

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

Vol. 92 No. 1

THE

COURIER

January 2022

NEW YEAR PRAYER:

Thank You Lord for giving me
The brand new year ahead.

Help me live the way I should
As each new day I tread.

Give me gentle wisdom

That I might help a friend,
Give me strength and courage
So a shoulder I might lend.

The year ahead is empty,
Help me fill it with good things
Each new day filled with joy
And happiness it brings.

Amen.



From
the desk
of...

Pastor Mark Luepke

“Worship and Epiphanies”

It is every pastor’s dream: To be a part of an epiphany! No, I’m not talking about pastors dreaming about getting a call to serve at one of the thirty ELCA congregations named “Epiphany Lutheran Church” or “Lutheran Church of the Epiphany.” But, instead, to be a part of helping someone to see and to know Jesus Christ. That is a wonderful thing to be a part of! And it’s not something that only pastors get to be a part of. *Every* Christian has this privilege and responsibility – to help in the revelation of God’s Son to the world. That’s an “epiphany.”

I am mindful of this privilege and responsibility many times in my work, but I am especially mindful of this task and joy when it’s time to preach. Whether the members of the congregation that particular day of worship are hearing the “old, old story” or hearing the Gospel (Good News) message for the very first time, I have the privilege of helping folks to see Jesus Christ. It is an awesome and humbling calling.

I hope that you regularly put yourself in times and places to be “epiphanized.” I know that it helps my faith and, in fact, my entire outlook on life when I *regularly* “see” Jesus. But if I stay away from opportunities to do so – like times of worship – chances are that I will *not* see Jesus. Or I won’t see Jesus as I should.

Having shared these words about the importance of worship, I need to say that I fully realize that all of us who live on this earth in the month of January in the year 2022 are still in the midst of a coronavirus pandemic. (Will it ever end? Yes, it will!) So, you may ask, what is the pastor doing encouraging individuals to be a part of worship services? Am I asking everybody to be irresponsible in their care for themselves and others by gathering together with others? No! There are those of you who should NOT be gathering with others in times of worship. And for those who choose to do so? We need to be vigilant in doing what we can to care for others *as* we gather together.

There may not be many “blessings” that we can point to that have come from this coronavirus pandemic. But there is one that is very obvious to me: the boundaries of our worship services have extended beyond Zion’s sanctuary walls or the reach of the radio station’s signal. While continuing to give thanks for the blessing of our radio ministry, our livestreaming (and recording of) Zion’s services on Facebook has proven to be a tremendous worship and outreach tool of ministry. So, while we anxiously await the time that all can safely physically gather together to worship, we know that we CAN worship together even when we may not be in the physical presence of each other. And so we CAN be “epiphanized” as we worship together!

In a past issue of “*The Lutheran*” magazine, Pastor Peter Marty doesn’t write about

Zion Child Care & Preschool

We spent the month of December doing all sorts of fun Christmas activities and making Christmas gifts for our families.

Our preschool Christmas programs were held at the church on Saturday, December 11th. The teachers put in a lot of time preparing and practicing for this special day! We began to practice songs on November 1st! The kids always do such a great job and families truly enjoy coming. It sure is a great way to kick off the holiday season!!



We had our staff Christmas party following the preschool programs. We got together for lunch, gifts and the big reveal of who our Secret Santa was!

Preschool students will have their winter break from December 23-January 3 (return on January 4th).

Kelly Bork, Director



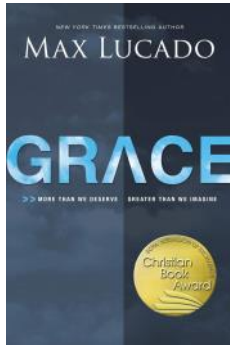
Second Sunday Supper

The Social Ministry committee has reassessed the Covid-19 situation. The decision was made that resuming the meal at this time is not in the best interest of those who would be involved, whether volunteer or attendee.

