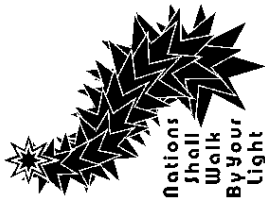


ZIONEWS

January 2010 Zion Lutheran's Monthly Newsletter

Shine like Stars

in the World...



Nations
shall
Walk
By your
Light

There is something about a star that captures the imagination. If you stand outside on a clear evening, it won't be long before you find yourself, head thrown back, mouth open in wonder, gazing up at the stars. You can't help it! They are like magnets! And always, there is that one star that shines brighter than all the rest - that one star that you keep coming back to every time you look away. The consolation of a light shining in the darkness captivates us.

Astrologers in the ancient East believed that they could read the thoughts of God in the stars. Perhaps God allowed that to happen on occasion, for we know that wise men were moved by the light of a shining star to go looking for the infant King of the Jews. They weren't part of the people of Israel, but they had studied the stories in the Hebrew Scriptures. When they found Jesus, somehow they knew that this child was worthy of praise. They fell to their knees and worshipped him, giving him gifts fit for a king.

By the light of a star, the Good News of Jesus' birth was revealed by God to strangers. The Greek word *Ephiphaneia* means manifestation, (*revelation* or *showing*). And so, we, the Church, enter into the Epiphany season, enlightened by the knowledge that God's love is for all people, all nations, all races, all social status'.

In Revelations 22:16, Jesus calls himself the "bright morning star." He is the Light of the world, shining in the darkness, illuminating the shadows of our lives, for it is in darkness that light is most needed. So many people are pining away in the darkness, looking for a sign of hope. Philippians 2:15 tells us that we, as children of God, are to be bearers of that hope - to "shine like stars in the world." This is why we step out of our comfortable little circle of Light, and reach out to draw in those who don't know Christ. As his followers, we become agents of his Light - like stars - bringing words of light and life and hope into the dark places in the world.

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Web page: www.zionlutheranga.org
Pastor Barbara Koch

Address Service Requested

As we begin a New Year together as the faith community known as Zion Lutheran Church, may we embrace the Light of Christ with renewed vigor and joy, telling everyone we meet of the One whose love has found us – Light from Light, true God from true God.

Tonight, take a moment to look up at the stars. Whisper a little prayer of thanks to God for the gift of Light that fills your world. If you are one who longs to know that Light more intimately, know that Jesus, the Bright Morning Star, waits at the door of your heart and knocks. All you need to do is let him in.

A Blessed Epiphany and a Joyous New Year to you all!

Pastor Barb <><

Your sun shall no longer be your light by day, nor for brightness shall the moon give light to you by night; but the Lord will be your everlasting light, and your God will be your glory.

Isaiah 60:19

Epiphany Party Chili Cook-Off!

January 6th is our first 1st Wednesday program of 2010. It is also the actual date of the Epiphany, when we celebrate the Wise Men from the East who followed the star to find the Baby Jesus. So, we are going to celebrate that day by having a Chili Cook-Off as the meal for that night. There is a Sign-Up sheet in the Narthex and in the Fellowship Hall for anyone who wants to enter the Chili-Cook-Off. There will be prizes for the winners in each of three categories of chili: *The Most Flavorful Chili, The Spiciest Chili and The Most Unusual Chili*. There will also be a competition for the Best Corn Bread.

For dessert, we will have the traditional *Epiphany Cake*, in which an uncooked bean is baked in the cake. Whoever gets the piece of cake with the bean in it gets to be the King or Queen for the evening, gets crowned with a special crown, and receives three gifts fit for royalty!

Come, join the fun! Cook up your best chili or cornbread recipe, and enter the competition!

Sunday, January 24th 11:00am Worship: Recognition of Youth Planning Team Members
Church officers will be installed during the service. Youth elected to serve on the planning team will also be recognized.

Sunday, January 24th 12:15pm-3:00pm: LYO Sunday Rehearsal & Preparation

Youth Sunday will be on February 7th. The youth will lead the 11am worship service. We need everyone's help! We will collect donations and participate in the "Souper Bowl of Caring" again this year.

All GA Youth Event

Friday, March 12th - Sunday, March 14th: FFA Camp in Covington, GA

This is an opportunity to gather with other Lutherans from around the state for a weekend of spiritual growth and fun filled worship.

