



THE
VISITOR
FROM ZION

NEWSLETTER OF ZION EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN RAHWAY

DECEMBER 2015

RAHWAY, NEW JERSEY

VOLUME 65, ISSUE 11

Pastor Pernini's Message

"In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered. This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. All went to their own towns to be registered. Joseph also went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, because he was descended from the house and family of David. He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn." ~Luke 2:1-7

Thomas Paine said, "These are the times that try men's souls." Ours is a time of great unrest. If the world isn't yet burning our hearts are slowly kindled to fire by a deep seated fear of what tomorrow may or may not bring. We are living in a moment where our deepest values clash with the world around us. Our greatest challenges, of course, never come to us in times of ease but unrest. And, unrest is all that we seemingly have. The cinders of Paris, France have barely gone out since terrorists killed 129 people. Governors across the U.S. are attempting to shut out refugees. Racial tensions across the United States are rising. Presidential politics are politicizing every single issue. Police and civilian unrest is a dichotomy that simply should not be a complicating factor in society. Fears of another terrorist attack on the US loom large against the backdrop of an angry citizenry. Everyone wants to change course, but no one seems to know how to steer the ship.

So it goes, today, like any trying moment in human history produces a great divide between people now enemies who were formerly friends. While such a divide is to be expected among the faithless - we have a two party political system after all - it is curious to

me how the faithful are also divided along "party lines" on issues like refugees and "appropriate military responses." I suppose that the tug-of-war between politics and religion has been going on long enough that I cannot begin to genuinely address the havoc that such a conflation renders. Yet, we are approaching Advent and shortly thereafter Christmas. We have a cute story about a father, Joseph, and his fiancé, Mary, who are looking for a place to deliver a baby. And, wouldn't you know it, no one can find space for them. This was probably due to fear of strangers on the one hand and lack of resources on the other.

Fear and scarcity are powerful determinants in decision making. It is amazing to consider all those things that we are afraid of: ISIS, refugees, police for some, and civilians for others, the future, the past, and the present. All can strike fear into the heart and all can be paralyzing. Consider scarcity for a moment. Scarcity, or lack of resources, is another lurking predator blocking our way to becoming restored. We lack so many things, perhaps many more things than any of us will ever actually possess.

Continues on page 3.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Operation Warm Heart begins December 2nd!

every week in the winter, 6pm Wednesday through 6am Thursday

Please consider how you can serve our brothers and sisters who are without homes in this season of ice and snow.

Volunteers are needed to greet and welcome our guests, cook and serve meals, and stay overnight.

WELCA Trip to Seafarers International House in NYC

Thursday, December 10th at 9:00 AM

To RSVP for the trip, contact Edna Syvertsen at 732-634-6687

All are welcome to join the trip to help assemble Christmas at Sea gift satchels for the population of seafarers served by Seafarers International House.

Working on the ships does not afford much time off for being with family around the holidays. These satchels provide small comforts (new socks, sweatshirts, and hats) and treats (a little bit of candy or nuts!), as well as a Christmas greeting from someone who has helped with donations and assembling.

For more information about Seafarers International House, visit <http://sihnyc.org>

“All God’s Children”

Worship Service for Individuals with Disabilities

Saturday, December 12th at 2:00 PM

This worship service will offer a Gospel message, prayer, music and singing. Light refreshments and time for fellowship will follow the service. Volunteers are needed to greet and assist with the service. Please join us in welcoming our brothers and sisters at this exciting worship service!

For more information, contact Jamie Dungey at 908-377-8945.



Greening of the Church

Sunday, December 20th after worship

Join in the seasonal fun of decorating the sanctuary for Christmas Eve worship.

Mac & Cheese Cook-Off

Saturday, January 9th at 6:00 PM

Cook up your best mac & cheese and bring an appetite to enjoy this event!

Like the Chili Cook-Off, it's a fundraiser/contest, so you will be able to vote for your favorites with cash if you wish.

All are welcome to enjoy a hearty meal and good fellowship!

Pastor's Message (*continued from page 1*)

And, again, it is curious that we, in pondering those things that we lack, even though we do not have them, they can possess us by their absence. I am talking about things like money, TV's, cars, education, family, friends, love, kindness, patience and the like.

