



Zion Messenger

December 2025

REJOICING, REACHING OUT, and RENEWING,
we share the joy of the gospel, through a life of faith.



A Christmas Letter from Jesus

When you look for me at Christmas,
 you won't need a special star.
I'm no longer just in Bethlehem,
 I'm right here where you are.
You may not be aware of me
 amid the celebrations.
You'll have to look beyond the stores
 and all the decorations.
But if you take a moment
 from your list of things to do,
To close your eyes and say a prayer,
 I'm waiting here for you.
You're the one I want to be with.
 You're the reason that I came!
And you'll find me in the stillness
 where I'm whispering your name.

Love,
Jesus

This letter reminds us that Jesus is no longer only in Bethlehem but is present everywhere, including each of our hearts. To find Jesus, we need only look beyond the materialism of the season — past the stores, gifts, and decorations, to the real reason for the season.

The reason for the season is the coming of Christ into the world to save us. Jesus became one of us so that we might know him in body and spirit.

This poem also suggests that we take a moment from the hustle and bustle of the holiday season to simply listen to our own heart, knowing that that is where Jesus lives. Christ is found in the quiet moments, when He is "whispering our name."

In this season of waiting for **Christ's coming, we are called to** prepare ourselves — to prepare our hearts, minds, and lives. We can do that by spending time in prayer, reading scripture, and performing acts of love in the name of Jesus.

Reading Scripture will remind us **of God's story of love and salvation**, which is the reason he came.

Prayer is a way of keeping us close to God. We have the privilege and freedom to speak with God at all time and in all circumstances.

Some possible acts of love may include visiting the lonely, writing to soldiers, or spending time with loved ones instead of buying excessive gifts.

May we take the time in this Advent season to truly prepare for **Christ's return**.

In the name of the one
for whom we await with
anticipation, longing, and joy,

Pastor Carol



Corner

The Twelve Day of Christmas

President's

The story is told that from 1558 until 1829 people in England were not allowed to practice their faith openly. During this era, the song 'The Twelve Days of Christmas' was written as a subtle way of celebrating Christ's birth in public without risk of prosecution. The song's lyrics had a hidden meaning known only to members of the church, each element of the twelve days offering code meaning for a religious reality.

1. The partridge in a pear tree stood for Jesus Christ
2. The two turtledoves stood for the Old and New Testaments
3. Three French hens stood for faith, hope, and charity.
4. The four calling birds were the four gospels
5. The five gold rings represented the first five books of the Old Testament (the Law).
6. The six geese a-laying stood for the six days of creation
7. Seven swans a-swimming signified the sevenfold gifts of the Spirit.
8. The eight maids a-milking represented the beatitudes.
9. The Nine ladies dancing were the nine fruits of the Spirit.
(See the fifth chapter of Galatians.)
10. Ten lords a-leaping were the Ten Commandments.
11. Eleven pipers piping stood for the eleven faithful disciples.
12. Twelve drummers drumming symbolized the twelve points of belief in the Apostles Creed.



I thought this was very interesting and honestly made me realize how truly blessed we are now that we can openly worship and praise Jesus without worrying about being harmed or jailed for our beliefs. I know I take the freedoms we have today for granted.



Wishing you and your families
a Very Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!



Tammy Reigle
Council President



Blessed

The last part of Acts 20:35 states “it is more blessed to give than to receive.” This is a great reminder to us as we enter into the Advent and Christmas season. During this season our hearts are drawn once again to the story of the greatest gift ever given, the gift of Jesus Christ. When Jesus Christ entered the world God’s love was not wrapped in fine ornate paper or tied with large, beautiful ribbons. Instead God’s love was wrapped in swaddling clothes and laid in a manger. God’s gift was selfless, pure, and life changing. God’s gift continues to bless the world today.

The season of Advent and Christmas is often centered around shopping lists and wish lists, which makes it easy to forget the deeper joy that comes from giving. True giving flows from gratitude, not obligation. When we give our time, our love, our encouragement, and our resources, we reflect the heart of God in the world. Every act of kindness matters, whether it’s donating items, volunteering your time to help others, sending a card to someone lonely, or offering a simple prayer. These are all ways to share Christ’s love with the world.

Jesus shows us that real joy is found not in the items that we accumulate, but instead it is found when we share with others. When we give and share our time with others, our hearts expand; and the world gets a glimpse of God at work in us and through us. Often, we find that the more we give, the richer our lives become, not in material things, but in the peace of our hearts, in gratitude, and in community.

This Advent and Christmas season, may we take time to look for opportunities to give generously and joyfully to others. May we ask God to open our eyes to the needs around us and our hearts to respond to those needs with compassion. For when we give out of generosity and not out of obligation, we receive something far greater; we receive the blessing of seeing God’s love come alive in the world.



Blessings,
Vicar Keith Powell



*Zion Congregational Council
Minutes from October 28, 2025*

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 5:57pm by Tammy Reigle.

Present: Kay Flanagan, Pastor Carolann Hopcke, Jim Meyer, Chris Nelson, Vicar Keith Powell, Sara Rasmussen, Tammy Reigle, Amanda Reinhart, Roberta Seda, Josh Thayer, Mary Kay Tisthammer

Equipping Time: Sara Rasmussen asked us some fun questions for us to get to know each other a little better.

