



Harbinger

January 2022
Volume 154 Number 1

Page 2
Christmas and Epiphany

Page 3
Catechism Review

Page 4
Worship Helps

Page 5
Book Review

Page 6
Campus Ministry

Page 7
Family Life

Page 8
Youth News

As Christmas came closer, there was a distraction by some surprise visitors we haven't seen in awhile — our little flock of wild turkeys. They are interesting critters, pretty in their own way but easily distracted as their wandering seems slow, meandering, and uninspired. I assume they were looking for food but either didn't know where to look or were easily distracted by reflections of ground level windows (even stopping to peck at their reflections.) Mostly they dawdled (an art form they have mastered.) Somehow they brought to mind a contrasting vision of wise men searching for Jesus. While turkeys wander, visitors from far away had a much clearer pathway in mind. I realized in that moment we are surrounded by a world full of people who fit into one of two categories. Either they have seen God's light and follow its glow, or mindlessly wander, looking for what satisfies, being easily distracted by reflections and shiny things. During the darkness of winter, in a world darkened by the infections of sin that surround, even a little light goes a long way. If focused on the real reason for the season, the light of a manger is enough to bring a smile to every face and joy to every heart. On the other hand, dazzling offers, pop up ads, and tempting promises can distract and keep others from the only peace which calms every trouble and brings joy to any heart. January 6 is the last day of Christmas and remembers the visit of wise ones led on their journey by a light missed by much of the world. Contrasting their vision with the mindless meanderings of goofy turkeys we are reminded of our daily choices. Most living boils down to only two options: the light of God's love or the dull reflections of a broken world. Don't ever forget the joy and excitement of Bethlehem's birth. Be assured as well that if Jesus is the glow in your eyes, others will see his light and be touched by the same joy and peace. There is nothing wrong with dawdling and wandering once in a while, but having seen the true light, how can we not let it lead and guide with the confident hope and peaceful joy it brings?

Pastor Seeber

Zion Lutheran Church
2122 Bronson Blvd.
Kalamazoo, MI 49008
Telephone: 269-382-2360
Email: zion@zionkazoo.org
www.zionkazoo.org

Christmas and Epiphany

In the first centuries of the Church, Easter was celebrated as the primary festival of Christianity. Sunday is the “new Sabbath” as Sunday is the day Jesus rose from the dead. Christmas is “bigger” in our culture, but that reality came about hundreds of years later.

The birth (*nativity*) of our Savior gradually became an important celebration in the life of the Church. After Emperor Constantine declared Christianity the “faith of the kingdom,” he celebrated Dec. 25th as the birth of Jesus. He took a Roman festival (*Saturnalia*) which had celebrated a gradual ending of the darkness of winter, and instead made it a celebration of the true “Light of the World” -- Christmas (or the “Christ Mass.”)

Christmas begins a 12 day cycle concluding on Epiphany (January 6.) Sundays during this time are part of the Christmas season, and the altar color is White. You might notice that our altar paraments for Christmas are different than the white of Easter.

December 26 is a day in which much of the Church remembers St. Stephen, who was the first martyr of the early Christian Church (see Acts 6:8-7:2.) And remember Saul, who held the cloaks of those stoning Stephen, became Paul after his conversion. When Dec. 26 is on a Sunday, the altar color would be red, which is the color associated with martyred saints.

December 28 is the Festival of the Holy Innocents (Matt 2:13-18.) When the Wise Men inquired of Herod where the new king was born, he became jealous. He wound up murdering as many young boys under the age of two as he could, hopeful of erasing any threats to his throne. During this time, Mary and Joseph fled to Egypt with Jesus.

This is a difficult story to consider, and yet a reminder of the threat that Jesus is to those dependent on earthly power. (Even today!)

January 1 is the day in which the Church has remembered the “naming” of Jesus. In the Jewish tradition, it was on the eighth day that a son was circumcised (as a sign of the covenant) and named. Mary and Joseph named their miracle baby, “Jesus.”

