

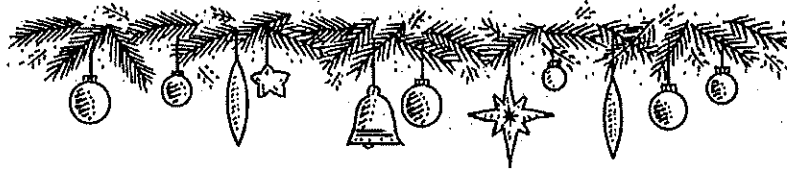
Zion Lutheran Church

210 North Wayne Street
Saint Marys, Ohio 45885

Zion Lutheran Church is a congregation of the North American Lutheran Church (NALC)
and a congregation of the Northwest Ohio Mission District.

A monthly publication of Zion Lutheran Church

December, Volume 2023, Issue 12



Peace Came to Earth

This year the first Sunday in December ushers in Advent. A time of anticipation and waiting for the coming Messiah – the birth of Jesus. We have three midweek Advent services this year, December 6th, 13th & 20th, at 7 p.m., in the main sanctuary. The overarching theme for the Advent series is “Peace Came to Earth.” I hope that, in the hustle and bustle of this busy shopping season, you will join us for these midweek services and find some peace yourself this time of year. I remind the Confirmation students that they are expected to attend these services and take sermon notes.

The Sunday School Christmas Program will take place Sunday, December 10th, at 6:30 p.m., in the main sanctuary. Along with the Zion children telling us about the birth of Jesus, the congregation will sing some hymns and the Adult Choir will also sing a song. I hope you will support our youth and join us for the program.

Rehearsals for the Sunday School Christmas Program will take place Saturday, December 2nd and December 9th from 10–11 a.m. The kids will read their lines in Sunday school on December 3rd and December 10th, so it is very important for them to be in Sunday school on those days.

The Community Memorial Service, sponsored by Grand Lake Hospice and Healing Memories Bereavement Services, will be held at Zion on Thursday, December 7th, at 6 p.m. Zion is honored to host this service for the St. Marys Community.

December 24th falls on a Sunday this month so we will have both morning worship and evening Christmas Eve Candlelight services. However, morning worship will consist of the 8 a.m. service only. No Sunday school and no 10:30 a.m. service. If you normally come to the 10:30 a.m. service on Sundays, I invite you to attend this 8 a.m. service instead so we may worship together as one.

That evening, our Christmas Eve Candlelight services will gather at 7 & 11 p.m. This is a beautiful service that culminates in those attending lighting their candles and singing Silent Night, followed by a moment of silence with the lit candles before we blow them out. I hope you will join us for one of these evening services and shine your light with those gathered to defeat the darkness and honor the birth of the one who is the light of the world.

Finally, Ann and I pray that you all have a safe and happy New Year’s Eve and a blessed and safe 2024.

Pastor Bill

News for the Women of Zion



Thank you to all the women who gave to our Thankful Offering benefiting Crime Victim Services of Lima. I will post the amount collected when we have the final total.

Our Advent Breakfast is Tuesday, December 5th, at 9:30 a.m., in the auditorium. Hope to see you there.

We will again be collecting cake mixes and frosting for Agape Birthday Bags. There is a collection tub by the elevator. The bags will be assembled in January at our workday. We need to fill 30 bags to look for sales during the holidays and please help us out. Thank you for supporting this local mission!

Since we are caught up with kits and quilts for this year, we will not be having a workday in December. See you on Thursday, January 18th workday.

Nina Spencer has kitchen duty in December. The Women's Fellowship group will not be meeting in December, but will resume in January 2024.

Wednesday, December 6th, Book Club will review is "A Redbird Christmas" by Fannie Flagg, led by Doris Cook. January's book is "Looking for Salvation at the Dairy Queen" by Susan Gregg Gilmore and led by Pam Fledderjohann.

Creative Crafters will be wrapping your Christmas presents on Saturday, December 9, in the lounge, from 9-11 a.m. Cost is \$1 per package, which will include wrapping paper, tissue, labels, bows, etc.

Our Women's 2024 handbook has been printed, so be sure to pick one up in the Narthex. Please read through it as there is lots of information about our programs and events here at Zion.

