

First Sunday of Advent
Sunday December 3rd, 2023



ZION LUTHERAN CHURCH

The Reverend Martha McCreight – *Pastor*
Mr. Andrew Sabol – *Director of Music Ministries*
Mrs. Julie Nieser – *Administrative Secretary*
Dr. Stanley E. Yoder – *Cantor Emeritus*
11609 Frankstown Road, Pittsburgh, PA 15235
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www.facebook.com/zionpennhills

INTROIT:

“Advent Responsory”

sung by the choir

I look from afar, and lo, I see the power of God coming, and a cloud covering the whole earth.
Go ye out to meet him and say,
“Tell us, art thou he that should come to reign over thy people Israel?”
High and low, rich and poor, one with another, go ye out to meet him and say,
“Hear, O thou Shepherd thou that leadest Joseph like a sheep,
tell us, art thou he that should come?”
Stir up thy strength, O Lord, and come to reign over thy people Israel.
Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost.
I look from afar: and lo, I see the power of God coming, and a cloud covering the whole earth.
Go ye out to meet him and say,
“Tell us, art thou he that should come to reign over thy people Israel?”

(First Responsory of Advent Sunday in the Office of Matins, early medieval Roman rite)

GATHERING HYMN: ELW 435 “Lo! He Comes with Clouds Descending” HELMSLEY
The assembly stands to sing.

THE LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH

KYRIE

Ky - ri - e e - lei - son. Lord, have mer - cy.

Chris - te e - lei - son. Christ, have mer - cy.

Ky - ri - e e - lei - son. Lord, have mer - cy.

GREETING

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God,
and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.
And also with you.

The Lord be with you. **And also with you.** Let us pray. Stir up your power, Lord Christ, and come. By your merciful protection awaken us to the threatening dangers of our sins, and keep us blameless until the coming of your new day, for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

FIRST READING: Isaiah 64:1-9

O that you would tear open the heavens and come down, so that the mountains would quake at your presence—as when fire kindles brushwood and the fire causes water to boil—to make your name known to your adversaries, so that the nations might tremble at your presence! When you did awesome deeds that we did not expect, you came down, the mountains quaked at your presence. From ages past no one has heard, no ear has perceived, no eye has seen any God besides you, who works for those who wait for him. You meet those who gladly do right, those who remember you in your ways. But you were angry, and we sinned; because you hid yourself we transgressed. We have all become like one who is unclean, and all our righteous deeds are like a filthy cloth. We all fade like a leaf, and our iniquities, like the wind, take us away. There is no one who calls on your name, or attempts to take hold of you; for you have hidden your face from us, and have delivered us into the hand of our iniquity. Yet, O LORD, you are our Father; we are the clay, and you are our potter; we are all the work of your hand. Do not be exceedingly angry, O LORD, and do not remember iniquity forever. Now consider, we are all your people.

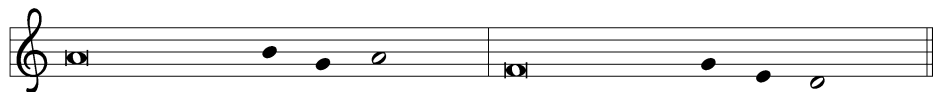
The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

PSALM: Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19

The antiphon is sung by the choir at the beginning and after verse 19.

The verses are sung responsively between cantor and assembly, using the following tone:



¹Hear, O Shepherd of Israel, leading Joseph ¹ like a flock;
shine forth, you that are enthroned up- ¹ on the cherubim.

