Zion Lutheran Church

**435 Oak Street**

**Manistique, MI 49854**

**906-341-5427**

The Beacon

# December 2023 Newsletter

**Saturday 5:00 p.m.** Worship in the Sanctuary

**Sunday10:30 a.m.** Worship in person & Via Zoom www.zionlutheran-manistique.org

Pastor Tommy Richter Pastor.TommyRichter@gmail.com

# Contact Us

Zion Lutheran Church

435 Oak Street

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906-341-5427

www.zionlutheran-manistique.org or follow us on Facebook.com

**Rev. Tommy Richter, Pastor**

Office: 906-341-5427

Home: 906-286-4383

**Secretary:**

office@zionlutheran-manistique.org

**Musician:** Linda Levin

**Choir Director:** Rebecca Peterson

**Custodian:** Pat Toennessen

**Congregational Council:** Linda Levin, President Donna Mott, Vice President Cyndee Miske, Secretary Jo-Nell Berger

Ken Groh Ruth Jones Todd Kangas Janet Krueger Peter Mattson

Bonnie Moody Teddy Nelson Rebecca Peterson

Naomi Fletcher, Treasurer

Cyndee Miske, Financial Secretary

*But about that day or hour no one knows, neither the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. Beware, keep alert; for you do not know when the time will come. It is like a man going on a journey, when he leaves home and puts his slaves in charge, each with his work, and commands the doorkeeper to be on the watch. Therefore, keep awake—for you do not know when the master of the house will come, in the evening, or at midnight, or at cockcrow, or at dawn, or else he may find you asleep when he comes suddenly. And what I say to you I say to all: Keep awake.* -Mark 13:32-37

It feels a bit different waiting in Advent this time around. I’m used to this season being about waiting for the coming of a new baby in the abstract sense. The little Christ child is on the way, to bring light shining into the darkness. But, although about that day nor hour no one knows except God our Parent, with our due date on December 29th, I find advent being a bit more literal this time around as we are also waiting for the coming of our own child. Now, our child is not at all the coming messiah, so please don’t draw any kind of parallel there.

Please, Pastor’s kids are under enough pressure as it is. My child will be my own child, the Christ child will be the Christ child. The babies are not the same. But the waiting is. I cannot help but feel the two waitings for babies merging in my Advent devotionals.

Waiting is often tough work. As a culture we like to avoid waiting at all costs. We want our food fast, we want no lines at the bank, and we want to go to the park with the swings RIGHT NOW! Okay, so that last want was very specific to my toddler, but you get the point. We don’t like to wait. And when we are forced to wait, we often do anything we can to fill the time so that we do not have to confront the waiting. We doom-scroll through Facebook, we twiddle our thumbs, or play chess moves in our heads. (Okay, that last one is specific to just me, but again, you get it.) My favorite thing about the season of Advent is that it challenges us to see again the strong liveliness of waiting, the vim and vigor and fullness of life that happen when we are holding space for what is to come. Just as my little baby-to-be will

be doing so much growing and changing and kicking and making Mama uncomfortable between now and the end of December, so should we be in the season of Advent: full of growth, kicking, changing, and discomfort. In waiting both mother and child become stronger and more able, more full and capable to face what is to come. So, when Christ says to Keep Awake here in Mark, he means for us to confront the tough work of waiting, for there is great gospel life in this time we like to neglect.

There is something profound to be gained from not starting Christmas the day after Halloween. As difficult as it can be, Christmas doesn’t even start directly after Thanksgiving, nor even on the First of December. We must wait for it until it comes in truth on December 25th and the twelve days that follow. Because in that waiting time, God is at work in us, and has promised to show up and provide strength and comfort, growth and some kicking. So, when you are anxious, look for God! For surely God is close by, as God has especially promised to be near as we wait. It is from the purest promise and joy and closeness of God which Mark concludes: “And what I say to you I say to all: Keep awake.” Amen.

