

**ZION UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST**

402 Main Street

P.O. Box 339

Lowden, IA 52255-0339

Rev. Stephen Stepp, Pastor

*Nonprofit Org.*

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**DECEMBER 2019**

Zion Herald December 2019 Volume 92 No. 12



Church Council member are Joy Combs, President, Aaron Horman, V. President Sharon Elijah, Secretary, Duane Lasack, Jon Mansfield, Randy Horman

**Information Corner** Our website address is [www.zionucclowden.org](http://www.zionucclowden.org)

**Secretary:** Linda Behrens **Zion office hours** Monday through Friday 8:30 to 12:00.

Zion office phone #563-941-7726, office e-mail [zionucc@fbcom.net](mailto:zionucc@fbcom.net)

**Pastor Steve Stepp** email: [zionpastor@fbcom.net](mailto:zionpastor@fbcom.net) Phone #s- Office: 563-941-7529 Home: 563-941-

Office hours... Monday thru Thursday 9:00am-1:00pm **or** set up a time that works best for you.

**Zion United Church of Christ**, 402 Main Street, P.O. Box 339, Lowden, Iowa 52255-0339

# **NEW CHRISTMAS TRADITION**

**Beginning December 1st,  
Read one chapter of  
The Book of Luke in the Bible  
each evening.**

**There are 24 chapters.**

**On Christmas Eve you will have read  
an entire account of Jesus's Life  
and wake up Christmas Morning  
Knowing WHO and WHY  
We Celebrate!!**

## **IMPORTANT DATES TO REMEMBER**

**December 1-First Sunday of Advent  
Senior High Fellowship Christmas Dinner after worship**

**December 8 – Second Sunday of Advent  
Congregational meeting following worship**

**December 15 -Third Sunday of Advent  
Christmas Fund Offering (the envelope you received)  
Bell Gift due back.**

**December 22 – Fourth Sunday of Advent**

**December 24 – 6:30 pm Christmas Eve Service.**

**December 25 -Merry Christmas**

**December 29 Final Sunday of 2019**

Greetings Sisters and Brothers,

December! Advent! Christmas! Snow! ... Snow? If you thinking that I love snow, I do...to a point. I love the beauty of a new fallen snow as its gives a luster of midday on a brightly moon lit night. I love the silence a fresh snowfall offers a peaceful escape from the background noises of the area. But what I love most about the first snow is that it signals us, "Christmas is coming!" Even if that first snow was in October..EEK!

When I was a younger lad, I must admit that Christmas was by far my favorite day of the year. But was it because I was in two Christmas programs each year? Or maybe because I love to sing *Joy to the World*? Or maybe it was the presents I expected to get each year? Or maybe it was the special brown paper bag filled with an apple, orange, shell-on peanuts, a red and green popcorn ball and those special Christmas hard candies with the weird filling inside.

Well those were certainly part of Christmas for me, but what I remember most is that special feeling in my heart after the first snowfall. The feeling that made me want to shout out Luke chapter 2 to anyone that would listen because it was my favorite story in the Bible. "And it came to pass that in those days there went out a decree from Cesar Augustus..."

Now I must be transparent, that feeling following the first snowfall faded as I grew up, at least until I had children of my own. It was that event in my life, the birth of my first child that rekindled that joy and excitement. You see it is easy for us to get caught up in the things of this world that are only temporary. Toys, houses, cars, promotions, etc. are the things of this world that are shallow and meaningless when we compare them to the gift of life; and that is what we are reminded of on December 25<sup>th</sup>. That is what we are given by God on the day Jesus was born, a new life that begins with a child who would grow up and never look past the true purpose of our humanity, the true meanly of being created in the image of God. That purpose is to simply accept the loving relationship God offers to each and every human being and accept a loving relationship with each of God's people.

So let's keep it simple this year; First, I want to see you all at of our Advent Worship Services as we prepare for the coming of God's only Son. Then let us celebrate the birth of Jesus by loving God and each other like Jesus Christ loves us. May we all have a wondrous Advent and Christmas as we remember the great gift of new life in the birth of God's Son, Jesus Christ.

Grace and peace,

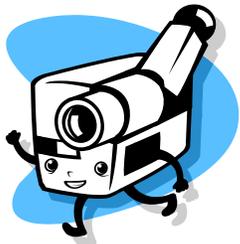
Pastor Steve

# THIS MONTH USHERS

Dec. 1, 2019	Senior High Fellowship
Dec. 8, 2019	Donna Luepker, Terry Lasack
Dec. 15, 2019	Donavon & Linda Freese
Dec. 22, 2019	Mary Huffman & Lori Dittmer
Dec, 24, 2019	Christmas Eve Service-Church Council
Dec. 29, 2019	Senior High Fellowship

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January 5, 2020	Church Council
January 12, 2020	Scott & Carmen Fields
January 19, 2020	Marcine Miller & Renate Port
January 27, 2019	Senior High Fellowship



## VIDEOGRAPHERS DECEMBER

Dec. 1	Jean Stepp
Dec. 8	David Niermeyer
Dec. 15	Jody Yutesler
Dec. 22	Donna Luepker
Dec. 24	Aaron Horman
Dec. 29	Cheryl Boedeker

## DECEMBER



December 1	Carter Horman & Josselyn Easterly
December 8	Sophie Popper & Drew Behrens
December 15	Carter Horman & Jaydon Nabb
December 22	Sophie Poppe & Josselyn Easter
December 24	Church Council
December 31	Johny Amina & Sophie Poppe
January 5	Jaydon Nabb & Johny Amina

Please note the change in the list. I moved the last 2 Sundays down and changed who was lighting.