The committee continues to monitor the situation and will resume as soon as they feel it is safe to do so.

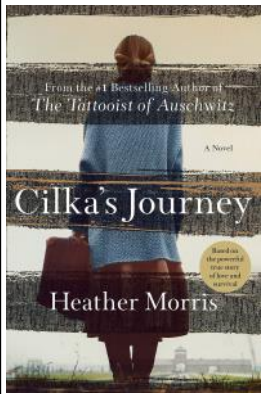
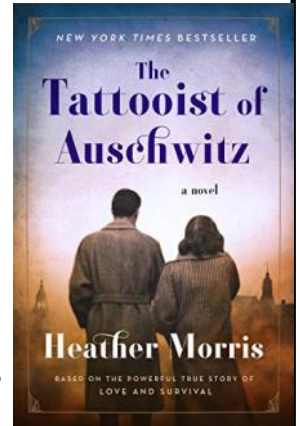
If you have any questions, or would like to volunteer to help when the meal resumes, please contact the Social Ministry Committee Chairperson, Deb Vath at 563-243-5333.

New Books for January 2022



In *Grace: More Than We Deserve, Greater Than We Imagine* by Max Lucado, he asks deep questions, such as “Have you been changed by grace? Shaped by grace? Strengthened by grace? Emboldened by grace? Softened by grace? Snatched by the nape of your neck and shaken to your senses by grace? God’s grace has a wildness about it. A white-water, riptide, turn-you-upside-downness about it. Grace comes after you. It rewires you. From the insecure to God secure. From regret-riddled to better-because-of-it. From afraid-to-die to ready-to-fly.”

Two novels by Heather Morris, *The Tattooist of Auschwitz* and *Cilka’s Journey*, have been donated by Diane Honeywell. The first tells of the experiences of Lale Sokolov, a real person that Morris met, who had been a prisoner at Auschwitz. When his captors discovered that he could speak several languages, he was assigned to tattoo the infamous numbers on his fellow prisoners. Morris has taken his story and written this novel, which brings to life both the tragedies and incredible acts of bravery and compassion he witnessed, plus an extraordinary love. “I tattooed her number on her left hand, and she tattooed her number in my heart.”



In the second book, Cilka is a friend of Lale’s and just sixteen when imprisoned. Her beauty saved her—and condemned her. The commandant notices her long, beautiful hair and separates her from the other women in camp. After liberation, Cilka is charged with being a collaborator for sleeping with the enemy. But did she have a choice? And where do the lines of morality lay for Cilka, who was sent to Auschwitz when she was still a child?

Memorial Gifts to Zion’s Ministries

One of the ways we can fondly remember our loved ones is to designate gifts in their memory to Zion Lutheran Church. These memorial gifts are used to further the desired ministries of the donor and the family of the memorialized individual - the ministry of Zion as a whole (within the congregation and/or through the ELCA) or to a particular designated aspect of our ministry.

Between 09/21/2021 and 12/22/2021, the following individuals have had memorial gifts given in their memory and directed to and through Zion Lutheran Church.

- | | |
|---------------------|---------------------|
| ♥ Delores Mallinger | General Fund |
| ♥ Dorothea Mohr | Greatest Needs Fund |
| ♥ Dorothea Mohr | Organ Fund |
| ♥ Dorothea Mohr | Quilters |

Thank you for remembering the ministries of Zion as our loved ones are remembered.

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

Homebound Communion

One of the many ministries that has been disrupted by the COVID-19 pandemic has been the sharing of the sacrament of Holy Communion with those who are homebound. In these days, this may certainly include those who, for reasons of health and safety, have not or cannot venture out of their homes to gather with others.

Looking out for the health and safety of both the homebound individual and a possible home Communion “servant,” one possible way for a homebound individual receiving the Lord’s Supper and communing with the rest of the Zion congregation is to have someone provide the prepackaged Communion elements to the homebound individual. Then, when Zion worships and communes together, the homebound person can listen to the worship service on the radio or through Facebook over the internet, and commune with the rest of the congregation during worship. This is already being done by and for several individuals.

