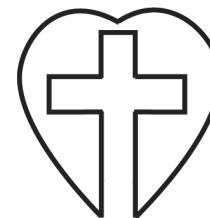


Zion Lutheran Church
1300 Pearl Street
Belvidere, IL 61008

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Sharing Christ's Love

Tidings of Zion

Newsletter of Zion Lutheran Church
1300 Pearl Street, Belvidere, IL 61008

Volume 46, No. 1

January 2012

From the Pastor's Desk

The Bible has been a best seller for years. I would bet that you own more than one copy. Yet it is the most misunderstood book around. It is a book that is to be read by all ages. All of us have made resolves to read it more and have not. Why? The book is ancient and is difficult to read. Yet in those pages, God will speak to you and try to explain to you THE STORY.

You have a unique opportunity to get to know THE STORY. In 2012, we will as a congregation read through the Bible in 31 chapters. You can purchase THE STORY from us as a congregation, or get it online. I will focus my sermons on a chapter a week. We will offer several small group times for you to discuss what you have read. Our website will let you know the schedule of readings and offer summaries for those who might have missed a worship time. We recommend a participant book for your own or small group discussion.

So right now, I invite you to sign up to get a book and participant's book for \$20.00 and then join with us in an adventure of faith. It can be a life changing time. I believe that once you see how God's story and your story intersect, you will not only grasp why the Bible is such a great book and grow in your faith. I also believe that once we are finished with our journey, you will read that Bible collecting dust now in your home.

Then join me in prayer and let's make 2012 a life changing time.
See you in Church, Pastor Otto

Your 2012 **Offering Envelopes** are in the Narthex—please pick up at your earliest convenience.

January Highlights

Annual Reports
due on Jan. 5

Pioneer Club
January 9

Women's
Retreat
January 14

Altar Guild
Meeting on
January 21

The Story
Begins on
January 22

Offering
Counters
Brainstorm
January 23

Chili Supper
January 19

Annual Meeting
January 29th
At 9:15 a.m.

Our Staff

Rev. Karl Otto	Senior Pastor
Rev. Bill Nelson	Visitation Pastor
Cheryl Sturges	Council President
Michael King	Youth Director
Pat Castro	Sunday School Director
Carleen Courtney	Music Director
Kim Zierke	Sunday School Music
Dan Albrecht	Worship & Praise
Kathy Martin	Secretary
Dan Druckrey	Custodian

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Fax: 815-544-0590
Email: zionbelvidere@juno.com
Web Site Address:
www.belviderezion.org
Office Hours: 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.



Worship Schedule

September—May
Sundays at 8:00 & 10:45 a.m.
Thursdays at 7:00 p.m.

June—August
Sundays at 9:00 a.m.
Thursdays at 7:00 p.m.
Nursery Available

Seminary News

Dear Friends,

A few days ago I received a letter from the seminary announcing a gift from Zion. To each of you who have given so generously--- THANK YOU! Your support means so much to me.

Often, people in the congregation ask me how my studies are going, or what classes I'm taking. Well, here's an update: I've just finished my fall term. I had two classes, *Exegetical Greek*, which means all the Greek I learned this summer was put into practical use. I spent the fall studying the book of John, in Greek. While not something I'll use every day of my ministry, it is fun and interesting to see how the New Testament was originally written, and to get at the heart of what its authors really meant to say. I also took *Lutheran Confessions*. This was a class in which we studied the "meat and potatoes" of the Lutheran traditions--the documents of the Book of Concord. We actually have several copies in the Zion library. Everything you ever wanted to know about being Lutheran is in that book!

I plan on spending some time resting, enjoying Christmas and spending time with my family, before I take off in January. I'll be going to Milwaukee for the first half of the month. I'll be learning about ministry in an urban setting. Particular attention will be given to ministry among people in poverty, anti-racism work and justice ministries. It's pretty far outside anything I'm used to, so it will be a positive learning opportunity!

I also want to share with you that I've been accepted into the summer CPE (clinical pastoral education) program at Rockford Memorial. I'll be learning the difficult but important work of hospital chaplaincy.

I thank you again for your support-- emotional, financial and prayerful. Please continue keep my family and me in your prayers.

