

Advent Challenge

Each day, beginning December 1st, has a designated word of the day. Think on the word, how it works into your life, both spiritually and practically. If you have a social media account, you may want to take a picture of something you see that day that embodies the word of the day and share on your social media account for others to see .

- | | | |
|-------------|---------------|---------------|
| 1. Prepare | 9. Awe/Wonder | 17. Prophet |
| 2. Candle | 10. Rejoice | 18. Awake |
| 3. Peace | 11. Beginning | 19. Light |
| 4. Patience | 12. Await | 20. Proclaim |
| 5. Wisdom | 13. Good News | 21. Gift |
| 6. Journey | 14. Wreath | 22. Angel |
| 7. Hope | 15. Sign | 23. Shepherds |
| 8. Child | 16. Gather | 24. Star |
| | | 25. Love |





From
the desk
of...
Pastor Mark Luepke

“Advent Waiting: We Can Do This!”

There are some areas of life where choosing a “favorite” is no big deal. For instance, a favorite sports team? Sure, you might take some ribbing when they don’t do well, but pitting your favorite against another person’s favorite is usually, or hopefully, done in fun. But, on the other hand, it is not so much fun, and it’s certainly not helpful, when a parent announces that they have a favorite *child*!

This choice of favorites may fall somewhere in between: I often feel that my favorite church season is the season of Advent. True, someone could argue with this. One could point out that the Easter season, the celebration of the resurrection of the Lord, is at the core of who we are and what makes us Christians. And someone could argue that it’s all a moot point if we didn’t have Christmas, the celebration of God coming to this earth as one of us in the Christ child. And what about Pentecost? The gift of the Holy Spirit is what enables us to have an understanding of these events and to know the blessing of the gift of faith. And, of course, Lent, with its focus on the cross.... Well, you get my point.

Why Advent? Well, a rather shallow reason would be that I really like the liturgical color of the season – a deep rich blue. And I could point to the fact that Advent signals the nearness of the Christmas season. And how can one not like something that gets us ready for Christmas?

But I think the primary reason that Advent is a favorite of mine is its theme of “anticipation” and “expectant waiting.” Both of these concepts imply that something is about to happen that hasn’t happened yet. But we are certainly ready for it to happen!

The approach to *this* Advent season seems different than most past ones. While I am certainly still looking forward to this season of “expectant waiting,” I must admit that I am also really tired of waiting. We as a congregation, as communities, as a state, as a country, and as a world have been waiting for the COVID pandemic to run its course and stop messing with our lives for more than 20 months now. And you and I are really ready for a conversation that doesn’t, in some way, eventually involve COVID-19.

Here are a few words from my December Courier article of one year ago. “The things related to the coronavirus that we are waiting for range from our concerns for people all across the world to the personal and mundane things of our daily life. Our list of those who are in some stage or process of waiting ranges from the elderly to the youngest of children.” And then I went on to write: “As we wait I give thanks to God that we are buoyed by the news of progress in vaccine development. And yet as we wait we are dismayed by the increasing rise of COVID cases, hospitalizations and deaths. As we wait we are frustrated by the fact that we cannot visit

with (or be visited by) family members and friends, or physically worship and fellowship with one another, or play sports and be involved in other extra-curricular activities, or simply be at ease when shopping for groceries. We are waiting and waiting for the return of some normalcy in our lives and in this world.”

I give thanks to God for the guidance God gave to those who have developed the anti-COVID vaccines and pray that more and more individuals who are able to be vaccinated will be. I also pray that those in this world who have not yet been given easy access to a vaccine will not have much longer to wait.

Last year, in addition to waiting for the vaccine to be available, we were waiting to be able to worship together again and to gather in other settings. We are grateful that our waiting has born fruit in many areas. But we are still waiting to safely gather together in other ways. We can do this! For the sake of taking care of others, we can do this “waiting.” With God, we can do this.

Here's another paragraph from last year's article: "Here we are, a people who have been in a state of waiting for several months now, entering into a liturgical church season of waiting. Do we really need this season? Especially in this particular year, do we really need Advent?"

