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# *The Contact*

*December 2004*

**Pastor Paul D. Ostrem**  
**Cheryl Hollich—Lay Associate**  
**Katherine Grafft—Missionary to Mexico**  
**Wilma Roach —Secretary**  
**Oscar Alvarez —Custodian**

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## **Worship Schedule**

**Sunday Worship Service 8:00 A.M. & 10:30 A.M.**  
**9:15 A.M. Sunday School**

**Christmas Eve Services**  
**7:30 & 10:30 P.M.**



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Zion Lutheran Church  
PO Box 585  
6th & Sycamore St  
Muscatine, IA 52761  
563-263-5074

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We don't have to wait for very much in our society. We have instant oatmeal, instant coffee, and instant photo developing. Digital cameras even let you see your picture before you print it! Technology has shrunk our sense of time so much that we expect to have everything with a push of a button or a flick of the switch. "Instant access" is a slogan in the business world. Someone wrote in a recent article, "Don't ever touch a newer and faster computer model or you will be ruined. You can put up with any inadequacies in your old computer except the realization that a newer model may be a bit faster."

In this kind of world, Advent is something of a problem. Advent is about expectation. Advent is about waiting. Advent takes its time. There is nothing "instant" about it. Advent is filled with words like "hope", something which has to do with the future and is not fully realized at the moment. Advent has to do with "promise", just God's word that something will happen, no visible guarantees, just words and hints and promises. Advent is filled with phrases like "in the fullness of time". God is not in a hurry. It took thousands of years for the promise of a redeemer to be fulfilled.

So in an instant world, the church in Advent attempts to wait. In worship, we seek to get in touch with the longing which took place not only historically for the people of God as they waited for the coming of Jesus, but the longing we have in our hearts and lives to be touched by the very real presence and power of God, the longing we have to be ultimately released from the grip and the power of sin and death, the longing we have to be made completely new. We try to wait because we know that being made new is not like making instant oatmeal or flicking the light switch. This takes time. God is not in a hurry. We are being made new daily, but the final product is not yet done.

It is not easy to celebrate Advent especially in a month when it seems the wheels of just about everything go into high gear. But I would encourage you to take time to light candles or find a quiet moment to reflect on God's Word and God's promises. God is coming to you this Advent in Jesus your Savior.

Pastor Ostrem

As I drove to the office this morning on a gloomy, drizzling day, I noticed two children on their way to school. They were dressed in hooded coats. Not surprising for the day. Then I noticed that one child was holding onto the others hood and walking behind him. From my observation, it wasn't a silly game but a serious case of leading.

What popped into my head was the Bible verse, "let the little children come to me...for it is to such as these that the kingdom belongs." (Mark 10:14) This is the time of year when we are indeed led by children. We can all too often get so involved in the details of "getting ready" and frenzied gift-finding, that we forget the big picture of Christmas. That's why we are given the gift of Advent. The church calendar gives us a time to get ready.

The Sunday School Christmas program this year is "O Christmas Tree: Reveal to Us the Savior." Each Sunday School class will be involved in introducing a different tree. The trees tell the story of God's promise and love despite our sin. That steadfast love is manifest in the birth of our Savior and later, in the death of Christ for us. The program will emphasize the connection of Christmas and Easter.

In connection with the Christmas Program, there will be a devotional available to use while we wait for the birth of Jesus. Each week, through the use of RAP (RAP is Read, Activities, Pray), families will be able to look at the trees of the program and prepare together. All ages can be involved in this "getting ready."

It is my sincere wish for all of you that your Christmas will be a time when you experience the joy of celebrating the birth of Jesus. A very Blessed Christmas to you and yours! Thank you for including me in your Zion family.