The theme for this year's event is "Keep it 'Tov" and it is based on Genesis 1. When God saw what had been created, God saw that it was "good". The word for "good" in Hebrew is "tov". God had put all of God's essence into what had been created. God is now inviting us to do the same thing. The keynote speaker and musical guest will be AGAPE. We will leave Zion at 5:00pm on Friday and return by 6:00pm on Sunday. The total registration fee is \$75. Youth on the cleaning team are asked to pay \$20 towards the cost of registration. Youth not on the cleaning team need to pay \$50 towards the cost of registration. A detailed information sheet about costs and what to bring will be distributed with the registration forms at the January 10th youth/parent meeting. All forms must be turned in to Dana Lee by **Wednesday, January 20th**.

Summer Plan Ahead - Mark Your Calendars

June 20th-25th: AFFIRM Youth Camp at Berry College in Rome, GA

Current 6th graders can attend this year!

All youth in grades 6 - 12 are invited to participate in youth activities. For additional information contact Dana Lee Smith at 728-3227 or 665-1377.

Lutheran Youth Organization

News

submitted by Dana Lee Smith

December Highlights

Alex Peth, Katherine Ralph, Matthew Ralph, Katie Pittman, Amber Hall and Dana Lee Smith enjoyed learning more about Manna House Ministries and helping out with Manna House's first Saturday shopping day. Many thanks to all who went Christmas caroling and shared some holiday cheer with our homebound members. Thanks to the Effingham chapter of Thrivent for providing money to purchase items for care packages that were distributed to homebound members. After caroling we enjoyed dinner with our 80 year old and over friends at the church. Thanks to all who helped with this delicious meal!

January Events

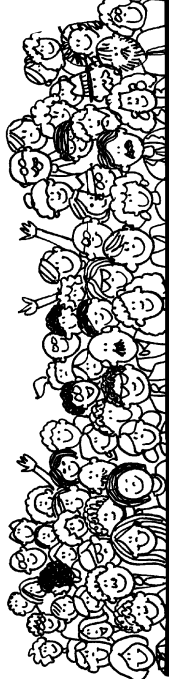
Wednesday, January 6th 6:00pm-7:30pm: Youth Bible Study
Come explore God's word and join us for some fun!
Sunday, January 10th 12:15pm-12:45pm: Youth/Parent Info. Mtg. & Planning Team Elections

Youth and parents are asked to meet in the education building immediately following the worship service. All GA information and forms will be distributed (see additional information below). Parents, please come prepared to fill out a new health form. Youth group members will elect 5 youth to serve on the Youth Planning Team. The team consists of 5 youth and 5 adults. The team provides leadership to assist in selecting activities and projects. Qualifications for youth team members are as follows: regular participant in Sunday School and Worship and active in Sunday and Wednesday programming. All the names of eligible youth are posted in the youth room.

Thursday, January 14th 6:00pm-7:00pm: Youth Planning Team
All previous members and newly elected members are needed for this meeting!

Wednesday, January 20th 6:00pm-7:30pm: Youth Bible Study
Reminder.....meal starts at 5:15pm.

Annual Congregation Meeting



Very Important Annual Congregational Meeting

- The Annual Congregation Meeting is scheduled for Sunday, January 10, 2010 at 4:00 p.m.
- A meal will follow with a time of fellowship. Soups, sandwiches and drinks will be provided. Please bring a dessert to share.
- Childcare will be offered.
- 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 Conference and Synod Assemblies.
- The complete Book of Reports will be distributed at the meeting.

This year, your participation and input at our annual Congregational Meeting will be even more important than usual, as we have a lot of decisions to make following our vote to remain in the ELCA. We will make changes to our constitution, elect at least three Council members who have served their terms, revisit our Vision and Mission statements, develop a Ministry Funding Plan and discern the direction that Zion wishes to go in 2010. In order to be representative of the congregation, your leadership needs to hear from you about your hopes and dreams and expectations for the future of Zion. I encourage you to make attendance at this vital meeting a priority for you, as it is only in gathering together to pray and listen to the Holy Spirit as a faith community that we can discern God's will for us as his people. See you there! **Pastor Barb** <><

Sunday School Christmas Musical Thank You

Thank you goes to many who helped with the children/youth's Christmas musical, **"The Christmas County Spelling Bee"**. We especially want to thank the children who worked so hard to learn their parts and came to practice; the parents who brought the children to practice and helped them learn their parts; and **Melinda Heidt and Karen Hall**, directors of the musical. We have a very talented group of young people in our church and adults who are willing to give of their time to share with us the great story of our Savior and how God loved us enough to send His one and only Son. During this season, tell someone else about the story of Jesus. The monetary gifts collected were used to help families experiencing difficulties at this time of the year. Our prayer for 2010 is that, whatever the New Year brings, each of us will remember God's great love for us, and that all we are and have is to the glory of God.

