



Zion St. John

LUTHERAN CHURCH

Being the Body of Christ

December 2018 Advent/Christmas Vol. 24 No. 12



“People, look east, the time is near of the crowning of the year. Make your house fair as you are able, trim the hearth and set the table. People, look east, and sing today – Love, the Guest, is on the way.”



OUR VISION STATEMENT

At Zion St. John Lutheran Church, we are committed to being the body of Christ until He returns. Led by the Holy Spirit and gathered around God’s Word and Sacraments, we join in worship, fellowship, learning, spiritual nurture, outreach, and service, as we grow in faith and invite others to experience Christ’s presence.



People Look East, ELW #248



OF CARROTS AND PICKLES

This is a time of year when traditions are important, both in our families and in Lutheran congregations. One of the joys and challenges of being a pastor is learning the traditions that are important in the congregation and then doing our best to honor them.

This congregation is no different. Soon the Christmas tree that will adorn our sanctuary will arrive and decorated. When we do this there are two special ornaments that will be placed on it. They are odd decorations that I’d never heard of or seen before I arrived here; **the carrot and the pickle!** My first reaction was HUH? I’ve asked about them and someone thought maybe these were German traditions??

So this year I did some research. The traditions surrounding these ornaments are old German traditions. In German families a bride is given of a glass carrot ornament to be placed on the Christmas tree to bring good luck in the kitchen. The placing of a pickle is also an old German tradition, but specific to Christmas Eve. The pickle was the last ornament to be placed and it was to be hidden deep within the tree. On Christmas morning the children would search for the pickle. The first child to find it would be given an extra present from St. Nicholas.

Of course, I have personal traditions that I have added to Christmas here at ZSJ. At my very first Christmas at Wartburg a young woman sang the first verse of “From Heaven Above”, with no accompaniment. I thought it was so beautiful that I began this tradition during my first call in Pella, Iowa, when my daughter, Amanda, sang it on Christmas Eve. Since coming here, Caitlin Retz has sung it.

Another tradition I have added is using special candles from the Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem, for the acolyte and myself to begin the candle lighting on Christmas Eve. I have come to cherish the traditions of this congregation. I hope you have enjoyed being reminded of their significance!

People Look East!



God's blessings to you,
Pastor Kim



We have come to the best month of the year, in my humble opinion. December is time with family, beautiful decorations, wonderful music, and getting ready for Christmas. In the church, we have a name for that getting ready: Advent.

Each year for Advent, the choir sings as we light the Advent wreath. This year, we are using a new piece with new narration. Each week, the congregation will say "*Grant that we might have the peace of Christ as we wait, the love of Christ as we act, and the grace of Christ as we speak.*" I think that this reminder is important to all of us.

During the Advent season, we wait for our Savior. That waiting is hard. Christmas is a joyful, happy time of year, and many of us love that season. I typically start listening to Christmas music in October and would put up my tree as soon as the leaves start to turn color if I could. As we wait for our Savior, it is important that we keep the peace of Christ at the front of our hearts and minds.

During the Advent season, many people begin to be more generous with their time and resources. We see people giving to food banks and other organizations, spending more time with the shut in or

lonely, volunteering where there are needs. As we do those actions, we do them out of Christ's love for us. During Advent, I like to think of how I can continue that spirit of giving throughout the year, not just for these four weeks. Christ's love for us is ongoing, and so should be our love for others.

The last part of the narration from our service really touched me when I read it. "The grace of Christ as we speak" is something that is difficult for all of us. Humans are people who like to talk, and there are times when we talk out of turn or say hurtful things to one another. We currently live in a world where anger, frustration, and bitterness grow easily and tensions are high. If we speak with the grace of Christ, we will speak with love and understanding. I heard someone say recently, "We speak to respond, not to understand." Perhaps if we slow down and truly understand one another, we will see more of that grace of Christ in each other.

During this Advent season, my prayer is the same as the narration for our wreath lighting ceremony: *Lord, grant that we all might have the peace of Christ as we wait, the love of Christ as we act, and the grace of Christ as we speak. Amen*

Peace of Christ as we wait

Peace, Caitlin

Love of Christ as we act



Grace of Christ as we speak



HOLIDAY FOOD FAIR

Just wanted to keep reminding you of the Holiday Food Fair coming up on Dec. 8, 2018. Coffee and cinnamon rolls will be served at 8:30 am and the sales will begin at 9:00 a.m. The items for sale will be cookies by the dozen, candies, cards, Rada, Fair Trade items (coffee, tea, chocolate, olive oil and more), and as always in the past - a few surprises.

The proceeds are divided between the West Fork Food Pantry, our kitchen repairs, and Wings of Refuge in Iowa Falls which is a refuge for victims of human trafficking.