Blessings, Cheryl

## PRAYER CORNER

*"Let us pray for the whole people of God in Christ Jesus and for all people according to their needs."*

### THOSE HOSPITALIZED & THOSE WHO HAVE REQUESTED OUR CONTINUED PRAYERS:

Tim Stange Karen Padgett Betty Miller  
Lisa (Frieden) Dowell Art Miller Maureen Johnson  
Irma Bender Emmert Heitmann Pat Tober  
Elaine Heitmann Earlene Rueckert

### For those who lost loved ones:

the family of Mae Mark

the family of Kyle Grady (fiancé of Thresa VanWey)

### Other Special Needs:

- 1) Pray for the hungry and the homeless throughout the world and for those for whom the cold weather will present special challenges and danger.
- 2) Pray for our missionary to Mexico, Katherine Grafft; our Bishops, Mark and Philip, and all who serve the Church.
- 3) Pray for our nation and its leaders, for peace in our world, an end to all conflicts, and for all those who serve our nation on foreign soil.
- 4) Give thanks for Christ's presence in our world and for the joy of the Advent and Christmas season.
- 5) Pray for safe travel for those who travel during the holidays.
- 6) Pray for the work of our local food pantry, MCSA and the homeless shelter, the Almoners' Fund, Lutheran Services in Iowa, and Lutheran Homes.
- 7) Pray for the work of our nominating committee.

*Happy Holidays!*

Faith and works are like the light and heat of a candle; they cannot be separated.

—Joseph Beaumont



The Fellowship Committee invites you to express your warmest wishes to the following members of Zion who celebrate their 80th or older birthday this month:

### HAPPY BIRTHDAY WISHES TO

*LOUISE HAVEMANN	DECEMBER 4
ANITA DAVIS	DECEMBER 9
RUTH UMBANHOWER	DECEMBER 11
HENRIETTA BISHOP	DECEMBER 22
SHIRLEY STANGE	DECEMBER 23
*FLORENCE NABER	DECEMBER 25

\*DENOTES 90 + YEARS



*"...you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger."*

Luke 2:12

## Year-end Contributions

Financial contributions to Zion must be in to the church office by 10:00 AM on December 31 to be included with the financial records for 2004. Thank you to all for your generous support of the congregation this past year!

# Thank You!

Dear Friends,  
We thank you so much for the many desserts you donated to MCSA last week. Our residents were sure tickled to get homemade sweets!

With appreciation,  
Sister Irma Ries  
MCSA

Thank you to Pastor Paul, Cheryl, and the many members of Zion for the birthday cards and well wishes on my birthday.

Arlene Erickson

Thank you to my Zion friends for the beautiful cards, floral arrangements, and memorials received at Mae's passing. To Pastor Paul and Cheryl for your thoughtfulness and prayers offered at the hospital and nursing home and to the ladies service group for the luncheon. Your kindness will always be remembered.

Bill Mark

Thanks to all my Zion friends for all the wonderful birthday cards I received. I enjoyed reading them. God bless each of you.

Ellen Tietje

Thank you for your love and care during my recent surgery and recovery.

June Pries

I want to say thank you for coming to my beautiful open house and for all the cards, red roses, phone call and piano players. I also wish to thank the ladies from the service group that helped in the kitchen. Thank you.

Mildred Knause

Thank you to Richard Stange for taking this year's Confirmation pictures. It was very appreciated.

Thank you for your generous support of the Soup & Pie Supper with donations of food and help.

Zion's Youth Group

## BLOOD DRIVE

MONDAY  
DECEMBER 6, 2004



December 6 will be the next Blood Drive and we need your support if you are able to donate. You will be contacted if you have previously donated, but we always need new donors to replace those who become unable to donate. It's an easy way to provide someone with some life saving blood and it is actually good for an individual to donate their blood occasionally. On Sunday, December 5, there will be someone after the services to assist you with a time to donate or call Nancy Tietje at 263-0032 for an available time.

"PEACE BE  WITHIN YOU."  
Psalm 122:8

  
*Anniversaries*  
*this*  
*Month*

**50+ YEARS**

Marlin & Evelyn Schauland  
December 11, 1943

Mike & Viola Jensen  
December 24, 1937

Art & Betty Miller  
December 21, 1947

George & Wanda Blackwood  
December 28, 1947

Ivan & Gertrude Day  
December 29, 1951

# Financial Report

If you would like to see the full report as the finance committee and council sees it and reviews it each month, please call or stop in the church office and we will gladly share it.

