though “our” camp is always right and holy and just. We throw words around like weapons and we refuse to truly listen to the other – because we are “right” and they are “wrong.” And nothing will persuade us otherwise. In John 8 we hear Jesus tell the men who wanted to throw rocks at a woman accused of adultery, “Let anyone among you who is without sin be the first to throw a stone at her.’ When the men leave, Jesus says to the woman, “Neither do I condemn you. Go your way, and from now on do not sin again.” What would it mean for us to live into these words of Jesus?

Many of us feel **exhausted**. We are tired. We are weary. For a brief moment it felt as though we were moving beyond COVID-19 and then suddenly, with the Delta variant, we were pushed back into worry and concern (I am writing this in the middle of August – perhaps the numbers will be better before you read this in September!). Quite frankly, I am tired of changing things on the calendar – wondering if something should be in-person or online, wondering if I am doing something risky or if I am not taking the variables into enough consideration. It is wearisome. What makes you exhausted?

Many of us feel there is **something more that we are missing**. We ache for connection with God and with others. We feel lonely when we are alone, and we feel even more isolated when we are in a group. We long for meaning. We yearn to truly live, move, and have our being in the Spirit (Acts 17). How does the community of Christ answer the loneliness so many are feeling? What have we missed in the life of the church and participants? How do we sink even more deeply into the waters of life that God has called us to and given us in our baptisms?

Many of us are **hopeful**. Yes, I fully am living in the reality of all that I said above. I am not a Pollyanna. And yet, I trust that God is here, God is present, God is active – in this beautiful, flawed world of ours. Right now, in our congregations and in our neighborhoods, there are grief-stricken, angry, exhausted, aching-for-connection people. And right now, God has given us the opportunity to not only reach out to these people, but to listen and reflect, grow and learn together. What a calling! What an opportunity!

I encourage you to check out the **LiVE Project** where you can connect, learn, and grow deeper in faith together and with others. <https://lutheransnw.org/ministries/the-live-project> You might also be interested in **Living Legacy** where congregations are encouraged to have deep conversations about their values, their dreams, and what God is calling them to do and to be into the future. <https://lutheransnw.org/programs/living-legacy>

The synod staff and I are here to journey, listen, and reflect with you. Thank you for these last two years. I look forward to this new year together in Christ.

+Bishop Shelley Bryan Wee

bishop@lutheransnw.org



Your prayers make a difference! If you have a person or situation that needs prayer, please call Pr. Becky and let her know. She can alert Zion's prayer chain and/or add the item to our congregational list.



Our prayers as a congregation continue:

- ◆ For all experiencing sickness, difficulty or grief, especially Bethany, Mark, Nina, Donna and Jim.
- ◆ For all experiencing cancer especially Tammy, Brayden, Maye and Kinsley.
- ◆ For these ministries: Lutino Adunu in Gulu, Uganda, Sol de Justicia church in Grecia, Costa Rica, Hogar Irekani in Michoacán, México, African S.M.I.L.E in Tanzania and the Interfaith Coalition of Whatcom County.
- ◆ For health, strength and endurance for all, especially the most vulnerable, as the pandemic continues.
- ◆ For the people of Haiti and Afghanistan, amid tumultuous times in their countries.
- ◆ For students, teachers and administrators as school begins again in the coming weeks.



Welcome
Glad you're here!

Zion happily welcomed three new members at the end of August: **Maria Valdavia and Diann and Alan Mitchell**. If you haven't already, make sure to introduce yourselves to Maria, Diann and Alan and extend a hearty welcome!

We'll be restarting our first Sunday of the month church clean-ups on September 4th at 9am. Cleaning and maintain our church are volunteer efforts, and many hands make light the work. Come on out for an hour of vacuuming, dusting and generally sprucing up our beloved church. Many thanks.

September Birthdays



- 2 Hazel Bay
- 4 Aaron Gandy
- 17 Evelyn Jensen
- 24 Carson Rowland
- 30 Abby Jensen

"May the Lord bless and keep you another year through!"





September Service Events



God's Work, Our Hands!
Our denomination the ELCA is encouraging a nation-wide day of service on September 12, 2021.

To that end, we will initiate some special collections this month:

Starting in September, Zion will collect bottled water for a program through the Interfaith Coalition called CAST (Coffee and Sandwiches Together). Since 1999, CAST volunteers have been offering free food, drink and hygiene supplies to anyone who needs them in downtown Bellingham three nights a week. **Zion would like to help keep up the program's bottled water supply and is requesting your donations. This will be an on-going collection.** Direct questions to Rosemary Meyers.



