

**GOD IS GOOD...ALL THE TIME!**

**OFFICE HOURS**

T-F (Karen) 12:00 noon-3:00 PM

**Office Phone**

(508) 987-1248

**Office email: Karen Borden**

[admin@oxfordzionchurch.org](mailto:admin@oxfordzionchurch.org)

**Pastor Nancy Beckwith**

**Pastor's Phone**

1-508-499-8787

**Email:**

[pastornancyb@gmail.com](mailto:pastornancyb@gmail.com)

Call or email Pastor Nancy to  
arrange an appointment or visit.

Pastor's day off: Friday

**Website**

[www.oxfordzion.org](http://www.oxfordzion.org)

**WORSHIP SCHEDULE**

**9:00 AM Worship**

**9:30 AM: Sunday School**

**9:45 AM Bible Study**

**10:30 AM Worship**

**UPCOMING EVENTS**

**Pastor @ Panera: 2:00-4:00 PM**

**Thursday, December 5, 12, 19**

**December 1:** No Sunday School

**December 2: 6:30-8:30 PM**

Stephen Ministry

**December 4: 6:00-8:00 PM**

Intergenerational Advent workshop

**December 8: 3:00 PM** Caroling

**December 9: 7:00 PM** Down And Out

Where Grace Takes You

**December 10: 7:00 PM:** Council

**December 11: 11:30 AM**

Ecumenical Clergy lunch

**December 11: 6:00-8:00 PM**

Intergenerational Advent workshop

**December 14: 9:00 AM**

Memorial Service for Norma Durand,  
reception to follow at Zion

**December 15: 3:00 PM-7:00 PM**

LIPY-CM gift buying @ Zion/

**December 16: 5:00-6:30 PM**

Confirmation

**December 18: 7:00 PM**

Blue Christmas

**December 22: 11:30 AM**

Prepare the sanctuary for Christmas

**December 24: Christmas Eve**

**Worship @ 4:00 PM and 6:00 PM**

**December 25: Christmas Day**

**Worship @ 10:00 AM**

**December 29: Worship @ 9:00 &**

**10:30 AM**

# Zion Lutheran Church

## December 2013

### **TALKING ABOUT GOD'S WORD and YOUR LIFE: Daily Faith Practice #3**

This month we continue looking at the five faith practices described by Dr. Rich Melheim in his book: "**Holding Your Family Together: 5 Simple Steps to Help Bring Your Family Closer to God and Each Other**". (As a reminder, the first step, is to SHARE the highs and lows of your day; the second step is to READ the Scripture because it reveals God's love for us.)

#### **Faith Practice #3: TALK**

*Keep these words that I am commanding you today in your heart. Recite them to your children and talk about them when you are at home and when you are away, when you lie down and when you rise. (Deut. 6:6-7)*

The third step is to TALK. Not just general talking about sports, or TV, or weather or traffic. But talk about how a key Bible text or story might relate to your highs and lows of the day. (Remember, Step #1 : SHARE and Step #2: READ) . On some days it will be really obvious how God's story intersects while on other days the connections might seem harder to make. Ask questions: "What is God trying to say to my life?" or "What does this verse mean to me today?" Choose your verses from anywhere --: the readings from Sunday worship, the daily devotional (Word in Season), or follow a Scripture reading plan from [www.faith5.org](http://www.faith5.org).

This takes practice, but with time you learn to look for how the deep things of God apply to your life 24 x 7. Connecting God's Word to our lives (highs and lows) puts Deuteronomy 6 into practice in a simple, practical way and building godly faith practices into the core of the family.

Here are a few examples from Melheim's book (page 104):

*-Today's high:* "I got an A on my math test."

*-Today's low:* "A bully was mean to me at school."

*-Today's Scripture:* "Be strong and courageous; do not be frightened or dismayed, for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go." (Josh. 1:9)

*-Today's high:* "I got to play with my friends."

*-Today's low:* "Some kids were mean to the new kid at school, and I didn't say anything."

*-Today's Scripture:* "Your kingdom come. Your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven".(Matthew 6:10)

#### **Home Huddle: How to start...**

\*Designate a special place to have your time together. Remove all tech devices and distractions.

\*Share your highs and lows.

\*Read a key verse or story from God's Word.

\*Pause and ask "How does this verse connect to the highs and lows you just shared?"

\*Listen.

So far we have covered:

#1 SHARE your joys and burdens, and grow together in love towards God.

#2 READ the Word of God,

#3 TALK about the Bible, and how it relates to the highs and lows of your day.

