



## *"By Grace . . . Access for All!"*

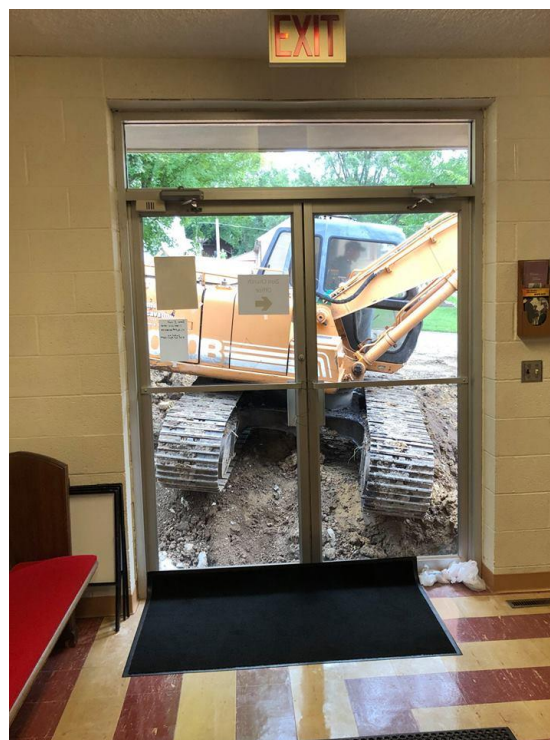
For more than 140 years, Zion Lutheran Church, Atlantic, Iowa, has been blessed to be God's instrument. The congregation helped bring access to the Gospel for generations and was instrumental in several church plants. However, the ministry was not without its challenges over the years. Zion lacked accessibility; the church needed an elevator and an updated restroom on the sanctuary level.

Increasingly over the years, attendees found the multi-level (think "many steps") facility was not easily accessible for many elderly and people with physical impairments. Pastor Ken Davidson and congregational leaders decided it was time to respond to the challenge.

### **Zion's Journey**

In 2012, Zion contacted the Lutheran Church Extension Fund Architectural Advisory Committee to explore options to enhance access. LCEF's AAC consists of professional Lutheran architects and liturgical artists who advise on architectural design, planning, construction and preservation of facilities.

Architectural assistance provided a plan for an ADA compliant entry to the church and fellowship areas as well as a lift to enable all members and guests to enjoy all levels of the facility. One of the challenges initially was finding out how to finance the improvements. It was projected to cost hundreds of thousands of dollars. In order to learn more about the feasibility of a capital campaign, the congregation reached out to Carole White, LCEF District Vice President – Iowa East and West, and Rev. Bob Riggert, LCEF Immeasurably More Campaign Consultant.



By the fall of 2016, the congregation voted to enter a partnership with LCEF to develop a campaign based on Gospel-powered, biblically-based stewardship principles. The capital campaign would also be reflective of Zion's history and culture, unique to their needs and provide significant gifts toward the project.

Consultant Riggert and a team of dedicated Zion volunteers immediately went to work to plan a campaign for early 2017. The team chose the campaign theme— "By Grace . . . Access for All!" — with Romans 5:2 as the biblical base.

## A Generous Response

After a Lenten season of prayer and Bible study, including communicating the need and opportunity to fellow Zion members, the congregation gathered for a Commitment Celebration on April 2, 2017. Congregation volunteers made a special effort to invite those who would be blessed by the improved accessibility to attend, thus, there were numerous wheelchairs and walkers in the sanctuary.

The response of Zion members was generous. Over three years, more than \$250,000 was committed toward the facility improvements. A celebration banquet at the local high school was a congregation highlight.

“Working with Bob was great,” said Pastor Davidson. “It helped as we continued to move forward and unify around the goal of providing access for all in our church building so that the Gospel could be better shared.”



### Digging Began!

Zion’s construction of the improvements began this summer. “God-willing there will be access for all—members and community—to the means of grace shared in and through Zion Lutheran Church,” said Riggert.

Based on Ephesians 3:20-21, “Immeasurably More,” is a process for trained LCMS consultants to walk alongside congregations as they grow as stewards and respond to opportunities including updating facilities,

helping to grow ministry, reducing debt and other endeavors requiring capital funding.

To learn more, Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod congregations in the Iowa East and West Districts should contact Carole White at [Carole.White@lcef.org](mailto:Carole.White@lcef.org) or 515-240-2229.

