



# Harbinger

**February 2024**  
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As many of you have asked, I'd like to share some details of our seven children the Lord has given to Laura and me. On the last Sunday (and last day) of 2023, five of our adult children were in church with us. Many commented they look like their mother (which is a very good thing). Even our son, Adam, has Laura's side characteristics. His full head of hair and tall, lanky frame...yeah, he looks nothing like me. To go along with Adam, are six daughters. In birth order: Hannah, Leah, Elizabeth, Adam, Emma, Lydia, Sophia.

Our two youngest, are college students Lydia (a WMU junior) and Sophia (a sophomore at Loyola, Chicago). They proudly claim bedrooms in the parsonage and Michigan as their home. The older five all have lives, families, and careers of their own and live scattered across the country.

Hannah is married to Trevor Freudenburg originally from Norfolk, NE. Trevor preached at my June installation service. He is the pastor of Lord of Life Lutheran in Chesterfield, just outside of St. Louis. They have two girls, Violet (almost 6) and Beatrice (almost 3). Fun fact, on February 19, 2023 (one year ago!) the day the Zion congregation, voted to extend a Divine Call to me, Laura and I were at Lord of Life for Trevor's installation. Thus, Lord of Life and Zion will always be linked!

Leah is married to Preston Sunderman originally from Battle Creek, NE. Preston and Trevor went to High School together. Leah was maid of honor at Hannah and Trevor's wedding. Preston was the best man. (Yeah, it's like a Jane Austen novel.) He teaches at the Lutheran high school in Norfolk. Leah works in the restaurant industry including holding my dream job of barista.

Elizabeth lives in Van Wert, OH, as a dental hygienist and super-mom to three boys: Grant (7), Theo (4), Henry (8 months). "Liz and the boys" we left behind to move to Kalamazoo. Luckily, it's just over a two-hour drive back to OH and been up to see other quite often. We do miss being away from them.

Adam lives in Fort Wayne, IN, working at a huge Amazon warehouses. He is an accomplished disc golfer and ultimate frisbee player. (Sports. You might have to google) Adam has visited often here in Kalamazoo and loves coming to Michigan.

Emma has lived in New Orleans, LA, two plus years now working in the restaurant industry. Her favorite as a hostess at crazy cool French bistro, Café Degas. She has come to visit. We made a brief trip to see her in October. I work to convince her to move here!

Those are the Saylor Seven. When Sophia is away at school we have seven children in seven different states. Sadly, it's been five years since we've had all our kids together. Many of you face similar challenges with your children and grandchildren. We covet times we can be together. We pray the Lord will keep watch over our families. And we anticipate that great, great day, when Jesus returns, and we shall all be together with Him.

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## Catechism Review: The Lord's Prayer (part 2) "Hallowed Be Your Name"

"Hallowed be thy name." (Be honest, those words seem a little old fashioned. We don't talk like that anymore. Those words were an old English translation from the Greek words of the New Testament. Modern translations of the original Greek might say, "Your name is holy," or even "Holy is your name!")

Hallow, holy, and sacred are really all the same word. They have to do with God. When we talk about God who is so much infinitely bigger than a word) it is a holy moment, hallowed ground, and a sacred time," for God is holy.

Was "hallowed be your name" a statement? "Yes! *God's name is holy?*" A request? "*I sure hope you are God?*" A proclamation grounded in awe? "*Wow, You are holy!*" Jesus makes clear that even the name we use to call God is as holy and sacred as God himself! The name and God are the same! So, how can a name be holy?

Think about it this way: As soon as we name something we define it. We limit it. We control it. If I say "red," you imagine something red. If I say "sorrow," you are filled with emotion. When we say, "God," we conjure an image. Each of us responds to any word with different images and emotions. No one's thoughts exactly resemble those of others. To comprehend what that God means is to come into contact with what can't be defined and is the awesome miracle of "Holy." Prayer places us into that Presence.

Everyone has seen an actor or athlete standing in the spotlight. What a moment of glory! Jesus wants us to remember prayer is our connection with God. He is THE focus! Prayer pulls us into the glow of HIS Holy Light. These words remind us that prayer is entering the living room of heaven, surrounded by spotlights and stars and angel choirs!

Luther said we can better understand how to keep God's name holy if we first look at how we make his name unholy. He said we do this when we misuse God's name in order to commit sin or steal his name and keep its power for our own.

