

Zion Lutheran Church & Preschool
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Christ The King Lutheran Chapel
1401 South Washington
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January 2022

Jonathon Bakker, Pastor

Garrick "Ricky" Beckett, Pastor

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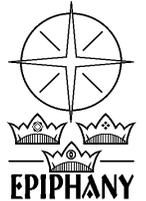
"Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever." Hebrews 13:8

It's that time of the year when we make New Year's Resolutions that we never end up keeping with catchy mantras thrown around like, "New Year, New Me" in hopes of fulfilling these resolutions to be "a better version of myself." Whether that means losing weight, traveling to a place you've always wanted to go, giving up a bad habit (in preparation for Lent, perhaps), picking up a healthy habit, reading the Bible in one or two years, or whatever it is, we all hope to change at the beginning of the New Year.

Even more, we hope everything will change. Even before COVID, the end of every year was always the same—no matter the good things that *did* happen, everyone always complains how terrible the year was. Yet, somehow, perhaps influenced by the spirit of Christmas, we also look forward to the New Year with expectations that it's going to bring good tidings. It never happens, of course, because at the end of that New Year the complaints come forth again.

It's not that seeking to better yourself through healthy exercise, or dieting, or reading, or whatever it might be is bad. Self-discipline is good. And it's not that it's bad to hope for things to get better either. That's human. The problem is our misplaced hope and trust. Rather than trusting in the immutable (unchanging) God, we instead trust in ourselves to change. Rather than hoping in the resurrection of Christ, whose birth we just celebrated on Christmas, we instead hope in four numbers to make things better (in this year's case, 2022). But they're just numbers.

The Good News for you this year and every year is that even though it's a new year, we do not have a new God. "Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever" (Hebrews 13:8). Our God is the same God who created the entire universe simply by speaking, the same God as the Old Testament, the same God who was born a baby as Jesus Christ in Bethlehem to die and rise for our justification; the same Jesus Christ who ascended to His throne mediating on our behalf, who sends all His disciples into the world to make more disciples by baptising and teaching; the same Jesus Christ who comes to you in His Word and Sacraments, and the same Jesus Christ who is coming soon to raise the dead and rein in God's kingdom in the new creation.



So, whatever changes do come this year—whether good or bad—let us always remember that God remains the same. Because He is always the same, this means His promises are also unchanging. Furthermore, this means His promise of forgiveness and salvation given to you in your Baptism has not changed in this New Year and it will never change. Baptism, after all, is where the biggest change in your life took place—you were changed from an enemy God to being a *child* of God! As the things in this world betray our trust and hope, therefore, let us always trust in the immutable God who remains the same yesterday, today, and forevermore. Amen.

In Christ Our Saviour,

Pastor Ricky Beckett

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION



At this time of year here in Michigan we get a lot of cloud cover. Sometimes it almost seems like a miracle when we get a little sunshine. Darkness. Light.

God's Word has a lot to say regarding light. The first spoken words uttered during the mind-boggling acts of creation were: "Let there be light".

In fact, light (and lightning) are referenced over eighty times in His Word. Most often light is mentioned in regard to the darkness of the curse of sin. Every child born since Cain was conceived under the curse.

Even our Lord Jesus was born under this shadow. But having conquered the darkness, took on our curse and rose again to bring us into His glorious light and bring us eternal life.

As parents, teachers, and disciples of Christ, we are conscripted to bring our children into His light, out of this dark, dark world as we sing with our "little people": Hide it under a bushel ? NO! I'm gonna let it shine!

Shine His light in the lives of your loved ones. "Let there be Light!"

Brad Coulson

Sunday School Superintendant

Sunday School resumes

Sunday, January 9



Epiphany Service
Thursday, January 6
5:30 p.m. - Zion

Join us for an Epiphany service at Zion!

The word 'epiphany' means *manifestation*, and in the church we celebrate on Epiphany the manifestation of Jesus as the divine Son of God. If we celebrate that the Father has *given* us the gift of his Son at Christmas, then we celebrate all the more at Epiphany that this gift is *unwrapped* before us as Jesus is revealed to be our Savior, the Holy One of Israel, promised of old.

As we take down our Christmas trees and put away our decorations for another year, I pray that all of our families are able to keep that Christmas Joy with them a few weeks longer. The staff would like to thank all our families for your support, kindness, and involvement this year. We have truly been blessed by the joy of each child as they prepared for their Christmas services. Watching their excitement in the message of Christmas, "A Savior Has Been Born to You". What a witness they are!