## ZLC Monthly Financial Update

	October, 2004	10/12 Year	Year-to-Date
<b>Income</b>	Actual	Budget	Difference
Budgeted Income	\$ 236,994	\$ 241,750	\$ (4,756)
Unbudgeted Income	\$ 16,382	\$ -	\$ 16,382
Total Income	\$ 253,377	\$ 241,750	\$ 11,627
<b>Expenses</b>			
Budgeted Expenses	\$ 237,487	\$ 241,750	\$ (4,263)
Unbudgeted Expenses	\$ 13,462	\$ -	\$ 13,462
Total Expenses	\$ 250,949	\$ 241,750	\$ 9,199
<b>Income - Expenses</b>	\$ 2,428	\$ -	\$ 2,428
<b>Fund Balances</b>			
Current Fund	\$ 24,949		
Memorial Fund	\$ 3,007		
Building Fund	\$ 15,238		
Gateway Apartments	\$ 26,730		



—The “flower chart” for 2005 is now posted on the bulletin board by the nursery. If you would like to sponsor the flowers on the altar for a given Sunday, please sign up.

—If you have an e-mail address and would share it with us we would appreciate it. We are building our computer address list and will allow us to contact you in other ways. Thank you.



## World Hunger

Are there people on your Christmas list who have everything they need and would be happy to be honored by a contribution in their name to World Hunger? We have cards which can be given to folks you may wish to honor in this way. Gifts to World Hunger can be directed through Zion.

## Supper Club

Supper Club will not meet but everyone is urged to go Christmas caroling Sunday, December 19th. We will meet at the church at 4:00 P.M. and return to the church for a chili supper. Come join us in song for a fun evening of holiday singing.



## Poinsettias

We invite you to purchase a poinsettia in honor or memory of a loved one. If you wish to purchase a seasonal flower, the envelopes are located in the Narthex. There is a line on the envelope if you would like to designate a gift to World Hunger. We will be purchasing the plants from Garrison's in Wilton, and the cost will be \$7.50 for each

## ZLCW

ZLCW held their General Meeting on November 8, 2004. The following women were elected and installed at the meeting by Cheryl Hollich.

Cheryl Jacobsen—President  
 Pat Tober—Secretary  
 Lee Denker—Treasurer  
 RoseMarie Doyle—Missions

The New officers will take over their jobs on January 1, 2005. Please feel free to contact them if you have any questions in the future.

December 14	Group 4 Potluck at Bertha Toyne's
December 16	Group 5 Christmas Party at Geneva Country Club at 6:30 P.M.
December	Group 6 No meeting

- - *from the Stewardship  
Committee*

“Gifts Are to Be Shared” (a devotion from the book, Diamonds in the Dust, by Joni Eareckson Tada)

“Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others, faithfully administering God’s grace in its various forms.” 1 Peter 4:10

So what’s your gift? Before you give me a theological list or a shrug of the shoulder, let me share a story with you about a six-year-old little girl. Her daddy serves as a pastor in the United States. Daddy was busy studying at the dining room table for a sermon the next morning on the chapter from which today’s verse is taken. He looked up to see Bethany watching him with a smile.

“What are you doing, Daddy?”

“I’m studying for tomorrow’s sermon.”

“Well, when you get done, I’ll give you a big hug.”

With that Bethany wrapped her arms around her father and squeezed the biggest hug she could muster. “Why did you do that?” my friend responded, “I’m not finished yet.” “I know,” said Bethany, “I just wanted you to know what it would feel like when you do get done.”

What a wonderful picture this little girl provided for her father’s sermon the next day. “Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others.” The pastor was employing his gift when he sat down to study and stood up to preach. But do you see the employment of yet another gift? Bethany put her arms to work and exhorted her father with comfort and the promise of reward. Now that’s what I call teamwork!

Our time here is so short. Our chances to put our gifts to work are fleeing fast. The question of the day is not how to find your gift. It’s where and when you use it. Only in that way will we “faithfully ministering God’s grace.”

Lord, I know my gift. Let me use it. Place me into paths of oncoming problems or new opportunities that I might exhibit the manifold grace of God. In Jesus’ name I pray. Amen.

## Lutheran World Relief Report

Twyla & Jeff Subbert delivered the boxes from Zion to Cedar Rapids for Lutheran World Relief :

School Kits	-	2003 - 24
		2004 - <u>28</u>
Total for 2 years	=	52
		4 boxes @115 lbs.