I'm of the opinion this year that we REALLY need the Advent season! And we have practiced waiting! Now let's turn our attention to waiting for what else God has in store for us through the birth of the Christ Child, the gift of Christ's presence in our lives this day, and the promise of our gathering with Christ in all his glory in some day to come. We can do this! With God, we can do this!

Pastor Mark Luepke



In-person worship services are: Saturdays 5:30 pm
Sundays 9:00 am

Radio Broadcasts on Sunday mornings at 10:30 am on KROS 105.9 FM or 1340 AM.

If you are unable to listen when aired, podcasts are available at krosradio.com/podcasts.
(Zion's podcasts are at the bottom of the podcasts page.)

Video services are offered via Facebook (www.facebook.com/zionlutheranchurchclinton)
and on Zion's website (www.zionlutheranclinton.org)

Zion Child Care & Preschool

Our school year is off to a great start!! It's hard to believe we are already practicing for our preschool Christmas program which will be held in the church on Saturday, December 11th.

Our preschool classes got to visit the fire station a couple of weeks ago. One group got to visit twice because their first trip was cut short with a fire call. This is one of the favorite field trips for the year. The 4's preschool classes also went on a nature walk and took a trip to the Sawmill Museum.

All of the classes in the center had Halloween parties. They all looked so cute and enjoyed parading through the building trick or treating.

We currently have a couple of 4 year old preschool spots for the 2021/2022 school year! In order to attend our 4 year old preschool program, children must be 4 by September 15, 2021. Our 4 year olds meet Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday each week. All children that live in Iowa and are 4 years of age qualify for the 4 Year Old Voluntary Preschool Grant with the CCSD and State of Iowa -tuition is FREE!

Please give us a call if you are interested in a preschool spot! 243-9393

Kelly Bork, Director

December Confirmation Class News

Zion's confirmation class meets on Wednesdays with Pastor Mark as a part of Zion's Faith FUNdations evening of Christian education and fun for our children and youth. While the family meal begins at 5:15 p.m., the confirmation students are asked to be here by at least 5:45 p.m. with class dismissing at 7:00 p.m.

Since six of our young people (all ninth-graders) were confirmed within an "Affirmation of Baptism" service on November 14th, the class is now made up of 6th, 7th, and 8th graders. Some of our most current learning has been in regards to our worship services – particularly in how the words and actions of our worship service liturgies come from and are rooted in the Bible.

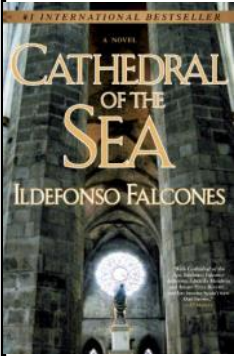
Please note that we hope to go Christmas caroling with the Faith FUNdations group on Wednesday, December 8th. Since we will be outside, dress accordingly. Also, it is important to bring a mask for when we are traveling together and if we are allowed to sing in some group-living facilities. As with everything in these pandemic days, our plans may change!

Also please note that we will NOT be having class on Wednesday, December 22nd or 29th.

Newly Confirmed Members of Zion

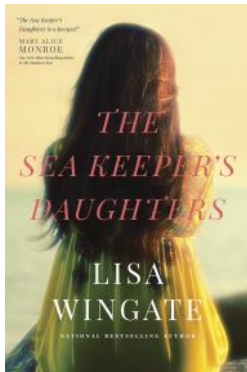
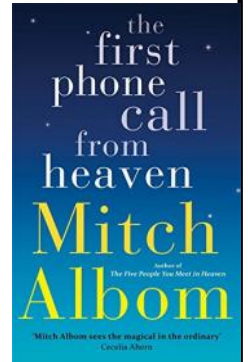
On November 14th, six of our young people – Alayna Landon, Avery Luett, Eligh Luett, Emeree Luett, Samantha Simpson, and Randy Spensley – affirmed their baptism within an Affirmation of Baptism/Rite of Confirmation service as Zion worshipped together that Sunday morning. Please include these six young people in your prayers and find ways to support and encourage them in their faith and discipleship walk as confirmed members of Christ's Church.

