



Zion Lutheran Monthly

December 2020

Pastor's Corner

Politics Aside

Of the increase of his government and of peace there will be no end, on the throne of David and over his kingdom, to establish it and to uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time forth and forevermore. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will do this. — Isaiah 9:7



Well, the 2020 elections are finally over. Some in our country are delighted by the results, others are almost mourning. If there is one thing we Americans can agree on, regardless of political party, it's this – we care deeply about our politics!

It is one thing to have political beliefs and to vote according to those beliefs. In our country we are permitted to vote freely according to our consciences; a rarity in most of the world. However, one thing is notably left out of our elections. We may vote with all our heart, and soul, and even “devotion”, and yet we can so often overlook that government, ALL governments in the world, are gifts to us from God, and ALL governments have one Lord and Master – Jesus Christ.

We may wonder of the relevance of talking “politics” during this season of Advent. However, there is no better time to talk about politics! You may recognize the above passage from the prophet Isaiah. It is a prophecy from Isaiah about the coming Christ. We hear it during Advent and it is one of our readings on Christmas Eve.

As we prepare for Christmas, I hope we Christians can recognize that we have an allegiance to someone far greater than a Republican or Democratic party. As Christians, I hope we remember that we owe devotion not to the person of Donald Trump or Joseph Biden, we owe devotion to God in the flesh, Jesus Christ our Lord. As Christians, I hope we remember what Scriptures say about ALL governments; one day they will all come to a close at the return of Jesus Christ and He and He alone will be ruler over all things.

On the day that Jesus Christ returns, there will be no more American, Canadian, or Mexican Governments; they will no longer be needed. On the day Jesus returns there will be no more governments in China, India, or Nigeria; there will be One Lord over all and it will be Jesus Christ our Lord. Don't get me wrong, governments are wonderful gifts to us from God. They keep order in this fallen world and prevent chaos. And as Christians, may we always realize the place governments should have in our lives while at the same time giving our devotion and adoration only to God – Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Governments in this world are all temporary, Christ alone is eternal; a perfect Advent message for all of us to remember!

— Pastor Grimenstein

Chairman's Report

Testing the Church's Faith

Here comes yet another Christmas Season to the world!!! How many of the seven billion souls will be aware of the promise of Christmas? Most of the people on this planet won't be celebrating Christmas since most people aren't Christians. It's quite possible nearly all people are in one way or another "aware" of the Christmas Season, since even atheists are aware of Christianity. It's one thing to be aware of something like Christmas and quite another to be aware and informed about the actual meaning and promise of a Savior who was born, died and shall return to judge. Christmas is just another holiday to many people, but to the believer, Christmas is a promise fulfilled and the reason a new covenant exists among those in whom the Holy Spirit dwells. The first Christmas was basically the beginning of the end for evil in this world and the beginning of salvation among mankind. Isaiah wrestled with the thought of the Messiah coming to the world and his people not grasping that fact; thank goodness we accept the fact that Christ was born and shall return!



During the coming weeks we'll be celebrating the season in challenging times as we're still being tested because of the pandemic rules and dynamics. But, we will be celebrating. Please stay tuned to the various efforts we're making to inform the membership of our worship and activity schedules. If you have questions or need help signing up for a service please call the church office.

Regardless of what obstacles are thrown our way we will keep the faith and maintain our determination to worship and celebrate our Christian heritage and blessings throughout adversity. Keep the Christian Church on earth, the LCMS and Zion in your prayers as this coming year dawns upon the world. We're in a "Job-like" battle with dark forces that oppose the Good News. Have Faith. "For the Lord knows the way of the righteous, but the way of the wicked will perish." (Psalm 1:6) Please take the time to read Psalms 1 and 2.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

– Paul Klemash

SUNDAY SCHOOL NEWS

The Sunday School children have recorded their parts and completed artwork for our Christmas video production (see below for details). Thanksgiving cards were sent to Zion's homebound members to stay connected to those who are unable to join us for worship and let them know we care about them.

Sunday school check-in runs from 9:20-9:30 am. Classes begin at 9:30 am. See the checklist below for what you need to know before, upon arrival, and leaving Sunday school.

