

# the herald

NEWS OF ZION LUTHERAN | ANOKA

DECEMBER 2023



**ZION**  
LUTHERAN + ANOKA

## 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)

### Gospel Readings

#### Dec 2-3

Mark 13:24-37

#### Dec 9-10

Mark 1:1-8

#### Dec 16-17

John 1:6-8, 19-28

#### Dec 23

Luke 1:26-38

#### Dec 24-25

Luke 2:1-14 [15-20]

#### Dec 30-31

Luke 2:22-40

## Christmas Eve & Day Worship

### December 24 | Candlelight with Communion

10 am; 1:30 pm; 3 pm; 4:30 pm; 10 pm  
in person and online

### Radio Broadcast (BOB-FM, 106.1)

10 am; 4:30 pm

### Cable TV Channel 6 Broadcast

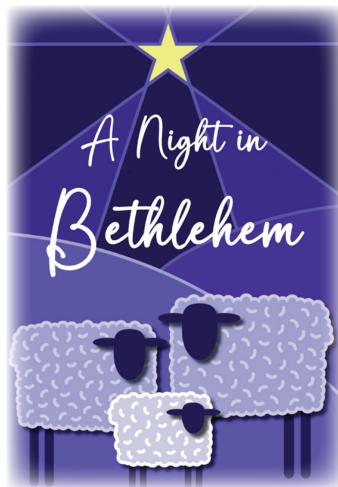
10 am; 5 pm

### Nursery Care

10 am; 1:30 pm; 3 pm; 4:30 pm

### December 25 | with Communion

10 am | in person and online



## Experience the night of Jesus' birth at "A Night in Bethlehem!"

*This exciting, new family event,  
is scheduled for 10-11 am, Sunday, Dec. 3*

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!

*Sunday school and adult education will not be offered this morning so  
people of all ages can participate! Want to volunteer? Contact Ann or*

*Lee at [acampbell@zionanoka.org](mailto:acampbell@zionanoka.org) and [lnitge@zionanoka.org](mailto:lnitge@zionanoka.org).*

## Christmas Choral Worship - December 16 & 17

On December 16 at 5 p.m. and December 17 at 9 and 11 a.m., Zion's music department will present a new Christmas Cantata for choir, handbells, and orchestra. Join us for this worshipful meditation on the season of Advent and Christmas. Special thanks to all the musicians at Zion who help make our worship so special.

## a message from pastor brent



As I write this, it almost seems as if our world is “on fire”. We were horrified by the October 7th Hamas attacks on Israel. Our hearts ache over the humanitarian crisis in Gaza. Russia’s unprovoked war against Ukraine continues. Our nation’s political division is as strong as ever. This is, of course, not the first time that our world has been overwhelmed by violence and war and political tensions. Back during World War II, American soldiers were taken captive during the Battle of the Bulge. They were herded into freight cars and taken into the heart of Germany.

On the evening of December 23, they were in the railroad yard of a German city when the British Royal Air Force launched a devastating air attack killing many Americans and Germans in the process. The attack was waged again the next night on Christmas Eve. When the American prisoners, packed like sardines in the freight cars, heard the planes, they were understandably filled with fear and alarm. An American chaplain happened to be among the prisoners and convinced the German guards to let him speak to the men. The chaplain walked from car to car reminding the men that it was Christmas Eve. He reminded them of the birth of Jesus and how Jesus was with them even in that terrible moment. Suddenly a deep, rich baritone began to sing, “Silent Night, Holy Night,” and soon other prisoners began to join in. Then something strange happened. Other voices, German voices, began to sing as well, singing the song as it was originally written, in German: “Stille Nacht, Heilige Nacht.” And there, under the roar of the planes, with bombs bursting in the background, the prisoners and their captors sang together, united for a few moments by the baby born 2,000 years ago, in Bethlehem. In a similar way, the Christ Child comes to us anew this season, as we watch as our world seems “on fire” and we struggle to find hope. We are reminded that through the Christ Child we have hope. He is our peace. For his birth, his life, his death on the cross, and his resurrection assure us that the world won’t always be like this. As the Old Testament prophet Isaiah wrote when predicting the birth of Christ: “And his name will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.” Join us this Christmas to hear the good news of peace that our world and our homes so need to hear.

