

Zion Lutheran Monthly

December 2023

Pastor's Corner

God is With Us

"Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall call his name Immanuel" (which means, God with us). Matthew 1:23

Forget the presents. Ignore all the food. Enjoy friends and family, but don't let your joy stop there. During this time of year, there is only one reason to have true, lasting joy – God has taken on human flesh, forever. God has taken on "flesh" in many ways throughout time. God walked in Eden (Gen. 3:8). He came to Moses in a burning bush (Exodus 3:6). He led the people of Israel out of Egypt as a pillar of cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night (Exodus 13:21). He literally sat on top of the ark of the covenant between the two cherubim (1 Sam. 4:4). God has been taking on various forms of "flesh" ever since Eden, but they all pale in comparison to what Christ has done for you at Christmas. He took on YOUR flesh.

And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us ... John 1:14, ESV

He took on our flesh with all its weaknesses, our flesh with all its temptations, our flesh with its many limitations, our flesh that is subject to pain, and hunger, and tiredness. God took on all these limitations willingly. But it was not enough for Jesus just to take on human flesh.

From the Manger to the

He did this for a very good reason. Jesus took on human flesh so He could suffer, die, and rise from the dead. In Christ's incarnation, we have truly been given the greatest gift of all time. His death and His resurrection have now become our death to sin and our resurrection to eternal life.

You truly have so much to be thankful for at Christmas, but make sure you look past the lights, the trees, the gifts and the food. Take joy in what Christ has done for you by coming in your flesh to save you from all sins and even save you from death itself.

-- Pastor Grimenstein



President's Perspective

Closer still to the End of the Age

Another year shall pass this month in the history of your church here at Zion. We move onward into the 126th year of this parish and give thanks to Almighty God for all the good He has done here in our presence. I hope you all enjoy a wonderful Christmas and New Year as we welcome 2024. Your church is standing strong, grounded firmly in a precious doctrine of faith and Christianity that is more rare than you might believe in this world of lies, deceptions and subtle evils. Thank goodness for the LCMS.



This January we will convene an important Voter's Meeting that will have at least two important actions on the agenda. We'll be discussing forming a call committee to call a deaconess to Zion and we'll be taking action to consider establishing an endowment for the church. Please stay tuned for information on those matters in the coming weeks. The Voter's Meeting is January 28th after the second service; as a member of this congregation, please attend the meeting.

Hopefully you've experienced or seen the lighting improvement in the parking lot. This provides much more safety in our lot. Not only is it easier to see what is around you but our camera systems are able to better "see" also. There are some other projects on the drawing board, however, let's all enjoy the Holiday Season; the trustees deserve a break from all the issues with contractors, etc.

Speaking of the Holidays, your church is gearing up for the usual busy season of providing the wonderful Holiday Services, so plan on being part of the joyous celebration as we mark the birth of the Christ Child. The Light of the World coming in humble manner, to fulfill the law and create salvation for all mankind, is our rock upon which we stand. Our hope is in the name of the Lord.

As a "church" I think our Catechism infers that we're supposed to be in contact with each other, a sort of family of believers. In Acts, the beginnings of the church described in chapter 2 finds us reading, "and they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and the fellowship, to the

<u>breaking of bread and the prayers ... and all who believed were together</u> and had all things in common..."

Well, that needs to be us -- together, with all things in common. Let's enjoy being a chosen Christian, praying for Christians in this troubled world, our Synod and our members who need help. God Bless you as 2023 ends and God be with Zion in 2024! Christ is with us, even to the end of the age. Amen.



-- Paul Klemash



There will be three opportunities for Christmas worship at Zion:

- * Christmas Eve (Sunday 12/24) service at 2 pm
- * Christmas Eve (Sunday 12/24) service at 7 pm
- * Christmas Day (Monday 12/25) service at 10 am

A Prelude of special Christmas music ...

will be played prior to the start of each Christmas Eve Worship Service. The afternoon prelude will begin at 1:30 pm; evening prelude at 6:00 pm. Come early to enjoy the beautiful sounds of this holy season!

