



Our Mission

We are a welcoming, caring community, called by Christ, and enabled by the Spirit, to share God's love by living our faith.



The Annual Meeting of
Mount Zion
Lutheran Church
will be held
February 5, 2012
immediately
following a single service
at 10 a.m.

Confirmation will begin at 9
a.m. and Sunday School will
begin at 10 a.m. All voting
members are encouraged to
attend.

Reflecting on "living our faith"

by Pastor Tanya Ramer

"...to share God's love by living our faith." If those words have a familiar ring, they should! For they are the closing words of Mount Zion's Mission Statement.

We see them, and read them all the time and in my mind, they capture vividly the whole of our mission and ministry in this world....*living our faith.*

What might such faith look like you may ask?

We might pay new and more attention to the faithful witnesses in scriptures (like Moses, Esther, or any number of faithful disciples) and learn from them about the powerful witness of living through a faith that is... alive.

We can look at historical witnesses, who in times of trial were bold in giving concrete form to their faith, even at the risk of losing their lives. I think of Pastor Dietrich Bonhoeffer, St. Francis of Assisi, Mother Teresa, and so many others.

And we can think of people we know, read or hear about today. People in whose example we can truly say, "They live their faith". Their stories can be models for hearing the good news.

In the church, we are always talking about feeding the hungry, sheltering the homeless, providing justice for those who have no voice, or supporting the many projects of service locally, nationally and internationally. All of these are so very important to our calling as Christians, but sometimes I fear that our formal statements and some of our arms-length service projects allow us to stay disconnected from the hurts in the world.

If we are to truly live our faith, then the gospel compels us to put God at the centre of every decision, every action, every word we speak...and if we do that...then this living faith of ours will truly change the world. But it starts with us and our relationship with God. The first questions we must ask are, 'Is God at the center of my life?' Does my relationship with God factor into my daily life of decisions?' *cont'd on page 3*

Vision can go far - with commitment

by David Heldman, Congregational President

Vision, Commitment: What do those two words have in common? And can one have vision, without commitment?



When we think about it, each of us has, and has had, visions of where we would like to be at different

times in our life, and of what we want to be. The journey to reach this vision is not always easy, for it takes total commitment to achieve our goals. Whatever our present stage in life, we still have visions of where life will take us. The question is, do we still want the excitement, and have the commitment, necessary for the journey?

I believe so, and that's why I'd like to share my vision of Mount Zion, and of the journey I hope we can share in the year and years ahead.

Simply put, my vision of Mount Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church is to be

"A community of Christian Believers devoted to the teaching of Jesus Christ."

Which means? I sum it up as "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you"

If that's the vision, now what about the commitment to achieve it?

Have you ever purchased an item (like a child's toy!!!) that you had to assemble? The descriptive picture of the completed piece is there in front of you, along with a mass of pieces, nuts and bolts etc. Your task is to assemble those bits and pieces to resemble the picture. Fortunately, we are given a plan, and the tools required.

As a congregation, we may not have such a precise a step-by-step plan to follow, but as I see it, we do have a clear objective:

"Do unto others as you would have them do unto you"

And the tools are you and me.

We're making progress toward our objective, but how can we revitalize our efforts, and pick up the pace?

Well, let's start at home:

Our Pastors, Our Music Director, Our Parish Nurse, Our Teachers, how can we assist them? Do we work with them? Do we encourage them? Do we thank them? Do we give them the respect and loyalty their position and efforts in the church deserve?

We have many committees within our congregation, with many willing hands tackling a multitude of tasks. (Membership on our committees includes at least 130 volunteers.)

Do we pay attention to the work of these committees? Do we acknowledge what they are trying to achieve on our behalf. Can we be more hands-on volunteers ourselves - and actively assist them - to achieve *our* shared mission?

Our Church building is used for many outreach activities, ranging from Open Sesame, and Little Mountain to gatherings of our Chinese neighbours, Scouts, Cubs, and other after school activities and events. These activities bring people regularly to our Church facilities, but do we, as Christians, also minister to them?

We have several members of our congregation who are homebound. What are we doing for them? It is so sad that our Friendly Visitors Ministry is struggling. How can this be? Shouldn't we be asking our Pastors and Parish Nurse: how can we help?

