

DECEMBER 2023

VOICE OF ZION

A Monthly Publication of
Zion Lippe United Church of Christ
9000 Copperline Rd E
Mt Vernon IN 47620
812 985-2437
website: zionlippe.org

Secretary email: zionlippesecretary@gmail.com

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

Sunday Family Worship at 10 am

Sunday School at 9 am

Worship Attendance

Date	In Person	Virtual (est.)
11/5	175	63 devices
11/12	171	64 devices
11/19	152	62 devices
11/26	147	77 devices

Sunday School Average Attendance

November: Adult (18+) = 20

Children (downstairs) = 10

Youth (grades 6-12, includes Conf.) = 14



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.



SUNDAY WORSHIP SERVICES ARE LIVE STREAMED and RECORDED FOR LATER VIEWING ON YOUTUBE !

You can always join us for Sunday worship wherever you might be. To easily view the live worship service simply go to our church webpage... www.zionlippe.org... and click on the "Watch Live" tab and you will be able to view the worship service when it goes live. For later viewing of recorded services, go to YouTube and search for Zion Lippe.



Greeter Schedule for upcoming Sundays:

Dec 3 – JJ & Kelli Mohr

Dec 10 – Diana Redman

Dec 17 – John & Miranda Pieszchalski

Dec 24 (10 am) – Delwin & Patti Parker

Dec 31 – Katie Primus

January 7 – Jerry & Pam Redman

January 14 – Marvin & Ruth Redman

January 21 – Steve & Debbie Reineke

January 28 – Linda Reutter

We will have magnetic name tags available for our greeters, and hand-shaking is optional. If possible, please try to be here about 9:30 am or so. If you know ahead of time that you can't greet the Sunday you are scheduled, you can let Worship Chair, Rosie Bogard know – but if something comes up and you can't make it that's ok!



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!

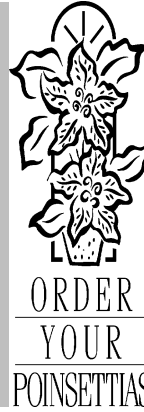
- 1 Jackson Kern
- 4 Sophia Starnes
- 5 Lukas Donner
- 6 Autumn Johnson, Kathy Barchet
- 7 Steve Reineke, Morgan Stierley
Rachel Hast
- 8 Greg Schmitt
- 9 Jamie Grabert
- 12 Emiley Chamberlain, Raymond Noelle
- 13 Julie Bullington
- 15 Russell Roehr, Shelby Conville
- 16 Lindsey Vaught, Toni Roberts
- 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
- 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 812 985-2437 so we may update our records. Thanks for your help!

Zion Senior Citizen Dinner Thursday, December 14 11 a.m.

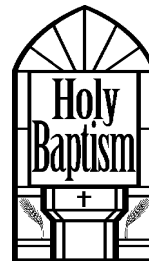


It will soon be Christmas and time to consider remembering someone special with a poinsettia or donation to a church fund of your choice. In either case please complete a form, found on foyer bulletin board, and place it along with your payment in the offering plate, or give to Rosie Bogard or drop off in church office **by Sunday Dec. 17.**

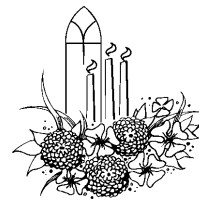
The poinsettias will come from the Green River Kiwanis Club, who use this sale as a fundraiser to support their community services.

Poinsettias are \$15 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 Rosie.



Levi Eric Boberg, son of Jonathan and Mackenzie Boberg, was baptized at Zion on November 5, 2023.



With Sympathy

We extend heartfelt sympathy to the family of Richard Mahrenholz. Richard passed away November 18, 2023 at the age of 82. No visitation or funeral services were held. We cherish good memories of Dick.



In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid; for see – I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord." (Luke 2. 8-11)

Is it possible in the midst of this fearful world and time in which we find ourselves, to really believe in our heart of hearts those words spoken by the Christmas angel so long ago? Or are we so accustomed to living in fear that we have become deafened to the voice that proclaims, "Do not be afraid"?

The shepherds were hardly the first nor the last to hear this message from God. These words were heard by Joseph when he struggled with whether he would go ahead with his plans to be wed to Mary. This voice was heard by Zechariah when Gabriel, the angel of the Lord, appeared to him in the temple telling him his wife Elizabeth would bear a son. This reassurance was heard by Mary when the angel entered her house in Nazareth and announced she would conceive and bear a son and she was to name him Jesus. It was the very same message heard by the women who came to the tomb that first Easter morning and found the stone rolled away. "Do not be afraid, do not be afraid, do not be afraid."