PLEASE NOTE:
Because
Christmas Eve
falls on a
Sunday, there
will be no
morning
services, or SS,
on Sunday
12/24



New Year's Eve (Sunday 12/31) services at 2 & 7 pm



KFUO Radio -- a media ministry extension of LCMS congregations -- shares Christ for you anytime, anywhere on **KFUO.org** via worship services, Bible and theology studies, practical talk programs, and sacred music.

You can find programs on demand at kfuo.org and wherever you get your podcasts! Find us on social: @KFUOradio on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram.



News from the Preschool

Greetings! Our year is well underway and is filled with 165 beautiful children learning, playing, and hearing God's word. We started in September, which is always a little chaotic, and now here we are in November purring like a kitten.

In case you were ever wondering what a typical day in the preschool looks like.... here you go:

We open the doors promptly at 9:00, greet the families at the door, and escort the children to their classrooms. As you can imagine, in September this was very challenging, especially since this was some of the students' first time away from their parents...lots of crying! Now fast forward to October...it's a completely different story. The children now can't wait for the doors to open and barely wave goodbye to their parents as they joyfully head to their classrooms...whew!

Once the children are settled in their rooms, we start the day on the carpet. The teachers will have a "morning meeting" and explain what they will be learning and doing that day. We then recite the "Pledge of Allegiance", and the older classes also recite the "Christian Pledge". Then it's off to "Free Choice" time. During Free Choice the children can play and use their imaginations with any number of toys and manipulatives set out for them. We also have "Centers" during this time. Each teacher in the room has a specific activity and will call the child(ren) over to complete the activity.

After Free Time we play the "clean-up song" and the children put their toys away. This takes some time, but eventually they know exactly were everything goes...and are very particular about it!

On Tuesdays and Wednesdays, we head up to the sanctuary for Chapel and Kids Praise. Pastor leads an interactive lesson with the children, and then I take over for Kids Praise. After all of this, the students are hungry... so off to snack we go. The rest of the day is filled with additional centers, story time, gross motor activities, and Jesus Time on the days we do not have Chapel.



As you can see, our days are very full. During October, November, and December, we also have lots of holiday themed parties, with the Grand Finale being the Christmas programs on Dec. 4th, 5th, and 7th at 7:00. We would love to see you there.

Our school is such a blessing to the students and their families, and I am equally blessed and proud to be its director. Thank you for allowing me to have my dream job.

Merry Christmas!

Tracey Harris





In the Classroom: For December, we will continue with CPH's Enduring Faith Series, Unit 7 - "Jesus Comes For Us". December lessons include: Lesson 5, "The Pointing Prophet-John Points to Jesus"; and Lesson 6, "A Temple Cleansing-Jesus Clears the Temple".

Christmas Video ... Our Christmas video is complete. THANK YOU Tess Carter for all the time and hard work producing it, and thanks also to the kids for participating.





December Dates -- SS Families PLEASE READ

Sun., Dec. 3 rd	9:15 Christmas Song Practice 9:30 SS class			
Sun., Dec. 10 th	9:15 Christmas Song Practice 9:30 SS class Video Showing after both Services			
Sun., Dec. 17 th	9:15 SS Christmas Party in classroom (Jesus birthday cake, stories, gifts & games)			
Sun., Dec. 24 th Christmas Eve	NO SUNDAY SCHOOL OR MORNING WORSHIP			
Sun., Dec. 31 st New Year's Eve	NO SUNDAY SCHOOL OR MORNING WORSHIP			

Member Milestones



On Nov. 17, 2023 Max and Jean Ma recited the Oath of Allegiance during the naturalization ceremony held at the United States Courthouse in downtown Pittsburgh. Following their more than 10 years of studying, working, and residence in the U.S. and holding permanent residency (referred to as the Green Card) for 5 years, Max and Jean officially become American citizens! Max is originally from western China and Jean is from Taiwan.

