



ST. PAUL-ZION DUAL PARISH DECEMBER 2024

A Few Thoughts from Pastor

Advent begins December 1 ... and Christmas is just around the corner. It's a busy time for most people and thoughts and emotions swirl around in hearts and minds like so many snowflakes in a blustery wind. Many look forward to the joy and happiness of the holidays as a temporary escape from the worries and problems in their lives. And while the festivities of the season may distract for a time, reality will (& does) set in, and thoughts of loneliness and sadness are also a very real part of the holiday season.

Now I'm not trying to be a "grinch" or some type of holiday scrooge or something, but I've been thinking lately about the real source of Christmas joy. And it's not presents, time-off, bonuses, or cute little kids making rare appearances in church to make us laugh with their talk of "Harold" the angel or the "wise guys" coming from "a-fire." And yes, we love to see family and friends and to celebrate and laugh with those we love, but such joy and frivolity are quite fleeting if that's all Christmas represents. Real, lasting, life-saving and life-changing Christmas joy is actually rooted in something much "bigger" than warm feelings and emotions; it is rooted in an incredible truth about God Himself.

Consider the following: *The Lord is my Shepherd (Ps 23:1). [And Jesus said,] "I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down His life for the sheep" (John 10:11). And (John the Baptist) said, "Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!" (John 1:29). The Lamb in the midst of the throne will be their Shepherd (Rev. 7:17). And (Mary) brought forth her firstborn Son, and wrapped Him in swaddling clothes, and laid Him in a manger (Luke 2:7).*

You see, the Baby whose birth we remember and celebrate during Christmas is both Lamb AND Shepherd. And while much of modern Christmas trappings may actually serve to distract us from this important truth, the real Christmas is about God coming to us to shepherd and to save us, to be the Lamb of God that takes away the sin of the world. This is the foundational truth that gives Christmas its eternal significance and which should comfort, inspire, and give us great joy.

continued to next page...

**St. Paul Lutheran,
Fairview**
110 East Maple
Fairview, KS 66425
785-467-8816

**Zion Lutheran,
Hiawatha**
613 South 1st
Hiawatha, KS 66434
785-742-3995

Pastor Brian Holle
revholle@sbcglobal.net

618-960-9575

**Office Hours—Tuesday/Thursday
9:00-11:00
Day Off—Friday**

OFFICE

Phone: 785-742-3995
613 S. First,
Hiawatha, KS 66434

office@nekpartnership.org

Hours:
8:00am-1:00pm
Tuesday & Thursday
Closed Friday

So with Christmas on the horizon, consider this poem by Kurt Reinhardt (*My Light and My Salvation*, c. 2008):



Lost in the Terror of the Night

Lost in the terror of the night,
The thorns had caught me in my flight,
My bleating cries would soon be still,
The wolf was circling for the kill.



But then His voice came on the wind:
“My precious Lamb, I know you’ve sinned,
Yet I have come to seek the lost,
To rescue them at any cost.”

He traced my path into the wild,
His heart set on His wayward child,
Until He found me where I lay,
His foolish sheep that went astray.



Into the thorns He stretched His arm
With boundless love, enduring harm,
His hands were cut and pierced for me
To break the snare and set me free.

With tender mercy I’m held fast;
Around His neck, now safe at last,
My shepherd bears me through the night
Towards the joy of dawning light.

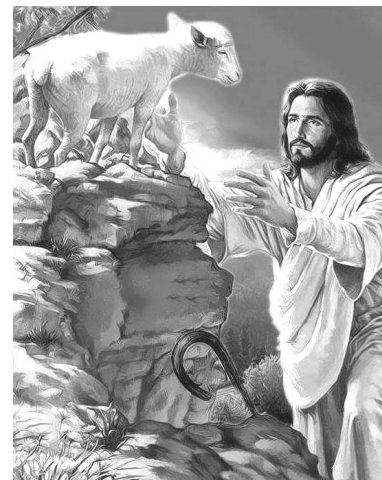


Now some of you may be thinking ‘Hey, that’s not a Christmas poem’ ... or is it? That Baby wrapped in swaddling clothes and lying in a manger is both Lamb (His hands, feet, and side ... pierced for you and for me) and Shepherd, and His life, death, and resurrection have eternal consequences for you. Celebrate this year and always, each and every day, as one found and saved by this Lamb / Shepherd. And then listen to Him ...

