

January/February 2022

Newsletter



Zion
Lutheran Church

808 W. Porter Ave. Stockton, CA 95207

Worship:

Sunday 9:00am

Office Hours: Mon-Thurs 8-1pm

**Phone 209-477-0259 or
office@zlcstockton.org**

www.zlcstockton.org

Weekly Activities:

Sunday

9:00am Sunday Worship
3:00pm Christian Education Forum

Monday

6:00pm Council Meeting (2nd Monday)

Tuesday

7:00pm Women's Bible Study

Wednesday

7:00am Men's Breakfast

Upcoming Events:

1/6	7:00pm	Joint Epiphany Eucharist Service @ St Anne's
1/9	5:00pm	Zion Chamber Orchestra Concert
1/16	5:00pm	Zion Chamber Orchestra Concert
1/23		Pastor Ryan's last day
1/28	7:30pm	Zion Chamber Orchestra Concert
1/30	10:00am	Congregational Meeting

Council Members

President	Dianne Spear Hooton (209) 601-9022
Vice President	Lauren AhTye (209) 986-3018
Treasurer	Chris DeRoos (209) 915-3208
Secretary	Connie Eastwood (209) 3925
At-Large	Sharyn Carr (209) 478-6032
At-Large	Deborah Griffin (773) 882-0592
At-Large	Ana Landa (209) 993-9272

From the Pastor

Dear Zion Community,

It is with a great deal of complex emotions that I write this letter to you. After much prayer, counsel, and discernment, I have accepted a call as the Pastor of Faith Formation at a Lutheran Church in Appleton, WI. My final day as your pastor here at Zion will be Sunday January 23rd, 2022. I have begun working with Bishop Rohrer and their staff to ensure they have everything they need to aid you during this transition and find you an interim pastor.

It has been my privilege over the last years to worship and serve with you. We have journeyed together into the unknowns of our changing world, societal decline of church membership, and the pandemic. We have created partnerships with St. Anne's and Family Promise, and are engaging in new and sustainable ministries. During this time of change I encourage you to hold fast to your faith and continue to trust in God. Change is something none of us love. We don't like saying goodbye. We don't like the unknown. But change is also an inevitable part of life and in the midst of change that is where our faith is challenged and grown. God will continue the good work he has always been doing in you and in this place.

My family and I will miss you. Zion has been the place where I learned how to be a pastor, where Leon was baptized, and where we adopted Tristan. We have grown together with you in our faith in and service to God and our neighbor. It is incredibly hard to say goodbye but I will never forget my first years of ministry with you all. Please pray for us as we leave, as we will be praying for you.

God's Peace to you now and always,
Rev. Ryan Eikenbary

Letter from the President

A friend once wrote on a scrap of paper, "Change is inevitable; improvement optional." I kept that quote for many years, and it is no less true now than it was then. Until 5 ½ years ago, our congregation faced many, many years of interim ministers along with Pastor Kirstin's two-year call after dealing with an upheaval in our church that would have destroyed weaker congregations. Then in 2016, we took a leap of faith that drove away some of our most ardent church members and friends. Again, something that rocked our foundation.

Choosing Pastor Ryan as our minister was challenging for most of us. All we knew was that he lived with his husband, and they had a son, details that were acceptable generally but not necessarily as a minister who would lead us closer to God.

And yet, that is exactly what he has done both in his life and in his call as our minister. Ryan and Burke have become symbols to us of the way parents should be. With Leon's energy level five years ago, many of us could only wonder how they could keep up with him. Then along came Tristan, their second son, and the loving care they showed him as he slowly adjusted to becoming part of a real family seemed boundless.

As for Pastor Ryan as an administrator, he took a broken business (yes, while the church is a place of worship, it is also a business) and organized it so it is now strong and on solid footing. (Waking daily at 3:00 a.m., though now he sleeps until 4:00, has helped him accomplish so much work that needed

to be done.) Three other congregations and Family Promise now share our campus from which we receive monthly income, and our facility looks busy and active. And because he accepted the joint ministry at St. Anne's, our financial situation is even much stronger.

Yet, while many wondered what to expect of a gay minister who was accepting his first call, we quickly learned his values were the same as ours. We were also greatly surprised to learn what a historian and scholar he is. Not only were his sermons interesting (once he learned to slow down as he spoke) from a historical standpoint and powerful in their message, his classes could have taken place at any university. Comparing words from the Greek Bible with the Latin and English Bibles and how their meanings could change have been common place, and his knowledge made the message of his sermons each week even stronger.

However, as Pastor Ryan and his family leave us to head on a new journey, what I will miss the most is his friendship. I have often stated I am not sure I would have become vice president and then president if I had not enjoyed working with him so much, and I truly appreciate his friendship.

So where does that leave the rest of us? On our own journey. How will it turn out? Only God knows for sure. We have challenges ahead as we adapt to an interim minister and go through the process (hopefully expedited this time) of calling a new minister. And yet, with the strength all of us have shown during the past two decades I have been a member of this congregation, I know we will not only survive but continue to thrive as the caring, special group of friends who are a family of God.

God has blessed us all.

Dianne

Treasurer Report

As I write this article, I am getting a handle on the financial workings of Zion, and needless to say, it is a learning curve, where I still learn something new almost every day.

The Church has seen many challenges over the last couple of years, not the least of which includes dealing with COVID-19 and all of the hurdles the pandemic, as well as government restrictions on when, where and how many of us can gather to worship have thrown our way. Through all of it, your stewardship has helped immensely to helping keep the church on firm footing moving into next year, and if we can keep up the pace, we can see us not only meet the current year's budget, but hopefully do so again for 2022.

