

## **Zion Lutheran Church Mission Statement:**

***“Bonded in Christ’s love, we teach, preach, and equip God’s people for discipleship here and throughout the world.”***



**Fourth Sunday in Advent**

**December 22, 2024**

***For those who are hearing challenged, Zion has digital listening devices for your use during worship. Please ask an usher or council member for one and they will show you how to use it.***

## **Prelude – Bell**

**The Advent season** is a very special time of year that sometimes gets lost in the bright lights of the Christmas season it precedes. The first day of Advent is the first day of a new Liturgical (or church) calendar and begins a four-week period of preparation for the nativity of Jesus Christ at Christmas.

## **Advent Gathering**

P- Cradle to cross are inextricably connected on the fourth Sunday of Advent. Elizabeth, John’s mother, and Mary, the mother of Jesus, are two women filled with the Holy Spirit and with faith. In Elizabeth’s inspired greeting and Mary’s song of praise we hear of

a saving God who remembers, scatters, lifts up, and fulfills all things.

**C- You, Lord, have lifted up the lowly.**

P- Between a lovely tribute to the little town of Bethlehem and Mary's magnificent song of praise, the letter to the Hebrews reminds us in no uncertain terms that Christ's advent is for "the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once and for all."

**C – You, Lord, have lifted up the lowly.**

P-It is the kind of tension in which the church always lives as when in holy communion—with high delight— "we proclaim the Lord's death."

**C – You, Lord, have lifted up the lowly.**

### **My Faith Story – Dr. Sandy Parks**

*How does the season of Advent impact my vocation (work/ministry)?*

### **Gathering Hymn – O Little Town of Bethlehem ELW 279**

**1 O little town of Bethlehem,  
how still we see thee lie!  
Above thy deep and dreamless sleep  
the silent stars go by;  
yet in thy dark streets shineth  
the everlasting light.  
The hopes and fears of all the years  
are met in thee tonight.**

**2 For Christ is born of Mary,  
and, gathered all above  
while mortals sleep, the angels keep  
their watch of wond'ring love.  
O morning stars, together  
proclaim the holy birth,  
and praises sing to God the king,  
and peace to all on earth!**

**3 How silently, how silently  
the wondrous gift is giv'n!  
So God imparts to human hearts  
the blessings of his heav'n.  
No ear may hear his coming;  
but, in this world of sin,  
where meek souls will receive him, still  
the dear Christ enters in.**

**4 O holy Child of Bethlehem,  
descend to us, we pray;  
cast out our sin, and enter in,  
be born in us today.  
We hear the Christmas angels  
the great glad tidings tell;  
oh, come to us, abide with us,  
our Lord Emmanuel!**

### **Confession and Forgiveness**

*As you are able, please stand. All may make the sign of the cross,  
the sign that is marked at baptism, as pastor begins.*

P- Blessed be the Holy Trinity, + one God,  
who opens the heavens,  
and draws near to us with salvation.

**C- Amen**

P- God is patient and merciful, desiring all to come to repentance. Trusting this promise of grace, let us confess our sins.

***Silence is kept for reflection.***

P- Everlasting God,

**C- you love justice and you hate wrongdoing.**

**We confess our fear, greed, and self-centeredness.**

**We are complicit in systems of exploitation.**

**We choose comfort over courage.**

**We are careless with creation's bounty.**

**Look upon us with mercy.**

**Turn our hearts again to you.**

**Make us glad to do your will and to walk in your ways for the sake of our waiting world. Amen**

P- Hear these words of assurance:

God clothes you with garments of salvation  
and covers you with robes of righteousness.

In tender compassion of + Jesus Christ  
your sins are forgiven

God's covenant is eternal,  
and God's blessing rests upon us all.

**C- Amen**

### **Blessing of the Fourth Candle**

P- Praise to you, O God, who lives with us,  
sharing our flesh and bones.

As Mary waited and Joseph dreamed, so we dream and wait for you. Bless us and let your face shine upon us, more radiant than these four candles, and even more dear than all else we seek.

Restore when we fail to refuse evil and choose the good and banish all our fears. We pray in the name of Emmanuel, your promised child and our Savior.

**C- Amen**     *Please be seated.*

## **Children's Time – Leap for Joy**

We get excited before Christmas, don't we? As Christmas gets closer and closer, sometimes it is hard to hold all the excitement in. We just have to jump up and down or sing or yell.