Fear and scarcity are the most powerful actors on the stage of our lives, yet they are the least acknowledged. It was fear and scarcity that led Joseph and Mary to the manger, "because there was no room at the inn." They essentially had nothing but the leftover space of a room more suited for animals than for the birth of the Christ. Yet, they had everything. What more could they possibly need? Mary sang (Luke 1:46-55) after the annunciation that she was to bear the Messiah, "My soul magnifies the Lord" despite my lack resources and the shame that pregnancy before marriage brings. She continued, "and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior" regardless of what the neighbors and family might say of a baby born out of wedlock. "He has brought down the powerful from their thrones" even though she would soon be beckoned against her will to travel a great distance while pregnant, "and lifted up the lowly" - Mary's song is about trust in this promise rather than its fulfillment. "He has filled

the hungry with good things, and sent the rich away empty," these words must have encouraged Mary who, as you well know, did not have two pennies to rub together.

It is true that Mary and Joseph had little to be thankful for when you consider their poverty and refugee status. But, they knew that Jesus, the Messiah and Light of the World, was on the way. They, instead of being paralyzed by fear and scarcity, two things which landed them in what equates to a barn, were able to sing songs in what appeared to be the darkest night joined by angels, shepherds and wisemen. Such an impossible hope amidst the absence of things to allay Mary and Joseph's predicament is the bedrock of the faith. You and I, in these "times that try men's souls," may have nothing, but we also have everything.

Today, when the soul of America is put on trial, do not succumb to fear and scarcity. Just as Jesus was with Mary and Joseph which caused them to rejoice in immortal song, so to Jesus is with you forever. There is nothing that can take Christ from you and with Mary and Joseph, let your soul magnify the LORD.

Grace and Peace,
Pastor Carmine Pernini



Congregational Book Sale Success

Kathleen Silva, Social Ministry

Zion's book sale was a great success bringing in a total of \$238 to put towards our ministry of the church. Thank you to all who were generous enough to donate and purchase books. And, of course, thank you to everyone who graciously volunteered their time in helping set up, shop, work, and clean up for this event. Your help was much appreciated and I couldn't have done it without you.

Wishing you God's blessings this Thanksgiving and always.

Chili Cook-Off Review

Charlene Leisinski

...and the winner is Ursula Lochner! Congratulations! Congratulations to all the cooks who participated, it was a close race!

On November 7th a Chili Cook Off Competition was held in Zion's own Social Hall. Six cooks entered a batch of their Chili to be tasted and judged by the people and friends of Zion. There were a variety of Chili's some were very mild, other spicy, there were meat and vegetarian varieties. About 40 people attended the event, they ate chili to their hearts content and enjoyed each other's company! Votes were cast for favorite Chili's by placing dollars in the basket in front of the Chili. The people were encouraged to vote often as this was a fundraising event. The people of Zion came through once again! We raised \$232.00 for the General Operating Fund and had a great time doing it!

Thank you to all the cooks who donated their time and Chili so all could enjoy the event! Thank you to all of the people who attended or supported the event! God bless you all!

Happy Fall to You

Josephine Polhemus, member of the sewing group
From one pumpkin to another...

A woman was asked by a co-worker, "What is it like to be a Christian?" The co-worker replied, "It is like being a pumpkin. God picks you from the patch, brings you in, and washes all the dirt off of you. Then he scoops out the yucky stuff and removes the seeds of doubt, hate and greed. Then he carves you a new smiling face and puts his light inside of you to shine for all the world to see."

Hanging of the Greens

Maria Blajsa

A common Advent tradition in the northern hemisphere is known as the Hanging of the Greens. This is an intriguing blend of ancient symbolisms adapted over the years to proclaim a variety of powerful messages.

Ancient Romans used evergreens as symbols of peace, joy and victory. Their long-lasting color and inherent strength suggested long life and exuberance. Early Christians saw in these same branches a symbol of the risen Christ, and would place evergreen boughs in their windows to symbolize that Christ was present in their home. However, some early Christian leaders condemned the practice, believing that it was too similar to Roman imperial customs.

