



Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church

349 Lindy Lane Ave NW
North Canton, OH 44720

The Rev. Mark Sherwindt
Senior Pastor

Mark Votaw,
Zion's President

Carol Rossbach,
Vice President

Dave Palumbo,
Zion's Treasurer

Jayne Schrader,
Council Secretary

Brian Walters,
Sound System Expert

Laura Thompson,
Finance Ministry

Our Sunday Morning Schedule
8:00 a.m. Traditional Service
9:15 a.m. Our Sunday School
10:30 a.m. Contemporary Blend

The Church Office Is Open
Monday through Friday
9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.
Office: 330-499-3909
Office: 330-499-3913

***“Growing in Love
and Service
by Grace”
from 1814
to the Present***

SPECIAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING ON SUNDAY EVENING, NOVEMBER 29

Dear Family of Zion:

The Church Council met earlier in November to discuss the need to upgrade our sound system and get the wireless parts of our sound system in compliance with FCC regulations.

Brian Walters summarized the issue very simply: The FCC ruled back on June 12, 2012 that sound systems with wireless devices operating in the 700 MHz frequency, which ours does, must stop using them. This goes for many kinds of organizations, including schools and churches. The rules change occurred five years after we had installed our renovated sound system, and we have been out of compliance ever since. We need to change that.

We also need to add two new body packs and receivers with handhelds for the children's programs. It's been a bit of a challenge trying to share microphones and channels with the kids, while the Praise Team has been using the sound system at the same time. We will also replace two damaged pieces of equipment, which we've stopped using for some time now. These repairs and upgrades will cost in excess of \$5,000.00.

The purpose of the meeting will be to authorize the expenditure of funds necessary to bring the wireless aspects of our sound system in compliance with federal law, and to effect the repairs and improvements described above.

Please plan on attending this Congregational Meeting; and join us for the wonderful meal beforehand. In fact, feel free to join in helping to provide our dinner by preparing your favorite soup, a tasty chili, a delicious dessert or great side or salad.

I look forward to seeing you on *Sunday evening, November 29th*, with dinner to begin at 5:30 p.m., and our meeting at 6:15 p.m.

God's peace be with you,
Mark Votaw,
Church Council President

AND NOW, A WORD FROM THE PASTOR

The new church year gets off to a fast start with a special Congregational Meeting scheduled for the First Sunday of Advent, which is November 29th. While the matter of compliance with federal law has been a concern for as long as we've known about it, sometimes you just have to wait for the stars to align – in terms of time and personnel – and then not miss the opportunity to respond with follow through. That sounds like a general theme that applies to Advent and Christmas, too. Advent signals the beginning of a journey through another church year by looking ahead to Christmas with four Sundays of preparation. At Zion, we mark these occasions with four Sunday Evening Advent Dinners, followed by four Sunday Evening Advent Services. Please plan to join us for all four, beginning with Advent I on November 29th.

The entire congregation is invited to serve as hosts of our first Sunday Evening Advent Dinner. The Chancel Guild will take the lead, and Church Council will help; but our Advent hope is that all of us will join in with a favorite soup, a spicy chili, a delicious dessert, side, or salad. Let's make it a congregational triumph in celebrating MUTUAL SUPPORT. When it comes to responding to God's call that we grow in love and service by grace, there is no substitute for practicing the mutual support that makes our church family strong and our sense of ministry vibrant. We need everyone to say YES in order to enjoy the difference we can make in choosing to be the church together. So, dinner begins at 5:30 p.m., with our service and congregational meeting following in the Sanctuary at 6:15 p.m. Please make every effort to join us.

Our second Sunday Evening Advent Dinner features Dave Palumbo and the Church Council celebrating Dave's lifelong connection Devitis Fine Italian Foods, and their delicious sausage. Zion's Praise Team will lead our Service of Lessons & Carols, which focuses on special music and readings from Scripture. We will need to move the starting time forward about 45 minutes, with dinner served at 6:15 p.m. and the service at 7:00 p.m. When it comes to great readings and beautiful music, this classic service offers a wonderful look at the strengths of our Christian tradition, along with the extraordinary talents with which God has blessed us at Zion. This will be the first of several seasonal services that highlight God's many blessings. Between the Praise Team, our Senior Choir, soloist and ensembles, plan on enjoying a great evening together.

