

***ZION
LUTHERAN
CHURCH &
PRESCHOOL***



**December
2024**



**101 South Railway
Mascoutah, IL 62258**

VACANCY PASTOR:

- **Rev. Jeffrey Hemmer**
Email: jeffhemmer@gmail.com or
Pastor@ZionMascoutah.org

MUSIC DIRECTORS:

- **Josh & Nancy Peterson**

PRESCHOOL DIRECTOR:

- **Vikki Harms**
Email: zionpreschooldirector2020@gmail.com

CHURCH SECRETARY:

- **Robin Phillips**
Email: churchoffice@zionmascoutah.org

Church: 618-566-7345

Fax: 618-566-9519

Website:

www.ZionMascoutah.org

Find us at @ZionMascoutah on
Facebook, X, and Instagram



**A Congregation
of The
Lutheran Church
Missouri Synod**

Mission Statement: "Zion is God's family of faith in Christ serving our communities, our country, and our world".

Humor

A boy wanted to be Joseph in the Sunday School pageant. He was cast as the landlord and objected loudly, but to no avail. When the pageant was presented, Mary and Joseph knocked on the door and asked him if he had a room for them. The boy smiled and said, "Yes, sure. Lots of room. Come on in!"

While participating in a church Christmas pageant many years past, I had the good fortune to be chosen as the narrator. Each rehearsal went off well and then on the night of the show, I, in a loud and penetrating voice announced the gifts of the Magi as "gold, Frankenstein and myrrh."

From the Pastor

The Reason for the Season

There is no war on Christmas. Christmas, the twelve days from December 25 until Epiphany on January 6, are left alone by the Chicken Little pundits and retailers of inflatable Nativities, who have been hawking their wares and inciting fears about a liberal takeover of the season since the Halloween decorations came down. Perhaps there is a war on a season, but the season isn't Christmas. And too often those who rejoice in the Nativity of Christ are fighting for the wrong side.

The real war is against Advent. And it's being fought, not principally by those outside the Church, but by those who should know better, who are spending lifetimes waiting for the second Advent of their Lord Jesus.

A few years ago, at the height of the Occupy movements (remember Occupy Wall Street?), there was a social media movement against the chaos and commercialism of Christmas called Occupy Advent. The premise was simple: Advent is a necessary season, a holy season, one we ought not discard in our rush to get presents purchased and decorations displayed.

With so many things competing for our time and clamoring for our attention, Advent is more necessary every year. Like Lent, Advent is a deliberately penitential time, a time to mourn our sins, to fast and pray, and to prepare ourselves—not principally for Christmas—but for the return of Jesus.

Continued from page 1.

LCMS member and editor-in-chief at The Federalist, Mollie Hemingway wrote a column a few years ago, “Forget the War on Christmas; the War on Advent is worse.” Frustrated by society's contempt for the contemplative, penitential season of Advent, she urges

“So if you really want to fight on the right side of the War on Christmas, you also have to fight on the right side of the War on Advent, OK? This will require something we’re very bad at in this country: a modicum of restraint and patience. Advent is for preparation. Christmas is for partying. So that means Christmas parties should take place during Christmas. Christmas parties should not take place during Advent. You get 12 full days when hardly anyone is working to party all you want. Use them.” (thefederalist.com/2014/10/09/forget-the-war-on-christmas-the-war-on-advent-is-worse)

Advent is for waiting. In particular, it's for waiting for the return of Jesus. *Advent* means coming. We celebrate the Incarnation of the Son of God, His first coming, His ongoing gifts of Word and Sacrament, His present-day coming, and anticipate His return, His future coming. The waiting, while awkward, while often uncomfortable, is the reason for the season of Advent. Advent trains us to fix our eyes beyond this temporary plane.

It's difficult, to be sure, when Santa decorations and Christmas trees pop up in stores as soon as zombie masks and skeletons get marked down to 50% off. But that should tell you something. Retailers want you to spend money. They have something to sell. The Church does not. She wants to prepare you for eternal things. She does so, in part, with a season of patience, of waiting, of hoping, of fasting, of praying, of watching.

Enjoy the wait. Blessed Advent.