The people of Northern Europe had many customs connected with evergreens in the wintertime before Christianity arrived there. In a land of long, cold winters, there was a fear that the sun would disappear and never return. Believing that evergreens had magical powers, people brought them indoors hoping they would help bring back the sun. Over time, the evergreens came to symbolize the presence of new life of Christ, whose birth was celebrated in the northern winter.

Holly became closely tied to Christmas and Christian symbolism. Some people saw it as a symbolic "burning bush" arriving at the time of year when we celebrated the birth of Jesus, the "new Moses." Others saw it as a symbol of Mary whose being glowed with the presence of the Holy Spirit symbolized by the color red. Still others saw its prickly leaves and red berries as symbols of the crown of thorns and drops of blood. Lest we get carried away in a story of pure joy, the holly tree reminds us of a larger picture.

Cedar in many cultures is a symbol of royalty, and the sweet smell of pine and other evergreens is a reminder of the frankincense brought by the magi.

As churches, homes and other places get adorned with greenery during Advent and Christmas, look beyond the decorations to the powerful symbolism that can take us ever deeper into the story and the mystery that is the birth of Jesus Christ in our world.

Sunday School News

Anita L. Waldron, Sunday School Superintendent

On October 25 the Sunday School children marched into the church with homemade instruments singing "Jesus Love Me" dressed in their Halloween costumes. Many of our congregation joined in the marching around the church singing. The children also did "Jesus Loves Me" in sign language lead by Lisa Rivera.

The Halloween party after worship was a huge success with 50 people in attendance. There were games, prizes and lots of good food. Thank you to everyone who helped.

Look for our Christmas program around December 27 led by the Sunday School children.

WELCA News

Edna Syvertsen

Our November 4th meeting was in the Social Hall where we had our delicious refreshments served by Anita Waldron and Edna Syvertsen.

We packed cookies which will be given to Zion's members who are shut-ins. We continue to collect items for Christmas-at-Sea. They will be taken to Seafarers and International House on December 10th when we will have our annual trip to them. Anyone interested in going to New York with us must call Edna Syvertsen at 732-634-6687 to make a reservation. Seating is limited. We will be packing satchels with the items that have been collected from many churches. We also make sure each satchel has a greeting card. These satchels are delivered to ships in the New York/New Jersey area by the port chaplains. They will be given to crewmen by their captains Christmas Eve or Christmas Day.

Many thanks to all who enjoyed coffee hour with us on WELCA Sunday, November 8th. Thanks to Annette Nielsen for the temple talk about WELCA on WELCA Sunday.

Our program was taken from an article in the October 2015 Lutheran Magazie about Women and the Reformation: Then and Now by Kirsi I. Stjerna.

At our next meeting we will be having lunch, all are invited – 12:30 pm in the Social Hall.

Angel Tree Project

Spread the Joy at Christmas

As Christmas approaches, we would like to invite you to take part in the Angel Tree project. You can purchase a gift (price range from \$20-\$25) for individuals from group homes that are run by the Arc of Union County. The Arc is an organization that supports persons with disabilities. Most of the individuals from the group homes no longer have family connections and so they will receive only a few Christmas gifts.

There will be a Christmas tree in the narthex that will have tags that will have the following information: name, gender, age, size and gift preference. Please pick a tag and purchase the requested gift. Then bring the wrapped gift (with the name tag attached) to church by Sunday, December 13, 2015. The gifts will be delivered to the individuals at the group homes. If you have any questions, please call Jamie Dungey at (908)377-8945. Thank you for helping to make Christmas a little special for some very special people!!!