December Teachers

Dates	Lessons	Pre - K	1 - 2	3 - 4	5 - 6
	Classroom	205	208	207	Lower Conf. Rm
December 6	John Prepares the Way	Barb Oechslein	Carrie Lemonovich	Andy Weldon	Susie Bishop
December 13	The Baptism of Jesus				
December 20	Christmas Party				
December 27	No Sunday School Classes				

December Apologetics Lessons (Post-Confirmation)



December 6	How Do We Know There is a God?
December 13	How Do We Know the Bible is True?
December 20	Adult Bible Study
December 27	No Sunday School Classes

Teacher:
Michelle Wallace
Classroom:
Lower Conf Rm

Sunday School Checklist

We have been working hard to put appropriate safety measures in place. Information has been emailed to Sunday school parents with specific details regarding COVID-19 practices and requirements for Sunday school. Below is a Quick Checklist parents can use before arrival.

- Submit **Release Form regarding COVID-19 Matters** (www.zlcb.org/sunday-school)
- Submit the **COVID-19 Health and Safety Procedures Form** (www.zlcb.org/sunday-school)
- **Face masks** are required. Don't forget to send one with your child.
- All children will report to their designated **Temperature Check Station** before going to class.
- All children will **wash or sanitize hands** before entering and upon leaving their classroom.
- **No food or water** will be provided! Water fountains are closed. Parents can send a labeled water bottle, if necessary.

Virtual Sunday School Options

We will offer LIVE Sunday school lessons via Zoom to our students from 1st - 9th grades. Your teacher will email you requesting an RSVP to the virtual class. If you have not received an email and would like your child to participate, please contact Katie Gielarowski.

SUNDAY SCHOOL CHRISTMAS VIDEO!!

The video will feature our children sharing the story of Christ's birth through the reading of scripture. It will also feature photos, artwork and the Nativity.

The short, 5-minute video will be shown directly **AFTER BOTH WORSHIP SERVICES ON SUNDAY, DECEMBER 13TH**. After each service we'll take a special offering to benefit Zion's Sunday School program.

Merry Christmas!





**Share the Joy of Christmas
with our homebound
members ...
Send them a card this Season!**

Mr. Tom Bicusky
Elmcroft of Bridgeville
3275 Washington Pike
Bridgeville PA 15017

Mrs. Lois Dittmer
Strabane Woods
319 Wellness Way
Rm 117
Washington PA 15301

Mrs. Dolores Preaux
ManorCare Peters Township
113 W McMurray Rd
Rm 204 B
McMurray PA 15317

Mrs. Florence Boehme
McMurray Hills Manor
249 W McMurray Rd
McMurray PA 15317

Mr. and Mrs. Peter Fisher
292 Murrays Lane
Pittsburgh PA 15234

Ms. Lois Sauro
Elmcroft of Bridgeville
3275 Washington Pike
Bridgeville PA 15017

Mrs. Joan Cisko
128 Phillips Drive
McMurray PA 15317

Mrs. Dottie Heslop
Country Meadows
3580 Washington Pike
Apt. 110
Bridgeville PA 15017

Thank you!



Your Thanksgiving Offerings in Support of the
Siberian Evangelical Lutheran Church through the
Save the Seminary Campaign raised \$7,355 to
support Pastors and congregations in Siberia!

Bridgeville Area Food Bank

The December collection for the Bridgeville Area Food Bank is Sunday, December 13th. The "item of the month" is HOT DRINKS. Items may be placed in the wicker receptacle in the narthex near the coat rack.



You are also welcome to help at the food bank every third Saturday of the month between 7:45 am and noon at Bethany Presbyterian Church (contact Barb Oechslein for more information). Many families in our area are in need due to the financial downturn. Please continue to support the Food Bank with your donations and volunteer service!

2021 MEMBER CONTRIBUTION ENVELOPES

are available on the long table in the back of the sanctuary in alphabetical order. Please be sure to take yours, as well as those of any family members or friends who may not be attending church at this time!



ALTAR FLOWER & ETERNAL LIGHT SPONSORSHIPS

for dates in 2021 will be available soon in the back of the sanctuary!

Beware E-mail Scam!

Unfortunately, once again a fake email has been circulating to Zion members the email appears to come from "Pastor Edward O. Grimenstein" and requests "a favor" OR "money and/or gift cards".

THIS EMAIL IS A SCAM. PLEASE DO NOT RESPOND TO IT! During the pandemic unfortunately these scams have been on the rise.




Giving Tree

There are still a few angels in need of a gift for the children served by the Bridgeville Area Food Bank. If you wish to partner with us in this mission, choose an angel and purchase an age-appropriate gift.

I would like to thank all of those who have already chosen an angel from the tree. Your unwrapped gift costing around twenty dollars should be returned with the gift tag attached no later than **SUNDAY, DECEMBER 13.**





Zion's Forward in Faith Kitchen Campaign to resume at the end of January

Despite the postponement of fundraising and kitchen upgrades last spring/summer due to the pandemic, much work has been done toward the goal of a renovated kitchen at Zion. Thanks to the generosity of Zion members, more than \$22,000 has been raised so far!