"I've lived the trials of the night,
So child, you need not fear;
I'm your salvation and your light
And I am ever near.

"I've climbed the grievous mountain way,
Your help through life to be;
I will not slumber night or day
Until you're home with me."

Pastor Holle



Stewardship



Anxiety vs. Trust

Jesus, in His Sermon on the Mount, teaches those who follow Him that worrying about the necessities of life is idolatry - worshipping a false god. Worry and anxiety show what we care about. Our anxiety reveals what we love and what we're devoted to. It reveals what we trust in.

This is why our Lord begins this section with an overarching principle: *"No one can serve two masters, for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and money"* (Matt. 6:24).

But you say: "I must eat and drink. I must have clothing to wear and have a home in which to dwell." Yes, all these things you need. And Jesus says that your Father in heaven will ensure that you have them. He demonstrates this with a simple argument: your Father in heaven feeds the birds of the air, who neither sow, nor reap, nor gather into barns. He clothes the lilies of the field, who neither toil nor spin but are arrayed more luxuriously than Solomon in all his glory. If, then, your Father in heaven feeds the birds, if He clothes the lilies, how will He not also feed and clothe you, when you are worth more than they are? (Matt 6:25–33).

Do you know that you are worth more than them? You are worth infinitely more. You are worth the price of the eternal Son of God. Did the Son of God come down from heaven and become a lily? Did He descend and take on the form of a bird? No! He came down from heaven and became a man - flesh of our flesh and bone of our bone (Gen. 2:23). He is one of us, our brother. And what did He do when He became flesh to dwell among us? He gave His holy, precious blood, through His innocent suffering and death, that you might be His own and live under Him in His kingdom forever.

God became man in Christ Jesus. He lived the life we failed to live, and He died the death we deserved. He was raised again on the third day overcoming sin and death ... for us. He was crucified for our transgressions and raised for our justification. So, if your Father in heaven has given His Son to die for us in order that we might live with Him eternally, how will He not also give us all things to support this body and life?

To be anxious about the necessities of life, to devote yourself to food and clothing, to care about these things and find security in them, is to serve another god. It is to deny that you will live forever because Jesus, the Son of God, is risen from the dead and lives and reigns for all eternity. It is to believe that the God who created you, redeemed you by the death and resurrection of His Son and sanctified you by His Spirit, will not keep His promise to sustain you in this life.

Jesus says, "Seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness" (Matt. 6:33). God's kingdom is His rule among us. His rule among us comes when our Father in heaven gives us His Holy Spirit, so that by His grace we believe His Holy Word and lead godly lives here in time and there in eternity. This is what we ask God to do for us in the prayer that Jesus taught us.

Your Father in heaven knows what you need — food and clothing, house and home — and He promises to give it to you. Chief of the things you need is His grace and mercy in His Son, Jesus Christ. So, seek after that. And those who seek will find. And all the necessities of life, our Lord says, will be added to you.

LCMS Stewardship Ministry ... lcms.org/stewardship

ZION LWML

The regular meeting of the Zion Lutheran Church LWML was called to order by Lela Middendorf, President, on November 12, 2024 with 5 members present.

The meeting began with a devotion entitled "A Season To Celebrate". The minutes of the previous meeting were read and approved, and the treasurer's report given and approved.

It was announced that Zion would have two Advent services, and discussion was had on meals prior to worship services.

Our annual Christmas donations were discussed. Becky moved and Virginia seconded that we donate \$100 to the St. Louis Seminary Food Bank. Motion carried.