Your partner in ministry and sister in Christ,

Julane Nease

Baptism

Welcomed into the Body of Christ through the Sacrament of Holy Baptism on December 4th—Alexander James Lundin, child of Nich & Michele Lundin.

Sympathy

Our thoughts and prayers are with Sandra Cregeen upon the death of her sister, Mary.

From our Mailbox

Dear Zion Members, Thank you so much for your memorial gift for Ken. I think we are going to update our keyboards at church. We loved our time in Belvidere and the friends we made there. Time sure flies.

Merry Christmas,
Holly McKnight

Thank you, Thank you!

On Saturday, November 26th, the church was decorated for Christmas. Thank you to Rocco & Gretel Baird, John & Lois Bender, Bob Brockway, Frank, Donna, Kris & Sarah Cepeda, Sandra Cregeen, Dan Druckrey, Peg Grenke and Arlyn Groen for adorning the sanctuary. Thank you to Ardys Brockway, Karen Durley and Mary Verken for decorating the window sills. Thank you to Bob Brockway, Arlyn Groen, Reynold Johnson, Art Sell, Carrol Verken and Bill Vorndran for dressing "Fat Albert".

Sincerely,
The Worship & Music Committee

The congregation sincerely thanks the family and friends of Irene Sell and Gloria Chapko for their contributions to Zion's scholarship fund. These memorial gifts enable us to recognize our young people for contributions to our church and to our community. The scholarship enriches their lives and helps them to realize their potential.

Each time we give an award, we also commemorate people such as Irene and Gloria who have left special memories in our own lives. The plaque in the narthex acknowledges the many gifts that have been given in honor or in memory of a loved one.



Thank you
To all the
ladies who
helped set
up the
Christmas
poinsettias

Bake sales sponsored by high school youth are held between services the second Sunday of the month.



Please remember to save your aluminum cans.

Our Congratulations to Jonathon Castro who graduated from Northern Illinois University on December 11th with a degree in Secondary Education (emphasis in History and English).

High School Youth

Our next coffee hour will be on Sunday, January 8th between worship services. Our theme will be winter season. Please drop off your baked goods in the kitchen between 8:00 & 8:45 a.m.

We will be hosting the Mardi Gras event in February. Details are included in this newsletter!

Helping Hands Tree

This year our Helping Hands Tree benefited children of Boone County. We had over 125 hands on the tree. We received 135 toys to help children of Boone County. The Salvation Army did the hand outs on December 7 and December 8th. We would like to thank all the members of Zion who participated in this wonderful program.

Annual Ski Trip

This year our annual Ski Outing will be on Saturday, January 28th. There will be a sign up sheet on the bulletin board in the narthex. If you would like to attend, please sign your name on the sheet or your family name, and indicate how many will attend. Please also let us know if you need ski equipment.

Listed here are the fees for this year's ski trip:

- Ski Lift Tickets—\$22.00
- Skis and Lift Ticket—\$34.00
- Snow Board & Lift Ticket—\$42.00
- Helmet Rental—\$5.00

We will be registering at Zion that Saturday at 12:00. We want to get on the road by 1:00 p.m. We need to arrive at Grand Geneva by 2 pm for registration.

Notice of Annual Congregational Meeting

The Annual Congregational Meeting will be held on Sunday, January 29th at 9:15 a.m. This will include voting on the budget for 2012 and electing council members. Informational meetings will be held after each service prior to this time on Sunday, January 22 and Thursday, January 26.

Pioneer Club

All people, 55 and older, are welcome to start the New Year by sharing in the Pioneer Club carry in Noon meal on Monday, January 9th. Bring a dish to share and table setting; beverage provided. Program TBA. On Monday, February 13th, the program will feature Jim McElhaney playing some "Smooth Jazz" on his clarinet. Please bring a dish to pass and table setting. The aroma of coffee will warm your arrival! Guests are always welcome. Monthly free will offerings help cover the cost of our programs.

Women's circle reminders

Faith Finders meet on the 2nd and 4th Wednesdays at 6:30 pm. here at the church.

Deborah Circle will meet on Tuesday, January 17th, 9:30 a.m. in the church library.