Next month...is #4: PRAY....Faithfully yours, in Christ, *Pastor Nancy*

### INTERGENERATIONAL ADVENT WORKSHOPS

**Advent Crafts and Light Supper (soup and bread), ending with Prayer and Song for all ages.**

**Wednesday, December 4<sup>th</sup> and Wednesday, December 11<sup>th</sup> 5:00 – 6:30pm**

Join us for a time apart from the hustle and bustle of the season to reflect and look ahead to the Coming birth of Jesus. From 5:00 to 6:15, we will gather to make an advent crafts, talk and eat together. We will end our time together with a brief time of song and prayer, from 6:15 TO 6:30. (Please bring \$5 per week, to help cover expenses.) Please sign up on the bulletin Board if you will be attending one or both workshops so we can be sure to have adequate supplies on hand. We will also need a few folks to make soup and help with setup. Please sign up if you can help.



**Wednesday Dec. 4<sup>th</sup> – Featured Craft -> Advent Candle Log** - A variation on the popular Advent Wreath- you will be able to decorate your birch log, place candles in it, and create a small Advent prayer booklet to use when lighting the candles each evening. Candles and the birch log will be provided. Ribbons, glue, glitter will also be available, but you can supplement with your own fabric or greenery if you would like.

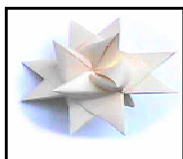
**Wednesday, Dec 11<sup>th</sup> – Featured Craft -> Home Advent Banner** - Create a Nativity Scene banner - Joseph and Mary kneeling before the baby Jesus. The Banner will be appropriate to hang on your front door, or indoors on a wall or refrigerator door. The basic fabric will be provided, but you can supplement with your own fabric and ribbons as desired. Please bring fabric glue and scissors, if you can.



#### Additional Advent Crafts: (Available both weeks)

**Make Cards to send to our Shut in members.** Create Advent and Christmas cards to mail to one or more shut-ins. If you can, please bring scissors, glue and old cards to cut up for re-use.

**Paper Angels.** Cut out paper angels and then decorate with paint, pencils or glitter, then use them as a table decoration or wall-hanging. Angels are the messengers from God who told Mary she would bear a child who sang ‘Gloria in Excelsis’ at the birth of Jesus, and sent the shepherds to Bethlehem.



**Moravian Star Craft** (for the ambitious crafty folks) Strips of paper are folded together to form this beautiful 3-D star that you can then hang on the tree, or from your ceiling. The star reminds us of the star that shone over the stable when Jesus was born.



#### **COCOA AND CHRISTMAS CAROLING**

**Sunday December 8<sup>th</sup>.**



Meet at Zion at 3pm. We will have cocoa and cookies together, then go to sing carols to some of our shut-ins. This is a great time to join together and share Christmas Carols and bring our church community to those who cannot come to worship on a regular basis.



#### **WORSHIP LEADER OPPORTUNITIES**

There are lots of opportunities for worship leaders to help out during the many worship services we have during the Christmas season. We will need extra readers for Christmas Eve, Christmas Day, The Lessons and Carols service on December 29th. We will also need ushers, communion assistants, greeters and acolytes. Please sign up on the bulletin board for any roles you are willing to serve in.



#### **CHRISTMAS PAGEANT**

**Christmas Pageant**

All children are invited and welcome to participate in the Christmas Pageant Christmas Eve at 4:00 PM worship. Arrive at 3:30 to get a costume!

This will be a ‘walk-on’ pageant—all who want to participate are welcome. There may be a brief rehearsal at Sunday School the previous week, but it is not required to participate on the 24th. Adults wanted to help with getting the kids ready. Sign up on the bulletin board if you can help.



Constitution changes approved at the November 24th Congregational Meeting. A second ratifying vote will need to be taken after the holidays. Bylaws vote upcoming too.



Stephen Ministry is reaching out to members and persons in the community with a special

**“Blue Christmas Service”**

**A Service of Hope For the Holidays**

**Wednesday, December 18<sup>th</sup>**

**7:00 P.M.**

“Blue Christmas” is a brief, informal candlelit service for those who find that the holidays are not always joyous. This is a gift that you can give yourself or offer to another! All are welcome!

Refreshments and a time to share with one another will be available following the service.



