



From Pastor John

Advent Matters

What follows are the Gospel readings for the Church's season of Advent.

Read Matthew 24:36-44 – Sunday, December 1

This portion of Scripture may seem to some inappropriate just before Christmas. At its best Advent is two things: a look back, and a look forward.

An apocalypse is a story of a showdown. The battle is on between good and evil, between God and the Devil. Jesus brought salvation the first time. When Jesus comes back, evil will lose for the last time, and God wins.

So the Church says: May he come soon.

Read Matthew 3:1-12– Sunday, December 8

These first few verses of Matthew's Gospel feature John the Baptist, whose whole ministry was to "Prepare the way of the Lord." It is important to know that the religious people of the time were not ready for Christ to be born in Bethlehem. It is for us to be ready for Christ to come again.

So the Church says: He is coming, soon.

Read Matthew 11:2-11 – Sunday, December 15

These verses are meant to provide scriptural clues to the identity of Jesus. He is the one who can do things only God could do. He is the one predicted. He is the one to prepare the way.

So the Church says: May he come soon.

Read Matthew 1:18-25 – Sunday, December 18

Jesus came the first time in a completely mistakable way. Born to poor parents, in an obscure town, in a stable no less. The second time will be more obvious, especially to those who are ready and looking. May he come soon.

So now the Church tries to do what John the Baptist did: Prepare the way of the Lord.

On Christmas Eve and Christmas day one part of Advent is over, one part remains.

Blessed Christmas to you and yours,
Pastor John Golv

CHRISTMAS POINSETTIAS/FLOWERS may be brought for the Christmas Eve Worship. If you would like to share one in memory or in honor of someone, please call the church office by December 20th to be noted in the bulletin.



- **December 3** – Parish Health Committee meeting
- **December 4, 11, 18** – Handbells – 4:45 God’s Joy – 6:00, Senior Choir – 6:30
- **December 7** – Zion’s 11th Annual Spirit of Giving – 8:00-10:00 – invitation only, 10:00-12:00 open to public
- **December 8** – Sunday School Christmas Program – 8:30
- **December 10** – Women of Zion Tea – 2:00
- **December 15** – Flapjacks for Faith – Between services
- **December 15** – Caroling – 4:30
- **December 17** – Parish Planning – 5:30
- **December 20** – Newsletter articles due
- **December 22** – No Sunday School
- **December 24** – Candlelight Service – 4:00, Silver Creek service – 5:30, Candlelight Communion Service – 10:00
- **December 25** – Christmas Day
- **December 29** – No Sunday School

ADVENT begins next Sunday, December 1st. There will be special music performances at our worship services through the Advent season. Please join us and celebrate the season!

- ✠ December 1 – Senior Choir
- ✠ December 8 – Sunday School Program – 8:30
- ✠ December 15 – God’s Joy
- ✠ December 22 – Senior Choir





Sunday, December 14

4:30

President's Message Laura Rude



Dear Zion Family,

Are you ready for a party? We have **the** biggest birthday celebration coming soon!

***"I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people."* (Luke 2:10b NIV).**

Did you know God likes to party? He's constantly throwing parties. In fact, the Bible says that God's angels throw a party every time a person trusts Jesus as the Lord and Savior of his or her life. They party for joy whenever someone turns away from self-centeredness and turns toward Jesus.

Christmas is a party — a birthday party for Jesus. It's why we say, "Merry Christmas." Yet we often leave the guest of honor out of our Christmas parties!

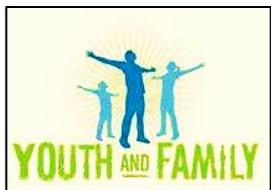
How are we preparing for this party? Are we thinking about what He wants for a birthday present? It doesn't cost us anything, but cost Him everything. He simply wants us to love Him with our whole heart. God, through his angel, tells us that wrapped in Christmas is good news of such great joy that, if we believe it, we won't be able to contain the celebration within us. **The joy of Christmas is based on the truth that God loves us, God is with us, and God is for us.** Can you hear the celebration in that?



There is so much to celebrate within our church every month. However, December has a sense of wonderment and hope to it. The Sunday School program, Christmas Caroling, taking in the beauty of the decorated church, the Christmas Eve service, etc. Please check out the calendar for all the events. I invite you to take part and experience the true meaning of Christmas! And remember, as we get busy with the baking, shopping, decorating, parties, etc., let us not forget about the Reason for the Season.