It was announced that we would make 2 Christmas goodie bags for our shut-in church members. LWML members are asked to bring goodies for these bags at our next meeting on December 10.

Discussion then followed on how the dynamics of our LWML might change with potential adoption of Zion's new church Constitution and By-laws.

The meeting was closed with a prayer about being thankful.

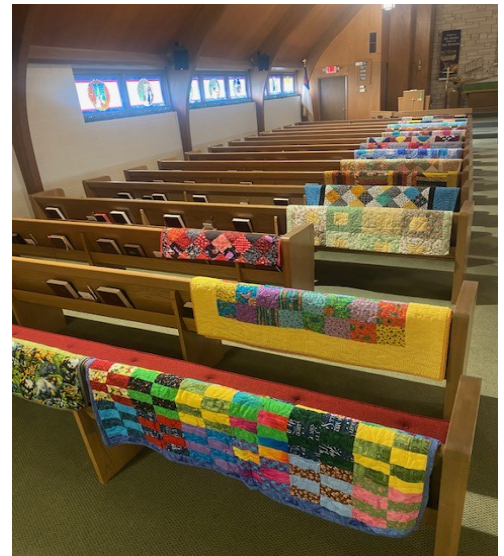
Anne Arnesen
Secretary



Beautiful quilts were displayed at Zion in October.

Many thanks to all those who helped to make this possible.

Our thanks to Linda Duesing for her donation of several quilt tops.



CHRISTMAS CANTATA

The choir of Zion Lutheran Church, Everest, along with several members of the community, would like to invite you to the performance of the beautiful Christmas Cantata, Were You There On That Christmas Night? The cantata will be at 2:00pm on Sunday, December 8th, at Zion Lutheran Church, 1521 Prairie Road, Everest.





2024
HOLIDAY
WORSHIP SCHEDULE



*JOINT Thanksgiving Eve Service –
Nov. 27 at St. Paul - 7:00pm*

*Joint Advent 1 - Wednesday, December 4
at Zion - 7:00pm*

*Joint Advent 2 - Wednesday, December 11
at St. Paul - 7:00pm*

*Joint Advent 3 – December 18
at Zion - 7:00pm*

Christmas Eve Services, December 24

*Zion - 4:00pm
St. Paul - 6:00pm*

*Joint Christmas Day services
will be held at St. Paul – 10:00am*

*Joint New Year's Eve service
will be held at Zion starting at 7:00pm*



FAIRVIEW LIGHTS UP

*St. Paul Lutheran Church Evangelism &
Outreach Committee
will be hosting a display
at the Fairview Community Building
on December 12th.
This will be from 6:00pm-8:00pm.*

*The Arch book "The Story of Jesus" will be
given out to families with children.
If questions, please contact Sadie Meyer*

ST. PAUL DORCAS

On November 3, 2024, the St. Paul Dorcas Group met in the church basement following Sunday morning service. Kristina Costlow led our Bible Study on Mary's history in the early years, from our Unshakable workbook. Mary, the mother of Jesus, is the most well-known woman in scripture, however, there is limited information in scripture about Mary. So we began looking in history at Jewish customs for her time. We read through the promises in the Old Testament and understood the foreshadowing as the plans God has. God's purpose for Mary's future was far greater than she could've ever imagined; as we will see as Mary's story unfolds she trusted him completely with her life, her future, and her son, she offers a beautiful example of a woman who diligently nurtured her faith by meditating and pondering on God's working in her life.

President Sarah Kleopfer began our Dorcas meeting with secretary Becky Meyer taking roll call, there were 15 members present. September and October minutes were read and approved. Treasurer Kathy Heiniger gave the treasurer's report and it was accepted.

For correspondence: we received a thank you from Orphan Grain Train for the school kits, hygiene kits, and quilts, that Steve Manche delivered to Lincoln. The hygiene kits were loaded directly on a truck to North Carolina for disaster relief. They also offered to take him on a tour of their new facility. We all thought that would be an interesting trip for some Friday afternoon throughout the summer.