Coincidentally, Nov. 17 – the date of Naturalization Ceremony for Max and Jean – marks the 10th anniversary of Max's baptism.



Thank you to all those who contributed to the Adopt-A-Grandparent program. We collected more than 600 hand creams for local seniors to brighten their Christmas holiday.

With gratitude, Ginny Kimberland

Dear Zion,

We are so grateful for all the support and prayers from Pastor Grimenstein and our "Church Family" from the start of mom's health crises until her passing. We were overwhelmed by the number of cards, calls, e-mails, and donations to Zion in her

Gratitude

memory, along with the remarkable turnout for her viewing and her funeral. We were overwhelmed by the outpouring of love! She felt so loved here and believe us, she loved you all back. Thank you with all our hearts.

With love, Marianne (Thielet) & Brent Miller

Zion Youth News & Events

Youth Group Meeting Schedule

NO MEETING IN DECEMBER. We'll come back together in January for a movie night. Join us Sunday Jan. 15th from 6:00-8:00 for popcorn, munchies and a faith-based flick!

All Zion youth in grades 8-12 are invited!

Our Holiday Treat-Making Night was ... SWEET!









BBQ Fundraiser coming in January!

Just in time for your Super Bowl celebration, Zion youth will be selling "ready-to -heat & eat" pulled pork, baby back ribs, and sauces from South Fayette company "Rib Raiser BBQ". Stay tuned!!



Monies raised will help with expenses for our trip to the 2025 LCMS

Youth Gathering in New Orleans



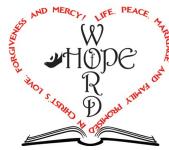


Several of our Zion teens and their parents will be attending the conference below and participating in the **March for Life** in Washington, DC. Please include them in your prayers for safe travel and may they be bold witnesses for the sanctity of life!



For those who have had an abortion, a Word of Hope ...

888.217.8679 • info@word-of-hope.org • word-of-hope.org









Interested in becoming a member?

Pastor Grimenstein will be starting an Adult Confirmation Class on

Thurs., January 11th at 6:00 for those interested in learning more about the Lutheran faith who are considering church membership.

The class is also open to current members interested in a "refresher" on the basics of the faith. The class will meet every Thursday from 6:00-6:45 for six weeks and will cover topics ranging from Baptism to the Ten Commandments.

Please email Zion secretary Susie Bishop secretary@zlcb.org to let her know you're interested in joining the class.



Foster Love Project Fundraising Goal Achieved

We are pleased to announce that we exceeded our matching funds goal by \$1,205. Zion will be sending the Foster Love Project a check for \$3,205 to help provide care and dignity for the kids in foster care in our community.

Bridgeville Area Food Bank

Pantry supplies are running low ... your support is greatly appreciated!



The December collection for the Bridgeville Area Food Bank is <u>Sunday</u>, <u>Dec. 10th</u> The "items of the month" are Hot Drinks, but any non-perishable food item is appreciated. Items may be placed in the wicker receptacle in the narthex near the coat rack.



The number of families and elderly in need of assistance from the Food Bank is increasing each month. Please consider donating!



Please return your unwrapped Angel Tree gift with the gift tag attached no later than SUNDAY, DEC 10.

In Christ's Service, Barb Oechslein, Bridgeville Area Food Bank Rep.

Join us & lend a hand!

Zion Decorating Party

Saturday 12/2 @ 10 am Lunch Served ... Sign Up in the Narthex!



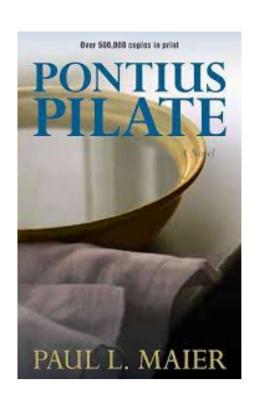


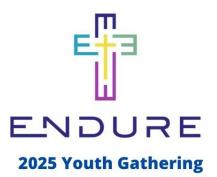
Zion Women's Book Club Spring Selection

Based on historical fact, this novel, written by a beloved LCMS author, portrays Pilate's rise to power, his politicking with national and religious leaders, and his pronouncement of a verdict that changed the world.

