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Tidings

The monthly newsletter of Zion Lutheran Church

Zion Lutheran Church

A congregation of the Southern Ohio Synod
221 S. Center St.
West Jefferson, Ohio 43162
(614) 879-8107
(877) 449-3503
ZionLutheranWJ@cs.com
Pastor Dennis Koch

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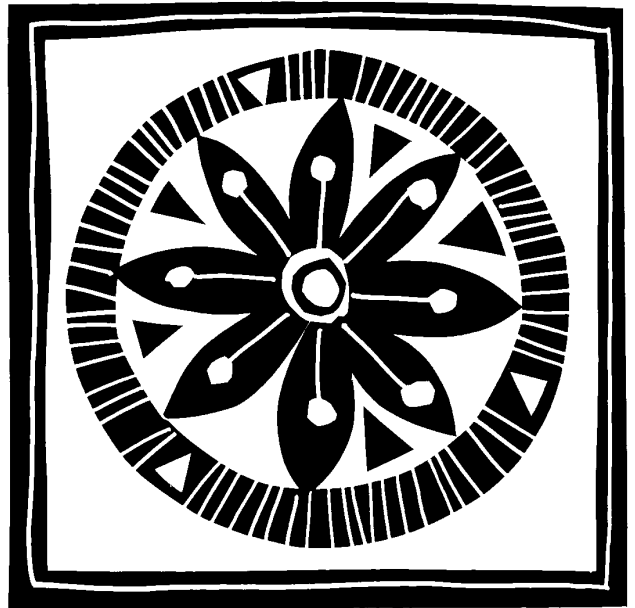
President

What does Christmas mean for us now?

What does the Christmas Season mean to us when the packages are open, the wrappers thrown away, the presents put away and other gifts are exchanged? What does Christmas have to do with the rest of the year anyway? To contemplate those questions, I share with you the message from the presiding ELCA Bishop the Rev. Mark Hansen. He begins by quoting the Gospel of Luke:

In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered. This was the first registration and was taken when Quirinius was governor of Syria. All went to their own towns to be registered. Joseph also . . . went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child.
(Luke 2: 1-2, 4-5, NRSV)

Augustus speaks, and there are universal consequences – no one is exempt from this decree. For the sake of imperial efficiency and control, all must be counted, whole populations put on the move, plans

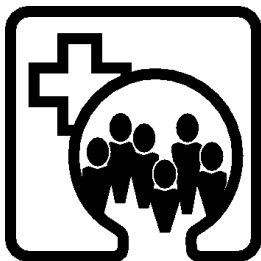


interrupted and dreams set aside, every sort of hardship endured. In the middle of this turmoil, a baby is born far from home, with no fit place to lay his head. What clearer sign could there be, both of the global power of Augustus and the powerlessness of ordinary people?

Today, even as citizens of a resourceful, powerful nation, we are haunted by a sense of helplessness and insignificance. The reach and unpredictability of global economic forces make every job and livelihood uncertain. Accelerating change seems to threaten to dissolve community, making us strangers to each other – and even to ourselves.

See CHRISTMAS, Page 3

Zion Lutheran Church
 Mission Statement
 "To share the
 Good News of
 God's love shown
 to us through
 Jesus Christ; in
 gathering for
 worship, Baptism,
 and Holy Communion;
 through studying
 God's word in order
 to share an active
 faith; providing
 loving service
 to our community."



Fund needs support

This is an excerpt from a letter by Father Devaney of Saints Simon and Jude Catholic Church.

For the past 13 years, I have been the treasurer of the Good Samaritan Fund here in West Jefferson. I've seen the ups and downs in this particular fund. ...

For the last two months I have not been able to help those in need without exhausting the fund, and that's why I'm encouraging every church to send what [it] can at different times of the year to supplement our fund.

From January 2002 to November 30, 2003, we have expended: \$2,893.45 in rent, \$1,167.04 for utilities; \$100 West Jefferson Food Pantry; \$100 for Food; \$100 for a burial; \$520 for gasoline ...

The checkbook is always available for your review, and I am happy to show you the receipts at any time. Sincerely,

Father Michael J. Devaney, O.M.I.

If you'd like to specify donations for the Good Samaritan Fund, mark your offering envelope and it will be forwarded.

Envelopes ready

Members' envelopes for 2004 are available in the Narthex/Social Hall. Since the envelope numbers may be different from those used in 2003, please discard any unused 2003 envelopes.

Let us pray

Keep these people in your daily prayers: Olivia Brewer, Dorothy Byerly, Maxine Campbell, Minerva Casto, Pete Cavinee, Ann Connor, Charles Edwards, Jim Evans, Lois Evans, Ray Flowers, Doug Forrest, Cheryl Fultz, Gwin Gaines, Fred Goldstein, Jim Kline, Helyn Kohl, Don LeFavour, Judy MacLaughlin, Ron McNutt, Dorothy Mumford,

Skip Nitz, Rose Owens, Robert Richards, Rob Robinson, Steve Russell, Don Schiff, Debbie Terry, Debbie Warner and Pat Woods.

Adopt-A-Family

Zion adopted a family with four children for Christmas. Thanks to everyone's help, we were able to provide an outfit and toys for each child. We also donated \$250 to the West Jefferson Community Association Adopt-A-Family program.

Loving Kindness

Loving Kindness Kitchen in London has requested serving/clean-up help from 5 p.m. to 7 p.m. on Monday, Jan. 12. A sign-up sheet is on the bulletin board. We will also prepare and serve a meal in April. See Carol Mahon with ideas for a nourishing but economical meal to serve more than 200 people.