## Snow, Fake or Real?

By Colleen Nelson

Born and raised in the Upper Midwest, I’ve been fortunate, more often than not, to awaken to a fresh coating of snow on Christmas Day. It’s fair to say that we Minnesotans expect snow for the holidays, so much so, that meteorologists find themselves apologizing for a brown Christmas. When it comes to holiday preparations, I procrastinate my list making, shopping and decorating until that magical day arrives when I wake up to a thick blanket of snow; a significant snowfall mind you, flurries do not count. In fact, I credit the white wonderland outside to change my perspective on the inside for the upcoming holidays. This made the year we spent Christmas in California with our daughter and son-in-law, the outlier. Experiencing the early onset of darkness and the glow of Christmas lights in 75-degree temperatures was uncanny and listening to Christmas tunes in my shorts and flip flops was bizarre. In terms of attending worship on Christmas Day, we found a church in the area. Their website strongly recommended making a reservation for one of the numerous services and suggested possible places to park-n-ride. I was intrigued, curious as to what else about this mega church would surprise me. Upon entering the auditorium, the level of excitement in the faces and chatter amongst the gathering crowd was contagious. A huge screen displayed scenes of the winter wonderland I’d taken for granted my entire life, while the worship band led us in secular Christmas tunes. Hmm. At this point, it was becoming difficult to keep an open mind. The crème de la crème of the hour was when fake snow started to fall from the ceiling while everyone joined in singing the familiar tune, Jingle Bells. I’m being facetious; I was stunned and disenchanted. And yet, following this theatrical, festive, and over-the-top opening came a Christmas message of love and hope in the miracle of the Christ Child that truly surpassed my expectations. What I learned that day is that the good news of Jesus’ birth might be wrapped in paper with unfamiliar patterns and tied with bows of a different color, but the love and hope that Christmas brings, remains the same, always.

# welcome

## Zion: A Place to Gather and Grow

If you have not yet returned your 2024 Stewardship Commitment, please mail it in or drop it off at the church office. If you have misplaced your stewardship material, extra copies are available at the front desk or go to [www.zionanoka.org](http://www.zionanoka.org) and click on the "2024 Pledge" button to download a form. Thank you for your faithful support of Zion's Mission and Ministry!



## Year-End Giving

The church office will be closed Monday, December 25 (Christmas Day). Please place your year-end gifts in the offering plate on December 31 or mail them (postmarked) by December 31 or give online at [www.zionanoka.org](http://www.zionanoka.org) by December 31. Thank you!

## Fare For All

DECEMBER 14 | 4 - 6 PM | LOWER COMMONS

This month features the popular December Holiday Pack which includes: bone-in spiral cut ham, Kadejan chicken drumsticks 1.25 lbs., grass-fed ground beef 80/20 1 lb., pork breakfast sausage 1 lb., Johnsonville Maple Breakfast Links, corn 10 oz., Dutch apple pie 8". Cost is \$35.

Fare For All is a program that allows people to come and 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.

# worship

## Advent

In this season when the cultural gravity pushes us down the hill to Christmas way too fast, it's time to apply the brakes and slow down. As countercultural as that may seem, there's too much to hear, too much to see, too much to experience, too much to take in to hurry through Advent. We sit with Isaiah and his people who longingly wait for the coming of the Promised One. We stand with John the Baptist as he calls God's people to prepare the way of the Lord.

Take time this month to listen fully to what is being said and sung in worship. Attend Zion's Choral Worship either Saturday, December 16 at 5 p.m. or Sunday, December 17 at 9 or 11 a.m. This year, since December 24 is both the 4th Sunday of Advent and Christmas Eve, we will celebrate the 4th Sunday of Advent on Saturday, December 23 and Christmas Eve on the 24th.

God is about to come, not as an angry judge, but as a human among us. This is good news – so take the time to linger and patiently prepare. Allowing the time to pause here in Advent will reap the rewards of patient, thoughtful, prayerful preparation for God's coming among us.

## Blue Christmas - A Service of Remembrance and Hope

This time of year can be a mix of emotions that make it a challenge. Blue Christmas is a gentle, contemplative service that offers comfort and hope for those carrying pain or loss during this holiday season. Join us on Thursday, December 21 at 6:30 p.m. for a service of reflection, song, comfort and hope for hurting hearts.

## Weekly Worship Opportunities

### **In-Person Worship**

Saturdays @ 5 pm and Sundays @ 8 am, 9 am & 11 am

### **Livestream Worship**

Sundays @ 9 am & 11 am

### **Radio (BOB-FM, 106.1)**

Sundays @ 9:10 am

### **Cable TV Channel 6 Broadcast**

Sundays @ 10 am & 5 pm

## Adult Small Group Studies

This month, we finish up our study "Luke: Gut Level Compassion" by Lisa Harper. Listed below is the schedule:

- Week of December 4: *A Most Radical Restoration*
- Week of December 11: *A Tale of Two Rooms*

Our next small group study will start the week of January 15 with a study by Adam Hamilton entitled: "Why? Making Sense of God's Will." Books will be on sale at the Welcome Desk. Look for more details in the January Herald, Life Together bulletin inserts and weekly E-updates.

