

# The Contact December

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## WHY DECEMBER 25<sup>TH</sup> FOR CHRISTMAS DAY?

One very common theory is that Christianity simply adopted pagan festivals and traditions around winter solstice and Sol Invictus (the Unconquered Sun), established by Emperor Aurelian in 274 C.E. Early celebrations of Christmas are thought to have derived from Roman and other European festivals that marked the end of the harvest, and the winter solstice.

However, in about 200 C.E., Tertullian of Carthage calculated that the day of the crucifixion (according to the Gospel of John) was March 25<sup>th</sup> in the Roman calendar. There was a belief in the early church that Jesus died on the same day he was conceived. The Christian celebration of the Annunciation of Our Lord is celebrated on March 25<sup>th</sup>, nine months before December 25<sup>th</sup>, which provides an earlier and different reason for choosing December 25<sup>th</sup> as the date of Jesus' birth. Following Emperor Constantine's legalization of Christianity in the 4<sup>th</sup> century, the Christmas celebration began to deliberately adapt pagan traditions into the Christmas celebration.

**Just a reminder. We have changed our donation memo *from* the food pantry *to* MCSA mid-year. ANY memos for year-end statements will reflect those changes. The food pantry is a part of MCSA.**



**Thank you to Dave and Scott Starkweather for replacing the handrail going up to the balcony!**

## Message from Pastor Willie:

Siblings in Christ – greetings in the name of the one who was, who is, and who is to come, our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. As pastors might joke, a Penitent Advent and Merry Christmas to you all!

In this season of Advent we hear the voice of John the Baptist crying in the wilderness, “Prepare the way of the Lord!” We hear Mary’s song of glory to God for God’s mercy, mighty deeds, and reversal of the order of the world – filling the hungry with good things and the rich being sent away empty, casting down the mighty from their thrones while lifting up the lowly. Advent calls us to anticipate and expect something entirely new to happen, keeping awake as we wait for the return of the Lord.

Advent also prepares us for the celebration of Christmas, remembering and celebrating the birth of baby Jesus as God’s kingdom broke into the world for the salvation of all. This is a season of looking in the review mirror as we celebrate and at the same time, looking forward to the new thing(s) God is up to in our lives, our community, the congregation of Zion Lutheran Church, and the world.

As you prepare to celebrate Christmas, I invite you to join us for worship on these Sundays of Advent and for Christmas Eve worship at 4 p.m. and 9 p.m. I also encourage you to reflect on the past year.

How has God been at work in your life in ways that you can point to as God’s work?

How can you give thanks for all that God has done for you in the past year?

How is God speaking to you in ways that encourage you to join in the new thing(s) that God is up to?

What do you look forward to in serving with God’s ministry at Zion Lutheran Church in the coming year?

I believe that God is always up to something new – always stirring us up, challenging us, and reforming us through the power of the Holy Spirit. Be open to listening to the Spirit in the coming year, because God is continually inviting, encouraging, and calling us to serve God and our neighbor in ways that we have done for years and ways that we have never done before.

Have blessed and reflective Advent and a Merry Christmas!

Peace in Christ,

Pastor Willie Rosin

*Peace*  
On Earth



*Christ  
the saviour is  
born*

MERRY CHRISTMAS!

WE INVITE YOU TO JOIN US AS WE SING, WORSHIP AND CELEBRATE CHRIST'S BIRTH!

Experience the magic of Christmas Eve at our Candlelight Services, where families unite in the warmth of Christ's love as we await His miraculous birth. Join us at 4 PM or 9 PM for an enchanting evening filled with heartfelt worship, joyous music, and a sense of community that will uplift your spirit. Let's come together to celebrate this beautiful season of hope and love, that will leave you feeling blessed and inspired!

Christmas Eve 4PM & 9PM



FAITH. FAMILY. COMMUNITY.

