

Third Sunday In Advent

December 15, 2024

10:15 a.m.

(* Indicates: all who are able to please stand.)

WE ENTER GOD'S PRESENCE

PRELUDE

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

PASSING OF THE PEACE

CALL TO WORSHIP *Prepare the Way, O Zion*

WE OPEN OURSELVES TO GOD

OPENING SENTENCES

L: Have you heard the good news? A baby is to be born in Bethlehem, and his birth will bring joy to the world!

P: **Jesus will be born to make all things new!**

L: Have you heard the good news? God anointed Jesus to proclaim good news to the poor.

P: **Jesus will proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind.**

L: Jesus will set the oppressed free, and proclaim the year of the Lord's favor.

P: **Let us worship with glad and joyful hearts—Jesus will be born soon!**

*HYMN *As With Gladness*

*ADVENT PRAYER FOR JOY

God of abundance and joy, like the shepherds who heard the angel's good news, we celebrate the good news of your Son's arrival. Fill us with uncontainable joy as we lift our voices in praise and gratitude. While we gather in spirit and truth, comfort the sorrowful places in our hearts, and help us mend the broken relationships. Let the deep joy of this third week of Advent nourish our souls today. Amen.

YOUNG PEOPLE'S MOMENTS

ADVENT CANDLE LIGHTING

ADVENT CANDLE PRAYER

God of compassion, we know many people do not feel joyful today. Some are grieving loss, some are feeling ill. Some people are hungry, some are worried or afraid. We know you see and understand all of our troubles, sadness, and pain. Even though you were born to bring joy, you do not ask us to pretend happiness when life is hard. Today, we pray for our friends, family, and neighbors who feel far from joy. You are close to the brokenhearted, comforting us in all our affliction so we may comfort others. Help us be a community where people feel safe to express all their feelings, from sadness and fear to joy. May we support one another at all times. Amen.

SPECIAL MUSIC Dave Jacobson, Soloist

GOD'S WORD FOR US

GOSPEL READING Isaiah 9:6,7

MESSAGE *The Promise Keeper*

WE RESPOND TO GOD'S WORD

*HYMN *Joyful, Joyful*

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE PEOPLE Arnie & Jan Watkins, Orval family, Hopkins family, Shawna & Family, Ron Narczewski, Evie Coulter, Jim Brown, Karen Kradle, Austin, Maxine, Shirley, and Jackie, Katie Narduli, Brianna, Jim Greening, Shelly, Pam, Dixie Tonozzi, Audrey Clements family, Zimmer Family, Tim P., Michelle, Eric & Tina, Jackson, Bill Vlastnik Family, Rusty & Mary Thies, Dale Jacobson, Jeff, Paul Nave, Jeff Rietgraf, Jean Mikus, Deb Cooper, Kathy Radke Family, Ryan, Jyll Janz, Josie, Steve & Audrey, Carol Harris Family, Ben Vowels, Sr. Family, Dick & Alice Tostovarsnik, Priscilla Dean, Tom & Gretchen Kaszynski, Lindenmier family, The Smith Family, Art Ramey Family, Jean Spayer, Emily, Renewal Team, Cindy Harzheim, Paul Lewis, Marilyn Haslam, Bob & Holly Antkowiak.

PASTORAL PRAYER
THE LORD'S PRAYER (debts)
PRAYER RESPONSE *O Thou Joyful*

OFFERING
RESPONSE *Angels We Have Heard On High*
*PRAYER OF DEDICATION **Generous God, we bring our gifts and offerings with joy and cheer because you have given us new life and freedom in Christ. Our small offering highlights the magnificent ways you have transformed our hearts and held our lives in your loving hands. We could never give enough to buy your love or favor, but we rest in the joy that your love is free and boundless. Bless these gifts to the ministry of your people. Amen.**

*HYMN *Joy to the World*
BENEDICTION
POSTLUDE

Announcements

New Prayer Requests

Jan Watkins, for health
Orval family, for health
Hopkins family, for health
Shawna and family
Deb, for health
Jim Brown, for health
Jim Greening, for health
Shelly, for health
Marty, for health

*If you would like to make an announcement during worship, please request a microphone. Thank you!

Thank you to all who helped out at the Annual Cookie Sale! It was a great success!

Please join us for fellowship refreshments after worship today.

The Church Council will meet tomorrow at 7:00pm.

Mark your calendars for The **Zion Diners Christmas Party** will take place this Thursday, December 19th at 6:00pm at Liberty Restaurant and will feature the **famous White Elephant gift exchange**. Dixie Tonozzi will be hosting. Please let her know if you are planning to attend.

****The Children's Christmas program will be held next Sunday, December 22nd during worship.****

Exciting Announcement: Join the CREW!

Hey Families! Get ready for an adventure because our Sunday School program, CREW, is back and better than ever! Join us every Sunday morning at 9:00AM for a fun-filled hour designed for kids in kindergarten through 6th grade.

At CREW, we dive into amazing stories, unleash our creativity with awesome crafts, and play exciting games that will keep everyone engaged and smiling! It's a great opportunity to make new friends, learn about faith, and have fun!

Don't miss out on the fun—come join the CREW this Sunday! We can't wait to see your smiling faces! See you there!

Advent Giving Tree- Our Mission during this Advent season is to help a local family in need by providing four children Christmas gifts and winter gear. To donate, please mark "Giving Tree" within your offering or contact Pastor Alex.

Listen to Pastor Alex at 8:25 every Sunday morning on 103.9 **WLPO**. Tell your friends!