That gives us a point of reference, for we are often best at unholy things; such as lying,

cheating, not forgiving or not loving. Such moments are abusing the name of God! That is stealing his Name.

Luther once wrote, "holy is nothing else than withdrawing something from misuse and dedicating it to its proper godly use, just as a church is dedicated and appointed solely to the service of God."

In this prayer we are pulled from selfish, shortsighted needs and encouraged to be one with God, that God might make all things holy ... even through us! Prayer is truly a sacramental moment!

Jesus reminds that even the name of God is holy, as any word we use to express God is holy. Any thought or understanding of God is likewise to be holy. When the name of God rolls off our lips we touch the very Being who created galaxies and microscopic cells. And the infinite, eternal, all powerful Creator touches us!

This is important, for how we use THE Name shows how we define what THE Name means to us. It tells others what we believe. Prayer is not impersonal like an email or text message, but instead transports us into the courts of heaven and the presence of God!

To know the Holy Name is to know the secrets of the universe and the power of heaven.

To say "Your Name is Holy" is to claim what the name means. To say "God" means we believe, and are grasped by the Holy. If we use the name in any other way, we demean the gift of grace that God's name is! To engage in holy talk means we have faith. In these words, Jesus teaches us how to connect in prayer.

When we remember the presence, power, and gift of the Holy One, we are more likely to be faithful and responsible in how we live, and love, and even how we die.

Of course God is holy, whether anyone believes or understands completely what that means. But in this prayer we are reminded that his holy touch can change our broken and imperfect lives.

How glorious that the holy One make us One with him ... in life, in death, and forever. — tws

## ASH WEDNESDAY and LENT

### *Beginning February 14!*

Traditions, such as Lent, often seem irrelevant in a modern society. Whether a new experience or not, Lent is a powerful opportunity for your life of faith, and your preparation for Easter.

Lent is a special opportunity for thought-full reflection and spiritual growth. It is a routine that might even change your daily routine throughout the entire year.

Ash Wednesday is the beginning of Lent.

Lent is a forty day journey to prepare us for Holy Week and Easter. The forty days are a reminder of what Israel learned in their forty years in the desert. It has the feel of Jonah's wait in the belly of a whale, Noah's boat ride, and Jesus' forty day temptation as his ministry began.

Lent remembers Jesus' loving journey to a cross and tomb, so that all the days of our lives will be flavored by his love for us.

### **Ash Wednesday is February 14**

**Noon and 6:30 pm.**

Ash Wednesday is a somber day of repentance and trust in the saving love of Jesus. This is the darkest day of the year as we reflect on our brokenness and that Christ's sacrifice for us comes from a love we don't deserve and is given with no guarantee of a response.

We are used to making a sign of the cross (with ash), saying "you are dust and to dust you shall return." This is both a hint of earth's power, and the victory of the cross.

### **Midweek services begin February 21**

**Noon and 6:30 pm.**

For several years, we have used familiar books, movies, and stories to better visualize the meaning of the themes of Lent. This year we will use a classic movie titled "Close Encounters of the Third Kind" to help illustrate Lenten themes.

While our meditations are based firmly in Scripture, such contemporary resources can be

helpful in understanding what we have maybe made too difficult about faith to fully appreciate and understand. Join us for this interesting Lenten series.

### **Lenten Midweek Meals**

Join us Wednesday at 5:15 for a meal before our evening Lenten worship. These are lovingly prepared by members and served in the Gathering Area. Please join us!

### **"Water in the Desert"**

This is the theme of this year's Lenten devotional booklet, written by Zion's ministry staff. This resource is meant to assist with your daily walk through Lent. It will feature brief, daily devotion and a question, prayer, or suggestion for follow through as you consider the loving ministry Jesus has called us into.

### **The meaning of Lent**

Lent comes from a word meaning "spring." And what is Lent but the spring cleaning of our spiritual lives? This offers a wonderful opportunity, in a special way, for spiritual housecleaning, to assist in getting us ready to celebrate the passionate love of the cross and an empty tomb.

For hundreds of years, Christians have embraced traditions of **fasting, meditation, and works of love as the disciplines of Lent**. Giving up something during Lent is a reminder of Jesus' sacrifice for us, and a wonderful tradition, if it is truly a sacrifice and is tied to your Lenten journey with Jesus.

