

ZION'S ADVENT AND CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICES

The First Sunday of Advent: Gathering as Families Welcome the New Year

Sunday, November 30, 8:00 a.m.: Our Traditional Service, with the Senior Choir singing
Sunday, November 30, 10:30 a.m.: Our Blended Service, led by Zion's Praise Team
Sunday, November 30, 5:30 p.m.: Our First Advent Dinner hosted by the Chancel Guild
Sunday, November 30, 6:15 p.m.: We Focus on the Advent Window & Advent Wreaths

[Our First Sunday Evening Advent Service features the talent of Ed Hauck on organ, as well as the reflections of Pastor Sherwindt on the meaning of our Advent Window, while making sure that all who join us are blessed with an Advent wreath (designed by Carol Rossbach).]

The Second Sunday of Advent: The Biblical Story of Hope and Fulfillment

Sunday, December 7, 8:00 a.m.: Our Traditional Service, with the Senior Choir singing
Sunday, December 7, 10:30 a.m.: Our Blended Service, led by Zion's Praise Team
Sunday, December 7, 5:30 p.m.: Our Second Advent Dinner hosted by our Church Council
Sunday, December 7, 6:15 p.m.: An Evening Service with Readings and Special Music

[Our evening service will feature special music by Ed Hauck on organ, along with anthems by our Senior Choir, with great lessons, and powerful hymns. Dinner will be delicious. Join us!]

The Third Sunday of Advent: Gathering as Families to Celebrate the Story

Sunday, December 14, 8:00 a.m.: Our Traditional Service, with the Senior Choir singing
Sunday, December 14, 10:30 a.m.: Children's Christmas Program, simply called *Christmas*
Sunday, December 14, 5:30 p.m.: Our Third Advent Dinner hosted by the Youth of Zion
Sunday, December 14, 6:15 p.m.: Please join us for our Annual Celebration of Chrismons

[Our morning service celebrates the role of children in telling the story of Christmas, while our evening program features Zion's youth in a service that celebrates the tradition of Chrismons.]

The Fourth Sunday of Advent: A Festival of Carols from around the World

Sunday, December 21, 8:00 a.m.: Our Traditional Service, with the Senior Choir singing
Sunday, December 21, 10:30 a.m.: Our Blended Service, led by Zion's Praise Team
Sunday, December 21, 5:30 p.m.: Our Fourth Advent Dinner hosted by the Men of Zion
Sunday, December 21, 6:15 p.m.: Celebrating *Christmas Carols from around the World!*

[Our grand finale is a joyous delight. Plan to join us. You'll be glad you did; and so will we!]

Our Christmas Eve Schedule at Zion: Two Services – 7:00 p.m. and 9:00 p.m.

Wednesday, December 24, 7:00 p.m.: Our Family-Friendly Service, with special music by Zion's many talented members, plus our Christmas Carol Setting for Holy Communion
Wednesday, December 24, 9:00 p.m.: A Traditional Choral Concert and Carol Sing for All
Wednesday, December 24, 9:30 p.m.: Our Traditional Candlelight Service, with Zion's Senior Choir singing, as well as our special Christmas Carol Setting for Holy Communion

GREETINGS FROM THE PASTOR:

Our year of bicentennial celebration is now past. We enjoyed visits from many pastors and interns, the family members of former pastors, and a son of the congregation – Pastor Lutz and Kate, Nancy Meuschke and sons Dane and Darrell, Carol Darcy and her daughter, Bishop Suzanne Dillahunt, Curtis (Yeager) Frank, Pastors Mike Wiechers, Bob Linsz, Ralph Edwards, and Louise Mollick. We also enjoyed great services with local ecumenical partners like Fr. Jay Clarke from St. Paul's Catholic Church, Rev. Sarah Taylor Peck from Community Christian Church, and Pr. Eli Klingensmith from Zion United Church of Christ. Former members, too many to mention, also blessed us with their presence. It was a great year, filled with heartwarming memories, while also confirming the hope God has given us as we begin year number two hundred and one of growing in love and service by grace. We begin this year with hope, the hope that is ours because of God's promise, and God's call to serve.

