

## Advent Anticipation &amp; Christmas Delight

One of my fondest memories of my Grandma Heeren was the party day for her 100th birthday. She lived in a nursing home in central Illinois. Her four children, most of her 14 grandchildren, a few great-grandchildren, and one great-great-granddaughter were present. The latter was our first grandchild, Hannah, and we were able to get the cherished five-generation photograph. It was a great day to connect again with a family that is spread far and wide and, of course, celebrate a century of life.

The most meaningful part for me, came before the party even started. Wayne and I arrived early, as I wanted to spend some time with Grandma before everyone else got there. I should mention that Grandma had severe dementia. One time, when I visited, she introduced me to her roommate six times, and in half of them, I was her eldest grandchild, and in the other half, I was her niece. Sometimes, she still thought her twin sister was alive or that my grandpa, who died when I was five, would be coming home from work.

When we entered her room, I reminded her who I was, and she said, "Yes, I know." Good start. Then she said it was nice that we had come to visit. I told her that we were here for a party, and she asked, "What party?" Me: "Grandma, it's your birthday?" Her: "It is?!" Me: "Yes, Grandma. Do you know how old you are?" Her: "No, 80?" Me: "No." Her: "90?" Me: "No, higher." Her: "95?" Me: "No, Grandma, you are 100 years old today!" Her: "No! I can't be that old." That conversation played out a few times. Later, I saw my aunt bringing in the cake. Me: "Oh, look, Jeanette is bringing in your cake." Her: "What cake?" Me: "It's your birthday party, Grandma, and everyone is coming to celebrate with you." Her: "Oh, that's nice." My brother arrived, as did our son's family, and these conversations repeated again and again.

As the day unfolded, Grandma was finally on board with it being her birthday and that she was 100. She even blew out her numeral 1,0,0 candles, and put her finger in the frosting of the cake like a child and licked it off. What brought me such joy that day was her joy. While dementia isn't usually something that we celebrate, that day, it was a blessing. Grandma got to live over and over again the wonder of turning 100, and the joy of anticipating a party with her family. How cool is that!?

We are entering the season of Advent, which prepares us for Christmas. We do this each year, over and over again. And each time, we wait with anticipation for the joy of Christmas. Unlike Grandma, we know that it is coming, but we do so with a renewed waiting and longing. Each year, the world, our families, and our lives have been and are going through different experiences. We wait for Christmas assured that Christ came into our world long ago, that Christ continues to meet us in this life through his cross and resurrection, and that Christ will come again on that glorious last day to make all things new.

Our Advent worship is characterized by waiting and longing, a movement from darkness to light. Our scripture readings further prepare us for the gospel announcement that "to you is born this day, a Savior, the Messiah who is Christ the Lord." (Luke 2:11) The growing anticipation of Advent unfolds into the delight of Christmas. Our promised Lord comes bringing God's grace, love, and mercy to a world in need. Thanks be to God!

A blessed Advent and joyous Christmas,

Pastor Elizabeth Martin

## Community Meal

Hot soup and crispy grilled cheese sandwiches were a perfect meal on a cool November evening for the 103 diners we served. There were three choices of soup for our guests, tomato, vegetable, and chicken noodle. They ate every one of the 118 grilled cheese sandwiches that were made. That was a lot of bread to be buttered. Special thanks to Dawn and Joanie who grilled all those sandwiches to perfection.



We are pleased with the great turnout we have been getting at the Community Meal. Through October we had already served 991 meals, compared to 896 meals served all last year. Knowing we were only 9 meals away from the milestone of 1000 meals our servers paid close attention to whomever got the 9th bowl of soup. The young girl who was served the 1000th meal received a certificate of recognition and a Dairy Queen sundae for dessert. There were nothing but smiles at that table.

Thank you to these volunteers who made this meal possible: Dawn, Donna, Pastor Elizabeth, Jean, Joanie, Judy, Kathy, Larry, Lillian, Linda, Marge, Marilee, Michelle, Nancy, Sharon, Terry and Wayne.

The next Community Meal will be held on Wednesday, December 11. There is a volunteer sign-up sheet on the bulletin board.

John Enright

---

## Food Truck

Thank You to the 29 volunteers that helped on Saturday, November 9<sup>th</sup> with our 5<sup>th</sup> and last Northern Illinois Food Bank truck for 2024.