## **Readings**

### **Micah 5:2-5a**

*Lector – The prophet Micah, having pronounced judgment on Judah, speaks of a future shepherd-king who, like David, will come from the small town of Bethlehem. This king will restore Israel and bring peace. New Testament writers understood this passage to be referring to Jesus.*

But you, O Bethlehem of Ephrathah,  
who are one of the little clans of Judah,  
from you shall come forth for me  
one who is to rule in Israel,  
whose origin is from of old,  
from ancient days.

Therefore he shall give them up until the time  
when she who is in labor has brought forth;  
then the rest of his kindred shall return  
to the people of Israel.

And he shall stand and feed his flock in the strength of the LORD,  
in the majesty of the name of the LORD his God.

And they shall live secure, for now he shall be great  
to the ends of the earth;  
and he shall be the one of peace.

If the Assyrians come into our land  
and tread upon our soil,

we will raise against them seven shepherds  
and eight installed as rulers. Here ends this reading.

**Luke 1:46b-55** - *Read responsively.*

And Mary said,

“My soul magnifies the Lord,

**and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior,**

for he has looked with favor on the lowliness of his servant.

**Surely, from now on all generations will call me blessed;**

for the Mighty One has done great things for me,

**and holy is his name.**

His mercy is for those who fear him

**from generation to generation.**

He has shown strength with his arm;

**he has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts.**

He has brought down the powerful from their thrones,

**and lifted up the lowly;**

he has filled the hungry with good things,

**and sent the rich away empty.**

He has helped his servant Israel,

**in remembrance of his mercy,**

according to the promise he made to our ancestors,

**to Abraham and to his descendants forever.”**

**Hebrews 10:5-10**

*Lector – The author of Hebrews uses the image of religious sacrifice to convey the significance of Christ’s coming. Through obedient acceptance of God’s will, Christ allows his own body to*

*become the greatest sacrifice of all, one through whom which we are made a holy people.*

Consequently, when Christ came into the world, he said, 'Sacrifices and offerings you have not desired, but a body you have prepared for me; in burnt-offerings and sin-offerings you have taken no pleasure.

Then I said, "See, God, I have come to do your will, O God" (in the scroll of the book it is written of me).'

When he said above, 'You have neither desired nor taken pleasure in sacrifices and offerings and burnt-offerings and sin-offerings' (these are offered according to the law), then he added, 'See, I have come to do your will.' He abolishes the first in order to establish the second. And it is by God's will that we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all. Here ends this reading.

### **Prayer of the Day**

*As you are able, please stand.*

P- Stir up your power, Lord Christ, and come.

**C- With your abundant grace and might, free us from the sin that binds us, that we may receive you in joy and serve you always, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, amen.**

### **Gospel – Luke 1:39-55**

P- Elizabeth, John's mother, and Mary, the mother of Jesus, are two women filled with the Holy Spirit and with faith. In Elizabeth's inspired greeting and Mary's song of praise we hear of a saving God who remembers, scatters, lifts up, and fulfills all things.

In those days Mary set out and went with haste to a Judean town in the hill country, where she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth. When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the child leapt in her womb. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit and exclaimed with a loud cry, "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb. And why has this happened to me that the mother of my Lord comes to me? For as soon as I heard the sound of your greeting, the child in my womb leapt for joy. And blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfilment of what was spoken to her by the Lord."

And Mary said,

"My soul magnifies the Lord,  
and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior,  
for he has looked with favor on the lowliness of his servant.

Surely, from now on all generations will call me blessed;  
for the Mighty One has done great things for me,  
and holy is his name.

His mercy is for those who fear him  
from generation to generation.

He has shown strength with his arm;  
he has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts.

He has brought down the powerful from their thrones,  
and lifted up the lowly;

he has filled the hungry with good things,  
and sent the rich away empty.

He has helped his servant Israel,  
in remembrance of his mercy,

according to the promise he made to our ancestors,

to Abraham and to his descendants forever." The Gospel of the Lord.

**C- Praise to you, O Lord! *Please be seated.***



## Special Music – Les Lieneman

### Message – The Comebacks are Always Better than the Setbacks!

#### Offering Hymn – O Come, O Come, Emmanuel ELW 257 vs. 1-4

1 O come, O come, Emmanuel,  
and ransom captive Israel  
that mourns in lonely exile here  
until the Son of God appear.

