

The Tower

December 2016

For Members & Friends of Zion Lutheran Church

Know Christ! Grow in Christ! Make Christ Known!



For more information about Zion's ministries scan this QR code to visit our website.



What's Happening at Zion

Calendar Notes

Advent Midweek Services

Noon -- Advent begins Sunday, November 27. Beginning on Wednesday November 30 and on December 7, 14 and 21 we will have a noon Advent Service. The themes will be: Hope: The manger dares us to believe the best is yet to be; Peace: Christ came to bring peace on earth and good will to all; Joy: Let there be jubilation, celebration and festivity; Love: It really come down to that: God loves us.

Evening -- On Wednesdays 11/30, 12/7 & 12/14 at 6:45PM in Stelhorn Lounge we will have an Advent service: *In Silence We Wait, Prayers for Advent Around the Cross*. Join us as we gather in darkness and pray for the light of Christ to come and bring peace.

Zion's Christmas Schedule

December 21—Wednesday

- 6:30PM—Blue Christmas service

December 24—Saturday—Christmas Eve

- 5PM—Family Christmas service
- 6:30PM—Musical Prelude
- 7:30PM—Traditional Christmas service
- 11PM—Candlelight Christmas service

December 25—Sunday—Christmas Day

10AM—One Service

January 1—Sunday—New Year's Day

10AM—One Service

Please note: the Nursery will not be staffed Christmas Eve or Christmas Day

Woodworkers Needed

We are looking for help in creating an outdoor nativity scene for Zion's front yard. All those interested, please contact the office or pastor Jim at jdebner@zlc-aa.org ASAP. Thank you in advance for your service!

Special Congregational Meeting December 11

A special congregational meeting has been called for Sunday December 11 during the Faith Formation Hour (10:10 a.m.) in Piper Hall. The purpose of the meeting is to review and approve the proposed annual budget for 2017. Please plan to be present and have a voice in stewarding God's resources. Copies of the proposed budget will be available in the office by December 1.

Associate Pastor Call Committee Update

Hello! Thanks for your continued prayers and support. Our members include: Holli Bertram, Kay Davoux, Dale Eckart (chair), Dan McConnell (ex officio), Margie Reynolds, Matt Rudy, Bob Thompson, and Emeline Weinert.

Since our installation in February 2016, the committee has been diligent in our efforts to find and call an associate pastor for Zion. We updated our Ministry Site Profile (MSP) to describe our congregation and the characteristics we are looking for; we met with the SE MI Synod Assistant to the Bishop and our conference dean several times to confirm the details of the process; we have screened over 35 Rostered Leader Profiles (RLPs), conducted Skype interviews with 6 candidates, and brought 3 candidates to Ann Arbor for on-site interviews.

As the seasons of Advent and Christmas approach, the Call Committee plans to suspend our active search activities -- to "push the pause button," so to speak, or go on hiatus, until January 2017. Our reasons include:

- Fewer pastors are submitting their RLPs at this time of year, as they celebrate Advent and Christmas in their own congregations
- Availability of candidates to interview with us -- especially on-site interviews -- would be very limited this time of year
- Availability of call committee members for interviews would be very limited; it would be hard for us to muster a quorum on our end to conduct the interview
- We've been devoting a lot of time and effort to this search, and want a break to refresh minds and spirits during Advent and Christmas

We have been receiving a steady stream of feedback from members of the congregation, and we appreciate your interest. Members of the committee appreciate the prayers and support we have received from Council and from the congregation during these last several months. We look to renew the search in 2017, to find the associate pastor God has in mind for us.

Worship Core Ministry

Calling All Musicians!

It's a great time to join a music ensemble at Zion!

- **The Rings of the Lord (Handbells)** meets weekly on Thursdays from 6-7:30PM in the Sanctuary. We welcome ringers ages high school to adult. No ringing experience necessary.
- **Chancel Choir** meets weekly on Thursdays from 7:30-9PM in the Sanctuary. We welcome singers ages high school through adult.

Singers and instrumentalists are also encouraged to provide Special Music throughout our weekly and festival worship services. If you are interested in sharing your music, please email Natalie Downs (ndowns@zlc-aa.org).

December Lectionary

- Dec 4:** Isaiah 11:1-10, Romans 15:4-13, Matthew 3:1-12
Dec 11: Isaiah 35:1-10, James 5:7-10, Matthew 11:2-11
Dec 18: Isaiah 7:10-16, Romans 1:1-7, Matthew 1:18-25
Dec 24: Isaiah 9:2-7, Titus 2:11-14, Luke 2:1-14 [15-20]
Dec 25: Isaiah 62:6-12, Titus 3:4-7, Luke 2:[1-7] 8-20

Zion Concert Series

Saturday, Dec. 10, 4PM - The Detroit Lutheran Singers**
(Tickets: \$15 General Admission, \$10 Seniors/Students, children under 12 free)

Saturday, Feb. 11, 4PM - Eastern Michigan University Choir*

Sunday, Apr. 2, 4PM - Measure for Measure**

* Free-will offering will be accepted **Ticketed event

Advent and Christmas Eve Music

Do you like to make music, but don't have time to commit to weekly rehearsals? You are invited to join one of our music ensembles this Christmas season! Whether you like to sing in the choir or ring handbells, come join us as we prepare for Advent and Christmas Eve. We are also looking for musicians (vocal and/or instrumental) who would like to share music during our Christmas Eve Music Prelude, which will take place on Saturday, December 24th at 6:30 PM. For more information, please contact Natalie Downs (ndowns@zlc-aa.org).