**²In the presence of Ephraim, Benjamin, ¹ and Manasseh,
stir up your strength and ¹ come to help us.**

**³Restore ¹ us, O God;
let your face shine upon us, and we ¹ shall be saved.**

**⁴O LORD ¹ God of hosts,
how long will your anger fume when your ¹ people pray?**

**⁵You have fed them with the ¹ bread of tears;
you have given them bowls of ¹ tears to drink.**

**⁶You have made us the derision ¹ of our neighbors,
and our enemies laugh ¹ us to scorn.**

**⁷Restore us, O ¹ God of hosts;
let your face shine upon us, and we ¹ shall be saved.**

**¹⁷Let your hand be upon the one at ¹ your right hand,
the one you have made so strong ¹ for yourself.**

**¹⁸And so will we never turn a- ¹ way from you;
give us life, that we may call up- ¹ on your name.**

**¹⁹Restore us, O LORD ¹ God of hosts;
let your face shine upon us, and we ¹ shall be saved.**

SECOND READING: 1 Corinthians 1:3-9

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. I give thanks to my God always for you because of the grace of God that has been given you in Christ Jesus, for in every way you have been enriched in him, in speech and knowledge of every kind—just as the testimony of Christ has been strengthened among you—so that you are not lacking in any spiritual gift as you wait for the revealing of our Lord Jesus Christ. He will also strengthen you to the end, so that you may be blameless on the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. God is faithful; by him you were called into the fellowship of his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

The Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

The assembly stands.



GOSPEL: Mark 13:24-37

The Holy Gospel according to St. Mark the 13th Chapter.

Glory to you, O Lord.

[Jesus said:] “In those days, after that suffering, the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light, and the stars will be falling from heaven, and the powers in the heavens will be shaken. Then they will see ‘the Son of Man coming in clouds’ with great power and glory. Then he will send out the angels, and gather his elect from the four winds, from the ends of the earth to the ends of heaven.

“From the fig tree learn its lesson: as soon as its branch becomes tender and puts forth its leaves, you know that summer is near. So also, when you see these things taking place, you know that he is near, at the very gates. Truly I tell you, this generation will not pass away until all these things have taken place. Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away.

“But about that day or hour no one knows, neither the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. Beware, keep alert; for you do not know when the time will come. It is like a man going on a journey, when he leaves home and puts his slaves in charge, each with his work, and commands the doorkeeper to be on the watch. Therefore, keep awake—for you do not know when the master of the house will come, in the evening, or at midnight, or at cockcrow, or at dawn, or else he may find you asleep when he comes suddenly. And what I say to you I say to all: Keep awake.”

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

The assembly is seated.

CHILDRENS MESSAGE

SERMON

Silence for reflection follows the sermon.

HYMN OF THE DAY: ELW 436 Wake, Awake, For Night is Flying WACHET AUF

The assembly stands to proclaim the word of God in song.

APOSTLES CREED

**I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, God’s only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,**

**born of the virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried;
he descended to the dead.
On the third day he rose again;
he ascended into heaven,
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen.**

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

The assembly is seated or kneels. Each portion of the prayers ends with these words:

Let us pray to the Lord, **Lord, have mercy.**

PEACE

The peace of Christ be with you always.

And also with you.

The people may greet one another with a sign of Christ's peace

The assembly is seated.

OFFERING

An offering is gathered for the mission of the church, including the care of those in need.

ORGAN OFFERTORY: “Meditation with Plainsong” Robert Below

OFFERING HYMN: ELW 257 O Come, O Come Emmanuel VENI EMMANUEL
The assembly stands to sing. *verses 1 and 2*

OFFERING PRAYER

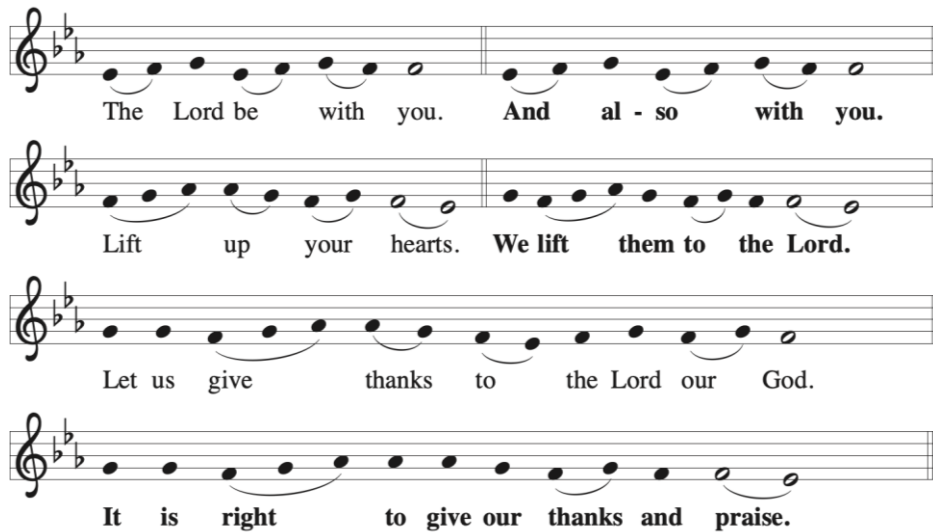
Let us pray.