And the children and youth of our congregation: how do we support them? Do we notice and acknowledge them as we should? Do we accept them at service? Do we speak to them and make them welcome? We should, for they are an

inspiration! (I am still blown away by our youth's recent financial gift which demonstrates such generosity and commitment to their church.)

Once a month we celebrate birthdays with cake and coffee and some prime time to socialize. Do we make the effort to speak to members we have not seen for a while – or not spoken to before? Do we greet visitors? Do we seek out, recognize or compliment contributors and leaders in the worship service?

When you come to Church, do you ever stop at the entrance and wonder: "Why am I here?" I know I do, and I am surprised and often renewed by the answer. (Try it yourself if you haven't asked that question for a while.)

More than ever before, I believe our shared challenge is to take our vision and commitment outside the walls of our Church.

If you and I can start each day with the vision thought:

"Do unto others as you would have them do to you."

I think we would be amazed at what that day would be like.

Let's try it. The vision is not an easy one to fulfill. But it is so worth our commitment and genuine effort!

Life Long Learning



Join us **Wednesday Evenings, (7 p.m.)/Thursday afternoons (2 p.m.)** for another Lifelong Learning event. We will be focusing on the book of 1 Corinthians and the topic: ***Being the Body of Christ***. For more information, please speak with Pastor Tanya. If you missed the first session, Pr. Tanya can

give you the introduction materials to help with the remainder of the classes.

Session 3 (Feb. 1/2) -How does the gift of love shape the Body of Christ?

Session 4 – (Feb. 8/9) - Are we giving what we were given?

Reflecting *Continued from Page 1*

Might the way we speak to our children, in moments of frustration, sound different as we see them the way God sees all of God's children, as blessings?

Might the disrespect we sometimes display for our co-workers, friends and any whom we may be in contact with be replaced with more caring words that might build up rather than deflate? What if, instead of 'flipping the bird' to that complete stranger who cut us off in a roundabout, we remain quiet and pray that he or she be kept safe in their journey home to a family?

What if, as we focus on our financial stability, we make ethical choices about how we invest our funds. (Do our investments coerce others to work in unhealthy environments, support child labour, etc.?)

What if we take action when we see injustices in our society that need to be rectified?

On Sunday mornings we often talk about the "big things" we can do to serve God. But to have a living faith, means *to live it* every second of every day in every way. It's a mindset for sure...and one that for each of us requires effort, attention, prayer, and a helping hand.

When we invite God into our whole day, our whole being, then we begin to see that our faith in God is alive and well and at work in the world. Our neighbours will see this, our co-workers and friends will notice a change, and even strangers in our midst will be touched by our living faith, even if we speak no words to them.

God is not some figment of imagination or idol hidden away for worship in church buildings. Rather, God is walking in the world with all people – people serving with open hands and willing hearts; people sharing God's love *by living their faith*.

Income Tax Receipts For 2011

The Income tax receipts for 2011 will be available by the end of January. They will be placed in your box in the church narthex. If you do not have a box they will be mailed to you. *Ann Crossman, Finance*

Introducing New Members – Judy and Piper Paleczny

Judi Harris

"I want to go up there and do that", the words of seven- year- old Piper to her mother, Judy, were the motivating factor in their decision to join Mount Zion's congregational family. It happened several



months ago when new members stood at the front of the church and were welcomed. Precocious Piper, seeing and hearing this, decided that she wanted to be an *"official member"* too. Thus prompted, Judy made the request to church council and

membership was happily approved. (When I heard this, I was reminded of Biblical words – *"a little child shall lead them"* (Isaiah 11:6b))

In talking with Judy, who is a daughter of member Sharon Egerdeen, I discovered that she had been a child member of Grace Lutheran church, *"stopped going"* for a number of reasons and for some time, then went *"church shopping"*, finding Mount Zion on her second visit. Following Piper's baptism at Mount Zion Judy spent many Sundays in the nursery which precluded her from worship, left her with something of a spiritual void and resulted , once more, in a time apart from church. But the Spirit went to work again and feeling *"called back to worship"* Judy and Piper returned to Mount Zion.