Quilts 15 quilts in 3 Boxes @64.5 lbs

Soap 3 boxes sent @53 lbs.

Sweaters 4 boxes sent @63 lbs.

TOTAL SENT WAS 14 BOXES @277.5 LBS.

There was a \$20.00 donation given to help with shipping costs. The Spring Lutheran World Relief pick-up will be on April 16, 2005.

### She Was Right After All



Small children were putting on a Christmas program. The entertainment proceeded without a hitch until near the end of the event. Each child held a large card with a letter printed on it. The letters were turned away from the audience. One by one each child turned the card he or she was holding to reveal a letter. First was the child with the “C,” then the one with the “H,” and so on down the line. When it was time for a little girl to hold up the “M,” it was upside down. The “M” appeared to be a “W.”

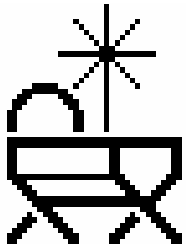
Quiet giggles rippled through the audience. Nevertheless, the kids continued one by one to reveal the rest of the cards. When the last card was shown, the cards were meant to spell out:

**CHRISTMASLOVE**

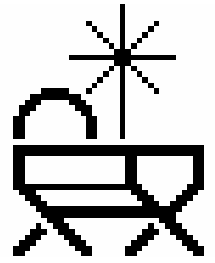
Instead, they spelled:

**CHRISTWASLOVE**

What first seemed to be a mistake wasn’t one after all.



## **ADVENT AND CHRISTMAS AT ZION**



### **SUNDAY SCHOOL CHRISTMAS PROGRAM**

The theme for our 2004 Sunday School Christmas program is “O Christmas Tree, Reveal to Us the Savior”. **The program will be on Sunday, December 12, at 4:00 PM.** Again this year, our children will creatively share with us the Christmas gospel.

### **ADVENT CAROL SERVICE**

One of the highlights of December at Zion is the Advent Carol Service lead by our choirs. The Senior, Youth, Cherub, and two Bell Choirs will lead this service of readings, carols, anthems, and sermon on **Sunday, December 19, at 8:00 and 10:30 AM.** Our theme this year is “Light Everlasting”.

### **FAMILY CHRISTMAS CAROLING**

Our fellowship committee is sponsoring an evening of Christmas Caroling to our shut-in’s and some of our senior members. We will divide into groups and canvass the community stopping along the way to share a Christmas greeting in song. Then we will gather back at the church for a chili supper. **This is a great family activity** and will be held on Sunday, December 19. We will gather at 4:00 PM in the fellowship hall to divide into groups.

### **CHRISTMAS EVE CANDLELIGHT COMMUNION**

One of the most beautiful services of the year at Zion is the Christmas Eve Candlelight Service with Holy Communion. Nearly identical services at 7:30 and 10:30 PM will include carols, readings, anthems, Bell Choir, communion, and candle lighting. The Senior Choir will sing at 10:30 and there will be soloists and small groups singing at 7:30. Bring your family and friends.

There will not be a Christmas Day service this year.

*The Advent and Christmas season is a marvelous time of the year for Christian people. Join us for worship each week and for the special services we offer. Bring family and friends. Invite people who may not be connected with a congregation to worship with you.*

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## CHRISTMAS SPIRIT

There is still an opportunity to share your Christmas spirit with the *Christmas Star Program* families sponsored by Volunteers and Information. Check the tree in the foyer of the church. These donations need to be back to Zion by December 5th.



Thank you for your support and may your holidays be filled with blessings.



*A retreat for women:*

Talented, Tired, Beautiful Feet...  
February 4-5, 2005  
Benet House Retreat Center,  
Rock Island

This retreat will take you on a spiritual journey "on foot" to discover and celebrate your unique talents and put your best foot forward to serve God and others.

- Retreat leaders: Pr. Kathy Gerking & Cheryl Hollich
  - We will leave Zion (carpool) at 6:00 PM and return about 4:00 PM
  - Space is limited to 22 people-- so register early.
- Cost: \$40/person (2 per room)

There will be time for creativity, group interaction, small group time, a guided meditation, fellowship and fun. More details will be available on the registration form.

