***The Messenger***

***A newsletter of Zion Lutheran Church ~ Ottawa Lake, MI***

***December 2021***

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***Advent Worship Services***

***All of the Bible is about Jesus!***

The Old Testament is not just a historical record, but the active, Spirit-filled Word of God, pointing to the future birth of the Savior. This Advent, we will take our congregation through Old Testament prophecies pointing to the Savior with *Symbols of Salvation.* Join us Dec. 1,8,15 at 7:00 p.m. each week for worship with a light supper served at 6:15 p.m.

**Christmas Festival and Cookie Walk**

Women of Zion invite you to join them on December 11 from 9- 1 p.m. for their *Christmas Festival with booths from various crafts and specialty vendors.*

We will also have a Cookie Walk for you to purchase a great variety of Christmas cookies.

We will have tickets for special prize baskets.

*We will once again have a raffle for a La-Z-Boy Chair*

***Lutheran Men ~Monthly Breakfast***

On December 11, 2021, we will have our Lutheran Men Monthly breakfast at the parsonage. Breakfast will be served at 8:00 a.m. We will have a hot breakfast, devotion, and a Bible study. **Please come and feel free to invite a friend or neighbor.**

**Congregational Meeting:**

Our Congregational Meeting will be held on December 12th following the worship service. Our meeting will be to approve the budget ~ Mission and Ministry Plan for 2022. There will also be election of officers. Please pray and be willing to serve our congregation.

**Christmas Worship Services**

*Please plan to join us for the Celebration of Christ’s birth this Christmas. We will have two services on Christmas Eve and one on Christmas Day. Our Christmas Eve 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***

***Christmas Day Service will be at 10:00 a.m.***

**Christmas Open House at the Parsonage on December 19th.**

Pastor Jeff and Jacob would like to invite you to stop by their home between 2-5 p.m. on Sunday, December 19th. Pastor and Jacob would love to have you stop by!

***Women of Zion ~ Meeting***

There will be no meeting on December 27, 2021. Their next meeting will be on March 28 at 2:00 p.m. They will have a meeting and discuss various mission projects to support. They will also continue their Bible study on the book of Revelations. All Women are invited and encouraged to attend.

*** WORSHIP WITH US EACH WEEK!***

 ***Join us for worship on Saturday at 4:00 p.m. and***

 ***Sunday morning at 10:00 a.m.***

***Sunday School and Bible Study***

 ***Please plan to join us at 9:00 a.m. Sunday School at 9:15 a.m.***

**Zion Church Choir**

 Zion's choir is led by Joseph Extegt. All are welcome to join in. Practice is usually held after Sunday worship service. They practice after church in the choir room in the basement. For more information, please speak with Joseph Extejt.

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***HANDBELL CHOIR ~*** It is time to make a joyful noise to the Lord.   Come join the bell choir.  They practice on Saturdays at 3:00 P.M. for 45 minutes.  Don’t know how?  Happy to teach you.  Come join the fun!

For more information, please speak to Karen Vollmer 419-841-6782.

**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 do not have an email address, check with Pastor Jeff. *(Our code is NC512)*

**Steps for Linking your Kroger card to help our ministry ~**

**1. Sign into your account at** [**www.kroger.com**](http://www.kroger.com) **or create an account.**

**2. Click on the NAME.**

**3. Scroll down to MY ACCOUNT and Click on it,**

**4. Scroll down to COMMUNITY REWARDS. Click on COMMUNITY REWARDS.**

**5. Enter Zion Lutheran Church Ottawa Lake MI (NC512)**

**Food Bank~ Thank you for your generous help** with our Food Bank. If you have any questions 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.



**To Join our Text alerts visit: Text the message @jgesk to the number 81010. If you’re having trouble with 81010, try texting @jgesk to (517) 682-0429. This is a free service ~ You are only charged if your cellphone charges per text** **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**

[**www.zionlutheranottawalakemi.com**](http://www.zionlutheranottawalakemi.com)

**Secretary ~ Sandy brady**

**(419) 410-9380**

**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:** Ron Vincent

**Secretary:** Connie Sieler

**Treasurer:** Dennis Reitzel

**Financial:** Ron Clark

**Recording Secretary:** Sheila Vincent

**Elders:** Lee Edington

**Deacons:** Dwight Gilliland

**Committees:**

Trust Fund: Connie Sieler, Alan Ahleman, Delores Ostrander, Sandy Brady and Gilbert Olrich

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**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 Zion.

\*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….***

***The Bible ~ Basic Information Before Leaving Earth.***

Greetings in the name of Christ. As you celebrate this Christmas, may you worship and celebrate the Savior Jesus that came for you and me in Bethlehem and who journeyed to the cross of Calvary to save us from our own sin and to open heaven for us.



**Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!**

 May God continue to use you to encourage others to know, to receive, and to live the love and forgiveness of the baby Jesus who was born to set us free.

In Christ,
Pastor Jeff Geske

**Sunday Morning Bible Class**

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

*God’s Word for Today ~ Study of Romans*

Each study in the *God’s Word for Today* series provides an in-depth exploration of a book of the Bible. Each session includes:

* background information on the book of the Bible, it’s author, audience, occasion, and purpose;
* learning experiences that promote exciting and challenging discussions;
* notes for leaders that answer questions, suggest a learning process, and provide additional information;
* discussion starters that help participants apply God’s Word to their daily lives. (13 sessions)

Romans summarizes well both a quarter century of Paul’s missionary preaching and teaching, and the essential emphases of his evangelical theology.

**Newsletter Article – December2021**

*(--From the LCMS website)*

Our Lord Jesus Christ, the great physician of both body and soul, healed a man with dropsy by His Word on the Sabbath (Luke 14:1–6). Dropsy is a paradoxical ailment, with an unquenchable craving for drink even though the body is over inflated with fluid, a craving that, when indulged, served not to ease but to feed the disease.

And so, if a man drinks a great deal but is never filled, he sees a doctor to inquire about what ails him, what is wrong with his body, and how to remedy it. For that is not thirst but a disease (Seneca, *Consolation to His Mother Helvia*, 11.3).

But if the owner of five couches goes looking for 10, or the owner of 10 tables buys up as many again, and even though he has plenty of land and money, he remains unsatisfied and desires yet more, losing sleep and always in discontent, does he not also require a physician to diagnose the cause of this distress?

For this is not want or lack, it’s a disease (Aristippus, quoted in Plutarch, *Love of Wealth*, 524b). As St. Augustine of Hippo wrote, “we may rightly compare the dropsical man to a covetous rich man: For the more the one is swollen with excess of water, the more he thirsts; so also the other: The more he abounds in riches … the more eagerly he desires them” (*The Sunday Sermons of the Great Fathers*, 4:135). Both require physicians. Both require diagnosis and medicine applied from the outside to the inward being. For these are not desires to be fulfilled but diseases to be cured.

This is why our Lord instructs us to not to be consumed by money. “No one can serve two masters … You cannot serve God and money” (Matt. 6:24; Luke 16:13). Our desire for money, like the disease dropsy, is never satisfied. We always desire more. We think, “If I just had this much then I would be happy.”

But even when that much comes, which God gladly gives, happiness evades us. The desire for more is never satisfied. It demands our constant energy, either in procuring more or protecting what we already have. When this happens, God, in His mercy, shows us that the money that He has given is no longer serving us, but we it. We have another master.

To overcome this, we need a physician’s diagnosis and a physician’s remedy. And our Lord Jesus Christ, our great physician of both body and soul, applies His Word to us as He did to the man healed of dropsy. He shows us how we have put our fear, love and trust in our money and not feared, loved, and trusted in Him above all things.

In essence, He says, “Stop chasing after these fleeting things. They are vanity. They are the things that moths and rust destroy. You cannot have two masters. Repent!” And in seeing our great error, we are sorry that we have not fully feared, loved and trusted in God above all things. And, in the mercy and grace that He earned for us on the cross, He takes away this sin, restores us to health, and bids us to live.

But then what? What do we do with this healing balm and care that our great physician has given? Do we simply go back to our old ways? “By no means!” St. Paul says (Rom. 3:31; 6:2). We do not just go back to the old ways, the ways that lead us to death. No, we live a new life, a life filled with the grace, mercy and love of God toward us. And God’s great mercy, grace and love toward is so abundant that it overflows and pours out onto those around us.

So we no longer hoard money and possessions. We no longer scrape and crawl our way to amass more. We give to those around us, as God in Christ has given to us. We press our money and possessions into service for those who need it: our family, our society and our church. For money is God’s gift to us to serve us and others. Not the other way around. It serves us because it is a gift from our Father in heaven.

**WE BELIEVE, TEACH, AND CONFESS**

***From Luther’s Small Catechism ~***

***Q.* 115. Why is He named Jesus?**

The name *Jesus* means “the Lord saves.” Jesus is His personal name.

 377 **Matt. 1:21** She will give birth to a son, and you are to give Him the name Jesus, because He will save His people from their sins.

 378 **John 4:42** We know that this man really is the Savior of the world.

 379 **Acts 4:12** Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to men by which we must be saved.

