

## Contact Information

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## GOOD THINGS FROM ZION

August 2023



### August helpers

Cleaner—Gary and Michelle

Usher—Gary/George

Lector—Carol

Communion Asst.—Megan

Acolyte—open

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

This month's theme is Go and...listen. We live in a world where people often clamor to be heard. Do we leave space to just listen? Can we slow our brain down long enough to listen for what's important? What can we discover when we listen?

What can we discover when we listen to our own heart? When you listen to your own heart and your own life, what gives you life and hope? What is draining your energy? I find journaling about those things very helpful. Your innermost self knows what you need for healing and life. And odds are, you can hear that still small voice inside. We just sometimes ignore it.

What can you discover when you listen...really listen...to another person? Practice listening and truly be in the moment with someone. Don't think about your response...just listen. What can you discover when you listen to a stranger? What can you discover when you listen to someone you might be tempted instead to judge? Can we just be curious about others?

What can you discover when you listen to nature? Spend some time outside—you can go for a hike or walk...or just sit on your porch. What birds do you hear? How about insects or scuttling creatures? The wind? Let other things fall away and just listen.

What can you discover when you listen to God? And how do you do that anyway? There are ways that involve words...scripture reading, sermons, the witness of another Christian. But there are also contemplative ways. Sit quietly in a comfortable position. Use a word or phrase to help you center. When your mind wanders, repeat the word or phrase to bring yourself back. Thoughts, plans, to do lists, reminders, annoyances will come, but you don't have to attach to them. Just say hello and let them move on by. Contemplation can seem like it's doing nothing. And the goal is not for some momentous word from God. The goal is to just be in God's presence.

And here's something really cool—all of the ways I listed are ways to listen to God. Because God speaks to us from deep within us where the Spirit dwells. God speaks to us through other people and their stories and struggles. God speaks to us through nature because the breath—the Spirit of God—is in all creation.

So Go and....listen. After a month of listening, tell me what you heard.

Christ's peace,

*Pastor Kris*

## Virg Unverferth and Mike Unverferth—Bethlehem

Mike, Virg and our kids took a trip to Washington state. We stayed in Orting, WA which is halfway between Seattle and Mt. Rainier. We spent 1 day in Seattle and saw the Space Needle, Museum of Pop Culture, Chihuly Glass gardens, the Aquarium and the famous fish market. The fish market has hundreds of shops and vendors selling all sorts of things, just lots and lots of people!!! The main spot is a fish shop that throws fish back and forth when someone orders one. We ate seafood for lunch which was delicious. Some had oysters, but not all of us!!! We then spent 2 days hiking including a day at Mt. Rainier. Great weather to enjoy long hikes enjoying the beautiful meadows, waterfalls, and the Mountain. It's great to see God's awesome beauty in this way. Seattle was something to see, but it definitely made us more appreciative of our wide open spaces and views in Nebraska.

## Linda Sestak—Bethlehem

Nathan and his family, Tim and his family and I spent a week together in a house just north of Holland, MI which was close to beaches and nestled in the forest. It has been 5 years since we had all been together and as wonderful as it was, I want to highlight the trip home.

We were still in Michigan when the low tire warning activated. As soon as possible we stopped for air and quickly we're back on the road. A second stop was required before long. As we got close to our reserved hotel, the warning came on again. We dropped Brandi and Anders at the hotel. Tim and I pulled into BF Goodrich tire shop shortly after 4 PM. We were helped immediately and quickly advised that the puncture was too close to the tire wall to be repaired. Fortunately my vehicle has a full spare tire.

Unfortunately, the spare was under a small mountain of our stuff. The young man removed our belongings, put on the spare, secured the ruined tire, and replaced our belongings. Then he refused payment!

We got home safely on the spare and I was able to get the tire repaired locally.

## Pastor Kris

**Chicago—again** — The neighborhood where our daughter and son-in-law live is near Southport Avenue, a street of trendy shops and restaurants. We stayed in a different neighborhood this time, but we did hit one restaurant on Southport before a concert. I was struck—like I am every time we go there—by the gender fluidity I see there. Multiple times at multiple restaurants I've been either greeted or served by a person whose gender I can't discern. Even as someone who works to be affirming, I have to admit that the whole area of transgender and non-binary has been a steep learning curve. But when I'm in front of a person whose gender I realize I cannot discern, I quickly next realize...I don't have to. What gender they are now or ever were simply isn't pertinent in that moment. My only real call in that moment is to just treat them as another of God's children. It's made me even more aware that there's a lot I simply don't need to judge.

## Calendar

Worship is livestreamed to the church YouTube channel. You can find the link to that and the bulletin on our website: [Online Worship](#)

<b>August 6</b>	9:00 am—Worship— <b>No communion</b>
<b>August 13</b>	9:00 am—Worship with Holy Communion
<b>August 20</b>	9:00 am—Worship
<b>August 27</b>	9:00 am—Worship

## Travels—continued

### Merlin and Marcia Fick—Zion

A 13 day bus trip through 9 states, 4000+ miles. First stop Mt Rushmore; then Coeur d'Alene, Id.; the water fall is Multnomah falls, Oregon ; then a drive along the Oregon coast; next to Crater lake national Park, beautiful blue water, a one of the highlights for me; then the JetBlue boat ride, that was a thrill; then on to a drive through the redwoods, an amazing place; then made our way to San Francisco where we road a cable car and had a great city tour, our motel was only a couple blocks from fisherman's wharf so spent some time at Pier 39; then we headed east through NV, UT where we stayed in salt lake City and then drove through the Bonneville Salt Flats; last night was spent in Laramie, WY. We were exhausted and thankful to be back home. We are also thankful that we took the trip and got to see lot the northwest. The bridge picture is a double decker, 5 lane bridge to Oakland, CA.