Hope is the theme of Advent, and hope is the theme that illumines the meaning of our Advent Window. On the evening of November 30th, the First Sunday Evening in Advent, we will gather for the first of four Sunday Evening Dinners and Services at Zion. The Chancel Guild will serve a light dinner, with the focus on soup 'n sandwiches – and plenty of desserts, of course! Following dinner, we will gather in the Sanctuary to listen to special music on organ offered by the new organist who has blessed us with his talents throughout the fall season. Ed Hauck will offer special music. Pastor Sherwindt will preach on the meaning of our Advent Window. All of us will enjoy the beautiful take-home present of an Advent wreath that allows us to let the hope of our Advent Window color the inside of our homes all season long. It will be a great service, the beginning of a great season of Sunday Evening Dinners and Services, and a great start of the new church year!

The Second Sunday Evening in Advent will feature special music by our Senior Choir, along with special musical selections offered by Ed Hauck on organ. Special lessons, special music, and a delicious meal prepared by our Church Council: December 7th is a night you will not want to miss. On December 14th, the Youth of Zion (and their families) will prepare dinner and lead our service of celebration focused on Chrismons. On the Fourth Sunday Evening in Advent, the Men of Zion will prepare a feast you will not want to miss, and Carole Singer will lead us through a wonderful program that invites us to enjoy Christmas Carols from around the world. This has become a wonderful grand finale that sets the table for what is the best Christmas gift of all, the gift of God's Son in the baby Jesus, born in a manger in Bethlehem.

Christmas Eve is always a beautiful night at Zion. Regardless of the weather, our hearts are warmed with the good news of God's grace given freely for all to receive with great joy. But before we get to Christmas, let's make sure that we give Advent its due, with our presence at the four Sunday Evenings in Advent, filled with good news, great food, special music, and services that will enlighten and engage, while inviting bold hope and great joy. Please join us!



CHURCH COUNCIL NEWS

With the arrival of November, Advent is on our mind. The Advent schedule was set with the Chancel Guild hosting our first Advent dinner, the Church Council hosting the second Advent dinner, the Youth of Zion (and their families) hosting the third Advent dinner, and the Men of Zion hosting the fourth Advent dinner. Services will feature Ed Hauck on organ for the first three Sunday evening services, and Carole Singer on piano for our fourth Sunday in Advent.

Our Treasurer had more good news to share as we enjoyed another monthly surplus in October. Our year-to-date surplus now stands at \$2,016.92. Given what could be an unusually cold November and December, your generosity is invited, and will be needed if we want to end the year on a strong note. We are confident that your support will help us end the year with all expenses covered, and another small surplus for what will be our ninth consecutive year of budgets in balance and property projects fully funded.

FINANCIAL FACTS FOR OCTOBER

October Income	\$ 17,681.72
October Expenses	\$ <u>17,543.24</u>
October Surplus	\$ 138.48
Income thru October	\$252,974.68
Expenses " October	\$ <u>250,957.76</u>
Surplus thru October	\$ 2,016.92
Food Pantry Fund	\$ 6,847.99
Zion's Youth Fund	\$ 7,976.53
The Women of Zion	\$ 2,065.13
Bicentennial Gifts Fund	\$ 17,487.28
Advanced Giving: 2014	\$ 1,500.00
Advanced Giving: 2015	\$ 2,000.00
Thankofferings-to-date	\$ 573.50

We thank you for your generous support!

MORE COUNCIL NEWS

Worship Ministry, Dale Jacobs: We have been happy to have Ed Hauck serve as our organist through the fall, and we are happier still that Ed is willing to join the staff as our organist. We look forward to Ed's serving as our organist at our 8:00 a.m. services during Advent, and to his providing musical leadership on organ at our evening services on November 30th, December 7th and the 14th.