Committee reports: the funeral dinner on November 9th, for Tom Krueger for a light lunch of soup and dessert was discussed. Karen Bauman and Cindy Manche will be contacting our members.

Cindy Manche had a birthday card for Bertha Kruse for the church members to sign. Poinsettias can be donated to go along with the two we currently have.

Saturday, November 30th at 6 pm we will decorate the church for Advent and Christmas. With pizza afterward.

Our three Christmas charities for this year are: Lutheran Urban Mission, Mosaic Foundation, and Topeka Rescue Mission.

Announcements: Prayers requested for Elaine Engelman, Stuart Manche, and Allan Boeh. Birthdays celebrated for November are Bertha Kruse and Sharon Meyer.

For our December Social, we will start by having lunch at the Kirkwood restaurant in Highland, then we will meet over at Linda Duesing's house, and Rosalie Mellenbruch will have a program. Treats will be by the officers. We were reminded to bring our Christmas Stockings to help support the charities.

We had our LWML offering and also collected LWML mites.

Other announcements were: Leslie Brockhoff and Kathy Heiniger are on the altar committee for November and December.

We closed with the Lord's Prayer.

Delicious gingerbread cake, pumpkin coffee cake, and applesauce cake, with coffee and tea was served by Nancy Manche.

Secretary, Becky Meyer

PLEASE REMEMBER IN YOUR PRAYERS:

Military: Spencer Ernst, Alexander Williams

College: Joey Meyer, Megan Brockhoff, Paige Stover, Gunner Smith.

Care Facilities & Shut-Ins: Betty Allen, Carol Bauer, Gene Rice, Bonnie Reynolds, Esther Krug, Doris Rice, Juanita Fritz, Don Robidoux.

Also in our prayers: Katie Fry, Jeanne Lowe, Martha Pearson, Charlotte Kruse, Wes Duesing, Richard Clay, Aimee Hampl, Carl Mueller, Sherry Hartley.

We Remember the blessed saints who now rest in the Lord (Tom Krueger) and we pray for their families that they remember all who die in the Lord live with the Lord. (Romans 6:5)



DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS

Dec 1-Charlotte Kruse, Dec 3-Scott Gigstad, Dec 4-Pastor Brian Holle, Dec 6-Jackson Manche, Dec 7-Diane Davis, Dec 8-Corey Dunaway, Dec 8-Henry Smith, Dec 8-Kenny Stephens, Dec 12-Jennifer Lowe, Dec 18-Helen Bauerle, Dec 18-Susan Wissmann, Dec 25-Tanner Smith, Dec 27-Daniel Kruse, Dec 28-David Middendorf, Dec 30-Anne Arnesen,

DECEMBER ANNIVERSARIES

Dec 3-Larry & Carol Walter, Dec 4-Janis & Ken Krug, Dec 12-Richard & Barb Shefferd, Dec 28-Matt & Jill Sprick, Dec 30-David & Lela Middendorf, Dec 31-Chad & Amanda Hinton

SERVERS FOR DECEMBER

(Please trade if you have a date conflict)

ST. PAUL LUTHERAN

Dec 1st: Kristina Costlow & girls
Dec 8th: Sadie Meyer & Evan Brockhoff
Dec 15th: Dwight & Charlotte Kruse
Dec 22nd: Steve & Nancy Manche
Dec 29th: David & Danny Bauerle