Certainly, these continue to be fearful times in which we live, but the world into which Jesus was born was hardly without its concerns. The atrocities surrounding the birth narrative are as horrendous as anything we might ever envision. And yet, God's holy messengers proclaim, "Do not be afraid."

As we once again begin the season of Advent, in preparation for the arrival of the Christ Child into our world and into our lives, we hope that this year will somehow be different. Perhaps we will hear the angel's words anew and allow ourselves to trust in the providence of God. "Do not be afraid." The good news that God became flesh in a tiny baby born in a manger ought to make a significant difference in how we live each and every day of our lives. Perhaps the greatest gift we could give ourselves this Christmas is to allow the message of the angels to be born in our hearts this holy season.

Blessings to each of you, *Pastor Jeff*



Congratulations to Marilyn Smith and Keith Frank who were married at Zion on November 25, 2023.



For the most part, Christmas is a time of celebration and joy. For many, however, this is a difficult time of year. Many people are carrying significant weights: grief, loss, depression, anxiety, financial stress, unemployment, uncertainty, aging parents, sick children, recent diagnoses, unknown illnesses. The public tone of the season does not resonate with many people's private experience. A **Blue Christmas Service** is a quiet, contemplative service for those who struggle to navigate the holidays. We invite you to join us for this year's Blue Christmas service on **December 17th beginning at 5:00 p.m.**

There will be a dinner served downstairs following the gathering in the sanctuary.



Christmas Eve Candlelight Worship December 24th - 7:00 p.m.

We hope that you and your family... and maybe even a special guest or two... can join us on Christmas Eve. Worship will begin at 7:00 p.m. and will be filled with your favorite Christmas hymns, choir music, candles, communion and an incredible time with our children. Please come early as seating in the sanctuary is normally filled to capacity this evening. We look forward to worshipping with you on this incredible night when we celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ.



COAT A KID - COAT DRIVE

The children of our church invite everyone to bring extra winter coats and jackets to the church and place them in the big "Coat a Kid" box located in the church foyer. All coats will be collected each week and delivered to Don's Claytons for cleaning and distribution. Last year we collected over 500 coats. Let's see if we might be able to move that number to over 600 coats this year. Thank you all for your support!



UGLY SWEATER/SUIT COAT SUNDAY - December 17th!!!! We are inviting everyone to wear the ugliest Christmas sweaters, coats, jackets, slacks, etc. on **Sunday, December 17th**. Come worship with us on December 17th and please invite your friends and other family members to join us for this fun filled, right before Christmas worship celebration.



Condolences: Study reveals what NOT to say when consoling the bereaved

Bereavement, the process of coping with the loss of a loved one, is a deeply personal and emotional journey. Friends, family, and informal support providers often play a crucial role in comforting the bereaved during this difficult time. However, a recent study, which involved in-depth interviews with bereaved parents and service providers, reveals some well-intentioned but insensitive remarks commonly made by people attempting to console the grieving.

While there has been significant research on the bereavement process, little attention has been given to the role of lay people in supporting the bereaved. This study, published in *OMEGA – Journal of Death and Dying*, aimed to understand how friends, family members, and other informal support providers attempt to console those who are grieving, particularly bereaved parents. The researchers were interested in exploring how certain comments and actions affected the grieving process and the emotional well-being of those mourning the loss of a child.

The study involved 20 bereaved parents and 11 service providers, who were interviewed individually over two hours. The participants were asked to describe their experiences and feelings during the bereavement process, specifically related to the death of a child. They were also asked to identify keywords for different time periods within their bereavement journey and share what was helpful and unhelpful during those times.

One of the central findings of the study was the detrimental impact of insensitive remarks made by well-meaning individuals. Participants reported feeling hurt and frustrated by comments that were intended to console them but came across as unhelpful.

Religious explanations such as “It was God’s will” or “God wanted another angel” were mentioned as unhelpful and sometimes hurtful. The study suggests that individuals should consider the bereaved person’s level of religiosity before offering religious explanations. This finding highlights the importance of tailoring support to the individual’s beliefs and preferences.

Comparing one’s grief to that of others or making inappropriate comparisons, such as “I know what you’re going through because I lost my mother,” was also cited as unhelpful. Such comparisons can minimize the unique pain experienced by the bereaved and fail to provide the comfort intended.

