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Zion noiZ

The Newsletter of Zion Lutheran Church
Piedmont, California
August 2026

Freedom in Christ

We are just past the celebration of the 4th of July and "freedom" has been much on our minds. We often think of freedom from the perspective of politics. I live in a free country. I am free of restraints for my words and actions. Unfortunately, we often forget that even with that freedom there are also consequences for our choices.

Paul speaks of freedom a lot in the letter to the Galatians. Here is a sample:

> For you were called to freedom, brothers. Only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another. For the whole law is fulfilled in one word: "You shall love your neighbor as yourself." (Galatians 5:13-14)

In Paul's context he was speaking regarding all of the rules and religious traditions being imposed on the people in his day. There were those, for example, insisting that Gentile Christians be required to follow the Jewish laws such as the requirement for circumcision. So he insisted on the freedom that we have in Christ Jesus. We are freed from following rules and laws in order to be saved.

Jesus said something like this in Mark regarding the law of the Sabbath:

> And he said to them, "The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath.

With both Jesus and Paul we see a different view of freedom than our political view. On both of these texts, the purpose of freedom is to use our freedom in service to one another. Paul's warning in Galatians is that when we use our freedom to serve ourselves, there is the great danger that become slaves again to whatever that is. It can be the obvious things like addictions. But it can be the more subtle things like reputation or work or possessions or habits.

What does this look like in our life together as God's people in church. So many people view the church as a place where God's rules are enforced and where freedom is taken away. Often these are not God's rules, but rather the traditions and customs of the church.

Paul calls us as God's people to be free of all of the expectations placed upon us, and live as Jesus did—serving one another. One reason that young churches grow more easily than long-established congregations is that they have less traditions and less expectations. So people are freer to live out the care for one another. This is an ongoing challenge for all of God's people. How do we use our freedom to care for others instead of only for my own needs and priorities?

Weekly Worship

Sundays: 9 am Traditional Worship In-person & Online.

All Worship Services are Available 24/7 via the Zion App, Website, YouTube and Facebook.

Bible Class: Sundays at 8 am Wednesdays at 10 am

SEEK **DISCIPLE** **MULTIPLY**

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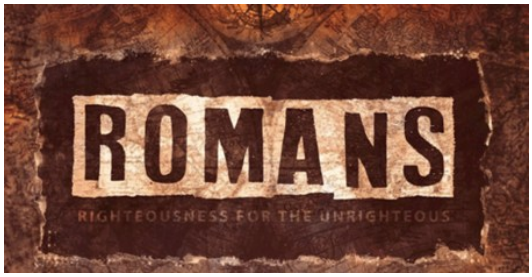
5201 Park Blvd • Piedmont, CA 94611 • ph: 510-530-4213 • fax: 510-530-2635
churchoffice@zionlutheran.net • www.zionlutheran.net

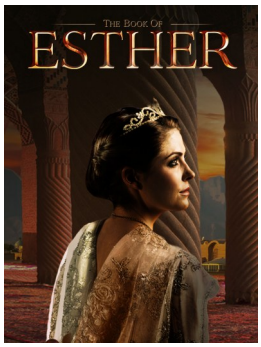
STUDYING GOD'S WORD

Bible Study I



Join us for Sunday Morning Bible Class! Start your Sunday with God's Word and meaningful discussion as we study the Book of Romans together **each Sunday at 8:00 a.m in the Conference Room.** Romans is one of the Bible's most powerful letters, revealing God's grace, the gift of salvation through faith in Jesus Christ, and what it means to live as His people. Whether you have studied Romans before or are opening it for the first time, this class offers an opportunity to grow in faith, deepen your understanding of Scripture, and connect with others in Christian fellowship. Everyone is welcome. Come with your questions, your Bible, and a desire to learn more about God's amazing grace. We look forward to growing in God's Word with you!

Wednesday Morning Bible Study



Join us each Wednesday at **10:00 a.m.** as we begin an engaging study of the **Book of Esther**. Esther is a remarkable account of God's providential care for His people, demonstrating how the Lord faithfully works behind the scenes to accomplish His purposes, even when His name is never mentioned directly in the text.

As part of our study, we will also explore the **Apocryphal Version of Esther**, which includes additional passages found in the Greek translation of the Old Testament. By comparing these additions with the Hebrew text, we will gain a deeper understanding of the history of the biblical canon and the differences between these versions.