New Books for December 2021



Cathedral of the Sea by Ildefonso Falcones is a novel that has been compared with Ken Follett's best sellers. Set in Barcelona, Spain in the 1300's, it tells the story of a man whose father has fled a brutal feudal system. Arnau joins the powerful guild of stone-workers to help build the cathedral of Santa Maria de la Mar. His brother studies to become a priest. Arnau makes friends among the Jewish population of Barcelona, and Arnau, hauled in front of the Inquisition, finds himself face-to-face with his own brother! Donated by Sheila Raasch.

We have another novel by Mitch Albom! ***The First Phone Call from Heaven*** is a novel about a group of people receiving phone calls from deceased loved ones, the effect that has on the small Michigan community in which they live, and the unlikely connections between their stories and Alexander Graham Bell. Donated by Immanuel Lutheran.



The Sea Keeper's Daughters by Lisa Wingate is not just a novel about a woman finding confidence and love, but discovering artifacts that connect her ancestors to the depression-era WPA folklore writer's project in Tennessee and a little-known group of tri-racial people living in the Blue Ridge Mountains with a connection to the Lost Colony on Roanoke Island! Donated by Immanuel Lutheran.



DON'T FORGET YOUR UNDERWEAR!!!!!!

Again this year, the Social Ministry Committee is collecting donations of socks and underwear that will be distributed to area children through the Holiday Network.

You may drop off your donations of socks or underwear in the collection boxes in the Narthex or the Gathering Space. Shop for any age child, boy or girl.

*Not up to shopping this year???
Make a cash donation and we will shop for you.*

Thank you for your gifts!

