



Zion noiz

The Newsletter of Zion Lutheran Church Piedmont, California

December 2022



Pastor Paul writes...

“And in the same region there were shepherds out in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. And an angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were filled with great fear.”

– The Christmas Gospel, Luke 2:8-9

“And the angel said to them, ‘Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord.’” - The Christmas Gospel, Luke 2:10-11 ESV (English Standard Version)

Some of you may remember hearing the Christmas Gospel in the King James Version on Christmas Eve and Christmas Day. When Luke 2 is read in the King James Version, much like Psalm 23 and other familiar passages, it is unparalleled in linguistic beauty and majesty. But even if you learned the Christmas Gospel in a more recent translation, the Christmas story is no less meaningful, moving, and powerful.

This year for the Christmas Eve and Christmas Day messages at Zion we are going to focus on the Christmas angel. Luke records the important role of the Christmas angel who appeared to the shepherds and brought them the good news of the Savior born for all people. On Christmas Eve we will look at the first two verses above (Luke 2:8-9) and on Christmas Day we will look at the second set of two verses (Luke 2:10-11).

What was the significance of Christmas angel coming to the shepherds? What was the significance of the message the angel delivered to them? What do these verses reveal about Christmas? About Christ? About us? How do these verses apply to our Christmas celebrations and our lives of faith today? We will explore all these questions this Christmas!

I hope you can join us in person for both Christmas Eve and Christmas Day, but if you cannot do that, then be sure to join us online for the livestream or 24/7 at your convenience.

Rejoicing with you in the birth of the Savior of all.

~ Pastor Paul



Weekly Worship

Sundays: 9 am Traditional Worship In-person & On-line 11 am Contemporary Worship On-line

All Worship Services are Available 24/7 via the Zion App, Website, YouTube and Facebook.

Bible Class: Sundays at 8 am Wednesdays at 10 am

SEEK

DISCIPLE

MULTIPLY

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Church Pews

The pews that have been taken out of the sanctuary are wonderful places to sit around the church, however it is time for many of them to go. The property committee is beginning to take them apart and remove them. While they are carefully removing the cloth coverings to save in case some other pews need some repair, the

quality wood that they are made of is being saved. If you would like some of this wood for a woodworking project, let the church office know. The pew ends are thick and heavy. The top back rail is 12 feet of very nice white oak. It would be awesome if we could repurpose and reuse all of this reclaimed wood.

Church Humor

According to the Alaska Department of Fish and Game, while both male and female reindeer grow antlers in the summer each year (the only members of the deer family, Cervidae, to have females do so). Male reindeer drop their antlers at the beginning of winter, usually late November to mid December.

Female reindeer, however, retain their antlers until after they give birth in the spring. Therefore, according to every historical rendition depicting Santa's reindeer, every single one of them, from Rudolf to Blitzen.... had to be a female.

We should've known this when they were able to find their way.

What does the Grinch do with a baseball bat?

Hits a gnome and runs.

What do you call a broke Santa Claus?

Saint-nickel-less.

What do you call a kid who doesn't believe in Santa?

A rebel without a Claus.

Why did Frosty ask for a divorce?

His wife was a total flake.

Why does Scrooge love reindeer so much?

Because every single buck is dear to him!



Movie Night at Zion

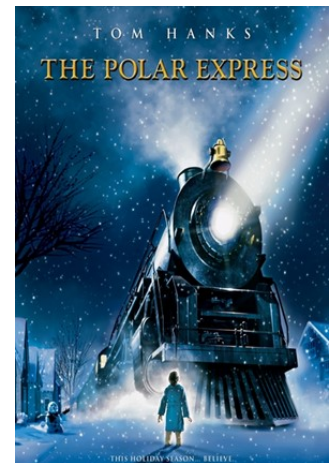
Saturday, December 17 @ 7:00 pm

Polar Express

On Christmas Eve, a young boy embarks on a magical adventure to the North Pole on the Polar Express, while learning about friendship, bravery, and the spirit of Christmas. This young hero boy boards a powerful magical train that's headed to the North Pole and Santa Claus' home on Christmas Eve night. During this ride, he embarks on a journey of self-discovery which shows him that the wonder of life never fades for those who believe.

Come join the Holiday fun!

Runtime 1hr 40 min Rated G



Catechism Corner

Mealtime Prayers in the Catechism by Martin Luther

Asking a Blessing

Lord God, heavenly Father, bless us and these Your gifts which we receive from Your bountiful goodness, through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

Returning Thanks after the meal

We thank You, Lord God, heavenly Father, for all Your benefits, through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit forever and ever. Amen.

How did Luther not write the common table prayer?

Come, Lord Jesus be our guest, and let these (thy) gifts to us be blest. Amen.

