



ZION PROCLAIMER

December 2025

"Noble Note"

Every Heart Prepare

I've never been a Boy Scout, I've never been one for camping, my knots are mediocre at best, and if I get lost in the woods, you all better find me quick! But one thing I did learn from my friends who have been Scouts is the motto "Be Prepared", which helps you to be ready for anything that might come your way.

We do our best to prepare for many situations in life: first dates, first day of school, job interviews, sports try-outs, and visiting family and friends. Not only is this a good and practical practice to keep up within our daily, physical lives, it's especially important when it comes to our spiritual, eternal lives!

The Advent Season is a purposeful time of preparation and readiness. The word advent means "coming", which builds up our anticipation of Jesus' First Coming as Savior and Redeemer born in a manger, as well as His Second Coming as King and Judge. To over simplify this concept: the Holy, Almighty, Powerful, Gracious God of all creation is coming to you!

"Behold, your King is coming to you." Matt. 21:5

So how do we prepare for His arrival? Vacuum the carpet, dust the house, pick up the kids' toys, wash those dishes, bake the cookies, and cook a meal? That's not necessary, though it might not hurt. God doesn't care what the cleanliness of our houses are and how cluttered they may be, He doesn't mind the pet hair on the couch or the mysterious objects hidden in the cushions. Rather, God is more concerned with preparing our hearts, minds, and souls; the real "manger" He desires to rest in, the real "home" He plans to dwell.

Advent is a time when God's people prepare their hearts to remember, celebrate, and give thanks for God breaking into the messiness of this fallen world – taking upon Himself human flesh, becoming a man, and being born of a virgin – all in order to fulfill the long-awaited promise of a Savior.

During these next few weeks, we will be comparing the ways in which we prepare our homes for the holidays in order to better help us prepare our hearts for Jesus' arrival! Just as we decorate our homes with evergreens (the eternal life Jesus brings into a decaying world), colorful lights and candles (the light of Christ that shines in the darkness), wrapped presents (God's gift of a Savior wrapped in swaddling cloths), and that beautiful nativity crèche (the scene of God entering into human history and making His home with us), they serve as reminders of the joy, peace, and love we receive Jesus Christ, who comes to save us from sin, to redeem us from the devil, and to restore all of life from death!

"Therefore you also must be ready, for the Son of Man is coming." Matt. 24:42a

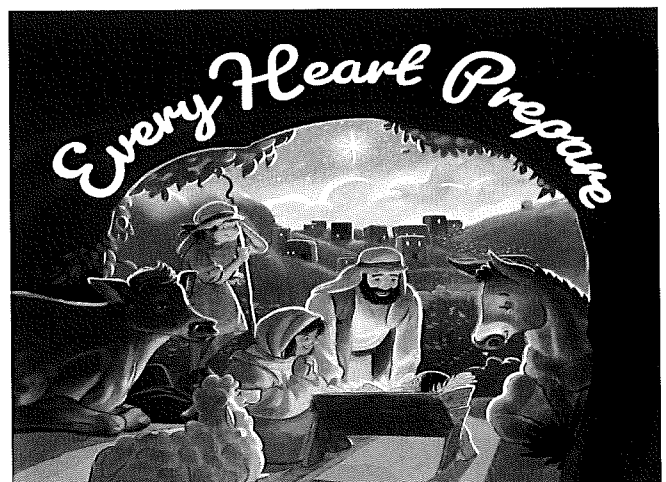
In His Service,
Pastor Andy Noble

Worship Schedule * FOR * CHRISTMAS

Wednesday	Dec 03	3:30 pm 6:30 pm	Church Decorating/Supper Midweek Advent Service
Wednesday	Dec 10	5:00 pm 6:30 pm	Supper/Fellowship Time Midweek Advent Service
Wednesday	Dec 17	5:00 pm 6:30 pm	Supper/Fellowship Times Midweek Advent Service
Wednesday	Dec 24 Dec 24	5:00 pm 10:00 pm	Sunday School Children's Service Candlelight Service/HC
Thursday	Dec 25	9:00 am	Christmas Day Worship/HC
Sunday	Dec 28	10:00 am	Divine Worship/HC

(No Sunday School or Bible Classes on 12/28)

Beginning in December (Dec. 3rd, 10th, 17th), our Midweek Advent Services will be held Wednesday evenings at 6:30pm, with a meal and fellowship at 5:30pm.