Since 2007 Judy has worked as a massage practitioner for corporate clients, also often using her skill at trade shows, golf tournaments and charity events. Over the years Judy has volunteered in many settings, most recently as the convenor of Piper's soccer league and assisting with the Region of Waterloo swim club which Piper also enjoys.

Piper is in the French immersion program at Westmount Public School, swims with ROW and loves to play soccer which means that she and Mom have to rush away from Sunday worship for the games at 12 noon. Piper is enthusiastic about Mount

Zion's Sunday School, always eager to come and was an excellent speaking angel at the children's Christmas service. Knowing that I was coming to visit with Judy and that she would be at school, Piper wrote down several *"messages"* for me: *"Jesus is with us everywhere"*; *"When we are in church he sings along with us"*; *"Jesus says, 'Peace be with you'"*. (Do you hear Isaiah reminding us again of a child's leadership?)

As Judy and I talked, her husband Lou was at work in another part of the house preparing a room for Judy to do massage therapy from home although his paid employment is that of a plumber for the Waterloo Region School Board. Lou, who is Roman Catholic, also worships occasionally at Mount Zion and is very supportive of Judy and Piper's membership. Both he and Judy are devoted to their *"miracle daughter"* and convinced that *"religion be a part of Piper's life"*.

When I inquired about Mount Zion's *"appeal"* to them, Judy was quick to respond with this list:

- The shape of the worship space – cozy & warm – everyone is near the front
- All the people involved in worship
- *"You can bounce and clap while you sing"*
- Great variety in music – guitars & bands
- *"You can smile and laugh during worship"*
- Pastor Tanya's *"liturgy bytes"* (which Judy calls *"tweets"*)
- Worship is so interactive
- *"I never sleep during sermons"*

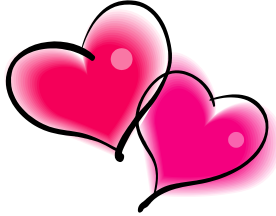
Although they are new to Mount Zion, Judy and Piper are already joining us in mission. They have recently completed the *"Walk to Bethlehem"* and have signed on for the *"Journey to Jerusalem"*. They have also just called in to volunteer as friendly visitors! (Won't some of our seniors delight in a visit from a child?)

In answer to my question about a future vision for the congregation, Judy replied that she is too new *continued on page 7*



Caring Connections

By Betty Behm R.N. BScN., Parish Nurse



February is Heart month

Nine out of ten Canadians are at risk for developing heart disease or stroke. The good news is that 80% of premature onset of these health issues is preventable. Here are nine risk factors which you can control:

- Smoking
- Physical inactivity
- High Blood Pressure
- Unhealthy diet
- Being overweight
- High cholesterol
- Stress
- Diabetes
- Excessive alcohol consumption

A modest weight reduction of 5% body weight can reduce your risk factors for high blood pressure and total blood cholesterol.

There are risk factors which we cannot control such as age, gender, ethnicity, family history and history of stroke or TIA (transient ischemic attacks).

However, by controlling those modifiable risk factors, you can significantly reduce your risk. For more information on heart disease check out this website <http://www.heartandstroke.on.ca/>

Journey to Jerusalem

In keeping with a health theme, why not join us for the Journey to Jerusalem. It's simple! Just pick up your booklet in the narthex and get active! Each week record the amount of activity you complete and Virginia Slack will record it and tally the results as we Journey towards Jerusalem by Easter. There is

also a scripture passage to reflect on each week, making this activity good for reducing stress, increasing activity and maybe even reducing weight. Wow! We have just addressed several of the modifiable risk factors for health disease!



Bowling Blitz!

February 26, 3-5 p.m.

Everyone is invited to join us for fun and fellowship at Waterloo Bowling Lanes. Why not sign up your team and we can have a little friendly competition, Children and adults of all ages can participate. A sign up sheet is posted in the narthex. Cost for bowling, including shoes will be \$6.00 per adult, \$5.00 per child or \$15.00 per family of 3, \$20.00 per family of 4

Celebrating Fifteen Years!



This fall will mark a milestone of Health and Healing Ministry at Mount Zion. The health council has decided to mark this occasion by producing a cookbook.

