



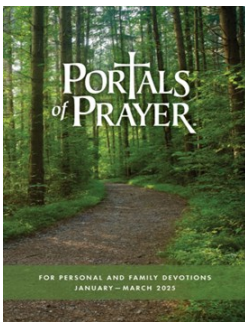
The COE President's Corner *by Anita Reck*

Luke 2:10-14 *(King James)*

- 10 And the angel said to them, fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people.
- 11 For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, which is Christ the Lord.
- 12 And this shall be a sign unto you, Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger.
- 13 And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of heavenly host praising God, and saying.
- 14 Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.

There is something so majestic, so awe-inspiring in these verses in the King James version. I love hearing them each Christmas. My eyes tear up and my heart sings with joy and love. I wish each of you to have that same joy and love, not only through Christmas, but throughout 2025.

Ministry of Disciple Life *by Jack Reck*



The Ministry of Disciple Life has purchased from Concordia Publishing House its daily devotional booklet **Portals of Prayer**. The *Portals of Prayer* booklet is a quarterly devotional that helps God's people focus on His Word and grow our faith each day. These booklets are now available in the sanctuary and narthex containing the devotions written for January-March 2025. When you are attending worship, please stop and pick up a copy for your home devotional use during the week.

"It is written, 'Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.'" Matthew 4:4

SEE PAGE 2 FOR PASTOR MATHEW'S MESSAGE

"Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call His name Immanuel."

Isaiah 7:14

OUR MISSION: WHY WE EXIST

To bring people into a covenantal relationship with the Lord (Matthew 28:19-20), and to equip them for personal growth and impact.
Ephesians 4:11-26

A Message from Pastor Mathew

"Twas the Night Before Christmas"
You know the story well.
The poetry, the art,
In fact, you might say it has no parallel.

But, there's something else about Christmas
There's something that calls us each year
We anticipate everything, the hymns, the candles,
We know what to expect, it's so crystal clear.

We remember the shepherds
That they were out in the field
When suddenly the angels' singing filled the dark night
When the glory of God was no longer concealed.

We remember Joseph and Mary
And the census that brought them to Bethlehem
We remember the donkey, the hay, and the manger
We remember the little Child named Jesus.

Now hold on just a minute,
Perhaps you noticed it too
"Bethlehem" and "Jesus" don't rhyme
That just kind of came out of the blue.

Jesus disrupts the rhyme in my message
He disrupts the rhyme on Christmas Eve
Because in the great poem of life
It's easy to not believe.

People were not expecting their King
They weren't expecting Him to be born in a stable
He even came as a baby, not of age
He didn't even come on people's timetable.

Jesus disrupted the rhyme
He changed the world and how it was viewed
He had to come in the way that He did
If it had any chance of being renewed.

Perhaps the predictable Christmas
Is the one that you happen to remember best.
The one just went just perfect
The one with which everyone was impressed.

But what about the ones that didn't work out
The ones that saw an epic fail?
Perhaps one that made you cry or scream
Or shook up your life's Richter scale.

We all have bad Christmas' from time to time
We're human and it's bound to occur.
Perhaps the death of a loved one, a bad diagnosis
Or a broken relationship is the evil saboteur.

The entire Christmas story is full of it,
It's completely full of the unexpected.
Its twists and turns wreak havoc on the people
But the disruptions are all interconnected.

A virgin birth, who thought of that?
No room at the inn?
I'm sure Mary and Joseph were thrown off guard
When offered but a manger for their child to be laid in.

If there was ever a bad Christmas
This had to be it.
The first one, the real one,
The one for which we'll soon have our candles lit.

The story of Christmas is nothing more
Than the biggest disruption of all time.
It's the story of God loving the world so much
That he gave Jesus to disrupt the sin-filled rhyme.

The world needed something special
It needed something to give life and help it cope
So, God did the one thing He knew He could do
And He sent us His Son, the one and only Jesus.

There it is yet again
A disruption in the rhyme
But what better way to disrupt our lives
Than with a name we can call on anytime.

His birth, life, and death
They were all, for the world unexpected,
But it wasn't the predictable that He was after
It was our hearts He desired affected.

Pastor Mathew's message continues on page 3

A Message from Pastor Mathew continued

If this Christmas doesn't work out
If it doesn't go as you planned
I hope that you don't forget it or leave it behind
I don't want you to misunderstand.

Jesus came to us
He came that we might start in a new direction.
He wanted to point us to God
That in a mirror we might see His reflection.

A life free of sin,
A life that is rooted in Him
A life that grows inside of us
A life that is hopeful not grim.

He came to us, was born in us
He grants us hope and peace for all time
And that, my friend is how and why
Jesus disrupts the rhyme.

Christmas worship services:
Christmas Eve
5:00 Children / Family
8:00 Traditional
Candlelight



In Our Prayers

David Detwiler
Mary Ann Dunlap
Corey Fischer
David Glenn
Casey Hirsh
George Langford
John Reed
Glenn Ribblett
Suzanne Roberts
Sara Smerkar
Sandy Valenson

ADULT SUNDAY SCHOOL - NEW SERIES "Reformation Profiles" lead by Jack Reck

This series is 6 sessions taught by Dr. Stephen Nichols. The church today faces problems similar to the church of yesteryear, albeit packaged and branded in different forms. A careful study of the history of the church prepares and equips its members to face the difficulties of its own day. The Reformation of the sixteenth century emphasized a return to the Word of God as a remedy for the theological deficiencies of the Roman Catholic Church, and Dr. Nichols embarks on this series to assist the current church by understanding the solas of the Reformation and their place for the people of God in all ages.

