

### Contact Information

Pastor Kris Bohac—402 499 4993

krisbo90@gmail.com

President Diane Rine—402.480.1483

Facebook—[Zion Lutheran Church ELCA](#)

Website—[www.zionithaca.org](http://www.zionithaca.org)

Log in information and the worship bulletin for worship can be found on our website on the “Worship online and in person” page

Zion Lutheran Church  
589 County Rd. 13  
Ithaca, NE 68033

## GOOD THINGS FROM ZION

November 2022



### Ordinary Gratitude

I've had a really busy few months. Mostly that's not been because of church stuff, although I've been busy with that as well. Outside of work, it's been trips to Chicago for baseball and visiting our kids. It's been a little get-away to the Kansas City area. We went to Santa Fe for a National Guard conference, and I went to Idaho for a conference for Nebraska Lutheran Outdoor Ministries.

I got Covid and a weird cardiac complication put me in the hospital. (It has completely resolved by the way.) I trained for a big triathlon that I couldn't do because of Covid.

We went to the Czech Republic with our kids for a twice delayed but amazing family vacation. And when I got back I ran the Good Life Halfsy half-marathon. Half-marathon training is maybe not quite as time-consuming as triathlon training, but it's still a lot.

I've also chaired a committee working to fund a new Aquatic Center in Waverly. Ground has finally been broken culminating a four-year stretch of hard work.

But now, the big things I had on my calendar are over. I always have a bit of a letdown feeling at the end of a big trip and at the end of race season. With everything that's been on my calendar even just in the last six weeks, it's been a double whammy.

And fall often brings on a bit of a melancholy feeling just on its own. The garden is done. The weather is cooling and sitting on the patio in the evenings is less comfortable. Trees are losing their leaves. Crops are nearly all harvested. Soon the autumn colors will give way to the brown of winter. It all marks the end of the growing season and a time of rest for the earth. It's a natural cycle, but it does often leave me feeling a bit sad. In fact, there have been times in my life when I've had actual depression triggered by that feeling of things coming to an end.

For some people, it's easy to start ramping up for the holidays...to get busy with decorating and shopping and maybe making travel plans. But if nature takes some time to rest, maybe we ought to take our cue from that.

The single most helpful thing I've found to manage some of the blues this time of year can bring is to focus on gratitude. And not really even so much gratitude for the great big things. I'm ever so grateful for family, friends, all the people in my life, and of course Jesus who is the source of all life, death, and rebirth. I'm grateful for the ability to travel and do crazy stuff like triathlons and a half-marathon.

But what I find helpful right now is the practice of gratitude for the very simple, ordinary things in my life. And my practice is to take a picture of those things. I'm more likely to be accountable to the process if I post those to my social media pages, but of course that's not necessary.

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It's often something as simple as a good cup of coffee or my Bengal spiced tea. Or my backyard or a good restaurant. It probably doesn't matter too much – I think it's the practice of looking for something and then taking the photo. It's a practice of mindfulness as well as gratitude. As I join nature in the process of letting go of the season of big activity, I can appreciate the beauty of rest, and the peace of the simple and ordinary.

Christ's peace,

*Pastor Kris*

## ***Advent***

Advent starts November 27. I haven't got a lot of details about theme and things like that yet. I'm sort of lucky to know what I'm doing for the most immediate Sunday. But last year on the Wednesdays in Advent I did a short evening prayer service at Bethlehem. I used Facebook Live on Bethlehem's Facebook page. I then shared it to Zion's Facebook page and later to Zion's YouTube channel. I usually had a few people show up in person and 20-30 watch online. That counts as a success, so I'll plan to do that again.

The prayer services will be at 6 pm so I can get to Zion for confirmation.

## ***Calendar***

**Worship services are livestreamed to the church YouTube channel. You can find the link to that and the bulletin on our website: <https://www.zionithaca.org/worship>**

**November 2** 7:00 pm—Confirmation and Wednesday school

**November 6** 9:00 am—Worship with Holy Communion—All Saints Sunday. As a congregation we will remember George Nygren who died this year. You'll also have a chance to light a candle for those you have loved and lost

**November 9** 7:00 pm—Confirmation

**November 13** 9:00 am—Worship  
Adult Ed after worship—LGBTQ issues

**November 16** 7:00 pm Confirmation class and Wednesday school

**November 20** 9:00 am—Worship

**November 27** 9:00 am—Worship—First Sunday in Advent

## **November Helpers**

**Cleaners** - Kim Fox/Cathy Hartshorn

**Communion Assistant** - Carol

**Ushers** - Merlin Fick

## **Lectors**

Nov. 6 - Taryn Sudik

Nov. 13 - Diane/Charlie

Nov. 20 - Henry Nygren

Nov. 27 - Diane/Charlie

## **Acolytes**

Nov. 6 - open

Nov. 13—Evie H.

Nov. 20—Taryn Sudik

Nov. 27—open