



The Rosette December, 2025

Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church
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Over the years, I've come to appreciate that the heart of the gospel of Jesus Christ can be expressed in four simple words: do not be afraid.

There were good reasons for Mary to be afraid when the angel announced she was to give birth to the Messiah. There were good reasons for the shepherds to be afraid when angels suddenly filled the night sky. There were good reasons for Joseph to be afraid when he heard of Herod's plans to slaughter children. There were good reasons for the disciples to be afraid when Jesus was crucified and then when he came and stood among them yet alive. In every case the message heard was the same: do not be afraid.

In these days, there are good reasons to be afraid. We live in a world of constant change, of violence and hunger, economic uncertainty and unrelenting political posturing. Our bodies are vulnerable to disease and to the aches and pains of being human. While fear and anxiety are real and inescapable in both ordinary and extraordinary times, the words "do not be afraid" come as an invitation. We are invited to give our fears to God, to lean on those everlasting arms, and to seek the gift of God's peace in the midst of it all.

Advent is a time to confront our anxieties, to name our fears, and to hold fast to the promise of Emmanuel, God with us. Do not be afraid because God promises a savior. Do not be afraid because Christ is king. Do not be afraid because God desires to give us a peace that passes all understanding. Do not be afraid because the people who walked in darkness have seen a great light.

A definition I recently rediscovered says: faith is believing in spite of the evidence, and watching the evidence change. As the 4 weeks of Advent give way to Christmas, we are invited to watch the evidence change. As the days of December unfold, darkness and gloom give way to light and grace. Our waiting and longing give way to birth and celebration. Fear gives way to hope and a world of sin and brokenness is transformed by the power of God come down to earth in Jesus. For unto us a child is born, unto us a savior given, and so we celebrate in faith!

Pastor Kate

Table Blessings: Messy Church

December 7, January 4, February 1, March 1

Every month on the first Sunday of the month, we offer “Table Blessings,” an interactive, family friendly way to gather, learn and worship together. As someone noted about our inaugural gathering, “it’s messy!” Exactly!

The “messy church” model is intended to be a welcoming and engaging forum for children and families to enter into our life at Zion. Come and see, come and share!

We start at 11:30 am each first Sunday of the month, and our time together includes a kid friendly lunch.

PLEASE NOTE: Help is needed! We need a support team for this outreach effort, especially while Pastor Kate is on sabbatical. We especially need Zion members who would be willing to coordinate the purchasing of food and serving of the lunch. At this time, we are purchasing pre-made/catered items with Thrivent Action cards, so no cooking is needed. Creative thinking about menus is welcome!

Give back this holiday season with Good Gifts



This holiday season, give a gift that makes a real difference in the world. Through ELCA Good Gifts, you can provide someone with goats, feed a refugee family or support an ELCA missionary. Visit ELCA.org/GoodGifts to browse these gifts and more.

Preschool Christmas Tree Decorating

Our Annual Christmas Tree Decorating event with the Preschool will take place on Tuesday, Dec. 2nd starting at 5pm. Over the past few years this event has evolved into a wonderful time of fellowship and connection between preschool families and Zion members. We set up craft tables, fire pits and, of course, the tree to be decorated. We offer hot dogs, hot drinks and Christmas cookies. A volunteer sign-up sheet is posted on the bulletin board, as we need a good number of people working together to make this event possible. Initial set up will be at 4:15 pm. Santa will be with us again this year. Grandchildren are welcome to join the fun.



Annual Congregational Mtg. Set

Our annual congregational meeting is scheduled for Sunday, December 7th immediately following worship. We will be voting on the proposed 2026 budget and election of new Council members. Please plan to attend.



2026 Offering Envelopes available

Zion's 2026 offering envelope sets are available for pick-up. For your convenience, they are on the table in the back of the large Sunday School room for a few weeks. After the new year, they may be picked up in the church office.

Clergy Renewal: Time Apart

While Pastor Kate is on sabbatical January 1 – March 26, 2026, the Rev. Karen Larson will serve as Zion's part time interim pastor. Pastor Karen will preach and lead worship on Sunday mornings, make pastoral visits, and minister among us up to 20 hours a week. Pastor Karen is a graduate of United Lutheran Seminary and recently retired from serving as pastor at Zion Lutheran Church in Leola. She resides with her husband, Jim, in Ephrata.