Approve Minutes: Roberta Seda made a motion to approve the minutes of September 16, 2025. Sara Rasmussen seconded. **Motion carried.**

Report of Officers

President: Tammy Reigle – No Report

Vice President: Mary Kay Tisthammer – No Report

Treasurer: Nancy Ahlers – Mary Kay Tisthammer made a motion to authorize Nancy Ahlers to choose Portico's Select Copay 2000 for Pastor's health insurance. This is the most comparable to the Gold+ plan that she's had since she started at Zion. (This may be for nought because Pastor turned 65 and has signed up for Medicare.) Roberta Seda seconded. **Motion carried.** Josh Thayer made a motion to set the fair rental for housing for the parsonage at \$7200. Jim Meyer seconded. Motion carried. Amanda Reinhart made a motion to accept the treasurer's report. Jim Meyer seconded it. **Motion carried.**

Staff Reports

Senior Pastor: Rev. Carolann Hopcke – Rev. Hillary Christensen will supply for Holy Communion on Nov. 23 and 30th, while pastor is on vacation. Pastor needs a Thrivent card for the light parade giveaways. The Immanuel Vision Foundation \$2,000 grant for hospital bears and dogs was approved and received. Kay Flanagan has resigned from doing PowerPoint. She is still willing to create the schedules and fill-in as available. Folks who have expressed an interest to join Zion: the Henn and Temme families. Marlys Smith would like to be an associate member. Letters for All Saints Sunday have been mailed. Reminder about the "Friendship Books" – these books replace the communion cards that we used to collect. Every one needs to participate – if you're already a member, simply write your name & check the member box.

Intern Pastor: Vicar Keith Powell – The synod Middle School Retreat was cancelled. A synod lock-in is March 6 & 7, 2026. The youth gathering in 2027 is in Minneapolis. An average of six people are attending the Sunday morning Bible Study. Confirmation is going well. Vicar will be gone for Veteran's Sunday due to a rural ministry class in Illinois. The next internship committee meeting will be Monday, November 17th.

High School Youth Coordinator: Dorothy Grosch – Vicar Keith & Melissa Kettelson took Luther League to the Holy Family Shrine in Gretna followed by a trip to Roca Berry Farm on Saturday, October 11th. Dorothy was sick & couldn't attend.

Committee Reports

Faith and Fellowship: The gathering at the Nest scheduled for October 12th was cancelled due to lack of availability. This will be rescheduled in 2026. The committee is planning another Holiday Dinner at the Albion Country Club in December.

Finance: The committee is working on the budget for 2026. It will be ready to present to council in November.

Mission Endowment: The committee is asking for council approval to move the Randall & Donna Kruse Scholarship Bond Fund to an ELCA Growth Fund when the bond comes due on November 6, 2025. Jim Meyer made a motion to move the Randall & Donna Kruse Bond Fund to an ELCA Growth Fund when it comes due. Sara Rasmussen seconded. **Motion carried.**

Calvin Webster has applied for the Harry Kruse Scholarship. Mission Endowment is recommending \$1,000 be given to Calvin Webster. Mary Kay Tisthammer made a motion to award \$1,000 to Calvin Webster from the Harry Kruse Scholarship Fund. Josh Thayer seconded. **Morton carried.** Overall, the committee reports that our funds have done well in 2025.

Fundraising Committee: The Elevator fund chart is next to the elevator in the upper narthex. (It was too tall for the lower narthex.) Elevator Pledge Drive monies have been coming in during the month of October. The silent auction bids were just over \$5,000. The front door collected \$1,800. The chili and cinnamon rolls were very good! Chili Winners: #1 Seth Flanagan, #2 Jolene Roberg. Cinnamon Roll Winners: #1 Jessica Reestman, #2 Jacque Dickey. The committee purchased skinny tables for the silent auction. Jim Meyer made a motion to pay for the tables with Memorial Fund money. Roberta Seda seconded. **Motion carried.**

Parish Education: There are some new members in Sunday School. The committee would like a way to keep track of new registrations every year. Rice Bowl banks were given to Sunday School students. The banks are due back on December 14th. The money collected helps to feed kids in orphanages across the world. Background checks are renewed every three years which means that most of the teachers need theirs renewed. The last three pieces of the Nativity scene (the Wise Men) will be painted on November 16th. Lisa Thayer is writing the *ABC's of Christmas* as the Sunday School Christmas program for December 14th. The Christmas ornaments that will be given to the children at the Christmas program are nativity cross ornaments.

Property & Maintenance: Door Keepers: Gay Sandman will continue to lock on weekday evenings unless there are meetings. The counters will unlock on Monday mornings. Cheryl Sherburne will unlock on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday mornings. Rolan and Connie Bentjen will unlock & lock on the weekends. Jon Porter plugged the hole in the furnace room where bats might have gotten in. Sara Rasmussen replaced the pulpit light. Scaffolding is needed to replace sanctuary light bulbs. Sara Rasmussen said we can use Tracy Coakes' scaffolding. We talked about snow removal. We are unsure of who removed the snow the last two years. Tammy Reigle shared information from Applied Connective about how much it would cost to have the doors lock automatically, which is @ \$4,500. Cindy Rasmussen found someone from York who can come to Albion and clean grandfather clocks, so Pastor put us on the list to clean the church clock. Zion's grandfather clock has not been cleaned since Russell Nore died.

Worship Committee: Veteran's Day worship is November 9th with a brunch to follow. The church pianos will be tuned on Thursday, December 4th. There will only be two Christmas Eve Services: 3:30pm & 5:30pm. Jane Mundschenk & Nicole Levander have volunteered to fill the candles.

Task Force Reports

Handicap Accessibility Project: Elevator Fund = \$183,854.75 (+ \$30,000 Grant) as of September 30, 2025. Josh Thayer talked to Fire Inspector, Todd Brehm, and has invited him to visit our building and meet with us. We are awaiting a date based on his availability.