Zion Singers

Zion Singers is a group of singers with daytime availability who come together once a month (usually the 4th Friday of each month) to prepare and present a program of sacred, fun, and seasonal songs to residents at a local nursing care, assisted living, or hospice care facility. All are welcome to participate! Our next date is Friday, December 16th at University Living. Our rehearsal will be at 12:30PM in Music Room 1 on Level B1, and the performance will be at University Living at 2PM.

Say It With Flowers

Observe an anniversary

Praise God

In memory of a dear one

In remembrance

Honor a friend

Proclaim love

Celebrate a birthday

Just want to donate

Thank someone special

Flowers add beauty to our worship and our lives. If you would like to donate altar flowers for a specific Sunday in 2017, please contact Ruth Huff at 734-665-3273. Please do not delay as dates have already been requested. Also, there are several times during the year when general funding is needed to purchase flowers, such as palms for Palm Sunday and carnations for Mother's Day. Donation envelopes for these purposes are available in the pew racks. Your flower donations are greatly appreciated!



Longest Night / Blue Christmas Service—Wednesday Dec 21, 6:30PM

While Advent is a season of hope and Christmas is a season of joy, not everyone feels hopeful or like celebrating. Grief, illness, aging, depression, loneliness, unemployment, and loss are magnified. Even those who are not struggling with losses may feel the stress of preparations and expectations around Christmas time. A Longest Night / Blue Christmas service provides a time and place of solace during the often frenetic days surrounding the celebration of Christmas. We come together on December 21 at 6:30PM in the sanctuary, seeking healing and room to share grief, sadness, loneliness, or confusion when these emotions often feel out of place during the holidays.

In the Northern Hemisphere, December 21 is the longest night, the winter solstice. It marks the shortest day of the year, the official start of winter. Tradition says that nature and all her creatures stop and hold their breath to see if the sun will turn back from its wanderings, if the days will lengthen and the earth will once again feel the sun's warmth. On this darkest day of the year, we come with our honest yearnings seeking the return of light and hope.

From Pastor Jim

Jesus Brings Peace This Christmas Despite the Mess

While they were there, the time came for the Baby to be born, and she gave birth to her firstborn, a Son. She wrapped Him in cloths and placed Him in a manger, because there was no guest room available for them. — Luke 2:6-7

The first Christmas was messy. Messy with crowded inns, smelly animals and an unplanned birth. Messy with questions: How did Mary become pregnant? What does Joseph tell his friends? Both trying to remember...what did the angels say?

Contrary to our perfectly wrapped packages and splendidly decorated homes the first Christmas was chaotic. There was no midwife for Mary, no bed for Jesus, no words for the shepherds who showed up in the middle of the night. The first Christmas was messy.

Is this one messy for you? Is it the first Christmas since the cemetery? Divorce? Pink slip? Christmas can be messy. Don't let Christmas get pushed aside just because your life gets busy or didn't work out the way you planned. Focus instead on Jesus.

The weary world rejoices because a Savior is born. Everything that brings us joy about this season is messy for Jesus. By being born as one of us, Jesus made Himself vulnerable to pain, rejection and loneliness. He put aside His heavenly glory and entered the messiness of life, your life.

The prophet reminds us, *"For unto us a Child is born...And His name will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace."* — Isaiah 9:6. Christ can indeed bring peace to any situation, any mess. The most difficult circumstance, the most ruthless enemy, the deepest pain — none of these is beyond Christ's reach. He comes into our messy lives to calm our hearts and minds. No one brings peace like Jesus. This is the gift of Christmas.

Intern's Corner



Question: As a pastoral intern, do you have a project that you will be focusing on this year?

Answer: Yes, I do! I have a heart for global missions and reaching out to the suffering. It brings me great joy when I can use my gift of teaching to help others learn about Jesus and then empower those leaders

to go and take the gospel back to their villages or cities to educate others. I truly believe in the Great Commission in Matthew 28:18-19 that we are called to take the gospel to the ends of the earth. My project will focus on doing just that!

This past summer I was invited by Stawa University in Uganda to serve as an adjunct professor. Each Tuesday, a group of 42 pastors and spiritual leaders from different villages in the Uganda region come to a virtual class that I teach. We use Skype and the power of technology to bring us all into one room to rip apart scripture, sing hymns, and grow deeper in our faith. It is a beautiful way to connect with people all over the world. We are hoping to expand our classes to include tribal leaders from neighboring countries, along with ministry partners of Zion and people who call Zion Lutheran Church their home. This global classroom is open to everybody who is interested. Come join me at 8AM each Tuesday morning in Classroom C.

In February, my husband and I will go to Uganda where I will lead a week long Women's Conference for over 1,000 females. After the conference we will go to Kenya, Nairobi, and Rwanda to speak with tribal leaders about our faith. The goal of my project is to use the gifts that God has blessed me with to grow His kingdom on a global scale while inviting Zion along on this exciting journey to which God has called me. It will be both challenging and fun!

Support Our Intern's Project Trip to Uganda

This coming February, Pastoral Intern Vicky Lovell and her husband Eric are traveling to Uganda as part of her internship program here at Zion [see her *Intern's Corner* article that details the trip, at left]. Dan McConnell (Zion's Council President) and Pastor Jim are inviting the members of Zion to financially support Vicky and Eric's trip to Uganda. Donations can be made with a note in the memo line (Uganda Trip). Thank you for supporting this special ministry that is touching lives around the world.

⁶ 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.