In Christ's Service and Yours,

Pastor Hemmer



This November at our youth group meeting, we ate snacks and had a devotion about Thanksgiving. We also did a service project which included sending coats and Christmas cards to North Carolina to support them after the hurricane. The youth had a lot of fun making these cards and were excited to put their creative skills to good use.



CHOIR NEWS

Open Choir Rehearsal

Are you a singer? Will you be attending the Christmas Eve Service? Then you are invited to sing in the choir! All are invited to rehearse with us on Wednesday, December 18 at 7:00. This rehearsal will focus on the music that will be sung during the Christmas Eve service: Carl Schalk's "Before the Marvel of this Night," John Rutter's "Angels' Carol," and a hymn concertato on "Once in Royal David's City" by Walter Pelz. We hope to have a large number of singers - both choral and congregational - for the service on Christmas Eve at 6:00.

Organ Music begins at 5:30 on Christmas Eve

Do you want a great seat for the Christmas Eve service? Then come early, and you will also hear an organ recital, beginning at 5:30. The selections will begin with settings of Advent hymns. At 5:45, the music will transition to Christmas hymn settings, making an exciting and jubilant introduction to the Service of Seven Lessons and Carols. This service will feature choir, strings, organ, and the congregation!

Membership Changes

Baptisms:

Transfer Out:

Board of Ed

Wow, this year has gone so fast! I can't believe it's Christmas time already. The Board had a productive year, and we are capping it off with sending gift cards along with notes of encouragement to our college students. We are making gift bags to present to our youth taking part in the Children's Christmas program.

There is still an opening on the Board. If you believe that youth are an important part of our Church, and wish to encourage their interest in Zion Lutheran, please consider volunteering to join the board.

We wish you a Merry and Blessed Christmas!

Linda Hoskins, Cary Robinson, and Bob Eldridge.



PRESCHOOL

December is always a short month, but packed full of learning. Ask any of our preschoolers what Christmas is about, and they will happily tell you...**"It's Jesus' birthday!"** We will celebrate Christmas by sharing the Christmas message with our families. We will also have Jesus Time with Pastor Hemmer and will hear the stories about "Jesus is Born" and "Angels tell the Shepherds"

Our last day of school will be Thursday, December 19th. School will resume on Monday, January 6th.

We wish everyone a blessed, happy, and safe Christmas holiday as you and your family celebrate the birth of our Savior. We look forward to seeing all our students again in January.

God Bless,
Vikki Harms
Zion Preschool Director



Elders Corner

"The LORD is my strength and my shield; in Him my heart trusts, and I am helped; my heart exults, and with my song I give thanks to Him" (Psalm 28:7)

Have you recently paused to reflect and give thanks to where you are at in your journey?
Have you recently asked if you have enough?
Have you thought about your service in faith and service to others?
As the holidays approach, now is a good time to devote to your daily readings, prayers, and consideration of help to others and to reflect on how thankful you are in your day to day life.

In Christ,
Geoff Phillips, Elder



Merry Christmas



2024 Christmas Program

Christmas program practice is 9:45 each Sunday until December 15th. We need pre-K through 8th grade in attendance. December 14th will be the last practice and the Happy Birthday Jesus Party, time TBD. If you have any questions or would like to participate in making the program successful, please see Anna, Dawn, Marianne, or Nancy.

SUNDAY
SCHOOL

Position Opening: Assistant Sunday School Superintendent for 2025

We are seeking an Assistant Sunday School Superintendent to serve a two-year term. The first year will be Assistant Superintendent, transitioning to Superintendent in the second year.

Responsibilities include:

Tracking attendance and collecting offerings.

Managing quarterly mission donations.

Collaborating with teachers on curriculum planning for the school year and Summer Sunday School.

This position is vital to maintaining a vibrant and successful Sunday School program for our children. If you feel called to serve or have any questions, please reach out to Anna Pannier or Dawn Corey. Thank you for considering this important opportunity to support our church's mission!

CHRISTIAN-THEMED 2025 Calendars and CHRISTMAS CARDS

THE LADIES AID HAS BEAUTIFUL CHRISTIAN-THEMED 2025 Calendars for sale. We have a LIMITED NUMBER, so they may go FAST! They are \$6 each.

We also have a wide variety of CHRISTMAS CARDS for sale at very reasonable prices. See the table in the hall outside the office to shop. See Candy or Glenda to pay.