Many of you have seen “Xmas” instead of Christmas (prompting calls to “keep Christ in Christmas.”) But the first Greek letter of Christ is “chi” (which is written with an “X.”) “Mass” is the word for the worship service. And so from the time of the middle ages the Church has used “Xmas” as a way of writing “Christ Mass” (or the day of worshipping the Christ.) So, if you know the Greek origin, Xmas DOES keep Christ in Christmas. (*Of greater concern is how WE keep Christ in Christmas through our own actions and beliefs.*)

The season of Christmas runs until January 6, which is called “Epiphany.” Epiphany means “revealed,” (as any “light” will do.) Epiphany commemorates the visit of the wise men from the East to see the infant Jesus (Matthew 2:1-12.) This has traditionally been called the “Christmas of the Gentiles” and is celebrated in the Eastern Church as a greater day of celebration than Dec. 25, for on this Day Christ was *revealed to the entire world!* In the early Church, Epiphany, Easter, and Pentecost were the major festivals!

Epiphany uses green as its color, for life and growth and the spreading of the Gospel throughout the world. Epiphany continues until just before Lent. The Sunday of the Transfiguration concludes the Epiphany season. Ash Wednesday and Lent follow during the next week. Hope this helps!

A blessed Christmas and Epiphany season to you and all whom you love! And when the trees come down, keep the joy of this season as the reason for each and every day of your life. What a gift has been given!

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

"Hallowed be thy name." We don't even talk like that anymore. New translations say, "Your name is holy." "Hallow," "holy," and "sacred" are all the same word – they have to do with God. So when we talk with God it is a "holy moment, hallowed ground, a sacred time!"

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!

How can a "name" be holy? Well, 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. But no one's thoughts or images would resemble those of others. To comprehend what that means is to come into contact with what can't be defined. It is the awesome miracle of "the Holy." Prayer places us into that Presence.

You have all 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." 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 best at "unholy things." (Like lying, cheating, not forgiving and not sharing love.)

Such moments are abusing the name of God! That is stealing his Name.

Luther said, "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. Any understanding – holy ALL! When the name of God rolls off our lips we are touching the very Being who created galaxies and microscopic cells.

And that is important – for how we use THE Name shows how we define what THE Name means to us. And it tells those around us 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. It means that we grasp the Holy. And if we use it 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, and 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. Pastor Seeber

Worship Helps for Families: The Altar

Most visible in any sanctuary is the altar, its historical reference is sacrifice, as a special connection to God. Animals were burned on Old Testament altars as gifts to God (and to get his attention.) Remember Abraham and Isaac, Noah after the flood, or Elijah and prophets of Baal? The Jerusalem temple had altars near the Holy of Holies" (where priests burned the incense of prayer.) Outside was a large altar where priests burned animals brought by the people.

With the gift of Jesus, the theology of the altar changed! We don't need to do things to get God's attention. Instead, He has come close to us in Jesus and his "once and for all" sacrifice for the world. The temple curtain (in front of the Holy of Holies) was destroyed at the moment of Jesus' crucifixion as an announcement of the perfect sacrifice that replaces all others!

Sacrifice is no longer a legal demand, but an act of love in response to what Jesus has so freely given by grace. We no longer go to high places and stone altars to give gifts to God, but are to make every moment and action a place of sacrificial, servant love. The New Testament Book of Hebrews powerfully proclaims how the old sacrificial system is replaced by Jesus who is both the great "high priest" and the "sacrificial lamb."

The early church didn't have altars of sacrifice, but worshipped in people's homes and gathered around the table for the meal of Holy Communion (just as Jesus and his disciples had gathered for their Last Supper.) Over time, special buildings were needed to accommodate larger groups of people and furniture (like altars) were built following the pattern of the Old Testament Temple.

The medieval church developed a doctrine of "transubstantiation" (meaning the bread and wine actually changed into Christ's body

and blood.) With such a belief, the altar became seen as a place where Jesus was sacrificed over and over again. Rails were added to separate that holy spot (where only priests were allowed to venture, much like the old Holy of Holies in Jerusalem.) Construction became more elaborate and often included gold, intricate carvings, statues, and art.

Gradually the idea of a table around which the family of faith gathered for a meal was lost, and the altar became the place where God really lived and was the most holy spot in the city. A major point of the Reformation was to understand the Sacrament of the Altar as a place for the faith family to celebrate Christ's presence in a special way, rather than the idea the Jesus was sacrificed over and over again like the Old Testament burnt offerings. But change is difficult and altars remained. And they have a special place as a reminder of God's love.

