



# ZIONEWS

January 2012 Zion Lutheran's Monthly Newsletter

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## A New Day Dawning...

It was 6 a.m. The sun was loudly announcing the coming of a new day in riotous colors – magenta and orange and gold. Father Time, an old man, white - bearded and gnarled as an old oak tree, had tossed the hat to the Baby New Year, and 2012 was ushered in! I stood on the porch, awe-struck, and watched the first sunrise of the new year arrive, blinking and yawning and waving its fists like a new born infant; fraught with possibility. A whole, new year was ahead of me! Why, anything could happen!

A baby does that to you, doesn't it? A brand new baby fills you with wonder, and hopes and dreams! You grasp tiny hands, marvel at the smallness of fingernails; take off miniscule socks to count tiny toes. And, when you look into those eyes, you get the feeling that you are looking into an old soul, too wise for this world, and suddenly, nothing seems impossible anymore. You dare to imagine all sorts of things and begin to plan how to put those dreams in motion. No wonder they chose a baby as the symbol of the New Year! A baby changes everything!

Perhaps that is why, when God came down to be one of us, he came down as a baby. Perhaps God wanted to experience *everything* it meant to be human. To experience how it felt to be helpless, totally dependent on others for food, for warmth, for affection, for life itself – and yet, still have the power to bring kings to their knees.

Three kings, Wise Men from the East, journeyed far to find a baby - the king of the Jews. Strangers to the faith, they didn't know they were searching for God until they found him. But, when they did, they were filled with wonder! They looked into those eyes - the eyes of an old soul - and knew immediately that this was the baby they were looking for. They dropped to their knees and worshipped him - the One they had never known.

Address Service Requested



Zion Lutheran Church  
121 Noel C. Conaway Road  
Guyton, GA 31312-5735

Office Phone: (912) 728-3430  
Email: [secretary@zionlutheranga.org](mailto:secretary@zionlutheranga.org)  
Web page: [www.zionlutheranga.org](http://www.zionlutheranga.org)  
Pastor Barbara Koch



An epiphany! A revelation! The Christ child was revealed to strangers! And from that day on, we who were once strangers were brought into the fold! Grafted onto the vine and adopted as children of God, we celebrate the New Year with an eye to January 6<sup>th</sup> – the day of the Epiphany of our Lord, when Jesus was revealed to be the Lord of *all*, not just a special few. And, one day, everyone will know him.

As the sun topped the trees, beams of golden light spread out like a fan across the morning sky. The stars disappeared from view, all except that bright, morning star - always the last to fade. I imagined that it rivaled the star that led the Wise Men to the baby Jesus; Jesus - the Bright Morning Star... and I realized with a jolt that I would follow that Star anywhere!

May 2012 be a year full of joyous epiphanies for you, as you seek the God who allows himself to be found.

Looking forward to journeying with you!

***Happy New Year! Pastor Barb <><***

*Every knee shall bow,  
every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord!  
Philippians 2:10-11*

**Pastor Barb is in the Church Office:**

Tuesdays: 2:00 p.m.- 5:00 p.m., Thursdays: 9: 00 a.m.- 12:00 p.m.  
and evenings by appointment.

**Council Retreat, January 22, 2012**

On January 22, your newly elected and installed Congregation Council will gather in the fellowship Hall from 5:00pm - 8:00pm for a retreat led by Pastor Barb. The purpose of the retreat is to pray for Zion, to listen to the Spirit's leading for us as a congregation, to set goals for the next few years, and to develop an action plan to put those goals into motion. The retreat will include prayer, education, presentations, open discussion and a meal. This is an important day for the leadership of Zion, and I ask for your prayers as we meet as well as your input as the year goes on. In Christ, *Pastor Barb <><*

*Council Highlights cont.*

2. Social Media Policy and video/photo permission slip being developed.  
3. Motion to move committee/council meetings to second Sunday of the month beginning February of 2012 for ease of treasurer's accounting made, seconded and carried.

**New Business**

1. January Congregational Meeting will be January 15<sup>th</sup>, 2012. Registration at 4pm, meeting starts at 4:30. Paid childcare for 7 y/o and under provided so all adults can attend. Covered dish, finger food meal to follow. Council members in charge of set up. Combine council organizational meeting.

2. Council Retreat led by Pastor Barb set for January 22, 2012, 5-8 pm. Purpose: to determine direction for Zion's future, to set goals, and develop an action plan. This will include prayer, educational presentations, discussion and a meal. Installation of Council and SS Officers at worship that morning.