We'll meet in March - date and time TBD - happy reading!!

Available at Amazon or CPH.





July 19-23, New Orleans

CALLING ADULTS AGES 26 AND UP!!

Synod is accepting applications for Gathering Ambassadors. Ambassadors are adults who serve in many different capacities for the duration of the Gathering. They are servant leaders and trusted voices, helping participants have a safe and remarkable experience. If you're interested in applying or learning more, please see Tevia Grimenstein.



Upcoming Events



Christmas Ornament Exchange

Sunday, December 10, 6-9 p.m. Napoli's Restaurant, Bridgeville

RSVP to Tracey Harris ASAP tharrisyd@comcast.net

Ladies Bunco Night

Friday, January 26th, 6:30 p.m. Zion Fellowship Hall

Watch your emails in January for more information and to RSVP!



MARK YOUR CALENDARS:

Eastern District LWML 40th Biennial Convention June 14-16, 2024 Double Tree by Hilton Hotel, Cranberry

What About...



Angels



It seems as though angels have captured the imagination of people everywhere. Unfortunately, there are a lot of superstitions and unscriptural understanding about angels. This pamphlet will provide a Biblical perspective.

Do angels exist?

The Word of God—not popular television shows or magazine articles—is our only reliable source for knowing what angels are, and what they do. The Bible teaches us that angels were made by God during the six days of creation. Before creation there was only God (John 1:1-3), and after creation, we are told that on the seventh day God "rested from all the work of creating he had done" (Gen. 2:3b). The Bible does not indicate on which day of creation God made angels. But angels are very real.

The word "angel" comes from a Greek word that means "messenger". Angels are God's messengers. Elsewhere in the Bible, angels are described as spirits (cf. Acts 23:9; Heb.1:14). The word "angel" is actually a description of what they do.

What are angels?

Angels are spirits. They are beings who do not have a physical body. Jesus Himself said, "a spirit does not have flesh and bones, as you see I have" (Luke 24:39). Evil angels too are described as not having "flesh and blood" (Eph. 6:12). In the Scriptures, when angels do appear in human form, this is only a momentary appearance for those who need to see them. Angels are not gods. They are God's creation and serve His holy and perfect will. The good angels are said to be "ministering spirits" (Heb. 1:14), sent by God to serve us, His people.

Are angels human?

Human beings are the crown of God's creation. Only of humans, and no other creature, did God say, "Let us make man in our own image" (Gen. 1:26). Furthermore, Scripture reveals that only into human beings did God breathe the breath of life (Gen. 2:7). Also, God did not give angels rule over His creation. This privilege He gave only to mankind (Gen. 1:26-28). Angels exist to serve God and His people.

Do human beings become angels when they die?

No, human beings do not become angels when they die.

The Scriptures are clear on this point. Until the last day, the souls of the dead are before the Lord, enjoying peace and rest in His presence, awaiting the final day when they will receive glorified bodies for all eternity (see Cor. 15; 1 Thess.5:17; Rev.7)

Are angels intelligent beings?

The Bible describes angels as having both intelligence and a will. The good angels know and follow the wisdom of God, which He has revealed through Christ to His church (Eph.3:10). They gladly serve us, who are the heirs of the salvation Christ has won for us (Heb.1:14). However, angels do not know all things. For instance, they do not know the thoughts of our hearts (1 Kings 8:39).

How powerful are angels?