Many also choose also to add something new to life as an aid in this journey! Maybe daily devotions, or an hour each week devoted to some mission? Maybe more time for prayer and the discipline of joining with your faith family in Lenten worship?

There are many opportunities in Zion and our community to serve others through Loaves and Fishes or other outreach efforts. It is all about making Easter the incredible time of life-changing joy that it truly can be! This also is an opportunity to welcome and invite others who have no church home!

Just as the dawn precedes the sunrise, so Lent gradually leads us into the risen Son! - tws

## Worship Help for Parents and Children

(It is OK for everyone else to read too!)

### “Scripture Readings and Sermon”

#### For Dads and Moms and other adults:

Like any book the Bible is full of words. These words are God’s gift of revealing his plan of creation, his parental disappointment when people sin or turn away from Him, and his loving plan to bring us back. Since we can’t see God, He uses word pictures to help us see Him more clearly.

When we talk about the Bible being “The Word of God” we must be careful. The Bible proclaims the Living Word, which is Christ Jesus, but the Bible is not God. The words in the Bible come from God, but those words are not God. We must always be clear that we worship the God of the Bible, not the book we call the Bible!

The words of scripture were gathered over hundreds of years as faithful people put remembrances, teachings, and stories passed from generation to generation into writing. God guided this process, as the writers were inspired by His Holy Spirit. These words have life and inform our lives of faith, worship, and hope for eternal life with God.

The use of Holy Scripture is rooted in Judaism. In Jesus’ day a reading from the Law or Prophets, was followed by explanation of that text by a rabbi (teacher.) We follow this same routine in the Christian Church, adding the New Testament. As the words from God are proclaimed, we are touched by God just as surely as in Baptism and Holy Communion.

Each week we read from the Old Testament, an Epistle, and the Gospel. Until 1973 we used a 1 year lectionary. There is now a 3 year series of readings for Sundays & festivals designated as “A,B,C.” Each year most of the Gospels are from one writer. “A” is Matthew. “B” is Mark. “C” is Luke. Selections from John are included within each series. This year we use Series B so most of our Gospel readings are from Mark. .

The three readings are chosen to reflect the same theme. They are based on the season of the church year, and speak to needs of all times.

Sermons are usually based on one or all of those readings, The sermon seeks to open the text to help it be relevant and useful for us in our daily lives of faith. Whether we read the scriptures or talk about them in a sermon, our prayer is that whoever proclaims God’s words will be open to the Holy Spirit’s guidance (just as those who listen, should have the same prayer.)

#### For Parents with Younger Children

Too many words can confuse. And attention spans can be short (for children too!) Just as adults do better reading and hearing when they have some familiarity with the text (i.e. Bible study) so children do better with words they understand and questions they want to ask.

Our children’s bulletins seek to help the children find a theme that the readings might convey. The illustration on the cover of the bulletin also helps focus on a theme for the day. This pattern of A-B-C helps introduce them basic themes and words about faith.

We are always looking for ideas from parents for what we can do to help. Parents should never assume their children aren’t hearing — and asking questions afterward will help you to answer questions or make applications on their level.

When you hear something in a text or sermon that might apply in your own family life — jot a note down and use that to begin a conversation in the car or around the dinner table. The bags with crayons, books, and even puppets aren’t simply to keep kids busy. Our kids often will act out what they are feeling or draw something that reflects what they are hearing.

God’s Word is never wasted, *it is just that sometimes we get in its way!* Sunday School helps parents begin a lifelong growth in being changed by God’s Words. Our confirmation and youth ministry programs continue to explore and assist our young people in their faith journey.

Always remember, Jesus is the Living Word. God’s Word speaks through Scripture and helps bring Jesus’ love and practical call into our lives.

Let us know how else we can help you with your words about “the Word.” Pastor Tim

# Youth News

We will continue to meet as a combined Middle School/High School Youth Group. Any student entering 6th-12th grades is invited to attend unless specifically noted! Friends are also invited!

## Confirmation Class (6th-8th)

February 7th from 6:15-7:30pm

February 14, 21, 28 from 6pm-6:30pm  
followed by worship until 7:15pm

## Bible Study

Sundays, at 9:15am in the High School Youth Room

## Winter Retreat

We have 11 students attending the winter retreat at Springhill from Feb 2-4. Please pray for safe travel and spiritual growth!