The Lutheran church kept the altar and the idea of the family meal, but the Reformed churches came to use theirs as a speaking or reading platform. We believe the altar is a table for a meal, and in our practice we have brought the table closer so that all can access the meal, even though we really can't all sit around the table at the same time. The altar proclaims a special presence and invites us to the gifts God offers. It is important we don't misunderstand what we believe or give the wrong impressions by our actions to those who are new to the faith.

I love the reverent and elaborate art of the cathedrals in Europe, but our theology today is closer to that of the early church and the first disciples. We certainly affirm the special closeness of God an altar proclaims, but must be careful to never think God is confined behind rails or on an altar. Or that we are closer there than in other places. Jesus taught every place is holy, because God is creator, and God is close as Holy Spirit. We treat it with respect, but also understand why it exists.

Book Review: **“Through Painted Deserts; Light, God and Beauty on the Open Road.”** Donald Miller. Thomas Nelson. 2005

When I was in college the phrase “road trip” was a welcome invitation to escape and find something new and different. And if we are honest, much of life is the embarking on various road trips either intentionally or not. What we experience along the way changes us in ways we never would have imagined. That was our hope for college road trips, but then we settled into the reality of our real world. Sometimes trips were just a brief escape and other times (even if it took years to realize) such journeys away from daily routines) fundamentally changed us all!

This book is an autobiographical account of a three month road trip of two young men as they drove an old VW bus from Texas to Oregon. It is full of exactly what you would expect from two young men who don't know exactly where they are going but pay enough attention and reflection for their journey to be one of earthly and spiritual growth. This is an easy and delightful read, sort of a “growing of age” experience. In the introduction Miller reflects that having settled down in Oregon he would never leave now but if he had been born there, he would likely have taken a road trip to Texas and settled there. And that begins a journey that all of us can relate to. This book is funny, insightful, and inspiring in surprising ways.

As the journey began, Miller realized his van only had an old tape player with no music worth listening to, inspiring the following: *“Music is the sound track of life. The absence of it is unforgiveable on a road trip. But I am without, and silence being the next best thing to noise, I resolve to myself to listen to that which is so commonly called nothing. Tonight's silence is road and tires, engine and wind. All that thumping beneath the van and the whistling from the wind against the mirrors. Each resonance rivals for the lead, and*

everything is a symphony if you think about it.” [39]

That gives you a clue as to how this book develops. Dialog and observations about scenery, food, or a waitress at the last drive in fast food place, is followed by reflection that is more sublime and deeper than you were ready for. One has to read it again, as it becomes apparent this is not just a road trip from Texas to Oregon (even though they didn't know their ultimate destination when they started) but the same journey each of us takes through life. We take excursions, road trips, vacations, only to get stuck too long at home or work again and ready for more change. But those journeys, when we listen to the silence (or the noise) and pay closer attention to the scenery have a habit of bringing insight and change.

There is a strong undercurrent (or maybe a surface current) of how this becomes a true faith journey for Miller as well. And each path that we take in our daily living has the same potential as well. How well do we travel when things break along the way and we aren't certain we can get them fixed, or we wind up in a new place we had never imagined? We either are left to our own wisdom, strength, or if inspired by faith, find God breathing into every moment and every destination (if we only are careful enough to watch, look, and listen.)

Miller writes in such a simple and normal way the reader has no trouble understanding what his journey was really about, and relating it to each of ours. And, after all, isn't that how Jesus taught on his road trip from Galilee to Jerusalem? He observed, reflected, and told stories that had relevance to his audience because they were so similar to their daily lives. This is not an intense or deep book. The humor is often dry and maybe a little earthy, but it is insightfully honest and a wonderful road trip that is colored by faith. Pastor Seeber

Campus Ministry DECEMBER 2021:

The 2021 Fall semester concluded the 2nd week of December and students have gone home for the Christmas break. Here's a summary of the weekly events as they unfolded this past semester

MONDAY EVENING BIBLE STUDY/TOPIC DISCUSSION:

During the first half of the semester, when we had topical discussions, attendance averaged around 10-12 students. When we had a Bible study, we had around 5-7 students attend. In the last half of the semester, we had 2-4 students attend and there were a couple of evenings where no one attended. The topical discussions were well received and my plan is to do more of them in the Spring Semester.

