



# Eye on Zion

A Quarterly Newsletter for the People of Zion Lutheran Church

November-December-January  
2021-2022

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## Close to Home

### *A letter from Pastor Joel Pancoast*

Dear Friends in Christ,

It is difficult for me to believe that I am writing about Advent and Christmas already, but time seems to be moving at different rhythms in a world fraught with as much anxiety and change as we have experienced over the last two years. Our theme for this Advent season is “Close to Home.” When the worship planning team first encountered this theme, many of us struggled with whether it was appropriate to our lives today. After all, some of us have been home much more than we want, and this theme only reminds us of that. As we approach Christmas, and even Thanksgiving and our New Year celebrations, maybe this theme will make us more aware of what we’re missing.

But there’s more to the theme than pointing out the obvious longing we’ve felt in our bones. When we say something hits “close to home,” we mean that it affects us deeply. We can all think of many examples in our lives, even in the recent past, where life is heavy with emotion and we feel vulnerable. “Close to Home” names the pain many of us

will carry into this season. The holidays can poke at our grief. Many will be missing loved ones lost to sickness and tragedy. The traumas of the pandemic will still be with us. Many have lost homes—due to natural disasters, economic hardship, and unjust policies. Many do not feel safe in their own homes due to poor living conditions or harmful family dynamics; many feel alone and isolated at home. All of this hits us close to home.

As we approach this holiday season, we may carry beautiful memories of the season close to our hearts, and we long for those again. This Advent theme of “Close to Home” acknowledges the already, but not yet tension of our lives and our faith: Jesus is with us, and yet God’s promised day is not yet fully realized. We long for God to draw near, for God to come close to home.

The Advent and Christmas scriptures are rich with home metaphors and imagery that help us live into that tension of the “already—not yet” of our faith.

*Continued on page 2.*

*Close to Home continued from page 1.*

John the Baptist prophesies about the One who is to come, but reminds us that we are still wandering far from God's promised day; his message hits close to home, especially for those experiencing that things are not right with the world. After receiving the angel's news, Mary retreats to Elizabeth's home, seeking refuge and safety. Christ is born in the midst of a journey away from home, in a crowded dwelling space amidst livestock and shepherds alike. The Magi travel far from home to pay homage to Christ, and having been warned in a dream, they avoid Herod by traveling home another way. In these scriptures, home is both physical and metaphorical, something we seek and something we are called to build. The stories are full of expressions of what home looks like with God, when home is not all we had hoped for or expected. Ultimately, God is our home and resting place. God draws near and makes a home on earth—sacred ground is all around us and in us.

God is our home, calling us together to live together in hope, peace, joy, and love. The seasonal image for "Close to Home" shows a logo with hands that, according to the artist, express deep longing for connection, intimacy, and for God to come close. The hands represent both God's hands and our hands, and they are actively drawing closer to one another, forming the structure of home. The home structure is not one-dimensional; it expands outward, with a doorway offering an open invitation to all.

Behind the logo are images of architectural blueprints. Blueprints are tangible glimpses of a vision actively and intentionally pursued. Several years ago, in the earliest stages of working with an architect to come up with a building design that expanded and enhanced Zion's mission and contribution to the community, the design team was struggling. I think the architect gave us three



**The "Close to Home" logo shows a pair of hands that represent both God's hands and our hands, actively drawing closer to one another forming the structure of home.**

draft ideas to try to work with, while being good stewards of our resources. None of them worked. One idea expanded the fellowship hall into where the bathrooms and kitchen were, but the passage from the office to the rest of the building would cut the gathering space in half. Another idea put the bathrooms so far out of the way we felt like people would get lost trying to find them, and anyone working with children did not feel comfortable with the long passageway to get there. Finally, I don't remember where I was, but I had an idea, and the only thing I had to draw on was a napkin. It must be true that some of the best ideas are drawn on napkins! And the only way to share the idea was to shoot a photo of my pencil-on-napkin drawing and send it in an email to the architect for him to do his magic.

Architectural blueprints are precise, and will inevitably be revised. I think we had more than thirty revisions of our own, and just as many change orders through the building process! Getting the blueprints right is important, because they give builders the information they need to bring a dream to life. That's what the holy scriptures during the Advent season do for us. They are like blueprints, detailing the dreams of a God who makes a home with us.

*Continued on page 3.*

*Close to Home continued from page 2.*

But the blueprints of our own lives and homes may take many revisions. This season of our lives may have exposed more than we ever thought imaginable. Throughout this issue of the *Eye on Zion*, I hope you will find encouragement to find your home in God, whether through worship, service, fellowship, or caring opportunities. Whether giving or receiving, as you read this publication, I invite you to consider the ways we may be comforted by the One who dwells intimately with us, and the ways we may expand safety and sanctuary for everyone wandering far from home. In this season, I invite you to come home—wherever home is found—to live fully with joy, hope, and courage.

Grace and Peace to you!  
Pastor Joel

## **Advent and Christmas Worship—Close to Home**

**November 28      The First Sunday of Advent      HOMESICK (Hope)      Luke 21:25-36**

*Advent begins as far from home as we could imagine with warnings from Jesus of the end of time. The world is not as it should be. Many have lost their physical homes, many feel alone, and many are isolated. Many of us feel as if we are wandering with no clear way forward. This first week speaks to our deep longing—for our home to be made whole, made right, and made well. With deep longing, we watch for God. Thankfully, God enters a homesick world.*

**December 5      The Second Sunday of Advent      LAYING THE FOUNDATION (Peace)      Luke 1:57-80**

*In the miraculous birth of John the Baptist, we see the foundation of what is to come. We see how interwoven his story is with Jesus' origin story. When Zechariah regains his voice, his imagination is also restored. He offers deep praise for God's tender mercy and casts a hopeful vision for his own child. He sings blessings into John's being. This lays the foundation for John's life. In turn, John will go on to prepare the way for Jesus who will guide us all in the way of peace. In this week, we focus on making space—in our lives and our imaginations—for God's blessings to break through.*

**December 12      The Third Sunday of Advent      A HOME FOR ALL (Joy)      Luke 3:1-18**

*John the Baptist's good news sounds harsh, but he preaches a home for all—where inequities are banished, valleys are lifted up, and all have the resources they need for collective flourishing. Ultimately, John's message is one of joy. We are called to collectively build and repair the structures of our society; we are called to be “kin-dom” builders. Wherever we build, God is there. What we build should be a place with a large table and room for all.*

**December 19      The Fourth Sunday of Advent      SEEKING SANCTUARY (Love)      Luke 1:39-55**

*After receiving the angel's extraordinary news, Mary retreats to Elizabeth and Zechariah's home to digest her new calling. She seeks refuge—physical safety and emotional protection. She receives a safe haven, a home for her heart to soon sing praise. Sanctuary and safe space is so crucial for everyone, especially the mother of Christ while she prepares to become a home for God. Sanctuary is anywhere God's love dwells freely and abundantly.*

*Continued on page 4.*

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*Advent and Christmas Worship—Close to Home continued from page 3.*

**December 24      Christmas Eve      INVITED HOME      Luke 2:1-20**

*There is no room for Mary and Joseph in the inn. They are displaced from their home, journeying to fulfill their civic requirements to be counted in the census. And yet, the time comes to give birth where they are, and so a humble home is found. A place is made—among the feeding trough, in a cramped room abounding with chaos. In many ways, Jesus is born without an invitation, and yet, he devotes his life to inviting people who are cast out. In the same way, we might imagine the story of Christmas as God's invitation to be welcomed home despite all barriers.*

**December 26      The First Sunday After Christmas      CHOSEN HOME      Luke 2:41-52**

*Home is not necessarily a place, but anywhere we find authentic belonging. In this story, we find Jesus pursuing his theological education, increasing in his wisdom even as a young boy. After the Passover festival, he strays from his birth family to dwell in the Temple, listening to the Rabbis and asking questions. Jesus claims and takes up space, choosing to dwell where God has chosen him to be. Similarly, we all need homes of our choosing—people and places that welcome us just as we are.*

**January 2      Epiphany Sunday      HOME BY ANOTHER WAY      Matthew 2:1-12**

*The story of Epiphany marks an end and the beginning. Leaving their home, the Wise Men embark upon a pilgrimage, seeking the glimpse of the divine in the Christ child. Being warned in a dream, the Magi choose a different direction to journey back home. This leads them away from Herod's deception, manipulation, and harm. The Magi make a subversive choice to disobey Herod. They listen to God speaking to them through their dreams. As our own journeys continue, we remember we must sometimes make bold choices to choose a different way.*

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## **Stay Tuned for Zion's Christmas Worship Schedule!**

In 2021, the realities of pandemic may still hit “close to home,” preventing us from our traditional schedule of three Christmas Eve worship services, packing the sanctuary wall-to-wall and singing out Christmas tunes. The staff is working to provide creative, meaningful, and powerful worship opportunities for the Christmas season, but at the time of publication, the schedule is not set.