## 8th grade project

March 3rd from 11:30am-3pm we will be working on our project!!! This needs to be the priority this day!

## Echoes

*God IS at work through people in our congregation...here is their story:*

God is alive.

Is your faith alive?

I recently attended my brother-in-law's funeral. He was a Lutheran school teacher. I knew him in a much different way and never experienced his impact in ministry. I knew he believed in God and we worshiped together. But I never really talked too much about faith with him. At the funeral and visitation I saw exactly how alive his faith was. Tears from middle schoolers, messages from his class, and the "pick me, pick me" list of volunteers to help as ushers or musicians or worship assistants served as a living testimony of the impact God had through this man. The support and love my sister has received not only from her own congregation but also his congregation is overwhelming and purely shows the value of a Christian community that is alive and active.

I share that to express how grateful I am with Zion's life. It has started on an individual level. During COVID so many of you decided to make faith a higher priority. You made changes to your lifestyle resulting in a stronger, more active faith. See, the health of a congregation is not found in attendance, numbers or programs, but in her members. God wants to work through you as He did through my brother-in-law. Are you ready?

## Upcoming Schedule

**February 7: Midweek Kids 6:15pm-7:15pm**

**February 14: Ash Wednesday 6:30pm**

**February 14, 21, 28: Midweek Kids changes time to 6-6:30pm to allow for worship**

### CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY

A number of years ago a movement began that basically states: I like Jesus but not the church. A lot of people stopped attending a worship service and even pulled their membership from their church.

“You don’t have to go to church to be a Christian.”

“Jesus told us to pray behind closed doors.”

“The church is full of hypocrites.”

Just a few of the quotes popular at the time...each reflects a complete misunderstanding of the Church (capital C). Yes, each of those statements is true. But to fully support those statements is simply an equivocation.

Christ instituted the Church as His bride. The Christian community is living and active. Sure, we are sinful and not perfect. But we also support one another and share the common identity: Child of God.

So what are you doing to contribute to the Christian community, not only at Zion but with other Christians? Keep watching for opportunities not only at Zion but in your every day living.

# Family Life

## Family Ministry News

**CAMPUS MINISTRY REPORT:**

With the start of the Spring Semester, Monday evening Dinner and Discussion group started back January 15<sup>th</sup>. There were typically 8-10 students attending in the Fall semester and I look forward to resuming our Monday evening events.

Hopefully, some student athletes from FCA will volunteer and serve at Tree of Life school this semester. Last year, a group of WMU women's basketball players went to Tree of Life one day during the lunch hour and spent time playing with the kids in the gym. We hope to continue this upcoming semester in a similar way, spending time with the kids at TOL during their lunch/recess time between 11AM-1PM.

If we are able to find a day during the week that works for the student athletes to volunteer, another hope is the possibility of having members of Zion help prepare and serve lunches for the students at TOL on the days they volunteer in the gym with the kids. There have been numerous small groups from Zion that have prepared and served meals at TOL in the past, and this might be a neat way for students from campus and members of Zion to serve together in the community.

I continue to enjoy visiting and calling on the shut-in and homebound members of Zion on Tuesday and Friday afternoons. There are currently around 20 homebound members.

Thank you to all of you for your continued support and comfort for me. I am taking things one day at a time. God continues to take care of me in different ways. Your love and support is one of those ways.

Blessings,

Pastor Mark

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**FRIENDS OF JESUS PRESCHOOL**

Thank you for all of the wonderful snack donations received during our January Snack Drive. Our preschoolers (and their tummies) appreciate it!

January was a fun month for Friends of Jesus Preschool students! They spent the week of January 22-26 celebrating National Lutheran Schools week with some fun dress-up days including Disney Day and Career Day. This month students are looking forward to Valentine's Day parties and working on some special themed artwork!

Enrollment for Summer Camp 2024 and the 2024-2025 school year is underway! Summer Camp will be offered in weeklong sessions with full and half-day options. Some of our exciting themes include Bubble Party, A Pirate's Life, and Superhero Academy! We are also pleased to offer a Young 5's preschool class next year! For more information on Summer Camp and school year registration, stop by the preschool office or visit our website [www.friendsofjesuspreschool.com](http://www.friendsofjesuspreschool.com).

Looking forward, March will be our Read-a-Thon month! Please stay tuned for more information about this wonderful preschool fundraiser!