Installation of our board members along with the congregation council members will be Sunday, January 7th, at both services.

I want to wish everyone a Merry Christmas and a joyous New Year! Come be a part of the women's activities in 2024!

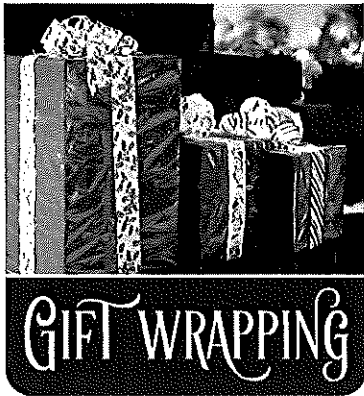
Nora Staunton, Chair of Zion Women of the NALC

Special Note of Thanks

Dianne Uhlenhake wishes to thank you for electing her to be the treasurer of the Women of the NALC. She will begin her duties as Treasurer in 2024.

"May God give you peace with yourselves; may he give you good will towards all your friends, your enemies and your neighbors; and may he give you grace to give glory to God in the highest." —*Charles H. Spurgeon*



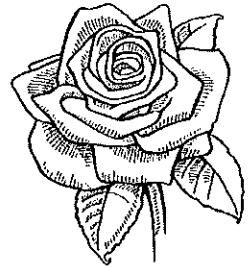


Gift Wrapping

December Creative Crafters Meeting – Santa’s elves will be here at Zion to help relieve some of your holiday stress. We will wrap your Christmas gifts for you! This is open to the entire congregation. Just bring your gifts to church on Saturday, December 9th, from 9-11 a.m., you’ll find us in the Lounge. We have all the supplies--boxes, bags, tissue paper, wrapping paper, bows, tags, tape, etc. *The cost is \$1 per package.* All you have left to do is put them under the tree! Enjoy the holidays stress free!

Christian Symbol

ROSE — This flower, often shown as stylized artwork, is a symbol for Advent, the promise of the Messiah and Jesus’ nativity. A white rose represents the Virgin Mary, and a red rose stands for martyrs. A wreath of roses symbolizes heavenly joy.



Prayer List

We invite you to include the following people in your daily prayers. The people on the list are friends and family or our membership:

Janet Dicke, Judy Von Blon, Brent Paulus, Sandi Deerhake, Alma Kuffner, Michael Moore, Tom Kaster, Ann Morris, Darlene Henkener, Margaret Moore, Ronald Suchland, Don Diers, Linda Diers, Ruth Schreffler, Vicki Bishir, Emily Henkle, Bill & Carolyn Slemmons, Markham Hodge, Alan Bishir, Mike Kittle, Donna Maynard, Kristin Hemmelgarn, Mary Willmann, Judy, Vicki Homan, Lisa Suchland, Kelsey, Eileen Zimmerman, Carolynn Sidey, Sandi Minturn, Roberta Daugherty, Barb, Martha Meyer, Family of James Voisard and the people of Israel.

Please pray for Sean Lawler, Andrew Johnson, Michael Carroll, Nathan Adams, Jacob Yahl, Jason Gross, Daniel C. Lukac IV, Michael Franklin and Kyle Schmehl who are in the service. Please pray for them, their family, and their safe return home.



Loose Offering

Our loose offerings each Wednesday and Sunday for the month of December are earmarked to support the Institute of Lutheran Theology. The Institute of Lutheran Theology is a private Lutheran seminary in Brookings, South Dakota. It provides distance education online and at its campus in Brookings. The institution is accredited by the Association for Biblical Higher Education (ABHE). ILT operates as a school which grants certificates and degrees to students who complete their studies with the school. It does not ordain graduates; that is left to the synods and associations which accept their graduates. *The loose plate offerings for Christmas Eve will go toward Zion’s current expenses.*