Pastor Tommy

 **Church Office Hours**

The church office will be open Monday 9:30 am-12:30 pm and Tuesdays through Thursdays from 9 am to 12 pm. Pastor’s office hours are Wednesdays 9 am-12 pm and Thursdays 9 am-12 pm. If you have questions, concerns at other times, or are in need of pastoral care please contact Pastor Tommy at 906-286-4383.

**Join us for Worship!**

**Saturday 5 pm** Worship in the Sanctuary

**Sunday 10:30 am** Worship is a hybrid service. You can join us in person or over Zoom. Holy Communion is served for those joining us in person.

To join Sunday worship over Zoom, go to our church website and click on the pink words “Join our Zoom Worship” under the worship times. Click Open or Open Link in the dialog box that pops up to join the call. If you don’t see a pop-up dialog box, click the blue Launch Meeting button. You can also join by phone.

No computer necessary! Call 929-205-6099 and enter the following ID# 9063415427, Passcode 49854.

**Congregation Council Highlights**

* The treasurer’s report showed an October income of $13,546.18 and expenditures of $13,422.63 for a balance of income over expenses of $123.55.
* Pastor Tommy reported on Advent/Christmas worship services, Bible studies, continuing education and community events.
* Worship and Music Committee Report – (1) We will change to service setting 4 during Advent. (2) A Blue Christmas service will be held in conjunction with St. Alban’s Episcopal Church on December 20 at 7:00 p.m. (3) Our Christmas Eve service will be at 4:00 p.m.
* Evangelism and Membership Committee Report – (1) Christmas caroling will be held on December 17 beginning at 4:00 p.m. (2) The committee continues to offer coffee hours each Sunday if no group/individuals sign up.
* Finance and Stewardship Committee Report – (1) As of November 30, 50 families have returned pledge cards for a total pledged amount of $101,142. (2) The December Noisy Offering will go to the Schoolcraft County Community Foundation (3) Council members approved $25 Christmas gifts for employees.
* Property Committee Report – (1) Connor Noble has been hired to do snow shoveling/snowblowing.
* Christian Education and Youth Report – No report.
* Personnel Committee – (1) We are in need of a church secretary. (2) Office hours will be posted on the monthly calendar.

**Mid-Week Advent Services**

Mid-Week Advent services will be held on Wednesday, December 6 and Wednesday, December 13 at 7:00 p.m. in the sanctuary. Prepare yourself for the celebration of Christmas by joining us!

**Festival of Lessons and Carols**

The Manistique Ministerial Association’s Festival of Lessons and Carols will be at St. Francis DeSales Church on December 10 at 3:00 p.m.

**Blue Christmas**

A Blue Christmas (also called the Longest Night) Service will be held on Wednesday, December 20 at 7:00 p.m. at St. Alban’s Episcopal Church.

Blue Christmas is a day in the Advent season marking the longest night of the year. Many churches hold a service to honor people who have lost loved ones and are experiencing grief during the holiday season.

Zion is holding this service in conjunction with St. Alban’s. Refreshments will be served following the service.

**Christmas Services**

Christmas Eve is on a Sunday this year. The Saturday service will celebrate Advent 4 during worship.

The Sunday morning service at 10:30 a.m. will also be celebrating Advent 4. There will be ONE Christmas Eve service at 4:00 p.m.

**Christmas Caroling**

Join us for Christmas Caroling on Sunday, December 17 at 4:00 p.m. We will meet in Augustana Hall and head out to sing for homebound members and for residents of Medicare and Woodland. A light supper will be provided after caroling.

**Christmas Tree**

Calling all people who love to climb and decorate! The Christmas tree will go up on December 17 immediately following worship. Lunch will be provided for all workers.

**December Noisy Offering**

The November Noisy Offeringof $52.35 was given to the Manistique Ministerial Association. December’s Noisy Offering will go to the Schoolcraft County Community Foundation.