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	Barry Hoffmeier
December 15	Jill Jacobs, Elle Esbaum, Todd Fadale
December 17	Wilbert Muhs
December 20	Bonnie Kintzel, Angie Peet, Tim Kahl, Marx Dittmer
December 21	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



*Wilbert and Millie would like to thank everyone for the cards of sympathy sent to them, remembering us in the loss of Wilbert's brother. Thanks again. Wilbert & Millie Muhs.*



ZION EVENING CIRCLE  
NOVEMBER 18, 2019

Evening Circle members met at 5:30 at the Lincoln Hotel to tour and learn about the historic building. Kim Jones showed us the rooms and told us about renovations that have been made and those that will be made in the future. We all appreciated her time and we enjoyed seeing one of the interesting places in Lowden.

After returning to church, we spent some time counting and trimming labels for use at the North Cedar schools. We had 581 Boxtops for Education and 534 Our Family labels. The money received from these labels will help North Cedar provide funding for many activities.

Devotions entitled "Lookin' Good" were given by Sharon.

President Terry called the meeting to order with 12 members answering roll call. Terry announced that Rose Horman has decided to remove her membership from Circle. The secretary's report was read and with no objections was declared approved. Joy read Julie's treasurer's report which was approved as read. Millie moved, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Jody to pay the bills. Motion carried.

Thank you notes were read from Jan Strackbein and Sig Schluter. Terry thanked those who had worked at funerals, brought bars for the Slaton concert, Julie and Barry for decorating the Christmas tree in Fellowship Hall; Janis, Janice and Jan for taking care of flowers in November and Janice and Janis for serving the Committee on Ministry.

A report was given by the poinsettia committee. Jan, Terry and Joy volunteered to man the basket silent auction at the Dec. 7<sup>th</sup> Christmas Light Festival at the Legion. Church decorating will be November 30<sup>th</sup> beginning at 8:30 a.m. All are welcome to come and help with this project. The bell tree will be ready on Thanksgiving Eve. Choose a bell and if you do not wish to do the shopping, let Julie know and she will shop for you.

Our Christmas party will be December 16<sup>th</sup> in Fellowship Hall with Mill Creek catering our dinner. Social time will begin at 5:00; dinner will be at 6:00. The cost is \$13.00 per person which includes the tip. Payment should be made to Janis Krafock at the time of your reservation.

There will be no meeting in January. Jody is in charge of flowers in January. Donna and Terry will serve the Committee on Ministry in January. In February Joy will be in charge of the project which is to bake cookies for the Ronald McDonald house. Julie will have devotions and Millie will be in charge of flowers.

Respectfully submitted  
Sharon Elijah, Secretary



**CHURCH  
COUNCIL**  
ZION UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST  
CHURCH COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES  
OCTOBER 17, 2019

Zion United Church of Christ Church Council met October 17, 2019 at 7:00 p.m. Vice-President Aaron Horman called the meeting to order. Council members present were Aaron Horman, Jon Mansfield, Duane Lasack, Sharon Elijah and Randy Horman. Joy Combs was absent. Linda Behrens was present through the treasurer's reports. Pastor Steve Stepp opened with a devotion and prayer. Joys and concerns were shared.

The minutes of the last meeting were approved on a motion by Duane, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Randy. Motion carried. The treasurer's reports were approved on a motion by Duane, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Jon. Motion carried.

Calendar review:

Oct. 20	Crop Walk
Oct. 21-28	Pastor's vacation
Oct. 27	AED information meeting
Nov. 3	Totenfest
Nov. 10	Concert by the Slaton's
Nov. 27	Thanksgiving Eve service

Pastor Steve reviewed his report. He suggested we have a council program sheet, listing things the council needs to attend to annually and monthly. Pastor's expense report was approved on a motion by Randy, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Duane. Motion carried.

Old business:

The AED informational meeting will be held after church on October 27. There will be a free will offering the night of the concert. Attendance cards have not been sent out as yet.

The new plastic tables for Fellowship Hall have been ordered and shipped. It was decided to sell the present tables for \$25 apiece. Aaron will send an email to church members; announce the tables are for sale at church on Sunday and then post them on-line.

Fund raising ideas for the new AC and furnace were discussed.