- Isaiah 9:6

Congregation Council

October 18, 2016—Highlights

Financial Report

- Cash—Available cash at the end of September was \$135,878. Cash in the operations account as of 10/14/16 is approximately \$168,000. We currently have sufficient cash on hand to last the next several months. The Zion Endowment Board made transfers to Zion accounts on 10/14/16: \$26,751.40 was deposited to the Operations account, and an additional \$1,137.68 was deposited to several dedicated accounts.
- Income—For the month of September, contributions were \$61,711, which was \$5,583 more than was projected in the budget. This compares to contributions of \$54,973 in September last year. YTD, contributions are \$619,415. This compares to \$611,200 YTD at the end of September last year. This is \$3,900 less than budgeted but \$8,215 more than YTD last year.
- Expenses—Four ministries were over budget in September. Total spending was \$7,823 under budget for the month. All ministries except one are under budget YTD. Total spending is \$119,161 under budget YTD.

	2016	2015	Variance
Attendance (YTD)	11,553	12,603	(1,050)
-Including Bibleland	13,179	14,542	(1,363)
Offering (YTD)	\$619,415	\$611,200	\$8,215
Offering per Person	\$53.62	\$48.50	\$5.12

Old Business

Asphalt repair was decided via email.

New Staff Position

The Personnel Committee has developed a position description for a “Youth Discipleship Leader and Coordinator of Family Life Ministry” [see article, page 5]. Council discussed the position description and the decision to link youth and family life in one full time position vs. a part time youth leader. David Werner explained that the position is envisioned to spend 70% of time on youth, 25% on adult education, and 5% on small group process. He also explained that this type of position is what most congregations have, and that he believes full time positions attract a bigger applicant pool. Council and David also discussed how the position would be advertised. Council approved the job description (unanimously). Personnel Committee also prepared a cost estimate showing the range of increase in cost for the new full time position compared to the existing part time position. Without further discussion, Council approved the cost estimate (unanimously).

Recommended Increase in Hours for Natalie Downs

Natalie is currently on the books to work 19 hours per

week but she has been working more. Allison Hendricks has asked to reduce her hours. Personnel Committee is suggesting to move hours from one staff position to another to reflect what each person is working, which results in a small cost increase. Council approved to increase Natalie’s hours and approve the additional cost increase.

Staff Salary Increase

Personnel Committee recommended a 2% salary increase for staff for 2017. Council and David Werner discussed that the purpose is to show employees that they are valued and that we care about them over the long term. With no further discussion, Council approved a 2% increase to be included in the 2017 budget. David Beck has started working on the 2017 budget and will substitute more accurate budget numbers when that process is done.

Stewardship for All Seasons (SAS) Update

Bob reported that this has been put on hold for the moment; this program is designed for churches that are smaller than ours. If we rolled it out this fall, it would be incorrectly associated with the budget process. The sense of the SAS team is perhaps to launch it for Lent.

Staff Evaluations

All staff evaluations have been completed except for Pastor Jim’s. The Personnel Committee has proposed that Pr. Jim’s evaluation be done by the Personnel Committee (David Werner, Frode Maaseidvaag, Diane Hunt) and elected officers of council. The committee will give Pr. Jim the paperwork; Dan will follow up with officers. This review will be based on the position description developed during the call process.

Advent Worship

Will be Wednesdays at noon and in the evening at 6:45 in Stelhorn Lounge and won’t include a sermon. A Family Advent event is being planned and Pastor Jim needs volunteers [see article, page 5].

Constitutional Update

There will need to be a constitutional review to adopt required changes from the national church. These changes to the constitution will need to be voted on at the annual meeting in February 2017, which will be held during Faith Formation hour.

IT Update

Bob communicated that the IT committee wanted to advocate for the establishment of policies for budget and computer purchases. One proposal is to modestly modify the Zion Building use form so that it includes IT needs. Given the form was previously approved by council, Bob seeks council’s approval to modify the form to include IT needs. Without further discussion, Council approved.

Young Discipleship

4th Graders First Communion

On Christ the King Sunday, this community of faith rejoiced with the following people who joined in sharing the meal of holy communion: *Noah Carlson, Theodore Curtner, Margaret Ellis, Landon Groth, Morgan Heusel, Ryan King, Isabel Ribick, Mia Rogers, Sarah Sawin, Ava Schneider, Ann Thompson, William Weiszhaar, Kate Wentzloff, Lia Wilson, Benjamin Yoders, and Talen Pilz*. In the sacrament of holy baptism, we are welcomed into the body of Christ and sent to share in the mission of God. In the sacrament of holy communion, God unites us in Jesus Christ and nourishes us for that mission. Living among God's faithful people, we are strengthened by God's word and this holy supper to proclaim the good news of God in Christ through word and deed, to serve all people, following the example of Jesus, and to strive for justice and peace in all the earth.

Family Advent Adventure Rescheduled to December 10, 1—3PM

A Night In Bethlehem: A Bible-Times Christmas Event for Families in Zion's Upper Level

Come discover Jesus in Bible-times Bethlehem! During this 2-hour Christmas program, families wander through the bustling Bethlehem marketplace and discover what life was like when Jesus was born. Everyone will create unique keepsakes as they interact with local shopkeepers who share the Christmas story. And they'll love talking to Mary and Joseph in The Stable, and hearing about the miracle of Jesus' birth.

Help is needed – we need characters in costume at the shops and wandering the streets. Contact vlovell@zlc-aa.org.

Bibleland Christmas Program

"A New Star"

December 18th at the 11:11 Service!

Bibleland, JAM and C+C will not meet on December 25th or January 1st – please take this time to worship together as a family.

We will resume on January 7th.

"Behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy,

Which shall be to all people." – Luke 2:10

Job Posting -Youth Discipleship Leader and Coordinator of Family Life Ministry

We are currently seeking a Youth Discipleship Leader and Coordinator of Family Life Ministry. The expectation is that the person serving in this position will work with other staff and lay leaders to develop, and lead programs and experiences that create an atmosphere of spiritual growth for youth disciples in the middle school through high school age groups and their families. Additionally, the person serving in this position will provide organizational coordination assisting pastoral staff and core ministry groups with adult education offerings and the small group activities of the church.

Applicants should have a genuine passion for working in youth ministry and have the ability and energy to develop a strong relationship with adolescents. Additionally, strong organizational skills, the ability to multi task and be willing to work with both youth and adults in a goal driven environment is vital. The successful candidate will work under a flexible evening, weekend, summer and holiday schedule.

This is a full time salaried position working a varied forty hour per week schedule. Salary will be commensurate with degree and/or experience. The desired candidate will have a Bachelor degree in a relevant field and have two (2) to five (5) year's successful position-related experience. Emphasis will be placed on a strong youth leadership background and training.

To apply, please send your cover letter, resumé and any other information that supports your application to Pastor James Debner at jdebner@zlc-aa.org or, Pastor James Debner, 1501 West Liberty Street, Ann Arbor, MI 48103.

Candidates wishing to review a job description for this position or learn more about Zion Lutheran Church are encouraged to visit the church web site: www.zlc-aa.org/jobs.

Thank You and Congratulations

The Memorial Garden Committee would like to say, "Thank You", to our new secretary Gladys Knoll. She has graciously accepted the position and has tackled many of the upkeep jobs for its beautification. She spent many hours making all of the engraved bricks more effective to read by painting over the etched printings. Wow! What a difference. Bless her! Please visit our lovely Memorial Garden. Watch for updates regarding more improvements.

¹ In those days Caesar Augustus issued a decree that a census should be taken of the entire Roman world. ² (This was the first census that took place while Quirinius was governor of Syria.) ³ And everyone went to their own town to register.

⁴ So Joseph also went up from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to Bethlehem the town of David, because he belonged to the house and line of David. ⁵ He went there to register with Mary, who was pledged to be married to him and was expecting a child. ⁶ While they were there, the time came for the baby to be born, ⁷ and she gave birth to her firstborn, a son. She wrapped him in cloths and placed him in a manger, because there was no guest room available for them.

⁸ And there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks at night. ⁹ An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. ¹⁰ But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people. ¹¹ Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord. ¹² This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger."

¹³ Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying,

¹⁴ "Glory to God in the highest heaven,
and on earth peace to those on whom his favor rests."

¹⁵ When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let's go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has told us about."

¹⁶ So they hurried off and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby, who was lying in the manger. ¹⁷ When they had seen him, they spread the word concerning what had been told them about this child, ¹⁸ and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds said to them. ¹⁹ But Mary treasured up all these things and pondered them in her heart. ²⁰ The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things they had heard and seen, which were just as they had been told.

- Luke 2:1-20

Member Caring Ministry



Women's Candlelight Luncheon

"Mary's First Christmas"

December 17th—11:00 AM—Piper Hall



Table hostesses needed. Please sign up at the Welcome Desk on Sunday mornings or call the church office for both hostess and guests. Women and girls above 12 are encouraged to sign up for a table on the boards in the Welcome Center. We are requesting a donation of \$7 per person to cover the cost of food (including dessert). Please pay before December 7th and bring your receipt to the event. It will be used in a drawing for a special prize, but everyone will leave this event with a special Christmas gift. Also, please bring a photograph or object that reminds you of a first Christmas—perhaps your first married Christmas, your first Christmas as a mother, or your first Christmas in Michigan. Questions, contact Barbara Debner: babdebner@gmail.com

Save the Date!!

The year 2017 is the 500th anniversary of the Reformation, and like Lutherans all over the world, Zion will be celebrating with Prayer, Praise and Thanksgiving! Many activities are being planned for the entire year, with specifics soon to be released. There will be something for everyone!!

As a kick-off, on Sunday, January 22, 2017 (after the late service) we will enjoy a German meal from Metzger's, followed by a viewing of the film *Luther*. This stirring, sweeping, epic, stars Joseph Fiennes as Martin Luther, the brilliant man of God whose defiant actions changed the world. The film traces Luther's exhilarating quest for the people's liberation. Regional princes and the powerful Church wield a fast, firm and merciless grip on 16th Century Germans. But when Martin Luther issues a shocking challenge to their authority, the people declare him their new leader and hero. Even when threatened with a violent death, Luther refuses to back down, sparking a revolution that shakes the entire continent to its core (2 hours).

Following the movie, Pastor Debner will lead us in a thoughtful, informative discussion of the movie. Tickets for the meal will go on sale late December/early January. Price will be \$10 per person and all Confirmation students will be Zion's invited guest with a free meal.

Please enter this date on your calendar. It will be a great Kick-Off to Zion's year-long celebration.

Festive Chick Flick Night

Women and girls are invited to meet in Zion's Gathering Place on Sat Dec 3 to enjoy two movies and popcorn. Wear warm lounge clothes and bring a comfy lounge, beach or lawn chair (the floor gets hard after the first hour).

Arrive at 4:30PM; the first movie, *The Preachers Wife*, starring Denzel Washington, starts promptly at 4:35. Stay for one or both—the second movie, *It's a Wonderful Life*, will begin around 6:20. Bring your daughter, a friend, or a granddaughter and start a fun tradition.

We encourage you to bring black socks to donate to the Ann Arbor homeless.