The Kitchen Upgrade Committee will discuss the next phase of fundraising and project planning at the All-Church Voter's Meeting on January 24th after late service. Lunch will be served.

Please join us at the meeting on 1/24 to learn more about kitchen upgrade plans!





Lutherans
For Life

www.lutheransforlife.org

888.364.LIFE

Lutherans for Life witnesses to the sanctity of human life through education based on the Word of God. It serves through individuals who volunteer at pregnancy care centers, with hospice, through prayer, and in a wide variety of caring activities. It educates and encourages through conferences and workshops, printed resources and newsletters, Life Sunday materials and Bible studies, curricula, video, and through the website www.lutheransforlife.org

Chats 4Life

Are you interested in discussing contemporary life issues with other high school and college-aged youth? Would you like to learn how to address those issues from a Gospel-motivated perspective? If so, Chats 4 Life is for you! Chats 4 Life offers young adults opportunities to connect via Zoom with other 4Life youth from across the nation. During these sessions, youth are invited to network, ask questions, and engage in discussion about contemporary life issues. So far we've covered abortion, euthanasia, vaccines, healthcare rationing, birth control, homelessness, human trafficking, serving those with disabilities, and much more! Watch our Instagram page for the next Chats 4 Life opportunity, and contact mbauman@lutheransforlife.org for



Life Quote



“As we look forward to Christmas dinner and the celebration of our Savior’s birth, let us remember that Christ’s coming into the world began with an unexpected pregnancy. Mary of Nazareth was unmarried and certainly had reason to be confused and afraid when she was asked to carry the Son of God. But she courageously let God’s plan unfold for her and her Child and brought our Savior into this world, despite her uncertain circumstances.”

Right to Life of Michigan – A Life Quote from Lutherans For Life • www.lutheransforlife.org



The next March for Life is
FRIDAY, JANUARY 29, 2021

Lutherans for Life will be there!



What About...

The Apostles Creed

What does it mean to confess the Christian faith?

There is nothing more sure or certain in this life than the word and promise of God. With the words of the Apostles' Creed, Christians through the ages have responded to God's Word to them. With the Psalmist we pray, "O Lord, open my lips, and my mouth shall confess your praise" (Ps.51:15) The word "creed" comes from the Latin word, "credo", which means, "I believe". To "confess" means to make a declaration of what one believes. When we confess the faith of the Christian church in the words of the Apostles' Creed, we are confessing our belief in who the Holy Trinity is, and what God has done for us. Each section, or article, of the Apostles' Creed speaks about the work of one of the persons of the Holy Trinity: the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. Each article of the Apostles' Creed is our opportunity to speak back to God, and to each other, the mighty deeds of the Holy Trinity by which He has created us, by which He has redeemed us, and by which He keeps us in the one true faith until life eternal. This is a very important dimension of our faith and worship of God.

What do we confess about God the Father?

"I believe in God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth."

We all believe in one true God, maker of the earth and heaven. "Our Father," he would have us say; children's place to us has given. He has pledged always to feed us; body, soul, to keep, to nourish. Through all evil he will lead us, guards us well that we may flourish. He cares for us by day and night and governs all things by his might.

That there is a god is a truth known to all human beings simply from the very existence of all things. This is called natural knowledge of God. There is nothing very remarkable about believing that there is a god. Only a fool says, "there is no god"(Ps.53:1). The real issue is not that people believe in no god, but that they are tempted to believe in a god who is not the one, true God. Or, that they are tempted to put in the place of the true God, "gods" of our

culture, like money, success, popularity or pleasure.

The first article of the Apostles' Creed declares that Christians believe, teach and confess that the one, true God is none other than the One who has made the heavens and the earth, and everything in them. But more than that, He is our Father who provides and cares for us as a father cares for his beloved children.

We believe that He has made us and has given us all the good things we have in this life. This He has done purely out of the love He has for us as our Father. He not only gives us life, He also defends us, guards us, and protects us during this life, so that we will join Him in heaven for all eternity. There is nothing in us that makes us worthy of the good things God gives us. It is all from His love as a father. How glorious it is to know that the same God who created heaven and earth also created each one of us and cares for us personally.

What do we confess about God the Son?

"I believe 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 was 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."

We all believe in Christ, His Son, whom as Lord we are addressing, of equal Godhead, throne, and might, source of every grace and blessing. Born of Mary, virgin mother, by the power of the Spirit, made true man, our human brother through whom sonship we inherit; He, crucified for sinful men, through God's power rose to life again.