**Announcements**

Next meeting is January 8, 2012. Committees at 6:00pm/ Council at 7:00pm.  
*Sherrí Pittman. secretary*

**Church Directory Updates**

Heather Edwards  
232 Epps Bridge Rd. Unit 3B  
Athens, GA 30606



## Congregation Council Meeting Highlights

December 4, 2011

**Minutes** of Council Meeting from Nov. 6, 2011 and Congregational Meeting Minutes from Nov. 20, 2011 were approved.

### **Reports**

*The Pastor's Report* for November 2011 was reviewed.

*The Treasurer's Report* for November 2011 was reviewed, one correction. Zion is still running slightly behind but are improving financially.

### **Committees**

**Property Committee:** Updated action list. Siding on the west side of church has been repaired. Weather stripping suggested for sanctuary and church office doors. Still researching solar panels.

**Evangelism:** Our float received Best "Spiritual Theme" in the Guyton Parade on Dec. 3. and sale set for March 3, 2012. Planning a "Winterfest" on Jan. 28 with chili cook-off and other activities.

Starting January 2012, trial of offering coffee and biscuits to people driving by from 6:00 – 8:00am on Tuesdays and Thursdays. Zumba Class ok'd by insurance with a signed medical release form and not-for-profit.

**Finance/Stewardship:** Estimate a budgeted increase of \$4,000 more in 2012 than 2011.

**Worship and Music:** Worship planned through Lent. Lenten Services at 5:30pm. in ZFH. Offerings designated for Relay for Life.

**Christian Education:** Sunday School as usual on Christmas day at normal time. Cake for opening. Happy Birthday Jesus! at normal start time.

**Social Ministry:** 30 pounds of candy sent to troops in Operation Gratitude. Offerings from LWR "barns" will purchase 2 pigs and 8 goats. 13 food baskets for Thanksgiving given from Zion to Manna House.

### **Unfinished Business**

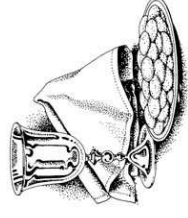
1. Constitutional Changes from 2009 need ratification at Annual Congregational Meeting in Jan. 2012. ELCA changes to Model Constitution being reviewed for possible revision of Zion's Constitution. (cont. page 15)



## Annual Congregational Meeting

- **The Annual Congregational Meeting is scheduled for Sunday, January 15th, 2012 in the Zion Fellowship Hall.** Registration is at 4:00 p.m. and the meeting starts at 4:30. Please register at the door and get a voting sticker at this time.
- The Agenda for this meeting will be finalized at the Sunday, January 8th, Council Meeting.
- Voting members (all members of legal age who have communed or made a contribution of record during the current or preceding year) of the congregation are encouraged to attend.
- Elections will include Congregation Council, Congregation Officers, Sunday School Officers and Representatives to Synod Assembly and Conference. The complete Book of Reports will be distributed at the meeting.
- Please bring finger foods for our fellowship meal following the meeting.
- Childcare will be provided.
- **A Note From Pastor Barb:** *The Annual Meeting is an important day in the life of Zion. Your prayerful input and vote do make a difference! We in leadership positions look to you and the Lord for the direction Zion is to take in the coming year. Thank you for serving God with your prayers and presence.*

**Just a reminder...** Communion registration must be done once a year. The first time you commune in 2012, please fill out a communion card and place it in the offering plate. Families may list all names on one card.



# Thank You



## Children's Choir

### Thank You for Caring!

Would you believe it? – With the toys & cash donated by Zion's Senior Citizens group, and the \$275 donated for toys at the Children's Christmas Program, a total of 110 toys & games were bought & delivered to the Department of Family and Children Services (DFCS) before Christmas. Over 300 Effingham families had signed up through United Way for help, so we hope at least 110 children had a happier Christmas because of your generosity. Thanks for sharing your blessings with others.

**Charles and Mary Lou Thomas**

**Because of your generosity**, 30 pounds of candy was sent to troops in Operation Gratitude to enjoy and share with their local neighbors. Offerings from the Lutheran World Relief "barns" will allow us to purchase 2 pigs and 8 goats to help people to grow into a sustainable living. Zion was able to give 13 food baskets for Thanksgiving to Manna House to help the hungry. *Thank you* for loving your neighbor in these tangible ways!

