

ZION UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

402 Main Street

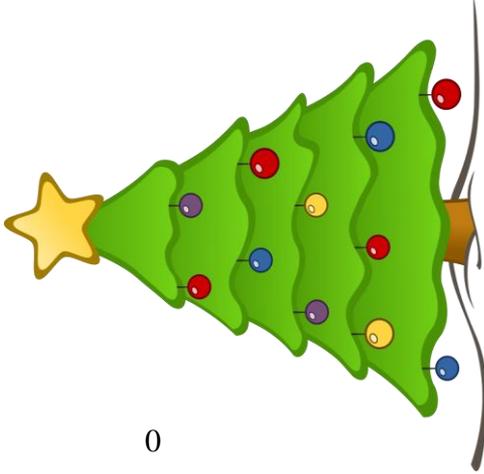
P.O. Box 339

Lowden, IA 52255-0339

Rev. Stephen Stepp, Pastor

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Christmas Dinner 2017

Senior High Fellowship would like to invite everyone to come and enjoy the annual Christmas Dinner in our fellowship hall on Sunday, December 3rd following the worship service. Be ready to enjoy great food, wonderful people, intriguing conversion, fun, games, and prizes.

“And there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks at night. An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people. Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger.”

Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying, “Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace to those on whom his favor rests.” Luke 2:8-14

Christmas Fund for the Veterans of the Cross

Offering will be taken on December 20th.

For 114 years, the Christmas Fund for the Veterans of the Cross and the Emergency Fund has been a leading light in our mission. The Christmas Fund is one of the 4 Special Mission Offerings of the United Church of Christ and provides us with means to directly assist those who have so faithfully and selflessly served and now find themselves facing unexpected financial needs. Please make your contributions by December 18, 2017 so Linda be can make the payment to the state office. Thank you.

Greetings Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

Sunday, December 3, 2017. Will that day be a day that you remember? What's so important about that day? Well, only you can decide that. Will it be a day you devote to God? Will it be the day you decide to re-engage God and return to worshipping God in community at church?

Now Sunday, December 3, 2017 is a first day—kind of day. It is the first day of the new church calendar. It is the first day of Advent, the season we as Christians celebrate as a time of hopeful waiting in preparation for the celebration of Jesus' birth. Did you know that the first day of Advent can fall on any date between November 27 (like it did last year) and December 3 (like it does this year)? So last year Advent started at its earliest possible time and this year it begins at its latest possible time. And just in case you were wondering, where does the word Advent come from? It comes from the Latin word **adventus** which means arrival, approach, invasion, incursion, ripening, visit, and/or appearance.¹

I think all these words describe the coming of Jesus Christ. He arrived on earth as a human being so that we could understand God in a new way and so God could understand us in a new way. Jesus approached the world in a humble manner from the time he was born. He was wrapped in rags and his first bed was a trough that animals eat from. The birth of Jesus was an invasion of many sorts. God incarnate: Jesus invades the earth, becoming one of us so that God could save the world. Jesus is the beginning of something new and new beginnings often start with a small incursion, something most people don't even notice, but I am sure when Jesus started his ministry, the Jewish leaders saw his ministry as a big incursion on their corrupted beliefs. At the birth of

¹ <http://www.latin-dictionary.net/definition/1747/adventus-adventus>

Jesus, God began ripening of our powerless faith, so it would be able to produce fruit. The birth of Jesus began the most important visit humanity would ever experience, and in faith, we know that Jesus is always with us through the power of the Holy Spirit. And now for the last one, appearance. This is the one I so hope that everyone takes deeply into their heart. God makes God's appearance known to all people in the incarnate birth of Jesus Christ through a series of wonderful prophecies and collection of accounts which include proclamation, conception, birth and celebration.

What I invite everyone to do this year is to arrive at church on Sunday, December 3rd and approach this Advent Season as an invasion into your life that will be an incursion on you regular routine which will begin a new ripening of your faith and will cause you to visit your church more frequently so that Christ's appearance in your lives will be each and every day as the Holy Spirit guides you in all that you say and all that you do to the glory of God.

May we all have a wonder-filled time of hopeful waiting in preparation for the celebration of Jesus' birth, and may the remembrance of Jesus' new creation transform us all into the humble, servants of God just like he was every day of his life on earth. May we all sing praises, "Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace to those on whom his favor rests" (Luke 2:14).

Grace and peace,

Pastor Steve

*The Son of God became a man
to enable men to become the
sons of God. C.S.Lewis*

IMPORTANT TIDBITS

December 3 first Sunday of Advent with a musical Cantata being performed here

Christmas Dinner will follow the worship service.

December 17 –Congregational Meeting will follow the Worship Service.

December 24

Worship Service at 10:15 a.m.

Christmas Eve Worship Service with Christian Education program at 6:30 p.m.

