

Contact Information

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Log in information and the worship bulletin for worship can be found on our website on the “Worship online and in person” page

May helpers

Clean—Charlie and Diane Rine

Lectors—Nygren

Communion Assistant—Charlie

Ushers—Marlin Otto/Jon Christo

Zion Lutheran Church
589 County Rd. 13
Ithaca, NE 68033

GOOD TIDINGS FROM ZION

May 2022



Loving Jesus

When I was in my third year of seminary, I was registered for a class on John’s gospel. It was a class that you were supposed to take after internship. John’s gospel is in many ways a more difficult gospel to deal than the other three. I guess they figured some time in a parish would provide a better backdrop.

But anyway, because I was on a non-traditional path that we were all sort of making up as I went along, I ended up having to take it before internship or there would be no place to fit it in and it would take longer than the 4 ½ years I already needed to finish. So, they let me take it.

The professor who was scheduled to teach it was one I’d had an online class with, but none in person. She was a good and very popular teacher, and I was excited to have her as a teacher, even if I wasn’t especially excited about John. There were people in the class who specifically designed their schedule so they could take that class from her.

But then, something happened and at the last minute the professor was switched to a retired New Testament professor. There were students that really considered dropping it at that point, but it wasn’t an option for me.

So, we dove in. The professor turned out to be very good. And a remarkable thing happened over the course of that semester – I fell in love with the Jesus of John’s gospel. That whole class developed a closeness I’ve not really experienced in an academic class before or since. And I think that was because of our shared experience with the Jesus of John’s gospel.

That same thing has happened as we’ve worked our way through John’s gospel over the last several months. My love for the Jesus I encounter there is rekindled.

So, you might ask – but aren’t all the gospels about the same Jesus? Well, yes. But the authors all have a different emphasis and a different image of Jesus. I think what I fall in love with more in Matthew, Mark, and Luke is Jesus’ image of the kingdom of God. I love the image of a world where systems are just and the lowly are lifted up. Those gospels, maybe especially Luke, get me fired up to work for social justice and to work for the kingdom where all have what they need to live.

But in John, it’s Jesus I fall in love with. The encounters he has with the different characters seem much more intimate. John’s emphasis on incarnation...on Jesus as the very embodiment of God...really brings Jesus to life for me. His rich use of symbolism work at a level somewhere deeper than my more logical brain can necessarily articulate.

As someone who is drawn to Celtic spirituality’s emphasis on nature and creation, this incarnate Jesus becomes real in all of creation.

I’ll be sad to leave John behind. In fact in my own personal devotions, I’ve started reading through the gospel and one of the books I used for preaching all over again. In the sermons, we’ll stretch the rest of John’s gospel over two Sundays and then dip into his letters. That will get us to Pentecost.

One of the challenges...but also one of the things I like about the narrative lectionary is that the summers are open. There are multiple options offered – we’ve been through most of them. I’ve made some of my own up.

Now, I’m interested in what you want to look at over the summer. Is there a particular theme? Or book of the Bible? Or a series on hymns? What would rekindle your love for Jesus? I’ll be asking in worship over the next two or three Sundays. But you can also email, phone, or text me your ideas.

Christ is risen! Alleluia!

Pastor Kris

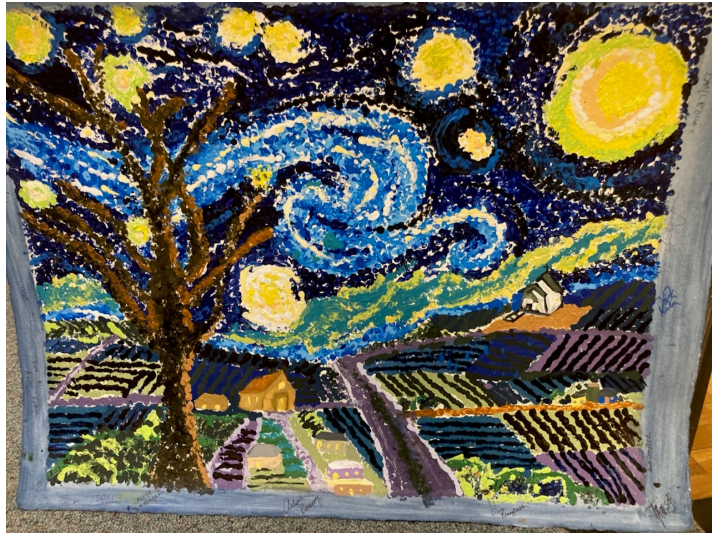
Thank You!

Thank you to everyone who participated and helped with our Lent midweek activities and Holy Week services. Everyone who showed up contributed in very important ways. Our painting project exceeded my hopes and I think the activities offered something for all ages. Intergenerational activities can be difficult to plan and carry out, but I think they’re especially important for kids to interact with adults of faith.

Special thanks to Janna Harsch for drawing out our “Starry Night” Bethlehem and Zion version, and for overseeing the painting. See photo below.

Thank you to Aaron and Kathryn Nygren, Evie and Eli, George Nygren and Megan Patent-Nygren, Anne, and Henry, Kim and Izzy, and Carol for providing Easter breakfast. It was delicious!

On May 22 during worship we will recognize all those who have served our congregation and its mission in some way over this past year. I’ve found this year very challenging with the return to in person worship and navigating another Covid surge and I’m grateful to all of you who have helped make it as smooth as possible.



Calendar

Worship services are livestreamed to the church YouTube channel. You can find the link to that and the bulletin on our website: <https://www.zionithaca.org/worship>

May 1	9:00 am—Worship with Holy Communion. Sunday school gathering and field trip to Saunders County Lost Pets
May 4	7:00 pm Confirmation
May 8	9:00 am—Worship
May 11	7:00 pm — Confirmation
May 15	9:00 am—Worship
May 18	6:30 pm—Confirmation class meet at church to go to dinner
May 22	9:00 am—Worship—Ministry Appreciation
May 25	7:00 pm—Confirmation
May 29	10:30 am—Worship
June 1	6:30 pm—Confirmation movie

Looking Ahead

June 5 is Pentecost. It’s also the day that Isabel Wright and Gracie Hofmeister will affirm their baptisms.