Registration for the 2022-2023 school year begins this month. Enrollment for members of Zion, existing students, and siblings of existing students begins January 3. Open enrollment applications are accepted on a first come, first serve basis beginning February 1. Children must be four years of age on or before September 1, 2022, to enroll in the four-year old class. Children attending the three-year-old class must be three years of age on or before September 1, 2022. We are also currently accepting enrollment for our Toddler class. Children between the ages of 16 months to 36 months are welcome. Enrollment will be done through our Smartcare system, instructions will follow soon. We will be offering more information on our Summer Camp program in the coming weeks. Brochures and enrollment forms will be sent home in your child's backpack in the coming weeks



Quarterly Voters' Meeting at CTK

Sunday, January 23

12:15 p.m.

STEWARDSHIP

Monthly Income & Expense Report
through November 30, 2021

	<u>2021</u>	<u>2020</u>
YTD Budgeted Expenses	\$ 422,947.42	\$ 413,931.36
YTD Actual Expenses	<u>\$ 453,846.99</u>	<u>\$ 387,493.84</u>
YTD Balance	\$ (30,899.57)	\$ 26,437.52
YTD General Fund Income	\$ 462,156.98	\$ 353,525.91
YTD Actual Expenses	<u>\$ 453,846.99</u>	<u>\$ 387,493.84</u>
YTD Income Less Expense	\$ 8,309.99	\$ (33,967.93)

'Tis More Blessed to Give Than to Receive

"In all things I have shown you that by working hard in this way we must help the weak and remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he himself said, 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.' " (Acts 20:35) And indeed, it is. Does this not strike a chord that resonates in us all? Which of us can't recall the look of surprise and thanks for the Christmas gifts that we labored to give to those whom we love? And the joy written on their face when that gift is received with thanksgiving means more than all the gifts we have received. It is more blessed to give than to receive. Our Lord knew this because He practiced it. He gave of Himself – sparing not even His life in death – in order to give us back to our Father in heaven. He knew that in giving you get more because joy is multiplied in giving. The one who receives and the one who gives both rejoice in what is given and received. And, what is more, the one who receives only wants to give back to the one who gave so generously in thanksgiving.

So it is with our tithes and offerings in church. We want to give because we have received from God all that we are and all that we have. Our giving does not originate in what we must do to earn God's favor. We have God's favor because of His gift of His Son, given through Word and Sacrament. Thus, we are made free from the compulsion of giving so that our tithes and offering are freely given in thanksgiving for what God has so generously given to us.

Why then does the church struggle to make budgets? Why does the church always seem stretched so thin when it is the place where God continually gives us His forgiveness of sins? Why does the church struggle when God, out of love for us, generously pours out His

grace and mercy? It is because we are sinners. Our fallen nature makes us selfish and miserly. It leads us to believe that we can have our cake and eat it, too. Because of sin, we want God's grace and mercy; we want His blessings of body and soul. But we don't want to share it with those around us. We want to remain comfortable in our own self-contained, neat, and tidy lives – without the headaches of loving those around us by helping them in their time of need.

"Remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he himself said, 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.' " Remember that God has placed you in a church, not only to receive His grace and mercy, but to press His eternal and temporal blessings into service to your neighbor.

Your tithes and offerings ensure that those around you have a pastor to preach the life-saving and life-giving Word of God. They ensure that the lights, heat, and air-conditioning are working. They ensure there is water for Holy Baptism as well as bread and wine for Holy Communion. They even ensure that your pastor has food and clothing and presents for his own family. The gifts of God are immeasurable. They multiply and redound to everyone's good as the fish and loaves in the feeding of the five thousand. So, remember the words of the Lord Jesus: "It is more blessed to give than to receive." And remember the joy that attended the gifts you gave at Christmas. This same joy attends your gifts to the church.

Mission of the Month

Life Choices of Central Michigan



Life Sunday is January 23

A huge thank you to all of you for the kindnesses you have shown to both of your pastors and their families at Christmas. Thank you for the cards and the gifts you have given to us; we are blessed by our church family. It is a joy to serve the Lord at Zion! In Christ, Pastor Ricky and Pastor Bakker.

Thanks to all of our elders and ushers for all of the work they do to ensure the services happen smoothly throughout the year, but especially in the Advent and Christmas seasons, when there are so many extra services. Thank you also to everyone who has assisted with recording the services this year, and now processing and uploading the videos, too, for our members watching online.

Thank you to all of you for the kind cards, gifts, and memorials you gave at the occasion of my grandfather's death. I thank God for all of you showing me such loving Christian support. Alleluia, Christ is risen! He is risen, indeed; Alleluia!

