

the herald

NEWS OF ZION LUTHERAN | ANOKA

DECEMBER 2024



ZION
LUTHERAN † ANOKA



Christmas Eve Worship

Candlelight with Communion

12 p.m.; 2 p.m.; 4 p.m.; 10 p.m.

in person and online

BOB-FM 106.1 Radio Broadcast 4 p.m. and 10 p.m.

Cable TV Channel 6 Broadcast 5 p.m.

Nursery Care: 12 p.m.; 2 p.m.; 4 p.m.

Christmas Day Worship

with Communion

10 a.m. in person

WORSHIP SCHEDULE

In-Person Worship

5 pm (Sat)

8, 9 & 11 am (Sun)

Livestream Worship

9 & 11 am (Sun)

Cable TV

10 am & 5 pm (Sun)

Radio Broadcast

106.1 (BOB-FM)

9:10 am (Sun)

Scripture Readings

Nov 30-Dec 1

Colossians 1:15-20

December 7-8

Luke 1:26-38

December 14-15

Micah 5:2-5a

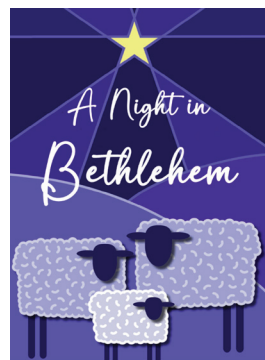
December 21-22

Luke 19:29-40

December 28-29

Luke 2:41-52

Experience "A Night in Bethlehem"



This popular congregational event is back on Sunday, December 8 from 10-11 a.m. **Visit** the village where Jesus was born...**Pet real** nativity animals as you arrive...**Get counted** for the census...**"Help out"** village craftspeople...**Sample** the foods of David's city...**Meet** the shepherds and sing with angels...**Stop** for a family photo...**And best of all,** find the stable and visit Mary, Joseph and the baby Jesus!

If you would like to help, contact Ann Campbell

acampbell@zionanoka.org.



a message from your pastors



Dear Friends in Christ,

As we approach the Christmas season, we often hear the familiar refrain that this time of year is meant to be "joyful" and "happy." The songs, the decorations, and the celebrations all seem to carry an expectation of cheer and good spirits. Yet, for many of us, Christmas can also bring feelings of weariness, sadness, or even loneliness. It's okay if you're not feeling the holiday cheer as you think you "should" be. The truth is, it's perfectly normal to have moments—days even—where happiness feels out of reach.

In our fast-paced, performance-driven world, we can easily forget that the fullness of our humanity, including the hard moments, is not something we need to hide from God or others. The Christmas story itself is a reminder that God entered into the full range of human experience. Jesus was born into a world full of brokenness, struggle, and longing. He wasn't born into perfection—He was born in a humble stable, to parents facing uncertainty, in a town of Bethlehem that was far from what anyone might call a "happy place." And still, the angels sang, the shepherds rejoiced, and the wise men brought gifts. Because even in the midst of all the messiness of life, God was giving us the greatest gift of all: His presence.

We, too, are invited to live in the tension of joy and sorrow, of caring for others and also caring for ourselves. Christmas invites us to reflect on the deep truth that we are not alone. We are not abandoned in our moments of sadness, doubt, or frustration. God's promises—of peace, love, and hope—are still very much alive, even if we don't feel them all the time.

Caring for our neighbor often starts with caring for ourselves, acknowledging that our own needs, emotions, and struggles are not something to hide but something to bring to God. When we take time to rest, to reflect, and to allow ourselves to experience the full depth of what we're feeling, we make space for God to comfort, renew, and strengthen us. It's in this space that we can find the strength to care for others, to reach out in love, and to extend the grace that we ourselves are receiving.

As we journey through this season of Advent and prepare for the joy of Christmas, let us not rush to happiness, but allow the fullness of God's promises to take root in our hearts. Christ comes to us, not because we have everything figured out, but because He knows we need Him. Let that truth be your hope this Christmas: God is with you, God Emmanuel, and His promises carry you beyond whatever you're facing today.

In Christ's love,

Pastor Connie

2025 Stewardship Update

Thank you for returning your commitments for our 2025 stewardship campaign "Building Strong Connections. Reaching Further. Together." We are working on our church budget now and your gifts help us to do ministry together by building strong connections and reaching further.