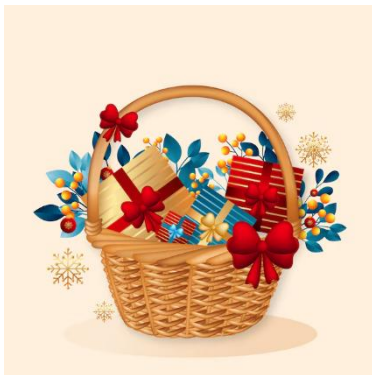
Toys for Tots Campaign, 2025

We're again collecting donations of toys for the Marine Corps "Toys for Tots" campaign. Could you help make this a bright Christmas for some families whose children otherwise may not receive any presents? Donations of new, unwrapped toys may be dropped in the collection box at the back of the Sunday School room through November 30th. All toys donated in the Lancaster area will remain local. THANK YOU for helping to make this a Merry Christmas and helping to SPREAD GOD'S LOVE TO OTHERS.



Silent Auction Planned

Christmas is fast approaching! Once again, it's time for our Annual Silent Auction. You can help fight world hunger by bidding on many displayed unique items that are generously donated by some of our talented members. This is a great way to get a jump on your Christmas shopping as well as donating to a very worthy cause. Homemade craft items are greatly appreciated. Items will be on display starting on Sunday, Nov. 30th. Bidding begins on December 7th and concludes at noon on December 14th. You will be notified if you have the winning bid for any item. Bidding numbers may be obtained from Donna Dieter in the church office. All proceeds go towards the Lutheran World Hunger Appeal. Please come and enjoy all the fun and help with this mission opportunity.



Salvation Army Bell Ringers Needed!!

We will ring the Salvation Army bell on Thursday, December 4th at Longenecker's Hardware from 12:00-8:00pm. Please sign up on the sheet posted outside the church office if you can help during that timeframe. What you are doing is helping directly provide funds for an important ministry to people in need in the Manheim area, as all the donations are kept and distributed right here in the Manheim Central School District area. There are many people in need this year, so let's see if we can have a banner collection for them!



Advent/Christmas in the Barn

Join us at the Wittel Farm on Sunday, Dec. 21st from 7:00-8:30pm for an intimate evening of scripture, hymns and songs, prayers and joyful music. We gather in the barn around the manger for this annual tradition, with candlelight, hot cocoa, and cookies. Address for the Wittel Farm is: 1753 Mill Rd., Elizabethtown, PA.



Christmas Eve Worship at Zion

11:30am Service of Holy Communion
For the Nativity of Our Lord

7:00pm Traditional Family Service

2026 Flower & Bulletin Sponsors Requested

We will soon have the new Flower and Bulletin Sponsor Charts posted in the entrance hallway for 2026. Take some time to jot down your name on the special days you'd like to sponsor.



Food Pantry Needs



During the month of December, the Manheim Central Food Pantry is looking for applesauce, beef stew, canned chili, canned beets, rice sides, toilet paper, paper towels, toothpaste, soap, shampoo, conditioner, feminine hygiene products, adult briefs, and diapers.

They could also use some plastic and reusable bags at this time. (No used or opened items; no out-of-date items). Monetary donations may also be sent to the MC Food Pantry, c/o Salem United Methodist Church, 140 N. Penn St., Manheim.

Please make sure any food items you may be donating are not out of date. Put donations in the cart outside the church office or drop them in the box on the porch of the food pantry at 334 W. Gramby St., Manheim. Monetary donations may also be sent to the MC Food Pantry, c/o Salem United Methodist Church, 140 N. Penn St., Manheim, PA.



Christmas Decorating

Decorating for the celebration of Christ's nativity will take place on Sunday Dec. 21 following worship. All are welcome to help trim the tree and finalize the sanctuary decorations in preparation for our Christmas Eve worship. Everyone who stays to help with the decorating is also welcome to stay a few moments longer and enjoy lunch together.

