

## DECEMBER 2021 VOICE OF ZION

A Monthly Publication of  
Zion Lippe United Church of Christ  
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Mt Vernon IN 47620  
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Secretary Hours:  
Tues, Wed and Thurs 8:30 am – 12:30 pm

**Rev. Jeff Long, Pastor**  
Pastor cell: 812 306-4675  
Pastor email: [zionlippepastor@gmail.com](mailto:zionlippepastor@gmail.com)

**Sunday Family Worship at 10 am**  
**Sunday School at 9 am**

### Worship Attendance

Date	In Person	Virtual (est.)
10/31	112	60 devices
11/7	90	47 devices
11/14	112	10 devices
11/21	117	40 devices

Virtual worship was available on Zoom and YouTube.

### Sunday School Average Attendance

November: Adult (18+) = 10  
Youth = 4 (Confirmation)



**With snow, ice, &/or other inclement weather...** Should questions arise concerning if Worship/Sunday School will be held on a given Sunday, cancellations will be announced on WFIE, Facebook, and the church's website.



### Playground Renovation Donations Continue to be Accepted

Thank you all so much for your donations to the playground renovation project... **WE ARE SO CLOSE TO OUR GOAL.** To date we have received donations and pledges totaling **\$62,650.00** toward our \$85,000.00 goal. That means we are about 74% of the way there already. **GREAT JOB EVERYONE!!!!**

If you haven't made a donation yet but would like to, please place your donations in an envelope marked, "**Playground**". **LET'S SEE IF WE CAN'T RAISE THE REMAINING \$22,000.00** by the end of this year!



*Congratulations to Casey & Megan Voelker at the birth of their son, Anderson Joseph Voelker, on October 27, 2021. Proud grandparents are Jerry and Pam Redman and great-grandparents Marvin and Ruth Redman.*



## DECEMBER

In order to share in the joys and celebrations of our lives as a congregation we publish a monthly list of birthdays and anniversaries of members and friends of Zion. Numbers in ( ) represent year.

### **HAPPY BIRTHDAY!**

- 1 Jackson Kern
- 4 Sophia Starnes
- 5 Lukas Donner
- 6 Autumn Johnson, Kathy Barchet
- 7 Steve Reineke, Morgan Stierley  
Rachel Hast
- 8 Greg Schmitt
- 9 Jamie Grabert
- 12 Emiley Chamberlain, Raymond Noelle
- 13 Julie Bullington
- 15 Russell Roehr, Shelby Conville
- 16 Lindsey Vaught, Toni Roberts
- 17 Peggy Mahrenholz
- 18 Brock Heneisen
- 19 Jeanette Hunter, Abigail Steinhart
- 20 Gabe Schroeder
- 21 Nancy deClaisse-Walford
- 22 David Simpson
- 24 Emma Schroeder
- 25 Theresa Juncker, Nancy Lewis
- 27 Teresa DeGiacomo
- 28 Grady Elless
- 29 Michelle Heneisen
- 30 Connie Eldridge
- 31 Ryan Gleim, Molly McCutchan  
Michael Patterson

### **HAPPY ANNIVERSARY!**

- 2 Bob & Janie Cummings (1977)
- 6 Warren & Karen (Dickhaut) Evrard (1975)
- 10 Steve & Debbie Reineke (1983)
- 18 Dennis & Judy (Garrett) Rueger (1971)
- 21 Dustin & Janelle (Uhde) Seitz (2013)
- 27 Scott & Suzanne Dougan (2003)
- 29 Jared & Shelby (Schweikhart)  
Conville(2019)

If your birthday or anniversary is not listed or not correct, please call the office at 985-2437 so we may update our records. Thanks for your help!



On **November 28**, everyone is welcome to join the Zion Church Family for our annual Hanging of the Greens and Chili Lunch after the morning worship service. A free-will offering will be accepted for the Chili Lunch, net proceeds to go to Playground Fund.

## **Zion Senior Citizen Dinner** **Thursday, December 16** **11 a.m.**



It will soon be Christmas and time to consider remembering someone special with a poinsettia or donation to a church fund of your choice. In either case please complete a form, found on foyer bulletin board, and place it in the offering plate, or give to Michelle Heneisen, or drop off in church office

**by Wednesday Dec. 8.**

The poinsettias will come from the Green River Kiwanis Club, who use this sale as a fundraiser to support their community services. Poinsettias will cost \$12 each and will be displayed in the sanctuary during this Christmas season. You may pick up your poinsettia after the Christmas Eve service.

