

CONNECTIONS

510 Pine Street, Trinidad CO 81082 / zionsluth@gmail.com

Centering Prayer

Centering Prayer will return to Zion's. All who are interested in resuming or starting this practice please mark Saturday, Feb. 12 for a half-day workshop led by the Southern Colorado Contemplative Outreach leadership team. Prior to March 2020, Zion's had a Centering Prayer group that met weekly and members have requested that it be restarted.

Our Worship

Zion's services are at 10 a.m. each Sunday. We worship in the sanctuary and online via Zoom. We ask that if you do not feel well (even if Covid-19 negative) plan to join us via online worship. Sunday Bible Study continues using the book, "The God Who Sees". We explore stories about Hagar, Joseph, Ruth and Jesus as we consider those who have fled their homelands. Worship and Bible Study links can be found in the weekly E-formation and on our website in the "News" tabs, clicking on E-formation news for the week.

Christmas Eve Worship

Join us on Christmas Eve as we celebrate the birth of our Lord with lessons, carols, and fellowship. Bring a friend or family member for this beloved service, which starts at 11 p.m., Christmas Eve in the Sanctuary.



We Have Room, We Have Room!

By The Rev. Dr. Rebecca Z. McNeil

The Inn was already too full. There was no way to accommodate a couple in obvious need of welcome and rest.

The holiday season is upon us. It is a season typically packed full. The weeks between Thanksgiving and New Year's Day are full of shopping and gift-wrapping, card writing and mailing, cookie baking and candy making, and light hanging and tree bedecking, concert-going, and party-throwing. It's a season of happily eating and gleefully indulging in drinks. It's a time for bingeing on happy Hallmark holiday movies. It is a season full of sounds like Bing singing and carols ringing out in every aisle of every store. The holidays are a season of gathering family and friends here, or going there, a time to take in concerts and special events. It's a season that is full to overflowing, and most of us love it.

Adam, my eldest, was sixteen months old. He was a busy baby into *everything, everywhere, all* the time. I was six months pregnant with his brother, and we were getting ready for a cross-country move. Our wood-paneled den was our packing central. I would get things from the living room, wrap them in newspaper, and put them in a box in the den. As soon as I went to the living room to gather more items to pack, Adam got busy. By the time I got back to the den with my hands full of our stuff, Adam had gleefully unwrapped and unpacked everything I had just put away. At the end of the first packing day, I was beyond exhausted. In desperation, I called home.

"Mom, if ever I needed you in my entire life, I need you now. Is there any chance you can come this week or next? If you keep Adam busy and happy, I can do the packing, but I'm exhausted carrying this baby and chasing Adam and trying to pack up the house." (continued on page 2)

(continued from page 1)

Daddy was still working. I knew he couldn't help at the drop of a hat, but Mom wasn't employed. (This was back in the dark ages before cell phones. When I called my folks in Omaha, Mom answered in the kitchen, and Dad got on the extension in their bedroom or vice-versa). "But, Becky," Mom said, "I have my bridge game on Tuesday, and we have Bible Study on Wednesday, and I'm volunteering at Tip-Top-Thrift Shop on Friday. I have a doctor's appointment next week. I'm sorry, I can't possibly come." Without missing a beat, Daddy said, "Phyllis, let's talk. Becky, we'll call you back."

Fifteen minutes later, our phone rang in Illinois. It was Mom. "I'll be there on the train on Friday and, I can stay as long as you need me." Mom's life was busy. It was full of good things. To travel halfway across the country to help me, she had to make room. With prompting from Dad, it did not take her long to decide that rescuing her daughter and bonding with her grandbaby was worth the clearing-out she had to do to make it happen. A pregnant daughter in need trumped Bible study and Bridge.

Five years earlier, I spent Christmas Eve in the parsonage of "Le Temple," the Reformed Church in Le Chambon sur Lignon, France. Alain and Sonia Arnoux, the pastors, invited a couple of us students from the language school (where we were preparing to serve as missionaries in French-speaking Africa) to enjoy Christmas Eve with their family. A fire blazed in the 500-year-old fireplace in the dining room. A tall, fat Christmas tree resplendent with ornaments and dangling sparklers filled the corner of the room. Now and again during supper, Alain leaned back and used his pipe to light a sparkler on the tree. It was much to the delight of their three little boys and to my amazed terror, I expected that tree to burst into flame any moment! More memorable to me than the sparklers on the tree or the multi-course meal or the abundance of desserts was my awe at finding myself inside the walls of that hallowed old home.