Operation Warm Heart Easy Donations Requested

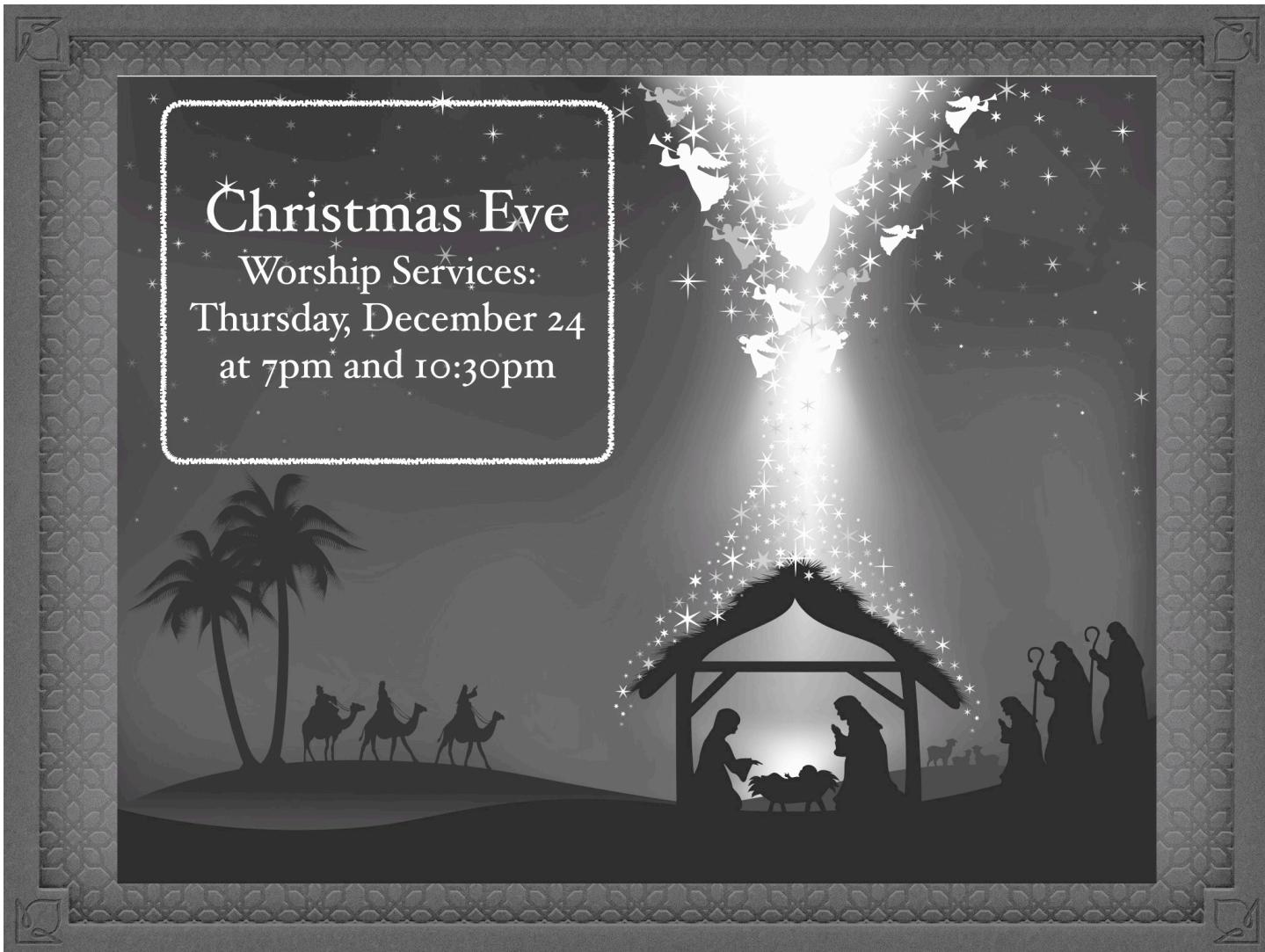
As we prepare to welcome again our brothers and sisters on Wednesday nights, there are a few easy ways to help out (and perhaps clean out your bathroom closet simultaneously!).

A 3-drawer organizer is located in the entrance of the worship space. In it, please consider placing: **new, travel-sized items:**

Shampoo	Conditioner
Body Wash or Soap	Hand Lotion
Lip balm	Toothpaste
Floss	Toothbrushes
<i>Deodorant (regular or travel sized)</i>	

If you have a job where you travel a lot, chances are you have easy access to stocking up on these from hotels!

Additionally, donations of **feminine hygiene products** as well as "**Hot Hands**" **chemical warmer packets** would be welcome, and there will be a receptacle for them as well. For more info, call Kathryn at 732-381-1867.



OPERATION WARM HEART



Zion Lutheran Church houses and feeds 15 people who are homeless every Wednesday evening through Thursday morning.

Sign up on the sheet in the entrance to worship to volunteer!

