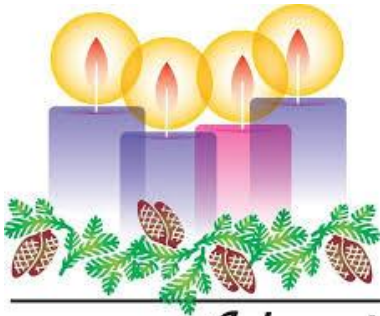


Zion Lutheran Church Mission Statement

“Bonded in Christ’s love, we teach, preach, and equip God’s people for discipleship here and throughout the world.



FOURTH SUNDAY OF *Advent*

4th Sunday of Advent with Holy Communion & the Sacrament of Holy Baptism

December 21, 2025

Rev. Dr. Renae Koehler

For those who are hearing challenged, Zion has digital listening devices for your use during worship. Please ask a council member for one and they will show you how to use it.

Prelude & Ringing of the Bell

Welcome

Advent Candle Lighting Litany

(As you are able please stand)

P - Today we light all four candles of advent: hope, peace, joy and love!

C - **Four small suns pushing back the long dark winter nights.**

P - We are filled with the joy that runs through heaven’s choirs and spilled onto the earth.

C - **We see love wrapped in flesh, announced by angels and arriving with a child’s cry.**

P - Hope, Peace, Joy, and Love;

C - **a holy blaze announcing that God is with us.**

Gathering Hymn – Good Christian Friends, Rejoice ELW #288

Good Christian friends, rejoice
with heart and soul and voice;
give ye heed to what we say:
Jesus Christ is born today;
ox and ass before him bow,
and he is in the manger now.
Christ is born today!
Christ is born today!

Good Christian friends, rejoice
with heart and soul and voice;
now ye hear of endless bliss:
Jesus Christ was born for this!
He has opened heaven's door,
and we are blest forevermore.
Christ was born for this!
Christ was born for this!

Good Christian friends, rejoice
with heart and soul and voice;
now ye need not fear the grave;
Jesus Christ was born to save!
Calls you one and calls you all
to gain the everlasting hall.
Christ was born to save!
Christ was born to save!

Prayer of Opening our Hearts to God

P - Holy God,

C - you sent angels to fling open prison doors and lead your apostles into freedom. You sent angels to frightened shepherds, singing good news into ordinary lives. Now, we thank you for sending angels to us; messengers we may not recognize, guardians to protect us, and cherubim that are joining us in songs of praise rising as we worship you with heaven and earth joined together. Amen. (*Please be seated*)

Reading of the Scriptures

First Reading – Ezekiel 1:4-14 Ezekiel describes the cherubim

I looked, and I saw a windstorm coming out of the north an immense cloud with flashing lightning and surrounded by brilliant light. The center of the fire looked like glowing metal, and in the fire was what looked like four living creatures. In appearance their form was human, but each of them had four faces and four wings. Their legs were straight; their feet were like those of a calf and gleamed like burnished bronze. Under their wings on their four sides they had human hands. All four of them had faces and wings, and the wings of one touched the wings of another. Each one went straight ahead; they did not turn as they moved.

Their faces looked like this: Each of the four had the face of a human being, and on the right side each had the face of a lion, and on the left the face of an ox; each also had the face of an eagle. Such were their faces. They each had two wings spreading out upward, each wing touching that of the creature on either side; and each had two other wings covering its body. Each one went straight ahead. Wherever the spirit would go, they would go, without turning as they went. The appearance of the living creatures was like burning coals of fire or like torches. Fire moved back and forth among the creatures; it was bright, and

lightning flashed out of it. The creatures sped back and forth like flashes of lightning.

Psalm 91:9-12 (Please read responsively.)

Because you have made the Lord your refuge,

the Most High your dwelling place,

no evil shall befall you,

no scourge come near your tent.

For he will command his angels concerning you

to guard you in all your ways.