Old Business: None

New Business: Amanda Reinhart made a motion to schedule the congregational meeting for after worship on Sunday, February 8th, 2026. Mary Kay Tisthammer seconded. **Motion carried.**

Next Meeting: **Tuesday, November 18, 2025**, at 6pm. **Mary Kay Tisthammer** has equipping time.

Adjournment: Mary Kay Tisthammer made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:35pm. Roberta Seda seconded. **Motion carried.** The meeting closed with the Lord's Prayer.

Respectfully submitted,
Kathryn Flanagan
Council Secretary

DECEMBER

BIRTHDAYS

- 12/1 Gracin Connelly, Nora Levander,
Elaine Reinhart, Lillian Reinhart,
Roberta Seda
- 12/2 Kyra Kruse, Dylan Staub, Tinley Schnoor
- 12/3 Ashley Lindgren, Masan Skillstad
- 12/4 Krista Choat, Nicole Woebbecke
- 12/6 Bob Coakes, Jonny Lindgren
- 12/8 Brian Dozler, Colton Juzenas
- 12/10 Christal Skillstad, Brooke Stuhr
- 12/12 Ben Stuhr
- 12/13 Aislynn Kurtenbach, Kim Woebbecke,
Ryleigh Young
- 12/15 Amy Culler, Ty Merten
- 12/16 Karen Rinehart
- 12/18 Christopher Lindgren, Tommi Kaumans,
Scott Reinhart, Jessie Sullivan
- 12/20 Kelly Seier, Ryan Tisthammer
- 12/21 *Bob Kruse**
- 12/22 Trudy Fick, Bryce Paulson,
Jenice Stevenson
- 12/23 *Joy Haas**, Norman Reynoldson,
Nathan Schmitz
- 12/26 Dana Andersen, Jane Mundschenk
- 12/27 Howard Levander, Riley Nelson
- 12/30 Lauren Kohtz, Alexis Pedro
- 12/31 Ron Levander

*Denotes 80+ years young



ANNIVERSARIES

- 12/1 Mike & Roberta Seda
- 12/4 Connie & Rick Nelson
- 12/28 Barb & Rich Howser
- 12/31 Joann & Jon Porter
Josh & Lisa Thayer

**denotes 50+ years of marriage*



We are not perfect and sadly, neither is our database. If you know of folks whose names are missing from the birthday or anniversary lists, please let us know. We really would like to include everyone. Thanks!

Don't see
your name?



Table Grace

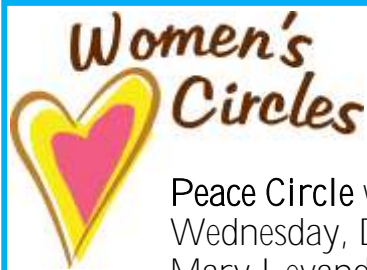
(Tune: Rock Around the Clock)

God is great, God is good
and we thank Him for our food.

We're gonna thank him
in the morning, noon and night.
We're gonna thank our God
'cause he's out of sight!

Amen (ch-ch-ch-ch-ch-ch-ch)
Amen (ch-ch-ch-ch-ch-ch-ch)





December 2025

Peace Circle will meet at Zion on Wednesday, Dec. 17th at 9am.
Mary Levander will be the leader.

Grace Circle will meet at 2pm on Wednesday, December 17th; at the Assisted Living. Doris Warner will be the leader.

2025-26 Flower Committee

December
Tammy Reigle

January
Tammy Reigle

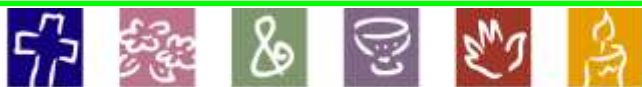


2025-26 Schedule

December:
Jim & Patti Meyer*
Nikki & Rich Heidemann

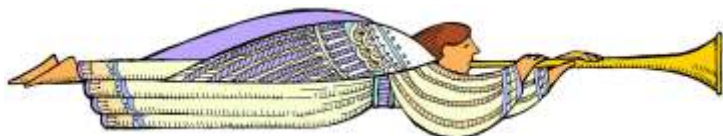
January:
Bob & Gay Sandman*
Kyla David
Marcia Seier
Lisa Skillstad

Altar
Guild



Worship Committee

NEXT MEETING:
Tuesday, December 9th
at 5:30pm



Longest Night (Blue Christmas) Worship Service Sun., December 21st **7pm at St. Michael's**



Although many of us are filled with joy and anticipation during this time of year, the holidays can be particularly hard for people who have recently lost a loved one. Holidays bring back many cherished memories and can rekindle the experience of loss.

This is a service of peace & healing offered to **those who may not be as "joyous" as the season expects.** It is designed for those who have experienced a loss in the past year, such as the loss of a loved one, a job, or some other life-changing event.

Holy God of Advent:
you became weak so we could find strength
in moments of heartbreak;
you left the safety of heaven
to wander the wilderness of the world,
holding our hands when we feel so hopeless;
you set aside your glory
to hold our pain so we might be healed,
even when there seems to be no hope;
you became one of us,
so we could never be alone
in any moment, in any circumstance.
So come now, Child of Bethlehem,
to strengthen us in these days.
May we feel your presence
in a way we have never known,
not just as One born in a stable
long ago and far away,
but as One born in our hearts, in our hopes,
in our spirits, in our weakness.
You have promised to go before us:
into our brokenness, into hospital rooms,
into empty houses, into graveyards,
into our future held by our God,
and you are here, even now,
waiting for each of us:
to serve us, to hold us, to comfort us,
to live in us, now and forever.
Amen.