### **From the Editor:**

**This newsletter issue is 36 pages with each page containing newsworthy content. Do not tire of reading before you are aware of timely information such as on pages 33 and 34.**

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*People will faint from fear and foreboding of what is coming upon the world, for the powers of the heavens will be shaken. Then they will see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory. Now when these things begin to take place, stand up and raise your heads, because your redemption is drawing near.*

—LUKE 21:26-28



# Defining Home

*Intern Pastor Andrea Kragerud*

*“If I were a house, I would be a big yellow house, with a yellow so inviting that if you were to walk by, just being you, it would call to you, ‘Come in, you and your heart sit down.’ And if you did come into that big, yellow, inviting house, you’d know you were home.” (JODI HILLS, MINNESOTA ARTIST AND WRITER)*



This quote by Minnesota artist and writer, Jodi Hills, has long been a favorite of mine. A print of this big yellow house hangs in my office at home. I have had the

opportunity to volunteer making meals at the Ronald McDonald house in downtown Minneapolis where the original artwork hangs. As the worship planning team considered the theme for this Advent season, I found the “Close to Home” themed imagery comforting and creative.

Defining home has meant many different things in my life. I have been asked a lot about home since I arrived at Zion in August. It is a natural question for us to ask “where do you live?” when learning new things about one another. I feel asking “where do you call home?” takes us to another level of connection. When asked, I will quite often respond, “I was born and raised an Iowa farm girl, but now I call home here in Colorado, in Longmont with Ryan, Anna, and Rangely.” When going back to the Midwest to see family, I do still feel that sense of going home. I also enjoy returning to my life here in Colorado. It is the best of both worlds perhaps. I consider myself fortunate.

Over the years I have felt another sense of being in ‘a home away from home.’ Moving away to college and for jobs certainly creates the opportunity. Starting seminary and being online for Zoom classes and physically on-campus with seminary friends from around the world has created a different sense of connection that feels like its own type of home. My classmates and I

are not able to gather as often, as our paths are stretching out further in our individual ministry experiences, but we still find time for connecting now and then. Most recently, I would say I am finding a new home in this thing called internship.

Internship is certainly about learning; learning the day-to-day things of church of course, but the real learning is so much more. I am reminded daily it is also about the inward reflection and discovery of my own gifts and passions for ministry. Internship is about trying on new things and seeing how they fit. Within this active faith community at Zion, I am grateful to be able to try on so many things.

Many of you have asked what my goals are for this year. My goals revolve around stewardship, pastoral care, faith formation, long range planning, evangelism, and a potential project involving spiritual practices. So far, I would say there has been a little bit of everything: preaching, teaching, worship planning, blessing animals, Bible studies, community connections, and good old coffee and conversations. I am excited to be experiencing and learning in all these things and more. Although I am only here for the year, Zion has begun to feel like a home within just a few short months.

The exterior of the church building may not be yellow, but I thank you for welcoming me and my heart (and my family) into Zion. I look forward to this year of growth and learning together. It is nice to be ‘close to home.’

You can check out Jodi’s blog spot here:

[The yellow house | Jodi Hills \(jodihillsblog.com\)](http://The yellow house | Jodi Hills (jodihillsblog.com))

## Celebrating Pastor Sonja's Ministry at Zion

So much of what makes us feel close to home is the people that matter to us. Pastor Sonja has made Zion feel like home to so many members of our congregation as she has helped to create a meaningful

### **An excerpt from Pastor Sonja's letter of resignation**

*Over these last 13 years as I have served as a pastor at Zion Lutheran Church, it has been a joy to share the Good News of Jesus which brings us hope and to live out God's call to care for our neighbor together. I have been honored to walk alongside you in times of joy and sorrow, and I will treasure each of these moments.*

Your Sister in Christ,

*Pastor Sonja Pancost*  
Pastor Sonja Pancost

relationship with Monroe, preached and taught many about God's word, and offered pastoral care to those in need. Pastor Sonja's contributions go far beyond what can be listed in a newsletter article. While we rejoice with her and her new job at Clergy Advantage, we also will miss her pastoral gifts she has shared so faithfully with us.

On October 17, we celebrated Pastor Sonja's ministry for 13 years here at Zion and welcomed her in a new way as a member of our congregation.

Many who were present wrote notes or spoke words of encouragement. If you were unable to be present but

would like to send words of blessing or gratitude to Pastor Sonja you can send these to the office. Pastor Sonja's last Sunday as a pastor at Zion was October 31. She will continue to worship at Zion with her family.



**Pastor Joel bestowed blessings on Pastor Sonja at both services. At the second service, she was joined by their daughters Sophia and Hannah.**





**On October 17, we celebrated Pastor Sonja's ministry for 13 years here at Zion and welcomed her in a new way as a member of our congregation.**

## **A heartfelt tribute**

*I am grateful to have had Pastor Sonja's guidance over the past 6.5 years. When I was hired at Zion, I had only worked in the medical industry. Pastor Sonja diligently coached me on numerous accounts to help understand the liturgy and ins and outs of the Lutheran ways. She did this because she loves Zion. Zion loves Pastor Sonja for all her dedication and talents, that she now can share with others at Clergy Advantage. I appreciate her stubbornness and her empathy, her humility and her compassion. Zion is fortunate to have had Pastor Sonja at many home visits, nursing home admissions, and by many bedsides as a loved one transitions to a better place. Her pastoral care is one of her greatest qualities, and Zion has been blessed with that love for the past 13 years. She will be missed as a pastor, but now can experience Zion's love from a different perspective.*

*With Gratitude,  
Lindsey Walter  
Zion Office Manager*



**Celebratory receptions following each service featured some of Pastor Sonja's favorite treats.**

**An excerpt from Zion's congregational council president accepting Pastor Sonja's letter of resignation**

*It is with heavy hearts, but also joy and understanding, that we have received Pastor Sonja's letter of resignation. One of Pastor Sonja's spiritual gifts is discernment, and though this is not an easy decision for her, she has reached this decision with clarity and confidence that God is calling her to a different ministry. We encourage you to celebrate her ministry and her new opportunity, and to hold her in your prayers during this transition.*

## Words of departure: *“I am thankful, grateful, and blessed.”*

Thankful, Grateful, Blessed.

These words, which were the theme for Zion’s stewardship program this year, are words that also capture my deepest feelings about my ministry at Zion and the ministry celebration on October 17.

**I am thankful** for the 13 years of ministry that I have served at Zion. It has been an honor to walk alongside each of you through joys and sorrows, to lead in worship of our God, and to help us to grow deeper in faith and service to others. I truly know that God brought Joel and me to Zion 13 years ago and has led my ministry here over these last 13 years.

**I am grateful** for the beautiful celebration of ministry that was put together by the staff in my honor. The videos and words of gratitude through cards and in person that each of you shared with me touched my heart, and I will treasure them. The celebration of ministry was beautifully put together and had my favorite Reese’s peanut butter cups. The gifts of the heart pendant, photo album, and nameplate for my new office will keep you all near to me and are the perfect gifts. It is a testament to the amazing staff at Zion that they pulled this off with less than two weeks notice. I am grateful that I leave you all in very capable hands with the wonderful staff of Zion.

**I am blessed** that I am able to remain part of this vibrant, faithful community in my new role as member of Zion. Hiatt, age 7, said it best, “Goodbye, Pastor. Hello, Sonja.” There truly is no other church like Zion. Zion has a passion for service, a desire to grow in faith through education, a love of ministry for all ages, and a deep ministry of care and relationships. Zion has a foundation of Jesus at the center and our relationships to God and others that hold us together. I am blessed that I can remain a member of this body of Christ gathered at Zion. As I look to the future, I am excited to see what the Spirit is doing through the work of the long range planning team and the very gifted church council.



**In his note, Hiatt  
said it best.**

I am thankful, grateful, and blessed.

Your Sister in Christ,  
Sonja

# Notes on Zion's Pastoral Transition

## *Zion's Pastoral Staff and Council*

With Pastor Sonja's resignation from Zion effective October 31, many people are asking, "What's next?" Truthfully, the pastors and council are all asking the same question, but we wanted to share as much information as possible to focus any anxiety where it needs to be. We are reminded by the prayer that was prayed the Sunday we had a celebration and thanksgiving for Pastor Sonja's ministry, which is also the prayer that Pastor Sonja and Pastor Joel prayed upon their own discernment to be called to Zion 13 years ago:

*O God, you have called your servants to ventures of which we cannot see the ending, by paths as yet untrodden, through perils unknown. Give us faith to go out with good courage, not knowing where we go, but only that your hand is leading us and your love supporting us, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.*

There is a lot of unknown, but we do know that God's hand is leading us and God's love is supporting us. It is difficult not to see that truth in all of the little details, from how Pastor Sonja was led to her decision to accept the full-time offer at Clergy Advantage, to looking back and seeing how God supplied a need for both Pastor Courtney and Zion after Madeline Fairfax resigned from her position as Zion's faith formation coordinator.

Things may change quickly, but at the time of this writing in late October, there is a plan to call a second pastor to Zion to accompany Pastor Joel. Pastor Courtney's presence in an interim capacity has helped us, in the very least, to see the benefits of having a pastor assume the faith formation responsibilities. The budget allows us to combine Pastor Sonja's compensation and the faith formation compensation to be able to call a

pastor serving in their first few years of ministry. This pastoral role would be responsible for faith formation of all ages, while sharing other pastoral responsibilities with Pastor Joel. Which responsibilities those are depends, in part, on the gifts that this second pastor brings.