Popcorn will be provided or you may bring your own healthy snacks. Bring a favorite beverage if you don't enjoy water with your popcorn. There is no reschedule if it is a snowy date. Our next film event is Feb 4.



Member Caring Volunteer Opportunity

Did you know that every Sunday morning one of our members picks up residents at Brecon village for worship and then drives them safely home after church? Thank you Kent Peterson! If you are interested in serving in this manner and available on Sunday mornings, please contact Kent. We would like to create a pool of van drivers for this ministry.

New Members

On Reformation Day, Zion welcomed 25 New Disciples who will journey with Zion as we seek to Know Christ, Grow in Christ and Make Christ Known. Take time to greet these fellow travelers in faith as we seek to follow Jesus in our daily life [see complete list of new members, page 12].

Zion Special Seniors

INVITATION

What: Birthday Party for Jesus

When: Saturday, December 3, 2016, noon-2PM

Where: Piper Hall

Gift: In lieu of a gift, please bring a friend, your appetite, your smile, and your voice

A donation of \$8.00/person will help to defray expenses

RSVP: Church office during the week or Welcome Center on Sunday mornings

¹⁴ Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign: The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and will call him Immanuel.
- Isaiah 7:14

Adult Discipleship

Adult Classes—December 2016

We have not offered formal classes in December for the past several years because the Advent/Christmas season is so busy. We have, instead, supported the ELCA Giving Fair [see box below].

This year, on Dec 4, Pastor Jim will be discussing the book: *#Struggles, Following Jesus in a Selfie-Centered World* by Craig Groeschel. Read the book or just come and discuss what it means to restore balance in our lives and end our unhealthy over-reliance on technology. The average person now spends 7.4 hours a day staring at a screen and that is just the beginning. We'll meet in Classroom C.

Giving Fair – Begins November 27

This Advent season, Zion, through its annual Giving Fair, is once again supporting an international cause of benevolence and, this year, adding a local cause. As a contributor to the Giving Fair, you can designate the area to which your gift should be directed.

- **Internationally**, you can choose ELCA Good Gifts, and designate a Water Well or one of the many other gift items. Last year the people of Zion raised \$10,000 and purchased 4 wells, each costing \$2,500. Clean water is one of the most powerful ways to change the world. Currently, 1 out of 6 people drink unclean water. With each working well, as many as 500 families gain access to clean, safe drinking water. Imagine the impact!
- **Locally**, Samaritas (formerly Lutheran Social Services of Michigan) is sponsoring a Special Advent Refugee Appeal. Samaritas is building extra support for 25 refugee families in Washtenaw County and SE Michigan by December 25, Christmas Day. Every \$2,500 gathered covers the basic needs of an average refugee family for one month. People want to raise their children without fear of war, religious persecution or other danger. Your contribution helps these New Americans start new, safer lives of health, joy and prosperity.

Zion Congregation has a giving heart, and these are two ways that you can open your own heart. Any amount of money you can donate is appreciated. Together we can make a difference in the lives of God's people. The Giving Fair begins November 27 and lasts through December 18.

Zion Reads *Luther*

Martin Marty's book, *Luther*, has been chosen as Zion's common read in 2017 on the topic of Luther.

That fall day when Martin Luther tackled a challenge on the door of his local church, he was not doing a totally new thing, but what he wrote was new and led to a revolution in Christendom. Marty's book can be purchased now; sale will continue through March 2017, when Pastor Debner will lead discussions based on the book. The cost of the book is \$10 and is available in the Welcome Center.

The Book of Romans: Biblical Roots of the Reformation

As we are all aware, 2017 marks the 500th Anniversary of the Protestant Reformation, as historians look at Martin Luther's nailing of the 95 Theses to the door of the Castle Church in Wittenberg, Germany as the beginning of that Reformation. In keeping with the Reformation theme, our Thursday afternoon Bible Study for Winter 2017 will be: *The Book of Romans: Biblical Roots of the Reformation*.

Why Romans? Well, Luther's emphasis was on the authority of God's word and Romans had a great impact on Luther's understanding of God's love and how we are saved. In addition, Romans is often referred to as the "Queen of Epistles," as most Biblical scholars consider it to be Paul's most influential book.

Our classes for the Winter will begin February 9, 2017 and will run through April 6, 2017, the week before Holy Week. We meet in the upstairs Omega Room, Thursdays, 1:30—3PM. These sessions will be led by Pastor Walter Schmidt. Please join us!

¹⁸ *This is how the birth of Jesus the Messiah came about: His mother Mary was pledged to be married to Joseph, but before they came together, she was found to be pregnant through the Holy Spirit.¹⁹ Because Joseph her husband was faithful to the law, and yet did not want to expose her to public disgrace, he had in mind to divorce her quietly.*
- Matthew 1:18-19

Mission Core Ministry

Zion's Haiti Mission Team Returns

Over the week of Oct 28—Nov 3, the team of Barbara Debner, Terri McCoy, Pr. Vicky Lovell and Mark Gunderson visited our Haitian partners in ministry, Mary Jane and Andris Jolibois. We were joined by 2 others travelers (Judie Schafer and Doug Jones) from other congregations. We were busy from the moment we arrived.



We had a “vacation day” on Saturday where we traveled up into the mountains above the clouds to visit a Baptist mission, buy food and art along the street fair, buy lunch at a Port Au Prince restaurant, and some other stops in town. At Sunday service, Pr. Vicky delivered the sermon (translated by Mary Jane) to 400+ parishioners. Later on Sunday, we worked with the Youth group to package 70+ health kits that were sent to those impacted by Hurricane Matthew on the western end of Haiti. On Mon—Wed, we took photos and measurements of the students for the sponsorship program, led craft projects and sang Bible songs with grades 1—6, played with the children at recess, ate beans and rice lunch with the 5th graders, gave a math teaching seminar to all the primary school teachers, distributed 50+ recorders (simple flutes) donated by Zion's Bibleland to all the music trade school students, taught the cooking trade school class BBQ techniques, and worked on several light maintenance projects.