PUZZLE

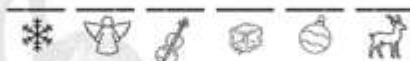


GOOD NEWS TO THE SHEPHERDS

What did the angel of the Lord say to the shepherds?

Directions: Write the first letter of each picture on the lines.

“



”

Luke 2:11, NIV

Christmas Card treasures



Turn old Christmas cards into beautiful keepsake ornaments! It's a fun, simple way to give new life to cards you've received and add a handmade touch to your tree.

What you need:

- Christmas cards
- Scissors
- Glue
- Circle pattern (cut from cardboard or trace around object)
- Hole punch
- Yarn or ribbon
- Glitter (optional)



What you do:

1. Trace a circle onto two Christmas cards.
2. Cut out the circles and glue the backs together.
3. Decorate the edges with glitter or ribbon for extra sparkle.
4. Punch a hole at the top and thread yarn or ribbon through to hang.



Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights.
— James 1:17 (NIV)



Bible Quiz



Who told Mary that her child would be called “the Son of the Most High”?

- A. Zechariah
- B. Gabriel
- C. Simeon
- D. Joseph

Answers are on page 13





LUTHER LEAGUE

for all youth in grades 9-12.

Join us on

Wednesday Nights!

Dinner begins at **6pm.**

Please mark your calendars and invite your friends! Everyone is welcome at any and all of our Luther League events!

Blessings,
Dorothy Grosch

Candlelight
Service

Wed., Dec. 10th

7:00pm

Everyone is invited
to attend this
worship service
led and prepared by
our Luther League!



Please mark your calendars, and
join us for this special worship.



**"Joy to the world,
the Lord has gum ..."**

Luther League Meals
Want to help provide meals
for Luther League meetings
on Wednesday nights? Go to
signup genius and do a search
using office@zionalbion.org
to volunteer! Thanks!



Luther League Schedule



DECEMBER

Sun., Nov. 30	4pm	Decorate Marilee's
Wed., Dec. 3	6pm	Practice Candlelight & Decorate Church
Thurs., Dec. 4	6pm	Albion Light Parade
Sat., Dec. 6	10am	Package Cookies
Wed., Dec. 10	6pm	Candlelight Worship & Cookie Sale
Sun., Dec. 14	10am	Christmas Cookie Sale
Wed., Dec. 17	6pm	LL Christmas Party

Boone County



Food Pantry

**1108 W. State St.
Albion, NE 68620**

Open EVERY Thursday
2-4pm

Ongoing Needs:

Canned Soup	Crackers
Canned Fruit	Toilet Paper
Cereal	Bar Soap
Kleenex	Toothpaste
Hand Sanitizers	Paper Products
Miscellaneous Personal Hygiene Products	

Donations may be brought to the Pantry on Thursdays between 2-4pm.

For more information, call Nancee Krohn (402) 741-1184 or Lynn Bygland (402) 920-3552

In order to be prepared
for our annual meeting,
there will be an

Informational Congregational Forum

Sunday, February 1st (after worship)

**Any questions,
please speak to a council member.**



Mobile Food Pantry ~ Sat., December 6th!

The next Mobile Food Pantry will be held on Saturday, December 6th at 9:00 am at the Boone County Fairgrounds. Due to the Covid-19 virus, this will again be set up as a drive-through only. All patrons will need to enter the fairgrounds from the 11th and Fairview entrance. Vehicles will be taken in order of arrival in a designated line. The first vehicle to arrive is asked to follow the road into the fairgrounds and stop and park directly in front of the cones that will be set out. All other vehicles entering that are there for the mobile pantry need to follow in line and wait until you have been asked to do otherwise.

If anyone is coming to volunteer their time, please park in the west parking lot next to the Casey Building. If you are willing and are able to volunteer, please arrive around 8:15 am.

If any volunteers or patrons have any symptoms of illness, please refrain from coming to the mobile pantry this month but feel free to ask someone else to pick up for you.

The Food Bank of the Heartland will provide pre-packaged boxes, along with some other produce and food products. Each patron will be required to take what is already packed in each box.

A specific number of vehicles at a time will be sent down to the distribution area. All people attending must remain in their vehicles unless asked to get out. All cars in the distribution area must remain parked until all of those vehicles are told to move. This is a big change as to how things are generally done so we ask for your patience and cooperation as the volunteers are doing their best.

Everyone is reminded that there is always the possibility that the mobile pantry could be cancelled or postponed due to the current events. Coordinators will do their best to update the information in the newspaper or through the Boone County Nebraska Sheriff's Facebook page.







Zion Church Council

Will MEET on
Tuesday,
December 16th at 6pm.

Mark your Calendar!

Annual Congregational Meeting on Sunday, Feb. 8th at 10:15am



CONGREGATIONAL MEETING




Next Meeting:

Sunday, February 15th at 10:15pm



✝ Christian Symbol ✝



POINSETTIAS


This shrub, native to Mexico, is at the heart of legend about a poor girl who wanted to bring Baby Jesus a gift one Christmas Eve. As she walked to church, she gathered a bouquet of weeds — which Jesus miraculously transformed into lovely red flowers. Thus the poinsettia (named for Joel Poinsett, the U.S. ambassador to Mexico who first brought the plant to America) is known in Mexico as la flor de la Nochebuena (flower of the Holy Night). The poinsettia is also an ideal Christmas symbol because its leaves turn red when deprived of sunlight and its flowers (the red inner buds) bloom in December.

Annual Ministry Reports

All committee chairpersons, ministry leaders, and treasurers are asked to submit annual ministry reports to the church office no later than January 5th, so that we may have it available by January 25th. Reports may be emailed to: office@zionalbion.org

These reports should include your committee's ministry activity during 2025. Any organizations and ministries of the church with bank accounts using Zion's Federal Tax Identification number, also need to submit a financial report for the year.