FUNDRAISER FOR VICTIMS OF HUMAN TRAFFICKING:

When we were selling Popeye's chicken sandwiches and the weather was still comfortable outside, we averaged selling between 15-20 sandwiches each Tuesday. However, we interacted with even more students and WMU staff each week, which was one of the hopes. When the weather turned colder, we shifted to selling soup and chili. We sold between 7-10 cups of soup/chili on those days.

We made some great connections with WMU staff who work in maintenance and landscaping. They were our most "regular" visitors each Tuesday. I am planning on building on those connections. Ideally, I would love to serve soup and chili inside Solid Grounds in the Spring semester. It would make for a great way to build relationships and connections with WMU students/staff and faculty. However, in the two events where we sold the food inside because of cold weather, we saw hardly any people come inside.

Each Tuesday, during the fundraiser, which went from 11AM-1:30PM, there were great interactions and acts of kindness. Almost every Tuesday, both WMU students and staff would give us money for victims of human trafficking, even though they weren't hungry or maybe had already eaten lunch. We were able to raise a little over \$830 from the sale of the food and the donations given to us. One member of Zion gave us \$500 to the cause, so we were able to write a check to the Kalamazoo YWCA for a little over \$1,300 for the victims of human trafficking.

WEDNESDAY FCA: Attendance at FCA was around 25 students each week. One thing I am working on for the Spring semester is to set up opportunities for the WMU athletes to serve in the community. Two opportunities are with the Kalamazoo YWCA and the Kalamazoo Refugee Resource Collaborative. I spoke with the

volunteer coordinator of the YWCA and we are exploring opportunities for WMU students and I to work with the children at the women's shelter, helping them with homework and being a friend to them. We are also having conversations with the refugee resource group, trying to set up a weekly event where WMU athletes can spend time with refugee junior and senior high youth.

FRIDAY CARD/GAME NIGHT:

Two new students this year, Sarah and Mikayla, started doing a card and game night every Friday evening at Solid Grounds. This was a fun night of fellowship. They invited their friends to play and we averaged between 4-7 students each Friday evening.

LOOKING AHEAD TO THE 2022 SPRING SEMESTER...

I plan to move the weekly fundraiser for victims of human trafficking to Monday and having our weekly topical discussion/Bible study on Tuesday evening.

I am working on trying to promote the weekly fundraiser through the WMU organization that promotes events on campus. I hope to transition into serving the food inside Solid Grounds and that students and staff will be comfortable coming inside the building.

In terms of the topical discussions, one idea in the works is to address the issue of mental health and well-being. The idea is to talk about pursuing both mental and spiritual well-being. To that end, the idea is to have a 4 week series, based on what Jesus said is the greatest commandment: "Love the Lord your God with all of your heart, soul, body and mind."

One week, we will focus on how to love God with our heart. The next week will focus on how to love God with our soul, the next on how to love Him with our body and the last week on how to love Him with our mind.

The thought and idea would be to have a professional counselor from either Desert Streams Christian Counseling or the WMU Counseling Center be a guest presenter on the weeks we explore loving God with our hearts and minds. The week we focus on loving God with our bodies, I want to bring in a WMU faculty member in Nutrition/Exercise Science.

Looking ahead to Spring Break week in early March, I will be keeping an eye on the work and progress of the disaster relief for the tornadoes that hit Kentucky. If there is still relief work being done in early March, that might be an ideal project and location. Maybe this could be an event where both WMU students and members of Zion serve together.

God's peace and blessings to you all!

Pastor Mark

Family Life

Family Ministry News

Sunday School

This month we are walking into the fire! That's right! All month long we will discuss Bible stories that have "fire" as part of the story.

We are having such a good time with Sunday School but sometimes we could use a few more helpers. If you are interested in helping every once in a while, please contact Aaron!

VISITORS

Chances are your holiday visitors (or visits) have ended. But our focus shifts to those who visited Jesus, when he was a young child. The Magi...traveling from afar. Think of all the ways you get ready for guests...cleaning, grocery shopping, logistical planning, etc. If you're anything like me, having all those things done really relinquishes anxiety...even if it takes a lot of time! But Mary and Joseph didn't really know any visitors were coming. The Magi were unexpected guests. Think of that...strangers, from a different land, showing up at your door unannounced, bearing a message that you must get out of here! I'm sure all those other thoughts of a clean house and such quickly dissipated. But also think of the perspective of the Magi...new stars, angelic messages, a child king? The faith these "wise men" showed is an example of trust. When we answer the call of God it doesn't matter how much we are prepared or open to the call...God will do what He sees fit. Is your faith one that blindly trusts the One?

