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# The Zion Messenger

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April 2019

April 3 – Evangelism

April 4 – Trustees

Men's Club

April 8 – School Board

Stewardship

April 9 – Administrative Council

April 11 – Shipmates

April 14 – Palm Sunday

April 18 – Maundy Thursday

April 19 – Good Friday

April 20 – Prayer Vigil

April 21 – Easter Sunday

April 23 – Elders

Parish Education

April 25 – Alumni & Friends

## A PRESCRIPTION FOR JOY

*“I have told you this so that My joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete.” John 15.11*

About an hour into the flight a man put away his book and started chatting with his neighbor. “So what is it that you do?” His neighbor (passenger seated next to him) just happened to be a Lutheran pastor. “I forgive sins” he answered. “Now how does that work?” the man replied. “Only God can forgive sins.” Fact is that for those unfamiliar with Lutheran doctrine and worship, many are puzzled by the same point. They reason, “No one – not even a pastor has the power to forgive sins.” But not just pastors: have you forgiven everyone?

A couple married for 15 years began having more than usual differences. Wanting to make their marriage work they agreed on an idea the wife had. For one month critical comments would be written down on paper (rather than being spoken) then placed in a “Fault” boxes. The boxes would provide space to express their daily irritations. The wife was diligent in her efforts to keep track: ‘You left the jelly jar top off the jar’ ‘You didn’t pick up your wet towel’ ‘Dirty socks are to go in hamper’ On and on she kept record until the end of the month. That night after dinner they

exchanged boxes. One by one the husband read her notes and reflected on what he had done wrong. Meanwhile the wife opened her box and was surprised to find it stuffed with slips of paper! One by one she read, each slip had the same message: “I love you.”

Forgiveness and joy are forever linked. Jesus said, “*Forgive your brother from your heart.*” Matthew 18.35 All who’ve been to Calvary to receive forgiveness leave Calvary to give forgiveness. You may have heard of the “Vertical-Horizontal” dimensions of the cross. The meaning is clear. God so loved the world He gave His Son in love and forgiveness (vertical - top to bottom). In return (bottom to top) we love and worship God as we love and forgive one another (horizontal - side to side, extending out from center of cross). To refuse to forgive, whether it be another person or yourself, to refuse to forgive is sin. It is also one of the chief ‘joy-robbers’ in life. Karl Menninger, famed psychiatrist, once said that if he could convince the patients in psychiatric hospitals that their sins were

forgiven, 75 percent of them could walk out the next day.<sup>1</sup> The refusal to forgive is a wall that robs our joy. Ultimately it becomes a wall between man and God.

In the very last chapter of Genesis Joseph teaches us a lesson about forgiveness. “*Don’t be afraid. Am I in the place of God?*” Our refusal to forgive our brother, sister, son or daughter, neighbor or whoever -- is to place ourselves as their judge. Being the judge is simply not ours to be. On the cross Jesus prayed, “***Father forgive them for they know not what they do.***” So the next time you bring a visitor along to church be prepared to answer the question. Tell them you agree; pastors don’t have power to forgive sins (not of themselves anyway). This power comes not from within the pastor, rather it’s all about God.

People deprive themselves of joy by not seeking God’s forgiveness. When Jesus says, “*Come to me*” He invites us to worship – He invites us to forgiveness – He invites us to joy. Then when joy is restored, “*Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have.*” 1 Peter 3.15 Christ is the certainty of a God-given joy and hope – Joy and Hope, truly these go hand in hand!

<sup>1</sup> Bible.org 2009, Psychiatric Patients

## ***2019 Lent & Easter Worship***

### **Midweek Services**

*Wednesdays – 1:00 & 7:00 p.m.*

*March 6 – Ash Wednesday – A Place at the Table for You*

*March 13 – The Upper Room: A Place of Service*

*March 20 – Gethsemane: A Place of Strength*

*March 27 – The Betrayal: A Place of Eternal Love*

*April 3 – The Courtyard: A Place of Renewal*

*April 10 – The Trial: A Place of God’s Will*

### **Holy Week**

*April 18 – Maundy Thursday – A Place of Forgiveness – 7:00 p.m.*

*April 19 – Good Friday – Golgotha: A Place of Simple Love – 7:00 p.m.*

### **Easter Sunday – April 21, 2019**

*Sunrise Service – 6:00 a.m.*

*Easter Breakfast – 7:15–9:00 a.m.*

*Easter Worship – 9:30 a.m.*

# April

# 2019

## Zion Lutheran Church

Staunton, Illinois

| Sunday   | Monday   | Tuesday                        | Wednesday   | Thursday   | Friday   | Saturday                 |
|--|--|--------------------------------|---|--|--|--------------------------|
|  | 1  | 2                              | 3   | 4  | 5  | 6                        |
|  |  |                                | 8:30am Chapel<br>9am Lydia Circle<br>10am Glenwood<br>1pm Lenten Worship<br>6:00pm Evangelism<br>7pm Lenten Worship | 10am Bible Study: Acts<br>6:30pm Trustees<br>7:30pm Men's Club               | 10am Heritage Communion  | 5pm Worship w/C          |
| 8am Worship w/C<br>9:15am Sunday School<br>10:30am Worship w/C<br>5pm Griefshare<br>6:30pm Christian Basics                | 6pm Sing Language Class<br>6:30pm School Board<br>Stewardship    | 7pm Admin. Council             | 8:30am Chapel<br>9am Lydia Circle<br>1pm Lenten Worship<br>7pm Lenten Worship                                       | 10am Bible Study: Acts<br>6pm Shipmates                                      | 10am Heritage Communion  | 5pm Worship w/C          |
| Palm Sunday<br>8am Worship w/C<br>9:15am Sunday School<br>10:30am Worship w/C<br>5pm Griefshare<br>6:30pm Christian Basics | 6pm Sing Language Class  |                                | 8:30am Chapel<br>9am Lydia Circle<br><br>Early Dismissal at 1:45pm  | Maundy Thursday<br>10am Glenwood<br>7pm Worship w/Communion<br><br>No School | Good Friday<br>10am Glenwood<br>11am Heritage Communion<br>7pm Worship | 5:00-9:00pm Prayer Vigil |
| Easter<br>6am Sunrise Service w/C<br>7:15am Easter Breakfast<br>9:30am Easter Worship w/C                                  | 6pm Sing Language Class<br><br>No School<br>Church Office Closed | 7pm Elders<br>Parish Education | 8:30am Chapel<br>9am Lydia Circle<br>10am Glenwood<br>6:30pm Confess/Sacrament                                      | 10am Bible Study: Acts<br>7pm Alumni & Friends                               | 10am Heritage Communion  | 5pm Worship w/C          |
| 8am Worship w/C<br>9:15am Sunday School<br>10:30am Worship w/C<br>5pm Griefshare   | 6pm Sing Language Class  |                                |   |  |  |                          |

Zion works at His Service Station: April 22-27, 2019