Daughters of Zion

Daughters of Zion held their monthly meeting on November 17th with 13 women in attendance! Opening devotions and prayer were led by Dot Longenecker, and concluded with the Lord's Prayer.

We had our usual reading of the minutes and financial updates and then, after discussion of up-coming events, we moved on to a little bit of "re-organization" of the base cabinets in the Rose Parlor. (Don't you just love fall house-cleaning??)

Many thanks for your contributions to "Toys for Tots"! This time of year is tough for a lot of folks, so thank you for helping to ease their burden with gifts of toys for their kids.

Please check out the lovely items on display beginning the first week in December in the Silent Auction. All proceeds go to Lutheran World Relief and their ever-challenging struggle to provide basic comforts to a hurting world.



Please note: This month's meeting on December 15th, **our annual Christmas Buffet** begins at **12:30!** Please mark the time and date on your calendar and join us for food, fun and fellowship!

Can you believe we're almost ready to start another New Year!?! Our first meeting in 2026 is scheduled for January 20, but, (and this is important), we do not hesitate to cancel in case of crummy weather for which January is famous. Our phone chain gang will contact you if there is a cancellation, and you can also call **717-625-0050** if you're uncertain about traveling. But, we hope to see you there!

Daughters of Zion, dedicated to serving as God's healing hands
in Manheim and the world beyond.



Preschool News







Dear Friends,

Thank you so much for your beautiful and kind get-well cards, visits and wishes sent to me during my recent hospitalization and continuing rehab and recuperation. Each one made me smile and reminded me not only of the individual sender, but also my much beloved and missed Zion Manheim family of faith. I look forward to building up my strength and going home in the next few weeks.

I'd also like to thank Pastor Kate for her visits, support, and reminders to keep my faith and hope alive despite my current challenges and circumstances. The light of Christ shines in the darkness and through each of you.

Thanks again. Blessings to you always!

Missy (Melissa) Hoffman

Thank you to all our friends here at Zion for remembering our birthdays recently. All the well-wishes were very much appreciated. It's great to feel the love shared by our church family as well as our family members. A big thank-you for all the prayers given on behalf of my brother, Barry, as well. He is recovering from a serious recent heart surgery, but God has blessed us with the gift of having him with us a bit longer. Thank you all!! God Bless You!!



Mike & Donna Dieter

Dear Friends at Zion,

I was overwhelmed with the beautiful flowers, cards and gifts you shared with me for Clergy Appreciation month in October, and with the support you have shown for my sabbatical. I have always held that Zion is a generous congregation, and you showed this again! Your generous support blesses me deeply and I am grateful.

Pastor Kate



Parish Registry

Death – Dan Rambler died on November 20, 2025

Rite of Confirmation – Brianna Boltz was confirmed on November 23, 2025

Financial Notes:

with joy and thanksgiving for your faithful stewardship.

OFFERINGS	Mo. Total	Budget
October General Fund offering	15,140	19,659
October Greater Zion Fund offering	890	---
Nov. General Fund offering (as of 11/24/25)	17,790	24,573
Nov. Greater Zion Fund offering (as of 11/24/25)	1,090	---

Prayer Chain

- **Have you ever needed prayer?** Zion's Prayer Warriors are there for you! As soon as Pastor Kate is aware of a need for prayer, she, in turn, calls Linda Keiffer (contact person, 717-742-2149). Linda then contacts the Prayer Warriors. Current Prayer Warriors to Zion's Prayer Chain include Holly Brosey, Linda Keiffer, Norm Drescher, and Yvonne Kreider. If you would like to join the team as an additional prayer warrior, please contact Linda Keiffer. We could certainly use a few more members to make phone calls.



The Expanded Prayer List is published at the beginning of each month.

Printed copies are available at the church. **You can contact Pr. Kate at the church office (665-5880) or Linda Keiffer @ 742-2149** to add a name to the list and to initiate the prayer chain.

Take note: Please

have permission from the person whose name you are placing on the list for prayer. The name of the contact person and phone number are also important for updates and further information about the person being prayed for.