Many have already asked why we don't just call Pastor Courtney. It is important that we keep the promise we made when Pastor Courtney started in this interim role. She needed to have space to discern where God is calling her while serving as a ministry partner with us. Pastor Courtney is currently discerning several different opportunities for call. If she discerns a call outside of Zion, we will immediately enter a process to discern a call to another pastor. If she discerns a call to Zion, we will work with the office of the bishop to extend a regular, full-time call to her.

In this time of discernment, you may find it tempting to want to convince Pastor Courtney why she needs to stay at Zion. Please refrain from these conversations so that she can have clarity of thought and time to discern with her family and mentors. If Pastor Courtney does discern a call away from Zion, please know that it is not a reflection of the relationship God has given us. She has many things to discern, including the congregation she is called to serve, proximity to extended family, opportunities for Andy and Junia to flourish, and much more.

It is entirely likely that this update will be outdated by the time you read this. Regardless, it is important for us to keep God's will and purpose in mind, wherever we are in our discernment. So we ask for your patience, and especially for your prayers for Pastor Courtney and for Zion in this time of transition.

## Music Ministry

*David Dunbar*

**H**ave you ever considered being part of the music program at Zion Lutheran? Now is a great time to get involved! Soon we will be in the season of Advent with all its wonderful musical treasures, both vocal and instrumental. There are lots of opportunities to make music at Zion: bell choir, chancel choir, praise team, and even solo/featured music opportunities. We are truly blessed to already have many volunteers sharing their talents to make the music program strong and vibrant, but hey, we can always have more!

The chancel choir meets every Wednesday evening at 6:00 p.m. in the sanctuary, and we would love to have you join us. No music reading skills are required—just a desire to be part of a fun group of singers. If you would like to give

choir a try, simply show up for a rehearsal (and please bring a mask and your COVID-19 vaccination card).

Or perhaps your taste in music is on the more “contemporary” side? The praise team, which provides music at Zion’s contemporary service, meets on Sunday mornings after the traditional service. Do you play an instrument or enjoy singing along with praise songs on the radio? Then we would love to have you make music with us!

Or perhaps you are more of a soloist and would like to share your gift with the church through special music? Whatever kind of musician you are, we would welcome you as part of Zion’s music program. God bless, and hope to see you (hear you) soon!

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## Stephen Ministry Training

*Laura Dimmitt*

Stephen Ministers are members of King of Glory and Zion who are trained to provide confidential, one-to-one, Christ-centered care to those experiencing a difficult time in life, such as grief, divorce, job loss, chronic or terminal illness, and relocation. Stephen Ministers do not give answers or counseling. They are not experts on grief or getting through a difficult time. When a crisis hits close to home, Stephen Ministers offer care through listening, caring, praying, encouraging, and providing spiritual support.

If you have gifts for caring and listening, we invite you to think and pray about becoming trained as a Stephen Minister. In-depth training of 50 hours is given to provide you with the support and confidence to take on one-to-one care assignments. Once trained, a Stephen Minister will be matched with a person experiencing a life crisis as the need arises, and meet with that person on a weekly basis. These trained Stephen Ministers who have a care relationship continue to receive support through monthly check-ins.

Stephen Ministry at Zion and King of Glory will be offering training between January and May. Specific dates and times are still being determined, but we will try our best to work with the schedules of those who express interest. If you are interested or have questions, contact one of Zion’s Stephen Leaders; they are LAURA DIMMITT and GINGER KLEIN or contact PASTOR JOEL.



# Children's Music Ministry

*Noelle Bauman-Stucky*

Zion Children's Music Ministry is finally back on its feet with a few changes that we are settling into. For the months of September and October, we held a six-week program offered to students between first and eighth grade where they learned songs and instrument parts. It was a wonderful time made by our amazing volunteers and participants. As the Advent and Christmas seasons are just around the corner, we will begin preparation for our Christmas service on December 12.

Through this season we sing, hear, and celebrate the carols that are close to our hearts and have traditionally been used during services and special events. These carols are wonderful, and we have recycled through them for previous Christmas programs. This year, we are going to shake things up and introduce the children to songs that could have an equally lasting impact on our kiddos but are more approachable than some of the more difficult carols.

Any children interested in signing up for the Wednesday night music group are welcome to join and prepare a few selected songs. These rehearsals will begin on November 10 and will end for the year after our program on December 12.



**Zion's volunteers and participants ensured a wonderful time for children learning songs and instruments parts.**

Sunday School students will also have the opportunity to be involved in this program! Throughout November, we will spend half of Sunday School time learning songs that will be used in December. Any Sunday School kids can learn the songs with everyone during this time, and then sing together in service. Fun songs and dance will accompany the second service!

Any middle school youth are also welcomed to be part of this process. It will be a great opportunity to collaborate with all ages to make lasting memories.

If your child is interested in joining the Wednesday night group, please check out the email sent to Zion families. There is also a registration page on our website. Please email me with any questions at [noelle@zionloveland.com](mailto:noelle@zionloveland.com). If your child wants to participate in the service on December 12 with the Sunday School crew, they can attend Sunday School to learn the songs and then sign up at the beginning of December to let me know they will attend and participate. I will also be sending the songs and some practice recordings through email so you can practice with them at home!

Thank you all for being supportive and caring through this time so we can safely have the children enjoy making music together.

# Confirmation—Publicly Affirming their Faith

*Pastor Courtney Steitz*

As Lutherans, we believe that in the waters of baptism we die to sin and are raised to new life in Christ. This new life is not something we create on our own. We don't work really hard to have faith; it is a gift that God freely gives us. If God's promises are written on our minds and on our hearts, we don't have to wonder about what good works God might have us do; they just flow from us. If any of you have gotten to know our confirmands you know this about them. ♦KATE doesn't have to try really hard to lead by example on her sports teams, she just does it. ♦KAM isn't wondering what would be a nice way to treat middle school students who look up to her at Girl Talk, it just comes easily. ♦HANNAH isn't worried about doing the right thing when meeting someone who has been excluded or left out, making a kind and welcoming space for others just comes naturally. Experiencing God's love, being reformed and made new by God's grace, and being sent back out into the world to proclaim God's Kingdom in word and deed, is actually all God's work, not ours. So when our confirmands come forward to publicly affirm their faith, they are affirming a faith that God creates in them. Thank you to families, mentors, and members of the congregation who have supported these young adults and will continue to do so! We are grateful for this step in their faith journey.



**Zion's pastoral staff stood in celebration with our 2021 confirmands. L to R: Kate Weimer, Pastor Courtney, Pastor Joel, Hannah Pancoast, Intern Pastor Andrea, and Kam Otteson.**

## **Kam Otteson**

Ministry Project: Work with children at the Red Schoolhouse on 5<sup>th</sup> Preschool.

*And we urge you, brothers and sisters, warn those who are idle and disruptive, encourage the disheartened, help the weak, be patient with everyone.—1 THESSALONIANS 5:14 (NIV)*

## **Hannah Pancoast**

Ministry Project: Build and support a free pantry.

*Am I now trying to win the approval of human beings, or of God? Or am I trying to please people? If I were trying to please people, I would not be a servant of Christ.—GALATIANS 1:10 (NIV)*

## **Kate Weimer**

Ministry Project: Collect school supplies for students in need.

*For nothing will be impossible with God.—LUKE 1:37*





# Faith Formation

*Pastor Courtney Steitz*

## Advent Devotionals

This year's Advent theme is *Close to Home*. To bring this theme even closer to home, we will be offering a Faith5 Advent Devotional that will focus on the scripture readings for each week. Faith formation is not something that only takes place at church or at church events. So much of our faith identity actually gets formed at work, school, and in our own homes. Our hope is that these Faith5 devotionals give families and households a way to thoughtfully engage the Advent season in a meaningful but simple faith practice at home.

Many of you are familiar with Faith5, but for those of you who are not we wanted to offer some explanation. Faith5 is a simple way of investing time with members of your household, with friends or family on Zoom or over the phone, or just with God each day. There are five steps to Faith5.

1. **Share** highs and lows of the day.
2. **Read** a verse or passage from scripture.
3. **Talk** or reflect on how the Bible verse relates to your highs and lows.
4. **Pray** for your highs and lows, for yourself, for your family, and for the world.
5. **Bless** one another or remember God's blessings and promise for you.

We are hopeful that this Faith5 Devotional will be a blessing to you this Advent Season.

## Faith5 Advent Gathering for Young Families

We love doing faith formation events at church—we have a blast learning about faith together! As much fun as we have at church, we want to help and equip our families to feel like they can do faith formation at home too.

An easy way to grow in faith as a family/ household and start having spiritual conversations with your kids is Faith5. Join us on **November 28 at 3:30 p.m.** for an informational event about how to integrate Faith5 into your kids' bedtime routine each evening. Hear about how these practices begun at a young age can impact your kids as teens and even adults.

If you have questions or would like to participate, contact Pastor Courtney.