Forty years earlier, when another pastor's family lived in that parsonage with its thick stone walls and big fireplace, there had been a knock at the door late one night. Huddled in the shadows stood a Jewish woman and her child. "Please," she asked, "will you shelter my child? Will you hide him from the Nazis? Will you make sure he is safe?" Magda Trocme, the pastor's wife, paused only a moment before she said, "Yes."

Her brave hospitality triggered an avalanche of hospitality and rescue amongst the parishioners of Le Temple. In the end, that brave little band of Christ's followers hid, housed, and helped escape-to-safety thousands of Jewish children. Later, when asked what motivated her to say, "Yes," Magda's simple response was, "how could I say, 'no?'" She made room. She cleared away her legitimate fear, the danger, the busyness of maintaining home and family and church in the struggles of war-time. Her life, undoubtedly, was already full, but at great personal peril, Magda made room. A mother, needing to save her child, was worth all the clearing-out and rearranging required for the pastor's spouse to make room.

This season is called, "The holidays." We Christians call it, more specifically, "Advent." In Advent, we prepare to receive Christ. We clear out space and time so we can welcome those without shelter, to come to the aid of those needing help now, (if not ever before in their lives), to see Mary and Joseph and Jesus in our neighbors of other religions, other races, and from other places. This season for us is less about tinsel and tantalizing treats and more about compassion and holy hospitality.

If ever our neighbors have needed help, if ever our neighbors have needed hope, if ever our neighbors have needed light to sparkle in the night, our neighbors need it now. Here at Zion's, we are preparing to welcome the Holy Family as we welcome families who are Afghan refugees. Here at Zion's we are clearing out our closets and sharing warm coats with our unhoused neighbors. Here at Zion's, we are clearing the clutter from our calendars and from our hearts, so that we can be a welcome place for the Holy to dwell among us. That first Christmas there was no room at the Inn. We have room. We have room. Thank God who blesses us richly, we have more than enough room.



Bread & Belonging: Students Have Room Too

Students grades 9 through College gather on Sundays for fellowship, food and discussion! On Nov. 28, when they gathered students went to work. They prepared and packaged dozens of cookies to distribute to area shut-ins.



December 2021



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Birthdays: 3 — Carol Smith 6 — Lorena Hawkins 19 — Vicki Otten 28 — John Rygiel			1	2 10 a.m.: Book Club	3 9:30 a.m.: Women's Bible Study (Fellowship Hall & Zoom) 	4
Advent 5 8:30 a.m.: Bible Study 10 a.m.: Worship 6 p.m.: Bread & Belonging	6	7 6 p.m.: LSFRM Refugee Volunteer Training Webinar (see link on pg 6 or in Sunday bulletins)	8	9	10	11
Advent 12 8:30 a.m.: Bible Study 10 a.m.: Worship 6 p.m.: Bread & Belonging	13	14	15	16	17 9:30 a.m.: Women's Bible Study (Fellowship Hall & Zoom) 	18
Advent 19 8:30 a.m.: Bible Study 10 a.m.: Worship 6 p.m.: Bread & Belonging	20 Newsletter Deadline 	21	22	23	24 11 p.m. Christmas Eve Worship 	25
Advent 26 8:30 a.m.: Bible Study 10 a.m.: Worship 6 p.m.: Bread & Belonging	27	28	29	30	31	

Worship Ushers:
 5 — Amy Navarette & Hailey Bearden
 12 — John & Lisa Rygiel
 19 — Paula Little & Carol Smith
 Christmas Eve — TBD
 26 — Kathy Broman & Doris Blalock

Worship Lectors:
 5 — Hailey Bearden
 12 — Lisa Rygiel
 19 — TBD
 Christmas Eve - TBD
 26 — Doris Blalock

(Send Lector & Usher Changes to j.karspeck@hotmail.com; Send Birthday Corrections to Julie Wersal or Jo Moss)

HAPPY ADVENT friends! Keep praying for those on our prayer list and those in our hearts. Light your candles to remind yourself that just a little light makes a world of a difference in dispersing darkness. You can find Advent devotional resources on the information table in the Fellowship Hall.

The Inn Advent Worship: You are a “House for the Holy?”