DECEMBER BAPTISMAL BIRTHDAYS

Alec Warden	December 4, 2005
Seth Luy	December 4, 2018
Matthew Pierce	December 6, 2009
Ladaya Wiskeman	December 9, 2007
Aidan Banahasky	December 18, 2022
Ashley Dodge	December 31, 2006

*If we are missing your child's baptism date, please advise the church office.

Worship Times
Saturday 5 PM
Sunday 9 AM

Faith Education Sundays

10:15 AM

ConnectFor: Families with Children in Pre-K - Grade 5

10:30 A

- ✦ Confirmation
Grades 6-8
- ✦ High School
- ✦ Adult

See Zion's Website for small group Bible Study.

THANKSGIVING PIES to LIGHT of LIFE RESCUE MISSION

THANKS to those who donated more than 80 pies needed by the Mission for the Thanksgiving meal at the mission and for meals distributed to Northside families served by the mission. The mission serves over 1000 meals each Thanksgiving, A special thanks to those who coordinated the pie drive and delivered the pies.

Advent

Evening Prayer

Wednesdays at

7:00 P.M.

December 4, 11 & 18

Heritage Room



Spiritual Realms ***A Study on What We Hope for in Advent***

Following the Advent Evening Prayer, Pastor Mathew will lead a mid-week study at 7:30 PM. The study will look into different realms mentioned in the Bible and connecting them to why we need Jesus. If you ever wondered about Heaven, Hell or anything in between, this will be a good place to ask your questions and seek answers in scripture.

December 4 - God's Throne Room Above

December 11 - The Occupied Territory of the Devil

December 18 - The Place of the Dead

30 And the angel said unto her, Fear not Mary: for you have found favor with God. 31 And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus.
Luke 1:30-31

SARRIS CANDY YOUTH FUNDRAISER

If you missed the deadline to order Sarris Candy, you can still support Zion's youth by shopping online at SarrisCandiesFundraising.com. Order by **December 7, 2024** using Group ID #10-1370, A \$5.00 flat shipping fee will apply.

THANK YOUR FOR SUPPORTING ZION'S YOUTH!



ANGEL TREE

Each year Zion provides Christmas presents for seniors in our neighborhood nursing homes through the Angel Tree Program. We seek out those residents that do not have family contact and show our care for these community residents through our giving. To be an "Angel" please see the trees in the narthex or basement entryway and select a tag. When taking a tag, please place your name on the sign-up sheet by the name you have selected. The tags provide gifts requested. Please place wrapped gifts in the Heritage Room or if locked, in front of the doors by **December 8, 2024**. THANKS!

ZION YOUTH FOSTER LOVE PROJECT

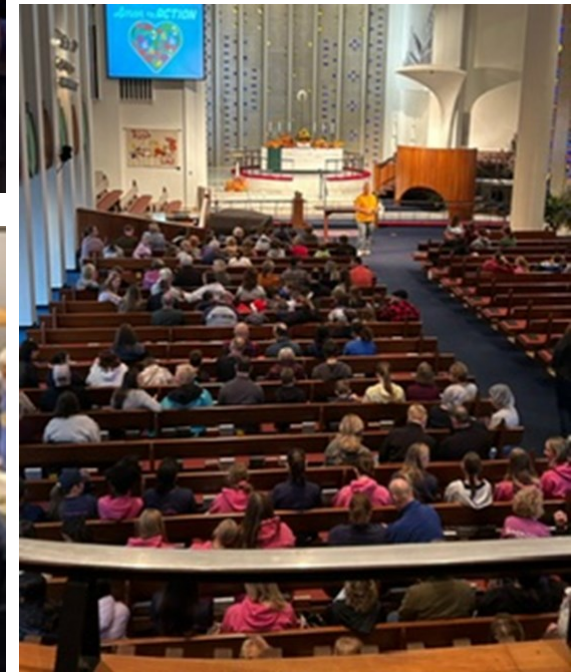
On **Friday, December 6th**, our youth will be shopping for the Foster Love Program. They will be purchasing gift items for children ages 2 through 12 and then will place the items into a duffel bag. They are hoping to complete 8 bags. **Monetary donations will be greatly appreciated.** Please note on your donation that this is to benefit the Zion Youth Foster Love Project. Thank you for supporting this worthy cause and may God bless you!

TOY COLLECTION FOR HURRICANE VICTIMS

Our area mission district is collecting toys for hurricane victims in the Carolinas. Zion has been named a collection point for donations. If you would like to donate, please consider the items below and deliver to Zion by **Sunday, December 8th**. Items sought include:

- Toys (Mark with boy/girl and age range).
- Toys must be boxed or sealed in a box before bringing in.
- Wrapping paper
- Tape
- Stocking Stuffers





On November 23, 2024, Zion members participated in Amen to Action at Christ Church in Bethel Park. They served by packing food for neighbors who are food insecure. In 2023, 1,008,340 meals were packed for distribution by the Greater Pittsburgh Community Food Bank.

For more information see: <https://plf.org/a2a>

Senior Christmas Brunch



Zion Lutheran Church

4301 Brownsville Rd.

Wednesday, Dec. 11

10:30am – 1:00pm

RSVP on the website or call the church office (412) 881-5512

* DEADLINE – MONDAY 12/2 *

zlbrentwood.org



Reverend Eric Riesen's Farewell Gathering

All are invited to an open house to honor Rev. Dr. Eric Riesen at the North American Lutheran Seminary as he steps away from his call as seminary president. The celebration will be on **Friday, December 6, 2024** from **1-3 PM** at the Trinity Anglican Seminary, 311 11th Street, Ambridge.

RSVP's are NOT requested.



For to us a Child is born, to us a Son is given, And His name will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

Isaiah 9:6-7

May the peace and joy of our Lord Jesus be yours at Christmas and always!