For more information,
contact

Kathleen Silva at 210-988-2774

EVERY WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 2ND THROUGH MARCH 30TH

ZION EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

DECEMBER 2015

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 6:00p Evangelism 6:30p Youth & Family 7:30p Bible Study	2		3 10:00a Sewing Group		4	5 7:00a Property Work Day -9:00a
6 Advent 2 9:45a Sunday School 10:00a Worship 11:00a Worship & Music 11:15a Fellowship Hour	7	8				5:00p Worship
13 Advent 3 9:45a Sunday School 10:00a Worship 11:15a Fellowship Hour	14	15				
20 Advent 4 VISITOR DEADLINE 9:45a Sunday School 10:00a Worship 11:15a Fellowship Hour 11:15a Decorating the Sanctuary for Christmas	21	22				
27 Christmas 1 9:45a Sunday School 10:00a Worship 11:15a Fellowship Hour	28	29				

10:00a Sewing Group
6:00p Operation Warm Heart
7:30p Advent Worship

9:00a Trip to Seafarers NYC
6:00p Operation Warm Heart
6:00p Finance
7:30p Advent Worship

10:00a Sewing Group
6:00p Operation Warm Heart
7:30p Advent Worship

7:30p Congregation Council
6:00p Operation Warm Heart
7:30p Advent Worship

10:00a Sewing Group
6:00p Operation Warm Heart
7:30p Advent Worship

7:00p & 10:30p
Christmas Eve Worship

5:00pm Worship

10:00a Sewing Group
6:00p Operation Warm Heart
7:30p Advent Worship

DECEMBER 2015 SERVER SCHEDULE



DATE	WORSHIP ASSISTANT	COUNTERS
December 5	Herman Renkevens	
December 6	Kathryn	Kip Palmer Barbara Brown
December 12	Lee Thor	
December 13	Barbara Brown	John Blajsa Maria Blajsa
December 19	Lee Thor	
December 20	Nancy Jean Wallace	Bob Shackleton Kevin Engstrom
December 24 <i>(Christmas Eve)</i>	Herman Renkevens Barbara Brown	
December 26		
December 27	Kip Palmer	Peg Hoepfel Bill Hoepfel

May Altar Guild: Gert Shackleton

If you are interested in participating in worship leadership as a worship assistant,
please contact Vi Stebner (732-382-2514).

December Celebrations

Birthdays

9	Kathy Piccininni	19	Peter Volz
9	Donna Giarrizzo	20	Geraldine Lovenguth
10	Alicia Scipioni	22	Nancy Jean Wallace
13	Katy (Luchsinger) Andaluz	25	Therese Bera
17	Helen Gehring	26	Erica (Cenci) Cordes
18	Kevin Konopi	27	Abigail Shine
19	Joan Breza	28	Ted Meadowcroft
19	Wallace Marbach	31	John Flanagan

Baptismal Anniversaries

7	Kathy Ward
13	Dorothy Cole
14	Robert Shackleton
25	Donna Giarrizzo
28	Dorothy Marbach

Let us Pray...

Ursula Lochner
 Carol Meadowcroft
 Ted Meadowcroft

Creigh Reichard
 Ellie Ringled
 Ryan Roos

Lee Thor
 Kathy Ward
 Charlotte Zygo

Abby Allen ----- friend of Marcia Eversley
 Debbie Beer ----- cousin of Cheryl Piccard
 Layna Rose Boiselle ----- friend of Cheryl Piccard
 Matt Bolger ----- friend of Annette Nielsen
 Ginny Bonicker ----- friend of Therese & Yogi Bera
 Andrew Born, USMC ----- nephew of Doug Born
 Robin Brown ----- friend of Lee Thor
 Holly Brown ----- friend of Cheryl Piccard
 Jackson Bunce ----- friend of Pat Ogarek
 Dominick Condo ----- friend of Therese & Yogi Bera
 Richard DeNero ----- friend of Cheryl Piccard
 Helen Deppe ----- sister of Gert Shackleton
 Robert Deppe ----- nephew of Gert Shackleton
 Ira Glover ----- friends of Marcia Eversley
 Patricia Grant ----- friend of Cheryl Piccard
 Charles Gritschke ----- nephew of Helen Gehring
 Elanore Hintenach --- mother of Tommy Hintenach
 Meg Keller ----- daughter-in-law of Grace Keller
 Marilyn Kelly
 Ed Kertesz ----- cousin of Frank Kertesz
 Frieda Konopi --- mother-in-law of Carolyn Konopi