## Children's Christmas Program

During the month of November, Sunday School students will begin preparing for the children's Christmas program. For the first half of Sunday School each week, they will sing songs and learn motions and dances. The program will be during the 10:45 a.m. service on December 12. We are excited that many of our Children's Music Ministry will join us for the program too! Stay tuned for more information.

## Advent Retreat

Sky Ranch is offering an Advent Retreat this year on December 3-5. This is a great way to kick start Advent with intentional worship, time in nature, and learning more about different Advent practices. The cost is \$80 per person or \$300 per family.

You can register on the Sky Ranch website by November 22.

# Faith Formation

*Pastor Courtney Steitz*

## **L2F2 Christmas Parties for Middle and High School Youth and Christmas Caroling All Ages**

We are already looking forward to Christmas! We will have separate parties for both high school and middle school students.

High schoolers will meet at Zion at 12:45 p.m. on December 19 for cookie baking. The cookies will be given to home-centered members during Christmas caroling later that afternoon. There will also be a white elephant gift exchange.

Middle schoolers will be at King of Glory for their Christmas party during their normal confirmation time at 12:45 p.m. on December 19. They will do a white elephant gift exchange and decorate and create Christmas ornaments for home-centered folks that will be distributed during Christmas caroling later that afternoon.

And after the parties, all ages are invited to come Christmas caroling. Our caroling will be to home-centered members the afternoon of December 19. Check the bulletins for more information as the date gets closer.

## **Kids in Christ**

It has been so wonderful to have so many different voices leading the Kids in Christ time in worship! I have enjoyed hearing from our different leaders. Many of you have gifts and ways of teaching kids that are unique to you. Thank you for sharing your energy and love for Jesus with our youngest members at Zion. Faith formation is strongest in the context of intergenerational community. When different members share with our children, it communicates to them that they are valuable enough that adults are willing to take time to share with them.

Different people prepare for Kids in Christ differently. One of the pastors can supply notes on the text or starting ideas for people as they prepare, or you can create one on your own. Some people like to work even more closely with the pastor or preacher to solidify their initial ideas. One of the pastors is also willing to help lead the memory verse if you don't feel comfortable leading that piece. If you are interested in leading a future Kids in Christ or have questions, please reach out to Pastor Courtney.

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## **Run 4 Camp**

For a lot of our students at Zion, and even our adults, Sky Ranch feels like a second home. During the month of November, we're doing an L2F2 Run for Sky Ranch 5K. You can run, walk, or hike your 5K anytime during the month of November, or you can join us at 5:00 p.m. on Saturday, November 27, at Zion to run/walk a 5K and finish at the Zion fireplace with hot drinks, snacks, and celebration. If you want to run or walk on your own, and just meet us for the celebration on Saturday night, the party starts at 6:00 p.m.

Like any good run, we will have t-shirts. If you would like a t-shirt, please sign up with the signup genius or let me know **your t-shirt size by November 3**. <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/5080844AEAF2FA6FB6-tshirt>

*Continued on page 15.*

# Faith Formation

*Pastor Courtney Steitz*

## Girl Talk/Man Cave/Middle School Fun Night

Our middle school students have had a busy fall! Every Tuesday our middle school girls meet at King of Glory at 6:30 p.m. for mentoring conversations with high school students. The second Tuesday of the month, middle school boys meet for Man Cave, a time of fun and connection with other students and adult leaders. On the fourth Tuesday of the month, they all come together for Middle School Fun Night! We have had water balloon splash fest, capture the flag, and game night.

These spaces for our middle school students are so important not just because they provide time for fun together but also because they offer places for authentic community. Through these programs, our middle school students are learning how to care for each other as a community of faith, how to listen well, and how to create space for others.

If you are middle school student who would like to learn more or if you are an adult interested in volunteering with any of these middle school events, please let Pastor Courtney know.

## River Heroes Summer Trip

As we focus on the theme of *Close to Home*, my hope is that we come to realize that we are always close to home when we find our home in God. In fact, as we find our home in God, God may invite us to a place far from our physical home, far from our comfort zone, in service to others. This summer, our high school students are invited to journey from “home” for the sake of others on our summer service trip.

This summer we will be joining Amnicon Lutheran Camp for their “River Heroes” trip. This is a canoe service-learning trip. High schoolers will spend time paddling on the Namekagon/St. Croix River cleaning up trash and still finding time for fun together.

The trip is \$600 per youth, but please do not let cost be a barrier to participating. We can help cover the cost of the trip for any student or family that wants to participate. In order to reserve a spot on the trip, please contact Pastor Courtney and turn in a \$100 deposit. Space on the trip is limited, so spots will be reserved on a first-come/first-served basis. **Check out our River Heroes informational meeting on November 7 at 7:00 p.m. for more information.**

We are looking forward to the opportunity this summer to journey with high school students from our homes to help care for everyone’s home.

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*Run 4 Camp continued from page 14.*

We are asking for a suggested donation of \$25 to participate. Like with all Zion events, please don’t let cost be a determining factor. Let me know and we can work with you on the cost. You can use this link if you’d like to pay online. <https://zionloveland.com/give/>

It is extra exciting because all gifts to Sky Ranch during the month of November are matched 2 to 1, meaning a \$25 gift to Sky Ranch actually ends up being a \$75 gift.

## Caring Connection Phone Calls

*Pastor Courtney Steitz*

Throughout the pandemic, many of you made phone calls to one another to help keep us connected. When we were unable to gather in person, these calls were a way to check in on one another and to remind each other that we were still loved and cared for, even when we were feeling disoriented in our own homes. Many of these calls have stopped now that we are able to gather a little more regularly in person.

Yet several people have committed to making calls to those who are home-centered or in need of extra care during this season. This commitment to calling and connecting is a beautiful example of helping all members of our community feel close to home, even when we're far apart.

JOANNE STERKEL received calls during the pandemic, and now volunteers to make calls to others. She writes, "During the pandemic I was fortunate to receive weekly phone calls from LINDA TEGEDER. We talked about family and Zion activities and about my welfare. I so much appreciated her calls. Now I want to respond to this activity by making phone calls to members of Zion who are home-centered. Those calls are the incentive for me wanting to participate from the other side...giving and still receiving from both sides."

If you are interested in being a part of phone call connecting, please reach out to Pastor Courtney.

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## Maddie chooses AmeriCorp closer to home

*Maddie Elder*

When Pastor Joel told me that the theme for the newsletter was "Close to Home," I thought my story was fitting considering where I am in my life.

As many of you know, I was planning to attend Augustana University this fall. Due to unexpected mental health issues, I ended up withdrawing and embarking on the journey back home. That same weekend, Pastor Sonja sent me a link for the AmeriCorps application. Upon reading the email, I thought she was absolutely crazy for thinking I could start this taxing but rewarding job after just returning home and facing the challenges of being physically, mentally, and emotionally healthy. With that being said, I had meaningful conversations with my parents, teachers who are role models to me, and God, and I decided I should apply. I sent in an application and following the interviews, I was offered the position. This was TOTALLY a God

thing, and I knew He was watching over me and in control when I had no hope there was any light at the end of the tunnel.

I am very grateful to be a Reading Tutor for AmeriCorp at Lincoln Elementary starting November 1! I have completed my first week of training, and I am in the second week of training now. I have thoroughly enjoyed the training, getting to know the fellow tutors, and learning how I can be the best tutor for the kindergarten through third graders.

I am in a better place mentally and emotionally being closer to home, closer to my family, closer to my supports, and starting a life-changing experience that is guiding me into a bright future.

If you would like to know more about AmeriCorp, please visit [www.americorps.gov](http://www.americorps.gov).

# Nourish

*Joel Brauner*

Nourish continues to roll on and we aren't going to let winter stop us! Join us as we meet on the Zion patio for delicious food, captivating discussions, and fellowship around the fire.

In the past few months, we've filled our bellies with pulled pork, tacos, and hot dogs. We've filled our minds with discussions around what does the future church look like, what is Nourish, and what's the deal with the Hocus Pocus witches. And we've filled our hearts with God's word and prayers for those around us.

The next few months should be colder, but that just means the food will be warmer. Join us and share delicious meals of bowls of chili and soup and sweet cups of hot chocolate with marshmallows. Everyone is welcome to join us. And that's not code for only families with kids! We gather all together at the beginning and the end, but there are separate programs for adults and for kids in the middle. So again, *everyone* is welcome!

Here is our schedule for the next three months along with the planned adult topic.

Saturday	November 6	5:30 p.m.	The Subtle Art of Not Giving a Flip by Mark Manson
Saturday	December 11	5:30 p.m.	Abortion and the Church
Saturday	January 8	5:30 p.m.	Discernment

If you're planning to come for the first time, let Joel Brauner (at [joeldbrauner@gmail.com](mailto:joeldbrauner@gmail.com) or 719-640-8190) or Pastor Courtney know so we can keep you in the loop with all the details.



Well-nourished and warmed by the fire, all are smiles who attended the September Nourish gathering.

# Thanksgiving Worship and Pie Auction

On Sunday, November 21, at 6:00 p.m., Zion will host a Thanksgiving worship service shared by the ELCA churches of Loveland. Pastor Chris Davis from Trinity Lutheran Church will be preaching. Immediately after worship, we will hold a pie auction.