If you are interested in communing in this way, please contact the church office.

CHANCY, ZION AND TORNADO RELIEF

In November, Zion received a check in the amount of \$1,000 from Chancy Lutheran Church in Clinton. Chancy ended their time of ministry earlier this fall after more than seventy years as a congregation. The gift from Chancy was one of a number of gifts that this now-disbanded congregation shared as they distributed their remaining assets, seeking to continue their ministry in this way through other congregations and organizations. The hope expressed with the gift to Zion was that the gift would “make a difference.”

Having received this gift with gratitude, Zion’s Congregation Council, within its December meeting, discussed how this gift might be used. The situation of those so severely affected by the tornadoes of the night of December 10th was raised. The end result of the discussion was that the Council designated the \$1,000 gift from Chancy be sent to the ELCA’s “Lutheran Disaster Response – Tornado Relief” ministry. Furthermore, Zion sent a matching donation of \$1,000 to this relief and assistance effort. We trust that these gifts, through the ministry of Lutheran Disaster Response, will “make a difference.”

Faith FUNdations

Faith FUNdations’ birthday party for Jesus was canceled due to a storm on December 15th. While it was disappointing to postpone our birthday party for Jesus, our largest concern was ensuring everyone was safe. Our birthday party for Jesus has been rescheduled to the next time Faith FUNdations meets, January 5, 2022.

Our meal on January 5th will be bow tie spaghetti and French bread. Dessert will be cupcakes and ice cream that we will enjoy by celebrating Jesus’ birth and singing “Happy Birthday”.

Coincidentally, the theme of the remaining Wednesday sessions in January will focus on the story of “Jesus and a storm.” You’re invited to join us from 5:15 to 5:45 pm for the family meal. Music and the class sessions begin at 5:50 pm. The evening concludes at 7:00 pm.

We look forward to seeing all the smiling faces in the new year!



LSI News

Amplifying the Voices of Iowa Children and Families

Individuals struggling without access to critical healthcare and family support services. Human service providers overworked and underpaid. Former refugees and immigrants striving to build new lives in the U.S.

These are all issues faced by Iowans. Help us ensure their voices are heard at the Iowa State Capitol. Lutheran Services in Iowa (LSI) will be advocating for our community members who are so often overlooked in our society. You can join us in this important work. Visit LSIowa.org/advocacy and sign up for our Advocacy Alerts. Learn more about the legislative process, the issues impacting your neighbors, and your role as a citizen in helping to amplify their voices. Save the date for March 10, 2022, and join us for Lutheran Day on the Hill, a day of advocacy and education at the Iowa State Capitol

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.

Entrepreneurship, Food, and Welcoming

In 2006, Ali and her family traveled from Kenya and resettled in the U.S. They found themselves in an unfamiliar place: Iowa. But today, they still call Iowa home, thanks to the community they built and the support they received while resettling in the U.S. LSI Refugee and Immigrant Services helped the family become comfortable and confident living in their new community.

"They taught us to shop, register for school – all the basic needs. Even winter shopping for the Iowa weather," Ali says. "They taught us how to get by. It was nice to help us get settled in."

After some time in Iowa, Ali and her husband, Salah, decided they wanted to open a restaurant as successful as the one they had in Kenya. They soon realized how challenging this would be – the biggest obstacle being the financial burden of opening a restaurant in the Des Moines area. After 15 years of never giving up on their goals, they were able to open Gursha Ethiopian Grill.

Opening during a pandemic, when other restaurants in the industry struggled to remain open, has come with its share of obstacles. But thanks to community support, the restaurant is a popular destination in the area.

Ali dreams of one day franchising to other locations. With their continuously growing clientele and delicious food, this goal is not far away.

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 the deadline date to be met so that all reports get included in the final report.

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

Budget Forum to be Held

Zion will be holding its annual budget forum on Monday, January 24th at 6:30 pm. The forum will be held in the Dining Room.