We also saw the material (concrete block, sand, gravel, & cement) already being delivered to the campus to begin building the 3 needed classrooms on the 2nd floor of the primary school to accommodate the growing primary school. Zion and the Korean Baptist Church that meets in our chapel collected over \$4000 to fund these new classrooms. Thank you all for your support and prayers on our journey!

Samaritas News

Children and Family Services

Samaritas, which is the new name for Lutheran Social Services of Michigan, is one of our best ways of serving people with the love of Christ. In 2015, the Children and Families group at Samaritas provided foster care and independent living support for 1,182 residents (about equally divided among Metro Detroit, Flint/Ann Arbor, West, Southwest and Mid-Michigan), as well as 311 refugees, including unaccompanied refugee children. They served 749 people with their program of in-home support for families of children with severe emotional impairments, other mental health and trauma issues. Their family preservation programs, including family reunification and foster care efforts, served another 1,179 people and the adoption program resulted in 404 adoptions. One of their special efforts has been a center on the south side of Saginaw that operates an evening family meals program and a home-bound meals program that provided 26,871 meals in 2015. These, and many other Samaritas programs, make Michigan a better place and show its residents the love of Christ. If you want to volunteer, you can stop by any of the Samaritas offices or contact Anna Romund at aromu@samaritas.org. If you want to donate, you can send checks to Samaritas, P.O. Box 674855, Detroit, MI 48267-4855 or phone 800-421-3062.

²⁰ But after he had considered this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, “Joseph son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife, because what is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. 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.”

- Matthew 1:20-21

Other News

Financial Report through Sept 30, 2016 from Finance Manager David Beck

Summary of Income and Expenses YTD Through September 30, 2016

	Budget 2016	Actual 2016	Variance 2016	Actual 2015
Income				
Contributions	\$ 623,315	\$ 619,415	\$ (3,900)	\$ 611,200
Board Income	1,800	1,415	(386)	1,613
Other Income	8,250	9,325	1,075	7,785
Bequests	15,000	10,134	(4,866)	-
Dedicated Funds	5,379	5,379	-	21,035
Endowment Fund	78,750	52,193	(26,557)	32,000
Total Income	\$ 732,494	\$ 697,860	\$ (34,634)	\$ 673,634
Expenses				
Council	\$ 16,950	\$ 4,352	\$ (12,598)	\$ 5,817
Pastor's Office	105,435	108,894	3,459	94,497
Adult Discipleship	26,859	2,244	(24,616)	21,555
Young Discipleship	52,338	47,407	(4,931)	72,350
Worship Ministry	92,766	86,248	(6,518)	70,727
Missions Ministry	77,525	71,975	(5,550)	72,859
Member Caring Ministry	5,986	3,577	(2,409)	4,779
Welcome Ministry	68,209	43,139	(25,070)	83,706
Building & Grounds	157,557	153,250	(4,307)	156,220
Administration	161,562	139,383	(22,179)	140,965
Debt Service	33,644	19,202	(14,441)	33,622
Total Expenses	\$ 798,832	\$ 679,670	\$ (119,161)	\$ 757,096
Net Income (Expenses)	\$ (66,338)	\$ 18,190	\$ 84,528	\$ (83,463)

YTD Attendance and Offering

	2016	2015	Variance	%
Attendance (YTD)	11,553	12,603	(1,050)	-8.3%
-Including Bibleland	13,179	14,542	(1,363)	-9.4%
Offering (YTD)	\$ 619,415	\$ 611,200	\$ 8,215	1.3%
Offering per Person	\$ 53.62	\$ 48.50	\$ 5.12	10.6%

Cash and Investments

Petty Cash	\$ 250
Operations Checking	135,628
Dedicated Fund Checking	121,606
Expansion & Renovation DF	496,480
FirstMerit Money Market acct	251,034
Subtotal	1,004,998
Dedicated Funds Receivable	-
Dedicated Funds Payable	(869,120)
Unrestricted Cash	\$ 135,878
Endowment Fund	\$ 2,543,718

Loans

United Bank & Trust - Line of Credit	\$ -
Member loans	\$ 205,000
Thrivent Mortgage	\$ -
Total	\$ 205,000

Information Technology Committee

The Zion IT group urgently needs help! We need volunteers with computer, digital, network or other IT knowledge, experience (or a willingness to learn) to join us. If you are interested, please contact Bob Thompson at (734) 677-0159 or rcthompson@zlc-aa.org

²² All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had said through the prophet: ²³ "The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel" (which means "God with us").

