

ZIONS NEWZFLASH



Zion's
Church

December 2024

Letter From Our Pastor

Birth stories. I could tell the birth stories of all three of our children. In pretty much detail. And with pleasure. And excitement. Our children, their lives, my experience with them and the families they've created has been among the absolute greatest joys of my life.

Not only could I tell you about their births, I could tell you story after story from their childhood into their adult life about experiences that I've shared with them. And in telling you those stories, I would get immense pleasure. Those experiences all began when those three special people were born into my life.

This month, we celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ into our world. Through Scripture, music and sermons, we will remember all the events leading up to and including his birth. But we won't just remember his birth at church, we'll remember his birth in our homes. We'll remember with decorations displayed in our houses, by ornaments on our trees and by music played in our homes, cars and in the stores.

One time years ago I spoke with one of my uncles and asked him when he accepted Jesus into his life. To my surprise, he said no one ever asked him that before. And I'm not sure that he shared the information either. But given the opportunity, he shared his story with me.

It seems to me that we should take the same pleasure in sharing our own personal birth stories of Jesus into our lives as we take in sharing the stories of our children's births. We should share, with delight, our experiences with Jesus, as freely as we would share the experiences that we've enjoyed with our own children.

I invite you, in this Christmas season, to share some of your Jesus stories and experiences with the people who you love. I'm not even asking you to witness to non-believers, as wonderful as that would be. Just share your stories of your experience with Jesus with some of the members of your family.

They'd be blessed from the experience, and I think you would too.

This Christmas season, let's share the stories of Jesus' birth...into our lives.

Merry Christmas!

Randy Bond

**"Kissing the
Face of God"**

-Morgan Weistling



CHRISTMAS HAPPENINGS

December 2024

Christmas Eve Services

December 23 & 24

The Christmas Eve worship services are returning again this year.

"Step Outside Your Cubicle" will be presented on Monday evening, December 23 at 7 pm, and Tuesday evening, December 24 at 5 and 7:15 pm.

The Traditional Christmas Eve Worship Service with communion will happen at 9:15pm on the 24th, as in years past. Each of the services will include a time of candle lighting with carols. Further, Sign Language Interpretation is available on December 23rd AND we will livestream the 7:15 and 9:15 services on December 24th.

We'd love to have you join us in celebrating the birth of our Savior and we would be delighted if you invited a friend. Please pray for the movement of the Holy Spirit in all of our Christmas events.

Zion's Bells

Come On Over!!!

The Advent season is upon us! A most beautiful time to focus on Emmanuel...

God with Us!

Zion's Bells will be playing on December 15th during the 8:15 a.m. service. One of our songs is "O Come, O Come, Emmanuel." It incorporates one of my favorite handbell techniques...the "singing bell" technique. "Listen for that STILL SMALL VOICE!"

In addition to the two songs during the service, we will be playing "Deck the Hall" during the postlude. Now, we realize that the postlude is not the "quietest" time to play with everyone scurrying here and there. So, we are inviting those of you who would like to experience this fun rendition to **COME ON OVER** to the windows and get an up-close view of our ringers in action! The entire song is malleted (with the exception of the highest bells which will be shaking). It even has some mallet choreography...so much talent!!!

Our hope is to add Advent/Christmas joy to your day as we give glory to God in song!

Wishing you the joy of living in His love at Christmas and always,
Zion's Bells

Moms of the Vine

Hot Cocoa Party

Please join us for another fun MOV event on Monday, December 16th at 10am in the Fellowship Hall. We will have a hot cocoa bar, a fun STEM game to build the tallest snowman, a Christmas keepsake craft ... along with discussion & a devotional. 🎄

Also, please feel free to bring along your favorite cookies for a cookie exchange !!

CHRISTMAS HAPPENINGS

December 2024

Christmas Decorated Cookie & Cookie Swap

Friday, December 13th, 6:30pm, The Journey Cafe

Get your cookie-decorating apron on and join us for some Christmas-cookie fun! Doors open at 6:30pm, and activity begins at 7:00pm.

The event is open to all with a \$5.00 admission fee per person.

This activity is two-parts – one is the Cookie Swap, and the other is the Christmas Cookie Decorating part.

Here's how it works...

For the Cookie Swap: You bring 2 dozen pre-baked of your favorite cookies along with a few copies of that recipe to share (you bring 2 dozen, and you get to take home any combination of 2 dozen cookies from the 'Swap' table).