Zion's 140th Anniversary Cookbooks Great Gift Idea.... SALE PRICE \$10!

Zion has added many new members in the past thirteen years. Have you looked through our cookbook? It contains more than 475 recipes, as well as some history about Zion and some fun entries as well. They sell for only \$10. Don't forget our wonderful cookbooks as you look over your Christmas list. They make great gifts!

**TOP
SECRET**

SECRET PAL PROGRAM

Would you like to have a Secret Pal at Zion? Have you noticed gifts mysteriously appearing at church? Zion's Ladies Aid/LWML members have had secret pals for the past few years and have enjoyed it so much, this program is offered to any member of Zion who wishes to participate. You will receive a slip of paper on which to write your name, favorites, etc. from Glenda Pike. See Glenda by Sunday, Dec 15, to get details and/or sign up. (Or sign up and get a sheet from the narthex table.) On Dec 22 and 29, we will draw Secret Pal names. You are to pray for this person and can send cards or leave cards or small gifts at church during the year. Names are revealed next December. Sh-h-h, don't tell anyone!

*shhh....
it's a secret*

Ladies Aid Christmas Potluck

ALL LADIES of the congregation are invited to join us on Dec 19, for our annual Christmas party and potluck (side dishes only, meat will be furnished). We eat at 6:00 PM and then will have a short program.



You may bring a \$10 gift for exchange; if you have a Secret Pal, that gift may be brought also. We will also take a collection for Concordia Seminary. It's a fun and special evening. Please plan to attend. See Glenda for more details.

LOCALLY-HARVESTED HONEY FOR SALE

The Ladies Aid is selling pints of fresh, local honey for \$15 each. See the display on the table in the narthex.





stewardship

Repenting of “Yours” and “Mine”

Retailers have had their Christmas displays up since before Reformation Sunday. The kids have made their list and checked it twice, or three times or more. It won't be long before the tree will start shedding its needles, the stockings emptied, the gifts unwrapped, toys broken, and the too small or out of style clothes returned. Before we know it, the annual celebration of Christmas will be over.

But for the children of God, we know that the gift of Christmas doesn't ever end. Week in and week out, the Lord continues to shower His gifts on us. Every time the Lord gathers us to His house, and we are led to kneel at His table, the gift of forgiveness is repeatedly granted to us. It is nothing we deserve. It comes to us freely!

The fourth stanza of the stewardship hymn, “Forgive Us Lord for Shallow Thankfulness” (LSB 788) highlights both this gift and our response.

*Teach us, O Lord, true thankfulness divine,
that gives as Christ gave, never counting cost*

To learn thankfulness is necessary. The parents of young children are well-versed in the fact that they must teach their children thankfulness. It does not come naturally. The spiritual genetics inherited from our parents allow us to think that the world revolves around us. When we receive something, there is an inward desire to think that we in some way deserve it.

But there is no way that we deserve anything we get from our Lord. We need that ongoing lesson from God Himself. Thankfulness toward God is worked in us by the Holy Spirit. God's Word works this thanksgiving in us. We need this weekly reminder that Jesus didn't consider “equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied Himself” for us, to the point of death on a cross (Phil. 2:6). He didn't bat an eye. He paid the price! Our life of stewardship is one of daily and weekly thanksgiving inspired by the Lord Himself.

*That knows no barrier of “yours” and “mine,”
assured that only what's withheld is lost.*

Because Jesus gave us everything and more, there can be no ownership. The child at Christmas is quick to claim that the newly gifted toy is “mine!” But as Psalm 24:1 asserts, “The earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof, the world and those who dwell therein.” There isn't anything in creation that is ours. When we cling to and claim ownership of anything in creation, we are losing out on the continual gifts with which the Lord desires to shower upon us. Closed hands cannot receive anything new. We cling to the old and dead and miss the new thing that the Lord desires to do in and for us.

We are led to repent of the “yours” and “mine” and remove the lie that we have any ownership. In this we have the promise that God will continue to give to us. Not just at Christmas, but every Sunday at the altar in the Lord's house.

??? Who Do I Contact ???

