

Contact Information

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

December helpers

Clean—McKinley/Hartshorn

Lectors—Nygrens

Communion Assistant—Charlie Rine

Ushers—Merlin Fick/Charlie Rine

Zion Lutheran Church
589 County Rd. 13
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2021 in Review: Pastor's Annual Report

Worship

Sunday worship

Like 2020, 2021 was shaped in many ways by Covid. We continued Zoom only worship through February. In March we added short in person services after Zoom worship, alternating between Bethlehem and Zion. On Easter Sunday we held a joint outdoor worship with Zion at the park in Ceresco. From the rest of April on, we resumed our previous schedule of in person worship. By May, Covid numbers were decreasing and a very high vaccination rate in the congregation allowed us to resume normal worship with no masks. In person worship has nearly returned to pre-pandemic level.

Online Worship

We continued Zoom worship from Zion for a few months and have since switched to a YouTube livestream. According to YouTube's metrics, at first we were getting 6 – 8 views per week, occasionally higher. That has dropped recently. But the quality hasn't been great mostly because our internet is not fast enough. We are in the process of getting that upgraded. We may look into some other options to improve quality of sound.

Special Services

I did a weekly 10 minute Midweek Moment on my own Facebook Live from the beginning of the pandemic to this past summer. Prior to Lent, there would be as many as 120 views. During Lent we did a Zoom midweek service in place of that. It was poorly attended and honestly not very good. And the Midweek Moment views tanked after that. Always something to learn.

Ash Wednesday and Maundy Thursday were hybrid services with no singing. Because of the importance of singing in our Good Friday service, that one was Zoom only.

In Advent I offered a short evening prayer service on Wednesdays broadcast from Bethlehem. In person attendance was around 4 or 5 and there were 40 – 60 views on Facebook. This is worth doing again. I used the Bethlehem's Facebook page to try to better reach the Davey Community than I might using my own page. I also shared it to the Zion Facebook page. As always, there was a learning curve with this.

Christmas Eve service was well attended in person. There were 4 views on the Livestream.

Pastoral Acts

Baptism – Feb. 7, Rory Sabatka

Wedding – June 5, Kyli and Jon Christo

(Cont. next page)

Service

We had two Lent projects. One was taking financial donations for Lutheran Family Service's Rally 4 Kids. The second was collecting items for Lutheran World Relief hygiene kits. These were shipped during the November Lutheran World Relief Ingathering

We collected household items for Lutheran Family Service for the Afghan refugee families they will be resettling

We have collected money to pay the tuition for two Tanzanian boys to go to school

Education

Adult education has gotten short-shrift during the pandemic. A colleague and I have been leading an Anti-racist Book group. This is open to anyone. In the coming year, I do plan to get some adult education options going again. I'm not sure yet what topics we'll look at. We had started a Faith and Current Events series before the pandemic, but I'm not sure that's where we'll continue to go. Anything we do will likely be a hybrid format with both in person and Zoom options.

We've struggled to find a model of education for children that works. Families are pulled lots of directions and this profoundly affects Sunday school attendance. This year we are doing an extended children's message during worship and a once a month in person gathering to reinforce and make some connections. The Sunday school Christmas program was on Dec. 19 and was well done and great fun.

Confirmation has been the biggest bright spot as far as education. We have 5 girls in the class who are engaged and curious about matters of faith. We meet on the first three Wednesdays of the month. I am team teaching this with Gary Grinvalds who is the Vicar at Grace Lutheran Church, Swedeburg. We entered into an agreement with him to pay a stipend for his service and he gets the teaching experience he wouldn't get at Grace.

God's blessings to Zion and to all of you in the coming year.

Pastor Kris

Calendar

Worship is also available on YouTube Live. Check the worship page on our website for the links to YouTube and to the bulletin: zionithaca.org

December

January 2	8:00 am—Council meeting 9:00 am—Worship with Holy Communion.
January 5	7:00 pm—confirmation
January 9	10:30 am —Epiphany Worship at Grace Lutheran Church, Swedeburg
January 12	7:00 pm—Confirmation
January 16	8:45 am —Worship. Note early start time due to annual meeting Annual meeting following worship
January 19	7:00 pm—Confirmation
January 23	9:00 am—Worship
January 30	9:00 am—Worship

Nebraska Synod News

Many of you may know this, but Nebraska Synod's Bishop Brian Maas is resigning to take a position with the Immanuel Vision Foundation. This means there will be bishop nominations in the months to come and a bishop election at the Synod Assembly, June 2–4, 2022.

The bishop nominating process includes representatives from congregations. It's also an important year to be represented at the Synod Assembly. Please prayerfully consider being a part of this process.