#### **Refrain:**

Rejoice! Rejoice! Immanuel  
shall come to you, O Israel.

2 O come, O Wisdom from on high,  
embracing all things far and nigh;  
In strength and beauty come and stay  
Tech us your will and guide our way. **Refrain**

3 O come, O come, O Lord of might,  
as to your tribes on Sinai's height  
in ancient times you gave the law  
in cloud and majesty and awe. **Refrain**

4 O come, O Branch of Jesse's free  
you own from Satan's tyranny;  
From depths of hell your people save;  
And give them vic-try o'er the grave. **Refrain**

## **Offering Prayer**

*As you are able, please stand.*

**P-** God our provider,

**C-** by your merciful hand abundance springs up from the earth. Receive and bless these gifts of your bounty.

Let them be a sign of your steadfast love and faithfulness for all people through Christ our Savior.

**Amen**

## **Apostles' Creed**

**I believe in God, the Father Almighty, creator of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried; he descended to the dead.**

**On the third day he rose again; he ascended into heaven, is seated at the right hand of the Father, and will come again to judge the living and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.**

**Prayers of the Church –** *When the pastor says, “Lord in your mercy” please respond with “**hear our prayer!**”*

## **Lord’s Prayer**

**Our Father, who art in heaven,  
hallowed be thy Name,  
thy kingdom come,  
thy will be done,  
on earth as it is in heaven.  
Give us this day our daily bread;  
and forgive us our trespasses,  
as we forgive those  
who trespass against us;  
and lead us not into temptation,  
but deliver us from evil.  
For thine is the kingdom,  
and the power, and the glory,  
forever and ever. Amen.**

## **Announcements in the Life of Our Church**

### **Blessing & Dismissal**

*As you are able, please stand.*

P- The God who calls us across the universe  
and speaks in the smallest seed  
+ bless, keep and sustain you  
now and to the end of the age.

**C – Amen.**

P- Go in peace. Share the harvest.

**C- Thanks be to God! ZION...a place to belong, a place to believe, a place to become!**

### **Sending Hymn – Away in the Manger ELW 277**

1 Away in a manger, no crib for his bed,  
the little Lord Jesus laid down his sweet head;  
the stars in the bright sky looked down where he lay,  
the little Lord Jesus asleep on the hay.

2 The cattle are lowing; the baby awakes,  
but little Lord Jesus, no crying he makes.  
I love you, Lord Jesus; look down from the sky  
and stay by my cradle til morning is nigh.

3 Be near me, Lord Jesus; I ask you to stay  
close by me forever and love me, I pray.  
Bless all the dear children in your tender care  
and fit us for heaven, to live with you there.

**Pastor Jer's phone number – 402-404-0494**

**[jkgil1979@yahoo.com](mailto:jkgil1979@yahoo.com)**

**Karen's number – 402-661-9362**

**Email [-jpzionlutheran@yahoo.com](mailto:-jpzionlutheran@yahoo.com)**



## **Wednesday - Christmas Day**

10 am Worship with communion – offering to the Backpack programs

## **Next Sunday – 5<sup>th</sup> Sunday Offering to the Cemetery**

**NO** Sunday School

9 am **No** BKF Club/**No** Adult SS

10 am Worship/Communion/Men's Choir

Council and **WELCA/Volunteers** to take down tree and decorations following worship

## **Helping out on Christmas Day**

Pastor.....Jerry Gilbreath

Organist.....Alnora Daubendiek

Acolytes.....Pastor & Karen Gilbreath

Lector.....Karen Gilbreath

Greeters.....The Council

Special Music.....Les Lieneman

## **Helping out Next Sunday**

Pastor..... Jerry Gilbreath

Organist.....Alnora Daubendiek

Acolytes.....Konnor Kolm

Millie Garton

Lector.....Gerald Ideus

Greeters.....Kyle & Michelle Kolm

Les & Mert Rademacher

Special Music.....Men's Choir

Serve Breakfast Club.....No Breakfast Club

**December Altar Guild:** Caroline Ideus, Dianna Andrew, Susan Buss, Patti Behrens, Lynette Jurgens

**December Table Troop:** Duane Zulauf, Stan & Mary Lenners, Al Wiese, Doug Parde Jeff Busboom, Steve Gronewold, Mark Buhr, Alex Buhr

**January Altar Guild – Susan Buss (Leader),** Patti Behrens, Lynette Jurgens, Caroline Ideus

**January Table Troop – Don Schuster (Leader),** John Gronewold, Paul & Shellie Remmers, Les & Mert Rademacher, Linda & Robert Ideus

### **Snow Brigade**

**For the week of Dec 23 – AJ Wiese Captain,** James Meints-tractor, Alan Wiese, Kenny Newman, Paul Jurgens, Gerald Ideus, Todd Bohlmeier, Brian Garton, Josh Gronewold.