ADULT NEW MEMBER/INSTRUCTION

Pastor Hemmer 618-946-6465

ALTAR GUILD

Lita Timmerman 618-806-2617

BOARD OF EDUCATION

Linda Hoskins 618-210-6987

Bob Eldridge 618-566-4841

Cary Robinson 618-420-7276

BOARD OF FINANCE

Karen Eldridge 618-580-5914

Cheryl Sax 618-806-7290

Deb Heck 618-792-0723

CHURCH BUSINESS

President — Mike Twenhafel 618-363-1955

V. President — Jon Robinson 618-420-6978

CONFIRMATION CLASSES

Pastor Hemmer 618-946-6465

EVANGELISM QUESTIONS

Bessie Fick 515-230-9937

Joe Bloomquist, Elder 618-954-9462

LADIES AID/LWML

Pinky Ahner 618-698-0555

MEN'S CLUB

Ray Kemezys 618-971-8691

Joe Crismon 270-762-6618

MUSIC

Choir/Organ- Josh & Nancy Peterson
618-973-8169

PRAYER CHAIN

Prayer requests - Contact Church Office

To be added to prayer chain please

contact Pastor Hemmer at

Pastor @ZionMascoutah.org

PRESCHOOL

Director - Vikki Harms 618-334-2261

SOCIAL MEDIA

Kayla Hollenkamp 618-367-5177

kayla_hollenkamp@hotmail.com

SOCIAL MINISTRY QUESTIONS

Pastor Hemmer 618-946-6465

Geoff Phillips, Elder 618-978-2616

SPIRITUAL CONCERNS/QUESTIONS

Pastor Hemmer 618-946-6465

Board of Elders:

A-G: Ray Kemezys 618-971-8691

H-L: Geoff Phillips 618-978-2616

M-R: Dan Eads 618-623-2760

S-Z: Joe Bloomquist 618-954-9462

STEWARDSHIP QUESTIONS

Ray Kemezys, Elder 618-971-8691

SUNDAY SCHOOL

Superintendent— Anna Pannier

618-409-5193

Assistant Superintendent— Dawn Corey

619-995-2401

THRIVENT

Lionel Timmerman 618-806-8993

Glenda Pike 618-806-3656

TRUSTEES/BLDG. MAINTENANCE

Trustees@ZionMascoutah.com

Mark Hatcher 618-409-8848

Lionel Timmerman 618-806-8993

Andy Sax 618-530-7294

Carl Sherrill 618-409-3321

WORSHIP QUESTIONS

Pastor Hemmer 618-946-6465

Dan Eads, Elder 618-623-2760

YOUTH GROUP

Kris Huth 618-267-3951

Jen Lara 618-530-8827

Marianne McDaniel 618-789-1602

Rhea Sax 618-558-0515



LUTHERAN HOUR MINISTRIES
www.lhm.org

December 1

"Will Everything Sad Come Untrue?"

Lutheran Hour Speaker:

Rev. Dr. Michael Zeigler

A mother and her young son trade a life of privilege for one of poverty, a story that is borderline unbelievable, yet nonetheless true. (Jeremiah 33:16)

December 8

"Completely Ordinary Human"

Lutheran Hour Speaker:

Rev. Dr. Michael Zeigler

Everyone has a story to tell and yours can be one through which Jesus is working to make the world new again. (Malachi 3:7)

December 22

"Does It Matter If Jesus Is God?"

Lutheran Hour Speaker:

Rev. Dr. Michael Zeigler

Jesus sets a good example, but good examples can't help dead people. Only God's Son can make us alive again. (Luke 2:10-11)

December 29

"No Getting Better Than This"

Guest Speaker: Rev. Dr. Chad Lakies

The Good Life--what is it? Pastor Chad Lakies says life is truly good when it's life the way God meant it to be. (Colossians 3:12-17)



Please
continue
to support the
Mascoutah
Food
Pantry.



Birthdays

12/04 Harry Bailey
12/04 Andrew Dunn
12/05 Ryan Heck
12/05 Ian Robinson
12/06 Tom Hinton
12/06 Pat Meier
12/06 Anna Pannier
12/07 Blake Rowold
12/12 Tyler Hinton
12/12 Ellie Tubbs
12/14 Lisa Wehmeyer
12/16 Nicole Roehrig
12/17 Laurie Fournie
12/18 David Hinrichs
12/18 Becky Wachtman
12/19 Ava Tubbs
12/22 Carl Sherrill
12/24 Andrew Hosler
12/26 Ruth Rincker
12/28 Alexander Allen
12/30 Kathleen Eldridge
12/30 Jerry Purdin
12/31 Rosemary Peterson



LWML: Dec 19

Christmas Potluck 6:00 PM
(Meat will be furnished.)