See Cheryl for a registration form.



"Because they didn't have e-mail then.  
That's why God sent an angel  
to proclaim the baby's birth."

## JOSEPH & THE AMAZING TECHNICOLOR DREAMCOAT

The Confirmation Class will be attending the Sunday, January 16, 2005 performance of *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat* at Circa 21, 1828 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue, Rock Island, IL. The doors open at 3:45 PM and the performance begins at 5:45 PM. We will be done at 7:30 PM. Group rates are:

Students (18 & under)--\$20  
Adults--\$36.50

That includes the buffet, show, tax and gratuity.

Everyone in the congregation is welcome to attend. Please give your check to Cheryl Hollich. A sign-up sheet is located on the Youth Bulletin Board.

**Deadline: December 10.**

*Sower's ~ ~ ~*

*~ ~ will meet December 13th,  
6:30 p.m. at June Pries' home.  
Come and join us for fellowship  
while we stitch.*

# Youth News

**Sunday,  
December 19  
4:00 PM  
Christmas Caroling**



- Meet at the church & we will go to visit Zion's shut-ins and sing Christmas carols to them. (books provided and no previous experience needed!)
- We will return to the church for chili and hot chocolate and be done by 7:00 PM. Bring a flashlight and dress for the weather.

## **JOSEPH AND THE AMAZING TECHNICOLOR DREAMCOAT**

**Sunday, January 16  
Circa 21, Rock Island  
Meet at 3:15 PM at Zion**

This show is a classic from Andrew Lloyd Weber. Group rate for youth 18 & under is \$20.00 Adults: \$36.50. That includes the show, buffet, tax, and gratuity. *Checks and reservations due by December 10.*

## **SUNDAY SCHOOL TREE**

Once again the Sunday School will be placing a Christmas Tree in the downstairs hallway but the decorations will be hats, mittens, and scarves. The hats, mittens, and scarves will then be given to our local Lutheran Services in Iowa for the needs of children and families. Just place your donation on the tree and watch it show the "warmth" of Christmas. Deadline: January 16, 2005.

O Christmas Tree:

Reveal to us the Savior



Sunday School Christmas  
Program—Sunday,  
December 12, 4:00 PM

Advent is a time of "getting ready." The Sunday School classes of Zion will assist in your preparations by presenting the Christmas story through the roles of trees. Join them as they tell about the Tree of Wisdom, the Tree of Hope, the Tree of Love, the Tree of Joy, and the Tree of Life. An offering will be collected for MCSA (Muscatine Center for Social Action).

There will be a time for cookies and punch after the program.

A series of Children's sermons and family devotionals will be connected to the program theme and will also assist in our preparation time.

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## LAY READERS

		<b>8:00 A.M.</b>	<b>10:30 A.M.</b>
<b>December</b>	5	Chuck Hoffman	Fran Carter
	12	Jurgen Boche	Deb Hughes
	19	Advent Carol Service	Advent Carol Service
	26	Paul Ruden	Dyann Roby

## GREETERS

		<b>8:00 A.M.</b>	<b>10:30 A.M.</b>
<b>December</b>	5	Pat Minder & Jane Sauer	Cynthia Maeglin
	12	Mary Koester	Elsie Bieri
	19	Scott & Michele Richardson & family	Mike & Chris Owen
	26	Joan Jensen	Nancy Keel

<b><u>Christmas Eve Services</u></b>		<b>7:30 P.M.</b>	<b>10:30 A.M.</b>
	24	Lanny & Rachel Creamer & family	Dave & Terri Hanson & family

## **HOSPITALITY SERVERS**

<b>December</b>	5	No Hospitality
	12	Parish Ed Committee
	19	No Hospitality
	26	Stewardship Committee

## **AMBASSADORS**

5	Kent & Mary Heckman
12	Margaret Wiesner & Helen Colony
19	Dick & Evie Marr
26	No Ambassador

## USHERS

<b>December</b>		<b>8:00 A.M.</b>		<b>10:30 A.M.</b>	
		<b>Richard Jacobsen</b>	<b>Mark Evans</b>	<b>Daryl Smock</b>	<b>Mark Frye</b>
		Wilmer Denker	Alan Lange	Ron Subbert	Anil Varghese
				Mike Carter	