Learning Ministry, Renee Keith: The Youth Missions Craft Show, as reported in last month's newsletter, was a huge success. Our Sunday School Thanksgiving Service Project went well. Now it is on to Advent and Christmas. The Advent Giving Tree will invite Christmas gifts and dinners for the families we serve through our Food Pantry; and the Christmas Program will be another great one, which goes by the name *Christmas*.

Membership News: We were happy to receive into membership the Haga family, Keith, Amanda, and Eli, and Matt Slease's future family, his fiancée Amanda Howes and her son Mason. If you would like to throw your name into the hat of Zion's congregational family, please let Pastor Sherwindt know. We would love to receive you into membership, but we respect the space that everyone needs in making this decision. One of our formerly active members, Fred Cathers, whose bass voice blessed our Senior Choir, has relocated in southern Ohio, and asked that his membership be transferred to Grace Lutheran Church in Lancaster. We've celebrated two baptisms: Drew Keith and Elijah Haga, received one confirmand into membership, Christian Henderson, and also welcomed Josh Roan, Stephen Thompson, and Ashley (SirLouis) Haren into the ranks of confirmed membership at Zion.

ADVENT DINNERS ARE HERE

Sunday Evening Advent Dinners are back!
The Chancel Guild starts us off with a special edition of soup and sandwiches on the First Sunday of Advent. Our evening service will welcome Ed Hauck as our new organist by allowing Ed to help all of us to understand why we are blessed because he's here. Our focus at worship will be the Advent Window, which features Advent candles and an Advent wreath. Pastor Sherwindt will tell the story of what's so special about the Advent Window, and Carol Rossbach has designed an Advent wreath for home use, which, just by coincidence, looks exactly like the wreath depicted with our Advent Window! Plan to join us for a great way to start the New Year, the new *church year*, that is. Join us **November 30th**.

Our Second Sunday Evening in Advent will feature Divitis sausage as Dave Palumbo leads our Council's effort to host the second Advent dinner. Dave has had a lifelong connection with Divitis' Italian Market & Deli on Tallmadge Avenue in Akron; we are glad to enjoy the fruit of this friendship, although we are higher on the sausage than fruit. Ed Hauck will be back at the organ bench for our evening service, and the Senior Choir will add some special music to our evening, along with others from our congregation with the talents to make our evening truly enjoyable. Be sure to join us on **December 7th**.

We like to draw from the great Scripture readings on this Sunday evening that provides a glimpse of the traditional service of lessons & carols. Between our readers, special music on organ, with our choir, and by members and friends of Zion, this evening service will be a great way to continue our preparation for our Lord's birth with yet another wonderful Advent service.

STILL MORE ABOUT ADVENT

The Third Sunday of Advent is all about Zion's Youth. The Sunday School will present their Christmas Program at the 10:30 a.m. service, then return to host dinner in the evening, and lead our service, which is a celebration of Chrismons. When you read our introduction to Ed Hauck on page 11 in this newsletter, you will discover that Ed has deep roots in Virginia, as does the tradition of Chrismons, which were introduced to the life of the church at Ascension Lutheran Church in Danville, Virginia. To honor this connection, Ed will accompany a quartet, singing the seasonal classic, *Mary, Did You Know?* Whether or not Mary knew, we know that the Sunday evening of December 14th is going to be another great Sunday in Advent, and the morning will be very enjoyable, too. Plan to join us on **December 14th**.

The Fourth Sunday of Advent is always our grand finale. Carole & Ron Singer lead our worship with an extravaganza of musical instruments from around the world, as we sing Christmas carols with roots in England, France, Poland, Germany, Sweden and Norway, with American classics and African-American spirituals, too. The service is unforgettable, and this year, the Men of Zion have pledged to make the dinner every bit as outstanding. Expect pot roast that melts in your mouth, with sides that'll dazzle, and desserts that will transport you to another world ... and back, so that you can enjoy the service, and the full measure of what it means *to make a joyful noise unto the Lord!*

December brings four Sunday Evening Advent Dinners, along with four Sunday Evening Advent Services. Plan to make us part of your preparations for Christmas. You'll be glad you did; and so will we.