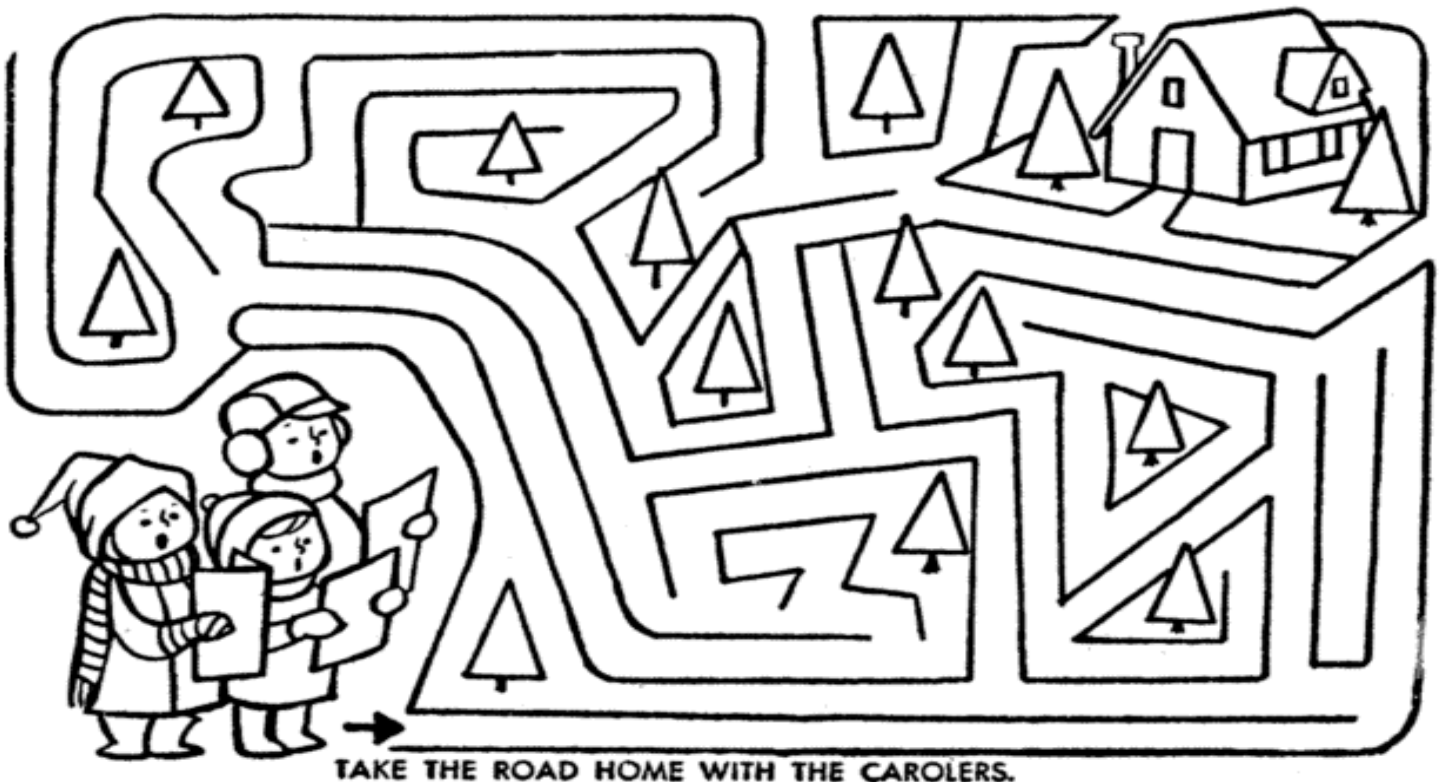
OFFICIAL NOTICE

Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church will be holding its Annual Congregation Meeting on Sunday, January 30, 2022 after the morning service. Please plan to attend, as a quorum of at least 75 voting members will be needed to conduct any business.

Pastoral Visit?

Are you in need of a visit or conversation with your pastor? If so, please let Pastor Mark know. Because of privacy laws and regulations, hospitals and care facilities seldom inform the church of an admission or change of status of an individual. So please notify Pastor if you wish a visit, phone call, or prayer.

The same is true for any other member of the congregation. If a visit, phone call and/or prayer would be helpful, feel free to let Pastor Mark know. Call 563-242-7391 or email him at pastormark@zionlutheranclinton.org



ZION LUTHERAN
Church

38TH ANNUAL

Silent Auction

DECEMBER 3-4, 2021
5:00 P.M.- 5:00 P.M.
ZION'S FACEBOOK PAGE

This year's Silent Auction will be a virtual event again. We will be posting all items to Zion's Facebook page. Bidding will begin at 5:00 p.m. on Friday, December 3rd and end at 5:00 p.m. on Saturday, December 4th. Bidding will be done through comments on an item's picture. All items will be available for pickup at Zion from 10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. on Sunday, December 5th. **Benefits Information Referral and Assistance Services**



WE'RE GOING TO MISS YOU AGAIN THIS YEAR!

The egg casseroles, crepes, cinnamon rolls and fruit bowl still need to wait. The "priceless treasures" will need to remain in our closets. The Carols won't be playing. The Dining Room will be empty.

But the needs in this Community remain. Would you consider making a monetary gift towards the "Community Assistance Fund/Silent Auction"? We promise we will be back with the usual Festive Flare when it's safe for us to do so!

Name _____

My Gift to the Community Assistance Fund \$ _____
(All proceeds benefit IRAS)

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT! ~ Social Ministry Committee

LSI News

Merry Christmas from LSI!

"The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it." — John 1:5

As Christmas approaches, we give thanks to you! This year has been another difficult time for all of us, and we are grateful for the Iowans who have stepped up just for the sake of giving and helping the people LSI is privileged to serve. Thank you for bringing the light of Christ to your neighbors who rely on these important services!

At LSI, we know many people experiencing deep darkness. We know parents who feel hopeless, with little resources to raise their young children. We know adults with disabilities who feel voiceless, with no support system or connection to their community. We know teens who are aging out of foster care, who fear they will never have a forever family.

To learn more about supporting Iowa children in foster care, visit LSIowa.org/Foster, or contact Deb Whitford, LSI Director of Philanthropy and Church Relations, at Deborah.Whitford@LSIowa.org or 563.676.2065.

Our Mission: Lutheran Services in Iowa responds to the love of Jesus Christ through compassionate service. LSI is an affiliated social ministry partner of the Iowa congregations of the ELCA (Evangelical Lutheran Church in America) and a member of LSA (Lutheran Services in America). We proudly serve people of all ages, abilities, religions, sexes, gender identities, national origins, ethnicities, races, and sexual orientations. Learn more at www.LSIowa.org and www.facebook.com/LSI.iowa.

Never Alone

Two years ago, Kayla knew it was time for a change in her life. She had struggled with substance use for years. When she was pregnant with her youngest son, Rafe, she was determined to build a brighter future for him. She entered treatment to become sober and create a healthy home for her baby.