Angels are extremely powerful beings. They are described as "mighty ones" (Ps.103:20;2 Thess.1:7). The good angels guard and protect God's children (Ps.91:11-13). The power of the angels is never unlimited, but is always subject to the will and authority of God. Evil angels too are powerful beings. The Bible tell us that they hold captive all unbelievers (Luke 11:21-22; Eph.2:2). Believers in Christ are able to withstand the temptation of evil angels through the power of God (Eph.6:10-17).

Where are angels?

Angels, like God, do not inhabit the same physical dimension that human beings inhabit. From time to time, they are ordered by God to appear in our physical dimension. Thus, while there are times when angels will make an appearance at a distinct place (cf.Acts 12:7), they remain beings that inhabit no physical space.

How many angels are there?

The Bible does not give us an exact number, but does teach that there are incredibly large numbers of angels who serve God. Scripture speaks of "ten thousand times ten thousand angels" (Dan.7:10).

From every indication in the Bible, there are an unimaginably large number of angels, of whom we are totally unaware most of the time. There is a fixed and limited number of angels, never increasing

What About...



Angels Cont'd.

or decreasing. Unlike human beings, angels do not marry and have children (Mark 12:25). They are immortal.

Are all angels the same?

Within the large numbers of angels there are apparently certain orders or classes of angels. Scripture speaks of "cherubim" (Gen.3:24; Ps 80:1), "seraphim" (Is.6:2), "thrones or powers or rulers or authorities" (Col.1:16), "archangel" (1 Thess.4:16).

Also among the evil angels there are ranks and classes of angels (Matt.25:41). Satan is described as the "Prince of the devils" (Luke 11:15). It is pointless, however, to try to invent complicated divisions and ranks of angels, since Scripture does not speak of this.

What are evil angels, and what do they do?

Originally, all angels God created were good and did His will perfectly. At some point after God created them, some angels chose to rebel against Him. They fell away from God and into great sin and evil. At that point, they were confirmed in their evil condition. There is no hope for them. In Matt.8:29, they recognize that there will be a time when they must suffer eternal torment and punishment for their rebellion against God.

Satan is the chief evil angel, the "prince of demons" (Luke 11:15). Here is how our Lord Jesus Christ describes Satan: "He was a murdered from the beginning, not holding to the truth, for there is no truth to him. When he lies, he speaks his native language, for he is a liar and the father of lies" (John 8:44).

When precisely the evil angels rebelled and fell away from God we cannot say for sure, but we do know it was some time at the beginning of the world. Most church fathers believe that the evil angels' original sin was pride, based on the fact that Satan's temptation of Adam and Eve was an appeal to their pride. Also, 1 Tim.3:6 indicates that pride was the cause of the devil's condemnation.

The devil is our great enemy, who "prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour" (1 Pet. 5:8). The Bible tells us that the devil is the cause of unbelief in the world (Eph.2:1-2). Every person who does not believe the good news of Christ Jesus is thinking and doing what the devil wants. The very fact

that people do not realize this, and even deny it, is the devil's greatest deception. The devil is so deceptive, at times he will even disguise himself as an "angel of light" (2 Cor.11:14).

What do good angels do?

Good angels enjoy the blessing of being able to see God. They are in the immediate presence of God, always beholding His glory and power (Matt.18:10). This is called the "beatific vision," which all Christians will enjoy one day in heaven.

God's Word reveals the following things about the activity of good angels: They praise God (Is.6:3; Luke 2:13), and they are the Lord's servants in the world and in the Church (Ps.103:20-21; Heb.1:14).

God sends angels to serve and to protect believers in their work and their callings in life (Ps.91:11-12). The Bible tells us that angels are present in the public worship of Christians (1 Cor. 11:10). God also uses angels to help the family and to preserve law and order (Gen.24:7; Matt.18:10; Dan.10:13).

How are we to treat angels?

We need to praise and thank God for good angels. We are told that we are to take care not to offend them through sin and unbelief (1 Cor.11:10; 1 Tim.5:21). But the Scriptures are also clear that we must not pray to angels, nor offer them our worship. The angels themselves protest any worship given to them (Rev.22:8-9).