**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.

**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.

Our Church Directory is Online!

View our church directory online or via the FREE mobile app today. To view the directory online, go to **members.InstantChurchDirectory.com** and follow the prompts under “Sign In” to “Create a login now.” Please remember, you must confirm your email address before you can sign in.  You will need to use your email address as listed in our directory to create a log-in the first time you use the directory online and via the mobile app.

Need help or have questions? Please contact Pastor Jeff.

**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 19th 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 month. If you are not listed or you know someone not listed, please contact Sandy Brady or Pastor Jeff.

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

The cost is $25.00

Please consider signing up for some time this coming year.

***December Birthdays***

***6 Jean Gilliland***

***8 Eileen Schmidt***

***10 Cheri Hand***

***11 Duane Holtz***

***14 Dylan Baumgartner***

***20 Callie Schmidt***

***30 Mary Dellabona***

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

***20 ~ Jeff and Candy Gorr***

***22~ Jim and Darla Hredzak***

*****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. or at AM 1560 WWYC or anytime at [www.lhm.org](http://www.lhm.org)

**December 2021**

December 5
**"Because We Belong"**
Speaker: Rev. Dr. Michael Zeigler
The world tells us we must be useful in order to belong, but that's now how God sees us.
(Luke 1:5-25)

December 12
**"TBD"**
Speaker: Rev. Dr. Michael Zeigler

December 19
**"TBD"**
Speaker: Rev. Dr. Michael Zeigler

December 26
**"TBD"**
Speaker: Rev. Dr. Michael Zeigler

**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

**COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES ~ NOVEMBER 21, 2021**

**Member Present:**  Pastor Jeff, Ron Vincent, Connie Sieler, Sheila Vincent, Ron Clark, Dwight Gilliland and Lee Edington.  Absent: Dennis Reitzel  Forum present.

Meeting was called to order by Ron Vincent @11:30. Pastor Jeff opened with a prayer.

Motion by Ron C. to dispense with reading of October minutes, 2nd by Lee.  Carried

Motion to accept October minutes made by Dwight and  2nd by Lee.  Motion Carried

**Pastor:**  Calendar for the new year activities is made up but will be brought up to date with any changes.

Choir is practicing for Christmas season.  Visits made to homes and hospitals but once again Covid has limited hospital visits. Services for Advent will be on Wednesdays, December 1, 8 and 15th.  Soup and dessert will be served before services.

**President**:  Ron will not be at services on December 19th to do the Facebook services.

**Treasurer/Financial/Building:** Ron reported that all bills are paid up to date.  A basement window has been repaired.

**Old Business:** Motion made by Lee to order hymnals (100 with engraving) and 2nd by Ron Clark.  Carried We have almost reached the total amount.  An anonymous donor has volunteer to donate the balance due.

**New Business**: 1. Christmas Eve services will be at 4:00 and 6:30 pm and Christmas day at 10:00 am and no 4:00pm contemporary services.

2.  Received an estimate of $1000 to $1100 to clean all windows inside and out in church and fellowship hall and basement windows on the outside only.  This doesn’t include the stain glass windows. Motion made by Connie and 2nd by Lee to get the windows cleaned and preferably before the holidays. Carried.

3.  Staff Gift for Christmas, once again congregation can submit gifts in envelope marked for Staff gifts and put in collection on Sundays.  This will be split up as before, 50% Pastor and 50% staff (Sandy & Joesph).

4.  Pastor will be gone December 26 thru January 4th.

A discussion was held on the who and how the weekly/miscellaneous monies will be counted and what reports will be used.  Sheila said she would try the new reports but they seem like a duplication of work.

Resolution: Only council members will be allowed to count and record monies (Financial Secretary and Recording Secretary and if needed Secretary).  Resolution made by Ron Clark and 2nd by Sheila Vincent.  Carried

Connie  made a motion to adjourn 2nd by Dwight  at 12:50.  Carried

Closed with Lord’s Prayer

**OUR CONGREGATIONAL MEETING WILL BE ON DECEMBER 12 AT 11:15**

Those that have stated that they are willing to serve are:

Treasurer: Brian Gilliland

Elder: Ron Clark and MaryJo Price

Financial Secretary ~ Sandy Bondy \*

Deacon ~ Jim Hredzak\*

\*These individuals are willing to serve but have not been members for one year. The congregation would need to approve the exemption to our constitution article C8.02.e to allow them to serve.