Thanks:

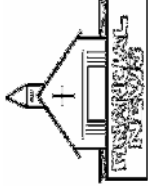
A huge "Thank you" to everyone at Zion who called me and sent me get well cards during my recent illness. Kelsey and I wish for you and yours many blessings during this Christmas Season. Merry Christmas, **Grant Anderson**

To our Zion Family, Thank you all very much for your cards, thoughts and prayers. Stacy is at home and doing very well. We still have some health issues but, overall, things are much better. We hope to be seeing all of you very soon. Thanks for everything, **The Carter Family**

Thank you so much for the Pizza Hut gift card. It will certainly come in handy! And it was wonderful to hear from you guys! May your holidays be merry! Love, **Samantha Ogletree**

With Warm Thoughts and Many Thanks!! What a blessing it has been to be so well cared for by so many! Thank you all for the many Christmas cards, delicious meals, and gifts from your hearts! You have truly been shining stars in our life together! We thank God for you all!

In Christian Love, Pastor Barb and Bob <><



November 2009 Treasurer's Summary Report

Fund	General	Building	Memorial	Bus	Land
Balance	3.22	8,597.29	75,072.63	3,281.27	321,886.61
Income	12,609.22	497.06	50.00	-0-	3,643.66
Total	12,612.44	9,094.35	75,122.63	3,281.27	325,530.27
Expenses	12,600.62	172.89	500.00	-0-	2,825.15
Balance	11.82	8,921.46	74,622.63	3,281.27	322,705.12

Special Contributions and Funds

ELCA Hunger Appeal	185.50	Manna House	230.14
Benevolence	1,230.00	Southern Seminary	-0-
Treutlen House	15.00	Local Mission Account	8,484.12
LSG	-0-	Cemetery Fund CD	15,101.88
Abundant Life Church	1,000.00	Internship Fund CD	1,868.11

LUTHERAN MEN IN MISSION

The men of Zion Lutheran Church meet the **fourth Sunday** of every month at **8 a.m.** for breakfast, fellowship and a brief devotional. Thank you to all who came out and contributed their time and efforts this past year.

If you are interested in finding out more about LMM, see **Craig Pittman, Harold Wheeler or Andy Dasher**.

ZIONEWS Deadline for February-January 17th!

Thanks to WELCA for the fantastic cookies, all of my helpers this month, and the Zion Church family for all of the blessings I receive from all of you. I count it a joy to serve Zion as your secretary. Blessings to all of you this New Year of our Lord, 2010 ... *Godd*

1st and 3rd Wednesday

Zion's mid-week program will meet on January 6th and 20th. Please come and enjoy the meal, fellowship, Bible study and the ever dreaded clean up. A wise man said "A family that eats together, stays together."

- 2:30-3:30 p.m.....Children's (Grades K-5) Choir rehearsal
- 3:30-4:30 p.m.....Biblical craft/study hall (Grades K-5)
- 4:30-5:30 p.m.....Faith Weavers (Grade K-5) Bible study
- 5:15-6:45 p.m.....A meal, age 3 & younger eat free,
age 4-10 \$2.00 each, age 11 & up \$5.00
each, maximum family rate \$20.00.
- 6:00-7:30 p.m.....Confirmation Classes with Amber Hall
- 6:00-7:30 p.m.....Youth (Grades 6-12) Bible studies
- 6:15-7:00 p.m.....Adult Bible Study with Pastor Barb...meal may be
eaten during study

We are encouraging everyone to attend, even if you have not made reservations. See you there. Any questions or to make reservations call **Norma Ralph (912) 313-2465**.

