



Vol. 14

December 2014

No 9



Look up John 1:14

The commercials have already started.

On the one hand, all of the advertising hoopla is reprehensible. We know full well that there is more to Christmastime than sales events. We know full well that “holiday” sales items don’t have anything to do with Christmas. All of this can be disheartening. It can even seem sacrilegious.

On the other hand, we know that there are real people who depend for most of their livelihood on brisk late November and December sales. We want only the best for them. We know that this time of year can be unequivocally sad, even depressing for some. Our hearts go out to them. We know that some will spend the 24<sup>th</sup> and the 25<sup>th</sup> alone, even when there are people all around. If there were a way to cure the pain of isolation, we would do it in a minute.

More than we need anything else, we need to hear God. That is what John 1 is all about. We need transcendence. We need more than anyone can provide for us. There are times when we are only too aware of the ordinariness of life. We want more than is readily available. Surely there must be more.

There is more.

The Good News is that God has spoken to us. God comes to us. If we have the feeling that there is much more to life and faith than we are aware of at any given moment, Christmas confirms that feeling.

There is more. [God’s] “Word became flesh and lived among us...”

Nothing is better than that. In fact it is so good that it may even seem unwelcome at first. Hearing the Word of God may well make us feel that we have heard only a divine pronouncement, or only a godly decree. We may feel humbled. We may feel small or reduced.

We may even feel that Christmas is too good to be true for us. It isn’t.

God came to us; God came to you, at Christmastime, full of grace and truth.

Pastor John

## ZLCW NEWS

The December meeting will be a Christmas Tea, December 9, at 2:00 pm with Program: Executive Board, Hostess: all circles with each person bringing goodies. (Please bring ten goodies instead of six so we will have enough for the Holiday Train on December 14.) Hospitality: Anna, and Visitation: Christmas Cards sent to shut-ins.

The Executive Board will meet at 1:00 and the Circle Bible Study will meet after the meeting. Lutheran World Relief pickup was November 8. We shipped 39 quilts, 31 school kits, 22 personal care kits and 26 baby layettes. Thank you to all who donated items and helped make the quilts and kits and got them ready for shipment.

The 2015 Circle handbooks are ready to be picked up; please pick yours up in the Narthex.

The Syttende Mai dinner is scheduled for May 20, 2015. Potluck after second service December 7th honoring Dilene for all her years of service. Thank you so much; you will be missed, Dilene! Linda, our new office manager is doing a great job.

JoAnn Offerdahl

## President's Message

### Millie Reiersen

Greetings friends in Christ!

Happy New Year! Once again it is the season of Advent. We remember with joy and gratitude that God sent His only Son to be our Savior. There is no gift that can compare.

Every week in December there are many ways to celebrate the season. This year, make the effort to reach out to someone less fortunate than yourself. Remember our folks in nursing homes, assisted living or living at home and not able to come to church as often as they would like. A card in the mail or better yet, a visit would do wonders.

Our end of year financials is fast approaching, and Zion needs you to be diligent with your giving, as you are able. God has been generous to us and we need to be good stewards of his generosity and help to keep God's gospel alive at Zion.

See you in church:  
Millie Reiersen

## Spirit of Giving

Saturday, December 6  
8:00 – 12:00

Many years ago, God gave us the greatest gift of all, His son, Jesus Christ. As we get ready to welcome the infant child, we reach out to those who are going through tough times extending the love and peace of the first Christmas. To help reach out to those in need, please donate slightly used items to be given to those in need.

Donations can be dropped off in the Fellowship Hall beginning Wednesday, December 3. No computers or televisions, please.



## Appreciation and Farewell to Dilene

Sunday, December 7  
10:30 – after second service  
Potluck and appreciation program



## December Events

- Saturday, December 6 – Spirit of Giving – 8:00-12:00
- Sunday, December 7 – Appreciation - Dilene Spielman – 10:30
- Sunday, December 7 – Caroling – 4:30
- Sunday, December 14 – Choirs Christmas Concert – 10:30
- Sunday, December 21 – Sunday School Program – 10:30
- Wednesday, December 24 – Christmas Candlelight Service – 4:00
- Wednesday, December 24 – Christmas Worship at Silver Creek – 6:00
- Wednesday, December 24 – Communion Worship Service – 10:00

## Food Shelf



December is Zion's food shelf month. Grocery carts are located in the narthex and by the northeast door for collecting the food. Also, monetary donations can be placed in the offering plate on Sunday morning or dropped off in the church office.



## Silver Creek News

Advent is a time for preparing for the birth of Jesus. Let's try to remember this as we start the hustle and bustle getting our hearts and homes ready for Christmas. We will have our regular Christmas Program following church services on December 14 with a potluck dinner to follow for the congregation. Our Christmas Eve Candlelight service is scheduled for 6:30 PM It is so fun to visit with extended families that worship with us on this special Holiday.

The church council will meet on December 14 following our potluck. Reminder to those who need to do annual reports to turn them in by January 4.

