

Charlie and the Christ Child

This is something that I wrote about 20+ years ago. You will receive this newsletter yet in December, near Christmas, and the season doesn't end until January 6th, so I think it is fitting.

I went to the jeweler the other day to have a battery put into my watch. I was directed to a small window on the wall of the store. Evidently, many other people needed batteries and adjustments to watch bands since there was a line. I gave the little man inside the window the watch, and he gave me a claim check and said to come back in forty minutes. I managed to browse the store in that time and also make a purchase. I headed back to the window to wait in line again, all the time thinking that three days after Christmas was not the time to be doing this.

I handed the man my claim check, and he informed me that he hadn't started my watch yet and to remind him of what I wanted again. I told him, just a new battery. He began to work. The first thing that I noticed about him was that his head bobbed and his hands shook uncontrollably. How could he do this fine motor skilled work? And yet, as his hand came in contact with the watch, he maneuvered it with such precision and confidence. As I watched him work he seemed so simple and humble. A sign outside the booth told me that his name was Charlie.

While I waited, I took a look around at Charlie's surroundings. The room was the size of a closet. He had about one foot to the back and both sides of his chair. All around him loomed stacks of books and bins and small drawers holding batteries, watch bands, tools, and other sorts of things he might need. The top of everything was layered with dust - small, humble, and simple surroundings that somehow seemed right.

On one side, I saw a small microwave oven. I wondered if Charlie heated up those cans of Soup at Hand that I send to work with my husband or was he given a bowl of homemade soup made for him by a simple and loving wife. I turned my attention back to Charlie who was finishing up the project. He was putting on the back of the watch so carefully, bringing it close to the magnifying glass on his spectacles as he made sure that it was secure.

I only had a ten-dollar bill and wondered if I should have brought the exact amount because I didn't see a cash register or even an adding machine in the little cubical. I gave him the ten, and the simple, meek man opened a small drawer in his work desk. He pulled out a wad of bills folded in half and secured with a rubber band. Hands shaking, he took off the band, handed me two ones, secured the ten to the other bills, and safely returned them to the drawer. He gently put the watch in an envelope, thanked me for my business, and bid me a good day. I turned away from that window, knowing that, somehow, the last ten minutes had made an impression on me.

I walked past my nativity set that day, just as I have the past few weeks. I stopped and walked back to it. The wise men dressed in royal robes are still on their way. I lingered on the rustic dusty wood that makes up the stable. I noticed the lazy animals lying on the straw. And as if for the first time, my eyes were drawn to the simple and humble child that lies in the center. Perhaps my experience with Charlie had heightened my awareness. Nothing flashy or spectacular, just God with us, simply and humbly devoted to loving us – Emmanuel.

Christmas and New Year blessings,
Pastor Elizabeth Martin

Community Meal

The cold windy weather didn't prevent 82 people from enjoying a ham dinner at the December Community Meal. In addition to ham, we served scalloped potatoes and corn. The cupcakes for dessert were to help celebrate Linda Johnson's birthday that day.

Thank you to the crew who set up, cooked, served, and cleaned up that night: Jean, Joanie, Sandra, Dawn, Nancy, Larry, Marge, Linda, Tammy, Marilee, Kathy, Wayne, Donna, and last but not least, Lyle, who carved up all five large hams for us.

Special thanks go out to Arlyn Groen and John Bender who repaired the malfunctioning stove just in time for the meal. Also appreciated were the two hams that were donated by Sandra D. and the Lees.*

**Maybe it's just me, but Sandra D. and the Lees sound like the name of a 1950's Do-Wop group.*

A volunteer sign-up sheet for the January 8th meal is on the bulletin board.



John Enright

Pioneer Club



Pioneer Club

We will meet for our Pioneer Potluck lunch on Monday, January 13th. We can meet anytime from 11:30 on with lunch being served at noon. The chicken will be provided and please kindly bring a dish to share, and your own table service.