Our new **Bible Study** series meets **Tuesdays at 6:30 PM** in the **Fellowship Hall**. This is a **hybrid event**, so you're welcome to join us in person at the church or participate via Zoom from home. Our study is based on the popular TV series, *The Chosen*, which brings the stories of the Bible to life in a fresh, powerful way. We'll explore themes from each episode, dive deeper into Scripture, and share our insights together. This study is open to all adults, and we encourage

you to invite a friend! Whether you're tuning in on Zoom or joining us in person, we look forward to growing together in faith.

Order forms for **Luminaries and Poinsettias** are available in your bulletin. Please turn in your order by Dec. 22nd. (Earlier is appreciated! 😊) The list will be available to view on our website and will be printed in the Christmas Eve bulletin.

Listen to Pastor Alex at 8:25 every Sunday morning on 103.9 **WLPO**. Tell your friends!

Join us Tuesday, December 24TH

We will be having Christmas Eve Candlelight Service at 7:00 PM here in the Sanctuary and broadcast on YouTube

Please note: Pastor Alex will be on vacation beginning December 26th and will be back in the office January 2nd. Rev. Kay Harding will preach on Dec. 29th and will be available for emergencies. Her phone number is (815)993-9220.

Each month, Zion UCC delivers a hot, nutritious meal to the **Peru PADS** homeless shelter, supporting those in need in our community. With the increased demand, the shelter reopened earlier this year, and your help is essential to continue this ministry through May. We invite you to make a difference by donating. Every contribution, big or small, helps us provide a hearty, healthy meal to those who need it most. To give, please write a check to the church with "PADS Meals" in the memo or donate online through the Giving page on our website. Thank you for opening your hearts to this mission of compassion and care!

Support Needed for Food Pantry Expansion!

The Illinois Valley Food Pantry is seeking donations as it searches for a new, larger facility to better serve those in need. A larger space will allow for the storage of additional perishable and non-perishable food items, ensuring that we can meet the increasing demand in our community.

Your financial support can make a real difference! Contributions can be sent to:

Illinois Valley Food Pantry 122 Wright St. LaSalle, IL 61301

Together, we can work to end hunger in our community. Thank you for your generosity!

Hope House Donations-Savanna Rietgraf is interning at a halfway house called Hope House that supports men transitioning from jail and prison. Many arrive with few belongings and need clothing as they work to rejoin the community. Savanna is asking for donations of gently used men's clothing - any sizes and styles, from casual to professional. Bring items to the church office or contact Jim Greening. Your support can make a big difference.

HELP WANTED!

Ushers: We are building a new Ushers List. If you previously served as usher and would like to serve again, we would like to add you to the new ushers list. Previously ushers served for an entire month. Ushers now will serve when they are available to serve even for a single Sunday. You can let Larry Grosenbach know you will serve as usher or email ushers@zionperu.org to be added to the ushers list.

Evangelism: We are updating our visitor information about Zion church and will be creating a visitor packet that will contain our new updated information about Zion Church and a thank you gift or two for them visiting. If you would like to help the Evangelism Team with the visitor project you can let Pastor Alex, Jerry Koehler or email evangelism@zionperu.org.

Live Life (Pre and Post Transplant Support Group) meets the second Monday of each month at 6:30pm at Zion UCC.

The Compassionate Friends Group meets at Zion every fourth Thursday at 6:30pm. This meeting is open to any parent who has lost a child. Please contact the church office for information.

Weight Watchers is meeting every Saturday morning at 8:00 here at Zion. We're happy to provide space for this worthwhile service to our community.

A retirement banquet for Pastor Dr. Ron McNeill will be held 1/12/2025 at noon in Bonucchi Hall at Granville UCC. If you would like to attend, please RSVP by calling (815) 878- 2652 or (815) 252-0741. Cards can be mailed to: Granville, UCC 103 N Church St., Granville, IL 61326

Tonica Church is collecting personal hygiene products to give away. Items needed include: *Bar soap *Shower gel *Shampoo Razors *Deodorant *Toothbrushes *Toothpaste *Combs or Brushes *Contact Diane Gebhardt with any questions.

You can now donate to Zion by Text to (815)393-1954

Enter the amount you want to give to Zion in the Text box and send. If it the first time you are giving by text you will be prompted to set up your giving method (credit card or bank account).

Copies of the hymns and large print bulletins are located in the Narthex.

Zion United Church of Christ 6 th & Grant Streets, Peru, IL Follow us on Facebook: Zion UCC, Peru, IL office@zionperu.org 1-815-223-2671 www.zionperu.org	
Ministers	Members of the Congregation
Pastor	Pastor Alex Garncarz
Organist	Jim Greening
Secretary	Erin Lewis
Liturgist	Arnie Watkins
Audio Technician	Jerry Koehler
Video Technician	Rhonda Essl
Song Leader	Dave Jacobson
Fellowship	Arnie & Jan Watkins

Attendance: December 8 : In Person: 29 + 11 children
On YouTube: 14

This week:

Monday, December 16th

7:00pm church Council meeting

Tuesday, December 17th

6:30pm Bible Study

Wednesday, December 18th

6:30pm Choir practice

Thursday, December 19th

7:00pm Zion Diners

Saturday, December 21st

8:00am Weight Watchers meeting

Sunday, December 22nd

Advent 4

8:25am Pastor Alex on WLPO

9:00am CREW

9:30am Choir practice

10:15am Worship in person, also available on YouTube CREW

Christmas Program during worship

Followed by fellowship refreshments

Office Hours-The secretary is in the office on Fridays

Monday-Thursday: Closed *Friday: 12:00am -6:00pm