**Social Concerns**

**Thank you all** for your cards, gifts, goodies and kind words over Christmas and Advent! Bob and I feel truly blessed to have been called to Zion! The longer we are here, the more we love you all! We thank God for you! It was wonderful to celebrate Jesus' birth with you and we look forward to serving God together in 2012. May God bless you with health, love, joy and prosperity in the New Year!

**Pastor Barb and Bob** <><

Thanks to the **Zion Congregation** for all the Christmas flowers, music, and special participation in Advent & Christmas Worship. Also, thank you to all who participated and helped with the Children's Christmas Program and all those that sang in the choir for the Cantata. What a beautiful celebration we were able to have!

**Zion Youth & Congregation** - Thank you so much for coming by the house and singing carols for us. It transplanted us both in time to when we as children use to go caroling. It makes our hearts so happy to see it is a tradition that is still carried on. Your voices were so beautiful and the songs touched our hearts. Hopefully next year we will be able to join you. Again, thank you for adding to the joy of this season.

**In God's Love, Elliott & Georgia Foss**

Thanks to our Children's Choir for doing such a great job during Advent and Christmas. A special thanks to all who took part in and helped to make this year's Christmas program a success. Weekly practice will begin again on Wednesday, January 11<sup>th</sup>. Parents, remember to make sure that your child's school has a signed permission form with the appropriate transportation information for Wednesdays. Children at Marlow Elementary ride a bus over to Zion. Children from other schools are picked up as car riders. Please contact Melinda Heidt (728-3288) or Dana Lee Smith (665-1377) if you have questions about transportation.

We are so blessed to have a Children's Choir that sings regularly at our Sunday morning worship! We love to hear our children sing! Thanks for getting your children here for practice and worship!

### "Youth for Hire" Project

*Submitted by Dana Lee Smith*

Zion Lutheran Youth Group is well underway with their plans to attend the ELCA National Youth Gathering July 18<sup>th</sup>-22<sup>nd</sup>, 2012 in New Orleans, LA. This event only happens every 3 years and hosts approximately 30,000 youth and leaders. The theme is "Citizens With the Saints". Part of this experience will include service to others as we continue working to assist with recovery efforts associated with Hurricane Katrina and the Gulf oil spill. Each day of the Gathering, thousands of youth will be out serving others. This is a once in a lifetime opportunity to make such a large impact and truly make a difference on a huge scale. The Gathering will also provide opportunities for us to experience worship and renewal as we gather daily. We estimate that this trip will cost approximately \$1,200 per person. Through Zion's "Youth for Hire" project, each youth attending is working to raise \$500 towards the trip. Please make checks payable to Zion Lutheran Youth. Thanks for helping us to achieve our goal!

**Alex Peth – 728-3495**

**Anna Lee & Christian Heidt Harris – 728-9184 or 601-2469**

## **Lutheran Youth Organization News**

*submitted by Dana Lee Smith*



Youth Ministry

### **December Highlights**

Thanks to everyone who joined us in caroling! We had a wonderful group of 34 carolers! Special thanks to Effingham chapter of Thrivent for providing money to purchase gift bags filled with goodies to distribute while caroling. Also, thanks to WELCA and all those who helped to prepare the meal for the carolers and all our 80+ year old guests. We all had a great time!

### **January Events**

**Wednesday, January 18<sup>th</sup> 6:00pm - 7:30pm: LIFE! (Living in Faith Everyday)**

Come join us for Bible study! Remember, meal starts at 5:15pm. Youth should be finished eating by 6:00pm.

**Sunday, January 22<sup>nd</sup> 12:15pm – 2:00pm: Planning for Souper Bowl Sunday**

Bring a sack lunch to church. Following worship, we'll eat and make plans for Souper Bowl Sunday service.

**Sunday, January 29<sup>th</sup> 12:15pm – 2:00pm: Souper Bowl Sunday Rehearsal**

Bring a sack lunch to church. Following worship, we'll eat and rehearse for Souper Bowl Sunday. Youth are in charge of leading worship on Souper Bowl Sunday.