GREAT NEWS FROM ZION'S SUNDAY SCHOOL



HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO:

UPCOMING EVENTS – MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

- Saturday, December 13:** Dress Rehearsal for Children's Christmas Program at a time TBA
Saturday, December 13: The Pizza Party and Giving Tree Gift Wrapping Party afterwards!
Sunday, December 14th: The Children's Christmas Program at the 10:30 Service (only)
Sunday, December 14th: Youth of Zion and their families host the Advent dinner, 5:30 p.m.
Sunday, December 14th: Youth assist with our Celebration of Chrismos Service, 6:15 p.m.
Sunday, December 28th: There will be NO SUNDAY SCHOOL CLASSES this morning!

PRE-K THROUGH THE SIXTH GRADE

This December we will combine our Sunday School lessons with practice for this year's Christmas program. We will involve all of our youth, including those in Catechism and High School, with many different roles. This year's program is called *CHRISTMAS*. It is a fun program that will help us to remember why we celebrate this wonderful holiday. We look forward to a great program with music provided by our talented members and a cast of awesome kids.



The first three Sundays in Advent – November 30, December 7 and 14 – will be spent preparing for this program during the Sunday School hour. The Christmas Program will be performed on Sunday, December 14th, at the 10:30 a.m. service only. We will have dress rehearsal, our annual Christmas Pizza Party, and wrapping of the Giving Tree gifts on Saturday, December 13th; however, we want to wait to set a time so that we can check with everyone's schedule.

Please make a note of the fact that there will be no Sunday School classes for youth or adults on Sunday, December 28th, which is the First Sunday after Christmas. We will resume our normal Sunday School schedule at 9:15 a.m. on the Second Sunday of Christmas, which is January 4th.

A FEW WORDS OF THANKS TO OUR YOUTH AT ZION

Thank you to all of our youth and Sunday School leaders for the great job they did decorating this year's Thanksgiving bags for both the Siffrin Homes in our community and our Food Pantry families. Youth from ages 2 to 18, along with help from our Sunday School staff, beautifully decorated about ninety grocery bags this year. We would also like to thank all of the Sunday School families that donated boxed mashed potatoes and gravy to help the Pantry.

The youth and Sunday School staff would like to thank the leaders and volunteers of Zion's Food Pantry and Clothing Closet for all of their time and hard work in making such a big difference in the many lives of those in need. You are all greatly appreciated!

MORE GREAT NEWS FOR ZION'S YOUTH

CHRISTMAS IS A SEASON OF GIVING

The Youth will again sponsor the Giving Tree this Christmas season for several families in our community who are in need. The Giving Tree (located in the Narthex) has tags with gift suggestions for these families. We are also hoping to help all of our pantry families by giving them Christmas dinner. So we have placed tags on the tree for a \$25 donation for Christmas dinners in addition to the gift tags. Please take one or more of the tags, purchase the item and bring the gift, unwrapped with the tag attached, to church by the date listed at the bottom of the tag, which is Friday, December 12th.



The youth will be getting together on Saturday, December 13th, after rehearsal, to have pizza and then wrap the giving tree gifts so they can be delivered to the families before Christmas day. Please help our youth to help these families have a Merry Christmas and feel God's love through this great service project.

As an added treat for our pantry families, the youth and their families are being asked to donate boxes of "kid-friendly" cereals (Fruit Loops, Lucky Charms, Apple Jacks, and the like) to help these families as they are home over the holiday season together. These items can be placed in the red wagon in the Narthex or given to your child's Sunday School teacher.