STUDYING GOD'S WORD

WEDNESDAY MORNING BIBLE CLASS

In December, we will study selected chapters in Leviticus. Having completed our study of Genesis and Exodus, we are continuing our examination of the Pentateuch (the first five books of the Bible). You are welcome to join us as often as you can for the following:

Wednesday, December 7th

Leviticus 4: Laws for Sin Offerings
Leviticus 8: Consecration of Aaron and his sons
Leviticus 10: The Death of Nadab and Abihu

Wednesday, December 14th

Leviticus 16: The Day of Atonement
Leviticus 19: Holiness of the Congregation

Wednesday, December 21st

Leviticus 23: Calendar of the Feasts of the Lord
Leviticus 24: Eye for an Eye and Tooth for a Tooth
Leviticus 25: Sabbath Year and Year of Jubilee

Wednesday, December 28th

No Bible Class (Christmas Break)

Join us Wednesdays at 10:00 a.m. either in-person in the Garden Room or online via Zoom.

SUNDAY BIBLE CLASS I

Join us on Sundays at 8:00 a.m. in Pastor's office. Pastor is leading a study on the words of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. We are using a student handbook, which leads us in sequential order into the incredible historical record of Jesus' birth, life, miracles, teachings, and suffering, death, and resurrection for the sal-

vation of the world. This is a fresh, in-depth, and amazing look at the message of the four Gospels as you have never studied it before!

SUNDAY BIBLE CLASS II

Bible Class II continues to meet in the conference room on Sundays at 8:00 am.

IRON MEN

Thursday, December 8 at 6:30 pm

After almost a year of studying the Not-So-Nice-Bible-Stories: Gory Deaths, it is time for some lighthearted humor! This month we will watch the stand-up comedy of Ken Davis, "Fully Alive".

Ken, a veteran humorist shares his own journey with his trademark humor and powerful stories: from lethargic resignation, to a new life of adventure, spiritual renewal, and health. See the snapshot that started it all, share in the three hours of terror that changed Ken forever. Meet a living fossil on a bicycle. Laugh and be inspired to live in the power of Christ's resurrection. The path to that full, new life is right here, just waiting for us to take the first step. This powerful, life-changing message is Ken's magnum opus—the passionate culmination of decades in ministry. It's also a terrific comedy event from the most experienced and best-loved Christian comic in America.

Join us for a manly meal, fellowship, and a fun time watching this comedy show!



These photos are from the graveside of Pastor Paul Labrenz, summoned to glory on October 2, 2022. This was the typewriter on which he typed all of his many, many sermons, preaching Christ crucified and risen!

Game Night Tuesday, December 13 at 6:30 pm

It is dark so early now, so get out and have some fun with your friends from church. Game night is always a good time and great way to spend your evening! Join us for some holiday fun and who knows what game(s) we might be playing!



Midweek Advent Service Schedule



A Potluck Soup & Salad Supper will precede all three Advent Services at 6:00 p.m. in the Garden Room!

A Service of Lessons & Hymns
Wednesday, November 30 7:00 p.m.

An Advent Service of Compline
Wednesday, December 7th 7:00 p.m.

Advent Hymn Sing with Lessons and Prayers
Wednesday, December 14h 7:00 p.m.

Please plan to join us!

Christmas Service Schedules



Christmas Eve Candlelight Service

Saturday, December 24th 7:00 p.m.

A traditional service of Christmas carols and choral presentations.

The service will feature a string quartet, Zion's Choir, and Holy Communion.

Christmas Day Festival Service

Sunday, December 25th 9:00 a.m.

A festive celebration of Christmas lessons and carols with Holy Communion.