**Birthdays Over 80**

- \* 80-89 Years Young
- \*\* 90-99 Years Young
- \*\*\*100 Years Young

**December Birthdays:**

- \*Margaret Tiecke 12/07
- \*\*Barbara Sabbath 12/13
- \*Bob Danner 12/15
- \*Carol Christophersen 12/21
- \*\*Ruth Starkweather 12/24
- \*Richard Marr 12/29
- \*Robert Martz 12/30

**December Birthdays:**

- Jade McCleary 12/02
- Robert Rusch 12/05
- Lydia Rosin 12/06
- Evan Gillespie 12/12
- David Starkweather 12/17
- Darion Subbert 12/17
- Casey Cantrell 12/23
- Amy Zybarth 12/23

**Lunch Bunch**

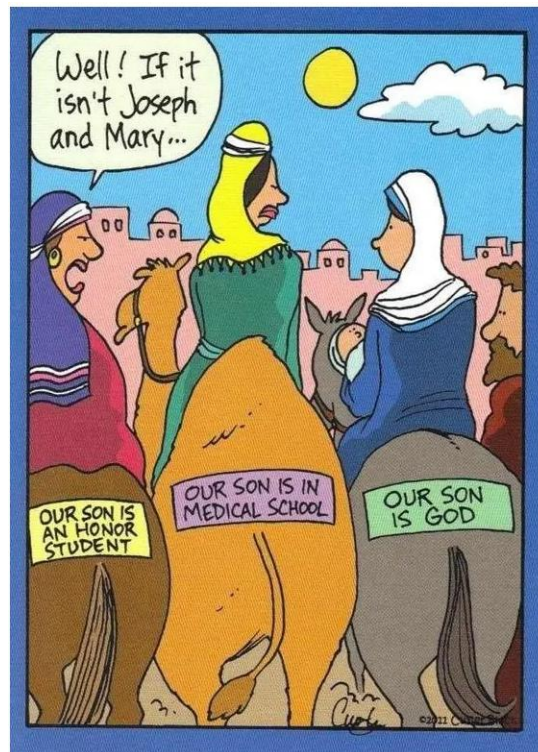
- Dec 12 11:30 @ Pizza Ranch**
- Jan 9 11:30 @ Family Restaurant**

**Title**

Total Offering Received For Week 12/1/24	\$4021
YTD Offering Received	\$190297
Remaining Weekly Offering Required to meet Weekly Budget	\$20083

YTD Food Pantry	YTD Laundry Love	YTD Quarters for Hunger
\$1264.05	\$831	\$507.25
Synod Ben/Outreach	World Relief	SHP
\$509	\$433	\$803.30

**Funny for Thought**



FAITH. FAMILY. COMMUNITY.

### **Birthdays Over 80**

- \* 80-89 Years Young
- \*\* 90-99 Years Young
- \*\*\*100 Years Young

### **January Birthdays**

\*Nancy Tietge 01/24

### **January Birthdays**

Mike Batenhorst 01/03  
Clayton Smith 01/03  
Charley McCleary 01/05  
Matthew Richardson 01/14  
Dyann Roby 01/15  
Rachel Creamer 01/19  
Jan Boche 01/21  
Judith Vargus 01/21  
Luke Kiddoo 01/23  
Bob Vargus 01/24  
Sarah Evans 01/27  
Justin Dornbush 01/28  
Tasha Cantrell 01/30

### **Contact News**

All newsletter information and articles for the next Contact are due by the end of day on