### **Plan Ahead**

**Sunday, February 5<sup>th</sup>**: Souper Bowl Sunday – Youth Lead Worship  
**Sunday, February 5<sup>th</sup>**: Youth Super Bowl Party  
**April 27<sup>th</sup> – 29<sup>th</sup>**: All GA – 6<sup>th</sup> thru 12<sup>th</sup> grade  
**June 17<sup>th</sup> – 22<sup>nd</sup>**: AFFIRM – 6<sup>th</sup> thru 12<sup>th</sup> grade

*All youth in grades 6 – 12 are invited to participate in youth activities. Our youth program meets on most 1st and 3rd Wednesdays for Bible study. We meet on 2nd and 4th Sundays for service and social projects. For additional information about youth activities, contact Dana Lee Smith at 665-1377.*

*Our Christian sympathy is extended to...  
Jody Dixon and family on the death of her grandmother;*

*Christine Kirkland and family on the death of her grandfather, Jackson Zipperer;  
and John Atkinson and family on the death of his step-father, George Asbell.*

*May God's loving arms wrap around you and comfort you during this time.*

### **Welcome to the Zion Family!**

**Blaire Ann**, infant daughter of, **Brett and Misti Vandenhouten** was baptized on December 11, 2011.

*We pray God's blessings on Blaire and her family.*

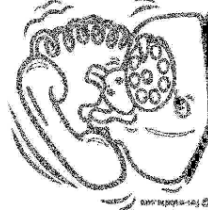


The Flower Chart for 2012 is almost full, so look for the sign-up sheet in the narthex to get your date secured.  
Contact Emma Lee Dasher at 728-3222 for questions.

### **TELEPHONE LIST**

The automated telephone call system that was set up at the beginning of 2011 has been very successful in keeping the congregation better informed of prayer and other concerns as they arise. We encourage everyone to sign up for this powerful system that allows us to be closer in prayer and with one another.

Pastor Barb is still the contact person for outgoing messages. If you would like to be on this call list, please call the church office (728-3430) or email ([secretary@zionlutheranga.org](mailto:secretary@zionlutheranga.org)) with your name and phone number. (You can also sign up on the list in the narthex.) No matter where you live in the U.S. you are welcome to be on this list. Remember to leave your area code if it is not 912. Thank you again to **David Harris** for setting up this call system.



Zion will host a **Red Cross Blood Drive Thursday, January 5th from 2:00p.m. to 7:00 p.m.** in the Zion Fellowship Hall. Please come out and give blood during this time.

**January 8th** is the very last day to turn-in your barn shaped coin boxes. There are still some out there and we would like to get them gathered up so they can be used through the ELCA World Hunger program to purchase gift animals to help people in third world countries make a sustainable living. If you have any questions, please call Norma Ralph at 912-313-2465.



### **Friday “Movie Nights” at Zion!**

January has **TWO** great **FREE** movie nights at

Zion! Bring your family and friends out both **Friday,**

**January 13th for “Mr. Popper’s Penguins” and Friday**

**January 27th for “Hercules”!** Feel free to bring your own snacks, or munch on our affordable drinks, chips, candy and of course **popcorn!**

Both movies will be starting at 7:30p.m. in the Zion Fellowship Hall, so mark your calendars and bring your family and friends out for a night of laughs, fellowship and snacks!



*Please join us January 18th thru January 25th as we all join in prayer for the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity.*

### **LMM BREAKFAST SOCIAL**

**Lutheran Men in Mission** will host their monthly

Breakfast Social on **Sunday, January 29th, at 9:00am.**

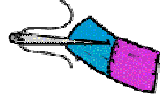
A full breakfast will be served. LMM will also have a short meeting during this time. For more information or if you would like to assist with this project, contact Clayton Dasher at 728-3222.



### **Quilt Making**

Quilts are in need everywhere! January is the time for getting things organized and ready to kick off the new **Quilt**

**Ministry** starting in February! Please contact Norma Ralph (912-313-2465) if you are interesting in working with this ministry, have items to donate, or have any questions.



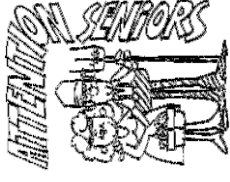
### **Senior Citizens!**

Christmas fun & games! That is what 49 folks enjoyed at their December meeting. After a wonderful meal headed up by **Charlie Heidt** & his “elves,” everyone enjoyed Christmas games and caroling. Thank you to each person who helped prepare the meal, provided food, &/or helped clean up afterwards.

A table full of new toys were donated by the senior citizens and delivered to DFACS to help many children have a fun-filled Christmas. (see thank you on page 4)

The next meeting will be on Wednesday, Jan. 18<sup>th</sup>, at 11:30 a.m. A representative from LifeLink of Georgia will share information on how important organ, eye & tissue donations are in helping others. The meal will be provided.