Whether you have studied Esther before or are opening the book for the first time, this class offers an excellent opportunity to grow in God's Word, ask questions, and enjoy Christian fellowship. Everyone is welcome—bring your Bible and invite a friend to join us on **Wednesdays at 10:00 a.m.**

Zoom Link for Wednesday Morning Bible Study
https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85173401109?pwd=AOu5B8EfdT6LFBCvAGfOk4x42bdQsB.1
Meeting ID: 851 7340 1109. Passcode: YeahZion

PARISH NURSING

I thought you might be interested in taking this questionnaire. The Whole Person Health Scale attempts to address the full picture of overall health. You can take this questionnaire to assess your own health. Scores range from 9-45. (A lower score means better self-assessed health). You can use this to look at areas in which you may be able to improve your health. You can take it at different points over time to see if your score improves. I like it because it addresses things that are important for our health that we might not always think about. It lets us look at things that we could change and things that are going well.

Whole Person Health Scale

Rate on a scale of 1–5 : ***Excellent=1; Very Good=2; Good=3; Fair=4; Poor=5***

1. Would you say your health in general is excellent, very good, good, fair, or poor?
2. How would you rate your quality of life, focusing on what matters most to you?
3. How would you rate your social and family connections?
4. In general, how healthy is your overall diet?
5. How would you rate your physical activity, compared with people in your age group?
6. How would you rate your ability to manage stress?
7. How would you rate your sleep?
8. How would you rate your ability to find meaning and purpose in your daily life?

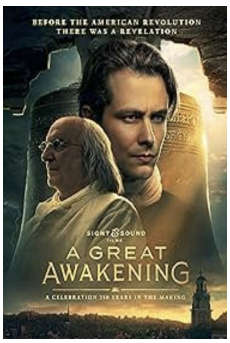
How would you rate your ability to manage your health, focusing on aspects of your health that matter most to you?
Take care, be well and God bless, Stephanie

Iron Men

Join us on **Tuesday, August 11 at 6:30 pm**, as we watch

Season 5 Episode 6: Reunions
As Jesus' followers gather for the Passover meal, His enemies assemble for a man hunt. Judas holds a secret meeting. If you haven't been able to join us before that is OK we want you to join us now! After all, you know the story and have read much of "The Book"!
Join us for our "manly" meal, fellowship and faith building

Movie Night
Saturday, August 15th 7:00 pm
A Great Awakening



"With the colonies on the brink of collapse, the Reverend George Whitefield ignites the first Great Awakening, uniting an entire generation with his thundering proclamation of liberty in Christ. In a miraculous turn of events, one of Whitefield's closest friends and greatest promoters becomes none other than Benjamin Franklin. With the nation's freedom hanging in the balance, Franklin discovers true liberty cannot only be written into law – it must be awakened in the hearts of the people."
Join us in the Garden Room for fellowship and a fantastic film!

Game Night!

Tuesday, August 18 @ 6:30 pm
Join Us for Game Night!

Looking for an evening of fun, laughter, and fellowship? **Join us for Game Night on Tuesday, August 18, at 6:30 p.m. in the Garden Room.** Whether you enjoy classic board games, card games, strategy games, or simply spending time with friends, there will be something for everyone.

Game Night is a wonderful opportunity to connect with members of the Zion family and meet new friends in a relaxed and welcoming atmosphere. In June we had 10 people which filled the conference room. Bring your favorite game to share or choose from the variety of games that will be available. No experience is necessary—just come ready to have fun!

Light refreshments will be provided, and all ages are welcome. Invite a friend, neighbor, or family member and join us for an evening of friendly competition, conversation, and Christian fellowship. Mark your calendar for August 18 at 6:30 p.m. We look forward to seeing you there!

Church Humor

The New Minister's Visit

A new, young minister was making his rounds to visit the seniors in the congregation. He visited an elderly woman who was housebound. As they talked, he noticed a bowl of peanuts on the coffee table and began snacking on them. By the end of the visit, he realized he had eaten the entire bowl.

"I am so sorry," he apologized. "I've eaten all your peanuts!"

The woman smiled and said, "That's quite alright, young man. Since I lost my teeth, all I can do is suck the chocolate off them anyway."

The Bus Driver and the Priest

A bus driver and a priest both arrive at the Pearly Gates. St. Peter gives the bus driver a golden robe and a mansion, but gives the priest a cotton robe and a small hut.

The priest says, "Wait, I spent 50 years preaching! Why does he get more?"

St. Peter says, "When you preached, people slept. When he drove, people prayed!"

The Little Things We Do…stories from Betty Galambos.