CHRISTIAN EDUCATION



Our Sunday School will again be sharing the joyous message of our Lord's birth through a special Worship Service on Christmas Eve at 5:00 pm.

Christmas program practices will be held on Sunday mornings from 9:00-9:45 am (during our Sunday School Time) The Christmas Eve service will be at 5:00 pm. We are requesting all children to be at church by 4:45 pm.

The Sunday School staff would like to wish all our students and there families a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year as be celebrate the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ.



We would like to say Thank You to everyone who helped in any way with the Annual Harvest Supper on November 8th. Without everyone's help with donating food, money, time and work, we would not be able to pull off such an event.

In looking back our first Harvest Supper was held on October 19, 1991. After expenses we profited \$7,142.

Also thanks for all the donations for the Food ingathering that was held on November 16-23rd All items were taken to New Opportunities in Carroll.

Thanks for all the donations for the Food ingathering that was held on November 15-23rd. All items were given to New Opportunities in Carroll



H O P E
P E A C E
Love Joy

December Duties

USHERS

Doug Schuette Doug Ehlers
Dan Wittrock Wade Ragaller
Jeremy Ehlers Paul Ehlers
Damon Ehlers

PARISH CIRCLE

Deb Owen

CHANCEL CIRCLE

Carm Thiedeman Melissa Ehlers & Diane Witt

ACOLYTES

Wed	3rd:	Lane & Sebastian
Sun	7th:	Dane & Malachi
Wed	10th:	Eliza & Collin
Sun	14th:	Audi & Sutton
Wed	17th:	Audrey & Kyler
Sun	21st	Kash & Kaleb
Sun	28th	Amelia & Brandt



Decorating
Party

We will be decorating the church for the Christmas season on Wednesday, December 3rd starting at 3:30 pm. A supper will be served prior to the Midweek Advent service. All are welcome to come.

Beginning in December (Dec. 3rd, 10th, 17th), our Midweek Advent Services will be held Wednesday evenings at 6:30pm, with a meal and fellowship at 5:30pm.

Dear Zion Members and Family,

The season of Advent is here! And with it comes the exciting opportunities for us to gather together, rejoice in God's Word, and prepare our hearts and minds and homes to celebrate the Nativity of our Lord, birth of Jesus Christ!

Whether you rarely miss a chance to worship in person or you haven't been here in some time, Advent is a great time to start anew and rejoice together in God's promises fulfilled to us in Jesus, who is *Immanuel*, "God with us"!

Beginning in December (Dec. 3rd, 10th, 17th), our Midweek Advent Services will be held Wednesday evenings at 6:30pm, with a meal and fellowship at 5:30pm.

Christmas Eve, we will have two worship services which bring to the forefront those meaningful and exciting Christmas traditions.

The **Children's Christmas Program** will be at 5:00pm

The **Candlelight Service** will be held at 10:00pm.

Christmas Day Worship will be at 9:00am.

Along with our regularly scheduled worship services on Sunday mornings at 10:00am, we want to invite you to our growing Bible studies which begin at 9:00am. Come and see what's new and join in the excitement of growing together in the Good News of Christ!

The **Adult Bible Class** meets downstairs in the basement, our youth (6th-12th) are invited to join this group, too!

The **Children's Sunday School** (Preschool-5th) will begin in the sanctuary for an opening and then head to their classrooms afterwards.

May God bless you this Advent and Christmas season as you recall the depth of God's love, grace, and mercy for you! See you soon at Zion!

