

# The Messenger

A newsletter of Zion Lutheran Church ~ Ottawa Lake, MI

December 2019

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## Advent and Christmas are fast approaching!!

ADVENT starts Sunday December 1<sup>st</sup>. Wednesday night Advent Services begin December 4<sup>th</sup>. There will be services on December 4,11,18. The services will begin at 7pm with a hymn sing. Watch bulletins for information concerning Advent meals.



## Christmas Festival and Cookie Walk

Get ready and mark your calendar for our annual Women of Zion Christmas Festival and Cookie Walk. The date is December 7 from 9:00 a.m. until 1:00 p.m. There will be all kinds of cookies, crafts, a baskets to win. We will also be raffling off a new La-Z boy chair. You don't want to miss this fun morning of shopping.

## Congregation Meeting:

Our Congregation Meeting will be held on December 8<sup>th</sup>. Our meeting will be to approve the budget ~ Mission and Ministry Plan for 2020. There will also be election of officers. Please pray and be willing to serve our congregation.



## Christmas Open House at the Geske's Home on December 22nd.

Pastor Jeff and Jacob would like to invite you to stop by their home between 2-5 p.m. on Sunday, December 22<sup>nd</sup>. They would love to have you stop by!

*Please plan to join us for the Celebration of Christ's birth on December 24<sup>th</sup>. We will have two services. Both services will have communion and candlelight. Please invite your loved ones, friends, and neighbors to join us in this wonderful celebration.*

**Early Service will be at 4:00 p.m.  
Evening Service will be at 6:30 p.m.**



# ZION LUTHERAN CHURCH

LCMC ~ LUTHERAN CONGREGATIONS IN MISSION FOR CHRIST

8307 MEMORIAL HWY. OTTAWA LAKE, MI 49267 ·

(734) 856-2921

**PASTOR · JEFFREY GESKE**

(785) 340-5635

[ZLCOLMPASTOR@GMAIL.COM](mailto:ZLCOLMPASTOR@GMAIL.COM)

[WWW.ZIONLUTHERANOTTAWALAKEMI.COM](http://WWW.ZIONLUTHERANOTTAWALAKEMI.COM)

**SECRETARY ~ SANDY BRADY**

**(419) 410-9380**

[SKWILES2000@GMAIL.COM](mailto:SKWILES2000@GMAIL.COM)

**CUSTODIAN AND ORGANIST~ JOSEPH EXTEJT**

## For Your Information

The following members give of their time to the leadership of this congregation. Please keep them in your prayers. If you have any questions, comments, or offers of help, please contact them.

**Chairman:** Dwight Gilliland

**Secretary:** Connie Sieler

**Treasurer:** Dennis Reitzel

**Financial:** Ron Clark

**Elders:** Ron Vincent

**Deacons:** Ben Schmidt; Bruce Ahleman; and Brian Gilliland



## LCMC ~ WHO WE ARE

**Free in Christ + Accountable to One Another + Rooted in Scripture  
and the Lutheran Confessions + Committed to the Great  
Commission**

## Prayers Are Important

If you have an occasion to request a prayer, please call the church office. If you would like your request to be on our prayer chain, please call Sandy Brady (419) 410-9380 or Pastor Jeff at the church or on his cell phone (785)340-5635.

## Please Inform the Church Office. . .

- \*when a member of your family is ill or hospitalized or if they are discharged or moved to another facility.
- \*when your address changes.
- \*when a new baby arrives.
- \*when a family member marries or leaves home for college, or military
- \*when planning a wedding to be conducted at Trinity.
- \*when a new family moves into your neighborhood.
- \*when you are planning to be out of town.
- \*when a brother or sister in Christ needs a visit from Pastor.



## From the desk of Pastor Geske....



Greetings to you in the name of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ! It is that most wonderful time of the year. I always enjoy seeing the Christmas trees, the lights, and all the other decorations that remind us of the promise fulfilled in Jesus Christ. As we celebrate this wonderful time of the year with all of its activities and celebrations, may each of us recall again the true reason for the season. This wonderful time of the year is all about God's love for you and me and the forgiveness and eternal life that He alone gives through Jesus. As you celebrate, may you remember the many promises of God for you that were fulfilled in Jesus. Let me share several of them with you.