We do not do things to try to please God. He has already given us His most precious Son and all He wants from us is to show His love to others and to spread the good news of His salvation. I am sharing a story each month of how ordinary people have done little things that have affected the lives of others. Go and do likewise.

Pastor Dorn's parish in Chicago had a school, and one of the projects that the school took on was to assemble protein packets. These were sent to different African countries and distributed to help the people supplement their dietary needs. As they were assembling these packets, one of the teachers came over and told them how happy she was that they were doing this project. She also told them that when she was in Africa, she received these packets and was so very grateful to the people that put them together and sent them. Now she knew where they came from. You never know how the little things we do effect others.

Anyone who has a story to share can just talk to Betty after church sometime and will use your story as well.

Catechism Corner

Reviewing the Ten Commandments and their meanings.

The Fourth Commandment

Honor your father and your mother.

What does this mean? We should fear and love God so that we do not despise or anger our parents and other authorities, but honor them, serve and obey them, love and cherish them.

The Fifth Commandment

You shall not murder.

What does this mean? We should fear and love God so that we do not hurt or harm our neighbor in his body, but help and support him in every physical need.

The Sixth Commandment

You shall not commit adultery.

What does this mean? We should fear and love God so that we lead a sexually pure and decent life in what we say and do, and husband and wife love and honor each other.

Volunteers Needed: Share Your Gifts in Worship and Fellowship

One of the greatest blessings of our church family is the many people who serve with willing hearts. As we continue to grow together in faith and fellowship, we invite you to consider serving in one of several volunteer opportunities that help make our worship services and community gatherings welcoming and meaningful.

Ushers play an important role in greeting worshipers, assisting with seating, collecting offerings, and helping create a warm and welcoming atmosphere for everyone who enters our doors.

Scripture Readers help bring God's Word to life during worship by reading the appointed lessons. This is a wonderful opportunity to participate directly in the worship service and share the message of Christ with the congregation.

Object Lesson Presenter help connect God's Word to the hearts of our children through engaging and meaningful children's messages. If you enjoy working with children and sharing God's love in creative ways, this ministry may be for you.

Coffee Hour Hosts provide hospitality and fellowship following worship services. Coffee Hour Hosts create opportunities for conversation, friendship, and community.

Button Pusher Operates the slides during worship.

Live Stream Producer Learn how to run the live stream of worship

No special experience is required-just a willingness to serve. Whether you can serve once a month or occasionally throughout the year, your gifts and talents can make a difference.

If you would like to volunteer or learn more about any of these opportunities, please contact Steve Harger. Thank you for helping make Zion a welcoming place where people can worship, grow, and connect.

"Jesus spoke these words, lifted up His eyes to heaven, and said: 'Father, the hour has come. Glorify Your Son, that Your Son may also glorify You, as You have given Him authority over all flesh, that He should give eternal life to as many as You have given Him.'" (John 17:1-2)

"I have manifested Your name to the men whom You have given Me out of the world. They were Yours, You gave them to Me, and they have kept Your word." (John 17:6,7)

Did you ever think about the fact that the Father gave you to His Son? You were chosen before the creation of the world. God chose you to be a gift to His Son. We are redeemed through the atonement, payment of our sins, by His Son's sacrifice on the cross. We would be helpless without His death and atonement for our sin on the cross. Jesus first prayed for His disciples and then He prays for all of us. In the garden, before His trial and crucifixion, He was praying for others.

"I do not pray for those alone, but also for those who will believe in Me through their word; that they may all be one, as You, Father, are in Me, and I in You; that they also may be one in us that the world may believe that You sent Me. And the glory which You gave Me I have given Them, that they may be one just as we are one; I in them and You in Me; that they may be made perfect in one, and that the world may know that You have loved them as You loved Me." (John 17:20-23)

When people see us they should see the love that Jesus has in His Father. I realize that won't happen until we are with Him in eternity – but we can show ways of love now in churches, homes and communities.

We can be kind and thoughtful to each other. We can speak words of encouragement (instead of criticism). We can be helpful to each other. We can pray for and with each other.

Jesus spent an incredible large amount of time praying. Where was Jesus? Oh – He's off praying in the garden or on a mountain. Jesus often taught in parables or by examples. He used terms His followers were familiar with. At one point His disciples came to Him and asked, "Lord teach us to pray" (Matthew 6). It was that important that Jesus gave them a prayer model, examples of do's and don'ts, and other information about prayer. He often gave them encouragement to pray. He told them to pray for themselves and also for each other. There are about twenty-one prayers of Jesus and all but one begin with addressing His Father (Alistair Begg: Truth for Life podcast: High Priestly Prayer).