**January 3**

### **Upcoming Meetings:**

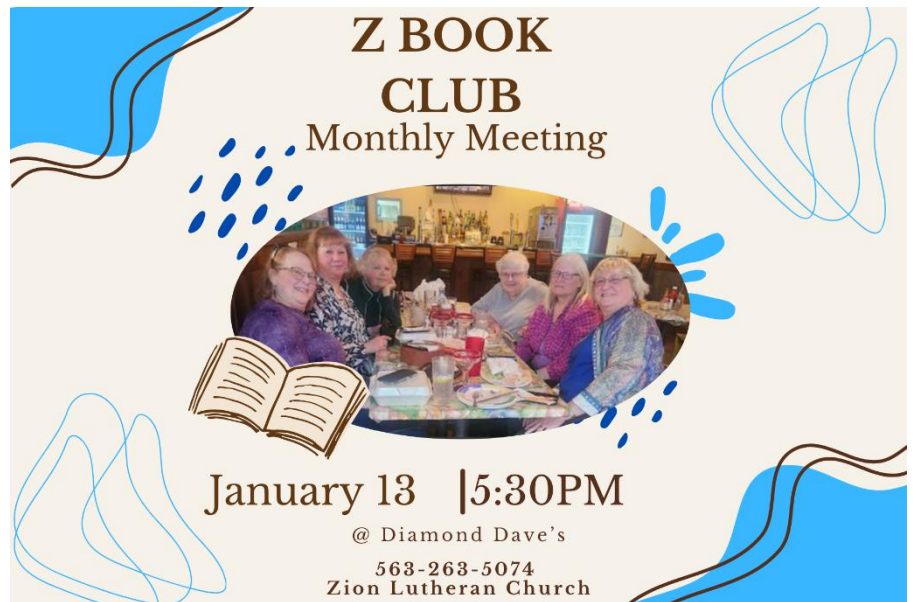
#### **Group 5**

**Dec 17** 1:00 MFR


**Jan 21** 1:00 MFR

#### **Joy Circle.**

**Jan 23** 6:30 p.m.



**Z BOOK CLUB**  
Monthly Meeting



**January 13 | 5:30PM**  
@ Diamond Dave's  
563-263-5074  
Zion Lutheran Church

**The Girl in the Letter: A home for unwed mothers; a heartbreaking secret in this historical fiction bestseller inspired by true events by Emily Gunnis 99 cents with Kindle Unlimited.**

**1956. When Ivy Jenkins falls pregnant she is sent in disgrace to St Margaret's, a dark, brooding house for unmarried mothers. Her baby is adopted against her will. Ivy will never leave.**

**Present day. Samantha Harper is a journalist desperate for a break. When she stumbles on a letter from the past, the contents shock and move her. The letter is from a young mother, begging to be rescued from St Margaret's. Before it is too late.**

**Sam is pulled into the tragic story and discovers a spate of unexplained deaths surrounding the woman and her child. With St Margaret's set for demolition, Sam has only hours to piece together a sixty-year-old mystery before the truth, which lies disturbingly close to home, is lost for ever...Read her letter. Remember her story...**

FAITH. FAMILY. COMMUNITY.

**December Anniversaries**

Kirk & Kim Sears 12/03

\*\*Sharon & Betsy Martin 12/18

\* 25+

\*\*50+

**January Anniversaries**

\*\*Mary & Ron Knause 1/6

\*Tracy & Gregory Bogart 1/24

**Usher Schedule**

**December**

Jim Haage

Julie Haage

Bill Toyne

Mike Batenhorst

Jackson Evans

**January**

Richard Jacobsen

Rosendo Ramos

Mike Carter

Julie Frye

**Altar Guild:**

Week 1: Richardsons

Week 2: Perishos

Week 3: Pusateris

Week 4: Starkweathers

Sub: Hansons



**YOUTH**  
Giving Tree

You have a chance to help those in need.

Donate new underwear, sweatpants, mittens, gloves, caps or scarves.

**THE TREE WILL REMAIN UP UNTIL JAN 6, 2025**

FAITH. FAMILY. COMMUNITY.

**Reminders:**

**Men's Bible Study** meets every Wednesday morning at 6:30 a.m. at the All American Diner.

**Christians Underground**  
We have an additional Bible study/discussion group opportunity in Muscatine called Christians Underground. Pastor Aleese Kenitzer from Shepherd of the Cross leads this group in discussion about the Revised Common Lectionary texts for the upcoming Sunday. They currently meet weekly on Wednesdays at 12:00 p.m. at Zion Lutheran church for about an hour. This invitation is open to all three ELCA congregations in Muscatine.

**Re:Storied** is a course intended to introduce participants to the whole of the Biblical narrative while also providing opportunities to tangibly practice dwelling in God's Word.