**CHRISTMAS WORSHIP SCHEDULE**

**December 24, 2013: Christmas Eve Worship**

**4:00 PM** Children’s Pageant and Holy Communion  
(All children welcome to be in the pageant)

**6:00 PM** Traditional Candlelight/Holy Communion Worship

**December 25, 2013: Christmas Day**

**10:00 AM** Worship with Holy Communion

**Sunday, December 29**

Worship at 9:00 and 10:30 AM  
Lessons and Carols

**December 31, 2013 and January 1, 2014**

Office closed

**PREPARE THE SANCTUARY  
FOR CHRISTMAS EVE  
DEC. 22ND AT 11:30 AM**



**Many hands needed!** To pack up the warming tree gifts, hang up the Chrismons, change the altar linens and banners, and set up the pew candles so that all will be ready to worship the coming of our Lord Jesus at Christmas Eve worship, December 24th at 4:00 and 6:00 PM and December 25th at 10:00 AM.

**2014 Giving Envelopes**

The 2014 Giving Envelopes are available for picking up at Zion. Please collect your set, so we can avoid postage costs.



Many thanks to those who came out on Saturday, November 16th to help with our church clean up day. Thank you to Sue Schade, Dave Olson, Mark Gregoire, Bud Fischvogt, Bob Laurens, Nicholas Leboeuf, Scott Leboeuf, Ed Rossmeisl, and Paul Peterson.



**GIFT IDEAS**

**GOOD GIFTS CATALOG**

Why not give something unexpected this Christmas? Shop with the ELCA Good Gifts catalog where you can find 50 different gifts that grow the church, fight hunger and transform lives. The catalog is now available at <http://community.elca.org/goodgifts>.

**DEC. 1<sup>ST</sup> IS WORLD AIDS DAY**

Over 30 million people live with HIV worldwide. Whether it is caring for orphans in Malawi or educating people throughout the United States – ELCA World Hunger is committed to accompanying people living with HIV and AIDS. Join with the global community by observing World AIDS Day on December 1.



**IMPORTANT REMINDER!**

**In case of emergency hospitalization or death – the best, and quickest, way to reach Pastor Nancy is by calling 508-499-8787.**

**PRAYER AND REFLECTION TO SUPPORT PEOPLE  
CARING FOR THOSE WITH AND AFFECTED BY HIV/AIDS**

*“The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few; therefore ask the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into the harvest” –(Luke 10:2)*

Loving and caring God, we thank you, because You call us to love and serve Your people. You call those who care for victims of HIV/AIDS to be healing hands in Your hurting world. You send them to compassion, to suffer with those who suffer. Day and night they labor to comfort Your people. Yet, many times they are depressed by the amount of suffering seen. And many times they are totally exhausted by the amount of work that must be done. They often neglect their own health and families in the HIV/AIDS struggle. O Lord, renew their strength. Amen



**WORSHIP AND MUSIC COMMITTEE**

Submitted by Jean Peterson, Worship Chair

**THE WARMING TREE**

The "Warming Tree" was so successful last year that the Worship Committee will repeat it this year as part of our Advent outreach. When the gifts are brought forward during the Offertory each Sunday, parishioners are encouraged to bring forth a donation of a new and/or gently used clean, warm winter adult article of clothing and place it on the tree. It can be for either a man or a woman.

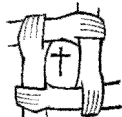
It is hoped that at the close of Advent we will again have a tree loaded with our friendship and love toward our less fortunate brothers and sisters. As was done last year, the "Warming Tree" donations will be brought to a local homeless shelter.

Jesus said, "Whatever you do to the least of my brothers, that you do unto me." Thank you for your thoughtfulness.



**ZION'S CROP WALKERS**

Haylee and Pam Olsen, Freddie Rivera, Richard Clark, Jane Boutillier, Linda Brouillard, Laurie and Kirsten Larson raised \$868 for local and world hunger relief. Pastor Nancy, Sue Butchman and Paula Clark helped check in the walkers and monitor the 3.5 mile route. THANK YOU to everyone for fundraising, walking, and contributing so generously.



Doing mission together

**SOCIAL MINISTRY**

Submitted by Paula Kilian Clark

**"And they'll know we are Christians by our love!"**

November was a very busy month at the Oxford Ecumenical Food Pantry. A combination of factors, onset of cold weather, recent cuts in food stamp benefits and a three Thursday month because of Thanksgiving, contributed to the higher need. Zion's volunteers, young and old, were eager and plentiful. Thank you to everyone who "shopped," carried bags, checked clients in or stocked shelves. For more information on fighting hunger in Massachusetts try viewing the documentary "A Place at the Table," which is available on-line and at local libraries. "If you pour yourself out for the hungry and satisfy the desire of the afflicted, then shall your light rise in the darkness." Isaiah 58: 10.

