

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

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

GOOD TIDINGS FROM ZION

January 2023



2022 in Review—and What Lies Ahead?

This year finally felt pretty normal in most ways for the church. Reasonably effective vaccines and somewhat less dangerous variants have made Covid less of a factor in making decisions and planning, although it's pretty clear it will be with us for a while.

Worship – worship attendance has largely returned to pre-pandemic levels. We've got a handful of kids who participate in music in their school, and I'm hoping they'll be willing to share some of that with us.

This year I again did Advent Evening prayer services on Wednesday evenings. It was in person at Bethlehem and streamed to Bethlehem's Facebook page and then shared with Zion's. Typically there were 4 to 6 people in attendance and 25 – 40 online views.

I also did morning prayer during Lent, just from my house.

Online worship – we continue to livestream our worship services to our YouTube channel and then share to Facebook. We typically get two or three views.

Adult Education – after the pandemic brought our adult education forums to a halt, we've finally got them restarted. We're using a sort of salon format with some food and drink, a shortish presentation, and a time of discussion. So far we've talked about vocation, Bible interpretation, and LGBTQ issues. We will plan at least a couple more in the first part of 2023.

Confirmation – we have four kids in Confirmation this year. Three will be confirmed at the end of this year. Gary Grinvalds, a seminary student serving at Grace in Swedeburg, is working with me so he gets that experience. And it's nice for me, too

Children's Education – after a meeting with parents, this year we switched from Sunday school to Wednesday evenings twice a month. Carol continues to teach that. Attendance has been far better than on Sunday mornings. In addition to the Wednesday class, families receive an weekly email with a lesson to read from their Bibles and a short video. They also receive take home sheets on each lesson.

Pastoral Acts

Funeral for George Nygren June 1

Baptism – Nash and Nora Mathiesen May 29

Affirmation of Baptism – Isabel Wright and Gracie Hofmeister – June 5

Serving and Giving – Bethlehem and Zion both participated in a refugee resettlement project with Our Saviour's Lutheran in Lincoln. We collected money and arranged for beds to be donated to two families Lutheran Family Services resettled. We also raised money to pay tuition for two Tanzanian boys whose mother Pastor Kris knows from her trip to Tanzania.

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We continue to give to the ELCA and the Saunders County Ministerium Food pantry. We gave 10% of the proceeds from the BBQ to the Mead backpack program

BBQ – the BBQ continues to be successful.

Stewardship – we continue to be financially healthy. But this year’s budget will show a 50/50 split between Bethlehem and Zion to cover pastoral expenses. It was 60/40 for a long time, but numbers at the two congregations have equalized and with the higher number of kids at Zion, more of my time has shifted to Zion. We will need giving to increase to make that sustainable for the longer term

The future – I have been in this position for 12 years. That’s a pretty long time and transition can be challenging after a long-term pastorate. I’m not planning to retire in the next 2-3 years, but probably not long after. It’s not too early to be thinking about the future and what leadership will need to look like

Christ’s peace,

Pastor Kris

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>

January 1	9:00 am—Worship— no communion
January 4	7:00 pm—Confirmation and Wednesday School
January 8	10:30 am— Epiphany worship at Grace, Swedeburg
January 11	7:00 pm Confirmation and Wednesday school
January 15	8:45 am—Worship Annual meeting after worship
January 18	7:00 pm—Confirmation
January 22	9:00 am—worship
January 29	9:00 am—Worship

Thank you

Thank you all so much for the cash gift for Christmas. I’m always very appreciative of that. I usually use it to get some sort of fitness gear for the coming season.

January Helpers

Cleaners - Carol and Harvey Mintzmeyer

Communion Assistant - Charlie Rine

Ushers - Gary Otto/George Nygren

Lector - Nygrens