The volunteers who helped to unload from the truck, package into bags and load approximately 8,000 pounds of food into vehicles included: Dan Albrecht, Jean Anderson, Jody Archer, Gene Berg, Katie Bishop, Rodney Brandmire, Dawn Calkins, John Enright, Jeff & Michelle Ernest, Charles Foster, Arlyn Groen, Marie Hagen, Kathy Hansen, Erik Jonas, Pastor Elizabeth & Wayne Martin, Terry Miller, Amy Ortiz, Deana Foley & her kids, Doug Shiloh, Curt & Brenda Tobin, Brenda Veit-Shiloh, Gary & Sharon Yunto. These 29 individuals packed 13 assorted items for giveaway that helped 265 families with 889 individuals with their food insecurity from Boone County and the surrounding area.



Our next food truck will be in February or March of 2025, once it is able to be scheduled. If you have not helped with this important Zion food ministry to the community and are interested, please let Mandy know.

---

## Pioneer Club

Pioneer Club



Pioneers will meet on Monday, December 9<sup>th</sup> for a noon potluck. Turkey breasts, stuffing, and sweet potatoes will be provided. Please bring a dish to pass and your own table settings. Pastor Elizabeth will show a video of Rick Steves's *European Christmas*. It takes you through a winter wonderland of traditional holiday music and celebrations in Norway, England, France, Germany, Austria, Switzerland, and Italy.

### Advent Soup & Study

Pastor Elizabeth will lead a three-week study using Adam Hamilton's *Incarnation: Rediscovering the Significance of Christmas* material. Hamilton is the senior pastor of the United Methodist Church of the Resurrection in Leawood, Kansas. Hamilton is accessible and engaging in the video segments. Pastor Elizabeth will add to the material, and we will have group discussions. We meet on three Tuesdays in Advent: December 3, 10, and 17, at noon for a soup and bread lunch and then our study time. Group participants will take turns offering to bring soup and bread. Each session is stand-alone, so please join in when you can.



---

### Women of Zion

**Thanksgiving Meal Drive** – Thank you everyone for another successful Thanksgiving meal drive for Zion. We collected \$1200.00 and provided 37 meals and gift cards (for a meat item) to First Step Daycare families and other families identified by Zion members. Thanks to Dick Beever for picking up the food from Aldi's and delivering it to First Step Daycare and church.

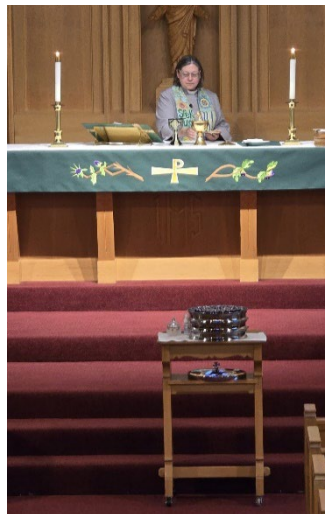


**Angel Tree** – The Angel Tree is in the narthex by the front glass doors. Pick a star from the tree and write your name on the clipboard in the chair. Remember to wrap the gift, secure the ornament to the package and return it to the tree no later than Sunday, December 15th. We will deliver them to the First Step Daycare families on Monday. Have fun shopping!



---

### Our morning celebration with Bishop Stacie Fidler





## Grants for Ministry

We celebrate and give thanks for our ministry partner, the Boone County Community Foundation. This year, they supported Zion's Food Truck ministry with a grant of \$1,500, which will buy one food truck in 2025. The Baby Bank also received a grant of \$3,500. These monies will go a long way in caring for our neighbors with the love of Christ.



---

## The Fire



It was Saturday, December 15<sup>th</sup>, 1945. I'm sure that the church was decorated for Christmas and the congregation was preparing to light another candle on the Advent wreath in the morning, but instead they received a call that the church was on fire! Curt Tobin remembers his mom, Virginia, dropping the phone and crying. Bonnie Keating remembers crying asking her mom "What about my crayons?". I don't know what my thoughts would have been, but I'm sure sadness would have overwhelmed me.

Cheryl Sturges

---

## Hometown Christmas Parade

Friday, December 6<sup>th</sup> at 5pm (Walkers are needed)

Once again, we will be walking in this parade and handing out knit caps. We will walk with Boone County CASA behind their float. We can keep our two large boxes of knit caps on their float. Please use the signup sheet on the bulletin board in the narthex.

