

DECEMBER 2025

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.)
11/2	149	68 devices
11/9	162	76 devices
11/16	151	45 devices
11/23	172	59 devices

Sunday School Average Attendance

November: Adult = 17
Children = 11
Youth (grade 6-12) = 4
Confirmation = 10

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.



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.



Greeter Schedule for upcoming Sundays:

Nov 30 – Ben & Ashley Lingafelter
Dec 7 – John & Miranda Pieszchalski
Dec 14 – Linda Reutter
Dec 21 – Russ Roehr
Dec 24 Christmas Eve – Council
Dec 28 – Michele "Kookie" Ruminer

Jan 4, 2026 – Bill Meyer
Jan 11 – Sue Scherry
Jan 18 – Sandy Schmitt
Jan 25 – Delene Schmitz

We will have magnetic name tags available for our greeters, and hand-shaking is optional. 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 Rosie Bogard know – but if something comes up and you can't make it don't fret!



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, Elliott & Roman Price
- 19 Jeanette Hunter, Abigail Steinhart
- 20 Gabe Schroeder
- 21 Nancy deClaisse-Walford
- 22 David Simpson
- 24 Emma Schroeder
- 25 Theresa Juncker Sumbles, 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)
- 7 Austin & Lindsey Spears (2024)
- 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!

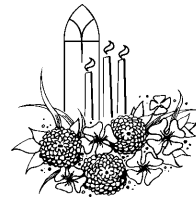
Zion Senior Citizen Dinner **Thursday, December 18** **11 a.m.**



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. 14.**

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.



With Sympathy

We extend heartfelt sympathy to the family of Colleen Heneisen. Colleen passed away November 3, 2025 at the age of 79. Funeral services were held November 8 at Pierre Funeral Home with burial at Memorial Park Cemetery in Evansville. We cherish many good memories of Colleen.

December UCC Special Offering

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



Dear Friends... December invites us into sacred space — a time when the world seems to slow down just enough for light to shine through the cracks of our ordinary days. As the season of Advent unfolds, we wait with anticipation, not only for Christmas morning, but for Christ to be born again in our hearts, our homes, and our world.

Advent teaches us that hope is not wishful thinking — it is ***courage taking root***. We light candles week by week not because the world is already bright, but because we believe light is stronger than any darkness. In a world where headlines often feel heavy and hearts sometimes grow weary, the simple message of the manger remains: **God is with us**. Not when we are perfect, but right where we are. Not only in sanctuaries, but in kitchens, hospital rooms, nursing homes, classrooms, quiet moments, and crowded places.

This year, I encourage you to do the best you can to slow down just a little. Notice the small graces. Listen for the whisper of peace. Make room for wonder. Share kindness generously. And remember that the first Christmas happened in a simple, humble space — which means Christ can arrive in the everyday spaces of our lives, too.

As we prepare our homes for Christmas, may we also prepare our hearts. As we wrap gifts, may we also unwrap gratitude. As we gather with family and friends, may we discover once again the gift of community — and the joy of knowing that God still chooses to come close.

May the hope of Advent, the peace of Christ, and the joy of the season be with you and those you love this month. I am grateful to be walking this journey with you.

Christmas blessings, PJ

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## **Christmas Eve Worship – From Darkness to Light**

### **Wednesday, December 24th @ 7:00 p.m.**

The night of Christmas Eve holds a special kind of wonder — a quiet holiness that reminds us that even in the deepest darkness, the light of Christ shines. This year, we invite you to join us for a beautiful Christmas Eve worship service on **Wednesday, December 24th at 7:00 p.m.** as we celebrate the theme: **“From Darkness to Light.”**

Through Scripture, candlelight, carols, and the story of Jesus’ birth, we will journey together from the shadows of the world into the glow of God’s love. It is a time to pause, breathe, and experience the hope that only Christ can bring. Whether you come filled with joy or carrying burdens, you are welcome — just as you are.

Bring your family, invite a friend, and come ready for an evening filled with peace, warmth, and the true meaning of Christmas. As the sanctuary fills with candlelight, we will remember once again that God’s light still shines — and the darkness cannot overcome it.

Let’s celebrate the wonder of Christ’s birth together — as one family, one community, one light shining in the darkness.

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Congratulations to Caleb Voegel and Haley Thewes who were married October 25, 2025 in Newburgh.

Congratulations also to Austin & Whitney O'Risky who were married October 18, 2025.



Sue Scherry
10421 St Paul Dr
Mt Vernon IN 47620



Women's Fellowship

The Women of Zion will meet on Thursday, December 11th at 6 pm for our Christmas celebration and unveiling of our Secret Pals.

If you have a Secret Pal, this is the meeting where we exchange gifts. If you don't have a Secret Pal, you are still welcome to attend or bring a gift to share with someone if you want to join in the fun!

Christmas Cookie Walk – Sweet Treats for a Great Cause!

Supporting New Life Rescue of Mt. Vernon, IN

Get ready to walk, taste, and *make a difference!* Our **Christmas Cookie Walk** will be held **following worship on December 14.** This year, all proceeds will go to **New Life Rescue in Mt. Vernon,** an organization bringing hope and help in so many wonderful ways to abandoned and orphaned pets.

Tables will be *filled* with homemade cookies of every kind. Fill a box with your favorites... or pick up extras to bless a neighbor, co-worker, or friend. Every cookie helps support New Life Rescue and the difference they make in our local community.

Please bring your cookies to the church on Saturday, December 13th from 9:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. or make arrangements with our "Cookie Walk" organizers, Andrea Singer or Ruth Redman.