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| **Zion Lutheran Church ~ Ottawa Lake MI** |  |  |  |  |
| **Mission and Ministry Plan 2021 Budget and 2022 Proposal** |  |  |
| **Missions** |  |  | Budget for 1 Month | 10/31/2021 | 10 Months | PROPOSED 2022 |
|  | LCMC | 1,000.00 | 83.33 | 1,000.00 | $100.00 | $1,000.00 |
|  | Other |   |   |   |   |   |
|  | Yearly | **1,000.00** | 83.33 | 1,000.00 |  | $0.00 |
| **Pastoral Support** |  |  |  |  |   |
|  | Salary | $24,000.00 | 2,000.00 | $20,000.00 | $2,000.00 | $26,000.00 |
|  | Housing | $10,625.00 | 885.42 | $8,500.00 | $850.00 | $11,000.00 |
|  | Mileage | $2,400.00 | 200.00 | $2,000.00 | $200.00 | $2,400.00 |
|  | Cell | $600.00 | 50.00 | $500.00 | $50.00 | $600.00 |
|  | Health | $6,000.00 | 500.00 | $5,000.00 | $500.00 | $9,900.00 |
|  | 403b | $1,375.00 | 114.58 | $3,211.92 | $321.19 | $3,497.00 |
|  | 403b Pastor Contr |  | -$2,500.00 | -$250.00 | -$2,000.00 |
|  | Fed Tax Pastor Contr |  | -$2,000.00 | -$200.00 | -$2,400.00 |
|  | State Tax Pastor Contr |  | -$1,000.00 | -$100.00 | -$1,200.00 |
|  | Pastor Employee Tax  |   |   |   | $3,600.00 |
|  |  | **$45,000.00** | 3,750.00 | $33,711.92 |  |   |
| **Support Staff** |  |  |  |  |   |
|  | Organist | $5,370.72 | 447.56 | $4,766.21 | $476.62 | $5,952.00 |
|  | Custodian |  | 0.00 | $2,000.00 | $200.00 | $2,400.00 |
|  | Secretary | $2,400.00 | 200.00 | $2,150.00 | $215.00 | $2,700.00 |
|  | Emp Tax Cont | 0.00 | -$594.61 | -$59.46 | -$1,250.00 |
|  | Taxes All Emp. | $750.00 | 62.50 |   |   | $2,095.48 |
|  |  | **$8,520.72** | 710.06 | $8,321.60 |  |   |
| **Facilities** |  |  |  |  |  |   |
|  | Chur. Elect | $4,800.00 | 400.00 | $5,500.45 | $550.05 | $7,800.00 |
|  | Chur. Water | $600.00 | 50.00 | $518.32 | $51.83 | $738.00 |
|  | Comm Tel | $2,500.00 | 208.33 | $1,615.36 | $161.54 | $1,800.00 |
|  | Insurance | $3,900.00 | 325.00 | $4,214.69 | $421.47 | $5,160.00 |
|  | Maintenace | $3,500.00 | 291.67 | $4,232.20 | $423.22 | $4,000.00 |
|  | Misc | $500.00 | 41.67 | $239.00 | $23.90 | $500.00 |
|  | Office | $4,500.00 | 375.00 | $4,676.97 | $467.70 | $4,400.00 |
|  | Par. Elect | $5,700.00 | 475.00 | $4,610.81 | $461.08 | $4,400.00 |
|  | Par. Water | $1,200.00 | 100.00 | $1,481.80 | $148.18 | $3,358.00 |
|  | Supplies | $500.00 | 41.67 | $76.45 | $7.65 | $500.00 |
|  | Trash Serv | $1,000.00 | 83.33 | $862.50 | $86.25 | $1,060.00 |
|  | Yearly | **$28,700.00** | 2,391.67 | $28,028.55 |  |   |
| **Ministry Support** |  |  |  |  |   |
|  | Altar Guild | $800.00 | 533.33 | $870.00 | $87.00 | $1,000.00 |
|  | Conf/Retreat | $500.00 | 333.33 | $638.29 | $63.83 | $1,000.00 |
|  | Educ | $150.00 | 100.00 | $311.64 | $31.16 | $250.00 |
|  | Elders | $150.00 | 100.00 |  | $0.00 | $150.00 |
|  | Evangelism | $500.00 | 333.33 | $856.95 | $85.70 | $1,000.00 |
|  | Music | $100.00 | 66.67 | $134.95 | $13.50 | $200.00 |
|  | Stewardship | $150.00 | 100.00 |  | $0.00 | $200.00 |
|  | Worship | $600.00 | 400.00 | $1,050.75 | $105.08 | $1,102.00 |
|  | Yearly | **$2,950.00** | 1,966.67 | $3,862.58 |   |  |
| Total Yearly | **$86,170.72** | 7,180.89 | $74,924.65 |   | **$102,912.48** |