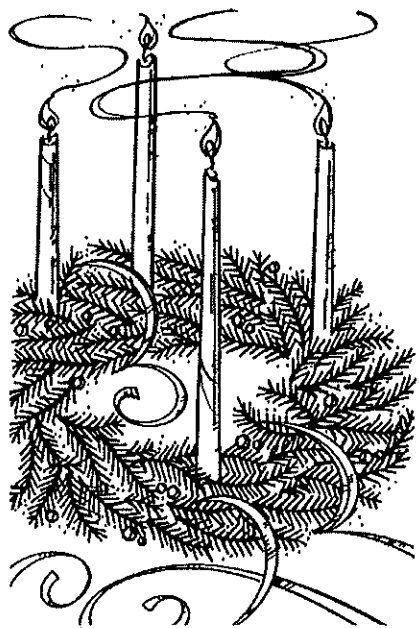
Shop-Til-You-Drop

All are welcome to participate in Zion's Annual Shop Till-You-Drop shopping spree at Walmart, on **Friday, December 1**. We invite everyone, adults, youth, and families, to meet inside Walmart, at 7 p.m., by the pharmacy entrance. If you are unable to attend this event, a box has been provided by the portico entrance, to bring in new, unwrapped, toys for needy children in our community. The deadline to drop off a toy(s) in the box is **Sunday, December 17**. We do this in coordination with the "Toys for Tots" campaign by the Marines.



Closings

- The church office will be closed on Monday, December 25th, and Monday, January 1st.
- The church office will have limited hours, beginning on December 26th through December 29th. They are as follows: **Tuesday—12/26, Wednesday—12/27, Thursday—12/28, and Friday, 12/29, from 8:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.**
- There is **NO** Wednesday night worship service on December 27th.



Advent Services

Midweek Advent Services will be held at 7 p.m., in the Sanctuary. On the following **Wednesday nights**. Watch for more details in your worship bulletin insert.

- **December 6th**
 - **December 13th**
 - **December 20th**
-

"God goes to those who have time to hear him — and so on this cloudless night he went to simple shepherds." —Max Lucado

Christmas Eve Services

Our Christmas Eve Candlelight worship services will be held on **Sunday, December 24, in the Sanctuary, at 7 p.m. and 11 p.m.** Holy Communion will be served at each service. We invite you to bring your family and friends with you to worship.

- We will not have a second service on Sunday morning, December 24th (only the 8 a.m. service).
- No Sunday School classes will be held on Sunday, December 24th. Spend time with your family.



BIRTHDAYS THIS MONTH

December Birthdays

Wishing a Happy Birthday to the following members of Zion Lutheran Church. We invite you to pray for the following people on their special day.

01–Riley Borsch, Erin Wenning
02–Bennett Glass
04–Tyler Ruvoldt, Josh Wingett, Amanda Huttis
05–Anne Hines
07–Kendra Rothe
08–Amy Hart
09–Joyce Finke, Michael Rutschilling
10–Jodie Perkins, James Suchland
11–Carol Peyton, Jacob Sharp
12–Megan Roby, Dora Mc Afee
14–Amy Nighswander, Deborah Orr
15–Edwin Reier, Frederick Vogel Jr., Hudson Roby
17–Jennifer Miller, Theodore Heinfeld
19–Harry Staunton
20–Bridget Alley, Doris Anderson, Margaret Moore,
Kirsty Opperman

22–Erica Kogge, Lorra O’Bryan, Melissa Sudman
23–Jennifer Eberle, Eric Langsdon, Mary Schelby,
Caleb Yahl, Deborah Yahl
24–Natasha James, Chad Wuebker
26–Natalie Lutz
27–Corey Lutterbeck
28–Maxwell Karner
30–Justin Schultz, Teresa Hembler
31–Becky Hinschlager, Nina Spencer, Jordan Weber,
Susan Wilkins, Savannah Slater, Beau
Gibson, Lonnie Prater, Carman Trafzer, Rhonda
Weaver

Sunday School Christmas Program

Come join us on Sunday, December 10, at 6:30 p.m., as our Sunday School students sit around a campfire and share the story of our Savior’s birth at our Christmas Program, *Light in the Darkness*. Enjoy listening to our choir and sing along to some Christmas hymns too.

- **Reminder to parents:** Sunday School Christmas Practices are **Saturdays, December 2 & 9**, from 10 a.m. to 11 a.m. We will go over lines on **Sundays, December 3 & 10**, during Sunday School.
- Cookie donations are needed! Donations are needed for the Sunday School Christmas program on Sunday, December 10 and the party on Sunday, December 17. Please leave in the kitchen marked either program or party. Thank you in advance!