*In Jesus Christ's love and care,
Your Elders at Zion Lutheran Church*

DECEMBER

Birthdays and Anniversaries

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
	1 Tammy Leiting	2 Doug Hansman Brooke Ruhland Diane Schroeder	3	4 Pam Kock Jaylee McNelly	5 Jasper Foley Joey Peplinski Mark & Kristi Hoffman Tom & Marjean Lipton	6 Abby Klink Randy Neumann Katie Schurke Rachel Winey
7	8 Landon Kraus	9 Madison Stork	10 Bonnie Cornelius	11 Bernice Vetter	12 Melissa Ehlers Blake & Samantha Liechti	13 Andrew Gallagher Eliza Wittrock Sutton Wittrock
14 Parker Melton Jeff Segebart	15 Rylee Kramer Marjean Lipton	16 Jordan Hanson Danielle Schrad	17	18	19 Hensley Hagge Gene Thiedeman	20 Wade Ragaller Chad & Shawna Wittrock
21	22	23 Cale Dirks	24 Kyle Lenz Janet Rose	25 Cooper Anderson	26 Megan Myers Gary Vetter	27
28 Brynlee Bass Keely Kramer Mark & Denise Ragaller	29 Terry Koch Al Mumm	30 Cooper Lay McNelly	31 Leigh Thiedeman			



Remember My Birthday?

As you well know, we are getting closer to my birthday. Every year there is a celebration in my honor and I think that this year the celebration will be repeated. During this time there are many people shopping for gifts, there are many radio announcements, TV commercials, and in every part of the world everyone is talking that my birthday is getting closer and closer. It is really very nice to know, that at least once a year, some people think of me

As you know, the celebration of my birthday began many years ago. At first people seemed to understand and be thankful of all that I did for them, but in these times, no one seems to know the reason for the celebration. Family and friends get together and have a lot of fun, but they don't know the meaning of the celebration.

I remember that last year there was a great feast in my honor. The dinner table was full of delicious foods, pastries, fruits, assorted nuts and chocolates. The decorations were exquisite and there were many, many beautifully wrapped gifts. But, do you want to know something? I wasn't invited. I was the guest of honor and they didn't remember to send me an invitation.

The party was for me, but when that great day came, I was left outside, they closed the door in my face..... and I wanted to be with them and share their table. In truth, that didn't surprise me because in the last few years all close their doors to me.

Since I was not invited, I decided to enter the party without making any noise. I went in and stood in a corner. They were all drinking; there were some who were drunk and telling jokes and laughing at everything. They were having a great time.

To top it all, this big fat man all dressed in red wearing a long white beard entered the room yelling Ho-Ho-Ho! He seemed drunk. He sat on the sofa and all the children ran to him, saying : "Santa Claus, Santa Claus" ... as if the party were in his honor ! At 12 midnight all the people began to hug each other; I extended my arms waiting for someone to hug me and do you know no one hugged me.

Suddenly they all began to share gifts. They opened them one by one with great expectation. When all had been opened, I looked to see if, maybe, there was one for me. What would you feel if on your birthday everybody shared gifts and you did not get one ? I then understood that I was unwanted at that party and quietly left. Every year it gets worse. People only remember to eat and drink, the gifts, the parties and nobody remembers me.

I would like this Christmas that you allow me to enter into your life. I would like that you recognize the fact that almost two thousand years ago I came to this world to give my life for you, on the cross, to save you. Today I only want that you believe this with all you heart. I want to



share something with you. As many didn't invite me to their party, I will have my own celebration, a grandiose party that no one has ever imagined, a spectacular party.

I'm still making the final arrangements. Today I am sending out many invitations and there is an invitation for you. I want to know if you wish to attend and I will make a reservation for you and write your name with golden letters in my great guest book. Only those on the guest list will be invited to the party. Those who don't answer the invitation, will be left outside.

Do you know how you can answer this invitation? it is by extending it to others whom you care for... I'll be waiting for all of you to attend my party this year... See you soonI love you !

- Jesus

DON'T
FORGET
THE



Offering
Envelopes



The 2026 Offering Envelopes will be available for pickup during the later part of the month of December. Please stop by the table in the entry way to pick yours up. If you cannot locate yours, please let the office know.



There will NOT be a January newsletter due to the Annual report.

The Annual Voters Meeting will be held on Sunday January 11th following worship service



Once upon a time there was a girl who had four boyfriends.

She loved the fourth boyfriend the most and adorned him with rich robes and treated him to the finest of delicacies. She gave him nothing but the best

She also loved the third boyfriend very much and was always showing him off to neighboring kingdoms. However, she feared that one day he would leave her for another.

She also loved her second boyfriend. He was her confident and was always kind, considerate and patient with her. Whenever this girl faced a problem, she could confide in him, and he would help her get through the difficult times.