All of that being said, Stewardship can take many different forms. The Church will always need money to pay the salaries, utility bills and such – that much is a given. But please don't forget that there are many other ways one can contribute to the Church, be it volunteering one's time, skills or even donating food to our Food Closet or clothing to our new outreach program to help provide shoes and clothes to those in need. However, you decide to give, be it money, time, etc., your gifts not only help Zion, but also help our fellow Brothers and Sisters in Christ in need.

Let me close by wishing everyone a very Blessed and Happy Holidays, and a huge thank you to any and all gifts you can give to the Church!

Christopher DeRoos
Treasurer, Zion Lutheran Church

Notice of Congregational Meeting

The Zion Lutheran Church Congregational Meeting will take place January 30, 2022. Please plan to attend. It will be short but very important for we must vote to approve the 2022 church budget and accept the members of the Nomination Committee. The previous Sunday, January 23, a packet including the agenda of the meeting, budget and list of the candidates for the committee will be passed out to allow people to read the information ahead of time. It is imperative that you attend if possible so we will have a quorum.

Dianne

P.S. I just learned Gary Putnam has agreed to be our minister that day so you have an extra reason for wanting to attend church!

Family Promise Update

Greetings, Zion Members.

The Day Center and its opening is on the horizon. It is difficult to pin down a specific opening date due to the hiring of a specific contractor and building materials. Both are currently in the works.

As you already know, Family Promise has hired a full-time director, Jory Gwasdoff. He is actively working on hiring a full-time program manager, contractor, and all the other things that need to be done to open up a daily program. He continues to fundraise and work at connecting with more churches that will directly work with the homeless families.

The Day Center will have a different mailing address than Zion Lutheran. This will resolve any confusion with our church and the Family Promise Program.

Once the contractor and staff are in place, the "opening of the doors" will be quick. As explained previously, most of the program materials are in place.

We are very impressed with the speed and professionalism of the people who are working to develop the Day Center. I will keep you posted on the happenings and changes of this center, both verbally, and in upcoming church newsletters.

I have been asked to join the Day Center Committee and feel honored and pleased to be able to join with such an active and dedicated group of people. I hope I can continue to serve Zion as a bridge to the Program that is housed on our church property.

Please feel free to get in touch with me if you have further questions.

Peace, Lauren AhTye

New Dimension's Thank You!

All the Christmas gifts have been picked up by the New Dimensions Foster Family Agency!!!

Thanks to everyone who participated in this gift giving. This was all completed by the second week in December, giving the Agency time to get the gifts to the foster youth.

The Director, Shannon Roberts, picked up all the wrapped gifts and was very pleased. She said she could tell they were all wrapped with love. Ms. Roberts gave Zion a beautiful Christmas Globe as a "Thank You" for our thoughtfulness. Please visit the church office and see the Globe.

Pictures of the children opening their gifts will be sent to us, at a later date.

Thank you again to Jane Rasmussen and Nancy Turnrose for all you time and efforts to make the gift giving to the foster youth in our area a success.

Lauren AhTye



Goodbye From Burke

Dear Zion,

Though Pastor Ryan has been able to write and say his goodbyes, I too wanted to take the chance, on behalf of the kids and me, to also say farewell. While we are excited about what lies ahead at Ryan's new call and our move to Appleton, Wisconsin, I am also sad to be leaving this place we have called home for the past 5+ years. Many of you have welcomed us with open arms and have been so kind to me and the boys.

Zion is the first time Tristan ever went to church. And Zion is where Leon was baptized. These are memories we will not forget. In fact, this picture from that day is one of my favorites. We were still new at Zion and Ryan's first baptism as an ordained pastor was of our son! That was the start of many positive memories with this church and with you all.



I appreciate the conversations many of you had with Leon, about sports or other topics important to an elementary kid. And I appreciate how you kept an eye on Tristan as he ran around before and after church. Caring for your pastor's family is a way that you care for your pastor.

I hope that you viewed my acts of service for the church as an outpouring of my commitment to you and to this place. From the website to the Facebook page, from property upkeep to picking up trash, my service was to God but also to each of you. One of my favorite memories at Zion is the weekend in 2017 when we celebrated the 500th anniversary of the reformation. We held an intergenerational service to burn the church mortgage and we took a bus to worship in San Francisco with our Synod.

Finally, I want to thank you for helping my husband to become the pastor that he is today. He learned a lot during his time ministering to you all. It will serve him well at his next call and your influence will always be with us.

I will miss you and wish you well. There is never a good time to say goodbye and though our time in Stockton came to an end sooner than we expected, I trust God's plan for us and for you. May God's grace sustain you even until the end of days.

- Burke Wallace



ST. ANNE'S PUBLIC HOUSE

Virtual Celebration and Quiz Night

FEBRUARY 26th, 2022, 6 - 8 p.m.

Supporting the Mission of the Episcopal Church of St. Anne.

A portion of the proceeds will support Lincoln Elementary School.

TICKETS: Minimum Donation \$10 per person in a household/group/Parish "pod"



Keep Calm and Pub On!

To keep everyone healthy and safe, we are celebrating again virtually for Public House 2022!

Registration for the event will be available on Eventbrite on December 1, 2021. Completed registration will include a Zoom link for us all to celebrate together, recipes to cook your own "pub food" at home, a sing-along song-book, music, and a special Virtual Pub Quiz with prizes!

Please join us and assemble your best pod of quizzers!