## **Faith Medical Response Team Update**

November 20, 2024

Dear Members of Zion:

With flu season approaching, The Council wishes to keep you and our entire congregation healthy and safe. Please continue to use sanitizer often and regularly throughout the service. Sharing of the peace is at your own discretion, but feel free to provide a peace sign instead of a handshake to avoid touching others during this time of year.

Pastor will be performing hand hygiene throughout the service. At this time, we will continue the traditional practice of communion. When you receive holy communion, please place your hands cupped, with palms up, so that Pastor Elizabeth may drop the wafer into your hand without making contact. This will help prevent the spread of germs. Wine or juice is served in single serving disposable cups. Please touch what you take and take what you touch. If it is tight, give the cup a twist. Individual communion kits will be available for those who wish to commune from the pew or from home. Again, please avoid touching multiple kits.

If you are feeling ill, awaiting a test result, have been exposed, or have a known illness, please stay home. We welcome you to join us virtually, live on Facebook or via Vimeo. Prior to entering church, please self-screen; if you are experiencing any of the following, we respectfully ask that you worship remotely:

- Cough or shortness of breath -Tested positive for Covid, Influenza, RSV, or Strep in the last 10 days
- Difficulty breathing -Awaiting a test result for Covid, Influenza, RSV, or Strep
- Loss of taste or smell -Been exposed to Covid, Influenza, RSV, or Strep
- Muscle or body aches -Traveled internationally in the last 10 days
- Fever or Sore throat
- Nausea, Vomiting, or Diarrhea

Zion continues to follow CDC guidelines which includes improving ventilation and screening those in attendance. While you are encouraged to self-screen and self-test with an at-home Covid-19 testing kit, please know that a negative result does not exclude other contagious illnesses. Masking is optional and respectful. Feel free to wear a mask without discrimination. Vaccines are available for Covid, RSV, pneumonia, and influenza. Please discuss your options and eligibility with your primary care provider. Finally, if you or a family member falls ill with Covid, RSV, Influenza, or a streptococcal infection (Strep throat, pneumonia, or sepsis), please notify the church office. We will keep your name confidential. The safety of the congregation is our priority.

God's Blessings to You,  
Zion Lutheran Church Council

# Thank You!

It is with a grateful heart that I thank my dear Zion family for my 90th birthday celebration! Special thanks to Jane Schuessler, Kris Beever, Don Sell, and all their helpers for my amazing party! Beautiful cake, cookies, coffeecake and coffee! And a huge festive display of balloons from Wanda Watts! And birthday cards galore!

God has blessed me dearly with wonderful Zion friends for which I am eternally thankful.

Love and Blessings, Marge Olson

---



## Prayer Requests

Sarah Larson, The Hardt Family, The Stumpf Family, Bill Hathaway, Georgia Ruggles, Pastor Gary Erickson, Terry Miller, Sam & Mazie Ruzic, Ardys Brockway, Dennis Flemming, Wanda Watts, Matthew Faust, Charles Lane, Gordon Rubeck, Cindy Smaha, Ron Nelson, Vicky Harley, Pat Huff, Bill Batterton, Wally Brown, Bob Kantner, Diane Vorndran, Guy and Pat Landmeier, Pat Melton, Frances Palmer, Felix Ring, Juan Castro Jr, Olivia Rubeck, Michelle Marks, Todd and Lois Graves, Marilyn Urban, Paula Crone, Helen Huftalin, Kendal Schmidt, Linda Johnson, Marcia Ellingburg, Dwaine Smith, Jim Johnson, Keira Kozlowski, The People of Ukraine, The People of Israel, The People living in Gaza, ALC Resurrection Church of India, Trinity Lutheran Church in Harvard

In Service to our Nation:

John Kozlowski, Justin Kozlowski, Rob Zediker



---

## Christmas Poinsettia Order Form

Cost is \$12.00 per plant.

Please note all orders are due **no later than Sunday, December 8<sup>th</sup>**.