Jen LaPorte, FOJ Director



**Book Review:** A Thousand Words: Reflections on Art and Christianity. Mary Elizabeth Podles. St. James Press. 2023

For those interested in how art can enrich faith, this is book that should be read. It was on my Christmas list and thankfully Santa came through for me. Mary Podles is an art historian, has curated in major American museums, and spent considerable time lecturing around the country and writing for various publications.

This book contains a collection of articles she has written for a Christian journal called Touchstone. Each article deals with a familiar piece of Christian art, exploring their background and usefulness for us today. She make each work of art come alive with her explanations. The faith background, as the inspiration for each piece, adds greatly to understanding such art.

Here is a review from the book jacket: *“This delightfully written book gives an entrée into sacred art that is deeply rooted in history and theology Art is a visual language, but most of us do not know how to ‘read’ that language. Podles’ richly detailed interpretations offer readers an insightful guide to Western religious art.”*

She covers a variety of examples of art such as sculpture, an illuminated manuscript, familiar renaissance paintings and altar pieces, and items such as crosses and crowns. It is beautifully illustrated and, as mentioned already, each essay is only one thousand words long. This is an incredible resource that is worth looking for.

As examples, she discusses he Pantheon in Greece and Hagia Sophia in Constantinople. She explores the rationale for changes in architecture from different periods of Christian history, and a items such a chalices and wall hangings. Some of the more familiar pieces of at from the Italian Renaissance and wood carvings from the Gothic period in Europe are included as well.

The following examples of her writing deal with completely different art forms from different countries and periods of history.

In discussing Raphael’s painting of the Sistine Madonna (which has two of the most memorable little cherubs who appear bored with all that is going on above them) she writes: *‘A golden light*

*slow outward from the center, as if the Virgin were indeed clothed with the sun (and the curve of Sixtus’s cope may be meant to suggest the cure of the moon beneath her feet. “ [112]*

Discussing a simple crucifix located outside a tiny church in Taos New Mexico, she writes: *“Here, then, are none of the glass eyes and jeweled teardrops of the Baroque, just the forms essential to convey the nobility and sadness of the suffering Christ, a simplicity appropriate to a country church out in the spare landscape of the New Mexican desert. [183]*

This is beautifully illustrated and the text for each piece of art she discusses is limited to one thousand words. That allows for a variety of art to be discussed, and insures that the discussions don’t get too technical or dry. She writes extremely well and is very easy to understand.

Whether your are knowledgeable when it comes to the discussion of works of art or this is your introduction, the beauty of this book is that everyone will appreciate and grow through her discussions she shares. there is not doubt that all of us will learn to look in a fresh, new way at any art that is inspired by faith.

Understanding the artist’s technique adds so much to understanding the art as a means of inspiring, and reveals how images can often say so much more than a collection of words. This is so important in viewing any art as it is more inspiring and edifying when we understand why it was created, who created it, and the means and motive of its shaping.

Art is so important to our Christian heritage, as Dr. Paul Maier would be quick to remind all of us. From 2nd century mosaics in Israel to modern paintings of Henry Tanner in the twentieth century, there is something in this book for everyone.

This is more than a text book (and certainly doesn’t read like one. It stands as a reminder that when mere mortals allow their gifts to be inspired by God, what results is the potential to inspire many others. In other words, we are blessed to be a blessing as the art in this book reminds us and proclaims. - Pastor Seeber

(We have a copy of this in Zion’s library.)



## February Birthdays

2/2	Xavier Wagner,
2/3	Gordon Berkousen, Danielle Field, Lowern Keirn, Fritz Klug
2/4	James Mayer, Justin Thiede
2/5	Lydia Saylor, David Watson
2/6	Carol Lueck
2/7	Mike Martin, Matt Simmons, Lucy Tomer
2/9	Mike DeMorrow, Scott VandenBerg, Edward Witkoske
2/10	Judith Maki, Stanislav Tinigin,
2/11	Andy Bentz, Lucille Rollen, Charlene Sauer, Jenny Woelzlein
2/12	Susan Curtiss, Amy Johnston,
2/13	Glen Kellam Sr.
2/15	Dustin Bremer, Ron Hoffman, Cindy Spiess— Malmstrom
2/16	Lola Frazier, Kathy Pfeifer, Jason Woods
2/18	Sandra Krueger, Luke Stokes
2/19	James Hackenberg
2/20	Steve Butt
2/21	Dana Butt, Gabriel Carlson, Karen Kunze, Brittany Morrow, Gregg Powell
2/22	Lauren Alsvig, Dawn Fierke
2/23	Joanne Bowes
2/25	Janet Bremer, Mae Cutler, Abigail VanDyken
2/26	Alexander Dobbin, Doug Phillips, Walter Rettman
2/27	Pam Leitz, Joanna Nelson