On December 13th, the Youth of Zion, their parents, and our youth leaders will take the lead in hosting our third Sunday Evening Advent Dinner. The Youth of Zion will also help lead the service, which celebrates the Christmas story through Chrismons. On December 20th, the Men of Zion will host our fourth Sunday Evening Advent Dinner, and Carole Singer will lead us in a service that celebrates Christmas carols from around the world. That gets us to the main event, Christmas Eve at Zion. This is an important year for us as we get ready for some transitions as the year unfolds. We have decided to lift up the strength of church family and community by celebrating Christmas Eve together, with one service, beginning with our Choral Concert at 7:30 p.m., followed by our Traditional Candle-light Service with Holy Communion at 8:00 p.m. There is strength in numbers; and as we get ready for the next chapter in our long history of faithful ministry at Zion, what better way could there be for celebrating all of God's blessings than to welcome the Good News of the Christ's birth with one voice praising God together.

CHURCH COUNCIL NEWS

As we head toward the end of November, it is the season of Advent, culminating with Christmas Eve, that takes center stage. The Advent schedule is now set, with the entire congregation 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. Our Advent Services on November 29 and December 6 will feature Zion’s Praise Team, with December 13 featuring Zion’s Youth with our celebration of Chrismons, and December 20 following Carole Singer on a journey of carols from around the world.

Our Treasurer shared the good news that we enjoyed a small surplus in October, with our year-to-date surplus standing at \$222.63. We will need to inspire some strong year-end giving if we hope to celebrate our eleventh consecutive budget in balance. We have trimmed back expenses fairly aggressively, but we are still concerned about this year’s loss of rental income. So, your year-end generosity is especially important as we make sure that November and December help us maintain our balance moving forward.

<u>FINANCIAL FACTS FOR OCTOBER</u>	
October Income	\$ 16,155.27
October Expenses	\$ <u>16,023.75</u>
October Surplus	\$ 131.52
Income thru October	\$179,283.60
Expenses " October	\$ <u>179,060.97</u>
Surplus thru October	\$ 222.63
Food Pantry Fund	\$ 7,930.96
Zion’s Youth Fund	\$ 9,000.11
Bicentennial Gifts Fund	\$ 8,252.78
<i>We thank you for your generous support!</i>	

MORE COUNCIL NEWS

Worship Ministry, Dale Jacobs: December draws our focus to Advent and Christmas Eve. With our search for a choir director and organist ongoing, we will rely on the strength of Zion’s Praise Team both for our Advent services, and Christmas Eve, too. We have decided to worship together at a single Christmas Eve Service, which will be led by the Praise Team. Our annual choral concert of special music will begin at 7:30 p.m., with our traditional candle-light service featuring Holy Communion beginning at 8:00 p.m.

Property Ministry, Todd Elsass: Dave & Renee Palumbo continue to take the lead in getting the parsonage ready for its next chapter, which is testing the rental market. We’ve had lots of help with painting and cleaning. We extend our thanks to Richard Biggerstaff, Randy Cizek, Darla Dague and Eric, Verle Elsass, Carl Geib, Clarence Givler, Cathy Harvey, Darlene Milavickas, Don Roan, Carol Rossbach, Pastor Sherwindt, Laura Thompson and Christopher, and Mark Votaw. We would also like to thank Verle Elsass, Carl Geib, Dave Palumbo, Pastor Sherwindt, and Mark Votaw for helping with our outdoor cleaning projects this fall.

Learning Ministry, Janet Slease: With the success of the 12th Annual Craft Show & Oktoberfest behind us, our Sunday School and youth now turn to their Christmas play and our Advent dinner, which are on the calendar for December 13th. The Christmas play is *Twelve Symbols of Christmas*, and will be offered at the 10:30 a.m. service on December 13th. The Youth, their families and our youth leaders will then return to church that evening, and host dinner at 5:30 p.m., and lead our service celebrating the story of Christ through Chrismons at 6:15 p.m.

GREAT NEWS FROM ZION'S SUNDAY SCHOOL



HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO:

Ben Keith – Thursday, December 3rd
 Quintin Hilson – Saturday, December 26th
 Joshua Hilson – Tuesday, December 29th

UPCOMING EVENTS – MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

Saturday, December 12: Dress Rehearsal for Children's Christmas Program at a time TBA
Saturday, December 12: The Pizza Party and Giving Tree Gift Wrapping Party afterwards!
Sunday, December 13th: The Children's Christmas Program at the 10:30 Service (only)
Sunday, December 13th: Youth of Zion and their families host the Advent dinner, 5:30 p.m.
Sunday, December 13th: Youth assist with our Celebration of Chrismos Service, 6:15 p.m.
Sunday, December 27th: There will be NO SUNDAY SCHOOL CLASSES this morning!