As believers, we have the privilege of having angels surrounding us and protecting us and working to do God's good and perfect will in our lives. Our hope and trust is always in God, whom we know sends His angels to watch over us and to see us through whatever difficulty in life may come our way.

Because of our Lord Jesus Christ's perfect life and sacrificial death, we have the assurance of the forgiveness of all our sins. We know that God loves and cares for us as His dear children. Furthermore, we know that the Lord sends His angels to care for us so that someday we may join them, and all the company of heaven, in singing His praises for all eternity.

-- Dr. A.L Barry Past President The Lutheran Church--Missouri Synod

December Service Participants

	Acolytes	Time	
Sun Dec 3	Emily Trentini Pippa Carter	8:00 10:30	
Wed Dec 6	Daniel Grimenstein	7:00	
Sun Dec 10	Elder Callista Chilcott	8:00 10:30	
Wed Dec 13	Daniel Grimenstein	7:00	
Sun Dec 17	Claire Schrag Elder	8:00 10:30	
Wed Dec 20	Pippa Carter	7:00	
Sun Dec 24	Callista Chilcott Daniel Grimenstein	2:00 7:00	
Mon Dec 25	Elder	10:00	
Sun Dec 31	Pippa Carter Daniel Grimenstein	2:00 7:00	

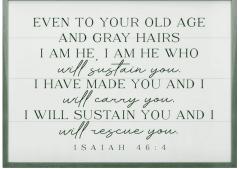








1 st	Tess Carter	17 th	John Gresh
1 st	Kami Fitzgerald	22 nd	Casper Carter
2 nd	Romy Carter	23 rd	Ed Hajduk
2 nd	John Coyle	23 rd	Megan Pasquini
3 rd	Augie Bishop	24 th	Michael Dyczewski
9 th	Michele Wallace	24 th	Jeremy Dyczewski
10 th	Megan Glasser	25 th	Joshua Grimenstein
10 th	Michael Kozak	26 th	Bob Bonacci
13 th	Susan Stone	27 th	Alex Yellig
14 th	Benjamin Taylor		







15th

Tristan Chilcott

22nd Jesse & Tess Carter

December 2023

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1	2 10:00 am
	*					Christmas Decorating
3 1st Sunday in Advent	4	5	6	7	8	9
8:00 am Worship	7:00 pm Preschool	7:00 pm Preschool	2:00 pm Advent Service Wk 1	7:00 pm Preschool	_A	
9:15 am Adult/Teen Bible Study & SS	Christmas Program	Christmas Program	7:00 pm Advent Service Wk 1	Christmas Program		
10:30 am Worship						
10 2 nd Sunday in Advent	11	12	13	14	15	16
8:00 am Worship	6:00 pm 1st yr Conf	6:15 pm Grace Bells	2:00 pm Advent Service Wk 2	7:00 pm Council		
9:15 am Adult/Teen Bible Study & SS	6:30 pm Faith Bells	7:15 pm Choir	7:00 pm Advent Service Wk 2	Mtg.		
10:30 am Worship Cookie reception	7:00 pm 2nd yr Conf		0.40.44			
6:00 pm Ladies Ornament Exch.			come, anuel			
FOOD BANK COLLECTION		Enm	anue()			
17 3 rd Sunday in Advent	18	19	20	21	22	23
8:00 am Worship	6:00 pm 1st yr Conf	6:15 pm Grace Bells	2:00 pm Advent Service Wk 3			
9:15 am Adult/Teen Bible Study & SS	6:30 pm Faith Bells	7:15 pm Choir	7:00 pm Advent Service Wk 3			
10:30 am Worship	7:00 pm 2nd yr Conf					
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
Christmas Eve	Merry Christmas					
2:00 pm Worship 7:00 pm Worship	10:00 am Worship			G		
31 New Year's Eve				to the NEWE	SORN 7	
2:00 pm Worship					ing	
7:00 pm Worship					U	