DECEMBER

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<div>27</div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 8:00 AM Bible Class I & II 9:00 AM In-person Traditional Worship & Live-stream 11:00 AM Live-stream Contemporary Worship 	<div>28</div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 5:30 PM Confirmation Class 7:30 PM AA - GR 	<div>29</div>	<div>30</div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 10:00 AM Wednesday Bible Class 6:00 PM Advent potluck 7:00 PM Advent Worship Service- sanctuary 	<div>1</div>	<div>2</div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 7:00 PM EBRS 7:00 PM LWML Cookie and Ornament Exchange 	<div>3</div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 10:00 AM Chruch Decorating
<div>4</div> <p>LWML Christmas Boutique</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 8:00 AM Bible Class I & II 9:00 AM In-person Traditional Worship & Live-stream 11:00 AM Live-stream Contemporary Worship 	<div>5</div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 5:30 PM Confirmation Class 6:30 PM Property Committee - CR 7:30 PM AA - GR 	<div>6</div>	<div>7</div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 10:00 AM Wednesday Bible Class 6:00 PM Advent potluck 7:00 PM Advent Worship Service- sanctuary 	<div>8</div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 6:30 PM Iron Men 	<div>9</div>	<div>10</div>
<div>11</div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 8:00 AM Bible Class I & II 9:00 AM In-person Traditional Worship & Live-stream 11:00 AM Live-stream Contemporary Worship 	<div>12</div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 5:30 PM Confirmation Class 7:30 PM AA - GR 	<div>13</div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 6:30 PM Game Night 	<div>14</div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 10:00 AM Wednesday Bible Class 6:00 PM Advent potluck 7:00 PM Advent Worship Service- sanctuary 	<div>15</div> <p>NEWSLETTER ARTICLES DUE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2:00 PM Finance Committee 	<div>16</div>	<div>17</div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 7:00 PM Movie Night
<div>18</div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 8:00 AM Bible Class I & II 9:00 AM In-person Traditional Worship & Live-stream 11:00 AM Live-stream Contemporary Worship 	<div>19</div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 7:30 PM AA - GR 	<div>20</div>	<div>21</div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 10:00 AM Wednesday Bible Class 	<div>22</div>	<div>23</div>	<div>24</div> <p>Christmas Eve</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 7:00 PM Christmas Eve Candlelight Service
<div>25</div> <p>Christmas Day</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 9:00 AM Christmas Day Festival Service 11:00 AM Christmas Day Festival Service online only 	<div>26</div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 7:30 PM AA - GR 	<div>27</div>	<div>28</div>	<div>29</div>	<div>30</div>	<div>31</div> <p>New Year's Eve</p>

A Response to a Magnificent Prayer

And Mary said: "My soul magnifies the Lord. For He has regarded the lowly state of His maidservant. For behold, henceforth all generations will call me blessed. For He has done great things for me. And holy is His name. And His mercy is on those who fear Him from generation to generation."
(Luke 2:46-50 NKJV)

The busy-ness of everyday life: errands to run, family to care for, people to encourage and visit. Preparations before a special event such as a wedding – are all-consuming. Every little girl dreams of becoming a princess or a beautiful bride. Such a blessed, happy time that she will always remember no matter how many years go by. And into this busy-ness comes Gabriel, God's servant angel with a message for Mary.

"Now in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a city of Galilee named Nazareth, to a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. And having come in, the angel said to her, 'Do not be afraid Mary, for you have found favor with God. And behold you will conceive in your womb and bring forth a Son and shall call His name JESUS. He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Highest, and the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David. And He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of His kingdom there will be no end.'" (Luke 2:26-33)

Wow. In an instant everything changed. It went from happy preparation to bewildered desperation. "How can this be?" (Luke 2:34) Mary asks. She could legally be stoned to death by Joseph. And the angel understood her dilemma. "The Holy Spirit will overshadow you, therefore, also that the Holy One who is to be born will be called the Son of God." (Luke 2:35)

Mary's preparations ended. She would have to go and tell her beloved Joseph. Simple, humble Mary. Lowly man of trade, carpenter Joseph. Not one of wealth or high position. Just two ordinary people used in God's plan of salvation.

And Mary's response? "Behold, the maidservant (literally 'slave') of the Lord. Let it be to me according to your word." (Luke 2:38)

Every Jewish girl dreamed of being the mother of the promised Messiah. Now, here is Mary, suddenly thrust into that role. And Joseph was a just man who had to make the decision to shame Mary, stone her to death or marry her. He has his love for her and the angel's message to take her as his wife as she carries the Son of God (Matthew 2). Two everyday people,

put into a life-changing situation. And how did they respond?

They both said "Yes".

Mary's Spirit-led prayer after the angel's visit is also called the Magnificat. It is a prayer of praise and acknowledgement of what God has done and will do for the people. She knew the promise of the Messiah. She had heard the Scriptures. And now God was putting her into the role of the mother of the Messiah, God's Son. Joy and Fear. I can't imagine how she felt, Such a blessing and such a terror, for her, a virgin.

Martin Luther wrote a book on the Magnificat. His writing was published by Concordia Publishing House in 1956: Volume 21. Mary's very soul rejoices in God, her Savior. Her very life rejoices. "God is magnified in our knowledge and experience when we greatly esteem Him and highly regard Him, His grace and goodness." (page 307)

Do we realize how many times God uses us, simple, humble humans in His plans? His plans are perfect. All thankfulness and glory go to Him. Mary praises God and asks Him for strength.

"I have traveled many moonless nights
Cold and weary with a babe inside
And I wonder what I've done Holy Father
You have come

And chosen me now to carry Your Son.

I am waiting in silent prayer

I am frightened by the load I bear

In a world cold as stone

Must I walk this path alone?

Be with me now.

Be with me now.

Breath of heaven

Hold me together

Be forever near me.

Breath of heaven

Breath of heaven

Lighten my darkness

Pour over me your holiness

For You are holy Breath of heaven.

