

ZION LUTHERAN CHURCH



Service of Prayer and Preaching
December 30th 2015



ANNOUNCEMENTS

BIBLE IN A YEAR. Back in 2012, we read the Bible in a year together as a congregation. Due to the overwhelming popularity of that venture, we are going to do it again in 2016. Reading lists will be available on the church's website, Facebook page, in the bulletin and in the monthly newsletter. Sermons will be based on the readings from the week, and Bible studies will give us an opportunity to discuss what we have been reading together. All it takes is 15 minutes each day and you'll read the Bible in a year!

INTERESTED IN JOINING ZION? While not necessary for salvation, visible membership in a congregation is, theologically speaking, a good idea. We'd love to have you (and your family) become part of our fellowship! Talk with Pastor Duncan or contact the church office if you are interested in learning more about church membership.

SUNDAY SCHOOL for children and adults is offered on Sunday morning, starting at 9:15. We have some incredible and dedicated teachers who would love to share the good news of Jesus with your children! Pastor Duncan leads the adult class in the basement; we are currently studying the Gospel of Mark.

SMALL GROUP BIBLE STUDY. Coming in January, we will jump back in to our study of Romans on Wednesday evenings. Come and join us as we study the book of Romans together. The fun starts January 6th at 7:00pm.

DID YOU KNOW that Zion supports missionaries to India and the Dominican Republic? Rev. Edward Naumann is working on starting a Lutheran seminary to serve the church in southern India and Sri Lanka. Bill Lohmeyer is working with the local church in the Dominican Republic to develop financially sustainable ministries to ensure long term stability and growth. It is a privilege to support these two missions and be a part of what God is doing in all nations!

Welcome to worship!

Thank you for being here! I thought long and hard about canceling this evening's worship service because, well, we had 4 worship services last week and we are coming together tomorrow evening for our annual New Year's Eve worship service. Why have a midweek worship service when there are so many other worship opportunities this time of year? Because worship is good; coming together as the body of Christ to pray and listen to the Word of God is a good thing.

This evening, we have no agenda. No "series" or Back to Basics that we have to fit into. So, as we enjoy some relatively free-form time together, I thought I'd share with you some of the Bible passages that have helped me when doubts and fears raised their ugly heads and tried to do their worst.

From Matthew to James, Psalms to Ecclesiastes, the Scriptures truly represent the full counsel of God. From revealing our Savior's love to our sinful nature; from what is pleasing to God to what is coming at the end of the age, the Scriptures tell us everything God wants us to know that we could not figure out for ourselves.

This evening, we study the Scriptures and we pray.
Thank you for being here! God bless your time in worship this evening.

-Pastor Duncan

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Zion equips, educates, and encourages believers in Christ, sending them into the world to share the Gospel.

The Service of Prayer and Preaching

The Invocation

Pastor: In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

People: Amen.

Confession of Sins

Pastor: Beloved in the Lord! Let us draw near with a true heart and confess our sins unto God our Father, beseeching Him in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to grant us forgiveness.

Pastor: Our help is in the name of the Lord,

People: **who made heaven and earth.**

Pastor: I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the Lord.

People: **and You forgave the iniquity of my sin.**

Pastor: Let us then confess our sins to God our Father.

People: **Most merciful God, we confess that we are by nature sinful and unclean. We have sinned against You in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone. We have not loved You with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. We justly deserve Your present and eternal punishment. For the sake of Your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, so that we may delight in Your will and walk in Your ways to the glory of Your holy name. Amen.**

Absolution Spoken by the Pastor

People: Amen.

The Reading: Matthew 2:13-23

Now when they had departed, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, "Rise, take the child and his mother, and flee to Egypt, and remain there until I tell you, for Herod is about to search for the child, to destroy him." And he rose and took the child and his mother by night and departed to Egypt and remained there until the death of Herod. This was to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet, "Out of Egypt I called my son."

Then Herod, when he saw that he had been tricked by the wise men, became furious, and he sent and killed all the male children in Bethlehem and in all that region who were two years old or under, according to the time that he had ascertained from the wise men. Then was fulfilled what was spoken by the prophet Jeremiah:

"A voice was heard in Ramah,
weeping and loud lamentation,
Rachel weeping for her children;
she refused to be comforted, because they are no more."

But when Herod died, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt, saying, "Rise, take the child and his mother and go to the land of Israel, for those who sought the child's life are dead." And he rose and took the child and his mother and went to the land of Israel. But when he heard that Archelaus was reigning over Judea in place of his father Herod, he was afraid to go there, and being warned in a dream he withdrew to the district of Galilee. And he went and lived in a city called Nazareth, so that what was spoken by the prophets might be fulfilled, that he would be called a Nazarene.

Sermon

(Please stand)

The Apostles' Creed

I believe in God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth.
And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord,
 who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary,
 suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died and buried.
 He descended into hell. The third day He rose again from the dead.
 He ascended into heaven
 and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty.
 From thence He will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit,
 the Holy Christian Church, the communion of saints,
 the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body,
 and the life everlasting. Amen.

The Prayers

You are invited to come to the Communion Rail for prayer.

Pastor: In peace let us pray to the Lord:

People: Lord, have mercy.

Pastor: ...let us pray to the Lord:

People: Lord, have mercy.

Pastor: For the concerns we have in our hearts. Let us pray...

Pastor: Taught by our Lord and trusting in his promises, we are bold to pray:

People: Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed by Thy name, Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven; give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom and the power from evil. For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever and ever. Amen

The Benedicamus and Benediction

Pastor: Let us bless the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

Pastor: The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord make His face shine upon you and be gracious to you. The Lord lift up His countenance upon you and give you peace.

People: Amen.

Pastor: Let us go forth in peace,

People: in the name of the Lord. Amen.