Invite friends and family, bakers and eaters, sweet tooths and generous hearts. Let's come together and make this a celebration of giving, community, and compassion.

Come hungry. Leave joyful. Make a difference!

Blue Christmas Service – A Gentle Space for the Season
Sunday, December 14th at 4:00 p.m. — Light Dinner to Follow

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For many, Christmas is a season filled with joy, celebration, and togetherness. But for others, this time of year can be difficult. Grief, illness, stress, loneliness, or memories of loved ones no longer with us can make the season feel heavier than it once did. If you find that this year your heart needs a quieter space, we invite you to our *Blue Christmas* worship service on **Sunday, December 14th at 4:00 p.m.**

Following the service, we will gather for a **light dinner and fellowship**, a chance to share conversation and comfort together. Whether you are carrying grief, walking through a challenging season, or simply need a quieter Christmas experience this year, this service is for you — and for anyone you may wish to invite.

Come as you are. Stay as long as you need. Let the light of Christ meet you with gentleness and peace.

**“The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.” — John 1.5**

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Children’s Christmas Program – Sunday, December 21st During Worship!

You won’t want to miss it! Christmas joy is coming to our sanctuary in a big way! On **Sunday, December 21st**, our children will lead us in a special Christmas program during our morning worship service — and it’s sure to bring smiles, laughter, and perhaps even a few happy tears! Our kids have been working hard—learning lines, singing songs, and discovering the story of Jesus’ arrival in Bethlehem.

Come support our amazing kids as they remind us of the true meaning of Christmas: God’s love coming close to us in the most unexpected way — through a child. Invite friends, grandparents, neighbors, or anyone who could use a dose of Christmas cheer. It will be a joyful and uplifting service for all ages! Mark your calendars: **Sunday, December 21st @ 10:00 a.m.**

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**Ugly Sweater Sunday! - Sunday, December 21st – During Worship**

*Wear it proud... the uglier, the better!*

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It’s time to unpack those dazzling sweaters — you know the ones! The ones with jingling bells, blinking lights, reindeer faces, or mysterious glitter that never goes away. **On Sunday, December 21st during worship**, we’re celebrating Ugly Sweater Sunday, and everyone is invited to join in the fun! This lighthearted tradition gives us a chance to laugh, celebrate community, and enjoy the joyful spirit of the season together.

Our worship will still focus on the heart of Christmas — the hope, love, joy, and peace that Christ brings — but it will also celebrate the gift of laughter and the joy of gathering as God’s family. So invite a friend, bring your brightest sweater, and let’s fill the sanctuary with color, cheer, and good fun — and maybe a few photos!

Zion Lippe UCC Church Council Meeting Highlights - November 11, 2025

Meeting called to order. Devotions led by Pastor Jeff. Approval of October Minutes

Special Guest – Gabe Schroeder (Endowment & Retreat)

Endowment: - Shared a handout summarizing the Zion Lippe Endowment Fund, including how to make a request. - Discussed putting a slightly reformatted version of the handout into use with the Request Form.

Family of Faith Retreat: - Intended dates are March 13–15. - Conducted a survey; 44 interested in attending - Exploring use of Santa Claus Lodge again - Main expense will be Event Room rental.

Motion: Lauren Kern motioned to use funds from the current Family of Faith Retreat Fund for Event Room deposit and to sign the rental agreement. Tim seconded. **Council approved – motion carried.**

Treasurer – Pat Reviewed October financials:

10/31 YTD Regular Offering: \$161,420.27

10/31 YTD General Fund Income: \$171,214.21

10/31 YTD General Fund Expense: \$187,409.16

Worship – Nancy

Acolytes began lighting candles during the prelude (mostly first-year confirmation students). Younger members also signed up in November. Council members now carry the offering forward while the congregation sings the doxology; many appreciated the change.

Education – Lauren

Discussed having Sunday School children participate during service.

Discussed open ZNC Director position and sharing a plea with the congregation.

Property – Roger

Discussed Ballfield Mowing pay to Gary & Staci Voegel.

Siding to be completed this week.

Steeple repair delayed by contractor due to other projects and weather; anticipated January start.

Stewardship – Tim

Endowment is reviewing investment advisors. Stewardship Committee is working on next year's budget.

Recreation – Adam

Planning Peppermint Pops outing: \$20 per person, with \$5 per ticket covered by the Recreation Fund.

Pastor – Jeff

Hanging of the Greens – November 30

Time off request: December 1–7 approved.

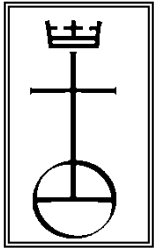
Discussed future Family/Game/Movie Night in January or February.

Accepted to serve on the Mental Health Network Board of the UCC.

Discussed community outreach ideas related to food and meals.

Motion: Lauren motioned to distribute funds collected from the Harvest Home donation drive to God's Storehouse and for the \$1000 remaining Council Designated Benevolence balance in the budget to go to Salem Church Sharing Basket. Tim seconded. **Motion carried.**

Next meeting scheduled for **December 9, 2025.**



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

See zionlippe.org for church calendars



Once again our youth are joining with other local organizations for this year's Coat-A-Kid campaign to help keep local children warm this winter season.

You are invited to check your closets for coats you no longer need, bring them to church with you and drop them in the Coat-A-Kid box located in the foyer.

Each week the coats will be delivered to Don's Claytons where they are cleaned and then distributed through the Salvation Army and the Evansville Christian Life Center - and are free to anyone that needs them.

Coats will be collected through the month of December.