Christmas Blessings to you all and **Happy Birthday Jesus!**

Laura Rude



May this find you in peace and joy simultaneously! This time of year is a season of preparation. Preparation for Jesus' arrival may look a little differently now than it did 2019 years ago, but are we focusing on the lists or what's on our hearts? *For Everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven.* (Ecclesiastes 3:1) Is this a season of firsts in your family? New members in the family

makes for new traditions, even if that means a change to how things have been done previously. But keep close to your heart the reason for the season- the hope that came in human infancy of Jesus Christ born in a manger.

I think of the preparation my family would do to host and put on a Christmas celebration- Mom's worship music blasting, the smell of lemon scented cleaning products, and setting up the trees and nativity scenes. We want to prepare our best of the best for celebrations, and especially for the arrival of our Lord and Savior, but instead of being present in the Christmas Eve worship we worry about the temperature of the food to eat afterwards, if the cat chewed through the Christmas lights (wait, or is that just me who worries that?), or if we gave enough to the cause? Jesus came to us in a manger, the lowliest of entrances, and yet he is King of Kings.

In the ever-changing seasons of family life, take the time to give the gift of presence not presents. Go tell it on the mountains and sing those Christmas hymns in a joyful noise even if it's not in a perfect pitch! Instead of trying for the perfect family picture, take just one snapshot, and then put the screens away. Invite your kids to help you decorate and bake goodies together, kids like to be messy (but kitchen cleanup is also teamwork time!) and eat together! For loved ones that are a distance away send a letter or card that is tangible.

This season, prepare your heart to welcome the hope that was gifted to us from our God of love, and came to us as a wonder to behold. Be present with loved ones and not worry about what's under the tree. Take time to listen and don't check the list for the umpteenth time. Marvel at the little things with the little ones.

Peace and joy to you this Christmas season!

Madison Crane
Director of Children, Youth, and Families
Redeemer & Zion Churches

Evangelism/Lay Ministry

- * If you are interested in joining the Evangelism/Lay Ministry Board, contact the church office.
- * New member recognition Sunday will be on the January 12 with a potluck after the second service.
- * Please let the church office know if you're interested in home communion.
- * We will be doing a few mixer activities at coffee time to integrate members and new faces.
- * In February we plan to view the program *Effective Parenting in a Defective World* at coffee time. More information to come on this.
- * Thanks, Kaylynn Wold for joining our board and Millie Reiersen for filling in for our snowbirds.

If you have any questions or suggestions, contact the church office.

Marijo Nabben, Board Chair

Prayer Shawls will not meet in December. Watch the bulletin and newsletter for when we will start again in January.

Thank you to everyone that has made this ministry possible! Without all of the wonderful donations this would not be possible. Nor would we have the number of shawls we do if not for my wonderful ladies!



On average, it costs about \$20.00 per shawl. This includes the yarn, ribbon to wrap it as a gift and the card that says either "Thinking of You" or "Praying for You."

At the last blessing, on November 3, the pastor blessed 95 shawls! We've only reach that number one other time.

I am very humbled by the response and outpouring from everyone that helps with this ministry. If anyone has questions or if you know of someone that is need of a shawl, please call me. Shawls are not only for those hurting spiritually or physically; we give many to say "Thank You."

My cell number is 686-3758, or my home phone is 449-4645.

Thank you and God Bless.

Deb Holtan

Zion's 11th Annual Spirit of Giving

Saturday, December 7

8:00 – 10:00 (Invitation only) - 10:00 – 12:00 (Open to Public)

We welcome your donations for Zion's 11th Annual Spirit of Giving.

- New, clean, neatly folded, **very gently** used season appropriate clothing, household items, toys, Christmas decor and decorations, and miscellaneous items
- **No items in garbage bags will be accepted.**
- No large appliances, furniture, televisions, microwaves, or computers

Donations may be dropped off in the **basement Fellowship Hall** on Wednesday, December 4, from 4:00 – 7:00, Thursday, December 5, from 9:00 AM to 7:00 PM, and Friday, December 6, from 9:00 AM – 5:00 PM.

No early drop-offs!!!! No Saturday drop-offs!!!!

If you can help Wednesday, Thursday, Friday or Saturday morning, please call Bonnie Yost at 684 - 4796 or the church office at 681-3296.

Thank you for sharing God's love and abundance with others and making someone's Christmas brighter.





WELCA Christmas Tea

All women of Zion are invited to ZLCW's annual "Christmas Tea" on Tuesday, December 10, at 2:00 p.m. Each lady is asked to bring ten cookies, bars or candies to be shared. Extra goodies will be Zion's contribution to refreshments for the Christmas Train later that week. The Executive Board is in charge of program and hospitality, and each circle is to provide a kitchen helper. We will also be addressing Christmas cards to shut-in's in our congregation. The board will meet at 1:00 p.m.