Secret pals Revealed
Senior Ladies Gift Donation

****Bring \$10 Gift for
Exchange****

Program Committee:
Marlene Lockwood & Glenda Pike

Hostesses:
Joyce Hendrix & Becky Wachtman

December

Wedding Anniversaries

12/16 Tom & Deb Heck
12/17 Dan & Lesley Eads
12/17 Ken & Gail Frey
12/23 Karl & Barbara Bretz
12/27 Lionel & Lita Timmerman
12/29 Terry & Beth Twenhafel



Baptismal Anniversaries

12/01 Matt Krausz
12/02 Rainer Bretz
12/02 William Bretz
12/02 Andy Sax
12/03 Pastor Kirk Clayton
12/03 David Hatcher
12/03 Jadon Lorton
12/04 Eliza Matthews
12/04 Emily Matthews
12/04 Jennalee Matthews
12/04 Lauren Matthews
12/06 Lily McDaniel
12/06 Dan Morra
12/07 Marion Kneschke
12/09 Katie Crismon
12/11 Melissa Kohnen
12/13 Kaitlin Queen
12/15 Stefan Drinnon
12/16 Jennifer Hosler
12/16 Jacob McDaniel
12/16 Nick McDaniel
12/16 Ray McDaniel
12/18 Marlene Lockwood
12/20 Ryan Heck
12/21 Nathan Stangle
12/25 Robyn Rakers
12/26 Sophia Bretz
12/27 Lisa Wehmeyer
12/29 Sherrie Knutson
12/29 Eliza Timmerman
12/30 Mia Simon
12/31 Sadie Orr
12/31 Jennifer Rueter
12/31 Joseph Rueter IV



Flowers for December

1
8
15 Eads, in celebration of their
36th wedding anniversary.
22
29



Altar Guild

Schedule for Dec.

1 Dawn & Phoebe Corey
8 Gail Frey
22 Karen Eldridge
25 Lita Timmerman

JESUS is
the Reason
for the
Season.

**Council Meeting Minutes
Zion Lutheran Church
November 7, 2024**

Meeting called to order at 7:01 p.m. (Jon Robinson)

Opening prayer and devotion by Pastor Hemmer.

Roll call: Joe Bloomquist, Laurie Fournie, Mark Hatcher, Pastor Hemmer, Linda Hoskins, Jon Robinson, Mike Twenhafel, Jean Kemezs, and Nancy Peterson (to give update on David's Harp program)

October Council meeting minutes approved by email.

David's Harp update: (Nancy Peterson)

Started semester with 11 students, two have discontinued due to basketball season starting. Overall it's been going pretty well. What was previously reported as 15% of the lesson fees to be retained by our church to go towards administration is actually \$3.00 per lesson fee. The \$3.00 fee is recommended in the David's Harp guidebook and instructors have signed an annual contract acknowledging the fee. This fee can be adjusted as needed in the future.

Pastor's report: (Pastor Hemmer)

- Duties have included:
 - Divine services, prayer services, Catechesis, meetings.
 - Member visits, shut-in, and hospital visits.
 - Brightly Vespers service.
 - Pastor conference.
 - Nov. 15-17 Pastor will be attending a Father-Son Retreat. Pastor Brian Heller will fill in.

Board of Finance report: (Laurie Fournie)

- Budget YTD: \$242,821.00
- Actual YTD: \$220,451.20

Treasurer's report: (Laurie Fournie)

- First Federal Savings Bank: \$120,589.13
- First Federal Savings Bank – Money Market: \$40,251.37
- Edward Jones account: \$72,472.80
- General Fund; \$51,410.28

MMSP to approve Treasurer's report.

Board of Education report: (Linda Hoskins)

- Preschool:
 - Current balance \$54,918.34
 - Lunch Bunch group is up to 11 members now.
 - Fall Butter Braid fundraiser raised \$3,400.
 - Staff attended Illinois AEYC Growing Futures Conference in Springfield Oct. 24 and 25.
 - Parent Teacher conferences to be Nov. 5 and 6.
- Sunday School:
 - October attendance 216, offering \$160.10, with \$40.03 towards missions.
 - Christmas program rehearsals are starting. Christmas Program will be held Dec. 15.
 - A Happy Birthday Jesus party will be Dec. 14.
 - Search is on for Assistant Superintendent.