Do You wonder as

You watch my face

If a wiser one should have had my place

But I offer all I am

For the mercy of your plan

Help me be strong.

Help me be. Help me."

(Breath of Heaven (Mary's Song), Amy Grant/Chris Eaton, BMG Rights Management Services Inc.)

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Luther writes of 1 Corinthians 1:27,28 “God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise. God chose the weak of the world to shame the strong. God chose what is low and despised in the world.” (page 34) When God comes into our “busy-ness” and our life changes, let our response be “Yes Lord! I am willing to follow You.”

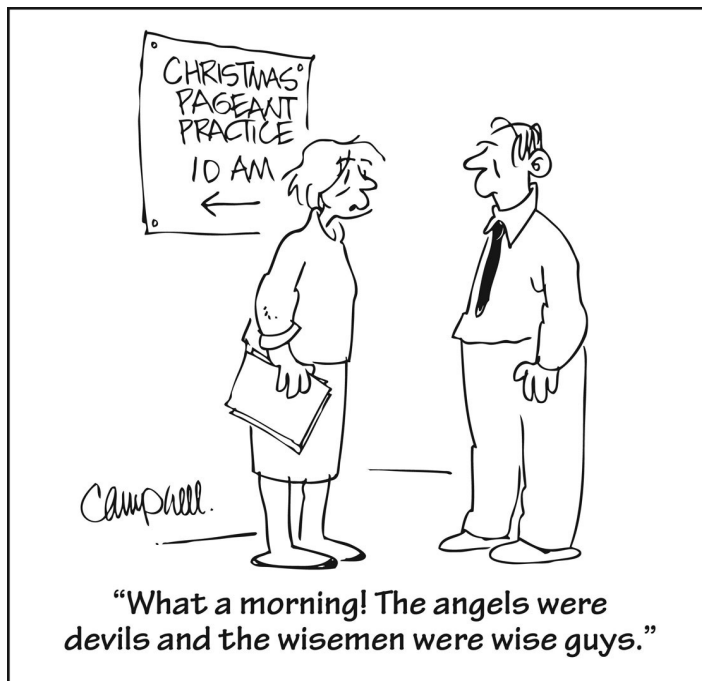
“Everything inside me cries for order.
Everything inside me wants to hide.
Is this shadow an angel or a warrior?
If God is pleased with me, why am I so terrified?
Someone tell me I am only dreaming
Somehow help me see with heaven’s eyes
But before my head agrees,
My heart is on its knees Holy is He.
Blessed am I.
Be born in me.
Be born in me.
Trembling heart
Somehow I believe that You chose me.
I hold You in the beginning
You will hold me in the end.
Every moment in the middle,
Make my heart Your Bethlehem.
Be born in me.”

(Be Born in Me (Mary) Francesca Battistelli, Capitol Christian Music Group)

When those events that “disrupt” our lives or our “busy-ness”, when God speaks to our hearts, let us be like Mary and say:

“Make my heart Your Bethlehem.
Be born in me.”

– Marlene S. Grunow, Prayer Ministry



SERVING THE LORD WITH GLADNESS

Altar Flower Donations Decmeber 2022

Sunday, Dec. 4	9 am	Advent/No Flowers
Sunday, Dec. 11	9 am	Advent/No Flowers
Sunday, Dec. 18	9 am	Advent/No Flowers
Sunday, Dec. 25	9 am	Christmas Day



+ Usher Schedule + December 2022

Sunday, Dec. 4	9 am	Rachel Heinitz Michael Grunow
Sunday, Dec. 11	9 am	George Berge Peter Grunow
Sunday, Dec. 18	9 am	Rachel Heinitz Michael Grunow
Sunday, Dec. 25	9 am	George Berge Peter Grunow

Coffee Hour Hosts December 2022

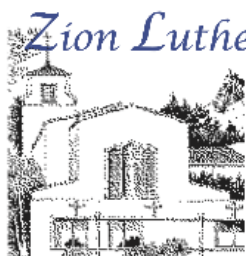
Sunday, Dec. 4	9 am	Open
Sunday, Dec. 11	9 am	Open
Sunday, Dec. 18	9 am	Open
Sunday, Dec. 25	9 am	Christmas Day

+ Communion Assistant Schedule + December 2022

Sunday, Dec. 4	9 am	Dave Nemy
Sunday, Dec. 11	9 am	Brian Walsh
Sunday, Dec. 18	9 am	Frank Cham
Sunday, Dec. 25	9 am	Jonathan Schaff

+ Lay Reader Schedule + December 2022

Sunday, Dec. 4	9 am	Hugh Bartlett
Sunday, Dec. 11	9 am	Jon & Judy Schaff
Sunday, Dec. 18	9 am	Josie Nelson
Sunday, Dec. 25	9 am	Christmas Day



Zion Lutheran Church

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This newsletter is also available on-line..