²⁴ When Joseph woke up, he did what the angel of the Lord had commanded him and took Mary home as his wife. ²⁵ But he did not consummate their marriage until she gave birth to a son. And he gave him the name Jesus. - Matthew 1:22-25

DECEMBER CALENDAR

Thursday, December 1

7:00 AM Men's ChristCare/Sunday Spot
12:30 PM Thursday Ladies Cards/Stellhorn Lounge
6:00 PM Rings of the Lord Rehearsal/Sanctuary
7:30 PM Choir Rehearsal/Sanctuary

Friday, December 2

12:30 PM Women's Friday Bridge/Stellhorn Lounge
1:00 PM ZSS Luncheon Setup/Piper Hall

Saturday, December 3

12:00 PM ZSS Luncheon/Piper Hall
4:30 PM Chick Flick Night/The Gathering

Sunday, December 4

7:45 AM Early Bird Coffee Hour/Welcome Center
8:00 AM First Light Worship/Sanctuary
9:00 AM Giving Tree/Stellhorn Lounge
9:00 AM Sola Worship/Sanctuary
10:10 AM Parents with Young Children Café/Alpha Room
10:10 AM Bibleland/2nd Floor
10:10 AM C+C/Omega Room
10:10 AM JAM/Youth Room
11:00 AM Korean Baptist Church/Yeager Chapel
11:11 AM Ignite Worship/Sanctuary
12:15 PM Christmas Outreach Rehearsal/Music RM. #1

Monday, December 5

6:30 AM Men's ChristCare/Sunday Spot
12:30 PM Monday Women's Bridge/Stellhorn Lounge
6:00 PM Prayer Team Meeting/Omega Room
6:15 PM Loss Recovery Support Group/Alpha Room
7:00 PM Ruth's Small Group/Stellhorn Lounge
7:00 PM Washtenaw Refugee Welcome Mtg./The Gathering

Tuesday, December 6

5:30 PM Personnel Committee Meeting/Church Office
7:00 PM IT Committee Meeting/Omega Room
7:00 PM Life's Lessons Book Club/Stellhorn Lounge
7:15 PM Building & Grounds Meeting/Creation Station

Wednesday, December 7

12:00 PM Advent Worship/Sanctuary
6:00 PM Family Matters Group/Creation Station
6:00 PM The Way of Life/Omega Room
6:45 PM Praise Band Rehearsal/Sanctuary
6:45 PM Advent Worship/Stellhorn Lounge
7:30 PM Al-a-teen Meeting/Omega Room
7:30 PM Al-Anon Meeting/The Gathering
7:30 PM Alcoholics Anonymous/Piper Hall

Thursday, December 8

7:00 AM Men's ChristCare/Sunday Spot
9:00 AM Activity Day/Piper Hall
9:15 AM Mom's Bible Study/Omega Room
6:00 PM Rings of the Lord Rehearsal/Sanctuary
7:00 PM Mission Core Ministry/Stellhorn Lounge
7:30 PM Choir Rehearsal/Sanctuary

Friday, December 9

Saturday, December 10

4:00 PM Detroit Lutheran Singers/Sanctuary
7:00 PM Washtenaw Refugee Welcome Meeting/The Gathering

Sunday, December 11

7:45 AM Early Bird Coffee Hour/Welcome Center
8:00 AM First Light Worship/Sanctuary
9:00 AM Giving Tree/Stellhorn Lounge
9:00 AM Sola Worship/Sanctuary
10:10 AM Congregational Meeting—2017 Budget / Piper Hall
10:10 AM Parents with Young Children Café/Alpha Room
10:10 AM Bibleland Christmas Rehearsal/2nd Floor
10:10 AM C+C/Omega Room
10:10 AM Catechism/Youth Room
11:00 AM Korean Baptist Church/Yeager Chapel
11:11 AM Ignite Worship/Sanctuary

Monday, December 12

6:30 AM Men's ChristCare/Sunday Spot
6:15 PM Loss Recovery Support Group/Alpha Room
7:00 PM Kesler's Small Group/Omega Room
7:00 PM Weber's Small Group/Stellhorn Lounge

Tuesday, December 13

12:00 PM Nurses Christmas Lunch/Weber's
7:00 PM Five Miles More Rehearsal/Sanctuary

Wednesday, December 14

12:00 PM Advent Worship/Sanctuary
6:00 PM Family Matters Group/Creation Station
6:00 PM The Way of Life/Omega Room
6:45 PM Praise Band Rehearsal/Sanctuary
6:45 PM Advent Worship/Stellhorn Lounge
7:30 PM Al-a-teen Meeting/Omega Room
7:30 PM Al-Anon Meeting/The Gathering
7:30 PM Alcoholics Anonymous/Piper Hall

Thursday, December 15

7:00 AM Men's ChristCare/Sunday Spot
11:00 AM International Neighbors/Piper Hall
1:00 PM Ruth's Circle/Stellhorn Lounge
6:00 PM Rings of the Lord Rehearsal/Sanctuary
7:30 PM Choir Rehearsal/Sanctuary

Friday, December 16

12:00 PM Setup for Women's Luncheon/Piper Hall
12:30 PM Zion Singers Rehearsal/Music Room 1
2:00 PM Zion Singers/Off Site
6:00 PM Bibleland Christmas Rehearsal/Sanctuary

Saturday, December 17

11:00 AM Women's Candlelight Luncheon/Piper Hall

Sunday, December 18

7:45 AM Early Bird Coffee Hour/Welcome Center
8:00 AM First Light Worship/Sanctuary
9:00 AM Giving Tree/Stellhorn Lounge
9:00 AM Sola Worship/Sanctuary
10:10 AM Parents with Young Children Café/Alpha Room
11:00 AM Korean Baptist Church/Yeager Chapel
11:11 AM Bibleland Christmas Program/Sanctuary

Monday, December 19

6:30 AM Men's ChristCare/Sunday Spot
6:15 PM Loss Recovery Support Group/Alpha Room
7:00 PM Ruth's Small Group/Stellhorn Lounge