December Birthdays

- 12/1 Sue Murray
12/5 Karen Connelly
12/8 Miranda Kulp
12/15 Ella Fotiou
12/16 Jen Corson
Cheryl Witmeyer
12/20 Norm Drescher
12/24 Mary Caplinger
Jim Miller
12/30 Linda Keiffer
12/31 Betty Myers



December Anniversaries



- 12/4 Tom & Connie Hershey
12/8 Dave & Sharon Lynes (35 years)
12/12 Dennis Shafnisky & Carol Atherholt
12/19 Richard & Doris Adair
12/23 Leonard & Jayne Burns
Tim & Jody Hess
12/27 Bob & June Lancaster



Dec. Readings

12/1 Psalm 124
Genesis 8:1-19
Romans 6:1-11

12/2 Psalm 124
Genesis 9:1-17
Hebrews 11:32-40

12/3 Psalm 124
Isaiah 54:1-10
Matthew 24:23-35

12/4 Psalm 72:1-7, 18-19
Isaiah 4:2-6
Acts 1:12-17, 21-26

12/5 Psalm 72:1-7, 18-19
Isaiah 30:19-26
Acts 13:16-25

12/6 Psalm 72:1-7, 18-19
Isaiah 40:1-11
John 1:19-28

2nd Sunday of Advent

12/7 Isaiah 11:1-10
Psalm 72:1-7, 18-19
Romans 15:4-13
Matthew 3:1-12

12/8 Psalm 21
Isaiah 24:1-16a
1 Thessalonians 4:1-12

12/9 Psalm 21
Isaiah 41:14-20
Romans 15:14-21

12/10 Psalm 21
Genesis 15:1-18
Matthew 12:33-37

12/11 Psalm 146:5-10
Ruth 1:6-18
2 Peter 3:1-10

12/12 Psalm 146:5-10
Ruth 4:13-17
2 Peter 3:11-18

12/13 Psalm 146:5-10
1 Samuel 2:1-8
Luke 3:1-18

3rd Sunday of Advent

12/14 Isaiah 35:1-10
Psalm 146:5-10
James 5:7-10
Matthew 11:2-22

12/15 Psalm 42
Isaiah 29:17-24
Acts 5:12-16

12/16 Psalm 42
Ezekiel 47:1-12
Jude 17-25

12/17 Psalm 42
Zechariah 8:1-17
Matthew 8:14-17, 28-34

12/18 Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19
2 Samuel 7:1-17
Galatians 3:23-29

Dec. Readings, cont'd

12/19 Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19
2 Samuel 7:18-22
Galatians 4:1-7

12/20 Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19
2 Samuel 7:23-29
John 3:31-36

4th Sunday of Advent

12/21 Isaiah 7:10-16
Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19
Romans 1:1-7
Matthew 1:18-25

12/22 Luke 1:46b-55
Isaiah 33:17-22
Revelation 22:6-7, 18-20

12/23 Luke 1:46b-55
2 Samuel 7:18, 23-29
Galatians 3:6-14

12/24 Isaiah 9:2-7
Psalm 96
Titus 2:11-14
Luke 2:1-14 [15-20]