Church Decorating

Volunteers are needed to help decorate the church for the Advent/Christmas season, on **Saturday, December 2**, at 11 a.m. (**time change**) for approximately 2 hours. Please join us to decorate for the Season.

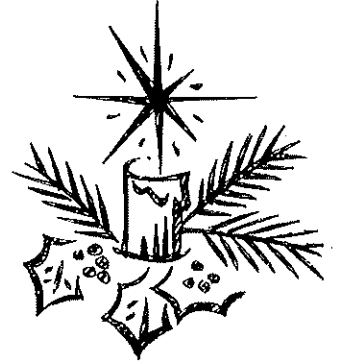


Anniversary Dinner

Zion will be celebrating Kathy Bishir's 40th work anniversary on **Sunday, December 3**, at 12 noon, with a dinner, held in the auditorium. All members and guests are invited. Contact the church office if you plan to attend.

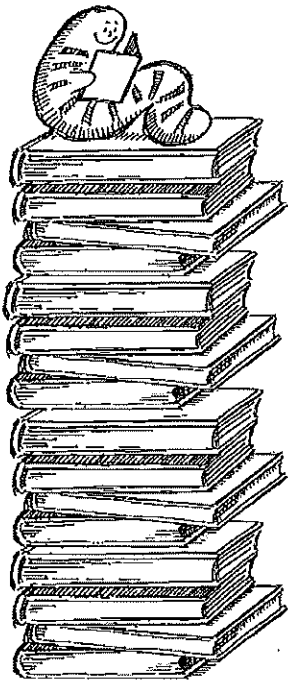
Advent Breakfast

Our Women's Annual Advent Breakfast will be **Tuesday, December 5**, at 9:30 a.m. in the auditorium. "The Perfect Gift" is the program. Please sign up on the "I Worshipped Today" or call the church office. Invite your friends and relatives to come celebrate Advent and enjoy Christian Fellowship with us.



Hospice Healing Memories Candlelight Memorial Service

Zion will host the special community Grand Lake Hospice Healing Memories Candlelight Memorial Service, on **Thursday, December 7**, at 6 p.m., in the sanctuary. This is an evening that is set aside each year to remember those who have experienced the loss of a loved one. This service is meant to be a time to help us move toward Christmas seeking assurance and to be embraced by God's redeeming love. Anyone who wishes to honor a deceased loved one or friend is invited to attend and join in this special evening. If you have questions in regard to the Candlelight Service, please call Grand Lake Hospice at 419-394-7434.



Library Notes

How Mrs. Claus Saved Christmas *Jeff Guinn*

After a full day of working hard at the North Pole, Mrs. Claus is persuaded to tell her friends how she met and married Nicholas. She grew up in a small village and from an early age, had a heart for helping the poor. Along her life's journey she meets Nicholas and together with their friends begin a quest to bring joy to children at least one day a year.

The Puritans in England have gained control of the Parliament and are determined to do away with Christmas. Mrs. Claus is just as determined to keep Christmas and the clash begins.

This book reads like a fairy tale from long ago. It is a good adventure to bite off a little at a time and savor the historical details and Christmas fun.

You have time to grab [A Redbird Christmas](#) by Fannie Flagg and join the Zion book club for a lively discussion. This is a short, happily ever after novel about Oswald, a lonely man who flees Chicago to a very small town in

Alabama for what he believes is his last Christmas. It is a touching story with vivid, believable characters. All in all a sweet, enjoyable Christmas read.

Join us Wednesday, December 6, at 1 p.m., in the all- purpose room.

The 13th Gift: A True Story of a Christmas Miracle

Joanne Huist Smith

If you can only squeeze one Christmas book into your busy schedule this season, then make it this one. It is a story you will revisit in your mind every year at holiday time.

The author, Joanne Huist Smith is numb after the sudden death of her husband. Her three children are asking about Christmas plans but she just cannot get it together and is dreading the fast approaching holiday.

Random acts of kindness take over the 12 days before Christmas and as the Smith's come together to solve the mystery, they realize that the gift of family is a beautiful reminder of the miracle of Christmas.

Several other seasonal books are featured along with these on the table in the church library.

Merry Reading!