Thank you for all of your support! Our Zion family is a truly wonderful family full of loving and giving people. This especially rings true during the holiday season; and we are so grateful for all that everyone does!

YOUTH TO HOST ADVENT DINNER ON DECEMBER 14

Advent has arrived along with our wonderful Sunday Evening Advent dinners and services. On Sunday, December 14th, the youth will host the Advent dinner. We are planning a delicious pasta dinner, finished off with lots of great desserts! We will be contacting the youth and their families about donating items for dinner, helping to set up, serve, and tear down for the dinner. Dinner starts at 5:30 p.m. So we will need all of the youth at church by 4:15 p.m. to get ready. This is always a great dinner and we appreciate everyone's help in making it happen!

The youth will also be helping with the Advent Service on Sunday, December 14th, which starts at 6:15 p.m. following dinner. We will be doing our Chrismon Service, and will need help with readers and we will need children to carry and hang the Chrismons on our Christmas tree.



Zion's Sunday School Staff would like to wish all our families a very Merry Christmas and a Blessed and Happy New Year!



THANKOFFERING SUNDAY

We celebrated Thankoffering Sunday on November 16th, when a good number of women participated in leadership roles in our worship services. Some sang with the Senior Choir, others with the Praise Team. Some served as Readers, Intercessors, and Assisting Ministers, while others served behind the scenes with the Chancel Guild. We thank them all, not only those who were with us at worship, but also the many women who worked through the year sewing comforters, assembling school and personal care kits, collecting blankets, volunteering with the ministry of our Food Pantry & Clothing Closet, and leading our Sunday School in service projects that helped get everything ready for our Great Turkey Give-away.

We also want to thank everyone who offered their support for the work and witness of the women of the church with the use of our Thankoffering envelopes. We are happy to announce that we have thus far received almost \$575 in Thankofferings, and are on the verge of exceeding last year's total \$600, all of which will go to support the *Women of the ELCA* and their many ministries throughout the church and around the globe.

PLEASE NOTE THE TIME CHANGE TWO CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICES

7:00 p.m. Zion's Family-Oriented Service

Worship Led by Zion's Praise Team
Special Music by the Walters & More
Our Carol Setting for Communion

9:00 p.m. Traditional Candlelight Service

Zion's Special Choral Concert at 9:00 p.m.
Our Formal Worship begins at 9:30 p.m.
Featuring Edward Hauck as Organist
Two Anthems by Zion's Senior Choir
Our Traditional Candlelight Ending

THE WOMEN OF ZION

Zion's Chancel Guild has decided that, due to the full and busy schedule of the season, it might be nicer to turn their annual Christmas Dinner into a celebration of the love we remember with Valentine's Day. So, look for more information about a special Chancel Guild Valentine's Dinner in February.

The women of Zion meet for their *monthly Bible study* on **Tuesday, December 16th**, in Resource Center at 9:30 a.m. *Transforming Life and Faith* is this year's theme, with this month's focus on *Faith in the Family*. Family was important in the spread of Christianity both during and after Jesus' lifetime. Family was also important for Martin Luther, who strongly believed that faith is formed in the family. Kathryn Kleinhans tells us that "we can learn much from the Luther family about the importance of faith formation and faith in the home. We see a model of family life that keeps expanding to include others. And perhaps most importantly, we learn that faith is a real faith for our real questions and real struggles of real life." Lutherans continue to value the connection between faith and family. December's Bible study encourages us to appreciate this aspect of our Christian faith and our Lutheran tradition. You are invited to join the women of Zion in the Resource Center, where their monthly Bible study meets on the third Tuesday of every month, which in December is the 16th. It begins at 9:30 a.m. You'll find the small group setting friendly, and the discussion lively. Plan to be there. You'll enjoy it.

Please remember that our *Comfort Givers* can use your company this month. They will meet just once this month, on December 11th in Luther Hall at 9:30 a.m. As the old saying goes, many hands make work light; and yours are just the hands we're looking for.