Voting Check and Balance Policy (November 11, 2009)

Operate the voting in a similar manner as the county polls. Persons are checked off the current updated voting roster per the constitution. Have a check-in table. At this table would be an updated voting roster where the eligible member's names are alphabetized. The person who would be in charge of the table should be the Congregation Secretary (Elected Officer).

After being signed in, a person would receive a tag signifying eligibility to vote. Before voting begins an announcement should be given to ask if all members have registered. Roll should be counted to serve as checks and balance when voting begins. Once votes are collected a statement shall be made that this ballot is now closed.

Constitution Requirement for Voting Eligibility

C8.02.c. **Voting** members are confirmed members of legal age. Such confirmed members shall have communed or made a contribution of record during the current or preceding year.

Congratulations:

To **Rachel and Craig Bracken** on the birth of their daughter, **Riley Claire**, on December 7th. Big brother, **Trenton**, grandparents, **Rick and Jenny Ullman**, and great-grandmother, **Louise Ullman**, are all delighted to welcome their new bundle of joy to the family.

Our Sympathy to:

Ronald and Joy Hutcheson on the recent death of his grandmother.



A Thank You from Bishop H. Julian Gordy (Excerpts)

December 4, 2009

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

During my recent trip to Effingham County, I was very pleased to learn some of the details of your significant support of the Lutheran Mission of Abundant Life in Pooler, Georgia. Since the mission began, your support and partnership have been instrumental to the Gospel work of that developing congregation. ...

Pr. Seth Bridger is convinced that Abundant Life would not have developed to the current point of health and vitality that it now embodies without your willingness to serve as the Sponsoring Congregation and Fiscal Agent. ...

On behalf of our Southeastern Synod and the ELCA, I take this opportunity to express gratitude for your good work. I especially thank two persons who have served faithfully as liaisons with Abundant Life: Mr. Joe Studier, for his willingness in serving as the first Treasurer of the Pooler Mission and Mr. Thomas Kessler, Treasurer of Zion Lutheran, for his instrumental role and integrity.

Thanks to the entire Zion congregation for your active mission partnership with Abundant Life. May God continue to bless the good work you do in Jesus' name.

Very sincerely,

+ H. Julian Gordy
Bishop

ELCA Southeastern Synod

3. Annual Meeting Agenda/Preparation: By general consensus, council approved the Meeting preparation assignments (filed with the December 6, 2009 Meeting Minutes) and the revisions to the Meeting Agenda.

Phyllis Heidt, Secretary

Zion Lutheran Church Congregation Meeting December 19, 2009

A Called Congregation Meeting of Zion Lutheran Church was held on Saturday, December 19, 2009. The meeting was called to order by Congregation Vice President, Charlie Heidt, at 6:50pm. The purpose of the meeting was to vote on whether the congregation would approve a resolution to leave the ELCA (filed with the December 19, 2009 Meeting Minutes). Congregation Secretary, Phyllis Heidt, read the council action that called for the meeting.

Pastor Barbara Koch led the opening prayer.

Charlie Heidt asked Ramona Kessler, Sherri Pittman, Dana Smith, and Joe Studier to serve as the vote tellers.

Since voter registration went through the designated discussion period of 6:30pm to 7:00pm, the discussion period was established for 6:56 pm to 7:26pm. Only two comments were made and two questions asked and answered. A motion was made, seconded to end the discussion period at 7:03pm. The motion was approved. The voter registration was closed and ballots distributed to the 167 registered voting members.

Per the Zion Lutheran Church Constitution, the resolution must pass with a 2/3 majority, or 112 yes votes. The tellers confirmed there were 167 ballots cast. There were eighty (80) votes Yes – “Leave the ELCA” and eighty-seven (87) votes No – “Stay in the ELCA”. Therefore, the resolution to leave the ELCA did not pass.

Once the results were given the meeting was adjourned at 7:15pm.