First, that promise in Jeremiah of the new covenant that Christ would fulfill, "No longer will a man teach his neighbor, or a man his brother, saying, 'Know the LORD,' because they will all know me, from the least of them to the greatest," declares the LORD. 'For I will forgive their wickedness and will remember their sins no more.'" (Jeremiah 31:34 NIV)

Second, from the Prophet Isaiah, "Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign: The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and will call him Immanuel." (Isaiah 7:14 NIV)

Third, again from the Prophet Isaiah, "For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there will be no end. He will reign on David's throne and over his kingdom, establishing and upholding it with justice and righteousness from that time on and forever. The zeal of the LORD Almighty will accomplish this." (Isaiah 9:6-7 NIV)



There are so many more passages that speak about the Savior that would come. We live on this side of His coming, His birth, His death, and His resurrection. What a joy to celebrate all that Christ has done for us to give us forgiveness and eternal life! As we celebrate this wonderful time of the year and recall the birth of our Lord and Savior, may we not lose focus of the true reason for the season. Perhaps these commandments can help all of us in keeping Christ at the center of Christmas:

- I. Thou shalt not leave "Christ" out of Christmas, making it "Xmas." To some, "X" is unknown.
- II. Thou shalt prepare thy soul for Christmas. Spend not so much on gifts that thy soul is forgotten.
- III. Thou shalt not let Santa Claus replace Christ, thus robbing the day of its spiritual reality.
- IV. Thou shalt not burden the shop girl, the mailman, and the merchant with complaints and demands.
- V. Thou shalt give thyself with thy gift. This will increase its value a hundred fold, and he who receiveth it shall treasure it forever.
- VI. Thou shalt not value gifts received by their cost. Even the least expensive may signify love, and that is more priceless than silver and gold.
- VII. Thou shalt not neglect the needy. Share thy blessings with many who will go hungry and cold unless thou are generous.
- VIII. Thou shalt not neglect thy church. Its services highlight the true meaning of the season.
- IX. Thou shalt be as a little child. Not until thou has become in spirit as a little one art thou ready to enter into the kingdom of Heaven.
- X. Thou shalt give thy heart to Christ. Let Him be at the top of thy Christmas list.

I pray that you have a blessed Christmas and Happy New Year. I look forward to seeing you in God's house at this wonderful time of the year and always.

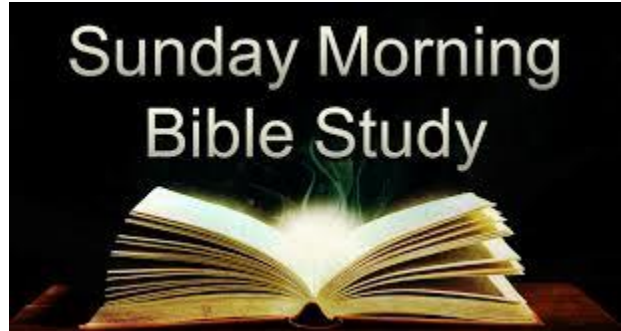
In Christ,  
Pastor Jeffrey D. Geske

## **Sunday Morning Bible Class**

*Please come and join our interesting study of the Word of God!*

### **Why Join A Bible Study** **By Peter Krol**

1. To get to know people
2. To learn about the Bible
3. To support my church or the people in the study
4. To sit under a gifted leader
5. To be a part of something great
6. To make new friends, or to deepen existing friendships
7. To be in a supportive environment
8. To build a tightly knit community
9. To develop more theological insight or biblical understanding
10. To grow as a Christian



Let me repeat: these reasons are all good. We should have Bible studies for reasons like these. But let's keep the best reason front and center. The good reasons are good only when they serve the best reason. What is the best reason?

*To know God through his Son Jesus Christ*

### **Adult Information Class**

If you know of anyone that would be interested in going through the Adult Information class, please let Pastor know.