## Upcoming Adult Forums

Adult Forums are held Sunday mornings at 10 a.m. in the Fellowship Hall. Below is the schedule for December.

- December 3: Our Fellowship Hall will become the town of Bethlehem as all people are invited to come and experience *A Night in Bethlehem*.
- December 10: Name the (Christmas) Tune! Players will compete in a game that will determine how well we know our Christmas Carols! Players are given a clue to the name of the song and then compete against each other and wager who can name the tune in the fewest notes. Each player has two chances to bid, then Mary Jo will play the song so the player with the lowest wager will have to guess.

Forums resume January 21. Watch for more details in the January Herald, Life Together bulletin inserts and weekly E-updates.

## Zion Pages Book Club

JANUARY 22 | 6:30 PM | THEATER

We will be discussing *The Warmth of Other Suns: The Epic Story of America's Great Migration* by Isabel Wilkerson. From 1915 to 1970, this exodus of almost six million people changed the face of America. Wilkerson compares this epic migration to the migrations of other peoples in history.

Zion Pages meets the 4th Monday of the month at 6:30 p.m. in the Theater. All are welcome!

# grow and care

## CYF Continues Support of Dinesh and Srimathi

Last year, Zion's children and youth began sponsoring two children through Lutheran Partners in Global Ministry. They are Dinesh (age 10) and Srimathi (age 8). Both are supported through an LPGM program called Project Education India. Working with Dalit-led Arcot Lutheran Church in India, the program provides boarding home schools for thousands of children. We provide \$40 per month per child. To participate, donate to Zion Lutheran Church and indicate LPGM/Project Education India on your envelope. Or give online at [www.zionanoka.org](http://www.zionanoka.org) and click the GIVE TODAY button.



Dinesh



Srimathi

## News from HS and MS Ministries

### Noisy Offering for Camp Ministries

Thank you to everyone who brought in their Noisy Offering in November! We gathered \$588 which will go toward our camp ministries. The next weekend our Noisy Offering buckets will be out is December 2 & 3. We will also have a bucket at the Welcome Desk if you would like to drop off your Noisy Offering during office hours.

### Global Health Ministries

On Tuesday, December 12 from 6:30-8:30 p.m., Zion youth and families are invited to join us at Global Health Ministries for a community service project of packing medical supplies to be sent out to global partners in need. If you are interested in this event, please register by emailing [kweiland@zionanoka.org](mailto:kweiland@zionanoka.org).

### Lefse for Mission Trip

On Sunday, December 10, we will be having lefse during coffee hour as a fundraiser for our mission trip to Tacoma, Washington this coming summer. There will be buttered and sugared lefse rolls for coffee hour, as well as take-home bags for purchase. Each lefse bag will cost \$10.

## Christmas Wishes for Steve and Kim Blewett

Join Zion in thanking Steve and Kim for their 30+ years in Papua New Guinea by making them Christmas Cards! You may remember Steve was a graduate of Anoka High School and a member of Zion. He and Kim work as Wycliffe Bible Translators. Send a note of thanks, prayers and encouragement in your card. Special cards are located at the Welcome Desk and in the Adult Forum space. There are also cards for kids to color. Place your cards in the basket at the Welcome Desk when completed and we will make sure they get mailed. Please have your card back to us by December 10.

## Caring Tree

The need is still so great in our community and we hope you can help! Zion's Caring Tree supports four local agencies: Alexandra House, Anoka Metro Regional Treatment Center, Stepping Stone Emergency Housing and Bridgeview Drop-in Center at Lee Carlson Center. We will be collecting gift cards to Walmart, Target and Cub which will be distributed to all four of the agencies listed. We invite you to drop off your cards at the front desk by December 13 so that they can be used by families in time for Christmas.



# care of creation

## Zion's EcoFaith Team - Ahhh! Christmas

Christmas is coming and it brings us anticipation, great joy, and can cause STRESS. I don't think God wanted it that way. He kept it simple, a simple man and woman with great expectations awaiting the birth of their first baby. It was a simple place, a stable in a small village. Jesus was their gift, as well as God's gift to the world.