Parish Fellowship Board invites you to go
Christmas Caroling on Sunday, December 15, at 4:30.

We will meet at the church at 4:30 p.m. and carol at Greenleaf, TRF Care Center, Oakland Park Valley Home. We invite all ages – children, teens, adults, seniors – to enjoy some old-fashioned caroling. A light supper of sloppy Joes, chips, cookies and hot chocolate will be served afterwards.



Zion Lutheran's Parish Planning Council Minutes November 19, 2019

The Parish Planning Council meeting was called to order by President Laura Rude at 5:32 pm. In attendance were Laura Rude, Pastor John Golv, Pastor Ale Tulu, Tim Numedahl, Bonnie Yost, Barbara Overbye, Madison Crane, Dennis Yost, Penni Nelson, Jodi Bergman, Lindsay Henrickson, Glenice Johnson, Sharon Jorde, Mike Spears and Deb Holtan.

Pastor Ale opened with a word of prayer.

The minutes from the October 15, 2019 meeting were presented. A motion was made to accept the minutes. The motion was approved.

Treasures Report: The budget is behind just over \$46,000.00. Barbara pointed out that last October we had a nice boost in income. Looking back at the council minutes, there was a Miracle Sunday during October of last year that brought in just over \$19,000.00.

The report was filed for audit.

Silver Creek: Penni Nelson said the winner of their quilt raffle was Pam Battleson. Silver Creeks Christmas Eve service will be at 5:30 on the 24th.

Stewardship: Dennis Yost reported that 92 pledges have been turned in so far compared to 81 pledges in 2018. There is between \$4,000.00 and \$5,000.00 more pledged this year than last year. Dennis stated that he felt this year's Stewardship Program was more up beat and positive and that he's heard a lot of positive feedback on the Temple Talks that were made. Overall he was pleased and hopes to build more on the program for next year. There is still a plan to go forward with calling members to put forth an invitation to

upcoming events at the church. The board is looking for volunteers to help with the calling. Also the board is looking for anyone that is interested in being on the Stewardship board, as there are only two members as of now. Discussion was also held on what kind of fundraisers could be done to help with the church's budget.

Worship: Sharon Jorde submitted her report highlighting that Deb Fulton will be contacting families for the Advent candle lighting and readings.

Properties: The board will be meeting on the Friday after Thanksgiving to put up the Christmas trees. The south wall in the sanctuary that had water damage from the heavy rains this fall has been repaired and painted.

Evangelism and Lay Ministry: Deb Holtan reported on the board's minutes from Marijo Nabben. New Member Sunday will be January 12th at the second service with a potluck to follow. The "Community of Gifts" sheets were handed out to the appropriate boards to utilize the information based on how it was filled out.

Christian Ed and Youth: Lindsay Henrickson reported that the board had met with Madison Crane and discussed what she will be responsible for and what the Sunday School Superintendents, Becky Frederickson and Davina Brown, are responsible for and what falls under the duties of the board. A couple of the upcoming events for K-5 will be Ornament making on Sunday November 24th from 1:00-3:00 pm. December's event will be "Happy Birthday Jesus" with a tentative date of Sunday December 8th after the Christmas program. Events for the 6-12th graders are still being planned. The next "Flapjacks for Faith" will be December 15th.

Director of Children, Youth and Families: Madison Crane submitted her report. She is generally on Mondays and Wednesdays at Redeemer. Tuesdays and Thursdays she is at Zion and Fridays she will split and be at both churches, or where she is needed more. Madison stated that she is busy learning each of the congregation's history with the youth and learning about the different committees and groups each of the churches have.

Parish Fellowship: Glenice Johnson reported there were 25-30 people that attended the "Pie with the Bishop." The Pie and Dessert Auction will be Sunday November 24th between the services. The larger donations will be reflected on the winning bidder's contribution statement. Christmas Caroling will take place on Sunday, December 15 starting at 4:30 pm. The carolers will go to Valley Home, TRF Care Center, Oakland Park and to Greenleaf. They are encouraging the youth to participate. There is still a need for leaders for the December Sharing Servants Group. Parish Fellowship will be filling in for the month of December. Glenice feels that some of the coffee servers between services might be intimidated as to what they are supposed to do. A list is being put together and will be posted in the kitchen. The "Training Ears to Hear" has been cancelled.

WELCA/ZLCW: Glenice Johnson reported that in early November the WELCA/ZLCW shipped out 28 quilts, 98 personal care kits, 54 school kits, and 31 baby care kits. The ladies will be serving coffee and refreshments after the joint Thanksgiving Eve service. The 2020 WELCA booklets are updated and ready for pickup. They will not be mailed this year. Ladies are to pick them up in the narthex. SAM (Synodically Authorized Ministry) will have a training meeting on December 14th from 11:00-2:00 here at Zion with WELCA serving their lunch. The WELCA Christmas Tea will be Tuesday December 14th from 10:00-2:00. Leftover cookies from the tea are packaged up and brought to be served when the Christmas Train comes through Thief River Falls. Glenice asked that the dishwasher in the kitchen be looked at and possibly serviced.

Public Relations: Jodi Bergman reported the board did not meet. The ads for Spirit of Giving have been placed.

Semi Annual Meeting: President Laura Rude asked for discussion on moving the Semi Annual Meeting that is usually the last Sunday in June, moving it to some time in September. There has been an ongoing concern that because it is during the summer months that there are enough members in attendance to have a quorum. Laura said Redeemer has moved theirs to September. After some discussion, Dennis Yost proposed a motion that the Semi Annual meeting be moved from June to September. The motion was seconded and carried.

Pastor Ale's Report: Pastor Ale stated he had nothing else to report.

Pastor John's Report: Pastor John submitted his report. He stated that there will be eight pastors involved with the Thanksgiving Eve service that will be held here at Zion on November 27th at 7:00.

Spirit of Giving: Bonnie Yost reported that several businesses are donating clothing; along with Social Services donating some quilts. Bonnie reminded the council that Spirit of Giving is Saturday December 7th.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:00 after saying the Lord's Prayer.

Respectfully submitted by
Deb Holtan, Council Secretary



2020 ZLCW Circle Books

Ladies, the ZLCW Circle Books are updated and ready for pick-up in the narthex. They will not be mailed this year.

Silver Creek

The winner of our raffle quilt this year was Pam Battleson. Thanks again to all who sold or bought tickets to support our annual fund raising.

The ladies will be busy decorating the church on November 25th starting at 9:00 AM, so try to schedule this into your calendar.

We will once again be marking the beginning of Advent during our service on December 1st. This time will be spent getting our minds and hearts in the Christmas spirit. Following the program we will join in fellowship with our traditional potluck and a chance to visit with our friends and neighbors.

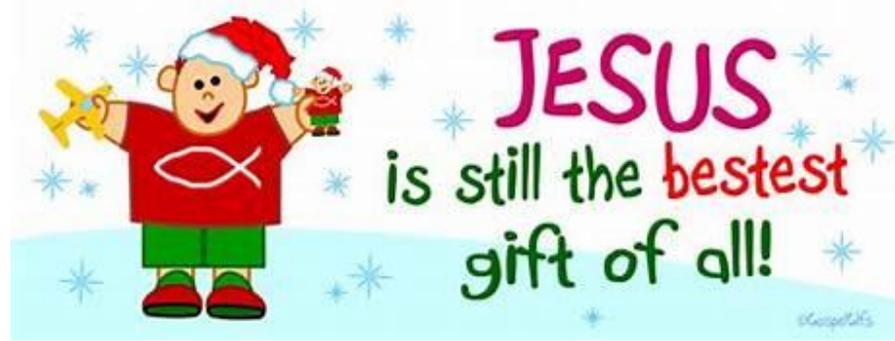
Church council will meet on December 8th following services.

Christmas Eve services will be held at 5:30 with a candlelight ceremony and Holy Communion. Hope your family will be able to attend.

***Rejoice, the Lord is King!
May His love shine brightly
On you and yours during this
Christmas Season.***

Bev Ruprecht





Sunday School News

December Reminders:

December 8 -

- ✝ Sunday school will sing at the 8:30 worship service.
- ✝ Canteen 505 Day!! A schedule will be shared with the teachers.



December 15 -

- ✝ Last day of Sunday school before Christmas break. See you in January!
- ✝ Classroom celebrations/parties

January Reminders:

January -

- ✝ Sunday School resumes!



Please join us on Facebook!

- ✝ **Facebook:** Zion Lutheran Church Sunday School – TRF
- ✝ We would also highly suggest joining the **Zion Lutheran Church Youth – Thief River Falls** page to stay up to date on all youth events.

If you have any questions about Sunday school, please let Becky (218-686-5563) or Davina (218-689-4965) know.

December Confirmation Schedule:

December 4 - Small group (lesson), Large group time
December 4 - Supper- Macaroni and Cheese
Confirmation Classes Resume January 8th

2nd Annual Confirmation Bring a Friend Christmas Party!

Wednesday, December 18th 6:00 - 8:00
More details to come.



Serving Opportunities

- Sunday, December 15th Christmas caroling – 4:30 Join us in singing at the nursing homes.