#### **Merry Christmas!**

It is that time of year again that we celebrate the birth of our Savior, Jesus Christ. As you celebrate Christmas, may you be reminded once again of how God loves you so much that He sent His Son to be your Savior. We wish you a very Merry Christmas and Blessed New Year!

Your staff,  
Pastor Geske, Joseph Extejt and Sandy Brady

## Newsletter Article – December 2019



Jesus, in His Sermon on the Mount, is teaching those who follow Him that worrying about the necessities of life is idolatry: worshipping a false god. This is because worry and anxiety show what we care about. Our anxiety reveals what we love and to what we're devoted. It reveals what we trust in.

This is why our Lord begins this section with an overarching principle: "No one can serve two masters, for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and money."

But you say: "I must eat and drink. I must have clothing to wear and have a home in which to dwell." Yes, all these things you need. And Jesus says that your Father in heaven will ensure that you have them. He demonstrates this with a simple argument.

Your Father in heaven feeds the birds of the air, who neither sow, nor reap, nor gather into barns. He clothes the lilies of the field, who neither toil nor spin but are arrayed more luxuriously than Solomon in all his glory. If, then, your Father in heaven feeds the birds and clothes the lilies, how will He not also feed and clothe you when you are worth more than they are?

For you know that you are worth more than them. You are worth infinitely more. You are worth the price of the eternal Son of God. Did the Son of God come down from heaven and become a lily? Did he descend and take on the form of a bird? No!

He came down from heaven and became a man: flesh of our flesh and bone of our bone. He is one of us, our brother. And what did He do when He became flesh to dwell among us? He gave His holy, precious blood and His innocent suffering and death, that you might be His own and live under Him in His kingdom forever.

God became man in Christ Jesus. He lived the life we failed to live, and He died the death we deserve because of it. He was raised again on the third day to overcome sin and death ... for us. He was crucified for our transgressions and raised for our justification. So, if your Father in heaven has given His Son to die for us in order that we might live with Him eternally, how will He not also give us all things to support this body and life?

To be anxious about the necessities of life, to devote yourself to food and clothing, to care about this and find security in it, is to serve another god. It is to deny that you will live forever because Jesus, the Son of God is risen from the dead, lives and reigns for all eternity. It is to believe that God – who created you, redeemed you by the death and resurrection of His Son, and sanctifies you by His Spirit – will not keep His promises of sustaining you in this life.

Jesus says this: Seek first God's kingdom and His righteousness. God's kingdom is His rule among us. His rule among us comes when our Father in heaven gives us His Holy Spirit, so that by His grace we believe His holy Word and lead godly lives here in time and there in eternity. This is what we ask God to do for us in the prayer Jesus taught us.

Your Father in heaven knows what you need – food and clothing, house and home, etc. – and He promises to give it to you. Chief of the things you need is His grace and mercy in His Son, Jesus Christ. So, seek after that. Those who seek will find. And all the necessities of life, our Lord says, will be added to you.

*(--From the LCMS website)*

## WE BELIEVE, TEACH, AND CONFESS

### *The Third Article of the Apostles' Creed* **Redemption**

*[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.*

*What does this mean? I believe that Jesus Christ, true God, begotten of the Father from eternity, and also true man, born of the Virgin Mary, is my Lord, who has redeemed me, a lost and condemned person, purchased and won me from all sins, from death, and from the power of the devil; not with gold or silver, but with His holy, precious blood and with His innocent suffering and death, that I may be His own and live under Him in His kingdom and serve Him in everlasting righteousness, innocence, and blessedness, just as He is risen from the dead, lives and reigns to all eternity.*

***This is most certainly true.***



### **Bringing Christ to the Nations and the Nations to the Church**

"The Lutheran Hour," which began in 1930, is now heard on more than 1,300 radio stations around the world. "The Lutheran Hour," hosted by Dr. Rev. Michael Zeigler, is the world's oldest continually-broadcast Gospel radio program. This weekly half-hour program proclaims the message of Jesus Christ to all

people and serves as a bridge, linking them to the Church. Listen to the Lutheran Hour on Sundays at 10:00 a.m. at FM 99.5 KAWZ or AM 1560 WWYC or anytime at [www.lhm.org](http://www.lhm.org)