## PARISH REPORT

### Deaths

Bill Ohland

12/23/23

### Volunteer Opportunities

The congregation is in need of volunteers willing to serve in the following ways:

- The congregation is in need of ushers, particularly for second service on Sundays. Currently we have just 8 which means that the existing pool must serve ever other Sunday. We'd like to open this up to woman, young people and families. A family of four could comprise a whole usher team by themselves, if any may be so inspired. How neat would that be? Please contact Ken Lundquist ([kequist22@gmail.com](mailto:kequist22@gmail.com)) or the church office if you want to help in this way.
- The congregation is in need of an archivist to document, catalog and store important church events for posterity, including the curation of printed and digital photography. If you like history, scrapbooking and have an interest in preserving the important moments of our church, this may be a perfect way for you to serve. This could be an individual or a collaborative effort, if you and a friend want to take this on. Please contact Aaron Grube to learn more ([dcegrube21@gmail.com](mailto:dcegrube21@gmail.com)).
- As you know, the board of directors will be assembling a list of candidates to fill vacancies that will be created when terms end for certain members on May 31. The following positions will be available: President Elect, Vice President of Personnel, as well as three (3) board members at large. We would be very interested in collecting input from the congregation as to whom you all think would serve our church well. From the names you provide, the board will reach out to determine availability. Email your suggestions to Joe Zerbel ([jzerbel@hapman.com](mailto:jzerbel@hapman.com)). Your input is most welcome and much appreciated!



The wish list item for **February is Rice (box or bag)**. Donation bins are in the Lobby by the church office.

## SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENTS

### GRATEFUL HEARTS THANKFUL HANDS

Praise God from whom all blessings flow...and so many blessings received from our recent bazaar. The final cash total of \$10,397,55 exceeded any other year by \$3,000!!! We were so blessed to give Friends of Jesus Preschool \$3,000, Zion Youth \$2,000, Deacon's Conference \$2,500 and Sparrow & Nest \$2,500.

*Matthew 5:16 ... let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven.*

Several Attic Treasure household items were donated to Partners in Housing Transition, a St. Luke's Episcopal Church outreach. Other Attic Treasures were picked up by the Deacon's Conference. Books went to Kalamazoo Public Library; new stuffies, hats, mittens and afghans were given to YWCA Domestic Assault. Our sponsored families through Helping Hands also received unsold items. Jewelry is being delivered to Fisher's of Men Lutheran Church--Pt. Isabel, TX for their rummage sale.

Please keep the bazaar mission in your prayers as we plan for November 2024. Thank you to those already making donations. We continue to collect them in the workroom.

Thank you donors, volunteers and a very generous congregation, Jayne and Linda Mayer

**CHRISTMAS DECORATIONS:** Special THANK YOU to the people who helped decorate the church for the Christmas season as well as helped remove the decorations: Don Daenzer, John DuBois, Charles Fierke, Helen Fierke, Cindy Krill, Dave Mayer, Jayne Mayer, Jim Mayer, Laurel Miner, Steve Nuyen, Rich Rakow, Pastor Mike Saylor, Dee Wentzel. The church looked absolutely beautiful!

**ENDOWMENT UPDATE:** 23 grants have been recommended so far this fiscal year to the Board of Directors for approval totaling approximately \$52,000 for Zion ministries and property improvements.

If you have a ministry needing financial help or to start one, let an Endowment committee member know and we can help you to fill out the grant request. Also, if you'd like to join us in this adventure, let one of the members know. Members are: David Doorman, Mark Meyer, and Dennis O'Brien.

**ZION LUTHERAN WORLD RELIEF GUILD:** Do you wonder where the quilts and baby bundles we make go? As we make them we do! LWR reports 194,983 quilts went to Angola, Dominican Republic, Georgia, Guatemala, Mali, Tanzania, the Gambia and Ukraine. 35,490 baby bundles were delivered to Angola, Dominican Republic, Mali, Tanzania, Turkiye and Ukraine. We are truly blessed to be part of this mission!