Those who serve ...

Jan. 4 – acolyte, Shawna Collins; greeters, Anne Marie and Alex Lutz; lector and worship assistant, Louise Johnston; nursery, Carol Mahon.

Jan. 11 – acolyte, Tyler Hadidon; greeter, Malenie Hadidon; lector, Faith Hall; worship assistant, John Hall; nursery, Dana King.

What's happening?

Mondays Adult Choir, 7:30 p.m.; Alcoholics Anonymous, 8 p.m.; **Wednesdays** Zion Family Night 6 p.m.; **Thursdays** Weight Watchers, 6 p.m.; **Jan. 6** Worship/Music Committee, 7 p.m.; **Jan. 8** Dartball at Reynoldsburg; **Jan. 11** Men's group, 8 a.m.; Confirmation Class, 5 p.m.; Mutual Ministry, 7 p.m.; **Jan. 13** Church Council, 7 p.m.; **Jan. 15** Dartball vs. St. John at home; **Jan. 22** Dartball at Grove City; **Jan. 25** Congregational meeting after worship; Confirmation Class, 5 p.m.; **Jan. 29** Dartball at Obetz

What does **CHRISTMAS** mean now?

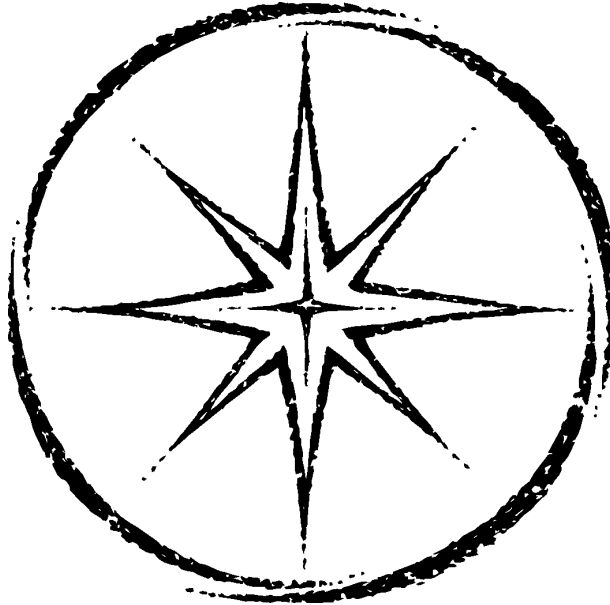
From Page 1

Preoccupation with our own lives often prevents us from being aware of, and responsive to, suffering throughout the world. As old conflicts endure and new ones spring up around the world, the way to peace is very hard to see, and even harder to walk. The universal reach of terror unsettles us everywhere, leaving no place of sure safety.

But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid; for see – I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord." (Luke 2: 10-11, NRSV)

God's messenger speaks, and there are universal consequences – no one is excluded from this promise! The first to hear are those of no apparent account, a band of scruffy shepherds who are sent to see and then become messengers themselves, joining the angels in stirring wonder in all who hear. Wondrous indeed, that God is at work here and now, that this newborn in a manger is, in fact, God with us, deep in the fragility of our flesh, deep in the world.

Messengers are still finding hearers, and hearers quickly become messengers. Baptismal grace ripples in every direction, creating community without borders. For the One who came to meet us in the manger has not abandoned our world or our lives, but is profoundly present, turning even the fractures caused by thoughtless human power into spaces where the Spirit blows and the Word rings, where in the fragile flesh of the



body of Christ, new life dawns with saving promise for all.

O sing to the Lord a new song, for He has done marvelous things. (Psalm 98:1, NRSV)

So after hearing Bishop Hansen's message, I ask you to ponder the question, "What does Christmas mean to us?" It is about God connecting with us. The good news connects to the real lives of shepherds. That good news connects to real lives of those at work and at home today. Nothing ends on Dec. 26. It only begins. What we hear and what we say in our worship services spill over into the conversations we have with friends and family, neighbors and co-workers. Consider all that you have seen and heard, as Jesus born for us is proclaimed in Word and Sacrament. As you go on your way, bring that good news back into the places where you go and into your life.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

Pastor Dennis

*When
praying, don't
give God
instructions –
just report
for duty.*

January Birthdays

- 1/1 Donald Brooks
- 1/1 Angela Eaton
- 1/3 Wesley Porter
- 1/6 Maxine Taylor
- 1/9 Zach Mahon – 14
- 1/10 Matthew Johnston
- 1/10 Nathaniel Johnston
- 1/16 Doralee Wendell
- 1/18 Lydia Feddern – 15
- 1/18 Michelle Gelber
- 1/19 Steve Lutz
- 1/24 Louise Johnston
- 1/24 Helyn Kohl
- 1/25 Dick Fogt

January Anniversary

1/6 Michael and Vicky Eaton – 20

February Birthdays

- 2/6 Heidi Weber – 9
- 2/7 Milly McNutt
- 2/12 Terry Taylor
- 2/22 John LeFavour
- 2/23 Bill Harrison
- 2/25 Jerry Gossett
- 2/27 Shari LeFavour
- 2/27 Tom Mahon
- 2/28 Lisa Jo Sterling

February Anniversaries

- 2/14 George and Doralee Wendell – 44
- 2/18 Richard and Nancy Bausch – 20
- 2/19 Steve and Anne Marie Lutz – 10
- 2/22 Frank and Joie Livingston – 58



Want to submit an item for the newsletter?

Contact Susie Taylor at 879-6414 or sataylor@netexp.net