The girl's first boyfriend was a very loyal partner and had made great contributions in maintaining her wealth and kingdom. However, she did not love the first boyfriend. Although he loved her deeply, she hardly took notice of him!

One day, the girl fell ill and she knew her time was short. She thought of her luxurious life and wondered, 'I now have four boyfriends with me, but when I die, I'll be all alone.'

Thus, she asked the fourth boyfriend, 'I loved you the most, endowed you with the finest clothing and showered great care over you. Now that I'm dying, will you follow me and keep me company?' 'No way!', replied the fourth boyfriend, and he walked away without another word. His answer cut like a sharp knife right into her heart.

The sad girl then asked the third boyfriend, 'I loved you all my life. Now that I'm dying, will you follow me and keep me company?' 'No!', replied the third boyfriend. 'Life is too good! When you die, I'm going to marry someone else!' Her heart sank and turned cold.

She then asked the second boyfriend, 'I have always turned to you for help and you've always been there for me. When I die, will you follow me and keep me company?' 'I'm sorry, I can't help you out this time!', replied the second boyfriend.. 'At the very most, I can only walk with you to your grave.' His answer struck her like a bolt of lightning, and the girl was devastated.

Then a voice called out: 'I'll go with you. I'll follow you no matter where you go.' The girl looked up, and there was her first boyfriend. He was very skinny as he suffered from malnutrition and neglect. Greatly grieved, the girl said, 'I should have taken much better care of you when I had the chance!'

In truth, you have four boyfriends in your lives: Your fourth boyfriend is your body. No matter how much time and effort you lavish in making it look good, it will leave you when you die. Your third boyfriend is your possessions, status and wealth. When you die, it will all go to others. Your second boyfriend is your family and friends. No matter how much they have been there for you, the furthest they can stay by you is up to the grave. And your first boyfriend is your spirit. Often neglected in pursuit of wealth, power and pleasures of the world. However, your spirit is the only thing that will follow you where ever you go. Cultivate, strengthen and cherish now, for it is the only part of you that will follow you to the throne of God and continue with you throughout Eternity.

Thought for the day:

Remember, when the world pushes you to your knees, you're in the perfect position to pray

Being happy doesn't mean everything's perfect. It means you've decided to see beyond the imperfections.



On a Mission to Support Christ's Mission!

December 2025

409 Kenyon Road, Suite B — Fort Dodge, Iowa 50501
515-576-7666 Fax 515-576-2323 www.idwlcms.org
Contact email: emilie@iowadistrictwest.org



Often in the role of Director of IOWAY, I have people reach out to me with requests of need or a desire to share a tangible blessing. The privilege of that is I am able to build relationships with all kinds of generous people across our district and be the connection point for the ones who are in a season of need. As you've read in my writings before, we have several Swaddling Clothes outreach spots in the district and the locations are multiplying. Each location and the congregation's volunteers connect with young families in their communities through the distribution of diapers, wipes, and other items if the location chooses. One of the things I did not expect was how God may surprise the person who fills the need. I had a specific ask from one of our locations for winter mittens for babies and toddlers. I asked around and was blessed to be connected to a great-grandma at St Paul in Webster City. She has spent the last several months knitting in the evenings, and I was able to share the beautiful fruits of her labor on the other side of the district. Now, littles are warm and blessed by her kindness and God's love. On the day I picked the mittens up, she and I had a lengthy conversation, and she shared with her eyes welling up, "God has given me a new purpose!" How amazing is that, to see His work through the lens of her handiwork.

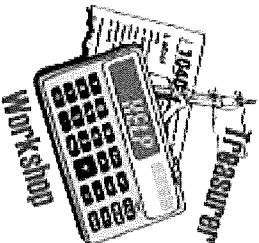
Julie Mann
IOWAY Director
julie@iowadistrictwest.org
515-408-9696

Time is short – December 31 is just around the corner! The Iowa Lutheran School Tuition Organization (ILSTO) will gladly accept your gift that will provide financial assistance to our students. Your donation needs to be post-marked no later than December 31. Tax credits are available on a first come first served basis so the closer you donate to the deadline please call to make sure credits are available. If you would like to donate online, please go our website. You will receive a 75% tax credit on your Iowa taxes and charitable contribution itemized deduction on your federal form. To get more information for donating to the ILSTO go online to www.iowalutheransto.com or call Dewey Torkelson at 712-260-2991.