On Tuesday, December 3, at 6 PM, all are welcome to join us for fleece blanket making. Bring a SHARP pair of scissors, common pins and, if you would like, a dessert to share. We will have some fleece on hand, but are in need of more. If you want to select your own pattern, it is very simple. Purchase two pieces of fleece that are the same size in the same or a coordinating pattern. For a baby blanket, two pieces of one yard each is sufficient; for an adult blanket you will need 1 and 1/2 to 2 yards of each pattern. Blankets will be given to our elderly and shut-ins and as Christmas gifts for the recipients of our giving trees. "When you help the poor, you are lending to the Lord...and He pays wonderful interest on your loan." Proverbs 19: 17.

There will be an expansion of our usual giving trees this December. In addition to the refugees, children and young parents at LSS's Florence House and Project AIDS Worcester, there will be a tree for the children of the 536 families served by the Oxford Ecumenical Food Pantry. Trees will be in the back of the sanctuary on Sunday, December 1. Please take a tag, sign the gift register, and return your gift with the tag on it. All gifts must be brought to the church by December 15 in time for the various agencies to distribute them. As we prepare for our Christmas celebrations may we all remember the true meaning of God's gift of love to us and give back as generously as we can. Peace and blessings!



**LIPY (Lutheran Inter Parish Youth)**

**DECEMBER EVENT**



**LIPY-CM INNER CITY GIFT BUYING/WRAPPING EVENT** is on **Sunday, December 15<sup>th</sup> 3:00-7:00 PM.** We will meet here at Zion before going to Oxford's WALMART to purchase gifts for the kids on the list from Concordia Lutheran's Worcester inner-city work. We'll return to Zion, wrap the gifts and enjoy pizza. Each participating church should donate wrapping, ribbons, bows, tags and tape. It is encouraged that a \$20 minimum per person participating in this event be given to go towards the gift buying, and \$5 towards the food. Donations Welcomed!

**LIPY-CM Youth in grades 7-12 are invited to all LIPY events.** You MUST turn in completed Covenant and Medical forms before you can attend LIPY events. (Forms are available on the Youth bulletin board in the hallway.) You can also join the LIPY Facebook group to be updated on activity plans. Talk to Pastor Nancy if you have any questions.





### **NOTES FROM THE November 12, 2013 COUNCIL MEETING**

Submitted by Marleen Bacon

The November 2013 Zion Church Council meeting was called to order at 7:00 pm by President Laurens and opened with devotions by Pastor Nancy.

The October Council minutes were approved and can be found on the bulletin board in the Fellowship Hall.

The financial reports were given showing the income and expenses for October and to date. Reports also included various designated funds. These reports can be found on the bulletin board in the Fellowship Hall.

Pastor Nancy submitted her written report of her activities. Among the issues discussed were the Stewardship drive and pledges made. Pledge cards are still being collected and it was noted that e-giving has increased. E-giving can be arranged anytime during the year.

President Laurens stated that Ed Keegan had contacted him with regards to the placement of the Zion bell. Mr. Keegan stated that due to various reasons the bell could not be placed by the entrance door or on the front lawn. The Council members voted unanimously to have the bell and foundation placed by the stained glass window off of the driveway with the cornerstone being placed facing the drive. Mr. Laurens will relay this information to Mr. Keegan.

The Council set the agenda for the November 24, 2013 Congregational meeting. The agenda, minutes from the last meeting and the proposed budget will be available for distribution the Sunday before the meeting.

The Budget committee had met and Vice-President Betrovski presented the proposed budget to the Council. During the Executive Session meeting, the Council members voted unanimously to approve the proposed budget to be presented to the Congregation for final approval.

Committees present told of the plans for the upcoming Christmas season including special services, Christmas Eve and Day services, giving trees and the opportunities for the Congregation members to make the season more joyous for others.

Starting in January 2014 the Council will be meeting on the second Monday of each month. All are welcome and encouraged to attend Council meetings.

Bud Fischvogt continues to work with the Church's insurance company regarding the replacement of the copper gutters. He is also working on motion lights and detectors for the outside of the Church property. The Property Committee continues to meet on Thursday evenings for property projects inside and out.

The Church Bylaws and Constitution will be ready for review by October 13, 2013.

Jean Peterson presented the Music and Worship Committee's schedule of upcoming events through to the beginning of Advent.

The Council meets the second Tuesday of every month at 7 PM and all are welcome to attend.

This meeting adjourned at 9:10 PM with the Lord's Prayer.



### **ZION'S CHRISTIAN CARE LIBRARY**

Submitted by: Carol Weinhardt Christian Care Library coordinator.