Lifelight Bible Study Begins January 13

In our winter sessions of Lifelight, we will be continuing our study of the book of Luke. New people are always welcome to attend and participate in this in-depth 9 week Bible study. The readings for each week will be compiled and available for download on the church website under the 'Bible studies' link. The class will be offered at 10:30 a.m. and 6:30 p.m. each Thursday (come at whichever time is most convenient for you) beginning Thursday, January 13. Please check the calendar each month closely as there will be an occasional Thursday where Pastor Bakker will be out of town, and we'll simply pick up where we left off. Speak with Pastor Bakker if you have any questions. The study materials are available in the church office..

Men's Breakfast Bible Study



*Saturday, January 15
8:00 a.m. at Zion*

Guided Reading

A Month in Matthew – This month we will focus on a continuous reading of Matthew's Gospel. Matthew, the first Gospel, gives us the account of Jesus' life on earth as seen through the eyes of a Jewish tax-collector who became an apostle. It is instructive in nature and was written to those who had been raised in the Israelite faith.



- Matthew 1 Genealogy and birth
- Matthew 2 Maji visit and the Egyptian sojourn
- Matthew 3 Baptist and Baptism
- Matthew 4 Temptation and Apostles
- Matthew 5 Beatitudes and God's Law – the Sermon on the Mount
- Matthew 6 The Lord's Prayer, fasting, anxiety – the Sermon on the Mount
- Matthew 7 The end of the Sermon on the Mount
- Matthew 8 Miracles of Faith
- Matthew 9 Healing Miracles
- Matthew 10 Sending the 12
- Matthew 11 John's Questions and Comfort
- Matthew 12 Judgment coming
- Matthew 13 Parables of the Kingdom
- Matthew 14 John's death, feeding the five thousand
- Matthew 15 Faith, Healing, and feeding the four thousand
- Matthew 16 Who is Jesus? A prediction of his death
- Matthew 17 Transfiguration and another prediction of death
- Matthew 18 Reconciliation and forgiveness
- Matthew 19 Marriage, Children, and a Rich Young Man
- Matthew 20 A parable, another prediction of death, and Zebedee's sons
- Matthew 21 Triumphal entry and Temple cleansing
- Matthew 22 Parables and rendering unto Caesar
- Matthew 23 Seven Woes, and a Lament for Jerusalem
- Matthew 24 Foretelling the end times
- Matthew 25 Parables of the End Times
- Matthew 26 The Plot Begins, the Lord's Supper
- Matthew 27 The Passion
- Matthew 28 The Resurrection and the Great Commission



In memory of Mary Bennett

Dale & JoAnn Gust

In memory of Lewis Camp

Wayne & Karyn Kiefer

In memory of Ronnel Deeg

Amy Bidlack
Darwin & Monica Brown
Julie Courtney
David & Linda Coyne
Yvonne Fitzgerald
Ruth Giffin
Wayne & Karyn Kiefer
Jim & Delores Morford
Patty Pickler

In memory of Raymond Rhines Jr.

Julie Courtney
David & Linda Coyne

FLOWERS!



The 2022 Flower Chart is posted at Zion. Flowers are just \$20 and you can take them home after the service. Sign up at Zion or call the church office. 772-1516. Thank you.

YOUTH / FAMILY LIFE NEWS

“For You” Higher Things Conference

The Higher Things Conference next summer will be at Valparaiso University in Indiana from July 26-29. Youth interested in attending should talk with Luke Epple Jr. as soon as possible. You can contact Luke with any questions at 944-5426.

Saturday, January 8

Youth are encouraged to gather at the SAC on CMU’s campus for some activities to be followed by a brief bible study most likely at CTK. Contact Luke Epple Jr. With questions or if interested. 944-5426

WHO IS READY FOR COLLEGE?????????

It is that time when high school seniors collaborate with their parents on selecting a college to attend if that is in their plans. Well surprise! We have the best college right in our back yard—just a couple hours from us.

LIVE UNCOMMON is the theme for our Concordia University Ann Arbor and Wisconsin. Here is a quote from President Rev. Patrick T. Ferry (recently retired) which appears in its flyer. “There is something quite different about Concordia University. What sets us apart, what makes us uncommon, is that our ordinary university is attached to the Word of God and connected to His promises.”

Did you know that CUAA is one of the fastest growing colleges in the Midwest? True.

CUAA has many other plus factors. Just to name a few of the Church Work Programs—Pre-Seminary, Lutheran Teacher Degree, Family Life Ministry, Director of Parish Music, Pre-Deaconess Studies. Then there many, many, many programs offered both online and in person. The best way to discover CUAA is to go to their website www.CUAA.edu.

Don’t pass up this opportunity without even taking a real LOOK! Nursing, pre-med, Dr. of Physical Therapy, Dr. of Nursing Practice, RN, MS, BSN, CNA and Physician Assistant Studies. There are programs in Marketing, Management, Computer Science, and more. Just visit the site www.CUAA.edu And, don’t forget the music programs. (See Dale Gust if you have questions)

SATURDAY, JANUARY 29

Lets Go Bowling!!!