Youth News

High School:

Bible Study

Resumes January 9th

Chili Cook-off

January 23rd from 11:30am—
2pm

NYG Meeting #3

January 23rd from 2pm—3pm

Middle School Youth:

Confirmation Class Resumes
January 5th.

Winter Retreat is January 7th—
9th. There will be NO Middle
School Sunday School on the
9th.

Echoes

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

November & December felt like “the months of giving” at Zion. We had multiple drives & opportunities to bless others.

-Hats & gloves were delivered to Bethany Christian Services to help kids in the foster care system stay warm.

-Toys were collected from Middle School & High School families so the foster kids of Bethany Christian Services could have a Christmas Party!

-50 Shoeboxes were packed & submitted to Operation Christmas Child. These boxes will be sent all over the world & share the love of Jesus with little ones who may have never heard of Him.

-The Bazaar brought in over \$5000. That money will be split between a few organizations in town & Zion ministries.

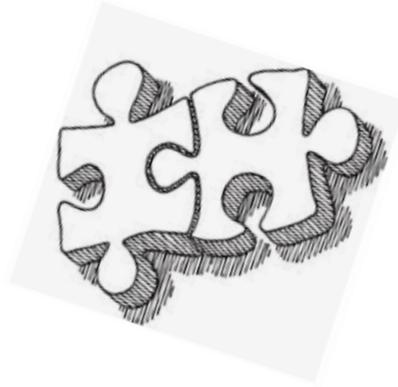
-Helping Hands provided 9 families in need with a Christmas celebration full of gifts.

-What else? These were all group efforts! I know there are so many unmentioned, unrecognized acts of service from our members...all showing that God IS at work!

January

BIRTHDAYS

1/2	Anna Griesbach
1/3	David Bierlein
1/5	Lindsey Heineman, Ashlynn Leitz
1/6	Jeanette Meyer, Andrew Wilkins
1/8	Betty Markwart, Daniel Meimers, Ross Nelson, Todd Nuyen, Richard Rakow, Judith Sepanik
1/9	Audrey Dorman,
1/11	Nicole Klein, Linda Rosenthal
1/12	Bob Nutsch
1/13	Zander Woodhams
1/14	Laurel Miner, Joey Proos
1/15	Toni Dembski-Brandl, Todd Ream, Susie Schierbeek,
1/18	Megan Doorlag
1/19	Adam Hendricks, Christopher McGill, Sullivan Miller, Alexander Perry
1/20	Pamela Blochard, Al Doorlag, Rosalind Proos
1/21	Owen Adams, Cameron Hay, Dolores Rink
1/22	Rita Linnenkugel
1/23	James Morgan, Mark Skuratowicz
1/24	James Koning
1/25	Phoebe Miedema, Carol O'Connor
1/26	Laurel Adams, Emma Dorman, Charley Emig, Christine Folck, Adeline Powell
1/27	Elijah Field
1/29	Dan Curtiss, Claire Kiessling, Kelsey Klug, Nathan Matheny, Noralyn Pridgeon
1/30	Amy Eastman, John Griesbach, Addalee Wilkins
1/31	Tyler Bowers, Grace Stiegemeyer