Each year in the United States alone, 2.3 million pounds of wrapping paper end up in landfills. If every family would reuse 2 ft. of Christmas ribbon, it would save enough to tie a bow around the earth. Small changes can have a big impact! In our family, we give our grandchildren three gifts - something to read, something to wear and a memory. Our memories are created through adventures or time spent together such as:

- Gathering together for a sleepover and making Christmas cookies, playing games, and watching a Christmas movie (this gives the gift of time to adult children, as well)
- Sledding or snowshoeing
- Making seed ornaments for our feathered friends to hang in trees outside
- Making gingerbread houses to take home
- Making simple gifts for family members
- Working at FMSC
- Bring food to the Canadian Pacific Christmas Train as it makes stops in Minnesota
- Going to an indoor park to play
- Tying fleece blankets to take to ACBC

If you decide to celebrate a more simple Christmas this year with your children and/or grandchildren, you will use up less of God's first gift to us, the earth and its resources. May your holidays be joy-filled with wonderful memories and less waste.

Jeanne Minier, Zion's EcoFaith Team

## Thank You Recent Radio Broadcast Fund Donors

Diane Halvorson  
Lyle & Marlene Willock  
Elaine Isaacson  
Craig Bakken  
Kristine Johnson  
Lois Peterson

Karen Siewert in memory of Gary Siewert and Leona Seeman  
Bob Fischer in memory of Sharon Fischer  
Pinky Pendergrass in memory of Diane Bahr  
Marilyn Herbold in memory of Ed Pederson  
John & Carol Loyd in memory of Ed Pederson  
Ken & Sandy Benson in memory of Bonnie Strand  
Ken & Sandy Benson in memory of Pastor Brent's mother

## about our people

### Baptisms

Oct 21 - Aden Heitzman  
Oct 22 - Hendrix Donley

### Deaths

Marlene Lord  
Gordon Frolik  
Connie Engstrom



# poinsettia garden

Help decorate Zion's Sanctuary by donating to the Memorial 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 Wednesday, December 13.



GIVEN BY: \_\_\_\_\_ AMOUNT ENCLOSED: \_\_\_\_\_

IN HONOR OF \_\_\_\_\_

IN MEMORY OF \_\_\_\_\_

CUT HERE  
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## care and serve

### Matthew Bags

Matthew bags are available at the Welcome Desk for you to give, in a safe manner, to a needy person you encounter. Bags are also given to organizations in our community who serve the needy, e.g., ACBC and HOPE4Youth. Each bag contains water, food bars, personal hygiene items, socks and a "Who to Call" resource sheet. Current donation needs are mid-length winter socks which can be dropped off at the Matthew Bags donation bin at the Welcome Desk. Financial donations are also accepted at the front desk. Please write "Matthew Bags" on the memo line of your check. Thank you for supporting Zion's Matthew Bag Ministry so generously this past year. Together, we are making a difference in our community.

### Family Promise - Big Changes for Volunteers

Our hosting is December 10-17 providing requested cleaning supplies for a month. Your donations cover that expense and checks can be made to Zion with a note that it goes into the Zion Family Promise Account.

We are also requested to provide six meals during December (each participating church is asked to provide six meals in December). This is accomplished through SignUpGenius. Email Dulcie at [livingoutfaith@hotmail.com](mailto:livingoutfaith@hotmail.com) and she will send you the link and instructions. There is no obligation, just take a look at what there is to do and sign up for the date that is best for you. Meals can be very simple, and since you are the one delivering the meal, you will have brief contact with the family member who comes to your car to get the meal.

In 2024, most volunteer activities will be requested through SignUpGenius. More information and instruction will be in the January Herald. These new options will decrease the job description of the Family Promise Coordinator.

Please contact Dulcie Campana [livingoutfaith@hotmail.com](mailto:livingoutfaith@hotmail.com) if you have any questions and thanks for supporting Family Promise as we continue to change and help more families.



1601 4th Avenue  
Anoka MN 55303

**ZION**  
LUTHERAN † ANOKA

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TWIN CITIES, MN  
PERMIT NO. 4190

A WELCOMING FAITH COMMUNITY.  
GROWING. CARING. SERVING.

## news from Zion Pre-K



We are so thrilled to have joined with Zion Lutheran Church to donate food to the ACBC food shelf. Our preschoolers enjoy watching our turkey grow when we add a feather for every item of food donated.

### WELCOME

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

### CONTACT US

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763.421.4656  
[www.zionanoka.org](http://www.zionanoka.org)