We all know that Mount Zion has wonderful cooks! So please pass along your favourite

recipe(s) to Rita Schaus for publication.

We will include: soup, salads, appetizers, casseroles, fish or meat dishes, vegetables, and of course, desserts.

We hope to have the book ready for sale at September's Soup-er Sunday and throughout the fall. You might also want to suggest a title for the cookbook. The winner will be presented with a free copy of the cookbook.

The Face of Compassion... Stories from Mary's Place:

Compassion: "...a deep awareness of and sympathy for another's suffering", ... "the human quality of understanding the suffering of others and wanting to do something about it", "...one feels compelled to help "

Susan*

Over the years, Susan has moved from shelter to shelter in Southern Ontario. She spends the summer months sleeping outside and finds the transition to staying in a shelter during the colder winter months challenging. For the first few weeks, she will sleep on the floor and will often separate herself from others. Women like Susan are easily overwhelmed with changes. It is necessary for them to take small steps at their own pace. Susan will tell you she does not trust anyone and feels better being free and sleeping on the streets rather than at the shelter. However, women living on the streets are extremely vulnerable to violence and abuse. The death rate among women living on the streets is ten times higher than women living in housing. At Mary's Place, we move at Susan's pace, keep our doors open to her at all times, and celebrate each small step with her. Our hope is that someday, Susan will have a place of her own and living on her own terms.

Teresa*

Teresa, like most young women was full of hope at one time in her life. The expected arrival of her first child helped Teresa see her life with meaning and love. She soon realized that she could no longer flop from couch to couch – she was going to become a mom and for her, this meant she had to settle down. It also meant that she would continue down the path of staying clean and free from the drugs that she had used as a teenager. The drugs were her way of coping with a family secret of severe childhood abuse.

Today, Teresa can be seen standing on a street corner soliciting. It's minus one degree outside and Teresa stands and waits for someone, anyone, who will stop for her. Often Teresa will come to Mary's Place because she needs support. She will have experienced abuse and trauma and will want to talk

to our staff about her circumstance. Sometimes, she will talk about the hurt and pain she feels due to her lifestyle, as well as the significant loss of her children. We offer critical support without judgment as well as providing basic needs such as a roof, a bed, food, and clothing. She will have access to health services as well. Susan comes back to Mary's Place because she knows she will receive support.

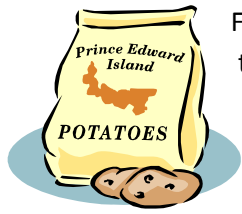


The Smiths

Families are becoming homeless at an alarming rate in our community. Mary's Place has responded to this growing demand for services and support. Almost all of the families who have come to Mary's Place in 2011 have experienced homelessness for the first time. They are shocked and confused. Their children are also reeling from the effects of losing their home. In many cases, the families have lost their homes due to a loss of income, whether it's through an illness, a job loss or a family breakdown. For the families, it was a decision of whether to pay the rent or feed their children. We support the family as an entity. The children are quickly put back into a local school that understands that plight of children who have become homeless. Our staff works with the parents to secure an income and find an appropriate place to live as a family, as well as to sort out the factors that contributed to the family becoming homeless in the first place.

**Some of the elements of these stories have been altered, and real names have not been used in order to protect identities.*

House of Friendship Potato Blitz



February is potato blitz month at the House of Friendship. This year they will need 200,000 pounds of potatoes in their 19 programs, helping to feed

those in need. They welcome donations of potatoes or cash. With cash they can purchase potatoes year round for a discounted price from local suppliers.

We are asking our Mount Zion members to participate in this project on the **Sundays of February 12th and 19th**. For \$2 you will be able to place your name on a cut-out potato which will be displayed in the narthex. You are certainly welcome to buy more than one potato.

There are three other community events the House of Friendship is promoting where donations will be welcomed:

- The Don Cameron Potato Night on Friday January 27th at 7:30 pm with the Kitchener Rangers vs Owen Sound Attack at the Kitchener Memorial Auditorium;
- A Supermarket Blitz on Saturday February 11th at select local supermarkets;
- A Community Potato Lunch on Friday February 24 at noon at St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church in Kitchener.