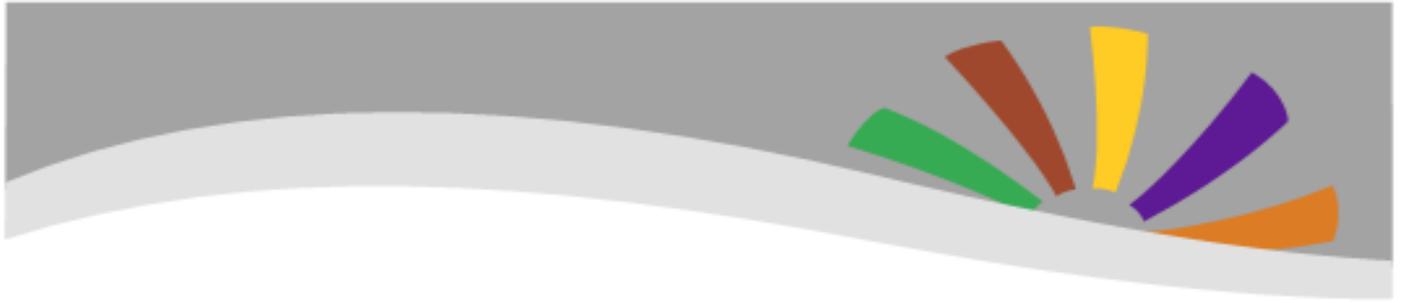


Do you like to do jigsaw puzzles? Do you have a shelf full of puzzles you don't want to work again and wish you could trade them in? There is a project under way to create a puzzle exchange here at Zion. This will *temporarily* be held in Room 100 in the pre-school area. If you have puzzles in good condition (no missing pieces!) you would like to contribute to the exchange, please bring them to church and put them on the table downstairs in Room 100. The goal is to have this up and available by the middle of January, just in time for those cold winter days! If you have questions or would like to be part of this effort, please contact Denise O'Brien at 269-762



The wish list item for
January is Beef Stew. Donation bins are in front of the church office. Thank you for your continued generosity.





Chili Cook-off

Join us!!!

The next high school youth fundraiser will be a chili cook off! We hope you'll join us either with a pot of chili, or to come taste!

Prizes and fun will be had and each donation is another step closer to the National Youth Gathering.

Tickets are \$10/person for tasting (kids under 12 are free). Concessions will be available as well!

Sunday, January 23rd

11:30am—2pm



Call Committee Update

Zion has initiated the process of calling a new Senior Pastor. The LCMS Michigan District provided the Call Committee with a list of ten candidates in early October. These candidates were selected by the District President, because their skills and talents match Zion's needs. Five of the candidates indicated that they were in a position where they were open to receiving a call.

The Call Committee has been meeting weekly to discuss the candidates. A great deal of time was spent reviewing their profiles, listening to sermons, and discussing how their gifts match Zion's needs. Copies of the candidates' profiles are available for any member of the congregation to review at the church. Please inquire in the church office, if you are interested in reviewing them.

The Committee has also established the interview format and created a list of questions to ask. The interview questions were solidified in late November. The candidates will be interviewed in January 2022, so the pastors can focus on Advent and Christmas activities in December.

Once we have completed the interviews, the Call Committee will share what we have learned with members of Zion at a Congregational meeting. At that time, the congregation will decide which candidate we should call.

We appreciate your continued prayers and patience as we work through this process. If you have any questions, please reach out to a member of the Call Committee:

- | | |
|-----------------|---------------------------|
| - Ryan Bickel | - Helen Fierke |
| - Chrissy Brege | - Dani Field |
| - Dan Buchtrup | - Jill Hamilton |
| - Steve Butt | - Ted Maxson |
| - Eric Carlson | - Pastor Brelje (Advisor) |



Benno & Carol Rosin wish to thank everyone for the cards, prayers and well wishes. It has meant the world to us and happy to share Benno is doing well.

Bill & Priscilla Mercier express heartfelt thanks for all the prayers, and cards. Special thanks to Pastors Seeber and Brelje for their hospital visits. Bill's blockage cleared shortly after praying with Pastor Brelje!

GRATEFUL HEARTS/THANKFUL HANDS

Our bazaar was so blessed this year! We had wonderful weather and a great turnout. We have so much to be thankful for from the tremendous help we had setting up our bazaar room to the cleanup after. We couldn't have been as successful as we were without our crafters, sewers, knitters, bakers, canners and all who donated to our attic treasures. We had many enthusiastic volunteers the day of the bazaar assisting in the kitchen, as cashiers and wrappers, selling raffle tickets or just making sure our community visitors were enjoying themselves. Most especially, we thank those who included us in their prayers. We don't have a final dollar amount to report yet but will publish that next month. It's never too early to start bringing in items for next year. As you are getting out or putting away your Christmas decorations and have items you just don't need any longer, please consider donating them to us! **Again, THANK YOU!!**

Dear Zion friends,

Bethany Christian Services of SW Michigan is deeply appreciative of the donations of toys, hats, mittens, and gloves that were given to foster children at our Annual Foster Care Christmas party held on December 7, 2021. These children need all of us to wrap around them in various ways to help them feel loved, connected, and safe. Thank you for your caring and action to show Christ's love to local children and their foster families. Bethany serves about 225 children in foster care - children from Michigan and refugee children. We pray for your congregation and hope that your celebration of Christ's birth brings joy and peace to each of you.