USHERS

THIS MONTH

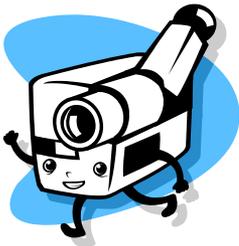
Dec. 3, 2017	Church Council
Dec. 10, 2017	Sharon Kruckenberg & Renate Port
Dec. 17, 2017	Lonnie & Stacey Luepker
Dec. 24, 2017	Kent & Janice Strackbein
Dec. 24, 2017 Eve Service	Barry & Julie Hoffmeier
Dec. 31, 2017	Senior High Fellowship

January 7, 2018	Church Council
January 14, 2018	Jared Bentrott & Brett Esbaum
January 21, 2018	Joby & Kyle Proesch
January 29, 2018	Senior High Fellowship

VIDEOGRAPHERS

December

Dec. 3	Cheryl Boedeker Cantata
Dec. 10	Jody Yutesler
Dec. 18	Aaron Horman
Dec. 24	Jane Drewelow
Dec. 31	David Niermeyer



DECEMBER

December 3	Nathan Nabb & Koby Stewart
December 10	Milo Easterly & Abby Blake
December 17	Taylor Lohman Jacob Gottschalk
December 24	August Harms & Leighton Tjaden

December 24

Church Council

December 31

Nathan Nabb & Koby Stewart



- December 1 Berniece Minor
- December 2 Larry Havel
- December 3 Sarah Ann Sawyer
- December 5 Jaynice Hamdorf,
Jane Drewelow, Linda Horman,
Scott Fields
- December 7 Scott Boedeker, Gary Klahn,
Riley Holst
- December 9 Megan Neil
- December 11 Landon Luepker
- December 12 Kent Strackbein, *Barry Hoffmeier
- December 15 Jill Jacobs, Elle Esbaum
- December 17 Wilbert Muhs
- December 20 Bonnie Kintzel, Angie Peet,
Tim Kahl
- December 21 Beth Fox, Pavin Esbaum,
- December 26 Sadie Holst
- December 27 Trevor Hamdorf
- December 28 Alex Dittmer, *Jessie Horman
- December 30 Cindy Wiedenhoff



Happy Anniversary!

- December 9 Donavon & Linda Freese 1967
- December 28 Tessa & *David Holst 1990



ZION EVENING CIRCLE MINUTES

NOVEMBER 20, 2017

Zion Evening Circle met on November 20, 2017, beginning at 6:00 to cut and count labels for North Cedar Schools. There were 1150 Boxtops for Education and 485 Our Family labels.

Donna presented devotions, entitled "Choose to Be Thankful". Terry opened the meeting with roll call answered by 11 members by naming a veteran in their family. Pastor Steve also was in attendance. The secretary's report was read and approved. Terry thanked Circle for gifts, cards and prayers she received during and after her hospital stay. Jane gave the treasurer's report. The report was approved as read. Marilyn moved, 2nd by Linda to pay the bills. Motion carried.

Terry thanked those who had walked and served at the CROP walk and those who took care of arranging the altar flowers and bulletin board.

Poinsettia giving was discussed. On a motion by Donna, 2nd by Millie, it was decided to gift poinsettias to those in nursing homes and assisted living. Motion carried.

Ideas for the Lowden Lighted Christmas parade were discussed. Evening Circle with the help of the congregation will be having a float featuring the model church which will be lighted. It is hoped that many members will walk beside the float carrying candles and singing carols. Lineup is 6:00 at the park with the parade beginning at 6:30. Evening Circle will be in charge of the silent auction of gift baskets donated by businesses in Lowden.

The 75th anniversary of Evening Circle was discussed with ideas shared. We will begin the celebration in January.

It was decided that Evening Circle will wait to pick a bell from the Bell Tree. We will get gifts for the bells that hadn't been chosen earlier. Food baskets donated by the North Cedar Clergy was discussed. Millie moved, 2nd by Jane that the fruit be purchased at J & J at the same time as the other groceries. Carried.

Janis announced that she had the tickets for the Jim McDonough concert and that we will meet at Hall of Fame at DeWitt to eat before going to the concert.

Pastor Steve thanked Circle for the rose and towel given to the Mohr family at the baptism of their new daughter. He also announced that the cantata will be presented on December 3rd, followed by the senior Christmas dinner. Thanksgiving Eve service will be November 22nd, with the confirmation class taking part. Christmas decorating will be Sunday, November 26, beginning after church service. The first pot luck luncheon after church will be on January 7th, organized by the Mission Committee.

Devotions in January will be presented by Jane; refreshments will be served by Julie and Donna. The fun night will be planned by Jane and Rose. Sharon will be in charge of flowers for January. The November meeting of the Committee on Ministry will be served by Jean and Jody; the January meeting will be served by Jane and Joy.

The meeting was adjourned. Jane was the winner of the "association" door prize.