Continued from previous page.

•BOE:

- Fall Fest was a success. We had a good number of entries for the chili cook-off and pie contest. We plan to do the same next year.
- We plan to buy Chik-Fil-A gift cards for our college students. Will be sending them after Thanksgiving along with encouraging Bible verses.
- Plans are being made for gift bags for children taking part in Christmas program.
- Next meeting will be Wednesday, Nov. 20.

Board of Elders report: (Joe Bloomquist)

- Apologetics Conference had to be cancelled due to keynote speaker family emergency.
- Call committee had meeting with Pastor Scharr this week. Went over results of surveys.
- Several names have been submitted. Hope to be able to start moving at a quicker pace after the first of the year. Encourage all to continue praying for the call process.

Board of Trustees report: (Mark Hatcher)

- Alarm system service call. Tech Electronics adjusted the fire alarm power supply in the basement. Trying to alleviate Cell Trouble alarms.
- Church Sign update:
 - Some estimates are in (from Eberhart Signs and Summit Signs) ranging from about \$25,000 to \$40,000 (Ray Kemezys)
 - The company that did the sign at the grade school and high school is at the high end.
 - Working on setting up a sign demo.
 - Contacting some local sign owners. (Geoff Phillips)
- Routine Maintenance:
 - Replaced flapper valve in sacristy restroom.
 - Removed ballast and installed LED bulbs in one office fixture.
 - Replaced broken bulb in Sanctuary above the lectern.
- Priorities:
 - Church office door lock.
 - Finish Smart Boards.
 - Sr. Youth room – leak (no change), baseboard work necessary.
 - Security monitor in choir loft (no change), need to load software.
 - Preschool girl's toilet – need to install additional flushometers/paint peeling stall door.
 - Re-tile stairway landings, starting with the balcony stairway.
- Discussed updating bathrooms – doing minor repairs vs. full remodel. Will need to get estimate on full remodel to discuss further.

President's report: (Mike Twenhafel)

- Elections of officers is next month. Anyone whose term is ending should try to find replacement for their position prior to next meeting.

Old Business: None

New Business:

- Pastor reported the times for Advent services 6:00 p.m., Christmas Eve 6:00 p.m., and Christmas Day 10:30 a.m. tentatively.

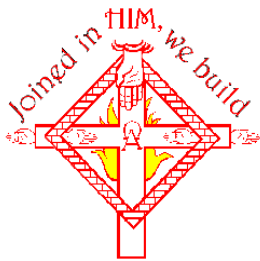
Next Council meeting – December 5, 2024 7:00 p.m.

Voter's meeting – December 12, 2024 7:00 p.m.

MMSP to adjourn at 8:04 p.m.

Closed with The Lord's Prayer.

In His Service, Jean Kemezys



Zion Lutheran Church
101 S. Railway
Mascoutah, IL 62258

BIBLE STUDY

Sunday 9:45 to 10:45 AM

**SUNDAY SCHOOL &
YOUTH BIBLE CLASS**

Sunday 9:45 AM

WORSHIP SERVICES

Sunday 11:00 AM In-Person
and on FaceBook

CONFIRMATION CLASSES

Sunday 9:30 AM & 12:30 PM

Address Service Requested

Worship Topics This Month

Dec. 1—1st Sunday in Advent—Matthew 21:1-9

Dec. 4—1st Advent Midweek — Adam: The First Man

Dec. 8— 2nd Sunday in Advent — Luke 21:25-36

Dec. 11—2nd Advent Midweek — Jesus: The Perfect Man

Dec. 15 — 3rd Sunday in Advent — Matthew 11:2-10

—Children's Christmas Program

Dec. 18 — 3rd Advent Midweek — Resurrected You: Finally Human

Dec. 22 — 4th Sunday in Advent

Dec. 24 — Christmas Eve — Service of Lessons & Carols

Dec. 25 — The Nativity of Our Lord —

Dec. 29 — 1st Sunday after Christmas — Luke 2:22-40

Please join us in worship to hear more about the Good News!