Free Joya Concert - December 8

Mark your calendars for a free Joya concert on Sunday, December 8 at 3 p.m. in Zion's Sanctuary. Pianist Mary Jo Gothmann will be joined by Minnesota Orchestra musicians James Garlick, Ken Freed, and Silver Ainomäe. The program will feature quartets of Mozart and Fauré. Invite your friends... it's FREE!

Love Begotten

Zion Music News

Our Choral Worship will be featured on December 21 at 5 p.m. and December 22 at 9 a.m. Both the Adult Choir and Ringmasters will lead the Choral Worship featuring a variety of Advent and Christmas-themed anthems. Our focus for the season is "Love Begotten" and it will be the focal point of that Sunday. Traditional Worship will remain at the 8 a.m. service. This year we are starting something new at 11 a.m. on December 22: "Worship Team Jingle"—a seasonal worship service with the band! Wear your best ugly Christmas sweater and join in the cheer of singing our favorite contemporary holiday songs.

Advent Preaching Series - Love Begotten

The Christmas hymn "Of the Father's Love Begotten" is a rich and beautiful text that highlights the eternal nature of Christ's divinity and the mystery of his incarnation. Each week during Advent, we will highlight a verse from this hymn in our reading, our prayers, preaching, and in the Advent wreath prayers, especially since candles represent the light of Christ coming into the world.

Nov 30-Dec 1: 1st Sunday of Advent "Of the Father's Love Begotten"

Dec 7/8: 2nd Sunday of Advent "Love Begotten: Forever Blessed"

Dec 14/15: 3rd Sunday of Advent "Love Begotten: Faithful Word"

Dec 21/22: 4th Sunday of Advent "Love Begotten: His Praises Sing"

Pastor Connie Tiede's Installation as Lead Pastor



On Sunday, November 17, Pastor Connie Tiede was installed as Zion's new Lead Pastor. Bishop Jen Nagel presided over the installation.



Worship in person Saturdays at 5 p.m. and Sundays at 8, 9 & 11 a.m.

Livestream on Sundays at 9 & 11 a.m.

Cable TV Channel 6 Broadcast Sundays at 10 a.m. & 5 p.m.

Radio Broadcast BOB-FM 106.1 Sundays at 9:10 a.m.

a personal reflection

Christmas at the Finish Line

By Colleen Nelson

Thanksgiving is behind us, which for many signifies a race to reach the 'Christmas' finish line. Those of us on autopilot with a lead foot, might benefit from refreshing ourselves with the Tortoise and the Hare fable. We are to consider the old adage, slow and steady wins the race. The season of Advent is an opportunity to turn the manic days of hotfooting it to Christmas into contemplative days preparing for the baby Jesus, Immanuel. "A voice cries: 'In the wilderness prepare the way of the Lord; make straight in the desert a highway for our God. Every valley shall be lifted up, and every mountain and hill be made low; the uneven ground shall become level, and the rough places a plain. And the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together, for the mouth of the Lord has spoken.'" Isaiah 40:3-5.

Advent Resources:

- **Calendars:** Advent calendars aren't just for kids anymore. Sure, you can find some with doors that reveal chocolates, popcorn, cookies, and toys. But there are also calendars with a daily wine sample and I would be remiss if I didn't mention treats for your furry friend. For a meaningful message, Zion's children's ministry is offering a take-home calendar which reflects the biblical message surrounding the birth of baby Jesus. And don't forget to follow the Kid City kids' large wall calendar at the top of the ramp, in the lower-level hallway. It will feature daily updates as Mary and Joseph journey to the stable.
- **Candles:** Join us in the Sanctuary each week as we gradually light four candles during worship with thoughts of peace, joy, hope and love. These attributes are just a spattering of all that God embodies. Keeping in mind the unfathomable depth of God's grace, we are reminded of God's promises during these Advent days & weeks.
- **Devotions:** What better way to focus our thoughts and prayers during our Advent journey than reading a daily reflection. *God Pause* (daily devotionals written by Luther Seminary's alumni) is offering a free 2024 Advent devotional entitled *Joy of Heaven, Here on Earth* at: <https://www.luthersem.edu/godpause/advent-devotional/>.

welcome

Year-End Giving

Financial contributions for 2024 should be postmarked by December 31 or delivered to the church office by 4 p.m. on Tuesday, December 31. Thank you for your generous and faithful stewardship in 2024!