God of goodness and growth, all creation is yours, and your faithfulness is sure.

Word and water, wine and bread: these are signs of your abundant grace.

Receive the gifts we bring, and nourish us to proclaim your abiding love in our communities and in the world, through Jesus Christ, our strength and our song.
Amen.

DIALOGUE



The Lord be with you. And al - so with you.

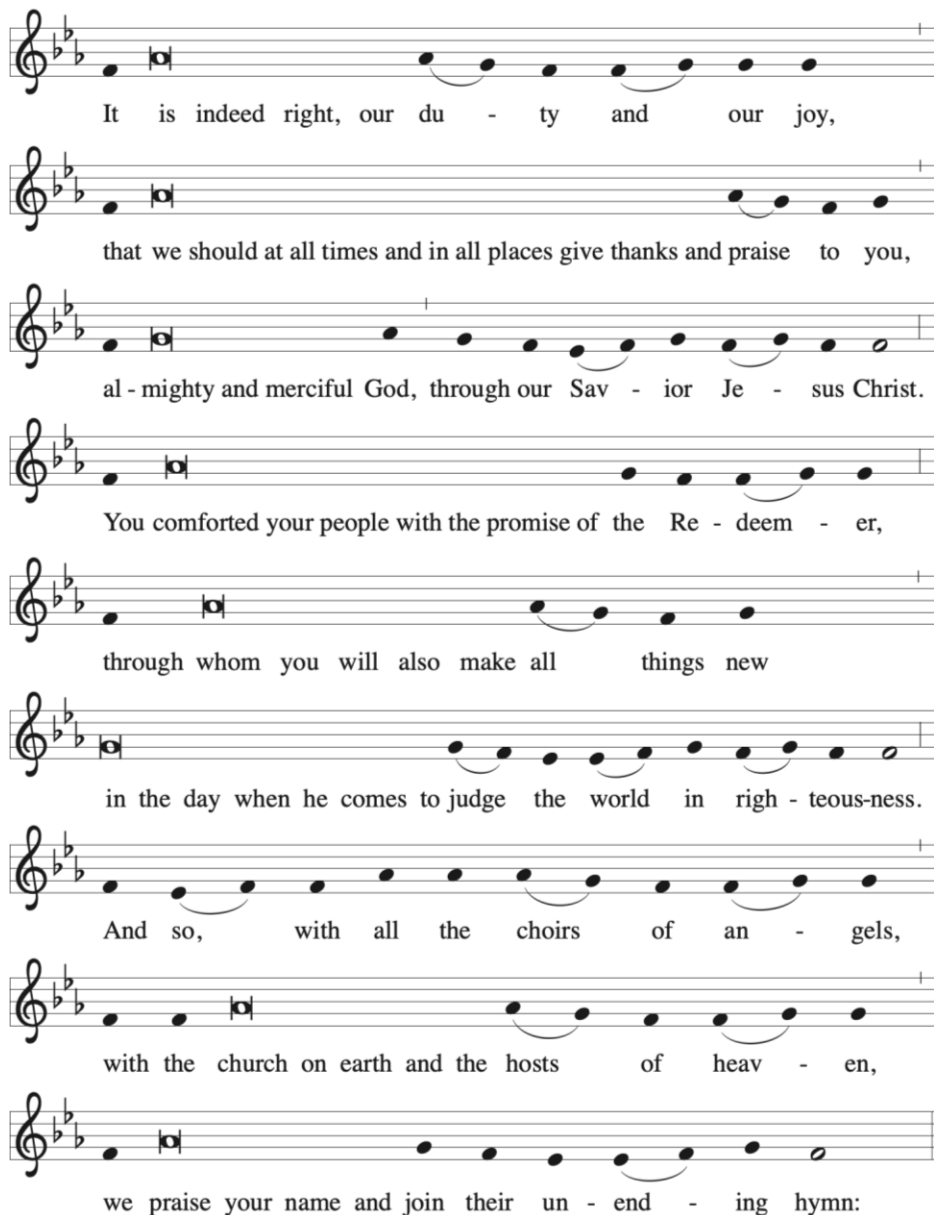
Lift up your hearts. We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

The image shows four staves of musical notation in B-flat major (two flats). Each staff contains a melody line with lyrics underneath. The first staff has two measures: 'The Lord be with you.' and 'And al - so with you.'. The second staff also has two measures: 'Lift up your hearts.' and 'We lift them to the Lord.'. The third staff has two measures: 'Let us give thanks to' and 'the Lord our God.'. The fourth staff has two measures: 'It is right' and 'to give our thanks and praise.'. The melody is simple, using quarter and half notes with slurs connecting phrases.