Women's Fellowship

Our Women's Fellowship will resume on Monday, January 8, 2024. A new study will begin; The Life of Martin Luther, An Historical Journey and Bible Study, by the Rev. Steven E. King. All women of Zion are welcome to attend! Please notify the church office by December 26th, if you wish to attend and to order a study guide. Cost of the guide will be determined after the order has been placed. Contact Pam Fledderjohann if you have any questions, 419-953-2334.



Goodfellows Applications

Goodfellows applications are available on the table in the narthex. If you or someone you know could use a little help this Christmas with gifts or food, please pick up an application. Complete the application and mail to Goodfellows by **Monday, December 11**.



One Warm Coat Campaign

Coats for those in need will be given away at Agape until the end of **February 2024**. If you feel inclined to bring in coats to Agape for One Warm Coat campaign, when dropping them off just tell them that they are for the one warm coat drive and they will go to the right building.

2024 Flower Chart

The 2024 Flower Chart for the first 6 months is on the bulletin board by the alley entrance. We invite you to select the date you wish to provide flowers. On the Tuesday before the date you selected, order your arrangement from your favorite florist, and *contact the church office, 419-394-3115*, to let us know what information you would like included in the bulletin.



Staff E-Mail Addresses

Zion is linked to the Internet. We are currently receiving e-mail service provided by bright.net. Staff e-mail addresses are:

·Pastor Bill Maki...wem1@aol.com
·Ann Mak...annmmaki@yahoo.com

·Kathy Bishir...kbishir@hotmail.com
·Mindy Thiebeau...zionbpe@hotmail.com

·General Mail...zionlutheranstmarys@bright.net

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Year-to-Date Financial Information

Financial Information: Our current financial information for Zion is as follows for year-to-date for the month, November 16.

- 1/1/2023 Beginning Balance--\$86,923
- NOVEMBER 2023 YTD Income--\$339,864
- NOVEMBER 2023 YTD Expenses--(\$362,699)
- Payroll WH/Benevolence—(\$5,840)
- NOVEMBER 2023 Ending Bank Balance--\$69,929

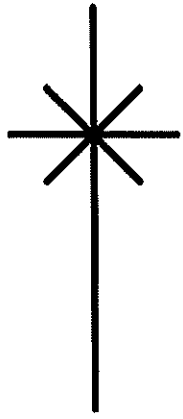
Council & Installation Services

The recognitions of our 2023 Congregation Council and Women's Council and installation of the 2024 councils will take place at both services on Sunday, January 7, 2024. If you were a member of council and are a newly elected council member, please plan to attend one of the worship services on that day. See you there!



Facing the Future

Don't worry about the future. Worry quenches the work of grace within you. The future belongs to God. He is in charge of all things. Never second-guess him. —François Fenelon



For
to us
a child
is born,
to us
a son
is given.



Isaiah 9:6

November 2023

Dear Fellow Zion Members,

With Christmas fast approaching, it is that time of the year to look back at all the things that we are thankful for, and the many ways God has blessed us with abundant lives. My hope is that you have been blessed in some way by being a member here at Zion Lutheran Church.

If you have been touched in a special way this past year by Pastor Bill Maki, Office Manager Kathy Bishir, Office Assistant Ann Maki, Director of the Board of Parish Education Mindy Thiebeau, Organist and Choir Director Merilee Miller, Pianist Miriam Johns, and Custodian Emily Meinerding, I encourage you to show your appreciation in some way. This can be done by praying for them, sending a thank you card, or giving a gift. I feel we owe all these people a deep-felt "Thank you" due to their dedication to our congregation.

If you desire to give a monetary gift and for your convenience, you will find two envelopes for this purpose enclosed in your church offering envelope packet- one for Pastor and one for the staff. Please include a note of the amount and for whom it is intended in the staff envelope. Please place these envelopes with your gifts in the offering plate or send them to the church office on or before Sunday, December 17. Gifts from the congregation will be given to them on or before Christmas Eve.

May this Christmas season bring peace and joy to you and your family.

Sincerely,

Neal Brady
Congregational Council President

2 Corinthians 9:6-10--⁶ Remember this: Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also reap generously. ⁷ 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. ⁸ And God is able to bless you abundantly, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work. ⁹ As it is written: "They have freely scattered their gifts to the poor; their righteousness endures forever." ¹⁰ Now he who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will also supply and increase your store of seed and will enlarge the harvest of your righteousness.