Nativity of Our Lord

12/25 Isaiah 52:7-10
Psalm 98
Hebrews 1:1-4 [5-12]
John 1:1-14

12/26 Psalm 148
Wisdom 4:7-15
Acts 7:59-8:8

12/27 Psalm 148
Proverbs 8:22-31
1 John 5:1-12

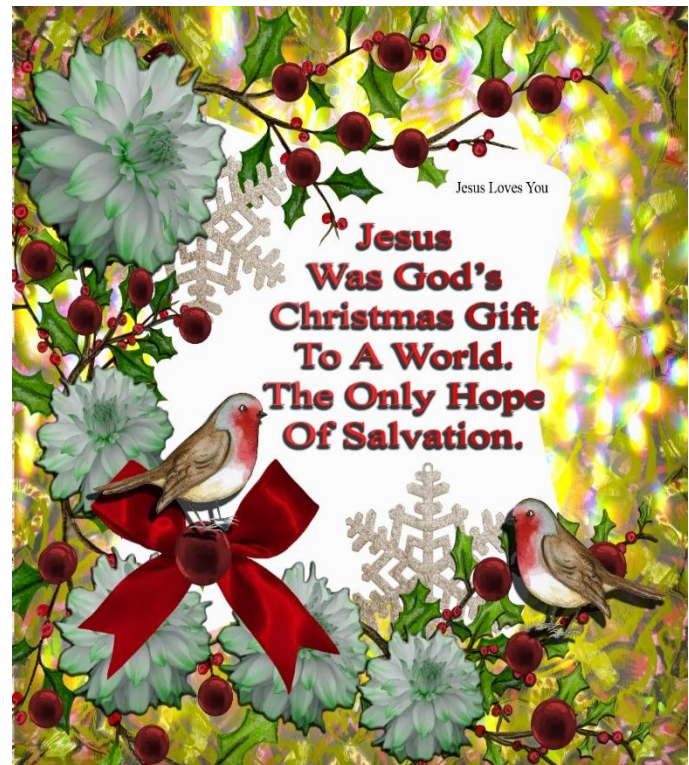
1st Sunday after Christmas

12/28 Psalm 148
Isaiah 49:13-23
Matthew 18:1-14

12/29 Psalm 20
Jeremiah 31:15-22
Luke 19:41-44

12/30 Psalm 20
Isaiah 26:1-9
2 Corinthians 4:16-18

12/31 Psalm 20
1 Kings 3:5-14
John 8:12-19



Altar Flowers



- Dec. 7 Dave Lynes' family in memory of Earl Gernert
- Dec. 14 Dave & Sharon Lynes in honor of their anniversary
- Dec. 21 Lenny & Jayne Burns in honor of their anniversary
- Dec. 28 Carol & John Blanck in memory of Meda Blanck

Note: Flowers are \$40 per week and must be paid to the church by the beginning of the month for the flowers you are sponsoring. Thank you.

Bulletin Sponsors

Month of December – This month is available for sponsorship.
Please call office at 665-5880.



Bulletins are - \$9.00 per week

Worship Help Schedule

We need helpers for this position. Please sign on the volunteer sheet outside the church office.

Date	Greeters/Ushers	Lay Readers	Communion Assistants
12/7	Terry & Cheryl Fry	Sue Shaw	
12/14	Dennis Obetz	Paul Caplinger	Lenny Burns
12/21	Mike & Kathy Connelly	Kyle Spohn	
12/24 (7:00pm)	Donn & Deb Gehman	Ronda Moore	
12/28	Kelly Barthold	Esther Brosey	
1/4	Stacy Fry	Francesca McClure	
1/11	Jody Hess	Denny Valins	
1/18	George May	Mary Welliver	
1/25	Jean Rambler	Carol Atherholt	

Zion's Prayers

Please remember Zion's members as you pray:

Helen Blank
Barb Evock
Beth Ann Hoffer
Carol Mackley
Betty Minnich
Nic & Stefan Spohn

Jayne Burns
Verdella Frey
Blanche Kauffman
Linda Martin
Ed Moyer
Mary Welliver

Kate Eichelberger
Barbara Grunenberger
Verna Landry
Erma May
Sue Murray
Donna Wilkie

Please remember our Friends of Zion in your prayers:

Denny Ammerman
Becky
David Bradfield
Janet Cummings
Lee Elgin
Sandy Grimm
Heather Hildebrand
Todd Martin
Diane Repp
John Shirk
Menno Stoner
Scott Weachter

Anthony family
Tom Beil
Naomi Byers
Barry Diffenderfer
Lewis Ettinger
Kevin Heisey
Yasir Makki
McKenna
Paityn Royal
Frank Smith
Thad Toole
Tom Welliver

Emily Bair
Liz Blinn
Nancy Couden
Bill Duncan
Leslie Flory
Janice Herman
Heidi Martin
Pamela Nester
Abby Shipe
Betty Lou Stoner
Joyce Warn
John Yoder

Please remember those in Military Service as you pray:

Ryan Plowman, Blake Reber, and Mikaela Adams