**For the week of Dec 30 – Justin Hippen Captain,** Gary Gronewold-tractor, Stan Lenners-tractor, Mark Buhr, James Lenners, Billy Harms, Larry Gronewold, Dale Zimmerman, Luke Ideus.

### **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**Welcome to worship! A Warm Welcome to all our visitors. We would love to have you visit again! We ask you please sign a visitor card located in the pews and bring the information section of the card to the information center desk, located in the Fellowship Hall or place it in the offering plate. We are so glad you are here!**

**HANDICAP PARKING** - We encourage you to reserve parking between the parsonage and the north doors for those joining us with mobility difficulties. Thank you! ~ The Church Council

**IF INTERESTED IN SPONSORING A WEEKLY BULLETIN** you may do so by contacting the Church secretary and making a check out to Zion Church for \$75.00.

**Fifth Sunday Offerings & Special offerings for December**

**Christmas Eve and Day offerings** will go to the Backpack programs

**The 5th Sunday - December 29<sup>th</sup>** will go to the Cemetery.

**Poinsettia Sign up**



The clip board is on the welcome center in the Fellowship Hall - please list who is giving the plant and who it is in memory or in honor of so can be listed in the bulletin. I will be printing the list for bulletins tomorrow so if you want to be recognized in the bulletin please have it written on the clipboard by today.

**Thank you very much for the Willow Tree pieces** we received from the Council and the Congregation. This completes the set that was started for us a few years ago. I have always wanted this set and never had gotten around to starting it. I leave it out year around because it means so much to me! It will continue to be on our china hutch in our new home – and will remind me/us of Zion also.

**Thank you!**

Karen & Pastor



**Merry Christmas! Have a safe & happy holiday season!** Thank you for the generous gifts for our residents! We appreciate it  
The Homestead House

**Thank you so much for your generous donation** of \$500 to Mother-to-Mother Ministry of Beatrice. Respectfully Folisatey Dunn, Coordinator

**The Church Council and WELCA/Volunteers** will take down the Christmas decorations and Christmas tree next Sunday, December 29th following Church. All ladies welcome to help!

**Exciting news and another option for giving is available for our Zion members.**

A QR code has been added to the Sunday bulletins. Simply scan the QR Code to the right to access Zion's Venmo account and submit your offering.

Offering envelopes and online giving via Vanco are still available to members as well. **Any members with questions regarding these options can reach out to a church council member.**

Zion Lutheran Church

@Zion68422



**venmo**

Scan this code to pay

## **HOLIDAY GIVING OPPORTUNITIES ...**

### **2 Corinthians 9:7 (NIV)**

“Each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.”



### **Beatrice Middle School & High School Mini Marts**

Consider donating - sandwich/trash bags, dish soap, canned fruit/vegetables, canned soup, pudding cups, pop tarts, macaroni & cheese

Collection baskets are located in both hallways

Requested by: Amber Lovitt -CASA Executive Director

\$250 Thrivent Grant written by Bev Stokebrand (Mert Rademacher's sister)

### **Tree of Warmth**

Consider donating - hats, gloves, mittens, scarves, socks

Requested by: Zion Parish Ed & Sunday School kids

\$250 Thrivent Grant written by Carley Remmers (daughter of Dennis & Doreen Remmers)

**The Willie & Anna Meints scholarship** applications are located on the welcome center located in the Fellowship Hall. Students entering college can apply for the scholarship for up to 4 years. Applications must be received by February 16, 2025 following the start of the student's first college year. Applications received after the February 16, 2025 deadline will not be considered.

**Committee Members: DeAnn Oltman, Steve Oltman & Laura Fikar**

## The Next Upcoming Hospitality Event

**Join us for a fun and creative afternoon at our Handmade Card Party**, where you'll make four unique cards—perfect for every occasion! Whether you're celebrating love, offering sympathy, wishing a happy birthday, or sending a simple note of encouragement, you'll leave with cards that are as personal as they are beautiful.