And He tells us to call upon our Father – Our Father Who is the embodiment of Love – the Creator of All. Our Father Who chose us before time.

Public prayers in church are a good way to listen to the heart of the pastor and His flock. We can also pray for each other.

When we pray, we give everything to God – our praise – our thanksgiving – our worship – our cares.

1 Peter 5:7 "Casting all your cares on Him for He cares for you." This was my first memorized Bible verse (over 70 years ago!). I was in the church preschool program and we had to stand up in front of everyone and recite a verse. This verse has served me well. We can "Cast our cares" before the Father because of what His Son has done for us. The priests would offer a sacrifice (a lamb or small animal) to pay for the sins of the people. This was done many times. There was a perfect Lamb – a perfect sacrifice that atones for the sins once and for all – Jesus, God's only Son paid the penalty on the cross for our sins. Not because we had done anything, or written or given a speech or given money. We come before the throne of God with nothing in our hands.

It was all a gift of grace through Jesus Who chose us and died for us to take away the punishment for our sins.

"Before the throne of God above
I have a strong, a perfect plea;
A great High Priest, whose name is Love
Who ever lives and pleas for me.
My name is graven on His hands
My name is written on His heart
I know that when in heaven He stands
No longer can bid me there depart"
(Before the Throne #574 Lutheran Service Book)

Cont. from page 5

We have a great High Priest who goes before the throne of His Father and prays, pleads for us. We appear in the filthy rags of sin, but when God looks at us, all He sees is the love and sacrifice of His beloved Son.

How can we ever thank Him enough? We will spend eternity doing so.

He knows our thoughts and desires, He sees our hearts. He is the perfect High Priest Who hears our prayers.

Jesus was always praying. We should always be praying. 1 Thessalonians 5:7 "Pray without ceasing." Prayer is like oxygen to our souls – we don't survive long without it!

God wants us to come to Him like a child comes to a Father. But He is a perfect Father. He is never abusive or angry. This Father is perfect and Holy – All -knowing. And we can come to Him because of Jesus.

As we seek guidance for obtaining a full-time pastor we should be constantly in prayer. He knows what we need to fill that hole. But God wants to hear from us. He loves us so much, He wants the best for us.

 At the end of each Zion Lutheran Sunday morning worship service, I will remain in 'my' seat. If you would like prayer would like someone to pray with you or for you, please join me. I don't need to know what the prayer concern is – God knows them. I will pray and we can pray together. This is part of being one – with God and each other.

Jesus spent much of the time in prayer. We can also spend much time in prayer. Thank God for Who He is and what He has done for us. Give Him praise. Talk with Him as you would a close friend. There is no friend who loves you more. Pray for each other and for your needs. Pray for provision for needs to be met. We have a great High Priest who hears those prayers and accepts them because of His gift.

"And can it be that I should gain
An interest in the Savior's blood?
Died He for me, who caused His pain—
For me, who Him to death pursued?
Amazing love! How can it be,
That Thou, my God, shouldst die for me?
Amazing love! How can it be,
That Thou, my God, shouldst die for me?
No condemnation now I dread;
Jesus, and all in Him, is mine;
Alive in Him, my living Head,
And clothed in righteousness divine,
Bold I approach th'eternal throne,
And claim the crown, through Christ my own.
Bold I approach th'eternal throne,
And claim the crown, through Christ my own."
(And Can It Be? by Charles Wesley upon his conversion)

– Marlene S. Grunow
prayer ministry

SERVING THE LORD WITH GLADNESS

Lay Reader Schedule

Sunday, August 2nd	Brian Walsh
Sunday, August 9th	Maret Bartlett
Sunday, August 16th	Carolyn Dal Ferro
Sunday, August 23rd	Jonathan Schaff
Sunday, August 30th	Becky McFarland

Usher Schedule

Sunday, August 2nd	Michael Grunow Brendan O'Brien
Sunday, August 9th	George Berge Peter Grunow
Sunday, August 16th	Michael Grunow Brendan O'Brien
Sunday, August 23rd	George Berge Peter Grunow
Sunday, August 30th	George Berge Llela Walsh

Communion Assistant Schedule

Sunday, August 2nd	Jonathan Schaff
Sunday, August 9th	Steve Harger
Sunday, August 16th	Brian Walsh
Sunday, August 23rd	Paul Grunow
Sunday, August 30th	Dave Nemy

Coffee Hour Hosts

Sunday, August 2nd	
Sunday, August 9th	Walsh Family
Sunday, August 16th	
Sunday, August 23rd	
Sunday, August 30th	

