**ZION’S MESSENGER**

**November 2022 + Zion Lutheran Church + 269-367-4817**

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It seems that in just the blink of the eye, this year has passed by so quickly and here we are, heading into a month that brings to mind many events and also brings us to the end of the year, the church year, that is.

We often think of November as a time of giving thanks as we celebrate Thanksgiving in a few weeks. As I watch the fields going from being full of crops to being harvested, it is certainly a time to give thanks for the harvest and for all of the ways that God has been with us and blessed us through this year.

November is a month full of church festivals which brings us to the end of the long green season of ordinary time. The month begins with All Saints Day on Nov. 1. On this day, we remember all of those saints in our lives and in the life of the church who have touched our lives in some way and who live on in eternal life. We also are again reminded that we are the saints on earth as we live out our faith as both saints and sinners. We are forgiven sinners and God sees us as saints.

The church year ends and a new year begins at the end of November with Thanksgiving Day in between. Nov. 20 is Christ the King Sunday, the last Sunday of the church year. We will also have our ZLCW Thankoffering service on this day. The new year begins with the 1st Sunday of the season of Advent on Nov. 27. This season is one of preparation for the most joyous festival of Christmas. There is always a tension between the season of

Advent being a time that outside of the church, it is already Christmas with music playing everywhere, Christmas shopping being a big focus of the season and the beginning of many celebrations and a time of quieter preparation within the church life.

Advent marks the beginning of a new church year. As we prepare for Christmas, this is a good time to think of ways that Christ can bring new things, renewal in our lives. Perhaps one thing to consider this Advent is a return to corporate worship if you have not yet returned during the time of covid. If you have been thinking of getting back to church involvement but have found yourself out of the habit, perhaps a good Advent discipline could be to commit to returning to church for Advent season and keep coming for Christmas and beyond! That would be a great new year’s resolution. For those who have resumed active involvement in the congregation, there may be other new year’s resolutions you may want to consider, such as doing home devotions for the season. There are Advent devotions books available for everyone from the church. There may be a special kind of giving to become involved in. You might make a commitment to invite someone to church during this season. The best form of evangelism to simply to invite someone to church who does not have a church home.

Let’s make this month of November and meaningful and joyful one as there is so much to celebrate!

Pastor Becky +

**SUPPLY PASTORS**

The new year will be here faster than we can imagine! It’s time to plan for supply preachers for 2023. Here are dates for the beginning of the year where lay leaders are needed to cover Pastor Becky’s Sunday’s off.

 Jan. 22

 Feb. 26

Please let Pastor Becky know if you would like to be the lay leader for one of these Sundays!

**THANKOFFERING**

The ZLCW Thankoffering Service will be Sunday, November 20th at 10:30am.  Our speaker will be discussing mental health.  We will be having various women and girls serving on this Sunday.

**MANNA’S MARKET**

**COLLECTION**

The Board of Evangelism has asked Manna's Market what their immediate and near future needs are. Here is Jayne Flanigan's response: "I would like to see a load of socks and underwear come in. All sizes--kiddos to adults. We never have enough socks and underwear because these items have to be new. " If you can help with this need, please place it in the Fellowship Hall. If you have any questions, please see a member of the Board. Thank you!!

**LAKE ODESSA CHRISTMAS PARADE**

**DEC. 9TH**

Mark your calendar and plan to be part of the annual Lake Odessa Christmas Parade with Zion!  We are working on plans to participate in the parade and handouts to the kids.  If you can help with this or have ideas, please contact Martha.

**COUNCIL AND BOARD NOMINATIONS**

The Nominations Committee will be convening soon to work on the slate of officers for Council and board members soon.  Please consider how you might be able to serve in the coming year!

**ZION CHRISTMAS TREE**

**FARM AND MARKET**

The second annual free Christmas Tree Farm and Market will be held again after Thanksgiving, November 25 and 26.  Last year, we gave away more than 40 trees and nearly all the ornaments and décor.  We think this year will be just as busy as there are many with tight budgets that cannot afford to purchase a tree, decorations, or décor.  We are asking for your help in several ways.  First, if you have items that you will not be using, consider donating them for us to give away.  Second, we need workers during the event! A sign-up sheet is in the narthex.  Please sign-up so that we can be open both Friday and Saturday.  Third, we need help setting up the week of November 6-11.  A sign-up sheet for setting up is also in the narthex.  Fourth, we need donations of cookies so that we can offer those visiting the store refreshments while they shop.

Thank you to everyone who has donated throughout the year.  We have many great trees, decorations, and décor items to offer people this year.  Thank you for your help with this mission.  If you have questions, please talk with Martha or Karen.

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**ADULT THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION**

The North/West Lower Michigan Synod is excited to announce a new series of theological education courses! The first course offering will be *Corinthian Correspondence: Conflict, Case Studies, Contemporary Congregations, and Christ* led by Rev. Dr. Walter F. Taylor. Classes begin January 10, 2023, are open to all adults, and are free of charge. More info at their website:

<https://www.mittensynod.org/events/adult-theological-education/>

**EVANGELISM COMMITTEE UPDATE**

The Evangelism Committee met on October 20th and had a very productive meeting.  If you have not had a chance to look at the bulletin board, there are thank you notes from kids who received school supplies at the Art in the Park giveaway, a ribbon and thank you from the Woodland Homecoming Celebration, and an article about the Blessing of the Animals.

The Blessing of the Animals was a great success in spite of the inclement weather that moved us inside to the Gathering Room.  There were 15 people, 10 dogs and one goat!  The Pastor led a very meaningful service and blessed each animal individually.  Several people brought pictures or talked about animals they had lost during the past year and the Pastor said a blessing and prayer of comfort for each of them.  A fun time of fellowship followed the service.

Below are a few decisions that were made during the Evangelism Meeting:

* A collection will be held to benefit a current need at Manna’s Market.
* Zion will sponsor two Christmas garlands in Lake Odessa.
* Zion will become a supporter of J-Ad Graphics in appreciation of their covering Zion events and missions.
* We will recommend to Council that we keep the focus scripture for another year.  (The Joy of the Lord is Our Strength.  Nehemiah 8:10)
* We will purchase aprons that say  “Zion Lutheran Church” to wear while serving community dinners and functions at our church.

If you have questions or would like to discuss any of the above, please see any member of the Evangelism Committee.  Thank you!

**KILPATRICK PRAYER NIGHT**

Kilpatrick Church would like to invite you and your congregation to a night of corporate prayer for our nation and state, on November 7 @ 6:30 pm.

**LAKEWOOD COMMUNITY COUNCIL**

**CHRISTMAS BASKET**

The Lakewood Community Council Christmas Basket Program is a cooperative effort of the entire community, especially the churches. We made changes in our protocols in 2020 because of the COVID situation and things went very smoothly. The council decided to keep many of the same processes in place. Once again, we will forego having "assorted" food collections and instead purchase products in quantity. We can accept large quantity donations of single items, ideally prearranged.

  We don't expect to need to limit the number of volunteers, but feel free to call ahead.  Delivery volunteers will leave the packages on doorsteps and not enter homes whenever possible.

What can we do:

·       Pray for this ministry, that hearts will be touched!

·       Send monetary contributions to cover meat certificates and other purchases. (You may put this in your regular offering so earmarked.)

·       Send hats, warm winter mittens/gloves (water resistant please) and socks

We will apply for a grant from Thrivent for $250 to purchase the needed gifts and for some socks, mittens etc. as we have funds.

We will encourage Sunday school children to be part of the team to package and tag the gifts Sunday, Dec. 4. They will be part of our Thrivent team. The gifts will be delivered to Central Methodist Wed., Dec. 7. (13 gifts for 4 year old children.)

Schedule:

Tues., Dec. 6, 7-9 pm set up. *Call ahead*

Wed., Dec. 7, 9 am to 2:30 pm. Distribute food into boxes

Thurs., Dec. 8, 9 am to 2:30 pm. Pack boxes & gift bags

Friday, Dec. 9, 9 am to noon: Wrap boxes & transfer gifts. *Call ahead*

Sat., Dec. 10, 9 am to noon: Deliver boxes to families

If you have questions please speak with Claude Smith (president), Buffy Meyers (tentative new treasurer), or Mary Smith.

Thanks for your help!

**BIBLE BUDDIES**

Bible Buddies: It’s a good thing for adults of the congregation to offer spiritual encouragement to the youth and children of our congregation. This year, the program will start over again. I do need to know who would be interested in being a Bible Buddy. I thank those who have let Pastor Becky know your interest in being a new buddy or continuing to be a buddy. Many more

are needed! Please let Pastor Becky know if this is something that you would like to be a part of. It involves sending cards of encouragement, sending cards and/or simple gifts for birthdays

holidays.

**SUNDAYS IN NOVEMBER**

**November 6- In Sanctuary Communion**

Pastor Becky Ebb-Speese

Acolyte: Kole Hokanson

Elder: Jolene Griffin

Trustee: Jerry Engle

Safety Person: Diane Griffin

Offering Counters: Mary Makley & Martha Yoder

**November 13- In Sanctuary Communion**

Pastor Becky Ebb-Speese

Acolyte: Lexi Griffin

Elder: Dan Utterback

Trustee: Mike Johnson

Safety Person: Ken Heise

Offering Counters: Diane Griffin & Carlotta Willard

**November 20- In Sanctuary No Communion, Thankoffering Service**

Acolyte: Anna Zylstra

Elder: Paul Meade

Trustee: Dan Zylstra

Safety Person: Dan Zylstra

Offering Counters: Jerry Engle & Carlotta Willard

**November 27 In Sanctuary Communion,**

Pastor Becky Ebb-Speese

Acolyte: Levi Griffin

Elder: Jolene Griffin

Trustee: Jerry Engle

Safety Person: Jerry Engle

Offering Counters: Doug Mackenzie & Mike Johnson