

ZION | 275

ZION LUTHERAN CHURCH 275TH ANNIVERSARY

History Moment - Easter Traditions at Zion

Easter is one of the most important festival in the church years, and Zion Lutheran church has many traditions that celebrate this important season.

One of the most visible traditions at Zion is the large outdoor cross decorated by flowers brought by members of the congregation. In recent years, this cross has become the focus of many pictures of families dressed in their Easter finest.



Date Unknown

This tradition has evolved through the years. The earliest mention of this practice was in an article in *The State* on March 25, 1948 describing the annual Easter sunrise service of the Zion parish, composed of Providence, Pilgrim and Zion congregations. According to the article, this service was the sixth annual service. Attendance was estimated to be between 400 and 700 worshipers. *The State* reported, "A large elevated cross 50 feet long, will be covered with flowers. All attending are invited to bring a bunch of flowers, any kind or color, to be placed on the cross, as a tribute to the Living Christ."

Mrs. Thomas F. Suber directed the combined choir consisting of approximately 100 voices from the senior and junior choirs of the congregations. Miss Nor a Gable was the pianist, assisted by Mrs. E. M. Caughman and Mrs. E.T. Driggers, with Mrs. Sadie L. Bryant and Miss Helen Wingard as violinists. The Rev. Thomas F. Suber's sermon was entitled, "Facing the Dawn." Worshippers faced "the rising sun, looking over the flower cross and the cemetery to hear the glorious Easter message of triumph and victory over sin, death and the grave. The choir stand and the rostrum will be appropriately decorated with Easter lilies, decorated with Easter lilies, gladioli, smilax, and ivy."

The dimensions of the cross had slightly decreased by 1970 according to an article in *The Dispatch News*. Music at this service was provided by local school musicians who were members of Zion.



Sunrise Service At Zion Lutheran

Zion Lutheran Congregation, Rt. 1, celebrated the Easter Season with a Sunrise Service of Worship on the front lawn of the church. Center of the worship was a large floral cross, decorated with flowers which were brought by the worshipers as they arrived at the church. This large cross, 39 feet long and about 18 feet across, was one of multicolored beauty with a great variety of colorful flowers. It showed the

spirit of new life and beauty of the Easter message. This was the first Easter Sunrise worship experience at Zion for a number of years. Music for the out-of-doors occasion was furnished by a brass choir composed of Wayne Buff, Janet Drafts, Karen Corley, Dale Driggers, Scott Cromer, Steve Wingard and Steve Hendrix. Pastor Garth L. Hill led the worship and delivered the message. (Photo by James Cromer)



Photo by John Drafts

The flower cross has continued to “bloom” in recent years, and members have continued to beautify the cross with flowers from their yards and gardens.



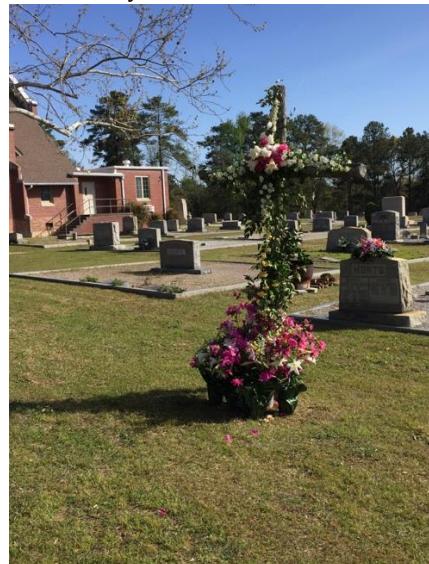
Photo by Becky Rickenbacker - 2006



Steve Shumpert assists with sunrise service - Photo by
Becky Rickenbacker - 2006



2015



2018

Breakfast

Members of Zion have enjoyed food and fellowship between the Sunrise Service and the Easter service with a delicious breakfast provided by the youth of the church (and their parents).



Photo by Becky Rickenbacker - 2006

Easter Service

Inside the church, members of the congregation have been greeted with the fragrance of Easter lilies placed all around the sanctuary and leading to the altar. For many years, the focal point on the altar has been a wooden cross decorated with beautiful flowers. This tradition was begun by Mrs. Helen Cromer and Mrs. Frances Rikard and continued by their daughters, Mrs. Carolette Cromer Turner and Mrs. Edith Rikard Clark.



2012



2018

Music has always played an important part in the Easter worship service as the choirs lead and inspire the congregation with joyous voices and bells. Sometimes, the choirs have been accompanied by musicians from the community. Zion's Easter traditions have enhanced the worship service and allow worshippers to praise the Risen Lord with all their senses. Praise the Lord! Hallelujah!



Photos by Becky Rickenbaker - 2006