This is the time to talk about all the ministry that your committee has done over the year. It's certainly been a great year thanks to God and thanks to all of you!



ANNUAL REPORT

All Saints' Day is a time to remember all the saints who have faithfully lived and died with the Lord.

On Sunday, Nov. 2nd, we remembered the following Saints...

ALL SAINTS' SUNDAY



Carter Ahlstedt
John Becker
Barb Buckendahl
Steven Choat
Barb Cox
Mitzi Fisher
Carolyn Gray
Karen Hoppe
Gary Howser
Liz Hunt
Carolyn Johnson
Gary Karabel
Victoria Ketteler
Bernie Lindemann
Curt Morgan
Fran Obermire
Greg Packard
Kenny Podany
Alvah Ranslem
Lynn Reiff
Don Roberg
Jason Schnoor
Christa Slater
Dorothy Tisthammer
Greg Warner
Kennedy Young

Melvin Andrews
Candice Breed
Padma Catell
Steve Cloninger
Mary Daley
Jackie Gompert
Christy Henrickson
Bob Hosier
Russell Howser
Penny Janousek
Carroll Kallweit
Karen Kelley
Robbie Kleffner
Rev. Bob Matthias
Dave Muhle
Dottie Olson
Grace Perone
Ruth Pribnow
Bud Ranslem
Dean Roberg
Mary Roberg
Debbie Schwartz
Virginia Storm
Amelia Voichoski
Ron Weltruski
Roger Young

Rest eternal grant them, O Lord;
and let light perpetual shine upon them.

NewsLetter DEADLine

**The January Messenger
deadline is
Sunday, December 14th!**



**Sunday,
December 14th
9:00am**

**Please join Us for Zion's Sunday School
Christmas Program on December 14th.
These programs are always one of the
miracles of the Christmas season!
Mark your calendars!**

Advent Families

Would your family like to be an
Advent Family



and help light the candles of the Advent wreath?
Sign-up on the bulletin board outside the offices
or call the church office at 402-395-2043.

Nov. 30 Advent 1 Flanagan Family

Dec. 7 Advent 2 Thayer Family

Dec. 14 Advent 3 Nelson Family

Dec. 21 Advent 4 Family Needed

Dec. 24 Christmas Eve

3:30pm Levander Family
(Nicole & Tony)

5:30pm Stuhr Family



**Just a REMINDER:
the Sew Happy
Mission Quilters
will NOT meet
in November or December.**

All are welcome to
join them in
January 2026!





Advent Schedule

Sun., Nov. 30 9:00am	First Sunday of Advent Ring in New Church Year Holy Communion & Bell Choir
Sun., Dec. 7 9:00am	Second Sunday of Advent Holy Communion
Wed., Dec. 10 7:00pm	Candlelight Service led by the Luther League.
Sun., Dec. 14 9:00am	Third Sunday of Advent Holy Communion & SS Christmas Program
Sun., Dec. 21 9:00am 3:00pm	Fourth Sunday of Advent Holy Communion Christmas Caroling
Sun., Dec. 21 7:00pm	Longest Night Service (St. Michael's RC Church) Blue Christmas Worship
Wed., Dec. 24 3:30pm 5:50pm	Christmas Eve Holy Communion Holy Communion



Christmas Eve Special MUSIC

**Do you play an instrument?
Do you like to sing?**

We are in need of special music before each of our Christmas Eve services. There is time to share your musical talents before the 3:30pm or 5:30pm services.

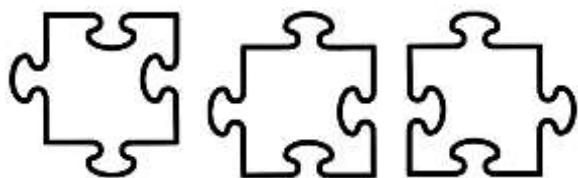
A sign-up sheet is posted on the bulletin board by Pastor's office. Sign up for the time that works best for you and let us know what musical talent you will be sharing.

For more information,
please speak with
Tami Texley 402-741-2330.



Puzzle Answers

Bible Quiz Answer: B (See Luke 1:26-32)
Puzzle Answer: Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you. (Luke 2:11, NIV)



Christmas Eve Worship Schedule

December 24th

Special Music

Begins

3:15pm

5:15pm

Worship

Begins

3:30pm

5:30pm

Coffee and CONVERSATION

December 4th
9:30am at the
Dotted Daisy

The Faith & Fellowship Committee is
inviting everyone for Coffee &
Conversation at the Dotted Daisy on the
first Thursday of each month at 9:30am.
We hope to see you on December 4th!

Please join us &
invite friends!



Holiday Dinner at
Albion Country Club
December 11th at 6pm



The Fellowship Committee has
planned a Holiday Dinner at the Albion Country
Club for Thursday, December 11th at 6:00pm.
The cost is \$25 per adult & \$9 per child (12 &
under). The cost includes salad buffet, entrée
buffet with Roast Beef & Fried Chicken, Mixed
Vegetables, Mashed Potatoes & gravy (Brown &
white), rolls & butter, Apple Pie, coffee, tea, or
soft drink, and tip. The children's menu
includes chicken strips, fries & milk (not the
buffet). Deadline to sign up is December 8th.

Alcohol will be available for purchase
on an individual basis.

A sign-up sheet is posted
on the Narthex bulletin board.