Your life — your very being — is a place where hope, peace, joy, and love are housed. At Christmas, we remember that Jesus was born into a simple stable because there was no room in The Inn.

So no matter how simple you believe yourself, or your home, or your life to be, you are a container for the Holy, a place where Divine Light can shine into the dark corners of this world. You have a part to play in this pageant we call “life” in this community. You are sacred. You are worthy. You belong.

The pandemic has laid bare, and widened, economic disparity locally and globally. As we enter the Advent season, how can our churches become houses where the Holy will be born anew—offering respite, sustenance and care, opening the doors ever wider to those seeking shelter from the onslaught of life? No one church can do it all, but each can do something.

As we study the biblical prophets that call us to care for our neighbors and “make room in the inn,” the lonely and frightened spaces within us are filled with the light of Hope, Peace, Joy, and Love. Each week during advent we will explore these topics, beginning with the *Hope* for the first Sunday in Advent, followed by Peace, Joy and Love for subsequent Advent Sundays. Join us for in-person or online worship throughout the Advent and Christmas Season, services are at 10 a.m. and plan to join us for a traditional Christmas Eve worship at 11 p.m. In addition, you can access weekly devotionals that align with *The Inn* series by requesting a printed copy from Pastor Andrea or accessing the devotional file at: <https://zionslutheran.tithelysetup2.com/news/advent-series-the-inn-a-home-devotional>.



Zion's Community Thanksgiving Tradition Continues

Again this year, Zion's teamed with community group and local and corporate businesses to provide Thanksgiving Meals to the Community. This year, COVID-19 safety protocols remained in place, so in the interest of health and safety for volunteers and guests, we provided approximately 550 meals via curbside pick up and deliveries. While the number of meals provided was lower than the 2019, pre-COVID-19, counts, it represented a 10 percent increase over the meals served last year and included a special outreach to area students, who received 50 meals.



With meals at the ready, Norine Hazen takes last minute meal request calls as part of our Thanksgiving Celebration.

Norine Hazen, our Thanksgiving and 5 Loaves program coordinator, had high praise for the people who volunteered time, talent, food, and cash. "I was truly overwhelmed with the generosity that poured forth from the community. I was amazed at the help we got," she said, "I think it's wonderful what our church and this community do."

She also praised local and corporate business partners for their support, especially Safeway where the proceeds from November Turkey Bucks went directly to the Thanksgiving Dinner; Sawaya Wholesale for food deliveries, donations, and discounts; and BLDRS Supply for delivery bags. In addition, she shared special thanks to Bill Winters, Kent Robinson and Pat Howlett who spearheaded the turkey fry that prepared more than 60 turkeys for the dinner.



Gravy guru, Lisa Rygiel was one of many volunteers who helped prepare, serve and provide meals.

Opportunities to Give This Christmas Season

As we proclaim God's abiding light of Hope, Peace, Joy, and Love in our community and in the world, we have various opportunities to give of ourselves this holiday season.

Trinidad Youth Club & Zion's: Helping Young People

We are working with the Trinidad Youth Club to brighten Christmas for those in need by buying gifts to bless young people. We have the names of 29 local young people who range in age from six to 13. Contact Pastor Andrea or Jo Moss to get a name. These young people have no specific wish lists and we have been provided only with names and age (no sizes, needs, etc.). Consider purchasing a gift that is age specific for these young people and help to brighten their day. We would like to have gifts delivered to the Fellowship Hall by Dec. 14.

First National Bank & Zion's: Giving to Area Seniors

With the rush of the holidays, and gift giving primarily focused on children, often our senior citizens are forgotten. For shut-ins, or seniors with little or no family nearby, the holidays can be an especially lonely time of year. First National -- with the help of South Central Council of Governments, Corazon Square, Las Animas County Department of Social Services, Trinidad Inn Nursing Home, The Legacy at Trinidad, and the generosity of people in our community, including Zion's -- is working to ensure that our Seniors are not forgotten.

Santa's Gift Tree is displayed in the bank's lobby at 100 E. Main St., in the Motor Bank Lobby and at the Wal-Mart Branch, from Nov. 24-Dec. 10. The trees are decorated with actual letters that Seniors have written to Santa and some letters have been given to Zion's so we have the opportunity to help too. So, choose a letter and fulfill the request, the Zion's letters are available from Jo Moss. Drop off your gift-wrapped present no later than Wednesday, Dec. 15 at the main bank, or bring to our Fellowship Hall, by Tuesday, Dec. 14, for delivery to the Bank. This is the 15th year the bank has sponsored the program, and it has grown to 380 requests. The recipients of these gifts are appreciative as, in some cases, it is the only Christmas gift they receive.