In this class, you'll create:

- A Valentine's Card to express your love and affection
- A Sympathy Card to offer comfort in times of loss
- A Birthday Card to brighten someone's special day
- A General Occasion Card with a supportive and encouraging theme.

All supplies and tools will be provided, so you can focus on enjoying the process! No previous crafting experience is required—just bring your positive vibes.

### **Details:**

- Date & Time: February 2nd, 1:00 – 2:30 PM
- Location: Zion Lutheran Church hosted by the Hospitality Committee
- Cost: \$10 non-refundable supplies fee (via Venmo to Deb Rinne or cash).
- RSVP: Please reserve your spot by January 19th to ensure we have enough supplies for everyone. Contact: Deb Rinne (402-499-3420) Cash or Venmo: @Deb-Rinne

We can't wait to see you there and help you make beautiful, personalized cards for all of life's moments!

## **CHURCH SECRETARY JOB OPPORTUNITY**

**The Church Council** is looking to fill the church secretary position. This would be a 16-20 hour per week position. The Council's intention is to fill this position by the end of January or the first of February, as Karen plans to retire at the end of April.



If you have an interest or would like additional information, **please reach out to DeAnn Oltman at 402-223-0561 or Carrye Meints at 402-520-6346.**

**Gold Crest** - Mildred Meints, Janice Jurgens, Doreen Wallman,  
Marilyn Robinson,

**Homestead House** - Anora Schoen

**Our Homes Assisted Living** – Randy Oltman

**Wilbur Care Center** – Ernie Jurgens



### **Poinsettia List for**

**2025**

**Alvera Bada** in Memory of Victor Bade, Emil & Margaret Wallman,  
and Ralph & Neva Bade

**Alex, Beth, Emmitt & Nolen Buhr** in Memory of Dennis & Bev Buhr

**Karen Buhr & family** in Memory of Leonard, Bruce and loved ones

**Lois Buhr & family** in Memory of Arnold Buhr

**Cornelius family & Harwood family** in Memory of Ron, Adeline, Diane Cornelius & Stephanie Morris

**Betty, Carol, Connie & families** in honor of Walt & Angeline Johnson, Roger Daubendiek, & Roger Keller

**Mike, Lindsay, Madison & Rory Detert** in Memory of Richard Newton

**Eddie & Lynette Dorn & James & Kelly Lenners & Families** in Memory of Ernest & Emma Meints and Dennis & Terry Meints

**Dennis & Rhonda Fossler & families** in Memory of Ernest & Marilyn & Rodney Zimmerman and Harvey Fossler

**Shirley Gronewold & family** in Memory of Ehme Gronewold

**Karla, Lexi, Macy & Faith Holland** in Memory of Dave Holland

**Dale & Hannah Hrenchir** in Memory of Thees & Alita Ehmen and Pat & Gordan Madsen

**Caroline Ideus & families** in Memory of Gary Ideus

**Robert & Doreen Ideus & families** in memory of Ted & Irene Busboom

**Peggy, Janie, Nancy & Neal & families** in Memory of Vernon & Evelyn Meints

**Lynette Jurgens & family** in Memory of Earnest & Anna Jobman, Sarah Jurgens, & Marilyn Folkerts

**Don & Elnora Lenners** in Memory of loved ones

**Tracy & Brooklyn Lidolph** in Memory of Wayne & Dorothy Lidolph & Larry White & loved ones

**Kent & Jennifer Mahler & family** in Memory of Cliff & Idella Mahler, Keith Mahler, Lowell Rahe

**Mildred Meints & family** in Memory of Lawrence Meints and loved ones

**Doug, Cindy, Lauren, Ashley & Trevor Parde** in Memory of Edward & Bernice Parde

**Cheryl, Keith Parde, Glenda, Janet & Kent** in Memory of Ernest & Dorothy Parde

**Marilyn Robinson & family** in Memory of Kenneth Robinson

**Betty Schoen, Devonna Primavera & families** in Memory of Elmer & Leona Trauernicht

**Patty, Jermey, Brittany Thomas & Doyle Scott & Larry and Macy Gronewold** in Memory of Lawrence & Shirley Gronewold, George & Eleanor Wolken, Will & Ester Gronewold

**Dorothy Trauernicht & family** in Memory of Wayne and loved ones

**This list is as of Saturday at print time. You can still get your name listed for the January newsletter and next 3 bulletins if sign the clip board today in the Fellowship Hall!**