Fare For All

DECEMBER 12 | 4-6 PM | LOWER COMMONS

This month, Fare For All is featuring their December Holiday Pack which includes: Ham 7-9 lbs., Shrimp - 12 oz, Homestyle Meatballs - 1 lb., Local Pork Breakfast Sausage - 1 lb., Turkey Tenderloin - 1.5 lb., Corn - 12 oz and Apple Pie - 24 oz. All for \$35. Fare For All is a program that allows people to shop at Zion once a month for deeply discounted, nutritious food. Fare For All is open to everyone and accepts CASH, CREDIT, DEBIT and EBT cards.

Noisy Offering for Camp Ministries - November 30-December 1

Thank you to everyone who brought in their Noisy Offering in November! We gathered \$457.73 which will go toward our camp ministries. The next weekend our Noisy Offering buckets will be out is November 30 & December 1. There will also be a bucket at the Welcome Desk to drop off your Noisy Offering during office hours.

grow and care

Sunday Adult Faith Forums

Grab a cup of coffee and join us Sundays at 10 a.m. in the Fellowship Hall.

- December 1: No Forum
- December 8: A Night in Bethlehem - Experience Jesus' birth at an exciting, interactive family event! Pet real nativity animals as you arrive! Get counted for the census. Help out village craftspeople like the potter, weaver and carpenter. Sample the foods of David's city. Meet the shepherds and sing with angels. Stop for a family photo. And lastly, find the stable and visit Mary, Joseph and baby Jesus!
- December 15: Rev. Dr. Rolf Jacobson, Luther Seminary Dean of the Faculty, Professor of Old Testament and The Alvin N. Rogness Chair of Scripture, Theology, and Ministry. Come and hear Rolf give us an update of what's going on at Luther Seminary.
- December 22: No Forum
- December 29: No Forum

Small Group Ministry

This month we conclude our study "My Neighbor is Muslim". Below is the remaining schedule.

- Week of Dec. 1: Islam & Violence: What Does Islam Teach about Violence?
- Week of Dec. 8: Islam & Finance: What is Islamic Finance?

Youth Summer Trip to Boundary Waters

Youth who have completed grades 8-12 by the summer of 2025 are invited to join us for the summer youth trip to Wilderness Canoe Base in the Boundary Waters. This trip is designed for all who are ready for adventure, eager to grow deeper in faith, and interested in experiencing God's creation in one of the most beautiful places in the world. We'll be camping, canoeing, and doing service projects at the base with our group. The trip is from July 16-20, 2025. Scan the QR code at the right to register on Realm.



Lefse Fundraiser

Help support our youth summer ministries by purchasing our holiday lefse! \$10 per package, limit 4 packages per person. Scan the QR code at the right to order on Realm and pick up from 8 a.m.-noon on Sunday, December 8 at the Welcome Desk. All online orders will come with a complimentary "I love Lefse" button. Please note that there will be a limited supply of lefse for purchase in-person. Only lefse that is purchased online is guaranteed.



Family Promise Commitment Week

Zion's next opportunity to provide hospitality for four Family Promise families in shelter is December 8. We are asked to provide cleaning supplies for a month. If you care to help with purchasing items and/or dropping the supplies off, please contact Pat Stearns at pat.stearns@comcast.net by December 1. If you would like to give money to support the purchases, please donate money to Zion, include a note stating for the Zion Family Promise Account and your Zion offering envelope number. Thank you!

caring for our world and each other

NexTrex Recycling Team Challenge Results

Thank you, Zion for all your plastic donations! We recycled just over 1000 pounds of plastic and we should be getting our NexTrex bench in the green space soon! Here are the team totals: Pr. Sue and Katie: 370.86 pounds, Pr. Connie and Ann: 322.7 pounds, Pr. Mike and Lee 321.45 pounds. Zion Pre-K collected 53.62 pounds in just five weeks to help us out! With the end of this challenge, we will no longer be collecting plastic BUT we hope this process created a habit for you and your family of collecting plastic bags and film. You can still bring your plastic bags and film to other places such as Cub Foods, Walmart, Target, or your city's recycling center. Thanks again!