**Zion Staff** thanks the congregation for all the expressions of appreciation received over Christmas. The cards, gifts, food and sentiments to the Staff really made us feel valued and helped close out another year on a very high note. Thank you and blessings from your Staff.

## SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENTS

**INCLEMENT WEATHER / CANCELATION REMINDER:** **UPDATED INFORMATION** Zion and Friends of Jesus Preschool follow Kalamazoo Public Schools for canceling events. This means unless otherwise notified Zion and FOJ will be closed when KPS closes. Going forward the closing notice will be on TV WWMT Ch. 3 only. Radio WKZO is not answering their phones on a regular basis so updating the radio is not a reliable option anymore. Also, WWMT Ch 3 may have a difficult time keeping their website up-to-date. However, the streaming on TV stays current. It is suggested you watch the TV for the most up-to-date information.

**OFFERING ENVELOPES:** 2024 Envelopes are available and set up in the main hallway. Please remember to pick your 's up when you're in.

**CONTACT INFORMATION:** If you aren't receiving the weekly email, please contact the office to update your email address.

Also, if you have moved or changed your phone number please remember to update the church with your current information.

If you prefer to receive Harbinger electronically instead of a hardcopy, please contact the office. We will be happy to add you to the Harbinger elist.

**DO YOU HAVE OLD UNWANTED EYEGLASSES?** There is a box in front of the church office where you can drop those eyeglasses. This effort is through the Medical Missions Outreach Optical Program. By partnering with local churches they are helping underdeveloped communities where the need is the greatest.

**SPECIAL NOTE FROM THE BOARD,** "Mindful of the value our congregation places on ministering to our youth, Pastor Mike has been asked to deliver a special children's message during second service worship. Whereas children will be invited to sit on the chancel stairs, in full view of the congregation present and those watching from home, we feel it best to do this in lieu of communion on the second and fourth Sundays of every month. This way the communion table will not be an obstacle for viewing nor a challenge for the children as they navigate their way forward. For the sake of consistency across all three services, we will therefore have communion on the 1<sup>st</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> Sundays of the month. We beg the congregation's patience as we try this out."

## HELPING HANDS UPDATE

Every tree on the board was selected and returned as a gift for our community families. Once again you helped make this ministry a huge success. The words, "thank you," simply seem inadequate for all the love and support you gave to help needy families in our Kalamazoo Community. We helped eight families this Christmas with a total of thirty-one people. I don't think we can begin to imagine the excitement, joy, and love shared with all of these families. If they could reach out to you they would tell you what a wonderful gift you have shared.

Here are a few responses from our sponsor families about this year's experience. (1) One of our families shared the mother had tears in her eyes, and how appreciative she was with the generosity of our congregation. The mother also expressed how she would one day like to be able to be the giver of these gifts, and be able to share her love with a needy family, making their Christmas a very special gift of love.

(2) Another sponsor family wrote the smiles on our family's faces grew and grew as we filled their van with gifts and food. Just when I thought their smiles could grow no further I noticed them get even bigger. The joy in their eyes was proof that God was at work in their hearts. This family was having a very tough holiday season and our congregation's support helped them make it through. Our work together helps change lives.

(3) I don't have a special story to share other than I hope this family was blessed by the enormous generosity of our congregation. It was evident Mom was not in a good physical, mental, or emotional state when we met her, and mostly I felt for those dear children. I pray she can change her life to be a better example for her children.

(4) Our delivery was heartwarming. The four year old was at school, and the infant was napping. We did get to meet the three year old, who was absolutely adorable. The excitement, exuberance, and joy on her face was wonderful to see.

Mom asked for some treats which were items she would not normally afford. Fruit snacks, some chips, and pretzels. We also purchased a cake with white butter cream frosting and had it decorated with a holly and ivy design and a "Christmas Blessing to You" message on the top. The 3 yr old was delighted. Two things were immediately evident to us. One, this mother of

three was truly in need of immediate help. Her second story apartment is very small. Not much furniture, no TV, no Christmas tree, very little light through the few windows, and not much in the refrigerator or freezer. Mom was very grateful for all the groceries and gifts. She was truly overwhelmed.