Participants will be encouraged to engage in Bible readings and reflections outside our group time. To share reflections and dive deeper, participants may participate in an optional 30 minute time from 6:00 – 6:30.



**KEEP IN YOUR PRAYERS**

**Please Pray** for Kristy Keith, Butch Doyle, Evelyn Christophersen, Billy Rueckert, Margaret Ames, Linda Brade, Evie Marr, Ralph Buster, Beth Simpson, Karolyn Subbert, Margareta Jansson, Pat Tiecke-Collins & the family and friends of Evelyn Christophersen.



## LSI Article and Story



### **A note from Renee Hardman, President and CEO of Lutheran Services in Iowa:**

Dear friends,

I hope this finds you safe and warm. As I am closing in on my first year as President and CEO at LSI, I am filled with gratitude for our generous donors, dedicated staff members, and kind supporters. Thanks to caring people like you, LSI had another incredible year serving our neighbors. Your donations ensured young parents had access to resources and support. Your in-kind items provided comforting beds for immigrants and refugees to rest upon. Your prayers lifted the spirits of our LSI team members and those we serve. As we enjoy this holiday season, I want to thank you for supporting LSI.

If you would like to serve more neighbors in need, please give at [LSIowa.org/donate](https://LSIowa.org/donate).

Eternally Grateful,

Renee

For more information, please contact Deb Whitford, LSI's Director of Philanthropy and Church Relations, at [Deborah.Whitford@LSIowa.org](mailto:Deborah.Whitford@LSIowa.org) or 563-676-2065.

*LSI is an affiliated social ministry partner of the Iowa congregations of the ELCA (Evangelical Lutheran Church in America) and a member of LSA (Lutheran Services in America). We proudly serve people of all ages, abilities, religions, sexes, gender identities, national origins, ethnicities, races, and sexual orientations. Learn more at [LSIowa.org](https://LSIowa.org) and [facebook.com/LSI.iowa](https://facebook.com/LSI.iowa).*



## Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church BUDGET TO ACTUAL - Unified Fund Month Ended November 30, 2024

	Unified Fund Nov 30, 2024 Actual	Unified Fund Nov 30, 2024 Budget	% of Budget	Unified Fund 11 months ended Nov 30, 2024 Actual	Unified Fund 12 months ended Dec 31, 2024 Budget	% of Annual Budget
<b>Revenue</b>						
Offering	\$ 18,548	\$ 23,984	77%	\$ 187,022	\$ 291,311	64%
Other Budgeted Income	3	500	1%	2,272	7,250	31%
Parsonage Fund Income	-	2,083	0%	18,750	25,000	75%
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>18,551</b>	<b>26,568</b>	<b>70%</b>	<b>208,044</b>	<b>323,561</b>	<b>64%</b>
<b>Operating Expenses</b>						
Staffing Expenses	16,562	17,418	95%	184,632	209,017	88%
Property & Office Expenses	3,339	5,083	66%	47,779	61,000	78%
Program Expenses	324	646	50%	6,253	9,000	69%
Benevolences	1,779	2,362	75%	19,245	29,544	65%
<b>Total Operating Expenses</b>	<b>22,005</b>	<b>25,509</b>	<b>86%</b>	<b>257,908</b>	<b>308,561</b>	<b>84%</b>
<b>Operating Income (Loss)</b>	<b>(3,454)</b>	<b>1,058</b>	<b>-326%</b>	<b>(49,864)</b>	<b>15,000</b>	<b>-332%</b>
<b>Other Income</b>						
Use of Sanctuary	-	-		250	-	
Unbudgeted Income	200	-		2,755	-	
<b>Total Other Income</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>-</b>		<b>3,005</b>	<b>-</b>	
<b>Other Expenses</b>						
Unbudgeted Expenses	26	-		1,039	-	
<b>Total Other Expenses</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>-</b>		<b>1,039</b>	<b>-</b>	
<b>Net Income (Loss)</b>	<b>(3,279)</b>	<b>1,058</b>	<b>-310%</b>	<b>(47,898)</b>	<b>15,000</b>	<b>-319%</b>
<b>Fund Balances</b>						
	<b>As of Nov 30, 2024</b>					
Unified Fund	\$ 138,371					
Building Fund	93,780					
Memorial Fund	32,624					
Fellowship Hall Fund	4,022					
Youth Fund	5,235					
Designated Benevolences	1,452					
Quilters Fund	2,868					
Innovative Ministries Fund	188,155					
Flower Fund	632					
Pastor's Discretionary Fund	400					
<b>Total Fund Balances</b>	<b>\$ 467,539</b>					