If you have questions, please contact Michelle.



*Congratulations to Kendra Schorr and Nick Gries, who were married October 30, 2021 at St Wendel Catholic Church.*

## **When it's Hard to be Grateful...**

As I finish writing this short reflection, Thanksgiving was yesterday, so we all know we're supposed to be grateful. But if we're really honest, it isn't always that easy. For most of us, it's been pretty hard to be thankful these days. Maybe you were let go from your job and you moved back in with your parents. Or maybe, you didn't get that raise you were expecting. Between all the Black Friday ads for things we want but can't afford, and the reality that another year is drawing to a close, being grateful can be hard.

But according to our faith, giving thanks is a choice. A choice that even secular studies have shown is that, if you're grateful, and you make a habit of listing out the things you're thankful for, your life has the possibility of being transformed.

In fact studies show that if for five minutes a day you spend time writing in a daily gratitude journal...basically write out things you're thankful for... your long-term well-being would increase by the same amount as it would increase if your income doubled!

We all think, "Oh, that sounds nice," but right now, making a list of things we're grateful for sounds hard. And that's that point of this reflection... We all need to be reminded of how much we have to be grateful for from time to time.

### **Here are three questions to ask and consider when it's hard to be grateful...**

**1. What am I looking at?** When it's hard to be thankful, we have to remember that gratefulness flows from the right perspective. But what's the right perspective? We aren't wrong to say that there's a lot of hard stuff in the world right now but there will be hard stuff in the world tomorrow and the next week and next year. But there is also so much to consider a blessing. Jesus found himself in some pretty difficult situations but over and over again he shared thanks in prayer, conversation, relationship, and around a table eating lunch or dinner. Think about that! How could we not be the most grateful people on the planet?!

### **2. What am I forgetting about?**

When we overlook the little things, we forget to be grateful. Aren't you glad you have toilet paper? Running water? A hot shower? Imagine going a week without those things. We can be grateful for a lot of things we have and experience—we just don't always realize it. And when we don't acknowledge the things we can be grateful for, it's easier to complain about the hard things. Gratefulness not expressed is gratefulness not experienced. The more you express gratitude, the more it grows inside of your heart, and the easier it is to express. The flip side is also true. The more you complain, the easier it is to keep complaining. Think about how often we complain and consider Philippians 2.14 which says, "Do everything without grumbling or complaining." Whatever you're facing, there is more than enough love and support around you to eventually get you through - sometimes we just forget.

### **3. What do I want my future to look like?**

Gratefulness has the power to strengthen relationships. So if we want our faith or our relationships with others to be stronger, we need to accept compliments and share them just as easily to spread this spirit of gratefulness.

Here is one simple way to start each day... simply say... "God, I just want to thank you for this day. I want to thank you for the fact that I'm alive and another day was given to me—it's a day I wasn't promised. I woke up this morning. A lot of people didn't. I have legs I can walk on. Thank you, God..." When we do this, we assume that everything we have is a gift. Whenever we begin to assume that everything we have is a gift, we quit seeing everything we have as something we've earned (e.g. "I really deserve this, because I worked really hard for it").

A thankful posture says, "God, everything I have is because of you. I don't deserve any of this. I'm going to view everything in my life as a chance to just thank you and point it all back to you." This has the potential to fuel the direction of our future and the future of our church and community. May the abundant gifts of the holidays bless each of you in their own unique way.

And early Merry Christmas to each and every one you! *PJ*

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**Advent Candle Lighting...** If you, members of your family, or a friend would like to be included in lighting the Advent wreath each of the Sundays leading up to Christmas Day - **December 5, 12, 19 or on Christmas Eve Friday, December 24th**, please sign up on the signup sheet in the foyer or by calling the church office to let us know what date you would prefer. It's going to be a wonderful Christmas season for sure.

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**UGLY SWEATER SUNDAY - December 19th!** We are inviting everyone to wear the ugliest Christmas sweaters, coats, jackets, slacks, etc. on **Sunday, December 19th**. Come worship with us on December 19th and please invite your friends and other family members to join us for this fun filled, right before Christmas worship celebration.

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## Life After Loss - Bereavement Support Group



Finding our way after the sudden or expected death of a loved one can shift our directions, perspectives, thoughts, feelings, and emotions in so many ways. With an emphasis on thoughtful sharing, caring, and looking forward, Zion church would like to offer bereavement group gatherings for those who have

recently lost a loved one or who feel like they would benefit from the support and stories that come from a group based gathering.