PREFACE



It is indeed right, our du - ty and our joy,

that we should at all times and in all places give thanks and praise to you,

al - mighty and merciful God, through our Sav - ior Je - sus Christ.

You comforted your people with the promise of the Re - deem - er,

through whom you will also make all things new

in the day when he comes to judge the world in righ - teous-ness.

And so, with all the choirs of an - gels,

with the church on earth and the hosts of heav - en,

we praise your name and join their un - end - ing hymn:

HOLY, HOLY, HOLY



Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow'r and
God of might, heav - en and earth are full of your
glo - ry. Ho - san - na in the high - est.
Bless - ed is the one who comes in the name of the
Lord. Ho - san - na, ho - san - na in the high - est.
Ho - san - na, ho - san - na in the high - est.

THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE

LORD'S PRAYER

Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us.

**Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name,
thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us;
and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory,
forever and ever. Amen.**

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

Come to the banquet, for all is now ready.

The assembly may be seated.

All are welcome at the table Jesus Christ sets for us. You will be dismissed section by section by an usher to come forward to the bottom of the chancel steps. As you come forward, on either side of the front pew is a tray of empty glasses (for wine) or a filled glass (with grape juice). Please take one before you come forward. You will then receive a piece of bread and then the assisting minister will distribute the wine. If you wish to only receive a blessing, please motion to the pastor. Gluten Free wafers are available and can be given by motioning to the pastor. For those who wish to receive a healing prayer and blessing, may move to an appointed station after receiving communion.

For those in need of assistance, please let the ushers know, and we will commune you in your pew. You may also receive a healing blessing and prayer from your pew.

AGNUS DEI



Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world; have mer-cy on
us. Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world; have
mer-cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the
world; grant us peace, grant us peace.

COMMUNION SONGS

Creator of the Stars of Night

(Sung by the choir, text at ELW 245)

ACS 998 In Silence We Wait

ELW 252 Each Winter as the Year Grows Older

CAROL OF HOPE

POST COMMUNION BLESSING

The assembly stands.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Let us pray, Living God, as the disciples ate and drank with their risen Lord, we have been nourished with the very presence of Christ. Through this meal may we be strengthened to keep your word and to proclaim the power of your love in Jesus Christ our Savior.

Amen.

BLESSING

The peace of God,
which surpasses all understanding,
keep your hearts and your minds
in + Christ Jesus.

Amen.

SENDING SONG: ELW 260

The King Shall Come

CONSOLATION

DISMISSAL

The worship is ended. Now the service begins.

Go in peace. Christ is with you.

Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE:

“The King Shall Come”

Michael Burkhardt

From sundaysandseasons.com.

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The Sanctuary Candle is given today in memory of Dick Wolfe from Reid & Brenda Wolfe.

Welcome to All Visitors: We welcome you to Worship at Zion Lutheran Church this morning. Bulletins may be found from one of the ushers or on the table in the back of the Narthex. Families and Children are welcome to worship – please feel free to worship

from your pews or to make use of our Playground Space at the back of the sanctuary along with provided coloring materials and special children's bulletins.

During the months of September – May, we offer Sunday School and Confirmation for children and youth after worship as well as Adult Study time in our Gerhard Lounge. You and/or your family are welcome to drop-in and join us at any time.

We hold a Hospitality time after worship throughout the year in our Gathering Space with goodies provided by volunteers from the congregation. Please feel free to stay after worship and partake in this time as you get to know more about the life of Zion Lutheran Church

We hope your worship here is fruitful and fulfills what you may need in your spiritual life this morning. If you would like to speak more with Pastor Martha, you can reach her over email pastormartha@zionpennhills.org or by calling the office 412-242-2626.