Our program will be Pastor Gary Erickson presenting "A Mexican Adventure"! Please join us for food & fellowship, All are welcome. You do not need to be over any certain age or retired or anything. Just come and join in! Bring a friend!

Chili Cook-Off

Mark your calendars. The Annual Chili Cook-Off will be held on Thursday, February 13 from 5:00 - 6:30. It is more than just chili, there will be soup, bread, and desserts. Prepare and bring your favorite recipe for chili or soup, or just come for dinner and fellowship. Vote for your favorite chili or soup with your dollars, and all money raised will be given to Lutheran World Relief to help those in need worldwide. A sign-up sheet will be on the bulletin board.

Hometown Christmas Parade

Once again, Zion joins the people of Belvidere in the time-honored Christmas parade tradition. Twelve members and friends walked and gave out 288 knit caps and Zion magnets to the parade watchers. We thank CASA for allowing us to walk with their float and carry our boxes.



Undecorating the Church

The church will be undecorated for Christmas on January 11, 2025 at 9:00. Please help if you are able.

Growing in Faith - Sunday School News January 2025

Hometown Christmas Tree



Thank you to everyone who helped make ornaments at the Ornament Making Party on Nov. 20th. The ornaments the kids made in Sunday School gave us lots of ornaments to decorate our tree. Thanks to Melody, Melita, Elleney, Marilee and Lillian for coming out on a not very nice night to make the ornaments and have dessert.

Instant Christmas Program

Sunday School presented their Instant Christmas Program on December 22 during the service. The entire congregation got to participate in the program. Both the kids and the Congregation did a great job. A special thanks goes to Melody Johnson for filling in as Joseph and Walita Johnson for helping with the practice on Saturday the 21st.



Note: Sunday School starts again on January 5th.

Happy New Year!!

Pat Castro

Zion's 2025 Family Mission Trip

When: July 13 - 18

Where: Crandon Wisconsin - North of Stevens Point 282 miles
(less than 4.5 hours from church.)

This mission trip is mostly relational through Adventures in Missions. We will work with Midwest Indian Missions and help with their summer camp. The week-long camp averages 50 children ages 8-13 from the Forest County Potawatomi and the Mole Lake Chippewa tribes. Our youth under 13 will participate in the camp while the adults and teenagers will assist as camp counselors. Daily activities include-games, crafts, music, and worship. Possible day trips to town for ice cream or swimming at the lake.

The teenagers and adults would work with the ministry host and the AIM Mission Leaders. (They do all the planning so we don't have to worry about that.)

Where do we sleep? Lodging is with a partner church in their camping cabins. (Bunk beds)

Who: Anyone ages 7 & up.

Dad's are welcome too! People are needed to referee the games. It's not all arts and crafts.

How much: \$470 per person for the 6-day trip! This includes all food and activities. Any child 7-12 years old accompanied by a paying parent receives a 20% discount (\$376). This works for up to 2 children per family.

We have already started working on fundraising ideas to help with the cost. We need at least 15 people to attend. See Jody Archer with questions and to sign up.



Budget Information & Annual Meeting

We will hold budget information meetings after worship on January 12th and 16th. We will have a second meeting for your questions after worship on January 19th and 23rd. Our Annual Meeting of the Congregation will be held after worship on Sunday, January 26th.

Women of Zion



Angel Tree – On Sunday, December 15th, Pastor blessed 16 gifts that were being delivered to the First Step Daycare families the next day. Thank you to everyone that participated in this annual event - from shopping for the gifts, inventorying them to make sure we had them all returned to church and loading them for delivery.

Altar Guild – Our supply of cups to take home altar flowers each Sunday is dwindling. We appreciate all the people that were bringing the cups back for us to use again, but we have depleted the shelf full that were donated to us a year or so ago. For

this reason, we are asking that people please bring containers to take them home from church when they have them on the altar for a special occasion. If no container is available, we will simply put them in plastic grocery bags for you to carry them home. Thanks for your understanding.