Many thanks,

Mary Holtapp

On behalf of Bethany Christian Services of SW Michigan

Special thanks to Sara Bussey and Aaron Grube for organizing this drive.

JANUARY 2022

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday																																																																																				
2 8:00 Worship No Bible Study 10:30 Worship	3 OFFICE CLOSED	4 10:00 P. Brelje Bible Walk thru Bible on FB 6:30 Personnel	5 6:15 Confirmation Class SmlGrp 7:30-8:30 LS	6	7	8 8:00 Men's Bible Study 5:30 Worship																																																																																				
9 8:00 Worship 9:15 Adult Bible Study 10:30 Worship 5:30-9:30p Sml Grp CW	10 6:30 Endowment	11 10:00 P. Brelje Bible Walk thru Bible on FB 6:30p SmlGrpCmte Zoom 9:30p P.HS Bible Study	12 6:15 Confirmation Class 6:30 Tax Help Program SmlGrp 7:30-8:30 LS	13 Noon Finance	14 MS Retreat 1/7 -1/9	15 8:00 Men's Bible Study 5:30 Worship																																																																																				
16 8:00 Worship 9:15 Adult Bible Study 10:30 Worship	17 ML King Day 6:30 BOD	18 10:00 P. Brelje Bible Walk thru Bible on FB	19 6:15 Confirmation Class SmlGrp 7:30-8:30 LS	20	21	22 8:00 Men's Bible Study																																																																																				
23 8:00 Worship 9:15 Adult Bible Study 10:30 Worship 11:30-2 Chili Cook-off 2p-3p NYC #3 Meet 5:30-9:30p Sml Grp CW	24	25 10:00 P. Brelje Bible Walk thru Bible on FB 9:30p P.HS Bible Study	26 6:15 Confirmation Class SmlGrp 7:30-8:30 LS	27	28	29 8:00 Men's Bible Study 5:30 Worship																																																																																				
30 8:00 Worship 9:15 Adult Bible Study 10:30 Worship	31	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around;"> <div style="text-align: center;"> <p>December 2021</p> <table border="1"> <tr><td>S</td><td>M</td><td>T</td><td>W</td><td>T</td><td>F</td><td>S</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td>1</td><td>2</td><td>3</td><td>4</td><td></td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>5</td><td>6</td><td>7</td><td>8</td><td>9</td><td>10</td><td>11</td></tr> <tr><td>12</td><td>13</td><td>14</td><td>15</td><td>16</td><td>17</td><td>18</td></tr> <tr><td>19</td><td>20</td><td>21</td><td>22</td><td>23</td><td>24</td><td>25</td></tr> <tr><td>26</td><td>27</td><td>28</td><td>29</td><td>30</td><td>31</td><td></td></tr> </table> </div> <div style="text-align: center;"> <p>February 2022</p> <table border="1"> <tr><td>S</td><td>M</td><td>T</td><td>W</td><td>T</td><td>F</td><td>S</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td>1</td><td>2</td><td>3</td><td>4</td><td>5</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>6</td><td>7</td><td>8</td><td>9</td><td>10</td><td>11</td><td>12</td></tr> <tr><td>13</td><td>14</td><td>15</td><td>16</td><td>17</td><td>18</td><td>19</td></tr> <tr><td>20</td><td>21</td><td>22</td><td>23</td><td>24</td><td>25</td><td>26</td></tr> <tr><td>27</td><td>28</td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr> </table> </div> </div>					S	M	T	W	T	F	S		1	2	3	4			5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31		S	M	T	W	T	F	S		1	2	3	4	5		6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28					
S	M	T	W	T	F	S																																																																																				
	1	2	3	4																																																																																						
5	6	7	8	9	10	11																																																																																				
12	13	14	15	16	17	18																																																																																				
19	20	21	22	23	24	25																																																																																				
26	27	28	29	30	31																																																																																					
S	M	T	W	T	F	S																																																																																				
	1	2	3	4	5																																																																																					
6	7	8	9	10	11	12																																																																																				
13	14	15	16	17	18	19																																																																																				
20	21	22	23	24	25	26																																																																																				
27	28																																																																																									