We are able to believe that God is our Father, because of what His Son, our Savior Jesus Christ, came into this world to do: to live perfectly in our place, to suffer and die to pay for the sin of the world, and then to rise victorious over humanity's most ancient and most evil enemies: sin, death and the devil.

Jesus Christ, the second person of the Holy Trinity, the Son of God from all eternity was born of the Virgin Mary,



What About...

Cont'd

The Apostles Creed

to offer up to the Father His precious body and blood for the forgiveness of the sins of the world. Through this sacrifice, the Son of God won for us reconciliation and peace with God, a peace that had been shattered by sin, both the original sin common to all human beings and the sin that is unique to each of us.

At the Father's command, Christ came into this world to do all this for us so that we would be His very own by faith, serving Him and living for Him. Our hope is in the One who rose from the grave and now lives as our Savior for all eternity.

What do we confess about the Holy Spirit?

"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."

We all confess the Holy Ghost, who grants comfort, grace, and power. He, with the Father and the Son, robes us for the triumph hour, keeps the Church, his own creation, in true unity of the spirit; here forgiveness and salvation comes to us through Jesus' merit. The body risen, we then shall be in life with God eternally. Amen.

The Holy Trinity, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, one God, three persons, equal in majesty and together being of one essence, truly does love us as His own dear children. The Holy Spirit calls us into fellowship with the Trinity, by the powerful means of grace that God has given: the Word and Sacraments. With the Word and Sacraments, He keeps the entire church on earth in the one, true and saving faith.

As Luther explains in his Large Catechism, the Holy Spirit works in our life through the church because the church "is the mother that begets and bears every Christian through the Word of God. The Holy Spirit reveals and preaches that Word, and by it He illumines and kindles hearts so that they grasp and accept it, cling to it, and persevere in it." In the church, the spirit of God is daily pouring out the forgiveness of sins

in rich measure so that on the last day we will rise from dead and join all believers in Christ in eternal life. Daily we want to thank and praise God the Holy Spirit for His work in our lives.

Why do we use creeds?

Some church bodies shy away from making formal statements of faith. The Lutheran church is not hesitant to use the historic, universal (ecumenical) creeds. We use the Apostles' Creed, the Nicene Creed and the Athanasian Creed. These three ancient creeds are how we confess the one, true faith of the Christian church and they help us to identify with all believers in Christ throughout all ages.

The historic creeds are, as our church recently stated in convention, "the cherished possession of the entire church down through the ages and are not just the expression of any one individual. The church has maintained the confession for these creeds and has even suffered martyrdom rather than deny the faith confessed in them." Therefore, the use of the historic Christian creeds is a very important part of Lutheran worship services. Because we know that personal, individual statements of faith are oftentimes subject to imprecise and even erroneous confessions of the faith of the church, we discourage the use of informal statements of faith in the

Creeds serve as a way to make sure that the church continues to believe what the word of God teaches. The treasure of truth in the word of God is what we wish to confess and to stand for as a church. It is based on these truths, as confessed in the Apostles' Creed, that the people of God are led to serve Him in both word and deed.

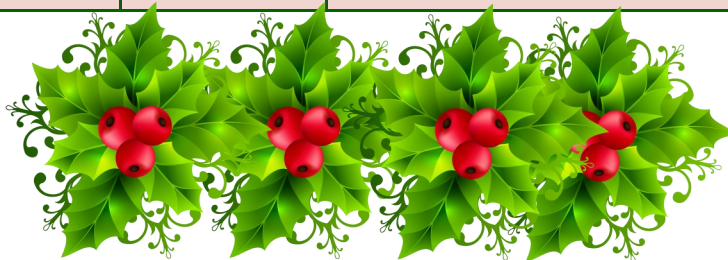
When we confess the Apostles' Creed, and the other historic creeds, we confess the faith of the Christian church. We do so with joy and confidence. With these words on our lips and in our hearts, we have the assurance that we are speaking back to God the truths He has first spoken to us. And thus, with confidence in the Lord's sure and certain Word, we say "This is most certainly true."

