

# ZION HERALD – MARCH 2018

*We are a congregation that strives to be an inviting, faithful, and growing presence in our community and in our world, with a passion for living and spreading the love of Jesus Christ by using our spiritual and material gifts in the service of God's people*

## ZION LUTHERAN CHURCH

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## WORSHIP SCHEDULE

Mar 04	10:00 am	Worship	Lent 3	Peter's Denial
<b>Mar 11</b>	<b>10:00 am</b>	<b>Worship</b>	<b>Lent 4</b>	<b>Jesus and Pilot</b>
Mar 18	10:00 am	Worship	Lent 5	Jesus Condemned
<b>Mar 19</b>	<b>7:00 pm</b>	<b>Council</b>		
Mar 25	10:00 am	Worship	Palm Sunday	The Crucified Messiah
<b>Mar 30</b>	<b>10:00 am</b>	<b>Worship</b>	<b>Maundy Thur/Good Friday</b>	<b>Jesus' Last Words/Jesus the Passover Lamb</b>
Apr 01	10:00 am	Worship	Easter	Resurrection
<b>Apr 08</b>	<b>10:00 am</b>	<b>Worship</b>	<b>Easter 1</b>	<b>Thomas</b>
Apr 15	10:00 am	Worship	Easter 2	Called into Christ's Service

### 2016 Zion Council

Nick Beck (Chair) Wayne McCracken (Vice Chair) Mickford Durgana Christine Gulyasik  
Ginette McCracken Alethia McIntosh Ed Strath Ingrid Beck (Treasurer)

### Non-Council Positions

Brian Cartwright (Recording Secretary)



## **How do you picture God?**

Your picture of God determines how you perceive yourself and others. Many of us have a picture of God other than the merciful Father who “demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us” (Romans 5:8). Bad theology through the millennia has created images of cultural deities that support humanity’s worst characteristics.

### **A God of wrath and vengeance**

Some picture a God of wrath and vengeance who demands “an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.” Jesus challenged misrepresentations of God’s character found in some of the culturally bound images in the Old Testament. The books of Leviticus and Deuteronomy, for example, talk about marriage violations. If a woman did not satisfy her husband that she was by proof a virgin on the night of their marriage, she was to be stoned to death (Deuteronomy 22:21).

How radically different was the love that Jesus showed the woman caught in the act of adultery when the men of her village were ready to commit the same murderous act. Jesus intervened, saying, “Let any one of you who is without sin be the first to throw a stone at her” (John 8:7). Jesus reveals God as a loving father who comes into the world not to condemn but to save sinners!

### **An ancient white male**

Other people view God as an ancient white male, as portrayed in medieval European paintings. All kinds of atrocities have emerged from this distortion: racism and the injustices committed in the name of ethnic superiority, as well as sexist discrimination, continuing in some religious circles, that excludes women from leadership. By contrast, early first-century Jesus followers discovered the miraculous, unifying love of God in which “there is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, nor is there male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus” (Galatians 3:28).

### **A tribal God**

The current rabid division in U.S. politics, as well as in much of the Christian church, can result from a picture of a God who is tribal, a god who is “for us and against the people we are against.” As author Anne Lamott says, “You can safely assume that you created God in your own image when it turns out that God hates all the same people you hate.”

### **God of the nation-state**

Closely related to the god of the tribe is the god of the nation-state. Constantine, who ruled the Roman Empire in A.D. 306–337, saw how the strength of the early Christian movement could unify and legitimize Rome’s dominance as the global power. It’s pretty safe to assume that Constantine’s legalization of Christianity had a deep, underlying political motive, uniting the flag of Rome with the symbol of Christ.

The god of the nation-state holds one nation favored above all others. Millennia of wars have been fought in the name of God. Even Israel forgot that its chosen status, described in Exodus 19:6, was not for privilege but for priesthood. “Through your offspring all nations on earth will be blessed.” We must never forget “that God so loved the world”!

### **Why Jesus?**

As we follow Jesus’ life and teaching, we experience God’s true identity. In Jesus, we experience God who values human relationships over legalistic doctrines and people over ideologies. The Bible is inspired for faith and life practice. But, we must never idolize the Scriptures (written word) over Jesus’ authority (Living Word). The totality of God’s revelation cannot be limited to the 1,113 pages in the bible. It can be fully discovered in the miraculous transforming love of God revealed in Jesus.

## OLIVE BRANCH UPDATE

**SAVE THE DATE  
THE OLIVE BRANCH FOR CHILDREN GALA  
APRIL 27TH, 2018  
HOPE TO SEE YOU THERE!**



**27 APRIL 6:00–11:00**

**BELLEVUE MANOR  
8083 JANE STREET**

**TICKETS \$135 (\$65 TAX RECEIPT)  
CAN BE PURCHASED ONLINE OR FROM THE PASTOR**

**INCLUDES:  
5 COURSE DINNER  
ENTERTAINMENT  
RAFFLE  
SILENT AUCTION  
OPEN BAR**

**UPDATE ON LAST YEAR'S ACCOMPLISHMENTS**



**Lucy finished her Form IV studies in 2017. She begins college in August. She plans to study to be a Primary School Teacher. She will begin with a certificate program and then complete her diploma and degree.**

**Lucy wants to make sure children receive the best academic foundations. Having struggled for her right to study, Lucy wants to ensure all girls gain access to school and pursue their dreams.**



**Mama Salumu has 3 sons. She hopes to raise her sons to be compassionate and educated men. She understands gender equality is a journey that needs mutual understanding and respect between the sexes and she wants her sons to be part of the movement towards a better society for everyone.**

**The money she makes through Maisha Beads helps her educate her sons, something she is so proud she is able to finance.**