IOWA LUTHERAN SCHOOL
TUITION ORGANIZATION

Give what you can. Love the gifts others can't give.



Plan now to join us for a virtual Treasurer's Workshop on **January 10, 2026** from 9-11:30 am. The guest speaker will be Mr. Bob Joy, CPA. Bob has nearly 30 years of financial experience. He owns an accounting business specializing in clergy taxes and is the financial manager for a large church. Any questions, please contact Roger Curtis at the District office (515.576.7666 or Roger@IowaDistrictWest.org). Register at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/TreasWorkshop>

The District Office will be closed on Wednesday December 24, and Thursday December 25, in observance of Christmas. We wish everyone a joyful and blessed holiday season!



District News

Send information to Emilie Jenson (emilie@iowadistrictwest.org) at the District office.

Around the District

This page in *The Messenger* includes information from congregations/circuits regarding guest speakers, events, or special occasions. If you'd like to invite others in the District, let us know and we will share it on our "Around the District" page.

For more information on Iowa District West activities, view *The Messenger* at www.idwlcms.org/publications.php

PRESIDENT'S PAGE

The Rev. Paul Egger

Iowa District West, LCMS

paul@iowadistrictwest.org / 515-576-7666

Leaping into Christmas!

Four hundred years before Christmas, God sends Malachi to proclaim to God's people, "I have loved you!"

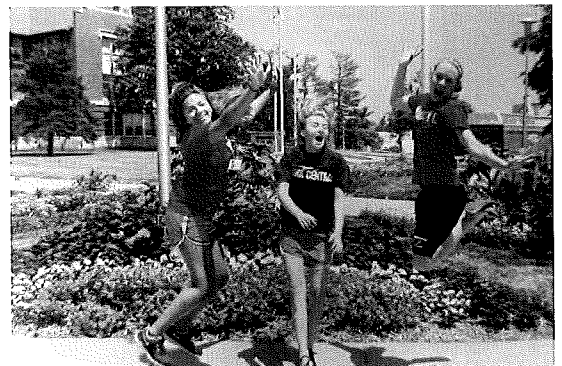
The people question God's love. Meanwhile, the priests are offering blemished sacrifices to God and saying the Lord's table is no big deal. The people are marrying spouses who don't follow God and then divorcing them. And people are wearing God out by claiming He approves of evil and that He's not around anyway and that they never benefit from serving the Lord.

Yet there are the few faithful, those "who fear the Lord." They speak to each other and remember God's Name. "They shall be Mine," says the Lord of hosts, "in the day when I make up my treasured possession."

And then God gives Malachi gracious words! "For you who fear My Name, the sun of righteousness shall rise with healing in its wings. You shall go out leaping like calves from the stall." Then God promises to send a new Elijah (John the Baptist) before the great and awesome day of the Lord comes. CHRISTMAS!

Christmas, Jesus is born! God has loved us! Sure, there's plenty of unfaithfulness to God and to each other going around today, just like in Malachi's day. How does God respond? HE IS FAITHFUL! He keeps all His promises! Here is JESUS! Born among cattle in Bethlehem.

Look at Nicole and Shelley and Kate leaping for joy! Of course they are—Jesus is born! God has loved us! Jesus is perfect love. Jesus is perfect sacrifice. Jesus is a very big deal Lord's table. Jesus is the faithful Groom for His bride, the church. Jesus is God who gives Himself into evil's hands to be abused and crucified in our place. Jesus is our ever-with-us Savior. Jesus is our Gracious Master who protects and rewards His servants now and into days of eternity. Jesus declares that you are His. Jesus calls you "His treasured possession."



So here we are, leaping into Christmas. Jesus is born!