# Join us on December 15<sup>th</sup> for the Sunday School Christmas Program



## ~STARRING~

Narrator 1 Phoebe.

Narrator 2 Maura G.

Mary (with doll Jesus) Grace G. Joseph. Sawyer D.

Innkeepers (2) Lydia R. Josephine G (Jo Jo)

Shepherd Group Paisley D. Morgan S. Bobby S.

Sheep Group Tucker D. Auggie. Jonas. Ezra

Leader Angels (2) Maura G. Evie E.

Angel Group Abner R.

Stage Hands Briar E., Emma





# 2024 . DECEMBER

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
<b>1 Q FOR HUNGER</b> 9:00 AM WORSHIP 10:15 FELLOWSHIP 5:00 PM AA 6:00 PM RE-STORIED BIBLE STUDY	<b>2 PASTOR'S SABBATH</b> 6:30 PM AA 6:30 GROUP 6 CHRISTMAS PARTY	<b>3</b> LUNCH TIME POTLUCK 7:00 PM SCOUTS	<b>4</b> 6:30 AM MEN'S BIBLE 12:00 CHRISTIANS UNDERGROUND 6:15 PM BELL CHOIR 6:00 P.M. FFN @ GRACE LUTHERAN 6:30 PM AA 7:00 CHOIR	<b>5</b> 6:30 PM ALL COMMITTEE MEETING CONTACT INFO DUE	<b>6</b> 6:30 PM AA	<b>7</b>
<b>8 LAUNDRY LOVE</b> 9:00 AM WORSHIP 5:00 PM AA 6:00 PM WORSHIP	<b>9 PASTOR'S SABBATH</b> 6:30 PM AA	<b>10</b> 1:00 PM MEMORIAL COMMITTEE 7:00 PM SCOUTS	<b>11</b> 6:30 A.M. MEN'S BIBLE 12:00 CHRISTIANS UNDERGROUND 6:00 P.M. FFN @ GRACE LUTHERAN 6:30 PM AA 7:00 PM CHOIR	<b>12</b> 11:30 AM LUNCH BUNCH@ PIZZA RANCH 6:00 PM COUNCIL MEETING	<b>13</b> 6:30 PM AA	<b>14</b>
<b>15 SHP</b> 9:00 AM WORSHIP/CHRISTMAS SUNDAY SCHOOL PROGRAM 10:15 FELLOWSHIP/YOUTH BAKE SALE 5:00 PM AA 6:00 PM RE-STORIED BIBLE STUDY	<b>16 PASTOR'S SABBATH</b> 6:30 PM AA	<b>17</b> 1:00 PM GR 5 MFR 7:00 PM SCOUTS	<b>18</b> 6:30 AM MEN'S BIBLE 12:00 CHRISTIANS UNDERGROUND 6:15 PM BELL CHOIR 5:30 P.M. FFN @ GRACE LUTHERAN 6:30 PM AA 7:00 CHOIR	<b>19</b>	<b>20</b> 6:30 PM AA	<b>21</b>
<b>22 MCSA</b> 9:00 AM WORSHIP 10:15 FELLOWSHIP 5:00 PM AA 6:00 PM WORSHIP	<b>23 PASTOR'S SABBATH</b> 6:30 PM AA	<b>24 CHRISTMAS EVE OFFICE CLOSED</b> 4:00 PM CHRISTMAS EVE CANDLELIGHT SERVICE 9:00 PM CHRISTMAS EVE CANDLELIGHT SERVICE	<b>25 CHRISTMAS DAY OFFICE CLOSED</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>27</b> 6:30 PM AA	<b>28</b>
<b>29</b> 9:00 AM WORSHIP 10:15 FELLOWSHIP 5:00 PM AA	<b>30 PASTOR'S SABBATH</b> 6:30 PM AA	<b>31 NEW YEAR'S EVE</b>	<b>1 NEW YEAR'S DAY OFFICE CLOSED</b>			