All offerings and funds raised at the pie auction will benefit Habitat for Humanity of Loveland, to help provide a home for those without safe, affordable housing. The challenge in previous years has been that the pastor whose congregation raises the least amount for the pie auction gets a pie in the face! In 2018, Pastor Chris took the pie after a last minute upset from a generous donor from King of Glory edged Trinity out. In 2019, donations were so generous, all three pastors set a challenge that if reached, all three would take the pies (see photo)! Which pastor will take the pie to their face this year? Come join us for some fun, all while giving thanks to God for many blessings and returning a blessing to Habitat for Humanity.



**So, which face gets the pie in 2021?**



**Donations were so generous in 2019, all three pastors stepped up to be "pied."**

But we can't have a pie auction without pies! Please consider donating your favorite pie for the auction. Pies can be delivered to Zion from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon on the Friday before the Thanksgiving worship, or on Sunday until noon.

## Thanksgiving Baskets

For Thanksgiving, we will again provide food baskets for families who are in need of a special holiday meal. You can sign up for items on the signup genius at <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/5080844AEAF2FA6FB6-thanksgiving1> where you will find a complete list of items needed. Our goal is to make 37 baskets. We are also asking for King Soopers gift cards in the amount of \$10 for the families to buy their Thanksgiving turkey. If you would like to donate, you can follow the link in the weekly e-on Zion email or call the church office.

Thank you for your generosity.



## Christmas Gifts for Monroe

Monroe staff will create the wish list of toys and clothing for the children of Monroe. The list will then be available to us through a signup genius link. We will also provide it to you in the weekly e-on Zion email, in announcements, or you can also call the church office for information about the ages, gender, sizes, and gift requests for the children. Your generosity makes holiday dreams come true for these kids. Thank you.

## ZQT (Zion Quilt Tyers)

The ZQT are at it again! Thanks to your time and talent tying quilts for Lutheran World Relief. Thanks to STIG and GUNNEL ORESJO who drove a truckload of Zion's quilts to Denver. If you are interested in tying quilts, please reach out to SUSAN OSBORN or call the church office.

## All Saints Sunday—Deaths and Baptisms

All Saints Sunday celebrates the baptized people of God, living and dead, who are the body of Christ. This day calls us to remember all who have died in Christ and whose baptismal journey is complete, as well as those who have begun their journey of faith through the waters of baptism since All Saints Sunday last year. At the Lord's Table we gather with the faithful of every time and place, trusting that the promises of God will be fulfilled and that all tears will be wiped away in the new Jerusalem.

The bell tolls the joy of Jesus' triumph over death, and a candle is lit as a reminder that Christ's light has shone through the lives of these saints at Zion:

*Mitzi Blore      Polly Hansen      Marvin Huth      Del Milbrath*  
*Miriam Mohr      Dale Schroder      Dan Stone*

We rejoice in the lives of those who have been called saints of God through the waters of baptism:

*Bradley George Samelson      Linus Richart Lamonda*  
*Eleanor Francis Irene Lucero      Jade Christensen*

## Zion's Columbarium and Memorial Garden

It has been just over a year since the columbarium and memorial garden at Zion was consecrated as a holy place and a home in which to lay the remains of our loved ones to rest. The beauty and growth in that space stands as witness of the resurrection and a reminder of our connection to those saints who have gone before us in life and in death and who now are at home with God. A new favorite tradition for some is to gather for Easter sunrise worship in the memorial garden, celebrating resurrection in the place of our beloved dead.

In October, the memorial garden board of trustees gathered in the space to assess any work that needed to be done or plants that needed to be replaced in the spring. A week later, JESSICA KUHNS picked up a truckload of mulch and gathered with a handful of other volunteers to prepare the garden for winter. Our commitment is to keep that space beautiful and treat it as the sacred place it is.



**Zion's memorial garden is a sacred and peaceful place.**

If you do not have arrangements for a place to lay your own remains after death, or the remains of a loved one, we encourage you to consider the Zion columbarium. Prearrangements are encouraged to reserve a niche. They are a gift to family members, knowing that at the time of death and grief, the wishes of the deceased will be fulfilled. The columbarium wall in Zion's memorial garden has thirty niches, and we currently have reservations for about one-third of the niches. Soon, the memorial garden board will look at adding another columbarium wall. Each niche has space for two urns. The current cost of one niche, whether it holds one urn or two, is \$2,000, and includes a polished bronze urn, engraved stone faceplate, and perpetual upkeep of the memorial garden. If prearrangements are made and the reservation is paid, that rate is secured even if the cost of a niche increases in the future. If you are interested in making prearrangements to reserve a niche, or have questions, please contact the church office to review a contract.

## Among Members and Friends

### At Rest in Our Father's House

**Dale Schroder** who died on August 25, 2021, and whose memorial service was held at Zion on August 31, 2021. We keep in prayer Dale's family, especially his long-time companion Pauline DeShay.

**Polly Hansen** who died September 9, 2021, and whose funeral was at Resthaven on September 17, 2021. We keep in prayer Polly's sons and their wives who mourn the death of their mother.

**Del Milbrath** who died on September 9, 2021, and whose funeral was at Zion on September 20, 2021. We keep in prayer all of Del's family and friends, especially his wife Naomi, children Trent and Tyann, and their families.

### Baptismal Blessings

We rejoice with Esther Lucero at the baptism of her daughter **Eleanor Francis Irene Lucero** who was baptized on Sunday, September 19, 2021.

### Prayers for Those who Grieve

**Helen Weideman** at the death of her sister Shirley.

**Kathy Loken** at the death of her mother Faye.

**Lisa Teesdale, Janice Molitor, and Carol Lowe** and their families at the death of their Aunt Julie.

**Arlene Meyer** at the death of her daughter Lois.

**Naomi Milbrath** at the death of her husband Del.

### Prayers of Celebration

Phyllis Zimmerman's at the birth of her great-granddaughter **Adilyn**.

Ken and Ruth Vick at the birth of their great-granddaughter **Daphne Ruth Lias**.

Naomi Milbrath at the birth of her great-granddaughter **Brinley Rose**. We especially rejoice that Del was able to see Brinley before he died.

Ginger and Jerry Klein at the birth of their great-granddaughter **Amelia**.

We rejoice that **Lynnea**, friend of Deborah Price, is in remission after a bone marrow transplant.

### We Keep in Prayer

*Zion offers up prayers for those  
in need—for members, for friends,  
for community, for our country,  
and for the world.*

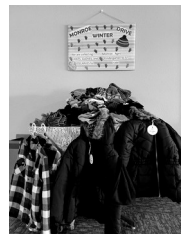


The eyes of Joanne Sterkel, Elaine Hart, and Harriet Colton, women bonded in faith and friendship, reveal their masked smiles.

*We are thankful  
for our Zion  
family and the  
love and support  
that radiates  
from  
friendships.*

### And the tally is:

- 65 hats
- 24 scarves
- 35 gloves
- 7 ear warmers
- 8 coats



Kudos to all who stepped up to keep our Monroe kiddos toasty this winter.



## Among Members and Friends

*Dear friend of Kristen's,*

*I'm sorry I forgot your name! My friend Kristen told me about your visit to her and your gift of her shawl. I was so pleased that you would honor her request to bring a prayer shawl to me in Arvada.*

*[The name forgotten is Kathy Pancoast.]*

*I love the shawl, and I love the idea behind it that I was being prayed for! Don't stop praying! The shawl feels so nice on my shoulders.*

*Thank you for your time and thoughtfulness.*

*Peace and God bless*

*Jeannie*

*Hello Kathy [Pancoast],*

*I just wanted to say thank you so very much for the beautiful prayer shawl from Zion and for thinking of me during this difficult time at the death of my mother in Pennsylvania. I appreciate you, and I am blessed to know you and Elliott.*

*Thank you again!*

*Nicole Oleski*

*Member Services Manager*

*Village Coop of Loveland*

*Dear Lindsey, all the office staff, and, of course, the pastoral staff,*

*We are so blessed by all your hard work. You all SO ROCK! Thank you.*

*Cindy Fankhanel*

*Thank you . . .*

*. . . to the family of Zion for all your acts of kindness during Del's battle with cancer and after he received his heavenly healing—whether it was your prayers, cards, a meal, phone calls, or other acts of kindness.*

*. . . to Elaine Hart who brought prayer shawls for each of us when we were told the cancer had won.*

*The Milbrath family say thank you and God's blessing to each of you as you have been a blessing to us.*

*Naomi, Trent, Tyann, Kenton, Travis,  
Maddie, Micah, and Brinley*

*Thank you to our Zion bulletin folders who show up EVERY Thursday—rain, snow, sleet, or shine to prepare our bulletins and communications for Sunday worship. We appreciate your time, commitment, and your hilarious conversations. We know the world is a better place because of all the problem-solving that occurs among you. We are grateful for you ALL!*

### Thank You Letters to Zion

- July 15, 2021—From House of Neighborly Service for a donation of \$2,431.
- August 16, 2021—From Loveland's Community Kitchen for a donation of \$1,450.
- September 1, 2021—From KidsPak for a gift of \$279.86.
- October 21, 2021—From Loveland's Community Kitchen for a donation of \$375.