Don't forget—we also have on-going collections for food and hygiene and household supplies in the baskets in the narthex.



From now until Sunday, October 10th, we will be collecting new or slightly used coats and other warm items (hats, scarves, gloves, etc.) for the Interfaith Coalition's annual Winter Coat Drive. Leave your donation on the hangers or in the basket in the narthex. Speak to Rosemary Meyers if you have questions.

The Evangelism Committee will meet on Monday, September 13th at 4pm at Woods Coffee in Ferndale. We will discuss some upcoming fall efforts: bottled water collection, coat and warm-item drive and November's Fall Festival. Your ideas and helping hands are welcome. Speak to Rosemary Meyers or Pr. Becky for more information.



International Missions Support



On August 14th, a 7.2 magnitude earthquake hit Haiti. Lutheran Disaster Response, a ministry of our denomination, is a good home for donations:

[Haiti Crisis - Evangelical Lutheran Church in America \(elca.org\)](http://elca.org)

For over a century in the United States, Lutherans have been involved in providing aid to refugees and is now involved in the crisis in Afghanistan. Lutheran Community Services Northwest has several links for learning how to help: <https://lcsnw.org/>. Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service (LIRS) through Refugees Northwest also has opportunities to get involved:

https://lirsconnect.org/get_involved/action_center/siv

Zion Lutheran Church Mission Statement

Since 1903

The beloved, forgiven people of God.

Called to spread the Good News so as to build up the body of Christ.

Gifted to share the healing love of Jesus Christ with our hurting world.

Empowered by the Spirit to be a caring country congregation for ministry to one another and the larger community.



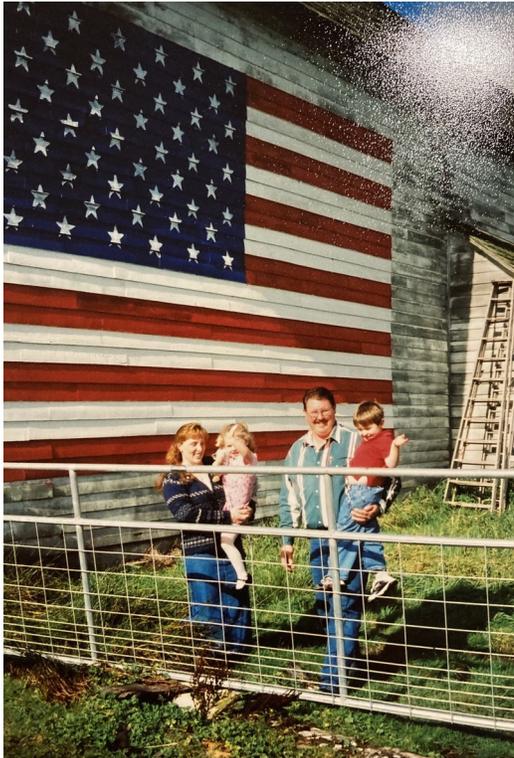
Zion's Relational Covenant

In our life together, we will...

Give thanks to God for the gift of our church and each other. Honor and respect our diverse opinions, perspectives and work-styles. Take responsibility for our own feelings and deal with issues directly. Ask clarifying questions and avoid making assumptions. Speak up honestly in the proper time and place. Make decisions in a transparent manner. Support decisions made by the group. Pray for unity in our congregation.



This month marks the 20th Anniversary of the September 11th attacks. Zion will offer a special moment of reflection after worship on September 12th. (Pictured here are Janel and Todd Black with their children. The Blacks painted a flag on their barn at Grandview Rd. and Kickerville Rd. in solidarity with all those who lost their lives on September 11th).



The Black family in 2001:
Janel, Riley, Todd and Dakota.



The Monday Bible Study will meet September 13th, 20th and 27th this month. We meet from 12-1:30pm. If the weather is pleasant, we will gather outside. If not, we will meet inside the church basement. Bring your Bible and a desire to explore God's word with others! We will not meet on Monday, September 6th in observation of Labor Day.

Craig Johnson will lead a Sunday morning class on the disciple Thomas starting September 12th and running five consecutive Sundays through October 10th. All are welcome to come learn, share and explore our faith tradition. We will start at 8:45am on Sunday mornings.



From the Archives



Back to class at the Pleasant Valley School around 1924 (prior to electricity) with children in Grades 1 through 8.

The building was completed in 1916 and was notable in its day for a large gathering area with a stage on the top floor.

Picture of the Congregational Church across the road from the Pleasant Valley School in 1904. The building immediately behind the church is the parsonage (short commute).

These buildings were erected in 1902 and demolished around 1971.