We invited her to come to our church services and shared her family would be in our prayers. Mom repeatedly expressed her thanks and asked we let the congregation know how much this meant to them.

As always we are in awe by the generosity of our Zion family. Gifts were carefully selected and more abundant than expected.

(5) Finally, every year seems to be a little different experience for us because the families' situations vary so much. This year, for the first time ever, we delivered gifts to what was once considered to be a conventional family. A mother and father that are married and the parents of all three children living with them. Even though they didn't have much, they clearly were glad to have each other and were hopefully happy, and grateful beyond words for the added blessing of what our congregation generously provided. There was abundant love in that home.

Dad is employed but struggles to make ends meet, especially while Mom is at home caring for their newborn. The older boys were excited to have visitors and show us the little Christmas tree in the corner of their cramped living room. We rarely get to know what become of families after our brief visit, but our impression was they are the kind of people who not only will remember the kindness showed them, but pay it forward when they are able. Such encounters leave us wishing there was some way we could bottle the whole experience and pour it out on our congregation.

Zion family, please think about these words and what God would want us to do: ***Christ has no body but yours. No hands, no feet on earth, but yours. Yours are the eyes through which He looks compassion on this world. Yours are the feet with which He walks to do good. Yours are the hands through which He blessed all the world. Yours are the hands, yours are the feet, yours are the eyes, you are His body. Christ has no body now on earth but yours. May you find ways to use your body to help others just like Christ did when He was on this earth.***



## FEBRUARY 2024 WORSHIP LEADERS

	<b>February 4</b>	<b>February 11</b> <i>Transfiguration</i>	<b>February 14</b> <i>Ash Wednesday</i>	<b>February 18</b>	<b>February 25</b>
<b>Head Ushers 8:00am</b>	Fred Bierlein Troy Cosgrove	Ted Maxson Alan Sarver		Dave Mayer Mark Schoonbeck	Brian Bauer John DuBois
<b>Head Ushers 10:30am</b>	Steve Nuyen Dennis O'Brien	Dan Buchtrup Eric Carlson		Joe Zerbel Garr Gast	Ken Lundquist Dave Borak
<b>Communion Assistants Saturday 5:30pm</b>	Judy Adlam		n/a	Ted Maxson	n/a
<b>Communion Assistants 8:00am</b>	Matt Simmons	n/a	Noon (Pastors)	Greg Gerfen	n/a
<b>Communion Assistants 10:30am</b>	Steve Nuyen	n/a	6:30 (Pastors)	Garr Gast	n/a
<b>Acolytes 8:00am</b>	Nikko Quezada	Beatrice Mayer	6:30 Hayden Williams	Ashlynn Leitz	Crosby Field
<b>Acolytes 10:30am</b>	Noah Bentz	David Hampshire		Sarah Skuratowicz	Mark Skuratowicz
<b>Cantor</b>	8a Dennis O'Brien	8a Vicki Holt 10:30a Vicki Holt		8:00 Linda Stieve	8a Karen Stokes Chapo 10:30a Danielle Field
<b>Lectors 8:00am</b>	Carol Daenzer	Donya Mosher		Greg Gerfen	Andrew Niedbala
<b>Lectors 10:30am</b>	Jon Tomer	Chris Wilkins		Jill Hamilton	Alison Carlson
<b>Altar Ministry Saturday 5:30pm</b>	1. 2.	n/a	n/q	1. 2.	n/a
<b>Altar Ministry 8:00am</b>	1. 2.	n/a	1. Dee Wentzel 2. Cathy Hof (NOON)	Joe & Larry Zerbel	n/a
<b>Altar Ministry 10:30am</b>	1. Toni Holt 2. Vickie Asaro	n/a	1. 2. Dee Wentzel (6:30p)	1. Larry Zerbel 2. Joe Zerbel	n/a

# Valentine's Day Word Search



## WORD LIST:

ARROW  
 BEMINE  
 CANDYHEARTS  
 CARDS  
 CHOCOLATE

CUPID  
 FEBRUARY  
 FLOWERS  
 HEART  
 HUGS

KISSES  
 LOVE  
 PINK  
 POEMS  
 RED

ROSES  
 SWEETHEART  
 TRUE LOVE  
 VALENTINE  
 VALENTINES DAY

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*Faith, Hope and Love*

But the greatest of these is

**LOVE.**

- 1 Cor 13:13 -