**Zion's faithful folders of bulletins are  
JEWEL CLAYTOR, ELAINE NICHOLS, HARRIET COLTON,  
TERESA MAJESKI, MARY DRAIN, and JOANNE STERKEL.**

## Among Members and Friends

### Grounds Maintenance

*A huge thank-you to DON FENSKE who sprayed weeds and maintained the area around the parking lot and the Boy Scout shed this spring.*

*Thank you to RICK BILSTAD, BILL MCCAIN, EILEEN HUDDLE, JESSICA KUHN, LINDSEY WALTER, and PASTOR JOEL for winterizing the memorial garden. Jessica picked up the mulch, and the crew brought all their own garden equipment to clean up weeds and prepare for the*

*season change.*

*If you are interested in helping maintain the grounds around Zion, please reach out to the office. We appreciate our dedicated volunteers!*



### Behind the Bulletin Board and Bookmarks

*Thank you to PAM STEVENS for maintaining our seasonal worship bulletin board. Your creativity is amazing, and the time and thought you put into making your creation shows! We appreciate always having the bookmarks ahead of time to prepare for Bible study and to anticipate the theme for next Sunday's sermon.*

*Zion is blessed to have all the behind-the-scenes talent our worship team provides.*

*Thank you for sharing your gifts with us.*

**Thank You, Kristi!** Unless you have had a wedding at Zion, you may not have been aware of the critical role that KRISTI PEACH has filled as Zion's volunteer wedding coordinator. For 16 years, Kristi has met with couples preparing to be married at Zion, helping them plan their wedding, including bringing in caterers, photographers, DJs, and many, many more details. These are the kind of things that overwhelm many preparing for a wedding, but Kristi helped track and organize all of the details to make their experience manageable, memorable, and joyous. Because we live in Colorado, many weddings happen outside in the beauty of creation. However, either because of Zion's recent remodel and addition, or the pandemic and its implications for weddings, or the current number of young people preparing for marriage and their connection to Zion, or some combination of all these factors, we have suddenly had more weddings at Zion. This, along with other reasons, has caused Kristi to reflect on her role as Zion's wedding coordinator, and she has decided to resign her position. Kristi recently wrote, "I appreciate having been able to be in this position for 16 years and the joy it has brought and look forward to moving on from here." Sixteen years is an amazing amount of time to do anything, and Kristi has served faithfully, sharing her gifts of administration and leadership with the church and many couples over those years. Thank you, Kristi!

# Madagascar Well and Irrigation Project

## *Will Reents*

Zion's Mission Committee is having a fund drive in November to raise money to construct three shallow wells each with a drip irrigation system. Southern Madagascar is experiencing a severe drought and famine. Over 1 million are going hungry and 500,000 children under age 5 are acutely malnourished, and it is expected to get worse. Today's drought is the worst in 40 years and is made worse by climate change. Harvest of their main staple, which is cassava, is expected to be 60-90% less than in normal years. Madagascar depends on tourism, but because of COVID infections, the country has been shut down to tourists resulting in the loss of 1.5 million jobs and no government subsidies to help people.

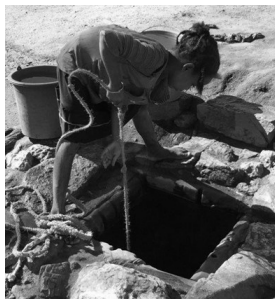
Our committee is raising funds to give to Global Health Ministries (GHM) who is organizing the project. These wells will be hand dug and maintained by each village with the help of GHM. They will be 24 to 48 feet deep. GHM will provide the concrete rings (\$1,000) and drip irrigation (\$2,000). Each well will supply water for a vegetable field the size of a football field and feed about 160 families.

Since this will continue to provide water and vegetables for years to come, we chose this sustainable project at a cost of \$9,000 which pays for three wells and three irrigated fields. The \$9,000 may seem too much to raise but stay tuned as to why we think it is a very feasible goal.

You will be hearing more from us in church on November 14, 21, and 28. Look in the church for the well and poster for an update.

After returning from our mission trip to southern Madagascar, we still remember the lady who was running beside our van begging for food. How shocking to hear they were subsisting mostly on cactus.

**Before (left) and After (right)**



**Well development:  
Before (above) and After (below)**



We have so much for which to be thankful. Please consider donating to this cause by December 12.

Members of Zion's Mission Committee are CARLEEN BLAKE, EILEEN HUDDLE, VICKI JOHNSON, WILL and KATHY REENTS, MEG SCHREIBER, SCOTT SPRAIN, and council liaison STEVE COURTS.

**The people of southern Madagascar are in peril.  
We can help with the well and irrigation project.**

## An Inspiring Program at the September TGIF Gathering

*Richard Bilstad*

Our September TGIF had a special program.

KIP OTTESON, son-in-law of Will and Kathy Reents, along with his son KAI, showed a video documentary called: “Credimus: We Believe.” It’s the amazing story of a landlocked yacht club doing a 70-mile boat race in 48 hours. Students at Platte Canyon High School learned to work as a team with teachers who love them. It was a very inspiring program.

Thanks to LYNN and KATHY LOKEN for providing this opportunity.



Kip Otteson and his son Kai provided an inspiring program at Zion’s September TGIF gathering.

## God’s Work. Our Hands. Sunday—A Rewarding Day of Service



Serving at the Larimer County Food Bank, five volunteers swept air vents, scrubbed shelving, and scoured the refrigerator.

## God's Work. Our Hands.—Making a Difference in our Community



Thanks to our  
volunteers,  
Monroe  
Elementary  
has a new set  
of the three Rs  
of education:

**Refurbish**  
**Revamp**  
**Renew.**

Volunteers at  
Loveland's Community  
Kitchen reported, "The  
weather was a little  
wonky, but it cleared  
up and the tent didn't  
blow away and we  
stayed mostly dry. We  
didn't hand out as  
many root beer floats  
as we thought, but it  
was a good afternoon."



## Celebrating Zion's Stewardship Commitment Thankful—Grateful—Blessed



Zion celebrated the culmination of its stewardship campaign with an outdoor reception for which Joanne Sterkel, Teresa Majeski, and Harriet Colton were perfectly clad.

### Thankful—Grateful—Blessed to Share in Ministry and Mission in 2022

In our October 10 worship, Zion had an ingathering of commitments to the 2022 budget. The theme for looking toward the coming year of ministry together is “Thankful-Grateful-Blessed.” Both as individuals and a faith community, we have so much to be thankful for in life, and this is an opportunity to show our gratitude through financial commitments to the mission and ministry God has called us to share at Zion.



The future is always unknown and uncertain, but we know there is even more uncertainty for many today. In all this uncertainty, what we do know is that God has an incredible future planned for Zion. It is amazing to see the ways Zion has already been able to serve the community in these difficult times and continues to find ways to gather for worship, education, and fellowship opportunities. We look with hope toward the ways God will continue to work in our lives and in our community. Through these difficult times, it can actually be an exciting time to be the church and share the many blessings we have with the community around us.

Statement of Intent cards were mailed to the whole Zion congregation. If you returned one already to show your commitment to being a financial part of Zion's ministry, thank you. If you do not have a Statement of Intent card but still would still like to turn one in, please let the church office know, and we can get one to you or we can fill it out for you. There is also an online version you can fill out if you are not comfortable or able to leave your home. If you plan to give to the 2022 budget and the mission we share but you do not know an exact amount, please consider filling out a card anyway as a sign of commitment and an act of faith.

## **Faster Pastors Ran 165 Miles for Refugees Forced from their Homes**

Thank you to all who contributed to Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Services (LIRS) on behalf of the Faster Pastors. On September 10-11, a team of 10 pastors and church workers ran a 165-mile relay from Idaho Springs to Buena Vista. Much of it was on single-track trails through forests and mountains, some of it was in the dead of the night. The Faster Pastors have been running for 10 years. In previous years, they have completed the course anywhere between 30-33 hours, but this year was their fastest completion time at 29 hours and 6 minutes! ANDY STEITZ had the hardest leg, with 12.6 miles on single-track trail and almost 2,200 feet of elevation gain over Georgia Pass, and he placed fourth overall against every other runner.

Best of all, the Faster Pastors together raised at least \$22,000 for LIRS, not counting many donations that were not tracked! That means that together, we were able to make a great impact in the lives of the more than 82 million people (35 million are children below the age of 18) who have been forcibly displaced from their homes due to persecution, conflict, violence, and human rights violations.

Thank you for your support for the Faster Pastors' relay and for LIRS.