PRE-K THROUGH THE SIXTH GRADE

During 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 *Twelve Symbols of Christmas*. It is a lovely and fun program where we will see a mom and her children decorating their home for Christmas. As they decorate, they discuss the meaning behind the items and how they all lead to Jesus.



The Christmas Program will be performed at the 10:30 a.m. service on Sunday, December 13th. We will have dress rehearsal, our annual Christmas Pizza Party and wrapping of the Giving Tree gifts on Saturday, December 12th, at a time to be determined once everyone's schedules have been considered.

Please make a note of the fact that there will be no Sunday School classes for youth or adults on Sunday, December 27th, 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 3th.

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 3 to 18, along with help from our Sunday School staff, worked really hard to decorate eighty-eight grocery bags beautifully this year. We would also like to thank all of the Sunday School families that donated boxed mashed potatoes and turkey 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 11th.



The youth will be getting together on Saturday, December 12th, 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 some items that are greatly needed to help these families as they are home over the holiday season together. These items are breakfast cereals (any type of Cheerios, Corn Flakes, Chex, and the like), peanut butter, canned fruit, and spaghetti sauce. 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 13

Advent has arrived along with our wonderful Sunday Evening Advent dinners and services. On Sunday, December 13th, the youth will host the Advent dinner. We are planning a delicious 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 13th, 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.



Sunday School Staff would like to wish all our families a very Merry Christmas, as well as Blessed and Happy New Year!



THANKOFFERING SUNDAY

We celebrated Thankoffering Sunday on November 8th, when a good number of women participated in leadership roles in our worship services. 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 throughout 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 this year's 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 this year we have received \$603 in Thankofferings. Thank you for helping us to exceed the \$600 mark yet again. These funds go to support the *Women of the ELCA* and their many ministries throughout the church and around the globe.

OUR CHRISTMAS POINSETTIA TREES:

Yes, we will be displaying our Christmas poinsettias on our Poinsettia Trees again! 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 20th. Order forms are available in our Sunday bulletins, or call the Church Office (330-499-3909) with your interest. We will need your orders in by Wednesday, December 16th. Your generosity is invited and appreciated. Our many thanks!

THE WOMEN OF ZION

Zion's Chancel Guild really enjoyed the decision they made last year, when, due to the full and busy schedule of the season, they turned their annual Christmas Dinner into a celebration of the love remembered with Valentine's Day. So, once again, 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 15th**, in Resource Center at 9:30 a.m. *Imagining* is the lesson for Advent. "The gift of imagining allows us, like Mary, to see with our own hearts and minds what God calls us to do. Although life rarely unfolds as we imagine, imagination gives us room to accept our call and trust God as we journey together." Our lesson this month invites us to join with Mary, not merely recounting her story but entering into it, participating in her YES to bringing the savior Jesus to a world in need. So, let's read Luke 1:26-55, and imagine how Gabriel's coming turned Mary's life upside down. Still, Mary thanked God, considered herself blessed, and then looked for ways to become a part of the great things God was doing, both with her and through her. 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 15th. 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 10th 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

To Cathy Harvey and our Friends at Zion,

On behalf of the Stark County Hunger Task Force pantry network and all those who rely on us in their time of need, the Stark County Hunger Task Force staff and board extend our deepest thanks for your recent donation of \$1,000.00.

Your compassionate gift allowed us to place up to 7,000 pounds of food onto pantry shelves, which is then distributed directly to the 27,000-plus hungry men, women, and children served monthly by our 33-member pantry network. Furthermore, it places hope into these homes – feeding families, easing their anxieties, and nourishing their minds and hearts, as well as their bodies.

Did you know that over 59,000 of our neighbors here in Stark County are hungry? It takes a community effort to meet the critical, basic needs of our hungry neighbors, and without your support, our shared mission to alleviate hunger in Stark County would not be possible.

By alleviating hunger in Stark County, we are building a stronger community. Together, we can make a difference.

*Warm regards,
Amy Weisbrod, Executive Director
Stark County Hunger Task Force
Fighting Hunger Since 1981*

Dear Pastor Sherwindt,

Thank you for your thoughtfulness, and thank you for coming to visit me in the hospital after knee replacement surgery at Aultman. I would also like to thank my church family at Zion for all your prayers and cards.

*In Christian love,
Donna Roan*

THANK YOU'S & MORE!

We would like to thank **Jeff Hisson** for the great job he has done investing his heart and soul, along with lots of information and personal anecdotes, in leading our Adult Sunday School Class on a journey of faith formation and refreshment grounded in Luther's historic emphasis on *Sola Scriptura*. We would also like to thank **Dave Zastawny** for his workshop on Christ the King Sunday dealing with legacy giving. Making good use of the blessings we've accumulated over a lifetime of serving and saving takes planning, a spirit of generosity, and a commitment to faithfulness. Dave did a great job in challenging us to live and give generously.