New business:

The water bill will be substantially more because water was running in a stool in the men's restroom for an unknown amount of time. Aaron fixed the stool, but suggested that council members check the restrooms each Sunday after service and also check that the lights are turned off.

Duane moved, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Jon, to replace the Eternal Candle with a LED lighted candle. We will use the same container and see if we can get a candle that is run by electricity rather than battery. Motion carried.

Council discussed their responsibilities for funerals.

The 2020 budget was discussed along with a 2020 stewardship campaign.

Zion church was blessed with a \$10,000 memorial gift from Richard Penningroth. Jon reported he had met with a company regarding tuck pointing on the exterior of the church. It was too small of a job for them to do; Jon will look into getting someone else to look at the job. Jon also reported that the bill from Lowden Plumbing & Heating for repairing the furnace in the Education Building was paid.

Our next meeting will be held November 21, 2019. Duane moved to adjourn the meeting, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Jon. Motion carried. Pastor Steve closed with a prayer.

Respectfully submitted,  
Sharon Elijah, Secretary

**GREETINGS!**

**At our last council meeting it was noted that our giving is down from the previous year. Please consider a special Christmas offering this year to help meet the financial obligations of our church.**

**Thank you for the support you have given through the year. We look forward to another successful year at Zion.**

**Merry Christmas!**

**From your Zion UCC Church Council**



Saturday night, December 14th, KNI/PNO will be talking about the true meaning of Christmas, play some reindeer games, decorate sugar cookies, create a baby Jesus ornament and watch the movie the Star. Please let us know ASAP that your kids will be joining. New families will need to register the Wednesday before. This event is totally free! Parents, this may be a great opportunity to do some last minute Christmas shopping or have a child-free night.

We are always looking for great volunteers who may want to help with the meal or activities. If you have any questions or would like to volunteer, please contact Heather Easterly at 515.971.8988. God bless!



**Missions Committee Meeting  
November 17, 2019**



Present: Linda Behrens Jess Coppess Megan Horman  
Pastor Steve Jon Mansfield Carmen Fields

Absent: Jan Olsen

Call to order: The meeting was called to order by Linda and Pastor Steve led the committee in prayer.

Approval of Minutes:

Megan moved approval of the June 2 meeting minutes; Carmen seconded. Minutes approved as distributed.

Financial Report:

Linda distributed the financial report. There are two outstanding checks: 1 to Friends of the Animals and 1 to Willis Dady – both were donations Christian Education asked Missions to match. Linda will check with Christian Education and the respective organizations to see if there is any record of the checks. If not, Linda will reissue. Carmen moved approval of the Financial Report; Megan seconded. Motion carried.

Old Business: No Old Business

New Business:

The committee discussed at length ideas for its next project. Ideas were as follows:

- Ask congregation for monetary donations.
- Raffle something off – Pastor Steve noted we should check with the State of Iowa on raffle rules.
- Donation of supplies – ask for congregation’s help and assign certain supplies to each Sunday of the month. Donation ideas included supplies for the church (office and cleaning), food for church food pantry, clothing drive, animal shelter (food, litter, cleaning supplies) and homeless shelter (cleaning and hygiene supplies).
- Breakfast before church from 9-10 am with free-will donation.

This topic was tabled and will be discussed further at a future meeting.

Linda explained the Missions Committee gives out \$7,000 in donations annually. So far, approximately \$2,000 has been distributed, so there is \$5,000 left to give. The committee discussed the following donations:

- \$100 each (equaling \$500 total) to Hour of Sharing, Christmas Fund, Neighbors in Need, Our Church’s Wider Mission, and Strength in the Church
- \$1,000 to North Cedar Bell Program
- \$500 to Deacon’s Fund
- \$1,000 to Water Wells
- \$1,000 to International food for the hungry
- \$1,000 to Sleep in Heavenly Peace

Linda presented the above donations for approval. Committee unanimously approved.

Next Meeting: The next meeting will be January 19, 2020 after church.

Adjournment: Linda adjourned the meeting and Pastor Steve closed with a prayer.

Respectfully submitted, Jessica Coppess

**NORTH CEDAR CLERGY ASSOCIATION**

**BELL PROGRAM 2019**

**NOVEMBER 28-----BELLS ON TREE**

**DECEMBER 15-----BELL PRESENTS RETURNED  
UNDER TREE (No Bows)**

**DECEMBER 18-----BELL BASKETS DISTRIBUTED  
(HELP NEEDED)**

Our Annual Christmas Dinner will be on Sunday, December 1 following worship. Please join us for a wonderful meal and fellowship! This dinner is hosted by Senior High Fellowship!



**Christmas to**

## **Believe In**

Our Christmas Program will be on Christmas Eve, December 24<sup>th</sup> at 6:30PM. All are welcome to join us and celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ.

## **Christmas Fund for the Veterans of the Cross**

*Offering will be taken on December 15<sup>th</sup>.*

For 116 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 5 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 15, 2019 so Linda be can send them into the Conference office. Thank you.