Altar Guild for December: Leslie Brockhoff, Kathy Heiniger, Galen Meyer

ZION LUTHERAN

Dec 1st: **Elder**-Scott Gigstad, **Acolyte**-Brady Killman, **Ushers**-Bob Freese & Larry Walter,
Greeters-Scott Gigstad family, **Sound System**-David Middendorf
Dec 8th: **Elder**-Kurt Killman, **Acolyte**-Saige Stover, **Ushers**-David Middendorf & Kurt Killman,
Greeters-Tim & Jackie Bianchi, **Sound System**-Bob & Virginia Freese
Dec 15th: **Elder**-Leon Wissmann, **Acolyte**-Grace Hampl, **Ushers**-Leon W. & Tim Bianchi,
Greeters-Bob & Virginia Freese, **Sound System**-Dwight Meyer
Dec 22nd: **Elder**-Scott Gigstad, **Acolyte**-Brady Killman, **Ushers**-Bob Freese & Larry Walter,
Greeters-Travis Hampl family, **Sound System**-Leon Wissmann
Dec 29th: **Elder**-Kurt Killman, **Acolyte**-Grace Hampl, **Ushers**-David Middendorf & Kurt Killman,
Greeters-Killman family, **Sound System**-David Middendorf

Altar Guild for December: Barb Shefferd & Lela Middendorf



Our mid-week Advent services this year will feature a “guest” speaker. Zechariah, a priest from some 2,000 years ago, will share his unique perspective on the Advent (Coming) of our God ... **AND** His “forerunner.”

On Dec. 4, at Zion, he will reflect on the events in the temple

On Dec. 11, at St. Paul, he will reflect on the birth of Jesus and John (the Baptist)

And on Dec. 18, at Zion, he will reflect on the ministry and lives of John & Jesus

Join us at 7 pm each week to “prepare” ... to hear God’s Holy Word, to give praise and thanks, and to have our “faith tanks” topped off once again. A pre-service meal will be provided each week beginning at 6 pm.

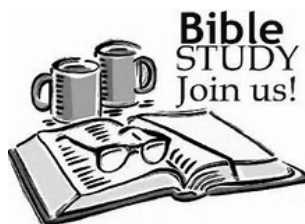
Don’t be too quick to jump to Christmas; take some time with our Mother the Church to “prepare” for the coming of the King.

Please Update!

If you have a new phone number, address, or email address,
please make sure you send it to the office.

You can e-mail the office at
office@NEKpartnership.org or call 785-742-3995.

The office would also like the names and addresses
of any members who are at college. Thank You!



Bible
STUDY
Join us!

Ladies Bible Study

Tuesday nights at 6:30pm
at Zion Lutheran.
Please join us!

Pastor Holle has a radio broadcast on KNZA
at approximately 10:05am on Sunday mornings.



DECEMBER, 2024

◀ Nov 2024		December 2024				Jan 2025 ▶
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 9:15 Bible Study @Zion 11:00 St. Paul Dorcas Zion Special Council mtg. after service	2 7:00 St. Paul Elder mtg.	3 6:30 Ladies Bible Study 6:30 Confirmation	4 6:00 Advent Supper 7:00:00 Advent Service @Zion	5 6:15 AHG Troop Mtg	6 Pastor Holle Day Off	7
8 9:15 Bible Study @Zion Special Voter's mtg. @Zion (after service)	9	10 9:00 Circuit @Fairview 6:30 Ladies Bible Study 6:30 Confirmation 7:30 Zion LWML	11 6:00 Advent Supper 7:00:00 Advent Service @St. Paul	12 6:00 Fairview Lights Up 6:15 AHG Troop Mtg	13 Pastor Holle Day Off	14
15 9:15 Bible Study @Zion	16 Articles Due for Newsletter	17 6:30 Ladies Bible Study 6:30 Confirmation	18 6:00 Advent Supper 7:00:00 Advent Service @Zion	19	20 Pastor Holle Day Off	21 Start of Winter
22 9:15 Bible Study @Zion	23	24 4:00 Christmas Eve Service @Zion 6:00 Christmas Eve Service @St. Paul	25 Christmas  10:00 Christmas Day Service @St. Paul	26	27 Pastor Holle Day Off	28
29 9:15 Bible Study @Zion Fellowship @ St. Paul	30	31 7:00:00 New Year's Eve Service @Zion				