While in treatment, Kayla enrolled in the HOPES program through LSI Early Childhood Services, which provides in-home parenting education and guidance for parents of young children. Kellie, Kayla's LSI worker, met with her every week to ensure she had all the resources and support she needed to raise Rafe in her home. They kept track of all his important developmental milestones, sharing smiles and laughs along the way. Whether it was supplying diapers or being a listening ear, Kellie was always there for Kayla.

Kayla is now two years sober, has a job as a chef, and feels empowered and confident that she has everything she needs to help her family thrive.

"I just feel overwhelmed and overjoyed. I never thought I could do all this, so I'm proud of myself," she says. "There are people at LSI that care about you. They are there to support you and they are willing to help."

Faith FUNdations

Faith FUNdations and Confirmation continue to meet on Wednesday evenings. We want to share some important activities and dates with you.

There will be no Faith FUNdations or Confirmation on the following nights, December 22nd and December 29th. We will resume on January 5th.

As of now we are planning to go Christmas caroling, Wednesday, December 8th, with our Faith FUNdations children and Confirmation youth. All members of Zion's congregation are invited and welcome. At this time Prairie Hills and the Sarah Harding Home will allow us to visit. We do ask that all children and adults please wear a mask.



Please join us for dinner at 5:15 p.m. for a meal of sloppy joe's and tater tots. We will leave the church for caroling at 6:00. Parents please join us; if your child is in a car seat we will need your help. Again, masks will be required.

On Wednesday, December 15, please join us for dinner at 5:15 p.m. We will be serving spaghetti and garlic

bread. We will then spend the evening enjoying a Birthday Party for Jesus with a special cake, ice cream, and fun activities. Parents you are welcome to join us. We will end our evening as usual at 7:00.

Our last planned event will be with the 4:00 p.m. service of the Friday Christmas Eve service. All children that are present will be invited to help lead the congregation in singing and hearing the Christmas Story.

We would like to thank Donica for her dedication to our youth programs. Thank you for giving the children a tour of the balcony and showing them where the Praise Band plays and what they do. You are very special and we appreciate your dedication. We also thank Bill Flikkema for playing his guitar and singing with the children. They loved it.

Children and parents, please be a part of our youth activities at Zion this Christmas! We care, share, and serve.



Merry Christmas and Blessings to each of you.
Judy Carstensen, Linda Schoening, Pastor Mark



CHRISTMAS EVE WORSHIP

We will have three Christmas Eve worship opportunities at Zion this year – at 4:00 p.m., 7:00 p.m. and 10:00 p.m. All the services will include Word and Sacrament, songs and carols, and candlelight. The 4:00 and 7:00 services will also include a children's sermon, while the 4:00 service will provide other participation opportunities for children. Come and worship! And invite others to worship, too!

The 7:00 p.m. service will be recorded by KROS and played on Christmas day at 12:00 noon. The 10:00 p.m. service will air live on KROS FM 105.9 & AM 1340.

There will be no 5:30 pm worship service on Saturday, Christmas day.

Committee Annual Reports

It is important to note the deadlines for committee annual reports to be turned in to Amanda for inclusion in the final church annual report. Please make note of these dates as it is important these deadlines be met so that all reports get included in the final report.

Committees whose reports do not require end of year financial information are due to Amanda on **Friday, December 31, 2021.**

Reports for committees that do require end of year financial data need to be turned in no later than **Monday, January 10, 2022.**

Altar Flowers & Radio Broadcast Sign Up

The calendars to reserve your date for sponsoring the radio broadcast or providing the altar flowers during worship services are located in the Gathering Space on the bulletin board.

Cards with the instructions for ordering flowers and for you to have an announcement put in the bulletin are located in baskets on the wall next to the bulletin board.

If you have any questions or would like to sign up but are unable to do so due to being homebound, please contact Amanda in the office at 563-242-7391.

2022 “Plan For Giving” Card

If you have not yet returned your 2022 “Plan For Giving” card, the Stewardship Committee encourages you to do so.

After your prayerful consideration of your plan for giving to and through Zion in this next year, please fill out your card and drop it off or mail it to the office. Thank you!