"We are pleased with the success of this program; both the giver and the receiver experience the gift of giving," said Bank Vice President, Chris Eglund. "With so many requests, we need the public's help more than ever! Please stop by and pick up a letter. You'll be glad you did! With your help, we can give our seniors the assistance they need and a special holiday memory to treasure."

Zion's Offering: Outreach for Afghan Refugees and Local

Each Advent, Zion's collects a special offering to extend our missions both locally and globally. This year, our special Advent collection will benefit two causes. The first is in support of Lutheran Family Services Rocky Mountains as they continue to support Afghan Refugees (for more information, see page 6). In addition, we are supporting Advocates Against Domestic Assault (AADA) here in Trinidad. AADA assists women, men, children, friends, family and anyone else affected by domestic and dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking. The program provides a 24-hour domestic abuse hotline, emergency shelters and transitional housing and numerous support group and advocacy programs. Learn more about AADA at <http://aadatrinidad.org>.

Making a Difference: November Coat Giving Project Update

By Lisa Rygiel

Thank you to everyone who contributed gently used coats, sweaters and sweatshirts for our November Coat Drive. We delivered more than 25 items to Pastor Clay at Cimino park before their Sunday worship on Nov. 14. They created quite a bit of excitement as everyone dug in and found something that met their needs. Your continuing generosity to The Way Ministry is greatly appreciated!

Pastor Clay has stated many times that Zion's is the most supportive congregation in Trinidad! We have collected all the coats needed at this point, but I am sure there will be a need next year so if you didn't get a chance to make a contribution, no worries! However, other items still needed include socks and gloves; so if you are out doing Christmas shopping and walk by a rack of tube socks or knit gloves, throw a set in your cart and leave them in the Fellowship Hall with a label that the donation is for The Way Ministry. Thank you!

ELCA Update – Lutheran Family Services Rocky Mountains (LFSRM) Outreach **We're Walking with Our Afghan Neighbors, You Can Too**

As you are aware, in advance of an August deadline, the United States began evacuating thousands of Afghans who worked for the U.S. as part of Operation Allies Refuge. The Special Immigrant Visa, or SIV, program allows Afghans who work or worked “by or on behalf of the U.S. government in Afghanistan,” as well as family members, to qualify for visas and lawful permanent resident status in the United States.



*Humankind has no Nationality....
I chose Humankind*



Lutheran Family Services Rocky Mountains is among agencies welcoming our allies. LFSRM team members work closely with Lutheran Refugee and Immigration Service (LIRS), essential city partners, other community organizations and congregations to help these important people resettle into our communities. We know that people of faith are uniquely poised to advocate for a welcome that lives up to the biblical call to love our neighbor, and we are a church that “holds power accountable, advocates justice, stands with those who are poor and vulnerable, provides sanctuary, and meets human needs” (from the ELCA social statement *For Peace in God's World*). We saw this in the decade after the 1975 fall of Saigon when Lutheran congregations sponsored more than 50,000 refugees from Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos, according to ELCA's Social Message on Immigration (<https://www.elca.org/Faith/Faith-and-Society/Social-Messages/Immigration>). As Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton articulated in her *Supporting Afghanistan* video (<https://vimeo.com/593502098>), we are here, for the long welcome.

Here at Zion's, we have an opportunity to be part of that welcome. According to information that Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service (LIRS) shared with Pastor Andrea, there are 30 "units" (families or a few singles) who already are in Colorado Springs with additional groups arriving over ensuing weeks. They need sponsors. The LFSRM staff in Springs is small, so they are partnering with families and congregations for support. In response to learning about this opportunity, and based on their past experiences, some of our members asked Pastor Andrea if Zion's could sponsor a family instead of just sending money. Zion's should have a partner family in December or January.

The Zion's partner team would commit to raise \$6,000 for their unit/family, and our congregation already has \$2,000 toward that goal. Some of our team would not be in direct contact and some would be. We are in need of a volunteer to serve as Zion's team leader. They would be the primary contact for our team.