Amy Martin ----- friend of Zion
 Barbara McDarby ----- friend Yogi & Therese Bera
 Ginny Mentzel ----- sister of Natalie Ford
 Dori Miller ----- friend of Therese Bera
 Kurt Muzer ----- nephew of Therese & Yogi Bera
 Daniel Nietzold ----- son of Kathy Ward
 Michael Nicols ----- friend of Yogi & Therese Bera
 Donna Policastro ----- friend of Therese & Yogi Bera
 George Policastro ----- friend of Therese & Yogi Bera
 Rita Reddington ----- mother of Carolyn Konopi
 Emily Resch ----- friend of the Irwin-Pernini Family
 Angel Rivera ----- husband of Lisa Rivera
 Donna Romano ----- friend of Therese Bera
 Maria Ros ----- mother of Fr. Sal Ros
 Marianne Sabol ----- cousin of Therese Bera
 Francis Sawler ----- father of Patrick Sawler
 Helen Spillar ----- friend of Gert & Bert Shackleton
 Susan Trail ----- friend of Therese & Yogi Bera
 Hugh Wallace ----- husband of Nancy Jean Wallace
 Gary Webb ----- brother-in-law of Cheryl Piccard

We pray for members at a distance & unable to join us:

Dot Cole
 Margaret Felver
 Arlene Hasbrouck
 Marie Jensen

Grace Keller
 Alexander Kitsakos
 Geraldine Lovenguth
 Harry McDowell

Bill Marbach
 Helen Rokos
 Richard Sillen
 Henry Thoden

John Thompson
 Dorothy Zehrer

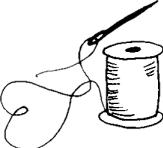
SECOND FRIDAY CUPCAKES

Thanks to all who contributed cupcakes that were delivered to First Presbyterian Church on Friday, November 13: Cathy Jones, Marge Speidel, and Annette Nielsen. Anyone may contribute. They are much appreciated. Thank you very much also to all the anonymous people who contributed plastic bags or paper products or their prayers! All of this is much appreciated.

The next opportunity to help with this faithful mission is **Friday, December 11th**. Please drop off a batch of 24 cupcakes **between 1:00 and 2:00 PM** at the Parish Office or call the office for a special arrangement.



SEWING GROUP

 The sewing group meets on the first and third (sometimes the fifth) Thursday of each month in the Education Building. Our next meeting times are **December 3rd and 17th at 10:00 AM**.

WOMEN OF THE ELCA

Our next meeting is on **Monday, December 14th at 12:30 PM** in the Social Hall.

ALTAR GUILD

The Altar Guild is looking for additional people to serve for one month a year. Call the church office to sign up.



VISITOR NEWS

Visitor submissions should be emailed to the church office (secy@zionlutherannj.net). If you do not have access to the internet you may still submit a hard copy. Please keep us up to date on your events. The deadline is the third Sunday, which is **December 20th**. Remember: if at all possible, please email your news.

MEDICAL SUPPLY CLOSET

If you would like to borrow walkers, crutches, canes, etc., please call the church office.

DONATEABLE ITEMS

CAMPBELLS SOUP LABELS for Navajo Lutheran Mission, Rock Point, AZ



Please save your Campbell's Soup Labels proofs of purchases! The labels are used to purchase vehicles for the Mission and are very valuable, as in the past they have been able to redeem these points in exchange for four 15-passenger vans (worth 1.5 million labels each!), and two 7-passenger mini vans for employee use. Although Campbell's no longer has the 15-passenger vans, the Mission is still able to purchase smaller vans and educational equipment, such as overhead projectors, computers, and playground equipment.

The Campbell's Soup program will only be accepting the bar code portion from the labels. Instead of saving the labels from Campbell's, Swanson's, V8, Prego, and Franco American products, they now just require that the UPC (bar code) insignia be sent. (Any bar code whose number begins with 51 or 14 or any with the Labels for Education will qualify). If the bar code has dotted lines around or near it, cut on the lines.