Prayer Requests

The Family of Bishop Stacie Fidler, The Potter Family, Jason Lehman, 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

A big thank you goes out to everyone who helped make Zion a beautiful place to celebrate Jesus' birth. Those helpers were Kris Beever, Jane and Al Schuessler, Beth Hong, Gretel and Rocco Baird, Lois and John Bender, Ken Anderson, Jeff Ernest, Wayne Martin, Dawn Calkins, Kathy Hanson, and Donna Brookbank. Arlyn Groen was missed this year due to a mishap the previous night.

Zion Family,

Thank you, thank you, thank you for all the beautiful cards, the good food, prayers, and concerns & visits. God loves you and so do I.

Wanda Watts

Thank you to everyone at Zion who made it possible for The Baby Bank to be awarded the Boone County Champion Award! We couldn't have done it without every single one of you!

The Baby Bank



We are Grateful for your Gifts toward our Mission of Serving Christ here at Zion, our community, and the world. You may scan this QR code for ease in giving through PayPal. Thank You for supporting God's mission!





Happy Birthday from your Zion Family!



4-Ken Anderson	9-Gerry Trieloff	19-Melita Ogan	24-Trish Zastrow	27-Kris Beever
6-Yvonne Miralrio	15-Dawn Brunschon	19-Melody Johnson	25-Jim Twyning	27-Cindy Foster
7-Kerry Thies	17-John Bender	23-Lesley Ahlberg	26-Sandra Rubeck	28-Wayne Martin

From the Treasurer:

General Fund

11/2024 Beginning Balance \$ 5,322.18

Total Income \$ 23,415.00

Total Expense \$ 22,126.42

Balance \$ 6,610.76

Building Fund

11/2024 Beginning Balance \$ 17,577.11

Total Income \$110,097.50

Total Expense \$110,612.13

Balance \$ 17,042.48

General Fund Reserve Savings (new Account)

Nov/2024 Beginning Balance \$152,434.65

Income \$ 44,308.36 Closed a savings acct

Expenses \$106,890.50 Parking lot

Balance \$ 89,852.51

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

OR

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

NEW EMAIL

zionlutheran1300@gmail.com

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 January

January 5

Jeremiah 31:7-14

Ephesians 1:3-14

John 1:1-18

January 12

Isaiah 43:1-7

Acts 8:14-17

Luke 3:15-17, 21-22

January 19

Isaiah 62:1-5

1 Corinthians 12:1-11

John 2:1-11

January 26

Nehemiah 8:1-3, 5-6, 8-10

1 Corinthians 12:12-31

Luke 4:14-21

January 2025

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
OFFICE HOURS Monday-Thursday 9am-1pm Closed Fridays			1 New Year's Day Office Closed	2 Council Reports Due by 9am 7:00 pm – Worship	3 Office Closed	4
5 Sunday Worship 9am Confirmation Class 10:20am AED Demo	6 Worship & Music 5pm Finance Meeting 5:30pm Shiloh 6pm	7 Annual Reports Due by 9am	8 Sewing/Quilting 9am Bible Study 9:30am Baby Bank 4pm-6pm Community Meal 5pm-6pm Council Meeting 7:00pm	9 7:00 pm – Worship	10 Office Closed	11 Take down Christmas decorations 9am
12 Sunday Worship 9am Baptism Congregation Budget Informational Meeting Confirmation Class 10:20am	13 Pioneer Lunch 12:00pm Witness 6pm	14	15 Sewing/Quilting 9am Bible Study 9:30am	16 Congregation Budget Informational Meeting 7:00 pm – Holden Sundae Worship	17 Office Closed	18
19 Sunday Worship 9am Congregation Budget Informational Meeting AED Demo	20 Tidings Articles Due by 9am	21	22 Sewing/Quilting 9am Bible Study 9:30am	23 Barnabas 6pm Congregation Budget Informational Meeting 7:00 pm – Worship	24 Office Closed	25
26 Sunday Worship 9am Annual Meeting	27	28	29 Sewing/Quilting 9am Bible Study 9:30am	30 7:00 pm – Worship	31 Office Closed	