THANK YOU'S TO ZION

First of all, all of us would like to thank **Jeff Hisson** for the great job he did in investing his heart and soul, along with lots of information and personal anecdotes, as he led our Adult Sunday School Class on a journey of faith formation and refreshment grounded in Luther's *Small Catechism*. We learned about Martin Luther, the Lutheran tradition, and our Christian faith. We then followed the pilgrim journeys of St. James, St. Andrew, and St. Martin, ending up in Mexico to learn more about how local traditions came to value Our Lady of Guadalupe. What a great series of lessons, and what a great guide to lead us. We look forward to Jeff's next excursion with us.

To our friends and family at Zion,

Our sincere thanks to Pastor Sherwindt for his visits to Larry in the hospital and for the beautiful funeral service.

Our grateful thanks to Darlene Milavickas and everyone who furnished the food and served the delicious funeral lunch.

Our thanks to Chuck Danner for recording the service and presenting DVDs to the family. We truly have a wonderful family here at Zion.

The Family of Larry Moore

Pastor Sherwindt and the Youth of Zion,

Wow! What a successful Craft Show; and what a great way to utilize the proceeds! Please accept the local Thrivent Board's congratulations for this wonderful event, and our check for \$500.00 to aid your youth in their planning a meaningful mission trip to help others in need. What a wonderful way for you and your youth to share the love of Christ with others.

*Denny Stafford, Financial Director
Stark County Chapter of Thrivent*

THANK YOU'S & MORE!

To Our Friends at Zion Lutheran Church,

We would like to thank you for your generous donation to the Stark County Humane Society. Your continued support of our efforts is greatly appreciated!

The shelter cannot thank you enough. We enjoy having friends, such as your church family, in our community.

Please let us know if any of your members, especially your youth from VBS, would like to come to the shelter to volunteer or take a tour. Rest assured that all donations go to the direct care of the animals of the Stark County Humane Society.

On behalf of all of us and our furry friends, thank you!

*Jackie A. Godbey, Assistant Director
The Stark County Humane Society*

OUR CHRISTMAS POINSETTIA TREES:

We always need help in making sure that we have enough poinsettias to fill our Poinsettia Trees for Christmas Eve. The cost is \$10 per plant. We plan to have them in the Sanctuary at worship on December 21st. Order forms are available in our Sunday bulletins, or call the Church Office with your interest. We'll need your orders in by Wednesday, December 17th. Your generosity is invited and appreciated.



LOOKING AHEAD: THE ARRIVAL OF ADVENT

The season of Advent is upon us, and this year we will focus our attention on the Advent wreath. The Advent wreath is part of a long-standing Christian tradition, although the actual origins are uncertain. There is evidence of pre-Christian Germanic peoples using wreaths with lit candles during the cold and dark December days as a sign of hope in the future. In Scandinavia during winter, lighted candles were placed around a wheel, and prayers were offered to the god of light to turn “the wheel of the earth” back toward the sun to lengthen the days and restore warmth. Christians adapted this tradition and used Advent wreaths as part of their spiritual preparation for Christmas.

It is thought that the first Advent wreath originated in Germany within the tradition of the Lutheran Church. The symbolism of the Advent wreath is actually quite beautiful. The wreath is made of various evergreens. The circle has meaning, and even the various evergreens have a meaning that can be adapted to our faith. The laurel signifies victory over persecution and suffering; pine and holly, immortality; and cedar, strength and healing. Holly also has a special Christian symbolism. The prickly leaves remind us of the crown of thorns, and one English legend tells of how the cross was made of holly. There truly is more to the wreath than meets the eye, for the circle of the wreath, which has no beginning or end, symbolizes the eternity of God, the immortality of our soul, and the everlasting life that is found in Christ.