All members are welcome to join us for some bowling and fellowship on Saturday, January 29, at Riverwood from 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. A sign up sheet will be up soon at Zion and CTK.



BowLING

Making Jesus the Center of My Focus

The four short weeks between Thanksgiving and Christmas can feel like a ride down a slide; each day gaining momentum causing me to take my eyes off Jesus and get wrapped up in the trappings of the holiday.

This year I'm going to make a conscious effort to center my mind and heart on Jesus, and push aside the many distractions that so easily entangle me. My plan is to reduce my cookie baking, relax my desire for a perfectly decorated home, and to stay well within my budget for gift giving.

My focus will be on Jesus — our Redeemer and Risen Lord.

My plan is to read the Bible daily, pray regularly, attend worship services, and to limit my social visits and obligations. Some resources I can use to guide my Scripture readings are the many *Lutheran Woman's Quarterly* Bible studies, archived and available for everyone at www.lwml.org/bible-studies-quarterly. Why not see which of these studies can help you keep your eyes on Jesus — the true Reason for the Season!

Linda Guterres
LWML Atlantic District



Who We Are

Have you often wondered who we are and what do we stand for? In the following months, there will be little inserts about LWML. Did you know that because we are an auxiliary of LCMS, you are a member. That means in order for this group to function, we need you to come to our meetings and events. We need you!

THE LWML MISSION STATEMENT

As Lutheran Women in Mission, we joyfully proclaim Christ, support missions, and equip women to honor God by serving others.

—Adopted January 2021

**MITES: DO YOU HAVE POCKETS OF CHANGE?
REMEMBER OUR MITE BOX IS LOOKING FOR
LOOSE CHANGE.**

Orphan Grain Train – Clothes - These clothes must be in good condition and clean. Please place in the container at the door at Zion Lutheran. Do not fill the garbage bags full as then they are too heavy for to lift. A volunteer is needed to take the bags up to Orphan Grain Train in Sebewaing, Michigan.

Thank you – To those who helped and all the great bakers of the terrific Christmas cookies at the December 4 Cookie Walk. We needed more cutout Christmas cookies, however, we did have a terrific variety of other special cookies. It was a success! Our income was \$1,111 minus expenses (\$170.56) for a profit of \$940.44. Ten percent will go to one of our charities.

Bazaar – 2022. We had some requests to once again have our craft show/bazaar in 2022. In order to do so we will need a volunteer to chair the Bazaar and also the Cookie Walk. If you are interested, please contact Kathleen Nims at (989) 294-1373.

Women's Bible Study – We will meet next on Saturday, January 8, at 9:30 a.m. To prepare for this lesson, please read pgs. 201-3, 100, 230-31, 254, 272-73, and explore timeline pgs. lxxx-lxxxii. I have purchased books for those of you who don't have one yet. New ladies are always welcome to join us. If you know of someone who wants to come and needs to order a book, have them contact me. They are \$17. Thanks, Anne Bakker

Christmas Party – What an enjoyable Christmas Party! Thank you to Kathy Nims for putting together a program, Jan Harless for doing such a great poster, Janah Aldrich for playing the piano and all who brought food.

District Convention – The convention has been changed to be held at Frankenmuth, Michigan, July 7-9. It should be a fun time for all and is close for us as well. You might not even have to stay overnight, however, I would recommend it if you are on a committee. We will need two delegates to represent our society with all expenses paid. Many volunteers will be needed from our Mid Michigan Zone as we are one of the co-hosts.

“Serve the Lord with Gladness” Psalm 100:2



2022 Theological Conference
February 5, 2022 | Our Savior, Lansing
8:30 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.

“Keep your conduct among the Gentiles honorable, so that when they speak against you as evildoers, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day of visitation” (1 Peter 2:12).

It is difficult to live honorably as a child of God when the Church is increasingly marginalized and ridiculed. To be sure, this is a consequence of evil in the world, but it is also because God’s people don’t know the Scriptures and/or because they compromise what they believe or how they live in the world.

Please join us for the 2022 Theological Conference on Saturday, February 5, at Our Savior, Lansing. Excellent speakers will guide us, with the help of the Holy Spirit, to pray and determine when to defend the “walls” of the Church and when to continue to shine and speak the truth in love, even though our witness may go against many of the current cultural topics.

Keynote Speakers

Rev. Dr. Dale A. Meyer
Rev. Dr. Joel D. Lehenbauer
Mr. Greg S. Baylor, JD
Rev. Dr. Theodore J. Hopkins
Rev. Brian D. West - Moderator

\$15/Student
\$20/General

Register online at
michigandistrict.org/theological22



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