Every member of the congregation is encouraged to donate items or volunteer to help that day (no training is needed and the pay is rewarding). Last but not least, everyone is encouraged to come for coffee, fellowship and shopping.

Items to be donated can be brought to the fellowship hall on Friday, before 3 pm or before 8:00 a.m. on Saturday morning. Please label your items and the containers so they will get back to you. If you wish, you can list ingredients or suggest a price for your item.

In His Service, Carla N, 892-4985

MARK YOUR CALENDARS FOR ZSJ ANNUAL MEETING,

JAN. 20 2019

(SNOW DATE JAN. 27)

REPORTS DUE JAN. 10!

KLMJ BROADCAST

Our 10 pm Christmas Eve worship will be broadcast on KLMJ radio @ 9 am on Christmas Day. Thank you to a very generous anonymous donor for this special gift!



ADVENT MIDWEEK WORSHIP

Midweek Advent worship will be on Wednesday, December 5, 12 and 19 @ 7 pm. The Holden Evening Prayer Service is a beautiful candlelight service that brings peace during a very busy time of the year! Come and find the true meaning of Christmas!



CHRISTMAS EVE FAMILY CHOIR

At the 5:00 service on Christmas Eve, we will have a family choir! This is a no commitment choir. We will rehearse before worship at 4:15, then will perform the piece in worship. People of all ages are welcome to join and sing, ages 3-99. Copies of the music will be available on the Narthex table by December 9.

FINANCIAL STEWARDSHIP

Here's a look at our finances as of October 31, 2018:

Budgeted Income	\$181,810
Offerings Received	\$150,363
Current Deficit	\$ 31,447
Expenses YTD	\$171,097
Checking Balance	\$ 5,618



This month our budget deficit grew by over \$3,000 and our checking account balance also dropped by \$3,000. Please help us change this trend over the next month. A reminder that all offerings received by December 31st can be deducted from your 2018 income for tax purposes. Thank you for your faithful giving.

Thursday Dec 6, 10am-12pm

Thursday Dec 20, 3:30-5:30pm



We gratefully accept donations of money, personal hygiene items, perishable and non-perishable food and garden produce. We are still searching for a permanent space to house the food pantry. This space must be climate and pest controlled. If you have questions or donations, please contact the church office.

WINTER WEATHER POLICY

If West Fork Community Schools cancel classes, all church activities will also be cancelled. For Sunday worship, the Council President and Pastor Kim will consult and make a decision whether Sunday services and SS will be held. If services are cancelled it will be **posted on the homepage of the website** and we will notify the following television and radio stations:

- TV: **KIMT, WHO & KCCI**
- Hampton: **104.9 FM – KLMJ**
98.9 FM - KQCR
- Mason City: **1300 AM – KGLO**
1490 AM – KRIB
97.9 FM – KCMR



ZSJ QUILTERS

We meet every Wednesday morning, Sept. thru April. These ladies, cut, pin, thread, press, and sew small and large donated pieces of material for quilts. We go to rummage sales and thrift stores to purchase items for baby care kits and sheets. Sheets are used for the backs of the quilts. We purchase material to: cut into diapers, serge baby blankets, and sew backpacks. We purchase roping for

backpacks, school supplies for backpacks, towels, combs, clippers, toothbrushes for personal care kits. This fall we gave 22 quilts to men and women shelters in Mason City, 17 quilts to Beloit and Bremwood, 4 quilts to prison ministry in Ft. Dodge, 60 quilts to LWR, plus 137 school kits, 50 baby care kits, 17 personal care kits, and 10 lbs. of rolled bandages to LWR. God bless these ladies for giving their time to accomplish these mission projects; Marcia E, Sue L, Pam R, Vickie B, Doris M, Sue R, Helga B, Marilyn S, Arliss G, Gail L, Maxine H, Patty B and Carna.



LIVE STREAMING OF WORSHIP & SPECIAL SERVICES

For the past couple of months we have been testing livestreaming our worship services on Youtube. The money used for this technology was a memorial gift. The easiest way to access this is to go the Zion St. John homepage and click on the Sunday Worship time link that will take you directly there or go to Youtube and type Zion St John in the search box. So far we have averaged 4 to 6 views per week. From feedback we have received, most of those who are viewing our services consist of members who are college students, members who are on vacation, and people who are ill or recovering from surgery. The technology committee does not feel that this is having any significant impact on Sunday worship attendance. Our services are also being livestreamed to the Sheffield Care Center where residents now have video coverage as well as audio coverage of our services.

We expect to have a large number of people use the live stream for the Sunday School Christmas Program this year. For grandparents and other relatives who live out of town this will be a wonderful gift to experience this very special event live!





Call to Order: by Doug Dohlman @ 10:27 am, November 11, 2018. Present were Vickie B, Jim B, Doug D, Pastor Kim, Scott C, Cindy H, Tony R, Lisa P, Brigid C. Devotions by Pastor.