**Pastor Joel and Pastor Sonja met at an exchange where she volunteered as a marshal (she did not run this year).**



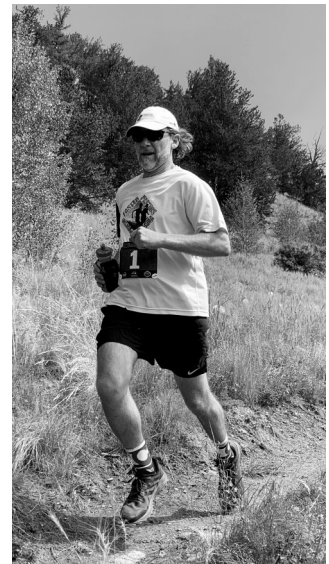
**Runners had a beautiful exchange at Guanella Pass.**



**Following tradition, the team ran into the finish line together.**



**The 2021 team stood together at the finish line in Buena Vista.**



**Pastor Joel finished his first run of 6 miles with over 1,200 feet of elevation gain.**

**We run by choice for refugees around the world running for their lives.**



## L2F2 Women's Retreat Recap

*Angie Elder*

Thirty-two women from Zion and King of Glory gathered around faith and fellowship for the L2F2 women's retreat at the YMCA of the Rockies in Estes Park, October 22-24, 2021. The theme for the weekend, *Present Over Perfect: Leaving Behind Frantic for a Simpler, More Soulful Way of Living*, came from the book by Shauna Niequist. The women learned from the author herself via a series of videos and group discussion questions. In addition to the learning sessions, the women also enjoyed the crisp mountain air, relaxing, painting "kindness" rocks, and reconnecting with each other. One participant stated, "It's been three years since I have attended and talking about things that matter with my friends and ladies in Christ is priceless."

Retreat participants will delve deeper into this topic during the monthly meetings of Woman to Woman utilizing Niequist's book and companion guided journal. All women of L2F2 are invited to attend.



Gathered around faith and fellowship, the women enjoyed reconnecting with one another.

**STANDING IN BACK ROW (L TO R):** Desi Boyce, Chrissy Wolfe, Kristin Otteson, Pastor Deb Abbott, Sarah Gall, Jami Juergensen, Eileen Huddle, Susan Linden, Peggy Klammer, Carleen Blake, Kathy Loken, Cori Scheidt, Florence Doksansky, Tracey Klammer, Deb Kocsis.

**SEATED IN THE MIDDLE ROW (L TO R):** Kathy Pancoast, Jan Einertson, Vicki Johnson, Sarah Christensen, Carol Schultz, Linda Juergensen, Carol Ward, Shelley Johnson, Pam Maddox, Kathy Reents.

**SEATED IN THE FRONT ROW (L TO R):** Erin Bachman, Amy Brauner, Bekah Christensen, Maddie Elder, Tyne Klammer, Pastor Sonja Pancoast

**NOT PICTURED (taking the photo):** Angie Elder

*Continued on page 27.*





Six sets of mothers and daughters attended the retreat.

**MOTHERS IN THE BACK AND DAUGHTERS IN THE FRONT – PAIRS FROM L TO R: Angie and Maddie Elder, Sarah and Bekah Christensen, Florence Doksansky and Sarah Gall, Linda and Jami Juergensen, Kathy Reents and Kristin Otteson, Tracey and Tyne Klammer.**



A retreat activity was painting “kindness” rocks.

## Kindness Rock Garden

Many of the women who attended the retreat participated in a craft activity of painting rocks for an up-and-coming “kindness rock garden” at Zion. The garden will be placed near the southeast entrance to the Zion parking lot for all to enjoy. Anyone is welcome to take a rock if they are in need of encouragement. In addition, anyone is welcome to take an unpainted rock, paint it, and return it to the garden to share with others. Let’s spread some kindness together!



Site of the kindness rock garden.

## WOMAN TO WOMAN

*Desi Boyce*

Woman to Woman is a monthly gathering of the women of L2F2 for faith and fellowship. Beginning in November, Woman to Woman will meet the second Monday of each month and continue through May. We meet at 6:30 p.m. for fellowship and then at 7:00 p.m., we begin discussion.



The group will be discussing the book **Present Over Perfect: Leaving Behind Frantic for a Simpler, More Soulful Way of Living** by Shauna Niequist. Through the guidance in Niequist’s book and the companion guided journal, we can create a life worth living. While life can be messy, hectic, and demanding, we have an opportunity to transform our lives and ourselves.

Women of all ages are encouraged to attend.

The first gathering will be Monday, November 8, at 6:30 p.m., at the home of VICKI JOHNSON, 6105 Jordan Drive, Loveland, CO.

If you are interested in attending, please contact DESI BOYCE at [drbt2006@msn.com](mailto:drbt2006@msn.com) so she can order materials.

## Zion Evening Book Group Selections November 2021—May 2022

### *Scott Sprain*

NOVEMBER—*The Book Woman of Troublesome Creek*, by Kim Michele Richardson, 2019. 320 pages. Historical Fiction.

The hardscrabble folks of Troublesome Creek have to scrap for everything—everything except books, that is. Thanks to Roosevelt’s Kentucky Pack Horse Library Project, Troublesome’s got its very own traveling librarian, Cussy Mary Carter. Cussy’s not only a book woman, however, she’s also the last of her kind, her skin a shade of blue unlike most anyone else. Not everyone is keen on Cussy’s family or the Library Project, and a Blue is often blamed for any whiff of trouble. If Cussy wants to bring the joy of books to the hill folks, she’s going to have to confront prejudice as old as the Appalachias and suspicion as deep as the holler. The book is inspired by the true blue-skinned people of Kentucky and the brave and dedicated Kentucky Pack Horse library service of the 1930s.

We meet on Thursday, November 18, at 7:00 p.m. at the home of Florence Doksansky, 3695 Leopard Street, Loveland, 80537.

JANUARY—*A Hillbilly Elegy: A Memoir of a Family and Culture in Crisis*, by J. D. Vance, 2018. 291 pages. Memoir.

Hillbilly Elegy is a passionate and personal analysis of a culture in crisis—that of white working-class Americans. The disintegration of this group, a process that has been slowly occurring now for more than forty years, has been reported with growing frequency and alarm, but has never before been written about as searingly from the inside. J. D. Vance tells the true story of what a social, regional, and class

decline feels like when you were born with it hung around your neck. The Vance family story begins hopefully in postwar America. J. D.’s grandparents were “dirt poor and in love,” and moved north from Kentucky’s Appalachia region to Ohio in the hopes of escaping the dreadful poverty around them. They raised a middle-class family, and eventually one of their grandchildren would graduate from Yale Law School, a conventional marker of success in achieving generational upward mobility.

We meet on Thursday, January 20, at 7:00 p.m. at the home of Scott and Ruth Sprain, 5260 Crabapple Court, Loveland, 80538.

FEBRUARY—*A Farewell to Arms*, by Ernest Hemingway, 1929. 304 pages. Fiction.

The best American novel to emerge from World War I, *A Farewell to Arms* is the unforgettable story of an American ambulance driver on the Italian front and his passion for a beautiful English nurse. Hemingway’s frank portrayal of the love between Lieutenant Henry and Catherine Barkley, caught in the inexorable sweep of war, glows with an intensity unrivaled in modern literature, while his description of the German attack on Caporetto—of lines of fired men marching in the rain, hungry, weary, and demoralized—is one of the greatest moments in literary history. A story of love and pain, of loyalty and desertion, *A Farewell to Arms*, written when he was 30 years old, represents a new romanticism for Hemingway.

We meet on Thursday, February 17, at 7:00 p.m. at a location to be announced.

*Continued on page 31.*

Zion Evening Book Group Selections November 2021—May 2022 continued from page 30.

MARCH—***Braiding Sweetgrass: Indigenous Wisdom, Scientific Knowledge and Teaching of Plants***, by Robin Wall Kimmerer, 2013.

410 pages. Nonfiction.

Drawing on her life as an indigenous scientist, and as a woman, Kimmerer shows how other living beings—asters and goldenrod, strawberries and squash, salamanders, algae, and sweetgrass—offer us gifts and lessons, even if we've forgotten how to hear their voices. In reflections that range from the creation of Turtle Island to the forces that threaten its flourishing today, she circles toward a central argument: that the awakening of ecological consciousness requires the acknowledgment and celebration of our reciprocal relationship with the rest of the living world. For only when we can hear the languages of other beings will we be capable of understanding the generosity of the earth, and learn to give our own gifts in return.

We meet on Thursday, March 17, at 7:00 p.m., at a location to be announced.

APRIL—***Beheld***, by TaraShea Nesbit, 2020.  
274 pages. Fiction.

Ten years after the Mayflower pilgrims arrived on rocky, unfamiliar soil, Plymouth is not the land its residents had imagined. Seemingly established on a dream of religious freedom, in reality the town is led by fervent puritans who prohibit the residents from living, trading, and worshipping as they choose. By the time an unfamiliar ship, bearing new colonists, appears on the horizon one summer morning, Anglican outsiders have had enough. With gripping, immersive details and exquisite prose, TaraShea Nesbit reframes the story of the pilgrims in the previously unheard voices of two women of very different status and

means. She evokes a vivid, ominous Plymouth, populated by famous and unknown characters alike, each with conflicting desires and questionable behavior.

We meet on Thursday, April 21, at 7:00 p.m. at a location to be announced.

MAY—***Varina***, by Charles Frazier, 2018.  
345 pages. Historical Fiction.

