

Genesis 50:15-21 (ESV)

¹⁵ When Joseph's brothers saw that their father was dead, they said, "It may be that Joseph will hate us and pay us back for all the evil that we did to him." ¹⁶ So they sent a message to Joseph, saying, "Your father gave this command before he died: ¹⁷ 'Say to Joseph, "Please forgive the transgression of your brothers and their sin, because they did evil to you."' And now, please forgive the transgression of the servants of the God of your father." Joseph wept when they spoke to him. ¹⁸ His brothers also came and fell down before him and said, "Behold, we are your servants." ¹⁹ But Joseph said to them, "Do not fear, for am I in the place of God? ²⁰ As for you, you meant evil against me, but God meant it for good, to bring it about that many people should be kept alive, as they are today. ²¹ So do not fear; I will provide for you and your little ones." Thus he comforted them and spoke kindly to them.

Romans 14:1-12 (ESV)

¹⁴ As for the one who is weak in faith, welcome him, but not to quarrel over opinions. ² One person believes he may eat anything, while the weak person eats only vegetables. ³ Let not the one who eats despise the one who abstains, and let not the one who abstains pass judgment on the one who eats, for God has welcomed him. ⁴ Who are you to pass judgment on the servant of another? It is before his own master that he stands or falls. And he will be upheld, for the Lord is able to make him stand. ⁵ One person esteems one day as better than another, while another esteems all days alike. Each one should be fully convinced in his own mind. ⁶ The one who observes the day, observes it in honor of the Lord. The one who eats, eats in honor of the Lord, since he gives thanks to God, while the one who abstains, abstains in honor of the Lord and gives thanks to God. ⁷ For none of us lives to himself, and none of us dies to himself. ⁸ For if we live, we live to the Lord, and if we die, we die to the Lord. So then, whether we live or whether we die, we are the Lord's. ⁹ For to this end Christ died and lived again, that he might be Lord

both of the dead and of the living. ¹⁰ Why do you pass judgment on your brother? Or you, why do you despise your brother? For we will all stand before the judgment seat of God; ¹¹ for it is written, "As I live, says the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God." ¹² So then each of us will give an account of himself to God.

Matthew 18:21-35 (ESV)

²¹ Then Peter came up and said to him, "Lord, how often will my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? As many as seven times?"

²² Jesus said to him, "I do not say to you seven times, but seventy-seven times. ²³ "Therefore the kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who wished to settle accounts with his servants. ²⁴ When he began to settle, one was brought to him who owed him ten thousand talents. ²⁵ And since he could not pay, his master ordered him to be sold, with his wife and children and all that he had, and payment to be made. ²⁶ So the servant fell on his knees, imploring him, 'Have patience with me, and I will pay you everything.' ²⁷ And out of pity for him, the master of that servant released him and forgave him the debt. ²⁸ But when that same servant went out, he found one of his fellow servants who owed him a hundred denarii, and seizing him, he began to choke him, saying, 'Pay what you owe.' ²⁹ So his fellow servant fell down and pleaded with him, 'Have patience with me, and I will pay you.'

³⁰ He refused and went and put him in prison until he should pay the debt. ³¹ When his fellow servants saw what had taken place, they were greatly distressed, and they went and reported to their master all that had taken place. ³² Then his master summoned him and said to him, 'You wicked servant! I forgave you all that debt because you pleaded with me. ³³ And should not you have had mercy on your fellow servant, as I had mercy on you?' ³⁴ And in anger his master delivered him to the jailers, until he should pay all his debt. ³⁵ So also my heavenly Father will do to every one of you, if you do not forgive your brother from your heart."



"how often should
I forgive?"

"Not **SEVEN** times,
but, I tell you,
**SEVENTY-
SEVEN**
times."

Matthew 18:21-22, NRSV

September 13, 2026
16th Sunday After Pentecost

Zion Lutheran Church, 17927 Dice Road, Hemlock, MI 48626
www.zionhemlock.org ~ Church Office 642-5909

✠ In the Name of Jesus ✠

As We Gather ~ Forgiving as the Lord Forgives Us.