Sunday School/Confirmation Today: All Sunday School and Confirmation classes will meet today for our studies.

December Birthdays: We will celebrate all the December birthdays today after worship in the Gathering Space. Stop by and enjoy a piece of cake or goodie and some coffee or tea.

Advent at Zion: Today begins the Advent season together. In addition to worship on Sunday mornings, we will be holding:

Midweek Advent Bible Study and Worship on Wednesday afternoons at 1:00pm.

Midweek Advent Worship on Wednesday Evenings at 7pm starting December 6th.

Blue Christmas: Hors D'oeuvre hour (5:30-6:30)

7:00pm Worship on December 20th

25 Days of Being a Good Steward: For the month of December, the Zion Stewardship Team is holding a "give back" challenge during the Advent season – calendars are available for pickup today! Please see a member of Stewardship: Charlotte Murray, Jeannette Christensen, Deb Rall, or Pastor Martha

Zion Christmas Program: Plans are underway for an intergenerational Christmas program during 9:30am worship on Sunday December 24th. For adults and children or youth who are interested in participating, please see Pastor Martha, Chris Dippold, or Janet Mauro to be plugged into the program. We are in need of 3 readers as well as others

to simply dress up as different characters (no speaking lines) in the Christmas story from the Gospel of Luke. We will begin rehearsing next Sunday December 10th during the education hour after worship.

Zion Christmas Cookie Delivery to Shut-Ins: The Parish Life committee is bringing back an old, favorite tradition here at Zion. We will be delivering Christmas cookies and bringing Christmas cheer to our shut-ins on **Sunday December 17th** from 1pm -3pm. We are in need of cookies or goodies that may be shared with those who are visited as well as volunteers to go out and deliver. Interested in helping out in any capacity? The sign-up sheet is in the Gathering Space.

Food Pantry Next Weekend: We will be holding our monthly Food Pantry next weekend and as always, we are in need of volunteers to help! Help is needed on Friday morning (December 8) in the Community room from 9am-12pm for pantry set-up and box packing. Help is also needed on Saturday, December 9th from 8am-11:30am in the Community room for distribution and clean-up afterwards. Thank you in advance for your help!

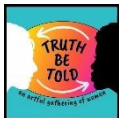
Hospitality Volunteers Needed: Do you enjoy a nice treat and a cup of coffee after worship? Well, we are in desperate need for volunteers to bring an item to share with others on a given Sunday. If you are able to help, please check out the calendar posted in the Gathering Space and sign up for the Sunday that you would like to contribute! No need to worry about the coffee – we'll take care of that! Thank you in advance for considering! Questions? Please see Charlotte Murray or Joe Balaban!

Glade Run Angel Tree: We have our Angel Tree up again this year in the Gathering Space. Tags are available on the tree. When taking one, please note the following: Do NOT wrap and please attach the tag so it is visible on your gift. Gifts are due back in the office by this **Thursday, December 7th** by 4pm in order to ensure a timely dropoff at Glade Run on Friday morning. Thank you!

Good Shepherd Ministry: This week our cards are for Nancy Fabel, Wanda Kojcsa, Elouise Brooky, Jean Pletcher and Sandra Short. Please take a moment to sign the cards and share a smile with those unable to join us for worship. Also remember them in your prayers this week.

Food Pantry Donations: For the rest of this year, we will not be specifying which items we are collecting each month. Instead, we will at any time gladly accept your donations of soap, shampoo, deodorant, cleaning products or any other personal care product. The

collection bin is in the narthex by the coat rack. Please put the food pantry on your shopping list! Thank you so much.



Fourteen women artists came together for more than a year to share stories and life experiences of racism. Each artist chose a word of importance to her and designed a 10" X 10" canvas around that word. Many of them created additional artwork being displayed around the country.

This month, we feature Kathleen Dustin. Her chosen word is "REPAIR." Kathleen is known as a pioneer in the field of using polymer clay as a medium for art jewelry and fine art. She has taught her use of polymer in Europe, the United States, and Canada. Many museums in those countries feature her work. Her 10" X 10" canvas focuses on a myriad of "patches" used to repair items such as cloth, leather, webbing, stitches, metal, screws, bandages, and tape. She hopes we can repair the inestimable damage from generations of racism.