December 1

#### **"Enough with the Self-Talk"**

Speaker: Rev. Dr. Michael Zeigler

We are not always who we say we are. What you say to yourself about yourself may or may not be what's true. Dr. Michael Zeigler says, "Enough with the self-talk!" Who does God say you are? You'll find that you are worse than you thought, and yet, more loved than you could ever imagine. (Luke 18:9-14)

December 8

#### **"God's Yes"**

Speaker: Rev. Dr. Michael Zeigler

Loved and Sent Series  
(Romans 8:18-39)

December 15

#### **"TBD"**

Speaker: Rev. Dr. Michael Zeigler  
Loved and Sent Series

December 22

#### **"Christmas"**

Speaker: Rev. Dr. Michael Zeigler

December 29

#### **"Dreams"**

Guest Speaker: Pastor John Nunes  
(Jeremiah 23:24)





**THANK YOU!!!** Thank you to all who have directed their Thrivent Choice Dollars to Zion Lutheran Church. This program through Thrivent is another way to support our ministry of sharing the love of Jesus in our communities. Since the beginning of Choice Dollars about nine years ago, we have received over \$9000. Please continue to direct your dollars to our ministry. For more information, please speak to Pastor Jeff or contact our area representative or any Thrivent financial professional in his office.



**THRIVENT NEWS ...**

If you would like more information about Thrivent, its products, or its fraternal functions, please contact our area representative Greg Durivage in Maumee, OH at (419)-740-4193.

If you are a Thrivent Member, please consider using a Thrivent Action Team to support our ministry here at Zion..

**What is a Thrivent Action Team?** Thrivent Action Teams make it easy to live generously. Thrivent provides promotional resources and seed money to jump-start your fundraiser, educational event or service project. Your team provides the people power to bring it to life.



**Food Bank~**

**Thank you for your generous help** with our Food Bank. If you have any question or would like to help in any way, please contact Rick Keck at (734) 854-4710. The Food Bank serves families and individuals on the second and fourth Tuesday of the month from 10:00 a.m. until noon.



**Home Visits** Please sign up for Pastor Jeff to visit you. Over the next several months, Pastor Jeff will be making home visits to get to know our members better. Please be open for a home visit and sign up at church.

### STAFF CHRISTMAS GIFTS

This Christmas, we would like to show our appreciation to our staff. Please consider placing a gift in the offering plate. Please mark your envelope and/or check with the words "Staff Gift" or you can use the envelopes provided on the table. Your kindness to our staff is greatly appreciated. Please give your gift by December 22 so that a check can be given to them on Christmas Eve.

## BIRTHDAYS AND ANNIVERSARIES

We would like to wish Happy Birthday and Happy Anniversary to the following individuals who are celebrating this December. If you are not listed or you know someone not listed, please contact Sandy Brady or Pastor Jeff.

- 1 Hunter Gilliland
- 6 Jean Gilliland
- 10 Cheri Hand
- 11 Duane Holtz
- 28 Granger Vaughan
- 29 Elizabeth Vesey
- 30 Connor Vaughan
- 30 Jacob Vaughan
- 31 Alex Vaughan



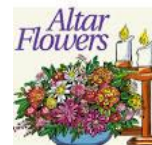
**We wish the following couples a very Happy Anniversary!**

We are not aware of any anniversaries this month, if you are celebrating, please let the office know. We do wish you a Happy Anniversary

**Flowers on the Altar** ~ If you would like to place flowers, please sign up in the hallway by the restrooms.

For the Month of December, the following have signed up:

- 1. 22. Bill and Sandy Brady
- 8. 29.
- 15.



### Community Rewards Program

Do you shop at Kroger? If you do, you can sign up for their Community Rewards Program and Kroger will give back to Zion money every quarter. Go on Kroger's website and sign up under Community Rewards. If you need help or don't have an email address check with Pastor Jeff. (Our code is NC512)