For more information, see
<http://www.nelm.org/support-the-mission.php>

SODA CAN TABS for Zion



Save the tabs from your soda cans. They will be collected to aid Zion and will be put toward our general operating fund.

A box is in the back of our worship space labeled "Can Tabs." For more information call Carley Lesinski at 732-388-9044.

USED EYEGLASSES for those in need

Please bring them to Zion and put them in the box in the back of our worship space.



Bread of Life from Anita Waldron

Pumpkin Casserole

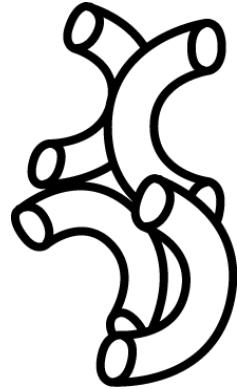
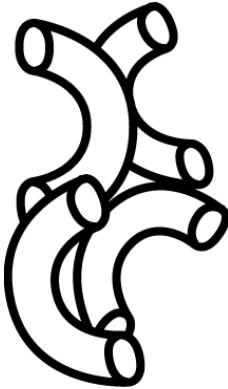
2 Cups pumpkin puree
 1 Cup sugar
 2 eggs
 ½ Cup butter

1 Cup evaporated milk
 ½ Cup flour
 1 tsp vanilla
 1 tsp cinnamon

Combine all ingredients into a casserole dish. Bake at 350 for 1 hour. A crust will form on top.

SAVE THE DATE for a MAC & CHEESE COOK OFF

Saturday, January 9th, 2016 at 6:00 PM



We invite Zion's cooks to make a batch of their Mac & Cheese and enter it in the Cook Off!

Bring your appetite so that you can enjoy the variety of Mac & Cheeses that will be there!

Bring your dollars so that you can vote for your favorite, and plan on voting many times!

We look forward to seeing you at this fun fundraising event!
 God bless you!

Christmas Poinsettia Orders – 2015

DEADLINE IS DECEMBER 13, 2015

I/We wish to order _____ red poinsettia plant(s) to beautify the sanctuary at Zion's Christmas Eve services

IN MEMORY OF: (please include relationship to donor)

IN HONOR OF: (please include relationship to donor)

TO THE GLORY OF GOD _____ (Check here if not in Memory/Honor)

BY: _____

Member Envelope # _____

Number of Plants @ \$7.00 _____ Total Enclosed \$ _____
 (Please make checks payable to Zion Lutheran Church)

CHECK ONE:

____ Will pick-up on or after Christmas Day.

____ Please distribute to a homebound member of the congregation.

Use PINK "Special Purpose" envelope from packet or pew rack (with your packet number). Enclose this Order Form; please print information clearly. Place in offering plate at any Service

Or you may mail to the Parish Office: 215 Elm Avenue, Rahway 07065.
 (Do not mail cash).

QUESTIONS?
 Call the Parish Office: 732-388-1815. 1:00pm-5:00pm

Zion Lutheran Church
215 Elm Avenue
Rahway, NJ 07065

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Address Service Requested

Weekend Worship Schedule

Saturdays

5:00 PMWorship with Holy Communion

Sundays

9:45 AMSunday School

10:00 AMWorship with Holy Communion

11:15 AMFellowship Hour

Midweek Advent Worship

Wednesdays at 7:30 PM

Christmas Eve Worship

7:00 PM & 10:30 PM

ZION EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

New Jersey Synod

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

215 Elm Avenue, Rahway, NJ 07065-3220

Phone: 732-388-1817 Fax: 732-574-2559

Web page: www.zionlutherannj.net

E-Mail: secy@zionlutherannj.net

Saturday Worship at 5:00 PM

Sunday Worship at 10:00 AM

Holy Days as Announced

The Parish Staff

Ministers: The People of Zion Church

The Rev. Carmine Pernini, *Pastor*

Patricia Ogarek, *Parish Secretary*

Dr. Brian F. Dallow, *Director of Music*

Frank Kertesz, *Sexton*

Mr. Kevin Brown, *Congregation President*

**LOVE GOD, LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR,
TELL THE WORLD!**

DECEMBER 2015