Financial Report for November 30, 2021

ZION: November Giving is under budget by \$3,945. Expenses are under budget by \$3,480. November ended with a Net Gain of \$2,288. YTD Net Income Loss is \$16,039, over budget by \$17,204. YTD Giving is down by \$22,140.

FRIENDS OF JESUS PRESCHOOL: Income is under budget by \$4,146. Expenses are under budget by \$4,982. November Net Gain is \$469. YTD Net Income Gain is \$2,281, over budget by \$9,054.

Solid Ground: Income is under budget by \$1,442. Expenses were under budget by \$345. November Net Loss is \$1,957. YTD Net Income Loss is \$232, under budget by \$4,733.

ZION LUTHERAN CHURCH	Current Month			Year-To-Date		
	Budget	Actual	Over/Under	Budget	Actual	Over/Under
INCOME						
Zion Giving & Misc.	65,125	61,180	-3,945	351,950	329,810	-22,140
EXPENSES						
Zion Staff Support	31,837	31,613	-224	189,865	184,234	5,631
Office Operations	903	2,600	1,697	7,665	9,288	-1,623
Church Property	9,575	8,270	-1,305	41,550	47,402	-5,852
Education Ministry	1,100	1,110	10	4,400	4,895	-495
Evangelism/Missions	50	0	-50	200	367	-167
Worship Ministry	488	247	-241	2,975	2,681	294
Other Ministries	155	121	-34	1,130	918	212
Music Ministry	2,250	1,925	-325	11,050	11,400	-350
Finance Ministry	9,370	6,370	-3,000	56,220	49,789	6,431
Zion Haus Ministry	284	739	455	1,580	2,880	-1,300
Missions - General	6,380	5,917	-463	34,150	31,995	2,155
Total Expenses	62,392	58,912	3,480	350,785	345,849	4,936
INCOME LESS EXPENSES	2,733	2,268	465	1,165	-16,039	17,204
FRIENDS OF JESUS PRESCHOOL						
INCOME						
FOJ Income	4,675	529	-4,146	18,645	3,099	-15,546
FOJ Staff Support	4,102	0	-4,102	21,558	231	-21,327
FOJ Operations Expenses	920	60	-860	3,880	587	-3,293
INCOME LESS EXPENSES	-347	469	816	-6,773	2,281	-9,054
SOLID GROUND						
Solid Ground Income	9,238	7,796	-1,442	62,782	57,534	-5,248
Solid Ground Expenses	10,098	9,753	345	58,281	57,766	515
INCOME LESS EXPENSES	-860	-1,957	-1,097	4,501	-232	-4,733
BALANCE SHEET						
	6/1/2021	11/30/2021	YTD Change			
ASSETS						
Cash	86,738	143,168	56,430			
Investments	188,271	188,812	541			
Other Assets	8,046	-1,221	-9,267			
TOTAL	283,055	330,759	47,704			
LIABILITIES						
Payroll	5,030	5,098	68			
Dedicated Funds	132,481	193,877	61,396			
Unrestricted Funds	145,544	131,784	-13,760			
TOTAL	283,055	330,759	47,704			
MORTGAGE LOAN BALANCE	\$672,496					
Dedicated Accounts with Balances over \$3,000						
Youth Ministry	\$9,182	FOJ Estate Gift	\$3,140			
New Staff	\$50,000	FOJ Fundraising	\$11,518			
Ins. Claim Water Damage	\$6,483	Benevolence/Wise	\$5,476			
Future Debt	\$25,714	Besser Ins. Checks	\$8,293			
Grateful Hearts Bazaar	\$5,533					

Monthly Publication of

Zion Lutheran Church

January

2122 Bronson Boulevard, Kalamazoo, MI 49008

NON-PROFIT
ORGANIZATION

U.S. POSTAGE

PAID

PERMIT NO. 479
KALAMAZOO, MI

CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED



Epiphany