In settling His accounts with us, our Lord acts not with anger, but with compassion. He does not imprison us as we deserve, but He forgives all our debts and releases us (Matt. 18:23–27). Therefore, our Lord bids each of us to have “mercy on your fellow servant” and “forgive your brother from your heart” (Matt. 18:33, 35). By the Lord’s forgiveness of our sins, we are free to forgive those who sin against us, because He has been handed over to the jailers in our stead and He has paid our entire debt with His lifeblood. Whether we live or die, we “are the Lord’s” (Rom. 14:8). Since we all will “stand before the judgment seat of God,” we are not to despise our brother (Rom. 14:10), but gladly forgive him. By the grace of God, our brother also “will be upheld, for the Lord is able to make him stand” (Rom. 14:4). Though we daily sin against each other, the Lord intends “to bring it about that many people should be kept alive” (Gen. 50:20). Jesus speaks kindly by His Gospel and promises: “I will provide for you and your little ones” (Gen. 50:21).

ORDER OF SERVICE Service of Prayer and Preaching	260
OPENING HYMN “ <i>Christ is Our Cornerstone</i> ”	912
SERMON HYMN “ <i>Chief of Sinners, Though I Be</i> ”	611
SERMON “ <i>The Grace of Forgiveness</i> ”	Matthew 18:21-35
CLOSING HYMN “ <i>Almighty Father, Bless the Word</i> ”	923

Pastor	Charles Buckhahn
Vicar	Ron Zuccaro
Organist	Carolyn Laurenz
Elder	Dick Bluemer
A/V	Dave Hutfilz
Ushers	Dick Bluemer and Bruce Tessin
Altar Guild	Troy and Michelle Beyersdorf

Our Measure of Love and Gifts

Attendance last week – 58 Needed for *The Lord's Work at Zion* \$4,729 ~ Received for the Lord's Work \$2,795; Capital Projects \$55.

Please pray for your fellow Christians on their birthday: September 14- Connie Traub; September 15- Rachel Greskowiak; 19- Lacey Walton; September 20- Pat Seeburger; September 21- Braden Beyersdorf, Jonel Davis, Emily Farrar, Jim Knapik, Bonnie Krape; September 22- Cindy Thom.

Homecoming ~ Join us on Sunday, September 27 following worship as we celebrate Zion's church family and renew our commitment to serving God. We'll enjoy a cookout with meat provided. Please sign up in the narthex to RSVP, bring a side dish or dessert or to help in planning and serving. Feel free to invite a member or a friend to join us.



Bible Study ~ Vicar Ron will be starting a Bible Study this morning after church at 10:45am in the fellowship Hall. All are invited to join us.

Prayer Requests ~ Feel free to contact Vicar Ron at 989-385-7569 if you have a scheduled hospital visit and would like him to visit and pray with you or if would like to have someone put on the Sunday prayers. Keep in your prayers this week Carolyn McKellar - Broken ribs and severe bruising in a car accident. Fran Jaenicke - Broken sternum and ribs, trouble breathing, from the same car accident.

Address/Phone/Email Updates ~ We are looking to update our membership records. If you have changed address, phone number, etc. or have adult children who have moved on please help us to keep in touch with them by letting us know of new address and contact information. You can email this to admin@zionhemlock.org or put on the sheet in the narthex.

Prayer Chain ~ If you would like to be included on a prayer chain a signup sheet is in the narthex. Prayer requests will be called to the first person who will pass the prayer request on to the tree. More information as people are signed up.

Lutheran Via de Cristo of Central Michigan will be holding their September Ultreya here at Zion Lutheran Church on Friday September 18th, 2026 at 7:00pm in the Fellowship Hall. **What Is Ultreya?** Ultreya is a regular gathering to celebrate and encourage each other to persevere in their Christian walk. **What Happens At An Ultreya?** Ultreya opens with singing, prayer, introductions, and praise and prayer requests. The 4th day speaker, scheduled in advance, gives a 10 minute talk with questions about the topic. Attendees are broken into small groups, where they discuss the talk and questions. The night concludes with a group altar visit, where needs are lifted up in prayer. And then, of course, we eat! Contact Laura Hollingsworth with any questions.