## ACOLYTES

<b>December</b>		<b>8:00 A.M.</b>		<b>10:30 A.M.</b>
	5	Meredith Baird & Kirsten Schneider	5	Karly McDonald & Justin Honeyman
	12	Molly White & Brandon Bass	12	Mario Alvarez & Chelsea Echelbarger
	19	Molly White, Kathleen Pusateri Walker VanWey	19	Sara Subbert, Meredith Baird & Halston Phelps
	26	Marissa Toyne & Meredith Baird	26	Karly McDonald & Mario Alvarez

**We will need acolytes and cross bearers for the Christmas Eve Services.  
Contact Pastor Ostrem if you can help.**

## ALTAR GUILD

Loanne Worth  
Shirley Stange

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## DECEMBER 2004

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<b>28</b> Youth Book Sale <b>8:00 AM</b> Worship Service <b>9:15 AM</b> Sunday School/Adult Study <b>10:30 AM</b> Worship Service <b>6:00 PM</b> Group 6	<b>29</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>1</b> <b>5:15 PM</b> Youth Choir <b>6:00 PM</b> Cherub Choir <b>6:00 PM</b> Confirmation Class <b>6:15 PM</b> Bell Choir <b>7:00 PM</b> Senior Choir	<b>2</b> <b>5:30 PM</b> Worship Committee <b>6:00 PM</b> Gateway Task Force <b>7:00 PM</b> Social Ministry Committee	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>5</b> <b>8:00 AM</b> Worship Service with Holy Communion <b>9:15 AM</b> Sunday School/Adult Study <b>10:30 AM</b> Worship Service With Holy Communion <b>5:00 PM</b> Youth Committee	<b>6</b> Blood Drive 	<b>7</b> <b>5:45 PM</b> Memorial Committee <b>6:15 PM</b> Fellowship Committee <b>7:00 PM</b> Evangelism Committee <b>8:00 PM</b> Finance Committee	<b>8</b> <b>5:15 PM</b> Youth Choir <b>6:00 PM</b> Cherub Choir <b>6:00 PM</b> Confirmation Class <b>6:15 PM</b> Bell Choir <b>7:00 PM</b> Senior Choir	<b>9</b> <b>6:30 PM</b> Executive Council <b>7:15 PM</b> Church Council	<b>10</b> <b>7:00 PM</b> MCC Variety Singers - Winter Concert at Zion	<b>11</b>
 <b>8:00 AM</b> Worship Service <b>9:15 AM</b> Sunday School <b>10:30 AM</b> Worship Service <b>4:00 PM</b> Sunday School Christmas Program	<b>13</b> <b>6:30 PM</b> Sower's	<b>14</b> <b>9:00 AM</b> Pastors Conference at Zion <b>12:00 PM</b> Group 4	<b>15</b> <b>5:15 PM</b> Youth Choir <b>6:00 PM</b> Cherub Choir <b>6:00 PM</b> Confirmation Class <b>6:15 PM</b> Bell Choir <b>7:00 PM</b> Senior Choir	<b>16</b> <b>6:30 PM</b> Property Committee <b>7:30 PM</b> Group 5 ZLCW	<b>17</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>19</b> <b>8:00 AM</b> Advent Carol Service <b>9:15 AM</b> Sunday School <b>10:30 AM</b> Advent Carol Service <b>4:00 PM</b> Family Christmas Caroling	<b>20</b> <b>11:00 AM</b> AARP	<b>21</b> <b>5:30 PM</b> Parish Ed. Committee <b>6:30 PM</b> Thrivent Meeting	<b>22</b> <b>7:00 PM</b> Senior Choir	<b>23</b>	<b>24</b> <b>7:30 PM</b> Candlelight Communion Service <b>10:30 PM</b> Candlelight Communion Service	<b>25</b> <b>Christmas Day</b>
 <b>8:00 AM</b> Worship Service <b>10:30 AM</b> Worship Service	<b>27</b> <b>8:00 AM</b> Office Closed <b>9:00 AM</b> Contact Articles	<b>28</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>30</b> <b>9:00 AM</b> <b>Assemble Contact</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>1</b> <b>New Year's Day</b>