Morning Sara Circle will meet on Wednesday, January 18, 9:30 a.m. in the church library.

Women of Zion!

Our next women's retreat is set for Saturday, January 14th from 9-11 a.m. Breakfast will be served at 9:00, followed by the program. Marilyn Smaha will present "The History of Purses". If you have an antique purse to bring along, please write a brief history on a note card. A sign up sheet for this event will be up on the bulletin board this week.

Twenty-five women enjoyed making a fantastic holiday craft at our last retreat, due to Jane Schuessler's guidance and generosity. Jane not only shared her skills but donated materials to make the craft more affordable. Thanks, Jane, for all you did!



Annual Chili Supper
Mark your calendars for Thursday, January 19 at 5:30 pm.





Wanted: Able bodies person(s) to help with Zion's recycling efforts. Gene & Sharon Hall, Gene Berg, Larry Schultz and Jon Huffman would like some help collecting the church's material and taking to the recycling center.

We each take 1 week per month. Not a big time commitment (the more people, the less time), but it does help the environment, reduces the amount of garbage, and gives Kathy and the kitchen workers a little more room. Our thanks go out to Larry Brendum who has helped us in the past. If you would like to help or want more info, call Jon. Thanks!

Annual Chili Supper

On **Thursday, January 19**, we'll be holding our annual chili cook off at 5:30 p.m. This year's donations will be benefiting Lutheran World Hunger Relief. If you would like to make your favorite chili, please contact pastor or Dennis Sturges.

Altar Guild News

How do the colors of paraments change on the altar?

How does Communion get set up?

Who cleans the altar and fills the candles?

Who takes care of the acolyte, communion assistant & pastor's robes?

Want to be a part of the behind the scenes group? An informational meeting will be on **Saturday, January 21st** at 10 a.m. at the church. Join us for coffee & muffins and good conversation. For more information, contact Wanda Watts, Chris Martin, Jane Schuessler or Kris Beever.

Money Counter "Brainstorming"

To all current money counters of Zion's offerings, and to anyone who would be interested in helping out!



The financial secretary and church treasurer will be hosting a gathering on **Monday, January 23rd** at 10 a.m.

Join us for coffee & donuts as we all discuss ideas and brainstorm on things like: easier ways to put monies into categories, keeping all information, and making this an enjoyable ministry. Do you have ideas to share? See you on the 23rd!

Please mark your calendars!

Zion Lutheran is going International

Dear Member of Zion,

We have received permission from our church council to go ahead in planning our summer mission trip to Pesco, **Peru**. If you are interested in going, please come to an informative meeting on Sunday, January 8th at 5:00 pm at the church. We will explain the parameters of the trip and what we need to do to raise the funds to go on this trip. If you decide to go on this trip, you need to put down a \$100 non-refundable deposit and start applying for a passport. The **last day to sign up** for this summer's mission trip will be **January 31**. We will not accept any late sign-ups for the trip due to the reservations we need to make and the deposit we need to put down for our stay at the resort we will be going to.

The date of the trip is between June 21 thru July 1st. We cannot lock into the dates yet because we are looking for the cheapest airfare. As soon as we get the best rate, we will lock it in. In order to get the best rate, we might have to leave on a week day and return on the following weekend. The trip will be no longer than 10 days.

If you have any questions about the trip before the meeting, please contact Michael King or drop me an email at michaelrking@sbcglobal.net

Sincerely & God Bless, Michael King, Youth Director

Mardi Gras

Mardi Gras at Zion is just around the corner! We came up with the theme this year of "Heart and Soul". This event will be on Sunday, February 18 at 4:00 p.m. at the church. So if you have any kind of talent, whether it's singing, dancing, acting, playing musical instruments or just acting like a fool, you qualify to be in our talent show!

Our high school youth will be hosting the event. The proceeds will go towards their summer mission trip to Peru. Tickets will go on sale Sunday, January 29th between the church services. Also, you can get your tickets at the church office. Please come and have a great time! Adult tickets: \$7.00, Students \$5.00, and children under 4 are free.

Deadline
to sign up
for this
Mission
Trip is
January 31