We also extend our thanks to everyone who helped with our Great Turkey Give-away. We thank our many friends, our partner churches in the North Canton Ministerial Association, the Koinonia Class at Community Christian Church, the Parkview Dinner Club, along with the Stark County Hunger Task Force and the Akron Canton Regional Foodbank. Last, but not least, thank you to **Peggy Muhlenkamp** and her children, who organize our signature finishing touch by providing fresh baked pumpkin pies for all! Thank you!

ZION'S ADVENT AND CHRISTMAS EVE SCHEDULE

First Sunday of Advent: We Gather as Families to Welcome the New Year

- Sunday, November 29, 8:00 a.m.: Our Traditional Service, with Senior Choir Leadership
- Sunday, November 29, 10:30 a.m.: Our Blended Service, led by Zion's Praise Team
- Sunday, November 29, 5:30 p.m.: Our First Advent Dinner hosted by the Congregation!
- Sunday, November 29, 6:15 p.m.: Our Special Congregational Meeting: Called to Order

Our First Sunday Evening Advent Service features a congregational effort both with dinner and at worship, too, as we include the business of a Special Congregational Meeting to get our sound system in compliance with new FCC rules and regulations. Please plan to join us!

Second Sunday of Advent: An Evening of Historic Readings & Special Music

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

Our evening service will feature historic readings from Scripture and special music offered by Zion's Praise Team, soloists, and ensembles. Please note the time change for our evening schedule, with dinner served at 6:15 p.m., and the service at 7:00 p.m. Please plan to join us!

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

- Sunday, December 13, 8:00 a.m.: Our Traditional Service, with Senior Choir Leadership
- Sunday, December 13, 10:30 a.m.: Children's Christmas Program, *Twelve Signs of Christmas*
- Sunday, December 13, 5:30 p.m.: Our Third Advent Dinner hosted by the Youth of Zion
- Sunday, December 13, 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.]

Fourth Sunday of Advent: A Celebration of Carols from around the World

- Sunday, December 20, 8:00 a.m.: Our Traditional Service, with Senior Choir Leadership
- Sunday, December 20, 10:30 a.m.: Our Blended Service, led by Zion's Praise Team
- Sunday, December 20, 5:30 p.m.: Our Fourth Advent Dinner hosted by the Men of Zion
- Sunday, December 20, 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!]

Christmas Eve at Zion: Join Together for One Service, beginning at 7:30 p.m.

- Thursday, December 24, 7:30 p.m.: A Traditional Choral Concert and Carol Sing for All
- Thursday, December 24, 8:00 p.m.: Our Traditional Candlelight Service, with Zion's Senior Choir singing, as well as our special Christmas Carol Setting for Holy Communion

25 Christmas Thrivent Action Team Ideas

1. Fill boxes for *Operation Christmas Child*
2. Gather a group of volunteers to serve food at a shelter
3. Buy supplies to decorate Christmas wreaths, sell them at church and donate the money
4. Do a casserole drive for a family with a sick child or family member
5. Host a baby shower for Jesus and collect items for single moms
6. Get supplies to make Christmas cards for the troops
7. Toy drive and wrapping party
8. Do a Christmas sock drive for the homeless
9. Adopt a family and have your friends all chip in to make it a great Christmas for them
10. Make Christmas themed blankets to donate to the homeless
11. Buy \$25 gift cards to give them to 10 people in your church as a random act of kindness
12. Promote a food drive in your neighborhood
13. Buy Christmas lights to put up and take down for the elderly
14. Buy snow shovels to create a shovel team for the elderly and single moms at your church
15. Host a cookie exchange and donate all the cookies to seniors in senior living facilities
16. Stuff stockings with pet supplies for people who adopt an animal from a local shelter
17. Do a Christmas wrapping drive to donate to a local non-profit that helps families in need
18. Stuff Christmas Care packages for Vets
19. Stuff backpacks with food and toiletries for children in need (add a Christmas treat)
20. Create babysitting packages and recruit babysitters for parents to go Christmas shopping
21. Have a cookie making party, sell the cookies at church for a needy family
22. Make Christmas ornaments and donate them to a local senior center
23. Put on a Christmas play and make the costumes with volunteers
24. Purchase Christmas children's books and distribute to kids in need
25. Host a Christmas hot chocolate stand and donate proceeds to the charity of your choice

We offer our thanks to God, to all of you, to Heartfelt thanks!