Anyone with questions or interest in the budget is invited to attend this informational forum.

Interested in Joining the Membership of Zion?

A “Welcoming of New Members” will take place sometime in the next month or two in Zion’s times of worship. Would you like to join the membership of Zion Lutheran Church? Or do you have questions about what this means? If so, please contact Pastor Mark. He would be happy to converse with you about this. And the members of Zion would be thrilled to fully welcome you into this community of faith, and worship, and service. In grateful response to God’s generosity, we strive to “Care, Share, and Serve.”

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.

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

FINANCIAL CORNER

November 2021 at a glance

General Operating	November	Year To Date
Income +	\$31,563.26	\$336,184.39
Expense -	\$31,455.07	\$311,828.58
Difference =	\$108.19	\$24,355.81

2022

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COUNCIL NEWS

Summary of Congregation Council Minutes – November 9, 2021

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

President Travis Morehead called the meeting to order at 5:30. Bishop Amy Current led the council in devotions and conducted a meet and greet via Zoom. Council met with her for about an hour and heard a message from the Bishop with an opportunity to introduce ourselves and share highlights and concerns with her.

Pastor gave the membership update. Longtime member, Dorothea Mohr, died this last month. The membership request of Loras and Penny Osterhaus was approved.

Treasurer Skip Carstensen reported the church's finances are in good condition. Some of the dormant and redundant accounts under Special Funds have been combined.

Travis Morehead reported he is still working on forming a nominating committee.

The Finance committee is gathering information from the various committees so they can work on the budget proposal.

Pastor Luepke left the meeting and salary recommendations for the year 2022 were discussed. A motion to give a 4% increase to all employees was made, seconded, and approved by all.

It was announced that Christmas services will be held on Christmas eve at 4:00, 7:00 and 10:00. No service on Christmas day.

The Annual Meeting of the congregation is January 30, 2022.

January 2022

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1 5:30 PM: Worship
2 9:00 AM: Worship	3 6:00 PM: Girl Scouts 6:30 PM: Elizabeth Circle	4 5:00 PM: Executive Committee 5:50 PM: All Committee Night	5 5:15 PM: Faith FUNdations/ Confirmation Class	6 5:30 PM: NO Adult Bells 6:30 PM: Adult Choir	7 <i>Pastor's Day Off</i>	8 5:30 PM: Worship
9 9:00 AM: Worship	10 5:30 PM: Habitat for Humanity Meeting	11 6:00 PM: Congregation Council 6:00 PM: Boy Scouts	12 1:30 PM: Rebecca Circle 5:15 PM: Faith FUNdations/ Confirmation Class	13 5:30 PM: Adult Bells 6:30 PM: Adult Choir	14 <i>Pastor's Day Off</i>	15 5:30 PM: Worship
16 9:00 AM: Worship 2:00 PM: Clinton Symphony Orchestra Chamber Music	17 6:00 PM: Girl Scouts <i>Submissions for the Courier newsletter due</i>	18 6:00 PM: Boy Scouts 6:00 PM: Child Care Board Meeting	19 5:15 PM: Faith FUNdations/ Confirmation Class	20 5:30 PM: Adult Bells 6:00 PM: MS Support Group 6:30 PM: Adult Choir	21 <i>Pastor's Day Off</i>	22 5:30 PM: Worship
23 9:00 AM: Worship	24 9:00 AM: Quilters 6:30 PM: Budget Forum	25 6:00 PM: Boy Scouts	26 5:15 PM: Faith FUNdations/ Confirmation Class	27 5:30 PM: Adult Bells 6:30 PM: NO Adult Choir	28 <i>Pastor's Day Off</i>	29 5:30 PM: Worship
30 9:00 AM: Worship 10:15 AM: Congregation Annual Meeting	31 6:00 PM: Girl Scouts					

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◆
Patrick Hoffman, Custodian

OFFICE HOURS

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