Sharon Elijah, Secretary

ZION EVENING CIRCLE NOVEMBER 24, 2017

Pastor Steve and Jean, Donna and Leroy Luepker, Lou and Janis Krafock, Joy Combs, Terry Lasack, Linda Freese and Sharon Elijah met at Hall of Fame in Dewitt at 5:00 for supper and to watch the last part of the Hawkeye football game. That of course, after certain members had to go back to get their tickets for the concert! After a good meal, we travelled to the Dewitt school to see Jim McDonough perform on the piano. It was a fun night, and a splendid concert. Thanks, Jan Strackbein and Janis Krafock for planning this great Christmas outing.

Sharon Elijah
Secretary

Zion United Church of Christ giving range report.

<u>Congregational Giving Range</u>	
Range	# in Range
\$1-50.99	50
\$51-100.99	11
\$101-200.99	9
\$201-300.99	3
\$301-500.99	8
\$501-1000.99	21
\$1001-2000.99	17
\$2001-3000.99	5
\$3000-4000	5
\$40001	2

This is a giving range report that reflects the amount given so far this year by individual members, families and friends. This report helps us to understand giving diversity within our congregation and it helps each of us set goals as we finish this year of giving. May God guide us to compassion and generosity as we continue the work of Jesus Christ in our community.



**CHURCH
COUNCIL**
ZION UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
CHURCH COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES
OCTOBER 19, 2017 Official Minutes

Zion United Church of Christ Council met at 7 p.m. on October 19, 2017. The meeting was called to order by President David Niermeyer. Pastor opened with a reading and a prayer. Those in attendance were David Niermeyer, Bonnie Kintzel, Joy Combs, Linda Behrens, Pastor Steve and Sharon Elijah. Jamie Nabb and Merlin Conrad were absent.

Joys and concerns were shared. News and happenings were announced.

Secretary's minutes were read and made official on a motion by Joy, 2nd by Bonnie. Carried. The financial reports were read.

Bonnie moved, 2nd by Joy to accept the reports. Carried. Joy moved to accept Pastor's expense report, 2nd by Bonnie. Carried. Linda left after discussing the financial reports.

Calendar Review:

- October 29 Congregational meeting and appreciation dinner
- October 31 Confirmation class Trunk and Treat at Lowden park
- November 5 Totenfest
- November 20 Evening Circle meeting
- November 24 Evening Circle Christmas outing
- December 17 Congregational meeting
- January 28 Annual meeting

Old Business:

Joy announced that she and her committee are still working on getting a complete updated membership list. The drain from the kitchen was discussed. We are waiting for another bid. Council appreciates the new landscaping in front of the parsonage and thanks Merlin for taking care of this as a memorial to Carma.

New Business:

The new roof for the parsonage and garage will be the topic of the congregational meeting set for Oct. 29. The dinner after the meeting was also discussed. Pastor and Jean have made the arrangements with catering by Family Foods and we hope we have a lot of members at the meeting and dinner. A letter about the Lowden Light-fest and Chili Supper was discussed. Evening Circle will be a part of the lighted parade. A letter about Pension board insurance was shared showing a new premium for 2018.

Sharon moved, 2nd by Joy that we purchase a new vacuum cleaner for the church. Carried. Bonnie will purchase the vacuum.

Our next meeting will be November 9th at 7:00. Sharon moved to adjourn, 2nd by Joy. Pastor closed with a prayer.

Respectfully submitted, Sharon Elijah, Secretary

**ZION UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
SPECIAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING
OCTOBER 29, 2017**

A special congregational meeting was held October 29, 2017, for discussing the installation of a new roof on the parsonage and garage. President David Niermeyer called the meeting to order. A prayer was given by Pastor Steve. A motion to dispense with the reading of minutes was made by Julie Hoffmeier, 2nd by Millie Muhs. Carried.

The building and grounds committee had met and had done their annual walk through the facilities. They presented to the council their recommendation that the roof on the parsonage and garage be replaced. The council agreed, and Jason Conrad gave us a bid of \$17,255 to have a metal roof put on, the same as on the church and the Christian Ed building. He estimated that we would need 29 squares, which would make each square cost about \$594. David asked for questions from the floor. Those being answered, David announced that the council would go ahead with the metal roof installation.

With no more business to conduct at this meeting, Aaron Horman moved that the meeting be adjourned, 2nd by Bernice Minor. Meeting adjourned. Pastor closed with a prayer and dinner blessing as a dinner was served in fellowship hall immediately after the meeting.

Respectfully submitted:
Sharon Elijah
Secretary

Greetings from Christian Education!

Advent Season begin, and Christmas draws near! The tradition of Christmas Eve service continues with our youth leading the program! Please gather your families, friends, and neighbors for our **December 24th service at 6:30p.m.**

All are welcome to join us! With the youth leading the program; it is essential for their attendance in Sunday School at 9AM for them to be prepared for the event! We will plan for some additional practices to sharpen our program! Dates will be announced soon!

If you ever have questions about our Christian Education program; please feel free to contact me!

Blessings to all!

Kelly Nabb

Zion United Church of Christ

Christian Education Coordinator

(563) 249-2335