Our focus is caring for you through compassionate listening, quality grief and bereavement education, and the offering of group services which support healing using a coach approach to grief and bereavement. This opportunity is open to anyone who might benefit. **If you would like to be a part of a group please contact Pastor Jeff.**

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Blue? Yes, blue as in the blues. As in "I am feeling blue." Not everyone is up and cheery for the Christmas holidays. Dealing with the death of a loved one, facing life after divorce or separation, coping with the loss of a job, living with cancer or some other dis-ease that puts a question mark over the future, and a number of other human situations make parties and joviality painful for many people in our congregations and communities.

There is a growing attentiveness to the needs of people who are blue at Christmas. Increasing numbers of churches are creating sacred space for people living through dark times and we are honored to be able to create such an opportunity here at Zion.

This worship experience will be reflective, accepting where we really are, and holding out healing and hope. This year's service will be **held Sunday evening, December 19<sup>th</sup> beginning at 5:30 p.m.** We invite you and a guest(s) to join us.

There will be a light meal served following the gathering.

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**Attendance:** Laura Droege, Michelle Heneisen, Terry Schroeder, Dan Hoffman, Jeff Long, Bob Klenck, Laverne Deal, and Brian Crase.

10/31 YTD Regular Offering: \$138,087.71

10/31 YTD General Fund Income: \$152,725.78

10/31 YTD General Fund Expenses: \$135,842.23

Differences: (+)\$16,883.55

*\*\*Note YTD 15,810 of payroll was paid from PPP Fund instead of General Fund*

As of 10/31 Playground fund is at \$55,645 including pledge from Endowment.

Rev. Dave Marshall filled in for Pastor Jeff on Sunday November 7th while Jeff was on vacation.

The Culver's give back for the Playground fund is on Wednesday November 17th between 4 and 10 pm, 10% of all sales between that time will go to the Playground Project.

There has been difficulty getting Children's Sunday School curriculum ordered. Sunday school for the children will start whether we have curriculum or not.

There are four approved Endowment requests. The first is \$800 from the Odds N Ends Sunday school Class to help cover expenses associated with preparing meals for the United Caring Shelter. The amount of \$800 was approved by the Endowment Committee. The council approved the amount. The second is for \$3,500.00 submitted by Patrick Schroeder to support Voices, Inc. for Facebook marketing and advertising. The amount of \$2,500 was approved by the Endowment Committee. The council approved the amount.

The third is for \$3,500.00 submitted by Nancy Dougan and Hans Schmitz to help offset the cost of purchasing a new stove for the United Caring Shelter. The amount of \$3,500.00 was approved by the Endowment Committee. The council approved the amount.

The fourth is for \$2,350 was submitted by Ashley Lashley on behalf of Operation Christmas Child to help with shipping of 250 boxes. The amount of \$1,350 was approved by the Endowment Committee. The council approved the amount.

Good Samaritan Home is asking for a donation of \$2,000 to purchase a new vehicle. Council approved making this donation.

The council approved \$1000 payment to Gary and Staci Voegel for 2021 ballfield mowing.

Kent Mann will work on fixing the gutters this week. The furnace filters have been changed in the education hall basement and in the sanctuary basement. Elwood Deal has the new cover for the parsonage septic tank.

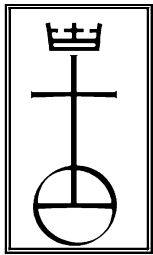
Hanging of the Greens and lunch will be on November 28th.

The grief support will be on November 15th at 7 pm.

Youth Gildas Club will be on November 17th.

There will be no Thanksgiving Eve service.

Other upcoming events are Blue Christmas service, Christmas Eve.



ZION LIPPE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST  
9000 COPPERLINE ROAD E  
MT. VERNON IN 47620

**DECEMBER SPECIAL  
OFFERING IS  
THE CHRISTMAS FUND**

Administered by the UCC Pension Board, gifts to the Christmas Fund help provide pension and health premium supplementation to low-income UCC retirees, emergency assistance to the families of clergy and lay employees, and Christmas Gift Checks to hundreds of annuitants. Please use the purple envelopes found at foyer bulletin board, or donate online at [www.christmasfund.org](http://www.christmasfund.org)

**SERVICE OF COMMUNION  
WITH MUSIC AND CANDLES**

**Friday, December 24, 2021  
7:00 p.m.**