Brynn C and Emily M presented progress on letters and blessing box. Motion to approve the letter and plans for the blessing box, Jim; second, Lisa; passed.

Pastor's Report

• Baptisms Performed

November 11, 2018 Octavia D, daughter of Julia S & Matt D

• Weddings Scheduled

July 20, 2019 Zac C & Shaunda M @ Diamond Oaks

• Weddings Performed

October 20, 2018 Tyler G & Emily C @ ZSJ

• Requests for Membership Transfer (1 household, 2 confirmed, 4 baptized)

Kent, Shelley, Drake & Stella K to Palestine Lutheran, Huxley, Iowa - motion, Brigid; second, Vickie; passed.

• Other Activities

1. Attended the Synod's Fall Professional Conference in Dubuque.
 2. Planned the Confirmation service.
 3. Attended 3 Confirmation celebrations.
 4. Preached at the Sheffield Care Center on October 18.
- Scheduled to participate in Veteran's Day Program at HS on November 12.

Items to Consider

1. Date for the annual meeting is set for January 20th with a snow date of January 27.
2. Regarding the letter Pastor wrote to Total Mobility (the company that installed the vertical lift.) It was received back as undeliverable.

Apparently, they are no longer in business.

3. The floor in the fellowship hall is in desperate need of waxing. A group of volunteers did this last time. Will be added to the master list of needed repairs.

4. We received a letter commending Payton P for the work he is doing at the church cemetery. They enclosed a check for \$100.00 to help cover the costs of maintaining the cemetery. Pastor spoke with Payton on Friday and he is willing to do snow removal at the church again this year.

5. Pastor is scheduled to have another procedure to try and remove a kidney stone on Tuesday, November 13. Hopefully, he will be back in the office by Thursday or Friday.

6. Motion to support Callie A as our Young Adult in Global Mission, Brigid; second, Pastor; passed. She is serving in Hungary, which is one of our Sister Synods.

Correspondence - none

Minutes - Motion to accept, Vickie; second, Scott; passed.

Treasurer's Report - Reviewed. Request to find out how much is left in Parsonage Fund.

Committee Reports

Parish Education

- SS Xmas program on Dec 9th.
- SS is going well.

Property Management

- Reviewed list of needed repairs. Will discuss at Nov 18 service and then post in the narthex.

Stewardship

- Plans in place for the next couple weeks.

Technology

- Will create a posting about online streaming and usage.

Worship & Evangelism

- December is full. Cindy will take January.

Youth & Family

- Lock in on Friday and Saturday for HS.

- Pie and Soup pick up on Monday the 19th from 4:30-7:30.

Old Business

- Need one more nomination for 2019 council.
- AED training will be after the first of the year.
- Pastor will check on the freezers in the garage.

New Business

- Will set budget meeting for November 25th @ 10:30
- Out of letterhead envelopes and Diane will order more.

Adjourn

Submitted by Brigid C

Women of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

CALL TO ORDER: President Alice Greimann called the meeting to order on Sunday, November 11, 2018 at 10:15 a.m. Those present were: Alice G, Arliss G, Maxine H, Judy S, and Marcia E. Diane W joined later. Alice gave devotions and the statement of purpose was read.

MINUTES: Minutes of the October 14th board meeting were approved.

CORRESPONDENCE: Thank yous were read from LSI for the 8 quilts and from Malachi R for the confirmation gift.

TREASURER'S REPORT: Alice presented Diane's treasurer's report. The checking balance was \$1,857.09 and savings balance was \$1,456.30. Report placed on file.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

◇ **Mission & Action** co-chair Maxine reported that eight quilts had been given to Bremwood and 4 to the prison ministry at Fort Dodge. The following were delivered to the LWR truck in Mason City: 137 school kits, 50 baby care kits, 17 personal care kits, 60 quilts, and 10 pounds of rolled bandages.

◇ **Mission & Growth** co-chair Judy reported that everything is ready for the guest day on Nov. 18 at 2 p.m. The speaker, Scott Mathiasen, counselor with Anchor Health Services, will focus on depression and suicide prevention. All area churches have been invited. Volunteers from the board and others will furnish cookies and drink will be served. Shut-in gifts were discussed with the possibility of making the finger prayer fiddlers again.

OLD BUSINESS:

- ◇ Distribution of Pennies for Poverty was discussed. It was decided to purchase a goat, pig, bees and the remainder toward chickens through ELCA Good Gifts with the \$100 plus.
- ◇ Carla Nelson stopped to report more workers are needed for the Holiday Food Fair on December 8th.
- ◇ Diane reminded us to turn in our Thank offerings this month.

NEW BUSINESS:

- ◇ Diane will ask two people to review the treasurer's books before annual meeting.