Tuesday, December 20

6:00 PM Reconciling in Christ/Omega Room
7:00 PM Council Meeting/The Gathering

Wednesday, December 21

12:00 PM Advent Worship/Sanctuary
6:00 PM Family Matters Group/Creation Station
6:00 PM The Way of Life/Omega Room
6:30 PM Knit 2 Together/Stellhorn Lounge
6:30 PM Blue Christmas Worship/Sanctuary
6:45 PM Praise Band Rehearsal/Praise Band Rm
7:30 PM Al-a-teen Meeting/Omega Room
7:30 PM Al-Anon Meeting/The Gathering
7:30 PM Alcoholics Anonymous/Piper Hall

Thursday, December 22

7:00 AM Men's ChristCare/Sunday Spot
9:30 AM Mom's Bible Study/Omega Room
6:00 PM Rings of the Lord Rehearsal/Sanctuary
7:30 PM Choir Rehearsal/Sanctuary

Friday, December 23

Office closes at noon

Saturday, December 24

Christmas Eve

5:00 PM Christmas Eve Family Worship/Sanctuary
6:30 PM Christmas Eve Musical Prelude/Sanctuary
7:30 PM Christmas Eve Traditional Worship/Sanctuary
11:00 PM Christmas Eve Candlelight Worship/Sanctuary

Sunday, December 25

Christmas Day

10:00 AM Christmas Day Worship/Sanctuary

Monday, December 26

Office Closed

Tuesday, December 27

7:00 PM Five Miles More Rehearsal/Sanctuary

Wednesday, December 28

6:00 PM Family Matters Group/Creation Station
6:00 PM The Way of Life/Omega Room
6:45 PM Praise Band Rehearsal/Sanctuary
7:30 PM Al-a-teen Meeting/Omega Room
7:30 PM Al-Anon Meeting/The Gathering
7:30 PM Alcoholics Anonymous/Piper Hall

Thursday, December 29

7:00 AM Men's ChristCare/Sunday Spot
6:00 PM Rings of the Lord Rehearsal/Sanctuary
7:30 PM Choir Rehearsal/Sanctuary

Friday, December 30

Saturday, December 31

New Year's Eve

Sunday, January 1, 2017

New Year's Day

10:00 AM Traditional Worship/Sanctuary

Monday, January 2

Office Closed

*Blessed
Christmas!*

The Tower

Zion Lutheran Church
1501 West Liberty
Ann Arbor, Michigan 48103

NON-PROFIT ORG.
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
Permit No. 436
Ann Arbor, Michigan

Return Service Requested

Date Sensitive Material
Please Deliver by
December 1, 2016

November Life Passages at Zion

BAPTISMS: *William Styles Rudy, parents Matt & Jessica Rudy; Olive Henrietta Sturza, parents David & Julie Sturza; Theodore Louis Curtner, parents Greg Curtner and Sonnet Meek; Andrew William Watt, parents James and Jamie Watt*

WEDDINGS:

FUNERALS: *Lucille Zink; Doug Raab; Jean Tilt*

NEW MEMBERS: *Kristian and Henriette Frikke-Schmidt (Ulrick, Teresa and Luca); Kristine Gallis; Jennica Groustein; Susan Hadley; Rev. David, Joan and Alison Hendricks; Garry Huff; Jack and Edie Pelton; Andrew Olive; Risë Rudy; Cathy Sigler; Derek and Susan Vertin (Sam, Ben and Natalie)*

Elected Ministry Leaders

Congregation Council

President: Dan McConnell (dmcconnell@zlc-aa.org)
Vice-Pres: Vickie Matthews (vmatthews@zlc-aa.org)
Secretary: Laura Berry (lberry@zlc-aa.org)
Treasurer: Bob Bertrand (bbertrand@zlc-aa.org)
At Large: Christine Karshin (ckarshin@zlc-aa.org)
Gordon Loll (gordonloll@yahoo.com)
Connie McComb (cmccomb@zlc-aa.org)
Bob Thompson (rcthompson@zlc-aa.org)
Sharon VanRiper (svanriper@zlc-aa.org)
Mark Warwashana (mwarwashana@zlc-aa.org)

Core Ministries

Worship: Dale Eckart
Welcome: Karen Salamin, Joanne Dence
Adult Discipleship: Sonja Page, Peter Bertocci
Young Discipleship: Tom Clifford, Ken Utsunomiya
Caring: Dianne Daily, Laura Girbach
Missions: Mark Gunderson, Layale Weinert

Support Ministries

Personnel: Diane Hunt, Dave Werner
Building & Grounds: Jim Love, Bill Lehmann
Financial Stewardship: Nick Rogers, Lisa Rombes
IT: Ray Vanderbok, Marcus Hunt
Endowment: Marcus Hunt, Leif Fry

Staff

Senior Pastor	James Debner
Associate Pastor	<i>Vacant</i>
Pastoral Intern	Vicky Lovell
Director, Adult Discipleship	<i>Vacant</i>
Finance Manager	David Beck
Office Administrator	Diane Rinehart
Director, Young Discipleship	<i>Vacant</i>
Bibleland Coordinator	Nina Johnson
VBS Coordinator	Jessica Rudy
Director of Choirs & Special Music	Natalie Downs
Organist	Elgin Clingaman
Contemporary Worship Leader	Alison Hendricks
Sound Operator	Tyler Dence
Worship Media Coordinator	Eddie VanRiper
Resident Custodian	Chris LeVasseur
Weekend Custodian	Max Wojewski
Wedding Coordinator	Emmeline Weinert
Nursery Care Giver	Kamryn Hayes, Anna Dupke
Librarian	Carleen Vanderbok

Email addresses for staff may be found at our website:

www.zlc-aa.org

Office phone (734) 994-4455

Please submit news items to tower@zlc-aa.org by the 10th of the preceding month.