- Dr. A. L. Barry, Past President

The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod

December Service Participants

Date	Time	Acolytes
December 2	7:00 PM	Sam Bishop
December 6	8:00 AM 10:30 AM	Will Schrag Liv Bonacci
December 9	7:00 PM	Decklan Pasquini
December 13	8:00 AM 10:30 AM	Decklan Pasquini Sam Bishop
December 16	7:00 PM	Claire Lemonovich
December 20	8:00 AM 10:30 AM	Will Schrag Christian Bonacci
December 24	3:00 PM 7:00 PM	Sam Bishop Luke Lemonovich, Joshua Grimenstein
December 25	10:00 AM	TBD
December 27	8:00 AM 10:30 AM	John Lemonovich Liv Bonacci
December 31	7:00 PM	Elizabeth Lemonovich



	Elders	Altar Guild	8:00 am Ushers	10:30 am Ushers
Dec	John Gielarowski Mike Wallace	Janet Oelschlager Marian Oelschlager	Megan & Brian Pasquini, Barb & Wayne Oechslein	John & Kari Gresh, Andy & Dwight Weldon

December Birthdays

1st Tess Carter

1st Laurie Eckels

1st Brad Golish

2nd John Coyle

2nd Romilly Carter

3rd Augie Bishop

3rd Linda Seibel

4th Tom Garrubba

5th Jim Goodge

9th Michele Wallace

10th Megan Glasser

10th Michael Kozak

13th Susan Stone

15th Tristan Chilcott

17th John Gresh

22nd Casper Carter

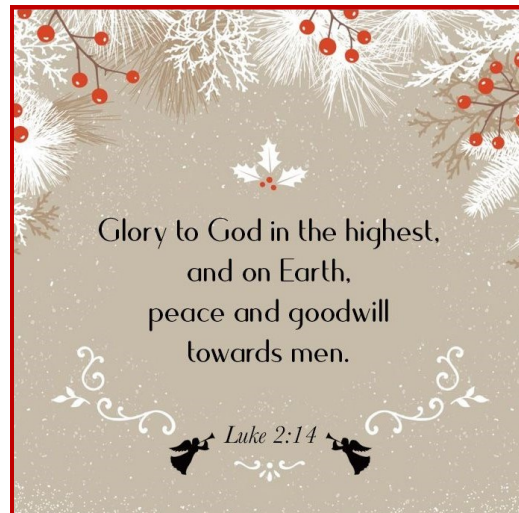
23rd Megan Pasquini

24th Michael Dyczewski

24th Jeremy Dyczewski

25th Joshua Grimenstein

27th Alex Yellig



December Anniversaries

22nd Jesse & Tess Carter





December 2020

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1	2 7:00 pm Advent Service	3 7:00 pm Elder's Meeting	4	5 10:00 am Small-Group Service of Prayer & Preaching 4:30 pm Church Decorating & Dinner
6 8:00 am Worship w/ Communion 9:15 am Adult/ Teen Bible Class & Sunday School 10:30 am Worship w/ Communion	7 6:00 pm 1st Yr Confirmation 6:15 pm Grace Bell Choir 7:00 pm 2nd Yr Confirmation, Trustees Mtg. 7:15 pm Adult Choir 8:15 pm Faith Bell Choir	8	9 7:00 pm Advent Service	10 7:00 pm Council Meeting	11	12 10:00 am Small-Group Service of Prayer & Preaching
13 8:00 am Worship w/ Communion 9:15 am Adult/ Teen Bible Class & Sunday School 10:30 am Worship w/ Communion SUNDAY SCHOOL CHRISTMAS VIDEO FOLLOWING BOTH SERVICES	14 6:00 pm 1st Yr Confirmation 6:15 pm Grace Bell Choir 7:00 pm 2nd Yr Confirmation 7:15 pm Adult Choir 8:15 pm Faith Bell Choir	15	16 7:00 pm Advent Service	17	18	19 10:00 am Small-Group Service of Prayer & Preaching
20 8:00 am Worship w/ Communion 9:15 am Adult/ Teen Bible Class & Sunday School 10:30 am Worship w/ Communion	21 6:00 pm 1st Yr Confirmation 6:15 pm Grace Bell Choir 7:00 pm 2nd Yr Confirmation 7:15 pm Adult Choir	22	23	24 3:00 pm Christmas Eve Service — Limited Seating 7:00 pm Christmas Eve Service	25  Merry Christmas 10:00 am Christmas Day Service	26
27 8:00 am Worship w/ Communion 9:15 am Adult/ Teen Bible Class & Sunday School 10:30 am Worship w/ Communion	28	29	30	31 7:00 pm New Year's Eve Service	 <p>And His name will be called <i>wonderful Counselor</i> Mighty God everlasting Father PRINCE OF PEACE. Of the increase of His government & <i>peace</i> there will be no end. <small>Isaiah 9:6-7 (NKJV)</small></p>	

Sunday morning worship at 8:00am and 10:30am



Zion Lutheran Church
3197 Washington Pike
Bridgeville, PA 15017