**GLEE Christmas Concert**

Manistique High School Glee will present their Christmas Concert in the Frederickson Auditorium on December 9 at 6:00 p.m. and December 10 at 5:00 p.m. Admission is $5 for adults, $3 for students and teachers and children under 5 are free.

**Soup with the Saints**

Thank you to everyone who joined us for soup, sandwiches and extra delicious desserts! As always, our cooks outdid themselves!

**Women’s Circles**

If you are interested in joining one of our women’s circles for Bible study, work projects and fun, please contact the church office or the following group leaders for more information:

 Sarah Circle – Elizabeth Macklem

 Joy Circle – Bonnie Groh

 Hope Circle – Sheila Clark or Julie Gauthier

The **Sarah Circle** will meet on Monday, December 4 at 1:00 p.m. in Augustana Hall.

The **Joy Circle** will not be meeting in December.

**Backpack Buddies**

The Backpack Buddies program will be distributing food bags on Thursday, December 28. All children ages 0-18, are eligible to receive food. Please pass the word!

Monetary donations or donations of food are always needed!

Thank you to the Manistique Ministerial Association for their recent donation of $1,000 to the Backpack program!

**Home Communion**

If someone in your family is unable to attend church and would like to receive communion, please call the church office (906-341-5427). Thank you to Lila Panek and Linda Mason who provide this ministry to our members.

Church Attendance Report

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Saturday** | **Sunday** | **Zoom** |
|  **November 4/5** | 14 | 50 | 5 |
| **November 11/12** | 8 | 40 | 5 |
| **November 18/19** | 11 | 48 | 4 |
| **November 25/26** | 12 | 37 | 3 |

**Thanksgiving Baskets**

Thank you to everyone who donated items for Thanksgiving baskets. We were able to fill six baskets for families in our community.

**Augustana Hall Roof**

The end is in sight! The remaining balance of the metal roof installed on Augustana Hall is $4,119.26. Thank you for your generosity in helping pay this debt.

**Stewardship Drive**

Thanks for returning your pledge card during our Fall Stewardship Drive. Fifty families/individuals pledged $101.142.00! If you have not yet returned your card, there is still time! The Stewardship Committee will begin their budget work soon.

**Sign-Up Sheets**

Sign-up sheet for Altar flowers, Bulletin, Bread & Wine, Coffee Hours and offering counters have been posted for 2024. You will find the sheets on the bulletin board in Augustana Hall.

If you would like to donate a poinsettia for our Christmas services, please fill out this form and send/drop it off at the church office by December 11th.

**Poinsettia Order Form**

Giver \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

In Honor of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

In Memory of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| DONATION OF $\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_(any amount)Donations to the Floral Fund will support the beautification of the sanctuary and narthex throughout the church year. | PLANT TO PURCHASE AND TAKE HOME\_\_\_\_\_\_Poinsettia(s)$12.00 eachTOTAL $\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ |

All orders are due in the church office by Monday, December 11th.

**Lector**

**Those Who Serve in December**

December 3 – Ruth Jones

December 10 – Jim Russey

December 17 – Andrew Mason

December 24 – Brian Nelson (am), Chris Cartland (pm)

December 31 – Christmas Carol Service

**Ushers**

 Ken Groh and Linda Levin

**Altar Flowers**

December 3 –

December 10 –

December 17 –

December 24 – Chris and Gayle Cartland

December 31 – Naomi Fletcher

**Bulletin Bread and Wine**

December 3 –

December 10 – Linda Levin

December 17 –

December 24 – Lois Bentley

December 31 –

**Acolyte**

December 3 –

December 10 – Michael Lamb

 December 17 – Kristin Lamb

December 24 – Nicholas Gauthier

December 31 –

**Communion Assistant**

December 3 – Linda Mason

December 10 – Sheila Clark

December 17 – Kim Lamb

December 24 – Julie Gauthier

December 31 – Linda Levin

**Counters**

Kay MacGregor and Linda Levin



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