Our average attendance in 2011 grew to 42! Folks enjoy getting out & visiting with others while eating a delicious meal. Don't stay home by yourself. Come join us at the January meeting! If you need a ride, let us know! We will be glad to make sure you get here!



### **Women of the ELCA**

*Submitted by Dana Lee Smith*

Thanks to all who made, packed, and delivered Christmas cookies. Because of you, 28 containers of homemade cookies were given to our 80+ years members and shut-ins for Christmas!

Another new year is hear! As you begin this new year, think about how you can get involved in all that WELCA has to offer. Remember, every female member of Zion is automatically a member. All ladies are encouraged to take part and become involved in one of our women's groups at Zion. It's a great way to get to know others and make a real difference. One way that you can make a difference is through our special Love Offering. All WELCA units from churches in the Southeastern Synod collect a special offering during the year. This year's Love Offering will be collected to support Luther Ranch Retreat Center.

*All women of Zion are members of WELCA. You are invited to take part and get involved in your organization. Bible study meeting times and locations are listed in Zionews.*



**Women  
of the  
EVANGELICAL  
LUTHERAN  
CHURCH  
IN AMERICA**

Serving in January						
Date	Flowers	Acolyte *	Crucifer*	Assisting Minister	Nursery	Communion Servers
Jan. 1 (W)	Amber Hall	TBD	Anna Lee Heidt/Harris	Sherri Pittman	Victoria Davis	Francis & Norma Ralph
Jan. 8 (W)	Judy Hart	Josie Sapp	Abbey Hutcheson	Sean Vandenhouten	Rebecca Heidt	Sheila Windham & Thomas Folmar
Jan. 15 (G)	Victoria Davis	Devan Funderburk	Alex Peth	David Harris	Misti Vandenhouten	Jenny Ulliman
Jan. 22 (G)	Brenda Pack	Megan Sapp	Caycee Pannal	Dana Lee Smith	Dawn Holton	Bill & Laurie Langston
Jan. 29 (G)	Emma Lee Dasher	Braden Thomas-Fulmer	Megan Edwards	Elliott Foss	Jody Dixon	Teresa Sikes

\* Acolytes and Crucifers need to meet in the pastor's office 10 minutes before worship (10:50 am).

Week of	Clean Education Building	Clean Church	Questions/ Changes
January 2nd	Alex & Benji Peth	TBD	If you cannot clean on your assigned week, contact Dana Lee by Wednesday of the week assigned. Remember, you <b>MUST</b> have an adult present when cleaning!
January 16th	Caycee Pannal	Braden Folmar & Julian Mobley	
January 30th	Cassidy, Megan, & Aaron Edwards	Andrew Sapp	

Month of	Greeters	Ushers	Visiting Comm.
January	Tricia Parrish Mya Robertson	Joe Studier Bryan Vandenhouten Cheryl Pannal Sheila Green	Emma Lee Dasher

Women's Circles	Program	Place
Evening January 3rd	Mary Lou Thomas	Home of Melinda Heidt (728-3288)
Afternoon January 5th	Mary Lou Thomas	Home of Bessie Studier (772-3424)
Mary/Martha TBD	Dana Lee Smith	Home of Dana Lee Smith (728-3227)

**Come to LIFE! on Wednesday January 18th LIFE! (Living in Faith Everyday!)**

Wednesday activities: our family-style meal (5:15pm), youth Bible study (6:00pm), adult Bible study (6:00pm), and our K-5th program (4:00pm) that focuses on Confirmation material. We invite you to **Come to LIFE! on Wednesday, January 18th.**



Dinner is open to all who enjoy great fellowship and delicious food. Dinner is \$5 for ages 11 & up, \$2 for ages 4-10 and free for children 3 and under; the maximum is \$20/family. For planning purposes, we ask that you make reservations with Norma Ralph (912-313-2465). Even if you forget to make reservations, all are welcome, always!

**"K-5 Kids"** is for children grades K-5. After the meal, Dana Lee Smith will lead a *Bible Study* class for *Youth* (grades 6-12). Pastor Barb will lead the *Adults* in a Bible Study and discussion of the readings for the upcoming Sunday worship service.



Another fresh new year is here . . .  
 Another year to live!  
 To banish worry, doubt, and fear,  
 To love and laugh and give!  
 This bright new year is given me  
 To live each day with zest . . .  
 To daily grow and try to be  
 My highest and my best!  
 I have the opportunity  
 Once more to right some wrongs,  
 To pray for peace, to plant a tree,  
 And sing more joyful songs!"

*William Arthur Ward*