On their hands they will bear you up,

so that you will not dash your foot against a stone.

Second Reading - Acts 5:17-21 **Angels open prison doors.**

Then the high priest took action; he and all who were with him (that is, the sect of the Sadducees), being filled with jealousy, arrested the apostles and put them in the public prison. But during the night an angel of the Lord opened the prison doors, brought them out, and said, "Go, stand in the temple and tell the people the whole message about this life." When they heard this, they entered the temple at daybreak and went on with their teaching. When the high priest and those with him arrived, they called together the council and the whole body of the elders of Israel and sent to the prison to have them brought. *Here ends this reading.*

Gospel: Luke 2:13-20 **Angels appear to the shepherds.**

(Please stand as you are able)

And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying, "Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favors!" When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us." So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph and the child lying in

the manger. When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child, and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them, and Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, just as it had been told them. (Please be seated.)

Gospel Sing Response - (tune: While Shepherds Watched their Flocks by Night.)

All glory be to God on high, and to the earth be peace; send love on us from heaven to earth; begin and never cease, begin and never cease.

Children's Message

Special Music – Les Lieneman

Sacrament of Holy Baptism - Charles Otto Siebert

Baptismal Hymn – Borning Cry ELW #732

I was there to hear your borning cry,
I'll be there when you are old.
I rejoiced the day you were baptized,
to see your life unfold.
I was there when you were but a child,
with a faith to suit you well;
In a blaze of light you wandered off
to find where demons dwell.

When you heard the wonder of the Word
I was there to cheer you on;
You were raised to praise the living Lord,
to whom you now belong.

If you find someone to share your time
and you join your hearts as one,
I'll be there to make your verses rhyme
from dusk 'till rising sun.

In the middle ages of your life,
not too old, no longer young,
I'll be there to guide you through the night,
complete what I've begun.
When the evening gently closes in,
and you shut your weary eyes,
I'll be there as I have always been
with just one more surprise.

I was there to hear your borb'ning cry,
I'll be there when you are old.
I rejoiced the day you were baptized,
to see your life unfold.

Homily - Rev. Dr. Renae Koehler

**Offering Hymn - It Came Upon the Midnight Clear ELW #282
vs 1-3**

It came upon the midnight clear,
that glorious song of old,
from angels bending near the earth
to touch their harps of gold:
"Peace on the earth, good will to all,
from heaven's all-gracious King."
The world in solemn stillness lay
to hear the angels sing.

Still through the cloven skies they come
with peaceful wings unfurled,

and still their heav'nly music floats
o'er all the weary world.
Above its sad and lowly plains
they bend on hov'ring wing,
and ever o'er its babel sounds
the blessed angels sing.

And you, beneath life's crushing load,
whose forms are bending low,
who toil along the climbing way
with painful steps and slow;
look now, for glad and golden hours
come swiftly on the wing;
oh, rest beside the weary road
and hear the angels sing!

Offering Sing Response (Tune: We Three Kings)

**Christ was born on Bethlehem's plain, gold we bring to crown
him again, king forever, ceasing never, over us all to reign. O
star of wonder, star of night, star with royal beauty bright,
westward leading, still proceeding, guide us to thy Perfect
light.**

Offering Blessing

P - Generous God,

**C - may what we give become more than money: may it
become shelter for the vulnerable, freedom for the bound, and
good news sung into weary places. Bless these offerings, that
they may travel farther than we ever could, borne by grace,
guided by love, and accompanied by angels. Amen. (Please be
seated)**

Nicene Creed

**We believe in one God,
the Father, the Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all that is, seen and unseen.**

**We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,
the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father,
God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God,
begotten, not made,
of one Being with the Father;
through him all things were made.
For us and for our salvation
he came down from heaven,
was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary
and became truly human.
For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;
he suffered death and was buried.
On the third day he rose again
in accordance with the scriptures;
he ascended into heaven
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,
and his kingdom will have no end.**

**We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,
who with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified,
who has spoken through the prophets.**

**We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic church.
We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.
We look for the resurrection of the dead,
and the life of the world to come. Amen.**

Prayers of the Church – (*When the pastor says, “Lord in your mercy” please respond with “hear our prayer!”*)

Lord’s Prayer

**Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy Name,
thy kingdom come,
thy will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven.**

**Give us this day our daily bread;
and forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us;
and lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.**

**For thine is the kingdom,
and the power, and the glory,
forever and ever. Amen.**

Communion Liturgy

P - The Lord be with you.