# 2025 . JANUARY



SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	
		<b>31 NEW YEAR'S EVE</b>	<b>1 NEW YEAR'S DAY</b> 6:30 PM AA	<b>OFFICE CLOSED</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b> 6:30 PM AA	<b>4</b>
<b>5 QUARTERS FOR HUNGER</b> 9:00 AM WORSHIP 10:15 AM FELLOWSHIP SUNDAY SCHOOL 5:00 PM AA 6:00 PM RE-STORIED BIBLE STUDY	<b>6 PASTOR'S SABBATH</b>  <b>EPIPHANY OF OUR LORD</b> 6:30 PM AA CONTACT INFO DUE	<b>7</b> 7:00 PM SCOUTS	<b>8</b> 6:30 AM MEN'S BIBLE 12:00 CHRISTIANS UNDERGROUND 6:00 PM FFN@ GRACE LUTHERAN 6:15 PM BELL CHOIR 7:00 PM CHOIR 6:30 PM AA	<b>9</b> 11:30 AM LUNCH BUNCH@FAMILY RESTAURANT 6:30 PM ALL COMMITTEE	<b>10</b> 6:30 PM AA	<b>11</b>	
<b>12 BAPTISM OF OUR LORD LAUNDRY LOVE</b> 9:00 AM WORSHIP 10:15 AM FELLOWSHIP SUNDAY SCHOOL 5:00 PM AA 6:00 PM WORSHIP	<b>13 PASTOR'S SABBATH</b> 5:30 PM Z BOOK 6:30 PM AA	<b>14</b> 1:00 PM MEMORIAL COMMITTEE 7:00 PM SCOUTS	<b>15</b> 6:30 AM MEN'S BIBLE 12:00 CHRISTIANS UNDERGROUND 6:00 PM FFN@ GRACE LUTHERAN 6:15 PM BELL CHOIR 7:00 PM CHOIR 6:30 PM AA	<b>16</b> 6:00 PM COUNCIL MEETING	<b>17</b> 6:30 PM AA	<b>18</b>	
<b>19 SHP</b> 9:00 AM WORSHIP 10:15 AM FELLOWSHIP 5:00 PM AA 6:00 PM RE-STORIED BIBLE STUDY	<b>20 PASTOR'S SABBATH</b> 6:30 AA	<b>21</b> 1:00 PM GR 5 MFR 7:00 PM SCOUTS	<b>22</b> 6:30 AM MEN'S BIBLE 12:00 CHRISTIANS UNDERGROUND 6:00 PM FFN@ GRACE LUTHERAN 6:15 PM BELL CHOIR 7:00 PM CHOIR 6:30 PM AA	<b>23</b> 6:30 PM JOY CIRCLE	<b>24</b> 6:30 PM AA	<b>25</b>	
<b>26 MCSA</b> 9:00 AM WORSHIP 10:15 AM FELLOWSHIP <b>10:30 AM CONGREGATIONAL MEETING</b> 5:00 PM AA 6:00 PM WORSHIP	<b>27 PASTOR'S SABBATH</b> 6:30 AA	<b>28</b> 7:00 PM SCOUTS	<b>29</b> 6:30 AM MEN'S BIBLE 12:00 CHRISTIANS UNDERGROUND 6:00 PM FFN@ GRACE LUTHERAN 6:15 PM BELL CHOIR 7:00 PM CHOIR 6:30 PM AA	<b>30</b>	<b>31</b> 6:30 PM AA		