Another notable finding was the negative impact of advice-giving. Participants expressed frustration when people offered unsolicited advice, such as “You should do this” or “You’ll get over it.”

Lastly, insensitive remarks often implied an expectation of a quick recovery. Comments like “You’ll be a lot better once you get through Christmas” or “It’s been six months; aren’t you better yet?” were perceived as insensitive and dismissive of the grieving process.

It’s important to note that the study participants recognized that those who made insensitive remarks did not intend to be hurtful. Instead, they were trying to offer comfort and support but lacked the understanding of how their words might affect the bereaved.

On the other hand, the study revealed several critical insights into what helps bereaved parents during their grieving process. Consistently, participants spoke about the importance of non-judgmental support from family, friends, spouses, and employers. Those who had access to such support found it invaluable. Local bereavement services and peer-support groups also played a crucial role, allowing them to share their experiences with others who understood their grief.

For some bereaved parents, returning to work provided structure and routine, which they found helpful. The support of co-workers also contributed to their healing process. For those who didn’t have work to provide structure, they either created routines or expressed a desire for employment to prevent excessive dwelling on their loss.

Participants highlighted the significance of practical assistance from their support networks, such as help with childcare, funeral arrangements, and meal preparation. These acts of kindness reminded them to take care of themselves during a time when they often lacked the energy or motivation to do so.

(Excerpts from The study, “[Consoling the Bereaved: Exploring How Sympathy Cards Influence What People Say](#)”, was authored by Kimberly A. Calderwood and Amy M. Alberton.)

Council Meeting Highlights – 11/14/23

In Attendance– Michelle Heneisen, Nancy Lewis, Rosie Bogard, Carl Barchet, Patrick Schroeder, Pastor Jeff, Bob Juncker

10/31 YTD Regular Offering: \$167,645.28

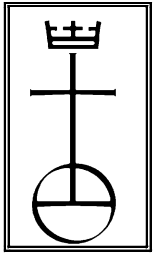
10/31 YTD General Fund Income: \$177,440.65

10/31 YTD General Fund Expense: \$168,168.48

- **Solar Project Update** – Stacy has met with both Morton Solar and Ohio Valley solar and both groups are willing to meet after church to give a presentation to the congregation. Discussion has been had with both groups on ground mounts vs. roof mounts and both have stated there would be additional costs for doing ground mounts but can present on both. Planned to have Ohio Valley Solar present after church on 12/17/23.
- **Ballfield Mowing Pay** – \$1,000 has been paid each of the last 2 years for the ballfield mowing. A \$200 donation is usually received from the NP Youth Club to help offset the cost. Pat motioned to approve the total \$1,000 payment again for the current year and for the funds to come from Property Maintenance. Council approved.
- **Endowment Requests** – 4 endowment requests were approved by the council:
 - \$1,000 Request from Odds & Ends class for United Caring Services
 - \$1,500 Request from JJ Mohr to provide streaming services for Jacob’s Village
 - \$5,000 Request from Sandy Willett for God’s Storehouse
 - \$1,500 Request for Operation Christmas Child to pay for shipping costs on 141 boxes. \$1,250 approved by endowment and council, as remaining \$250 is being covered by other donated funds.
- **Peppermint Pops Update** – 47 people signed up as of 11/14 meeting. Final payment is due Sunday, November 19th.
- **Soup Cook-Off** - \$325 was raised in the soup cook-off this year, and is being donated to VOICES, Inc. Around \$100 of expenses for the hot dogs, buns, and other costs were requested for reimbursement. Council approved this reimbursement to come out of recreation budget.
- **Zion Nursery Center Updates** – Hacienda gift card sales were over \$5,000, meaning over \$1,000 was raised for the Zion Nursery Center. Nancy mentioned that tuition is planned to be raised to \$15 per month to increase pay for teachers and help offset costs.

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**Ohio Valley Solar will be here after church on Sunday December 17 to give a presentation on possible solar installation at Zion. Congregation is encouraged to attend. We are also considering the possibility of offering the presentation on Zoom, more info to follow.**



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 helps 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)

***The Women of Zion  
will have their annual  
Christmas Party on  
December 14 at 6 pm***

*The Theme will be "The Hands of  
Jesus". A meal will be served with the  
committee providing the meat. Everyone  
is asked to bring a covered dish. Secret  
Pals will be revealed along with  
Christmas Bingo. All women of Zion  
are invited!*

***Hope to see everyone for a  
fun-filled evening!***