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Bev Rupprecht



### Zion Lutheran Church Parish Planning Council Minutes November 18, 2014

The Parish Planning Council was called to order by President Millie Reiersen at 7:00 PM. In attendance: President Reiersen, Pastor John Golv, Pastor Ale Tulu, Deb Holtan, Connie Hamre, Jay Krogstad, Sharon Jorde, Tim Numedahl, Kristi Numedahl, Ken Kalsnes, Amber Holtan, Joel Rude and Penni Nelson.

Millie gave devotions. The secretary's report was approved by a motion from Ken and a second from Sharon.

The treasurer's report was filed for audit.

**Natural Church Development** - Holy Spirit sermon series is going well. The Bible study for "The Story" has about 20 people involved.

**Youth Education** reported that the Sunday School Christmas program will be on December 21 at the 10:30 service. Supplies have been ordered for that. Operation Christmas Child boxes will be delivered to the Evangelical Free Church this week.

Silver Creek will have Christmas program and dinner on December 14th.



**Worship Board** is looking for families to light the Advent candles. Amber's family will do the first Sunday.

Jay reported the next Children's Sunday will be Dec 21 with Coney dogs being served. In January, Jay will lead a Bible study for the youth. Redeemer and Zion youth are going to have youth group together.

Pastor John is concerned about the growing gap between expenses and income.

The next Parish Planning Council will meet December 14 after the choir concert at 10:30. The meeting adjourned at 7:45PM after the Lord's Prayer.

Millie Reierson  
President

## A Very Luther Christmas

Check out these Christmas traditions that Luther may have had a hand in starting.

**Christmas tree** -- There are reports of people decorating trees during the winter solstice dating all the way back to ancient Rome, but it was in 15th century Germany that Christmas trees began being sold as decorations.

Some people credit Martin Luther with being the first to decorate an indoor Christmas tree. Legend has it that after walking through the woods on a snowy Christmas Eve, Luther was awestruck by the beauty of the stars shining on the snowy branches of evergreen trees.

When he returned home, he brought with him a small fir tree and decorated it with candles so he could share the outdoor experience with his family.

**Away in a Manger** -- Some sources attribute the Christmas hymn *Away in a Manger* to Luther, though this is likely only a fable. The author of the hymn's first two verses is unknown, and so some have suggested that the song was based off of one Luther wrote for his own children. The hymn itself was first published in 1885 in the *Little Children's Book for Schools and Families* by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in North America. Two years later composer James Murray republished the hymn as "Luther's Cradle Hymn" in the book "Dainty Songs for Lads and Lasses." *From Living Lutheran – December 28, 2012*

## December Youth News – Jay Krogstad



### **December 3 - Decorate Church**

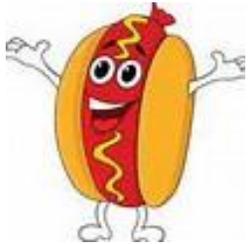
On December 3 we will be decorating the youth room and some parts of the church. We are looking for anything that people haven't used in a while or some stuff you would like to donate to the youth to decorate. We will decorate from 3-5 on that day. Maybe if we are lucky we can go purchase a real Christmas tree for the youth room. Never know.

### **December 13 - Newsboys Concert**

Zion Youth is going to a Newsboys Concert help on December 13 in Grand Forks. We will be leaving from Zion on that Saturday around 3:00 pm so we can get to Grand Forks and go out for supper. Tickets already had to be purchased from Jay.

### **December 15 - K-5 Xmas Party**

We will be having a K-5 Christmas party from 3-5. Jay will pick up the youth at Challenger and bring them back to Zion for the activities. If your youth would like to attend please inform Jay before December 11. He needs to know numbers for drivers. There is no cost for this event.



### **December 21 - Coney Dog Fundraiser**

This fundraiser will take place of the Flapjacks For Faith. It will run from 10:00 - 1:00 on December 21. The event will be put on by the National Youth Gathering 2015 Team. Please come and show your support for these youth.

### **December 24 - Christmas Services**

Are you ready for Christmas? Remember that here at Zion we have two services on that day. One at 4:00 pm and the other at 10:00 pm. Silver Creek also has one at 6:00. I think it would be pretty cool if we could get A LOT of youth to participate in both services. If you would like to sing or play an instrument for either service please let Jay know...AWESOME

### **January 24 - 25 - Ski Trip**

This year the ski trip is moved up to January 24<sup>th</sup>-25<sup>th</sup>. This way we can accommodate the athletes that would like to attend. The prices for this event have not been negotiated yet. Look for the price within the first week of December. Most likely around the \$80-\$90 range can be expected. Deposits for this event need to be to Jay no later than January 8.



### **December 21 - Sunday School Christmas Program:**

Kid's Sabbath - "Jesus is Born" will be presented Sunday, December 21, at 10:30 service. After the program everyone is invited to the Fellowship Hall for Coney Dogs. A free will offering will be collected, proceeds going to the youth.

No Sunday School December 28th and January 5th. Wishing everyone a wonderful Christmas break! See you back on Sunday, January 11.

### **Operation Christmas Child**

Operation Christmas Child was once again a great success. Zion delivered 98 boxes. Zion's youth helped pack 45 of those boxes with noisy offering money. Thanks, everyone.