For the Christmas Cookie Decorating: We will supply 10 pre-baked sugar cookies for you to personally decorate and keep. We will also supply all the colored frostings and some sprinkles, but feel free to bring some of your own favorite sprinkles too.

Here are some examples of cookies (pictures below are for example-purposes only and may not be part of the cookie decorating activity)



Since you will receive a batch of sugar cookies to decorate, it is important that you RSVP at <http://www.inspiredsisters.org/christmas-cookie-decorating-and-cookie-swap/> so we can adequately prepare.

Light refreshments and a few snacks will be available, but you're welcome to bring a snack or drink item to share.

In the spirit of this giving season, feel free to bring additional donations of diapers, baby items, or gift cards to Aldi's to bless new families for [LC Medical](#).

Holiday Gala

Wednesday, Dec. 18th, 6-9pm
Journey Cafe

Young adults are invited to a formal holiday celebration!

Join us for live music, light snacks and Christmas fun! Formal attire is encouraged for this event.

If interested, please contact Greta Perry at 484-516-8989.

*High school students in 11th and 12th grade are invited to join The Walk for this event!

Season's Greetings

Sundays, Dec. 8, 15, and 22

The Young Adult Sunday school will be celebrating the Christmas season with cookies and warm drinks outside during the three Sunday services before Christmas.

All Zion's Church attendees are invited to join us on Dec. 8th, 15th, and 22nd outside in-front of the church for caroling and fellowship between church services!

DECEMBER BUSINESS NEWS

December 2024

Consistory Corner

- We finalized the budget and it is available in the back of the sanctuary for congregational review.
- The **Annual Congregational Meeting** will be held on Sunday, **December 8, 2024** after the third Worship Service.
 - At this meeting we will discuss 4 topics:
 - 1) A motion will be made to allow 3 Strands Community Center to utilize the east end of the Journey Cafe, for a monthly donation.
 - 2) Approval of the Capital Maintenance Budget
 - A motion will be made to proceed with the capital projects for 2025 at a cost not to exceed \$370,000, utilizing investments if necessary to cover these projects.
 - 3) Approval of the 2025 Budget
 - 4) Suggesting the following by-law change for congregational vote:
 - Section VI - Consistory subsection Business Team
 1. Current language:
'All expenses not provided for by the budget proposed by the business team shall be referred to the Consistory for approval. If the expense exceeds \$10,000, it must receive the approval of the Consistory and the Congregation.'
 2. Newly proposed change by Elders:
'All expenses not provided for by the budget proposed by the business team shall be referred to the Consistory for approval. If the expense exceeds 3% of the prior year's total annual budget, it must receive the approval of the Consistory and the Congregation. As a contingency for a catastrophic event, the Consistory may approve up to 10% of the prior year's total annual budget.'

End-of-Year Business

- Please update your Realm account for any changes in address or household status. End of year contribution statements will be sent soon. Update your info at connect.zionschurch.org. Don't have a computer? Please contact the secretary at 610-562-2300 to report changes of address or household status.
- 2025 Offering Envelopes are available for pick up. If you would like to receive Offering Envelopes and did not, please complete the request form on the distribution table and envelopes will be made available to you.
- Reimbursement requests for items purchased in 2024 are due no later than Sunday, December 29, 2024 in order to include these items in our financial reports for the year 2024.

OCC Shoeboxes

There were 141 shoeboxes collected for Operation Christmas Child at Zion's Church this year! Thank you for your generosity and impacting lives for Christ! Please continue to pray for the children touched by this project.

Children & Family Upcoming Events

December
2024

A Grinchy Gathering

Saturday, December 7th

1:00–4:00 pm

Visit “Who-ville” with your family and learn along with the Grinch that “perhaps Christmas doesn’t come from a store, perhaps, Christmas means a little bit more”.

Sign up at zionschurch.org/register

Planet Shakers

Dec. 11: Family meal at 5:45

Dec. 11: Christmas party & PJ night

Dec. 18 & 25: No Planet Shakers

B.L.A.S.T. Kids

Sundays at 9:40 am

3 years old - 5th grade

Our collection for a Christmas gift for Jesus (chickens) continues through Dec. 22

Moms of the Vine

Where moms & kids can share life together
& grow in Christ

Hot Cocoa Bar - Dec. 16

10:00 am in the fellowship hall

More Info

JenniferScott@zionschurch.org

610-562-2300, option 6