The four candles represent the four weeks of Advent. For many churches, three candles are purple and one is rose. In some churches, all the candles are blue, since blue is regarded as the color symbolizing hope, a primary theme of Advent. Various themes represented with the candles include hope, peace, joy, and love. The progressive lighting of the candles symbolizes the expectation and hope surrounding our Lord’s first coming into the world as a baby in Bethlehem and the anticipation of His second coming as judge and king at the end of time to inaugurate the arrival of the new age. Some modern day adaptations include a white candle placed in the middle of the wreath, which represents Christ and is lit on Christmas Eve.

Our fascination with Advent wreaths this year coincides with the installation of our faceted stained glass windows to celebrate our bicentennial anniversary. Carol Rossbach has designed a nice wreath for home use, and our families will receive one as we gather for dinner and worship on the First Sunday Evening in Advent. Ed Hauck will start us off with special music on organ. Pastor Sherwindt will tell us more about the meaning of our Advent Window. Our Advent wreaths will come with suggestions for home devotions. We want to recapture the original Lutheran insight into the connection between preparing for Christ’s birth with Advent, and then celebrating our faith through lives that honor the Lordship of Christ ... in our hearts, in our homes, in our church, and throughout the world.



MEET ZION'S NEW ORGANIST: T. EDWARD HAUCK

God is good. We were blessed with two exceptional organists for close to eight years, Fred Locker and Phil Lehenbauer, and the absolutely wonderful Margaret Reichenbach for three years before that. God has blessed us with talented and faithful organists over the last dozen years. Not even a month had passed when Ed Hauck sat at the organist's bench on a Sunday morning in September, and no one doubted from that time forward that Edward Hauck was a God-send, a gift, someone who would honor the instrument we love, while helping us to worship the God who loves us and has called us to grow in love and service by grace.

The organist's bench in our Chancel has known no one other than Ed since Phil Lehenbauer decided to follow his retirement dreams to Florida. With this newsletter, all of us are happy to announce that Ed Hauck will join our staff as the organist who will provide the musical leadership at our 8:00 a.m. service, and other evening services as our needs arise and his schedule permits. Ed loves music, and also serves as the Director of Music at Simpson United Methodist Church, where he is both the choir director and the organist. The proximity of our churches, and the different needs each congregation represents, allows Ed to serve us both.

Ed has been in northeast Ohio for almost two decades, but his roots are in Virginia, where he was raised, where his family lives, and where he went to school, and received his degrees in Sacred Music and Organ, his major at Virginia Commonwealth University. Ed served both Lutheran and Methodist congregations in Virginia, until he moved to northeast Ohio (almost twenty years ago) to take a full-time position as Music Director at Messiah Lutheran Church (ELCA) in Fairview Park. He then served in a similar position at Grace Lutheran Church (ELCA) in Wadsworth, before moving to Stark County.

Here in our backyard, Ed continued his involvement in the American Guild of Organists, became the founding director of the Canton Children's Hand Chimes and Bell Choirs (when VOICI still offered a children's choir), and began his tenure of service with Simpson United Methodist Church. He brings with him a lifetime of love for liturgy, sacred choral music, bells, voices, and, of course, instruments. We have enjoyed the dedication he brings to his craft, and the reverence with which he approaches worship. We look forward to the creativity he will add to our celebration of Advent and Christmas during this holy season.

Please make every effort to join us at our Sunday Evening Advent Services. Worshipers who enjoy our traditional service at 8:00 a.m. already know the gifts and talents Ed has added to our worship life with his presence at the early service. All of us need to make the time to enjoy what Ed will add to the life of our community. The Sunday evening of November 30th will be a great introduction to Ed's musical leadership at the organ. He will also provide this leadership on the Sunday evenings of December 7th and December 14th. There is no doubt that God is good and we are blessed with yet another fine organist at Zion. Let's make sure that we use the season of Advent to welcome Ed into our life as a church family. Let's make sure we find ways to offer our thanks and praise to God for a wonderful start to year number two hundred and one.