Please join us & bring family & friends!
For more information, please speak with
Deb Borchers (308-991-3912)



Christmas Poinsettias

If you would like to help decorate the church for Christmas, please
order some poinsettias. They are available in the following colors:

Red, White, or Glitter (Red & White Speckled)*
(Colors are subject to change based on availability)

You may order flowers in honor/ memory of loved ones. The list of
those honored/remembered will be in the Christmas Eve bulletin
and the January Messenger.

Complete the form below to order poinsettias and place it in the
offering plate or mail it with your payment to:

Zion Lutheran Church
319 S. 5th St.
Albion, NE 68620

The cost is \$15.00 per plant (6" pots).

The order deadline is Sunday, November 30th.
(Speak with Patti Meyer if you have any questions.)

Name of sponsor: _____

Phone # () _____

In memory of: _____

In honor of: _____

of plants & colors: _____

Amount enclosed: \$ _____

(Feel free to use more than one order form)



Sunday, December 28th
9:00am



Worship Song Leaders DECEMBER

- 7 Jacque & Tom Dickey
- 14 Kay Flanagan
- 21 *Volunteer Needed!*
- 24 *Volunteer Needed!*
Volunteer Needed!
- 28 *Volunteer Needed!*



There will be NO Sunday School
December 14th — January 4th
Classes will resume on
January 11th!



CONFIRMATION



Classes:
Wednesdays,
December 3rd, 10th & 17th

Dinner is served at 5:30pm
Class begins at 6pm until 7:30pm

For more information,
please speak with Pastor Carolann.

Faith + SHARING =
EVANGELISM

The Evangelism Committee
will meet on Tuesday,
December 9th at 7pm.
All are welcome!

Sunday Bulletins

Sunday bulletins available in the narthex. They will be in the tract rack by the Thursday before the upcoming Sunday. Feel free to stop by and pick one up if you are watching on Facebook or Vyve channel 21.



Bulletins



Communion Elements Available

Individually packaged communion elements continue to be available for pick up in the church narthex. Take as many as you need for your household. This will let you take communion with us on Sundays as you watch us on Facebook live or on Vyve Channel 21.

If you have any questions, please talk to
Pastor Carolann or Amy Zaruba.



2025-26 Fellowship Coffee Serving Schedule

December: Women of Zion
January: Church Council



Snow Shoveling Volunteers Needed!

We need help to scoop or shovel all of the church and parsonage sidewalks! If you are able to help, just come by after a snow and start!

FYI Confirmation Students:
Each sidewalk is worth 5 points!
Thanks for your help!

Intern
Committee
Meeting
6pm on Tuesday,
January 27th



Prayer Chain & Prayer Concerns

If you would like to add someone to the prayer chain, please call Sharon Waters (402-741-2358) or the church office (4029-395-2043) and they will start the chain. If you'd like to add someone to our Sunday prayers, please call the church office (402-395-2043).

***"Rejoice always, pray without ceasing,
give thanks in all circumstances;
for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus
for you." (1 Thessalonians 5:16-18)***



Christmas Gifts that don't cost a cent!

- ◇ The gift of listening
- ◇ The gift of affection
- ◇ The gift of laughter
- ◇ The gift of a written note
- ◇ The gift of a compliment
- ◇ The gift of a favor
- ◇ The gift of solitude
- ◇ The gift of a cheerful disposition
- ◇ The gift of Jesus!

May you be blessed at Christmas and throughout the year!



Prayer Concerns this Month

Wolf Memorial Home Residents

Judy Harder

Bob & LaVonne Kruse

LaVonne Mills Muriel Young

Good Samaritan Estates (Assisted Living)

Donna Kruse Dorothy Young

Genoa Assisted Living (Genoa)

Arletta Francis

Heritage of Bel-Air (Norfolk)

LaVonne Olnes

Mid-Nebraska Lutheran Home

Harold & Lois Thewke

Community Memorial Health Center (Burwell)

Dale Sheldon

Out of State

Elva Bartels (Texas)

Joy Haas (Colorado)

In Our Sunday Prayers

George Christo, Joy Haas,

Beth Metz, Mark Smith, Pat Tobiason,

Xander Wright, Diane Young,

and the families of Jean Bittner,

Jackie Gompert, Robbie Kleffner,

Jeff Noble, Kenny Podany



Our Congregation

Adult Choir

Bell Choir

Sunday School Choirs

Pastor Carolann & Vicar Keith

All Worship Assistants

Other Concerns

Our Military

All those affected by war, violence & hatred

Those affected by natural disasters

Other prayer concerns are welcome



Don't forget to bring your box of Reverse Advent Calendar supplies to church on Christmas Eve or the Sunday after. All items benefit our local food pantry.

Thanks for your help!



Bell Choir Practice
Wednesdays
at 4:30pm

If you have any questions,
please call or text

Jacque Dickey
at 402-741-1709.

Handbells



Christmas Caroling
3pm on Sunday,
December 21st

At 3pm on Sunday, December 21st, we will gather at the church in order to carpool to the nursing home, assisted living & possibly some of our shut-ins for Christmas Caroling. Please mark your calendar and join us!

EVERYONE is invited!

The Sacrament of **BAPTISM**

*On November 16th
we celebrated
the gift of God's grace as
Emery Lila Zoucha
is baptized in the name
of the Father, ✚ Son,
and Holy Spirit.*



*Emery was born at 1:14pm
on Saturday, May 3, 2025.
She weighed 5 lbs., 14oz.,
and was 18" long.*

*Loving Parents: Kim Christo &
Zachary Zoucha*

*Siblings: Paxtyn O'Connor
Aston Zoucha
Cambria Zoucha*

*Godparents: Jamie Beister
Erica King*

*Grandparents: George & Pat Christo
Diana Zoucha*



*May God continue to bless them all
with His abundant love and grace.*



All of Zion's Sign Ups
can be found online!