Alice adjourned the meeting at 11 a.m. and we closed with the Lord's Prayer.

Secretary, Marcia E

Dorcas Circle

Tuesday, December 4 @ 1 pm

Hostess: All

Bible Study: All

Rebekah Circle

Will not meet until January 7, 6 pm



PRAYER LIST

In order to keep Pastor Kim informed and our prayer list accurate, please let the church office or Pastor know if you are in the hospital or are anticipating hospitalization.

Cindy R	Sarah P	Beth J
Lorri H	Sawyer A	Finley O
Pam B	Chuck N	Cliff C
Dick H	Christy M	Virginia C
Bev F	Louise C	Kira N
Gary S	Alice G	Junior N

Bishop Steven U

◇ Our HS and College Students as they take their finals.

Dec 1	Marvin K
Dec 3	Jesse E, Michael R
Dec 4	Colin C, Kenden N
Dec 6	Rebecca H, Joseph K, Dana Z
Dec 8	Doug D
Dec 14	Connie L
Dec 15	Brittany M
Dec 16	Grant N
Dec 19	Darrin S
Dec 20	Georgi E
Dec 21	Doug D, LeAnn E, John T
Dec 22	Kathy B, Colten H, Floyd G
Dec 23	Mary Jane N, Sue R
Dec 24	Coleen H
Dec 25	JESUS!
Dec 26	Deb B, Kelly K, Steve K
Dec 27	Alex B, Gene B, Tina H-L, Dakota R
Dec 29	Hayden F, Cooper W
Dec 30	Brett B
Dec 31	Pam H, Norah T



ADVENT/CHRISTMAS WORSHIP

(* Live Stream @ www.zionstjohn.org , click on Sunday Worship)

Dec. 1	10 am	Family Tree/ Sanctuary Decorating
Dec. 2	9 am	*Sunday Advent Worship w/ Holy Communion
	7 pm	Advent by Candlelight
Dec. 5	7 pm	Midweek Worship, "Holden Evening Prayer"
Dec. 8	9 am	Holiday Food Fair
Dec. 9	9 am	*Sunday Advent Worship
	4 pm	*SS Christmas program
Dec. 12	7 pm	Midweek Worship, "Holden Evening Prayer"
Dec. 16	9 am	*Sunday Advent Worship w/ Holy Communion
Dec. 19	7 pm	Midweek Worship, "Holden Evening Prayer"
Dec 23	9 am	*Sunday Advent Worship Carols and Lessons
Dec. 24	5 pm	*Christmas Eve Candlelight Service with children in mind
	10 pm	*Christmas Eve Candlelight Service
Dec. 25	9 am	Audio Broadcast of 10 pm Christmas Eve Service on KLMJ
	10 am	*Christmas Festival Worship w/ Holy Communion
Dec. 30	9 am	*Worship with Carols and Lessons

Holiday Worship Schedule



WORSHIP ASSISTANTS:

Head Usher: Don G

Altar Guild: Kari M, Kacy M

Acolyte:

2 Brynn C
 9 Lily D
 16 Jaydn D
 23 Cadence N-P
 24 Sage S, 5 pm
 Claire T, 10 pm
 25 Emily M, 10 am

Crucifer:

2 Jake S
 9 Ava H
 16 Trevor G
 23 Cole M
 24 Gavin M-O, 5 pm
 Jake S, 10 pm
 25 Ava H, 10 am

Lector:

2 Marcia E
 5 Jim B, 7 pm
 9 Jane E
 12 Jim B, 7 pm
 16 Dawn G
 19 Jim B, 7 pm
 23 Judy S
 24 Jim B, 5 pm
 Doreen D, 10 pm
 25 Judy S, 10 am
 30 Dawn G

Greeters:

2 Kathy B/ Sue R
 9 Bev B
 16 Gurtiz Family
 23 Rickes
 24 Bushkofskys, 5 pm
 Dohlmans, 10 pm
 25 Judy S, 10 am
 30 OIks

Offering Counters:

Cindy H, Jim B

Fellowship Time Servers:

2 Dean P
 9 HFF
 16 Bill N
 17 Diane W
 30 Bushkofsky/ Gurtiz Fam

SUNDAY WORSHIP SCHEDULE

9:00 am Worship
 10:15 am Fellowship and Sunday School



G Kim Wills, Pastor
pastor@zionstjohn.org

641-425-9453
 9:00am-3:00pm, T-F

Caitlin Retz, Director of Youth/Family Ministries
youth@zionstjohn.org

641-494-6989
 9:00am-4:00pm, S-M-T-Th
 9am-noon Wed.

Church Office
mail@zionstjohn.org

641-892-4010
 9:00am-12:00pm, M-F

*Just a reminder, the church office will be closed
 December 25!*

Merry Christmas!