Charles Frazier returns to the time and place of Cold Mountain, vividly bringing to life the chaos and devastation of the Civil War. Her marriage prospects limited, teenage Varina Howell agrees to wed the much-older widower Jefferson Davis, with whom she expects the secure life of a Mississippi landowner. Davis instead pursues a career in politics and is eventually appointed president of the Confederacy, placing Varina at the white-hot center of one of the darkest moments in American history—culpable regardless of her intentions.

We meet on Thursday, May 19, at 7:00 p.m. at a location to be announced.

***“In the case of good books, the point is not to see how many of them you can get through, but rather how many can get through to you.”***

—MORTIMER J. ADLER

## **Sharing the mission of the Veteran Servant Corps Project**

Zion was blessed to have Vicky Daub, executive director of the Veteran Servant Corps Project (VSCP), preach in worship on October 17 and share the mission of VSCP. If you are interested in helping with VSCP or participating in their retreats for veterans, please let Pastor Joel know.

October 18, 2021

Pastor Joel,



Thank you for welcoming Larry and me to Zion yesterday. It was a wonderful experience that neither of us will soon forget. We especially enjoyed the turkeys you arranged there for our greeting yesterday morning!!!

I loved watching the children interact during the children's sermon. I was honored that you gave me time during the service for a Mission Moment. In fact, I felt like part of your ministry team yesterday as we served together.

A special thank you for allowing me to preach. I so love to preach! I especially loved the sermon preparation experience as I learned about Zion online, and prayed about what I was to share with all of you.

The Hospitality Hour after both services was an added bonus. I particularly enjoyed one-on-one conversations with folks there, who trusted me with their personal stories.

Larry and I both took pictures during the time to honor Pastor Sonja. I sent them separately via email. Your daughters are so beautiful! I loved watching them join pinkie fingers while Sonja was being honored during the second service.

I will be praying about what God has in mind for joint Zion/Veteran Servant Corps Project initiatives to serve Veterans and their families in the future.

Peace.

Vicky

# Re-Gathering Team Update

Since March 2020, a Zion re-gathering team has met regularly to keep track of the cases of COVID-19, including hospitalizations and deaths, and our congregation's response. We know it is impossible to balance different opinions around the pandemic, vaccines, and the use of masks, so as the name of the team implies, our goal is to provide opportunities for gathering in community in ways that keep people safe, healthy, and confident that they can gather with others safely without undue risk, while caring for the most vulnerable among us, especially those with compromised immune systems and children who are unable to receive the vaccine. Just as you want to feel safe and comfortable in your home, we want all to feel like Zion is a safe and comfortable home to them.

As you might imagine, the team has been busy in recent months. These are times we want and expect to be free of the virus, and yet we are still living with pandemic realities. At the same time, we have all learned so much in these last two years of how to gather safely.

In September, cases were so high the team felt it best to require masks for everyone in the building at all times. Currently, food and drink cannot be provided inside, so on Sunday mornings, we continue to provide coffee and fellowship outside under the pergola, where transmission of the virus is much less likely. Even in the winter months, we will continue to do so as we are able, lighting the fireplace and bringing out the patio heaters.

As we have learned how to ventilate the sanctuary, wear masks, and give distance to one another, the re-gathering team and staff have made some changes to worship that we hope will feel like another step closer to home. Beginning on Reformation Sunday, we will celebrate Communion in a continuous fashion with wafers and pre-poured cups, and not yet gathering around the altar. For those who are not comfortable

with this, there will still be an option for people to remain in their seats and receive Communion with the kits we've been using. They will commune first, along with Zoom worshipers. To be abundantly cautious, communion assistants will be vaccinated and fully masked. For those who choose to come forward for Communion, we ask that you stay in groups with the people you came with, and keep physical distance from those in front of you. As you receive the bread or the wine/grape juice, please step aside before removing your mask to eat or drink. We know that these sound like a lot of details and rules, but please keep in mind we are trying to offer our best while making sure everyone is comfortable and safe.

Along with Holy Communion, we will also start to offer sacred space tables after the sermon as a way for people to respond to God's word in different ways. For those who choose to participate, we ask that only two people at a time gather around a table in order to maintain distance. We will try to include enough tables and space for everyone who wants to participate.

We know that the policies and practices set by the re-gathering team will not make everyone happy. In such divided times, this will be impossible. However, we ask for your patience and prayers, and to give thanks with us that in spite of difficult times, God's spirit continues to gather us and enlighten us.

Thank you, from Zion's re-gathering team:

RONDA BUCK	SARAH CHRISTENSEN
BILL KURTZ	VICKI JOHNSON
SCOTT SPRAIN	CINDY WARREN
INTERN PASTOR ANDREA	
PASTOR COURTNEY	
PASTOR JOEL	

## Everyone Has a Home in Worship at Zion

Worship is central to what we do as Christians, and hospitality is important to making sure everyone knows they belong. In this season of worship, we want to encourage everyone to consider several options.

If you are joining us for in-person worship and have a blue Zion name tag, please start to wear it again. Many of you have left them in your church mailboxes. Some of you may have taken them home. If you cannot find your name tag, please contact the church office to order another one.

If you are joining us online for worship, we are exploring ways to make sure you are at home as part of the community. We want you to know that the pastors review who is online for worship, not to “take attendance” but because worship is personal and we like to know who is with us, whether in person or online. Worship is meant to be participatory and not simply watched, so please consider using the chat feature of Zoom. Before worship, if you have prayer concerns, please let us know. At the passing of the peace, please consider sharing a greeting of peace. After worship, share a greeting or a blessing with others.



Finally, we are grateful that HOWARD ABRAHAM and TRACEY KLAMMER have been serving as “online greeters” each Sunday. We are hoping to have more online greeters; if you are interested, please let us know. An online greeter can worship at home or in person in the sanctuary. These greeters help make worship personal by welcoming worshippers on Zoom while creating a safe community.

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### Thompson Valley Preschool (TVP)—Looking ahead to the 2021-2022 school year!

Registration begins February 1 for the 2021-2022 school year for preschool (ages 3 to 4 years old) and pre-kindergarten (ages 4 to 5 years old) children.

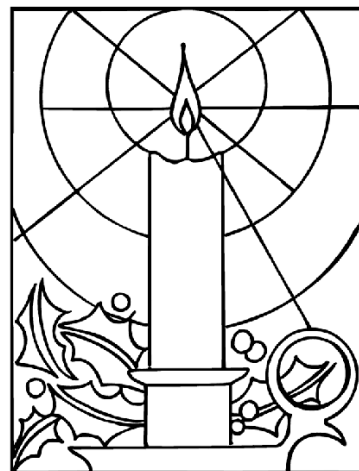
TVP offers affordable access to a high-quality, early-childhood program promoting kindergarten-readiness skills. Play is the work of children and TVP provides play-based instruction as well as modeling positive relationship development with social and behavioral skills interwoven into daily activities.

Preschool	Tues/Thurs mornings	8:45 to 11:15	Must be 3 years old by September 1
	Tues/Thurs afternoons	12:45 to 3:15	
Pre-kindergarten	Mon/Wed/Fri mornings	8:45 to 11:15	Must be 4 years old by October 1
	Mon/Wed/Fri afternoons	12:45 to 3:15	

Contact TVP for more information at 970-667-6552 or [admin@thompsonvalleypreschool.org](mailto:admin@thompsonvalleypreschool.org)



*Merry Christmas Coloring*





**Evangelical Lutheran  
Church in America**

God's work. Our hands.

**Zion Lutheran Church**  
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Instagram: [zionlutheranloveland](https://www.instagram.com/zionlutheranloveland)  
YouTube: [Zion Lutheran Church Loveland](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCz9t3U3U3U3U3U3U3U3U3U3)

Issue 11/21

Change of Service Requested

## Join Us in Worship

8:15 a.m. Traditional Worship  
In Person or Zoom  
10:45 a.m. Contemporary Worship  
In Person or Zoom

## ***Our Mission:***

We build and nurture a  
welcoming faith community  
for all generations.

## ***Our Vision:***

All shall know Jesus Christ  
as Lord and Savior,  
and love each other  
as He loves us.

**Celebrate Your Faith—  
Renew Your Spirit—  
Love One Another**

## **Important Dates Related to Newsletter Content (Read the Articles for Details)**

November 6	Nourish
November 7	River Heroes Summer Trip Informational Meeting
November 8	Woman to Woman
November 10	Children's Music Ministry Wednesday Group
November 17	Children's Music Ministry Wednesday Group
November 18	Evening Book Group
November 21	Thanksgiving Worship and Pie Auction
November 22	Deadline to Register for Sky Ranch Advent Retreat
November 24	Children's Music Ministry Wednesday Group
November 27	L2F2 Run for Sky Ranch 5K
November 28	Faith5 Advent Gathering
December 1	Children's Music Ministry Wednesday Group
December 3-5	Advent Retreat at Sky Ranch
December 8	Children's Music Ministry Wednesday Group
December 11	Nourish
December 12	Children's Christmas Program
December 12	Deadline to Donate to the Madagascar Project
December 13	Woman to Woman
December 19	L2F2 Youth Christmas Parties and Caroling for all Ages
January 8, 2022	Nourish
January 10	Woman to Woman
January 20	Evening Book Group
February 1	Thompson Valley Preschool Registration Begins