From the Zion Addiction and Awareness Ministry (ZAAM)

ZAAM hosted Daniel Kelly, Executive Director of the Steve Rumlmer HOPE Network on Tuesday, October 22 and Sunday, November 24. We learned how the body responds to addictive drugs like opioids and how the antidote, naloxone can prevent an overdose death. It is not a 'treatment' for opioid use disorder. Opioids attach to multiple centers within the body, especially the respiratory to a point of lack of breathing. Knowing the symptoms of overdose is important in saving a life with the naloxone antidote. This drug is available without a prescription. Families struggling with a loved one should have naloxone near by. Almost 800,000 people have died from an overdose since 1999. Fentanyl opioids are 50-100x more potent than morphine. For more information on drug abuse see the National Institute on Drug Abuse at <https://nida.nih.gov/>.

Zion Caring Tree

Zion's Caring Tree supports five local agencies: Alexandra House, Anoka Metro Regional Treatment Center, Stepping Stone Emergency Housing, Family Promise in Anoka County and Bridgeview Drop-in Center at Lee Carlson Center. We are collecting gift cards from Walmart, Target and Cub to be distributed to these agencies. Gift cards can be dropped off at Zion during business hours through December 11.



Thank You Recent Radio Broadcast Fund Donors

Lyle & Marlene Willock	Rolland & Carol Voelker in memory of Mel Iseminger and Cliff & Joanne Nelson
Ruth Beck	Pastor David, Deb, Tom & family in loving memory of Darlene Holmes
Floyd Nelson	Bev Fraser in memory of Dolores Bies and Joanne Nelson
Kristine Johnson	Judy Bendiske in memory of Lyle Anderson
Craig Bakken	Judy Bendiske in memory of Dolores Bies and Joanne Nelson
Lois Peterson	

about our people

Baptisms	Deaths	Weddings	New Members	New Members
Nov 9 - Axel Jones	Michael Mettler	Kendra Brunn &	Paul Hanson & Karen	Mickey & Susan
Nov 30 - Madison Rock	Verlyn Hovdestad	Jayce Primeau	Christenson	Bluedorn
		Madeline Kinn &	Brent & Bonnie	Kristin Woizeschke
		Roland Oyou	Peterson	Chuck & Kathy Davis
			JD & Katie Davis	
			Gary & Marvel King	

poinsettia garden

Help decorate Zion's Sanctuary by donating to the Poinsettia Garden in memory or in honor of someone special. Memorials are \$20 each. To order, fill out the coupon below and mail it back with your payment or pick up an envelope at the front desk. Envelopes must be returned by Sunday, December 15.



Given By: _____ Amount Enclosed: _____

In Honor Of _____

In Memory Of _____

cut here

caring for our world

From the Creation Care Team - Greening our Holiday Spirit

A sustainable approach to Christmas! As the holiday season approaches, our Creation Care team is taking steps to make our celebrations both festive and earth friendly. We invite you to check out the Christmas tree outside of the Sanctuary. This year, we're transforming the space beneath the tree into a showcase of sustainable gift-wrapping alternatives. Instead of traditional wrapping paper that ends up in landfills, we're embracing creative solutions that give materials a second life:

Fabric gift wraps using:

- Colorful scarves that become part of the gift
- Retired tablecloths given new purpose
- Salvaged fabric pieces with festive patterns

Paper alternatives include:

- Brown kraft paper decorated with twine and pine sprigs or stencils
- Children's artwork repurposed as wrapping paper
- Newspaper brightened with holiday ribbons (which we'll reuse next year)

Each reusable gift wrap choice saves multiple pieces of traditional wrapping paper from entering landfills. When multiplied across all team members' gifts, our small changes add up to significant environmental impact.

JOIN THE MOVEMENT! We invite everyone to embrace these earth-friendly alternatives. By making mindful choices in how we present our gifts, we demonstrate that environmental responsibility and holiday joy can go hand in hand. After all, the best gift we can give for future generations is a healthier planet. Together, we're proving that small changes in our holiday traditions can lead to lasting environmental benefits.



1601 4th Avenue
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A WELCOMING FAITH COMMUNITY.
GROWING. CARING. SERVING.

Pre-K Playroom Fun



We are making the most of our playroom while the weather decides if it is fall or winter. The preschoolers enjoy having a place to climb and use their large muscles inside away from the elements.

WELCOME

You are invited, you are welcome to come and experience God's love at Zion Lutheran Church.

CONTACT US

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