COUNCIL NEWS

Summary of Congregation Council Minutes – October 12, 2021

(The full minutes are posted on the bulletin board near the church office.)

It was reported that the Confirmation service for our 9th graders will be November 14, 2021. Students wishing to participate in this Affirmation of Baptism and Rite of Confirmation are Alayna Landon, Avery Luett, Eligh Luett, Emeree Luett, Samantha Simpson and Randy Spensley. The Council voted their approval.

Treasurer Skip Carstensen reported that the operating finances are good. Skip and Pastor looked over the Special Funds accounts and have suggested combining some of the dormant or redundant accounts. This action will be further discussed at the next meeting.

All Committee Night is resuming and will be on the first Tuesday of the month at 5:50 p.m.

Portico/Canopy: Recommendation from Building and Grounds Committee to use the same architect from the original building renovation project for redesigning the drop off area and parking lot on the east side of the building. Changes to the original building will have to be made in order to tie the portico to the structure. Blueprints and drawings will be done when the spending of funds are approved. It is hoped that cost figures for the project will be ready for the Annual Meeting. The Council approved the recommendation from the Building and Grounds Committee to approve the expense of \$9,000 from the Forward in Faith funds for the architect work.

A meeting with Bishop Current will be before the November 9 Council Meeting at 5:30. While the council will gather together, the bishop will join us via Zoom.

Vice-president Jim Pillers asked committees to take the first part of their next meeting to figure out their budgets for the 2022 year so the Finance Committee would have them after that night to look over. Deb Vath volunteered to be on the Budget committee.

Jim Rhoades, on behalf of the Security Committee, has asked to be able to purchase cameras from the same company we previously had install cameras, which is now CertaSite. He is requesting 2 outdoor and 1 office camera to be installed at a cost of \$1589.89. This purchase was approved.

President Travis Morehead shared that he would be working on establishing a Nominating Committee to present to the Council. Pastor is willing to help facilitate the work of the committee, without voting on the committee.

The date of the Annual Meeting of the congregation was set for January 30, 2022.

Pastor Mark left the meeting and, after discussion, it was decided to approve Pastor's benefit and salary package at the November Council meeting.

Advent and Christmas

T M V A Y S S U S E J L D T X G O D W I T H U S K E
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ADVENT
 CANDLES
 PROPHECY
 ANGELS
 MARY AND JOSEPH
 GLORY TO GOD
 MANGER
 JOY TO THE WORLD
 O COME LET US ADORE HIM
 INCARNATION

CHRISTMAS
 BLUE PARAMENTS
 EXPECTATION
 BETHLEHEM
 JESUS
 PEACE ON EARTH
 NATIVITY SCENE
 SILENT NIGHT
 CAROLS
 LOVE

WREATH
 HOPE
 WAITING
 EMMANUEL
 SHEPHERDS
 GOD WITH US
 WHITE PARAMENTS
 WORSHIP THE LORD
 LIGHT IN OUR DARKNESS
 ZION LUTHERAN CHURCH



POINSETTIAS

OR

LUTHERAN DISASTER RESPONSE

You are invited to help decorate the altar for Christmas services with poinsettias. If you wish to contribute to this effort, please complete this form and place it and your donation in an envelope marked "Poinsettias".

As an alternative, donations may also be given to ELCA Lutheran Disaster Response. Please complete this form and place it and your donation in an envelope marked "Disaster Response".

Checks for either gift should be made out to Zion Lutheran Church and should be given by December 16th. All gifts will be listed in the bulletin on Christmas Eve.

Poinsettias may be picked up after the 10:00 p.m. Christmas Eve service or the following Sunday.