The featured book from Zion's Christian Care Library for the month of December is **THE GREAT HOUSE OF GOD** by Max Lucado.

Our author, Max Lucado challenges us to do something different. We are to use the Lord Prayer as the floor plan to our spiritual house instead of using it only as a model prayer. We are reminded that God wants us to consider his house our home not just a part-time dwelling, a place we visit on the week-end or for holidays. **THE GREAT HOUSE OF GOD** has 15 chapters and a study guide. Each chapter based on a sentence from the Lords Prayer. The author uses humor and modern examples to make his point. For example in the Hallway of God's House we ask for forgiveness and to be forgiven. Here Max Lucado writes about resentment and getting even. He uses the example of an old Amos and Andy routine where Amos asks Andy why he wearing a little bottle of "Nitroglycerine," around his neck. Andy replies that he is bothered about a fellow who has a bad habit of poking people in the chest while he's speaking. "It drives me crazy," Andy says. "I'm wearing this nitro so the next time he pokes me, I'll blow his finger off." This illustrates that often the one hurt by not forgiving or in a get even situation is us. There are these illustrations and many Bible scriptures through out the book to illustrate that in God's house, you're home.. The book is an easy to read and one that will make you think a little more about the Lord's Prayer and what God wants for his children.

**ZION LUTHERAN CHURCH FINANCIAL RESULTS OCTOBER 31, 2013**

*Shirley I. Rossmeisl, Treasurer*

During the month of October, we received \$10,740.46 thousand and we disbursed \$11,158.26 thousand. Expenses exceeded Income by \$417.80 dollars.

For the year, we received in \$110,844.88 thousand and disbursed \$115,609.74 thousand through the month of October.

For the ten months of 2013, Revenue is \$16,521.79 under budget and Expenses are \$11,756.93 under budget.

**The following is a comparison of 2013 actual to 2013 budget:**

	<b>Oct 2013</b>	<b>Jan-Oct 2013 YTD</b>	<b>Budget YTD 10/12</b>	<b>Over/(Under) Budget</b>	
<b>Operating Revenue</b>	\$ 10,740.46	\$ 110,844.88	\$ 127,366.67	\$ (16,521.79)	
<b>Less Operating Expenses</b>	\$ 11,158.26	\$ 115,609.74	\$ 127,366.67	\$ (11,756.93)	**
<b>Income Net of Expenses</b>	<u>\$ (417.80)</u>	<u>\$ (4,764.86)</u>	<u>\$ -</u>		

<b>Expenses</b>	<b>Oct 2013</b>	<b>Jan-Oct 2013 YTD</b>	<b>Budget YTD 10/12</b>	<b>Over/(Under) Budget</b>	
Benevolence	\$ -	\$ 4,778.09	\$ 8,666.67	\$ (3,888.58)	
Pastors Ministry	\$ 6,398.07	\$ 61,333.77	\$ 62,674.17	\$ (1,340.40)	
Stephen Ministry	\$ 81.64	\$ 116.89	\$ 1,083.33	\$ (966.44)	
Youth Ministry	\$ 96.05	\$ 111.76	\$ 833.33	\$ (721.57)	
Worship & Music	\$ 1,754.51	\$ 21,067.61	\$ 22,037.50	\$ (969.89)	
Administration	\$ 1,214.49	\$ 12,193.44	\$ 12,575.83	\$ (382.39)	
Property Management	\$ 479.16	\$ 4,339.65	\$ 5,795.83	\$ (1,456.18)	
Insurance & Utilities	\$ 1,094.84	\$ 9,314.55	\$ 11,200.00	\$ (1,885.45)	
Education & Outreach	\$ 18.30	\$ 1,339.25	\$ 1,375.00	\$ (35.75)	
Evangelism	\$ -	\$ 182.42	\$ 250.00	\$ (67.58)	
Hospitality	\$ -	\$ 62.71	\$ 250.00	\$ (187.29)	
Stewardship	\$ 6.20	\$ 68.00	\$ 625.00	\$ (557.00)	
Non-budgeted Expenses	\$ 15.00	\$ 701.60	\$ -	\$ 701.60	
	<u>\$ 11,158.26</u>	<u>\$ 115,609.74</u>	<u>\$ 127,366.67</u>	<u>\$ (11,756.92)</u>	**

**2013 Operating Budget** **\$ 152,839.69**

**CHECKING ACCOUNT BALANCE AT 10/31/13** **\$ (107.22)**

**MEMORIAL/DESIGNATED FUNDS BALANCE AT 10/31/13** **\$ 35,302.99**



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