To volunteer, use one of the links below:

Worship Assistants: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/60B0C44ACAC28A1F58-worship>

Food Pantry Volunteer Signup:
<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/60B0C44ACAC28A1F58-54444846-food>

Confirmation Meals:
<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/60B0C44ACAC28A1F58-meal>

Luther League Meals:
<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/60B0C44ACAC28A1F58-luther1>

This is an easy and convenient way to
volunteer for the dates and ways you
would like to help. If you need
assistance, contact the church office.



DECEMBER

7	Tami Texley
14	Tami Texley
21	Tami Texley
24	Tami Texley
28	Sarah Liss



Choir Schedule

Advent

Rehearsal Sunday, December 7th 10am
 Rehearsal Sunday, December 21st 8am
 SING Sunday, December 21st 9am

*If anyone would like to prepare a vocal or instrumental special music, please contact Tami Texley (402-741-2330).



In person Online

May	124	130
June	96	129
July	97	141
August	105	128
September	160	137
October	139	161

Year to Date: 118 In person
 132 Online



2pm on December 18th at Wolf Home
 Volunteers Needed!

We will be hosting Bingo at Wolf Home on the 3rd Thursday of each month. We need at least two volunteers each month. There is a sign-up sheet on the narthex bulletin board.

For more information, please speak with Pastor Carolann (402-395-2043).



VACATION DATES



Pastor Carolann will be on vacation from Thurs., December 25th through Fri., January 2nd.



The Mission Endowment Committee will meet on Monday, February 9th at 5:30pm.



Faith & Fellowship

Committee will meet on

Sunday, December 7th after church at 10:15am

All are welcome to join us!



Welcome New Member Marlys Smith!

*Marlys joined our church family
as an associate Member
on Sunday, November 9th!*

*We are so happy to welcome her
into our church family at Zion!*

Albion's Light Parade

Thursday, December 4th
6pm

Zion will be participating in the light
parade again this year! Our theme
is: The Grinch!

We need:

Lights (old or new as long as they work!)

Garland & Bows

VOLUNTEERS to

- walk with the float
- hand out our giveaways!
- ride on the float!

Donations are being collected in
the narthex. We need these soon.

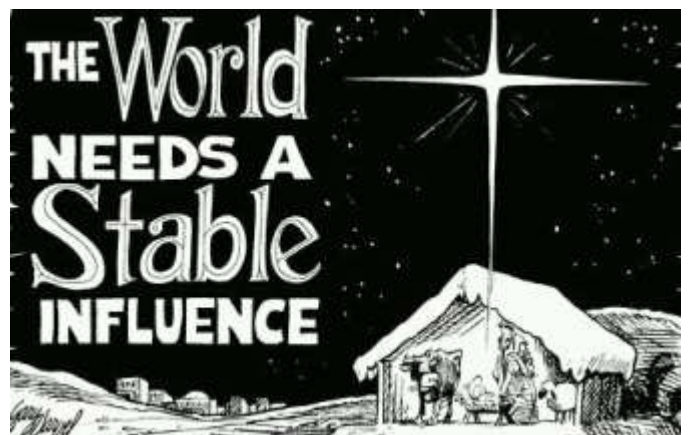
If you'd like to volunteer to help,
walk or ride, please speak with Kim
Schaefer 402-741-2716.

Zion Lutheran Church 2026 Serving Groups



Serving Groups are those folks called upon to serve, make a salad or dessert for a funeral. There are three Serving Groups at Zion with six Serving Group Leaders. A copy of the 2026 Serving Group Schedule is included in this Messenger. Please let us know if your name or phone # needs to be corrected, or if we inadvertently omitted you! (If we did that, we are very sorry!) If you no longer feel as though you can help in this way, let us know that too, and we will remove your name. You may also direct any questions to one of the Serving Group Leaders listed.

We are ALWAYS looking for folks who are willing and able to serve at the luncheon, regardless of your assigned group. If you are able to do that, please let the church office know so we can keep a separate list of servers. This is an important and vital ministry at Zion. We are thankful for your willingness to embody this ministry.





Tami Texley

PEOPLE SPOTS

Tamera Sue Tyson was born on February 13, 1965, in Broken Bow, Nebraska, to Dr. Dennis and the Rev. Faith Tyson. Three years later, Tami happily welcomed her younger brother, Jeffery. The family later relocated to Hastings, Nebraska.

Tami attended kindergarten through the fourth grade at Harvard Elementary School before transferring to Hastings Public Schools. There, she attended Alcott Elementary, Hastings Middle School, and Hastings High School, graduating with the Class of 1983. Tami held her first job during High School; it was delivering medications for Ed Pharmacy in Hastings. She later began working at Godfather's Pizza, where she advanced to the manager.

After High School, Tami pursued higher education at Peru State College in Peru, Nebraska. She earned a bachelor's degree in fine arts with a focus on K-12 vocal & instrumental music. A few years later, she continued her studies at Wayne State College in Wayne, Nebraska, obtaining a master's degree in curriculum and instruction. Tami also earned an endorsement to teach English as a Second Language (ESL).

After college, Tami began her teaching career at Orleans Public School in Orleans, NE, where she taught music to students in grades 5-12. Later, she took a short break from teaching to serve as a missionary in Peru, South America. During her time there, she realized that missionary work was not her true calling.