Last year we raised over \$565 for the potato blitz. Let's see if we can increase that amount. Thank you in advance for helping to feed our neighbours in need. *Ladona Riegert for the Service Committee*

Welcome Judy and Piper from page 4

and too content with what she's experienced thus far to be looking ahead. In her words, *"I'm just happy to be where I feel good."* Which prompts me to conclude with *"And we're delighted to welcome you into our midst!"*

Mount Zion Women's Annual Retreat

It's time to mark your calendar with the date for our Annual Women's Retreat. Those dates are Fri. April

20th -- Sun. April 22nd. Pastor Joanna Miller from Zion Phillipsburg will be our leader this year. Watch for more details in the next Mountaineer or Sunday bulletins. *Carol Ziegler*



Valentine's Day - February 14, 2012

The 45+ Club is holding a pot luck lunch at 12 noon followed by a guest speaker at 1:30 p.m. Cloe Hamilton from *Warm Embrace* will speak to us on memory training methods; brain fitness and cognitive stimulation for seniors who are struggling with memory loss. Everyone is welcome. If you cannot make the pot luck luncheon, please join us for the speaker. For more info, please contact Joyce at 886-0487 or Dianne at 569-8922.



Mount Zion Book Club Meets Feb 15

The first gathering of the new Mount Zion Book Club will take place on Wednesday, February 15th at 7:15 pm. All are welcome to participate. The book to be discussed is *The Best Laid Plans* by Canadian author Terry Fallis. This book is a satirical look at Canadian politics, and won the Stephen Leacock award for humour.



We Need You

Mount Zion is in need of people willing to serve on Church Council. This coming Annual Meeting we need to fill four positions. No previous experience needed. If you are interested please speak with Dave Heldman or the pastors.

Together in Worship



Sunday, February 5

5th SUNDAY AFTER THE EPIPHANY

Confirmation Class 9:00 a.m.
Sunday Church School 9:45 a.m.
Holy Communion 10:00 a.m.

Readings:

Isaiah 40:21-31;
Psalm 147:1-11, 20c
1 Corinthians 9:16-23;
Mark 1:29-39

Sunday, February 12

6th SUNDAY AFTER THE EPIPHANY

Holy Communion 8:45 a.m.
Confirmation Class 9:50 a.m.
Sunday Church School 10:30 a.m.
Holy Communion 10:45 a.m.

Readings:

2 Kings 5:1-14; Psalm 30
1 Corinthians 3:1-9; Mark 1:40-45

Sunday, February 19

TRANSFIGURATION OF OUR LORD

Holy Communion 8:45 a.m.
NO Confirmation Class
Sunday Church School 10:30 a.m.
Holy Communion 10:45 a.m.

Readings:

2 Kings 2:1-12; Psalm 50:1-6
2 Corinthians 4:3-6; Mark 9:2-9

Wednesday, February 22

ASH WEDNESDAY

Imposition of Ashes & Holy
Communion 7:30 p.m.

Readings:

Joel 2:1-2, 12-17; Psalm 51:1-17
2 Corinthians 5:20b – 6:10;
Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21

Sunday, February 26

1st SUNDAY IN LENT

Holy Communion 8:45 a.m.
Confirmation Class 9:50 a.m.
Sunday Church School 10:30 a.m.
Holy Communion 10:45 a.m.

Readings:

Genesis 9:8-17; Psalm 25:1-10
1 Peter 3:18-22; Mark 1:9-15

Wednesday, February 29

MID WEEK WORSHIP

Holden Evening Prayer 7:15 p.m.

The nursery is looking for more volunteers to assist on Sunday morning during worship. Currently we have four nursery leaders. If you are able to share your gifts with our children, please speak to Donna Harris (Coordinator)

The Mountaineer is a publication of Mount Zion Lutheran Church

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Deadline for March Issue:

February 15, 2012

Please send your photos, comments, ideas and updates to gastmeier@rogers.com

If The Weather Outside Is Frightful

The weather outside is frightful and you're wondering whether a service might be cancelled. In that unlikely event, the information will be available on the home page of our website www.mzlc.ca. The church's answering machine will also carry news of the cancellation. We will try to have it listed on 570 News Radio on the A.M. dial.