As angels sing,
Pastor Paul Egger
President, Iowa District West



Update

UPCOMING EVENTS:

- Nov 27-28: OFFICE CLOSED FOR THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY
Dec 1-2: GIVING TUESDAY CAMPAIGN
Dec. 24-25 OFFICE CLOSED FOR CHRISTMAS HOLIDAY
Dec. 31-Jan. 1 OFFICE CLOSED FOR NEW YEAR

RETIREMENT ANNOUNCEMENT: JOY WOLFRAM

After 10 years of faithful and joy-filled service, our wonderful Reservationist, Joy Wolfram, has announced her retirement on December 31, 2025. We are deeply grateful for her dedication, her caring spirit, and the way she has made every guest feel welcome at Camp Okoboji. As we celebrate Joy and wish her well in this next chapter, we invite you to join us in a Retirement Card Shower in her honor.

Please consider sending Joy a card or note of appreciation to:

Camp Okoboji
Attn: Joy Wolfram
1531 Edgewood Dr.
Milford, IA 51351



Your kind words and memories will mean so much to her as she reflects on her time at Camp Okoboji and prepares for retirement.

DECEMBER 1 AND 2 WILL BE YOUR OPPORTUNITY TO INCLUDE CAMP OKOBOJI IN YOUR GIVING

PLANS! Camp Okoboji is blessed to announce our Giving Tuesday Campaign will be a Matching Fundraiser! On December 1 and 2, your donation - cash, check, or credit card - will be matched, \$1 for every \$2 raised up to \$10,000! Gifts marked "Giving Tuesday" or "Matching Campaign" but received on days other than December 1 and 2 will be acceptable to be included for the match.

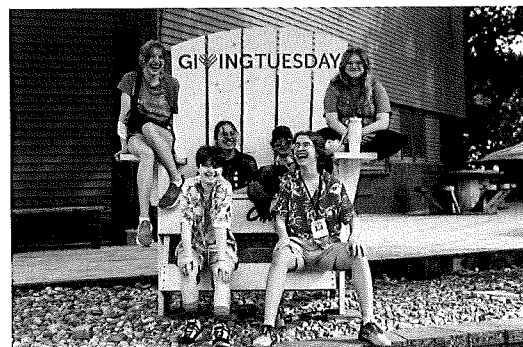
To learn more, please contact the Camp Office at (712) 337-3325.

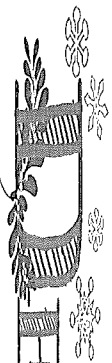
Make your gift at campokoboji.org.

Thank You!


THANKS to volunteers and groups who give so generously of their time and talents in serving Camp Okoboji.

- A big "THANKS" goes out to the annual mailing volunteers who spent the day helping us get out over 6,000 appeal letters!





THE CHRISTMAS



	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
	1	2	3 3:30 Church Decorating 5:30 Meal 6:30 Midweek Advent Service	4	5	6
7 9:00 Chr Ed 10:00 DW/HC	8	9	10 5:30 Meal 6:30 Midweek Advent Service	11	12	13
14 9:00 Chr Ed 10:00 DW/HC	15	16	17 5:30 Meal 6:30 Midweek Advent Service	18	19	20
21 9:00 Chr Ed 10:00 DW/HC	22	23	24 5:00 Children's Program 10:00 Candlelight Service/HC	25 9:00 Christmas Day Service/HC	26	27
28 10:00 DW/HC	29	30	31			

USHERS

Doug Schuette Dan Wittrock
 Doug Ehlers Jeremy Ehlers
 Wade Ragaller Damon Ehlers
 Paul Ehlers

Parish Circle

Deb Owen
Chancel Circle
 Carm Thiedeman
 Diane Witt

ACOLYTES

12/3 Lane & Sebastian
 12/7 Dane & Malachi
 12/10 Eliza & Collin
 12/14 Suttan & Audi
 12/17 Audrey & Kyler
 12/21 Kash & Kaleb
 12/28 Amelia & Brandt

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712/689/2441
Zionluth@westianet.net

Non-Profit Organization
Arcadia, IA 51430
Standard mail

FRIENDS WHO CARE

<i>Christian Education</i>	<i>9:00 am</i>
<i>Divine Worship</i>	<i>10:00 am</i>
<i>Christmas Eve—Sunday School Program</i>	
	<i>5:00 pm</i>
<i>Christmas Eve Candle Light /HC</i>	<i>10:00 pm</i>
<i>Christmas Day</i>	<i>9:00 am</i>