Phyllis Heidt, Secretary

Serving in January						
Date	Flowers	Acolyte *	Crucifer *	Assisting Minister	Nursery	Communion Servers
Jan. 3 (W)	Amber Hall			Sherri Pittman		Dawn Holton Maudene Graham
Jan. 10 (W)	Bessie Studier	Matthew Ralph	Katherine Ralph	Dana Lee Smith		Joy Hutcheson
Jan. 17 (G)	Reggie & Ann McDaniel	Luke Dasher	Ryan Pittman			Ruth Pauley Chuck Prathst
Jan. 24 (G)	Roy & Rhonda Clifton	Autumn Conaway	Harrold Wheeler, III			Bob Koch
Jan. 31 (G)	Charlie Heidt	Megan Edwards	Cassidy Edwards			Diane Counts Cheryl Pannal

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

Week of	Clean Church	Clean Education Bldg	Questions/Changes
January 4	Casey Griffith & Nicholas Dasher	Autumn Conaway	Contact Dana Lee Smith @ 728-3227 or 665-1377 by Wednesday of the week as signed
January 11	Katherine & Matthew Ralph	Ryan Pittman	
January 18	Harrold Wheeler, III	Andrew Kessler	
January 25	Melissa Lowe	Cassidy & Megan Edwards	

Month of	Greeters	Ushers	Visiting Comm.
January	Norma & Francis Ralph	Bruce Peth Craig Conaway Craig Pittman Ryan Pittman	Ruth Pauley

Women's Circles	Program	Place
Evening January 5th-7:00 p.m.	Mary Lou Thomas	Home of Melinda Heidt - 728-3288
Afternoon January 8th-2:00 p.m.	Mary Lou Thomas	Church Education Building
Circle of Friends Jan. 18th-7:00 p.m.	Norma Ralph	Church Education Building
Mary/Martha	TBA	Contact Dana Lee Smith 728-3227

ZION LUTHERAN CHURCH Congregation Council Meeting Highlights - Draft December 6, 2009

A complete copy of the approved minutes will be posted on the Church Bulletin Board

The meeting was called to order by VP Richard Hall. Herbert Warnell read a Bible passage.

A member appeared before council and requested the resignation of council members who are not participating at Zion. She stated businesses do not allow their Board of Directors to serve if they are working for a competitor and neither should Zion.

Reports

The Minutes from the November 1, 2009 Congregation Council Meeting were approved as printed.

The Minutes from the November 15, 2009 Called Congregation Council Meeting were approved as printed.

The Minutes from the November 15, 2009 Congregation Meeting were approved as printed.

The Pastor's Report was reviewed.

The Treasurer's Report for November 2009 was reviewed.

Committees

1. Finance: The Budget for the 2010 Annual Meeting can not be developed until after the December 19, 2009 Congregation Meeting. The committee will likely prepare a monthly budget and extend it to quarterly as time progresses. The committee will develop a budget to present at the Annual Meeting on January 10, 2010.

Unfinished Business

1. Memorial Garden: Further action on this item was tabled. Pastor Barb will continue to try to make contact with the individual who made the donation.

New Business

1. Membership Status Change Requests: Louisa Fisher, Jennifer Hamilton, and Thomas Peth requested to change their membership from associate to rostered. Joe Studier made a motion to honor the requests for the changes in membership. Herbert Warnell seconded the motion, which carried council's approval.
2. December 19th Meeting Setup: By general consensus, Craig Conaway will stop registration at the appointed time, and Joe Studier will be the time keeper for the discussion period.

Women of the ELCJA News

By Melinda Heidt

- Thanks to all who made, packed, and delivered Christmas cookies. Because of you, 25 containers of homemade cookies were given to our 80+ years members and shut-ins for Christmas.
- Thank you to Circle of Friends for the Angel Tree. We will give information on the amount of money raised in the next Zionews. The money collected will go to Habitat for Humanity to help move a house.
- All women of the congregation are invited and encouraged to take part in all activities. Look for the meetings listed in each month's Zionews. For more information, contact president Melinda Heidt at 728-3288.

SENIOR CITIZENS

Christmas Fun! That is what 32 folks had at our December meeting. After a wonderful meal headed up by **Charlie & Melinda Heidt**, everyone enjoyed Christmas games and caroling. Thank you to all the "elves" who helped prepare the meal and/or provided food. 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.

The next meeting will be on Wednesday, Jan. 20th, at 11:30 a.m. **Meredith Arnsdorff**, an Assistant Superintendent, will be our guest speaker. She will be giving us an update on what is going on in the school system. The meal will be provided. Our average attendance in 2009 grew to 40! 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.

It's time to think about signing up for flowers for 2010.

Look for the sign-up sheet in the narthex.

Just a reminder... Communion registration must be done once a year. The first time you commune in 2010, please fill out a communion card and place it in the offering plate. Families can list all names on one card.



Calendar Page