Altar Flowers

Sunday, August 2nd	Bev Smith
Sunday, August 9th	Walsh Family
Sunday, August 16th	O'Brien-Rauen Family
Sunday, August 23rd	Bev Smith
Sunday, August 30th	Bliven Family

Flower Costs are Now $87 per Week

Object Lesson

Sunday, August 2nd	Steve Harger
Sunday, August 9th	Brian Walsh
Sunday, August 16th	Pastor Dorn
Sunday, August 23rd	Carolyn Dal Ferro
Sunday, August 30th	Betty Galambos

FOOD OF THE MONTH

AUGUST FOOD OF THE MONTH

CHRISTIAN CONCERNS

The backpacks have been filled and the children will soon be back in class!!! A good breakfast and lunch are key to a successful day, however, many of our Oakland neighbors are still struggling with food insecurities. The Christian Concerns Committee continues to collect non-perishable food items for our neighbors in need. All groceries collected are donated to City Team Ministries for their daily meal program and many mobile pantries. Please prayerfully consider adding extra groceries to your cart for our neighbors in need. God bless your contributions and God bless all students and teachers!!!!

Items needed---

Cereal (sugar free please)	Shelf stable milk	Peanut Butter and Jelly
Complete pancake mix	Syrup	Beans and Rice (dry or canned)
Soup and crackers	100% Juice	Pasta and Pasta sauce
Coffee and Tea	Flour and Sugar	Macaroni and Cheese (no milk needed)
Salt and Pepper	Cooking Oil	

Notes from the Board Meeting—7/19/2026

Outreach Committee: The concert is planned as an opportunity to bring the public onto our campus.
The Committee is working on having Zion T-shirts for events like this and other events.

Property Committee: The Board approved the plan to place the words "Zion Lutheran" above the main doors to the sanctuary and possibly also the word "Welcome." The committee continues push forward the work on the hillside.

Finance Committee: The Finance Committee is working with the Board to establish policies and procedures for all church expenditures so that there is better financial accountability. The committee is working on the Budget for the 2026-2027 budget year.

Transitional Interim Minister: The Board voted to extend the contract for Pr. Dorn for up to 90 days.

Call Committee: The Call Committee continues to work with the District in its work toward calling the next long-term pastor.

Congregational Meeting: The Annual Voters Meeting of the Congregation is set for Sunday, September 27th, following the worship service.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
26 8:00AM Bible Class I 9:00AM In-person Traditional Worship & 10:30AM Britt Odemba presentation 10:30AM Leviticus for Christains 10:30AM Outreach Committee	27 7:30PM AA - GR	28 4:00PM Revelli Violin	29 10:00AM Wednesday Bible Class 4:00PM Revelli Violin	30	31	1
2 8:00AM Bible Class I 9:00AM In-person Traditional Worship & Live-stream 10:30AM Pastor's Bible Class	3 7:30PM AA - GR	4	5 10:00AM Wednesday Bible Class	6 11:00AM Property Committee	7	8
9 8:00AM Bible Class I 9:00AM In-person Traditional Worship & Live-stream 10:30AM Pastor's Bible Class	10 7:30PM AA - GR	11 6:30PM Iron Men	12 10:00AM Wednesday Bible Class	13 10:00AM Trust Committee	14	15 NEWSLETTER ARTICLES DUE 7:00PM Movie Night
16 8:00AM Bible Class I 9:00AM In-person Traditional Worship & Live-stream 10:30AM Board of Directors Meeting	17 7:30PM AA - GR	18 6:30PM Game Night - CR	19 10:00AM Wednesday Bible Class	20	21	22
23 8:00AM Bible Class I 9:00AM In-person Traditional Worship & Live-stream 10:30AM Pastor's Bible Class	24 7:30PM AA - GR	25	26 10:00AM Wednesday Bible Class	27	28	29 3:00PM Tom Rigney Concert
30 8:00AM Bible Class I 9:00AM In-person Traditional Worship & Live-stream 10:30AM Pastor's Bible Class	31 7:30PM AA - GR	1	2 10:00AM Wednesday Bible Class	3	4 7:00PM EBRS	5

Zion Lutheran Church
5201 PARK BOULEVARD
PIEDMONT, CA 94611

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ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

Church E-mail Addresses:

Pastor Dorn pdorn@zionlutheran.net
Steve Harger sharger@zionlutheran.net
Terry Frazier churchoffice@zionlutheran.net

www.zionlutheran.net

(510) 530-4213

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This newsletter is also available on-line..