Color Choices are:    RED                      WHITE                      PINK                      MARBLE

Number of plants you want to order\_\_\_\_\_

Given in honor of:\_\_\_\_\_

Given in memory of:\_\_\_\_\_

Your Name:\_\_\_\_\_

**You can pick up your plants on Sunday, December 24<sup>th</sup> after the Christmas Eve service or Sunday, December 29<sup>th</sup> after the service. The office will be closed Thursday, December 26<sup>th</sup>.**



# Happy Birthday from your Zion Family!



1-Bill Vorndran	8-Larry Brendum	18-Jaxxen Sipe	26-Don Sell
1-Kevin Watts	11-Linda Johnson	18-Emsley Foley	28-Ken Downey
4-Stephanie Cordray	16-Rick Zediker	24-Ken Beever	28-Cailyn Kottman

## From the Treasurer:

### General Fund

10/2024 Beginning Balance \$ 6,967.00  
 Total Income \$ 19,588.77  
 Total Expense \$ 21,233.59  
 Balance \$ 5,322.18

### Building Fund

10/2024 Beginning Balance \$ 17,577.20  
 Total Income \$ 2,682.00  
 Total Expense \$ 2,702.09  
 Balance \$ 17,557.11

## General Fund Reserve Savings (new Account)

October/2024 Beginning Balance \$152,402.29  
 Income (interest) 32.36  
 Expenses  
 Balance \$152,434.65

### Staff

Rev. Elizabeth Martin  
 Intentional Interim Pastor

Mandy Minson  
 Administrative Assistant

Ken Anderson  
 Council President

Dan Albrecht  
 Choir Director

Pat Castro  
 Sunday School Director

Diane Vorndran  
 Financial Secretary

Sharon Yunto  
 Treasurer

### Worship Schedule

Sundays at 9:00am  
 Thursdays at 7:00pm

Find Worship Videos at  
[www.zionbelvidere.com](http://www.zionbelvidere.com)

OR

On Facebook at  
[ZionBelvidere+](https://www.facebook.com/ZionBelvidere+)

### Council Members

#### Term Through January 2025

Ken Anderson  
 Jody Archer  
 Rodney Brandmire  
 Dawn Calkins  
 Doug Shiloh  
 Gary Yunto

#### Term Through January 2026

Gretel Baird  
 Melody Johnson  
 David Schumann

#### Term Through January 2027

Kris Enright  
 Michelle Ernest  
 Kelly Kotajarvi

## Texts for the Month of December

### December 1

Jer 33:14-16

1 Thess 3:9-13

Luke 21:25-36

### December 8

Malachi 3:1-4

Phil 1:3-11

Luke 3:1-6

### December 15

Zeph 3:14-20

Phil 4:4-7

Luke 3:7-18

### December 22

Micah 5:2-5a

Heb 10:5-10

Luke 1:39-55

### December 29

1 Sam 2:18-20, 26

Col 3:12-17

Luke 2:41-52

December 2024						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 <b>Sunday Worship 9am</b> No Sunday School Confirmation Class 10:20am	2 Worship & Music 5pm Shiloh 6pm	3 Advent Soup & Study 12pm	4 Sewing/Quilting 9am Bible Study 9:30am	5 Choir 5pm/Bells 6pm  <b>7:00 pm – Worship</b>	6 <b>Office Closed</b>  <b>Hometown Christmas Parade 5pm</b>	7
8 <b>Sunday Worship 9am</b>	9 Pioneer Lunch 12:00pm  Witness 6pm	10 Advent Soup & Study 12pm	11 <b>Council Reports Due by 9am</b> Sewing/Quilting 9am Bible Study 9:30am Baby Bank 4pm-6pm Community Meal 5pm-6pm	12 Choir 5pm/Bells 6pm  <b>7:00 pm – Worship</b>	13 <b>Office Closed</b>	14
15 <b>Sunday Worship 9am</b> <b>Cantata</b> <b>Confirmation Class</b> <b>10:20am</b>	16	17 Advent Soup & Study 12pm	18 Sewing/Quilting 9am Bible Study 9:30am <b>Council Meeting 7:00pm</b>	19 Choir 5pm/Bells 6pm  Barnabas 6pm  <b>7:00 pm – Worship</b>	20 <b>Office Closed</b>	21 Kid's Christmas Program Practice 10am-1pm <b>Blue Christmas Service 4pm</b>
22 <b>Sunday Worship 9am</b> <b>Kids Christmas Program</b>	23 <b>Tidings Articles Due by 9am</b>	24 <b>Christmas Eve Worship 5pm</b>	25 Christmas Day  <b>Office Closed</b>	26 <b>No Worship</b>  <b>Office Closed</b>	27  <b>Office Closed</b>	28
29 <b>Sunday Worship 9am</b> <b>Lessons &amp; Carols</b>	30	31 New Year's Eve			31 <b>OFFICE HOURS</b> <b>Monday-Thursday</b> <b>9am-1pm</b> <b>Closed Fridays</b>	