Name _____

Donation to: Poinsettias Disaster Response
(please circle one)

In honor/memory of: _____

_____ I wish to take a poinsettia home after worship services.

_____ I wish to donate my poinsettia and have it given away.

FINANCIAL CORNER

October 2021 at a glance

General Operating	October	Year To Date
Income +	\$36,985.42	\$304,621.13
Expense -	\$24,375.92	\$280,373.51
Difference =	\$12,609.50	\$24,247.62

October In-Person Worship Attendance

	Saturday	Sunday	Total
October 2 & 3	53	79	132
October 9 & 10	43	84	127
October 16 & 17	45	87	132
October 23 & 24	52	67	119
October 30 & 31	43	92	135
Average	47	82	129

Food Pantries “Shopping Cart” Requests

Thank you Zion for continuing to support the local Food Pantries with your monetary gifts. Please also consider much needed non-food donations that the Benevolent Society makes available to local families. Requested items include feminine hygiene products, toilet paper, shampoo, conditioner, razors, shaving cream, body soap, dish soap, laundry soap, diapers (newborn & up) & adult diapers. You will notice the “Shopping Cart” in the narthex on the first weekend of the month. Feel free to leave your donations in the cart. We will make sure that all food and non-food items get delivered to the Pantry. Thank you!! ~ Social Ministry Committee

ZION’S PRAYER CHAIN

Zion has a prayer chain that has people who are ready to pray for you. If you, or someone you know, is in need of prayer, please call Mary Lou Mallicoat at 563-357-2963 or Helen Steen at 563-243-2288. All information is kept confidential; only first names are used on the prayer chain. Please ask permission if praying for someone other than yourself or get permission from a family member.

C. S. Lewis wrote: “I pray because I can’t help myself. I pray because I’m helpless. I pray because the need flows out of me all the time, waking and sleeping. It doesn’t change God. It changes me.”

If you would like to notify Zion’s prayer chain of a prayer request, please call one of the numbers listed above.



December 2021

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1 5:15 PM: Faith FUNdations/ Confirmation	2 5:30 PM: Adult Bells 6:30 PM: Adult Choir	3 5:00 PM: Silent Auction begins on Facebook	4 5:00 PM: Silent Auction Ends 5:30 PM: Worship
5 9:00 AM: Worship 10:00 AM: Silent Auction pick-up begins 1:00 PM: GriefShare Holiday Session	6 6:00 PM: Girl Scouts 6:30 PM: Elizabeth Circle	7 5:00 PM: Executive Committee 5:50 PM: All Committee Night 6:00 PM: Foster Care Training	8 1:30 PM: Rebecca Circle 5:15 PM: Faith FUNdations/ Confirmation (Christmas Caroling)	9 5:30 PM: NO Adult Bells 6:30 PM: Adult Choir	10	11 9:00, 10:00, 11:00 AM: Childcare Christmas Programs 5:30 PM: Worship
12 9:00 AM: Worship	13 5:30 PM: Habitat for Humanity Meeting	14 1:00 PM: Sarah Harding Communion Service 6:00 PM: Congregation Council 6:00 PM: Boy Scouts	15 5:15 PM: Faith FUNdations/ Confirmation <i>Submissions for the Courier newsletter due</i>	16 5:30 PM: NO Adult Bells 6:00 PM: MS Support Group 6:30 PM: Adult Choir	17	18 5:30 PM: Worship
19 9:00 AM: Worship	20 6:00 PM: Girl Scouts	21 6:00 PM: Boy Scouts	22 5:15 PM: NO Faith FUNdations/ Confirmation	23	24 Christmas Eve 4:00 PM: Worship 7:00 PM: Worship 10:00 PM: Worship <i>Office Closed</i>	25 Christmas 5:30 PM: NO Worship
26 9:00 AM: Worship	27 <i>Office Closed</i>	28 6:00 PM: Boy Scouts	29 5:15 PM: NO Faith FUNdations/ Confirmation	30 5:30 PM: NO Adult Bells 6:30 PM: NO Adult Choir	31	

Zion Lutheran Church
439 3rd Avenue South
Clinton, Iowa 52732
Phone 563-242-7391

Vol. 91 No. 12

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ZION'S STAFF

Rev. Mark Luepke, Pastor
Phone: 563-242-7391
pastormark@zionlutheranclinton.org

◆
Kelly Bork, Director
Zion Child Care Preschool
Phone: 563-243-9393
zioncc-ps@hotmail.com

Amanda Deuermeyer, Office Administrator
Phone: 563-242-7391
officeadministrator@zionlutheranclinton.org

◆
Donica Vonderohe, Staff Musician
music@zionlutheranclinton.org

◆
Patrick Hoffman, Custodian

OFFICE HOURS

Monday through Friday
9:00 a.m.— 3:00 p.m.