Upon returning to Nebraska, Tami faced a choice between going back to work at Godfather's Pizza or returning to teaching. She chose to continue her teaching career and accepted a position as a music teacher at Spalding Academy in Spalding, Nebraska. After several years there, she took another break from teaching to serve as a house parent for Christian Homes in Hickman, Nebraska. Following three and a half years in that role, and living between Albion and Hickman, Tami decided it was time to settle in one place and return to teaching. She joined Newman Grove Public Schools, where she taught music for 20 years. She finished her teaching career at St. Edward Public Schools. Tami retired in May 2024, and now devotes her time to caring for her parents.

While helping her mom one summer at a camp in Lexington, NE, Tami met the love of her life, Darrell Texley, who was also volunteering that summer to help with the children's camp. After meeting there, the two fell in love and were married on April 14, 1990, in Hastings, NE. The couple has been blessed with a wonderful son, Andrew.

In her free time, Tami enjoys crocheting and baking. She also has a passion for travel and organizes international trips through EF Tours. In addition, she is an active member of the Albion Music Club and the Albion P.E.O.

Tami is a lifelong Christian who grew up in the Assembly of God Church. She was baptized at the Assembly of God Church in Hastings in May 1974. Tami was a member of the Assembly of God Church in Albion until its closure. Since the fall of 2015, she has shared her musical talents with the congregation of Zion Lutheran Church, serving as the accompanist during services and as the choir director. Tami also plays in the bell choir at Zion and serves on the worship and music committee. We are deeply grateful for the many ways she chooses to serve God at Zion.

Written and Submitted by
Vicar Keith Powell

[illegible]

All proceeds benefit the Elevator Fund!



**Next Meeting:
SUNDAY,
February 15th
at 10:15am**



Next
Meeting:
Sunday,
Dec. 7th
At 11:00Am



Please mark your calendars!
We need you!



Wine & Word
6pm on Thursday,
January 15th
at the
Gateway Terrace
Community Room



Wine & Word is taking a break during the busy month of December. We will resume in the new year on January 15th!

Everyone is invited to the Gateway Terrace Community Room (11th St) for a casual evening of faith, food, and fellowship.

If you ¹have any questions or concerns, please speak with Pastor Carolann (267-374-7762).

**Please mark your calendars
and join us!**

Handicap Accessibility Project



Elevator Update

Total Cost:\$232,945*

(Custom Elevator for caskets)

Elevator T-bill Account	\$183,854.75
October Income	\$13,500.00
October Expenses	\$0.00
October Interest	\$531.55
Total	\$197,886.30**

*This does NOT include the Sprinkler system estimated @ \$252,000.

** Does NOT include the \$30,000 grant!



***Thanks for your support
of this very important project!***

Zion Lutheran Church,
Thanks for your
support & donations
for the Albion Community
blood drive! Thank You as well
for your part in helping collect
67 life-saving units during a
difficult time for donations.

Take care and have a good
start to the holiday season!

Kyle Jensen



**American
Red Cross**



Dear Friends,

As the seasons change and autumn fills the air, we are reminded of how grateful we are for the steady blessings in our lives, especially the continued support of friends like you. Your generosity sustains the heart of our ministry, allowing us to care for, guide, and uplift the children and families we serve each day.

Because of your kindness, our youth are thriving, settling into school, building friendships, learning valuable life skills, and growing in faith. Each smile, achievement, and moment of hope is made possible through your partnership and prayers.

This October, we give thanks for your support of \$97.50 and the light you bring to this mission. As Philippians 1:3 reminds us, "I thank my God every time I remember you." Your faithfulness makes a lasting difference, and together, we continue to build stronger futures for our children and community.

As the air cools, the children continue working hard in school. Thank you for your ongoing support.

Grace and peace,
Dan Cooper
Executive Director



Worship at Zion Lutheran Church is Intergenerational; on most Sundays we see



several generations of one family sitting in the same pew. And of course, among those generations, there are children. On any given Sunday, there is a chorus of laughter, crying and fidgeting from children in worship at Zion Lutheran. For these children and their parents, we give thanks!

To Parents of Young Children

We are so glad that you are here, and that you brought your children with you! Thank you!

- ♦ Relax! God put the wiggle in children; don't feel you have to suppress it in God's house.
- ♦ Sit toward the front where it is easier for children to see and hear.
- ♦ Sing hymns loudly, pray, and voice the responses with enthusiasm. Children learn behavior by copying you. If you are fired up about God, they will be too!
- ♦ Remember that the way we welcome children in Church directly affects the way they respond to the Church, to God, to Christ, to one another. Let them know that they are at home in the Church.
- ♦ Teach children some of the basic prayers. Being able to join in with the prayers helps them feel they are contributing too.
- ♦ Attend worship often, children like and need routines where they can participate.

To other members of our Church Family

A smile of encouragement is always welcome to parents with small children. If you forgot what it was like when your children were young and feel the need to step in and offer advice, please follow the example of Jesus and don't do that here. The presence of children is a gift to the church. They give us a future AND a present filled with much hope! Amen!



Zion Messenger is a monthly publication of
Zion Lutheran Church
319 S 5th St., Albion, NE 68620
Worship Services - Sunday 9:00am

Office Hours:

Monday - Thursday 9:00am - 4pm
Friday Office Closed
Phone 402-395-2043

Pastoral Care Concerns after hours:
Pastor Carolann Hopcke, 267-374-7762

Email: office@zionalbion.org
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Zion Sunday Services are broadcast LIVE on Vyve Cable Channel 21 and repeated on Wednesdays at 8am, 10:30am, 12pm, 4pm, 7pm, 8pm & 9pm and Saturdays at 8am and 12pm.

You may also join us each Sunday morning at 9am on Facebook Live!



You may worship with us live, or watch the service by clicking the link on our Facebook page at www.facebook.com/zionalbion