Volunteer options vary, some of our team would be in direct contact with the family and others would be 'support' people. Our volunteers need to have training for the program, especially those of us who want to be a team member in direct contact or a support team member. This training is mandatory. The next training opportunity is through a webinar on Dec. 7. The link to learn more is:

https://www.lfsrm.org/event/refugee-volunteer-orientation-colorado-springs-online-3/?instance_id=3582.

In addition, each volunteer will need to submit an application and those who work directly with the unit/family, also will need a background check when they are paired with their family.

Again, we hear God's call to accompany one another while speaking up for a generous policy of welcome. We can walk with our Afghan neighbors as they arrive, as they are resettled, and as they continue to become part of our communities. And we can advocate with and for our neighbors in this moment of need. If you can help, please let Pastor Andrea know.

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Spotlight On:**A Confirmand's Perspective --
Rainbow Trails Confirmation Retreat**

By Vanessa Port



We had our first discussion on Faith, Hope and Love Friday night. Doubt, negativity, hate and fear were written on huge rocks that our bible study leader Pastor Brad took out of his backpack to demonstrate what we sometimes carry.

On Saturday, he took out balloons from that same backpack that were labeled Hope, Faith and Love and they were obviously much lighter! At worship Saturday night we lit white candles and put them in a sand box shaped like a cross. Psalm 46:10 is one of the verses we talked about. Galatians 5, the fruits of the spirit passage and 1 Corinthians 13 the love chapter also were the focus of the retreat.

We had fun doing archery, a low ropes course, hiking, walking the labyrinth, rainbow words/writing on a piece of paper and talking to Brad. During the labyrinth walk, I felt peace, patience and joy. I learned about Lectio Divina from Pastor Brad, which is reading the bible and looking for the word that jumped out of the passage. We wrote Haiku nature poems after going on a nature walk and thinking about what we saw and heard. We had a dance Saturday too. I enjoyed having hash brown potatoes and eggs for breakfast. I loved the Australian Shepherd Penny that is 4 months old, she is adorable.

My favorite thing to do at Rainbow Trails was archery. I had experienced some practice with archery before we arrived. I got two on the white, one on the red, and one on the hay. We also went to the Pop Shop which was another of my favorites. Low ropes was hard because I had to trust myself and people that I didn't really know.



Pastor Andrea Doeden (center) with confirmands Vanessa Port and Ben Pierce at Rainbow Trails Confirmation Camp.

News Notes:

- Becky McNeil and David Lamb are in our community theater's Christmas play *The 12 Days of Christmas* at 7 p.m. on Dec. 3, 4, 10 & 11, and at 2 p.m. on Dec. 5 & 12 at Main Street Live, 131 West Main Street. Tickets are \$15 for Adults and \$5 for those under 17.
- Volunteers are needed to serve as Sunday worship assistants — ushers, lectors, communion prep and clean up. If you can help, let JoAnn Karspeck know at: j.karspeck@hotmail.com or 719-680-1222.
- Julie Wersal is preparing the 2022 Church Directory. Please look at previous directories and let Julie know of any changes or additions that you would like to make. Also, if you have not been in the directory before, reach out to Julie with your information and let her take your picture. She'll also be taking pictures at the church if you want an updated photo.

From Our History Books:

Zion's Members Have Served Thanksgiving Dinners for 29 Years

For 29 years, Zion's Lutheran has provided Thanksgiving Dinners for others. In its early days, dinner focused on serving college students who were away from home for the holiday. Our Thanksgiving Dinner Coordinator Norine Hazen said that, three church families (the Hazen, Jones, and Forward families) originally got together at church to share meals with students.

The first year, only a few students showed up. Since then, Zion's members have expanded their meal to help people who are homeless, have limited means, and senior citizens.



Zion's Community Thanksgiving 2021: a community & congregational partnership for almost 3 decades.

Members knew that not everyone could visit the church for dinner so they turned to *Meals on Wheels* and the Senior Center to identify people who needed meals delivered Thanksgiving Day.

From there, other requests for meals were identified by church members, individuals in need, and area residents. People were encouraged to call and request delivery or visit on Thanksgiving Day for meals.

In 2019, Zion's provided almost 900 meals. In 2020, COVID-19 limitations resulted in that number dropping to about 500 meals prepared using the Soup Kitchen facilities and available for delivery or curbside pickup only. For 2021, we served more than 550 meals.

Zion's Lutheran Church
510 Pines Street
Trinidad CO 81082

ADDRESS: