



December  
2024

**Zion Lutheran Church  
Zion News & Notes**

Published monthly by the church office, newsletters include news of upcoming events, regular and special announcements, photos of current events, and other items of interest. Newsletter archives are available on our website:

[www.zionlutheranNy.org](http://www.zionlutheranNy.org)

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# Zion's News & Notes

## ***A Few Words From Pastor Janet***



*The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it. John 1:5*

Dear friends,

We are in the midst of what I think of as the candlelighting season. The days are short and so much of our waking time is lived in darkness. And so we find reasons to light candles ritually, more candles than we might normally—the candles we light on All Saints to remember those who have died, the candles on the Advent wreath and in home devotions, the candles of the mid-week Evening Prayer services, the candles of the Longest Night Service and, of course, the stubby individual candles we clutch to sing Silent Night on Christmas Eve. There is something about seeing the flames flicker that does something for us spiritually.

But this year in particular, many are feeling the weight of more than just physical darkness. There is the darkness of the ongoing wars in Ukraine and Gaza. A significant number of Americans are stressed about the future of our country, political divisions, economic uncertainty, and the dehumanization of others. The song that is providing a soundtrack in my head these days is “*Light One Candle*”.

*Light One Candle*, written by Peter Yarrow of Peter, Paul and Mary, and the Jewish son of Ukrainian immigrants, is a pacifist response to Israel's 1982 invasion of Lebanon but is now considered a Hanukkah song because of how well it speaks to the enduring hope and resilience symbolized by the Festival of Lights. Hanukkah celebrates the rededication of the second Temple in Jerusalem and the miracle of the oil that burned for eight days despite only having enough for one day. The song calls for the lighting of a single candle to remember the miraculous victory of the Maccabees over oppression by the Greeks, reflecting the broader human struggle for justice and freedom. Yarrow's lyrics remind us that light, even a single flicker, can push back against the darkness of despair, ignorance, and hate.

*Light One Candle* inspires us to be beacons of hope and agents of change, dispelling the darkness around us with acts of kindness and justice. The song's enduring appeal lies in its universal message of hope and the power of small, consistent efforts to bring about change, reminding us that every effort counts and that we must not let the light of hope and determination go out. The source of our light is Christ, who has commissioned us to be light for the world. Be the light in this time of darkness. Lend a hand to someone in need. Offer a listening ear. Contribute to organizations that work to alleviate suffering and hunger. Stand up for those who are marginalized or oppressed. Encourage others with uplifting messages. You might even listen to *Light One Candle*:

*Light one candle for the strength that we need, to never become our own foe.  
And light one candle for those who are suffering, pain we learned so long ago.  
Light one candle for all we believe in, that anger not tear us apart.  
And light one candle to find us together, with peace as the song in our hearts.  
This Advent let us all be bearers of Christ's light and find the world to be a bit brighter.*

Your Co-Worker in the Gospel, Pastor Janet

# *December Announcements*

## **Coffee Hour**



Please join us for coffee hour every Sunday after the service. Please see the sign up sheet if you are interested in making coffee or cleaning up afterwards. You are welcome to bring food/snacks to Coffee Hour.

## **Poinsettias**

The sign up sheet has been posted for ordering your poinsettias for Christmas!

## **Annual Congregational Meeting/Annual Reports**

The 2024 Annual Congregation meeting will be held on January 26th after the worship service. The Annual Reports will be available for pick up on January 12th. Please call or email the church office if you need your Annual Report mailed to you.

## **Zoom/YouTube Online Services**

If you need help with our online services, please reach out to Isabel at any time during the service at: [ZionLuthTechnologist@gmail.com](mailto:ZionLuthTechnologist@gmail.com). You can also use Zoom's chat option.

## **Church Envelopes**

2025 offering envelopes are now available. Envelopes can be picked up from the large table located in the Narthex. If you're unable to pick up your envelopes in person, please contact the church office, and we'll make arrangements to get your envelopes to you. Please toss any leftover 2024 envelopes you may have to make sure that your 2025 offerings are recorded correctly. For questions, contact Joni Pulliam, financial secretary, at 315.793.2020.

## **Walking With Friends**

Zion's Walking Group will meet again Wednesdays at 3 PM in the Target wing at Sangertown. All are welcome - please join us! Text Kim with questions at 315-794-6233.

## **Church Office**

The church office will be closed for the holidays from December 23rd—January 6th. If there is a pastoral emergency during this time, please call 315-525-6769. For non-emergencies, please email us at: [office@zionluth.com](mailto:office@zionluth.com).

## **2024 Annual Report**

Please submit your reports to the church office: [office@zionluth.com](mailto:office@zionluth.com) as time permits. The deadline for reports is December 31st.

We need time to format the Annual Report and have it available two weeks before the Annual Congregational Meeting.

Thank you for your time and talents in getting this information to us.

## December Birthdays

Pr. Janet Griffiths	3	Helga Morrison	17
Elijah Stevens	3	Carole Grove	22
Hannah Barrett	4	Jim Schieble	23
Carolyn Dzwonkas	4	Wendy Stevens	23
Esy McCarthy	4	Lisa Lucas-Myers	25
Kim Manino	7	Ann McCarthy	28
Ron Kowalczyk	8	Norm Jeché, Jr.	29
Karen Mannella-Daniel	8	Laura Hilt	30
Holly Kulawy	17	Sara Grapski	30



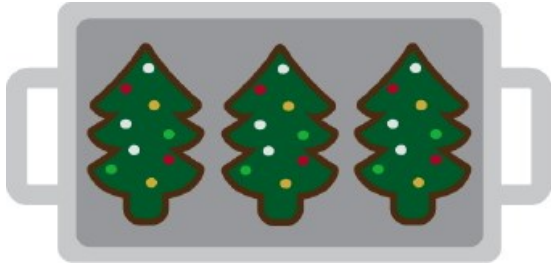
## Gifts Given to the Glory of God

In Memory of:	To:	Given by:
Fran King	Memorial Fund	Claudia King

## Treasurer's Report

		October 2024 Treasurer's Report		
	Oct-24	Year to Date	Budget	Over/Under Budget
<b>Income</b>				
Giving	\$ 15,028.15	\$ 128,571.61	\$ 127,916.66	\$ 654.95
Other Income	\$ 2,339.99	\$ 19,064.15	\$ 13,923.36	\$ 5,140.79
<b>Total Income</b>	\$ 17,368.14	\$ 147,635.76	\$ 141,840.02	\$ 5,795.74
<b>Total Expense</b>	\$ 12,873.84	\$ 135,481.85	\$ 141,035.00	\$ (5,553.15)
<b>Net Income</b>	\$ 4,494.30	\$ 12,153.91	\$ 805.02	\$ 11,348.89

## Advent & Christmas Season



*Please consider bringing a snack for a special Coffee Hour following the Lessons & Carols service on December 29th. Thank you!!*



### ANGEL TREE

To contribute, you can take an angel off the tree that has an envelope attached to it. Please send your contributions directly to Zion Lutheran Church with the notation of "Angel Tree" so it is clear where the monies are to be directed. All the monies received will be converted into Walmart gift cards that will then be handed to Thea Bowman for distribution to the families. **Contributions will be collected through Sunday, December 8th!**

### MITTEN TREE

Handmade or store-bought hats/mittens, gloves, scarves **will be collected through December 8th!** Children's sizes will go to Thea Bowman, and the women's and men's glove sizes and men's hats will go to The Center. Items can be dropped off on Sundays or during church office hours.

### DECEMBER WORSHIP TEAM & ADVENT SCHEDULE

Date:	Worship Asst.	Pastor	Greeters	Ushers
December 1 <i>Advent 1</i>	Wendy Stevens	Pr. Janet Griffiths	Darlene Hill	
December 8 <i>Hanging of the Greens</i>	Curtis Pulliam		Jan Corn	Laurel McCurdy & Jeanne Gymburch
December 15 <i>Advent 3</i>	Karen Toepp	Pr. Rick Klafehn	Laura Hilt	
December 22 <i>Advent 4</i>	Wendy Stevens	Rev. Jennifer DeWeerth	Karen Toepp & Janet Bagnall	Jeanne Gymburch & Doreen Nicholls
December 24 <i>Christmas Eve 7 PM</i>		Pr. Janet Griffiths		
December 29 <i>Lessons &amp; Carols</i>	Mark Thompson		Darlene Hill	Darlene Hill & Caryn Carlson



### **GIVE THE GIFT OF FAIR TRADE THIS CHRISTMAS**

As in years past, gift bags, tags and tissue paper for your use can be found on the bottom shelf of Zion's Fair Trade Booth in the Fireside Room.

Besides Organic Mind Body and Soul Coffee, we have added a new choice for your holiday giving—ORGANIC LOVE BUZZ. Other items that will make good presents are: olive oil, tea, hot chocolate, and chocolate bars. Some of our favorite bars have been discontinued and the new choices are: Organic Milk Chocolate, Organic Dark Chocolate Caramel Crunch with Sea Salt, and Organic Dark Chocolate Whole Almond and Sea Salt.

Sadly, we will have to stop selling nuts as they have been sitting on the shelf too long and they are past the Best Before date of 10/22/2024. The price of cashews and pecans has been slashed from \$7 to \$5 and we hope people will purchase them for home use.

Merry Christmas and thank you for helping small farmers in the United States and other countries build a better economic future for their families and communities.

*Thank you in advance to Tina Ponce and her violin students for playing music before the service on the first Sunday of Advent!*

### **Notes of Gratitude**

**Many thanks** to Laurel McCurdy & Wendy Stevens for their expert editing eyes with our monthly newsletters this past year!

**To members of Zion,**

Thank you so much for your generous donation to our preschool program. We truly appreciate your kindness and support. We would also like to thank you for taking us in when we had nowhere to go. Your support has meant the world to us!

The Apple Tree Preschool Inc. staff



# Missionary Update

On October 29th, I received this email below from Pastor Kristin Engstrom, our missionary, who used to be in Zambia, but now is serving as country representative in Madagascar. Zion has been able to support Pr. Kristin's mission because the Upstate NY Synod is a sister synod with (ELCZA) in Zambia, but because Madagascar is not a sister synod, we are sad to share that 2024 is our last year to accept contributions for Pastor Kristin's mission. –Laurel McCurdy

Hello Laurel,

I am so glad to learn that Zion Lutheran has been praying for me as an ELCA global missionary! And yes, you are correct that I am now serving in Madagascar as the ELCA Country Representative. I'm sorry I haven't yet had an opportunity to send out a newsletter with this big news - my transition here and the work involved has been like drinking from a firehose. Since I haven't been able to send you a Newsletter, I've attached a few pictures that you are welcome to share with the congregation. Please greet everyone at Zion Lutheran for me and please share with them my appreciation for their prayers. Tahine Jesosy (Jesus bless you), Pastor Kristin

**Pictured right:** Malagasy Lutheran Church National Church Assembly held in September. Pastor Kristin with former and newly elected church leadership and Lutheran World Federation reps.

**Below Left:** Pastor Kristin with representatives from one of the Healing & Prayer Centers. The men are wearing white, which shows that they are trained shepherds at the Soltenanana Toby.

**Below Right:** From the National Church Council meeting in October. Women leaders in the Malagasy Lutheran Church with Pastor Kristin Engstrom.





# Events

## Women of Faith Upcoming Events

All women are invited: Tuesday, January 28th at 7pm on Zoom - planning meeting for Bible Studies. Please research and let us know if you're willing to lead a Bible study, February–May. (Look for the Zoom link in WOF January emails.)

All women are invited to meet at Zion on Saturday, March 8th (snow date March 15th) at 10 AM. Zion will provide drinks and snacks, followed by a program by Our Saviour about women and the church.

### Our Saviour Lutheran Church

Our Saviour will be hosting potlucks on the following Tuesdays in December:

*December 3rd at 6 PM*

*December 10th at 6 PM*

*December 17th at 6 PM*

**Followed by 7 PM Advent Worship**



Sunday, December 8th at 2 PM, there will be a **Carol Sing at Our Saviour**. Pick up Choir for everyone, rehearsal will be just before the program like at the summer picnic.

Thank you to Kim Marscher & John Blackburn for helping with the preparations for the Carol Sing!



***Longest Night Ecumenical Service—December 20th at 6 PM at Clinton United Methodist Church.*** For the longest night of the year (the winter solstice), the Clinton Area Ministerium is supporting a Longest Night service for those experiencing grief, loss, or hardship during the holiday season. Dealing with the death of a loved one, facing life after divorce or separation, coping with the loss of a job, living with cancer, among other things, can be difficult. The pain of loss is felt by many at this time of year, and this service offers a sacred, gentle space to gather, remember, and comfort.



Eleven people from Zion are going to the Kingdom's Choir" concert on December 12th at 7 PM at the Stanley in Utica. Kingdom's Choir is a gospel choir from England that is known for singing 'Stand By Me' at the royal wedding of Harry & Megan. See Kim Marscher to get your tickets if you've asked for one, and write a check or provide other payment method for \$69 to Zion Lutheran Church and write "Ticket" in the memo section. We are looking forward to an evening of carols and other beautiful music!!



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**Zion Lutheran Church, New Hartford, NY**

*The mission of Zion Lutheran Church is to prayerfully  
discern God's call to help people  
to become more fully devoted followers of Christ.*