C - And also with you.

P - Lift up your hearts.

C - We lift them to the Lord.

P - Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

C - It is right to give our thanks and praise

The Great Thanksgiving

With all of our loved ones who have died and now live as saints in heaven, and all of us living our mortal lives here on earth, we glorify God as we sing together:

Sing Response - (ELW #289 refrain of Angels We Have Heard on High)

Gloria, in excelsis Deo; gloria in excelsis Deo

Words of Institution

Communion Hymn – O Little Town of Bethlehem ELW #279

O little town of Bethlehem,
how still we see thee lie!
Above thy deep and dreamless sleep
the silent stars go by;
yet in thy dark streets shineth
the everlasting light.
The hopes and fears of all the years
are met in thee tonight.

For Christ is born of Mary,
and, gathered all above
while mortals sleep, the angels keep
their watch of wond'ring love.
O morning stars, together
proclaim the holy birth,
and praises sing to God the king,
and peace to all on earth!

How silently, how silently
the wondrous gift is giv'n!
So God imparts to human hearts
the blessings of his heav'n.
No ear may hear his coming;
but, in this world of sin,
where meek souls will receive him, still
the dear Christ enters in.

O holy Child of Bethlehem,
descend to us, we pray;
cast out our sin, and enter in,
be born in us today.
We hear the Christmas angels

the great glad tidings tell;
oh, come to us, abide with us,
our Lord Emmanuel!

Prayer After Communion

P - Almighty God,

C - we feel strength rising within us from your holy bread and wine. We rejoice in your healing power taking place within us right now; healing us in the places where we were hurting. We shine with your light as we let every child know that they are cherished, and every neighbor know that they are important. For these gifts of love and life within your holy meal, we give you thanks. Amen.

Benediction

Announcements in the Life of the Church

C - ZION... a place to belong, a place to believe, a place to become!

Sending Hymn - Hark! The Herald Angels Sing ELW #270 vs 1-2

Hark! The herald angels sing,
"Glory to the new-born king;
peace on earth, and mercy mild,
God and sinners reconciled."
Joyful, all you nations, rise;
join the triumph of the skies;
with angelic hosts proclaim,
"Christ is born in Bethlehem!"

December Altar Guild:

Annette Wiese, Rhonda Fossler, Linda Ideus, DeAnn Oltman

December Table Troop:

Alex Buhr (Leader), Duane Zulauf, Stan & Mary Lenners, Alan Wiese, Doug Parde, Jeff Busboom, Steve Gronewold, Mark Buhr

SNOW BRIGADE:

December 22nd - Luke Ideus (Captain), Gary Gronewold (Tractor), Stan Lenners (Tractor), Justin Hippen, Mark Buhr, James Lenners, Billy Harms, Larry Gronewold, Dale Zimmerman, Luke Ideus.

December 29th - Mike Busboom (Captain), Dean Zimmerman (Tractor), Russ Wallman (Tractor), Dan Jurgens, Greg Dorn, Paul Remmers, Craig Ideus, Terry Gronewold, Alex Buhr

Vital Statistics for last Sunday

Worship 175 Giving \$9,238.39
SS 69 Giving \$ 131.25

THIS WEEK IN THE LIFE OF ZION

Today

8:45 – Little Angels-1st Grade (Parish Hall), 2nd-8th (Church)
program practice

9:00 - BKF Club/Adult Bible Study

10:00 - Worship/Communion/Baptism

*****Time and Talent sheets due*****

Wednesday

6:00pm - Christmas Eve Program

Thursday

10:00am - Christmas Day Service

Friday

Newsletter Printing Day!

Next Sunday

No Sunday School

10:00am – Worship

Helping out next Sunday

Pastor:.....Rev. Dr. Renae Koehler

Organist:.....Alnora Daubendiek

Acolytes:..... Micah Hofstetter
Sadie Gronewold

Lector:.....Les Lieneman

Greeters:.....Les & Cindy Lieneman
Dean & Karen Zimmerman

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Welcome to worship! A Warm Welcome to all our visitors. We are so glad you are here & would love to have you visit again! Please sign a visitor card located in the pews and place the information section of the card in the offering plate. We hope to see you again!

THIS WEEKS BULLETIN IS SPONSORED BY: Karla Holland in memory of David Holland's birthday, December 15th.

IF INTERESTED IN SPONSORING A WEEKLY BULLETIN you may do so by contacting the Church secretary and making a check out to Zion Church for \$75.00.

Welcome to our newest member in Christ Charles Otto Siebert

Son of Konrad and Anna (Jurgens) Siebert born on July 11, 2025. The sponsors are Charlie Sidels and Tommy & Heidi Crane. Grandparents are Paul & Cindy Jurgens and Eric & Peggy Siebert. Great Grandmother is Lorene Wallman.

OFFERINGS FOR DECEMBER – Christmas Eve and Christmas Day offerings will go to the Heritage Room and repairs to the School House.

THANK YOU - Thanks to Zion 3rd Grade Sunday School class & Parish Ed for collecting over 120+ of their “favorite things” for the community food pantry this Christmas season! God Bless you one & all!

MEN’S CHOIR REMINDER – No practice December 22nd or 29th. Practice will resume on January 5th.

ALL ZION MEMBERS – Please take a moment to complete the 2026 Time & Talent sheet as they are due **TODAY** and return to the church office, place in the offering plate, give to a Council member, or email to zionlutheranchurchpickrell@gmail.com. The time & talents of our members is what makes Zion such a special place to worship. What a perfect way to volunteer & give back to Zion! Sheets are located on the tables at each entrance & on the Welcome Center. Thank you!

POINSETTIA SIGN-UP – The clipboard is located on the Welcome Center in the Fellowship Hall. Please list who is giving the poinsettia and who it is in memory or in honor of. Names will be listed in the bulletins and January newsletter. Deadline for sign-up to be listed in the bulletins is **TODAY AT NOON**.

WILLIE AND ANNA MEINTS COLLEGE SCHOLARSHIP

Students attending college can apply for the scholarship for up to 4 years, following the start of the first college semester. Applications are located on the Welcome Center in the Fellowship Hall. Deadline to submit the application is February 15, 2026. Please make sure to read the qualifications listed on the application.

Committee members: DeAnn Oltman, Steve Oltman & Laura Fikar

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GIVING
easy. fast. effective.

GIVING OPTION - Simply scan the QR Code to the right to access Zion's Venmo account

and submit your offering. Offering envelopes and online giving via Vanco are still available to members as well. **Any members with questions regarding these options can reach out to a church council**

Zion Lutheran Church
@Zion68422



venmo

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TREE OF WARMTH -



ZION'S
Tree of Warmth

December 1st - 31st

During the month of December, Parish Ed will be taking donations for new gloves, stocking hats, scarves and socks. Place your donations on our Tree of Warmth located in the church. All items will be donated to the Beatrice & Adams community.

Bailey Pointe – Vivian Schuster

Gold Crest - Mildred Meints, Janice Jurgens, Doreen Wallman,
Marilyn Robinson

Good Samaritan – Bob D. Ideus

Homestead House - Anora Schoen, Rosanna Miller

Our Homes Assisted Living – Randy Oltman

Beatrice Health & Rehab- Duane & Marsha Zulauf