Her large necklace in the shape of a dagger uses red thread to stitch the dark and light pieces together. It suggests how difficult this repair is and refers to the violence that has occurred. Large photos of Kathleen's art will be on display in the Gathering Space for the month of December. This display will advance our goal to be more inclusive in our artwork here at Zion.

Worship Volunteers Needed: Do you have an interest in serving as an usher, on altar guild, as a lector, or even as a communion presenter (i.e. bring forward the communion elements?) If so, please contact Pastor Martha or call the church office so that we can get you assigned a Sunday to volunteer! Thank you!

Annual IRA Required Minimum Distribution (RMD): If you are 72 or older, please consider Zion Lutheran Church as the recipient of a charitable gift from your RMD without incurring income tax on the gift amount. These gifts can be designated to Current Expenses, Major Maintenance, the Zion Mission Endowment Fund (in honor or memory of loved ones), and/or any other special fund. A form is available in the tract rack in gathering space to indicate your preferred designation(s). Talk to Pat Pope if you have questions about the form. You should consult your IRA custodian, tax advisor, or an attorney for this distribution. Distributions from your IRA plan must be made payable directly from your IRA custodian to Zion Lutheran Church. You must act before December 31 of each year.

Memorial Candles for 2024: There are still a few dates left for 2024! If you would like to reserve a candle in honor or memory of someone, please call the office and let Julie know. They are \$5.00 each.

Living Lutheran: As you might have read in the March issue of *Living Lutheran*, they will not be printing any more beginning with the November/December 2023 issue. You may still access this publication online at <https://www.livinglutheran.org/>

Zion Lutheran Church Budgeted Finances as of October 31st:

Offering Income: \$184,735.75

Other Income:* \$ 46,180.75

Total Income: \$230,916.50

Total Expense: \$209,261.86

Net: \$ 21,654.64

*Thomas Child Care and Learning Center and other groups who use our facilities.

OREMUS: If there is someone that we can prayerfully take off of the prayer chain, please let the Church office know. If you or someone you know (who is not on the OREMUS) is in need of a pastoral visit, please let Pastor Martha know at 406-565-3592. Thank you.

OREMUS

Rehab Facility:

Evelyn Lamm (Concordia, Monroeville, Room 110)

Nancy Fabel (Rosebrook Living Facility, Sarver, PA, Room 116)

Paul and Mary Lou Feathers (Presbyterian Homes, Oakmont, Room 204)

Prayers Requested For: Fred Ross, Georgia Kirkpatrick, Sandra Short, Marion Ertel, Elouise Brooky, Diane Marburger, Bonnie Goff (friend of Pat Pope), Steven Sorieno & family (cousin of March Schuler), Gary Bunch (husband of Cheryl Bunch), Bob Beresky, Wayne Stumpf, Latica Green, Pari Bailey (friend of Pastor Martha), Mary Rex (friend of Kathy Gaberson), Kelly Hammond (niece of Kathy Gaberson), Katie Ritenour (cousin of Debbie Marks), Sandy Hutchins (friend of Diane Santoriello), Andrea Shissler (friend of Annette Felmley), Darnell Pope (brother of Sandra Short), Michael Ladonne (friend of Audri Erfort), Ron Jeroski (friend of Charlotte Murray), Steve Bell (brother of Rhonda Pope), Chris Vuocolo (nephew of Mary Lou D'Ambrosio), Beth Rall, Sarah, Tom & Carolyn Schuler, Marsha Balaban, Joe Hesketh, Lynn Santoriello (sister-in-law of Diane Santoriello), Mary Jean Hawkins (cousin of Diane Santoriello), Rachel Faulkner, Denise

Capobianco (friend of Sandra Short), Patrick Taylor, and the family and friends of Chris Nieser (cousin of Julie Nieser)

ZION EVENTS THIS WEEK

Sunday, December 3:	9:30 – Worship in person, Livestream on Facebook 10:45 – Sunday School/Confirmation 12:00 – CCC Church – Chapel
Monday, December 4th:	6:00 – Council Meeting – G. Lounge
Wednesday, December 6:	1:00 – Bible Study – G. Lounge 6:00 – Parish Life 7:00 – Holden Evening Prayer – Chapel 7:30 – Executive Committee – G. Lounge
Thursday, December 7:	7:30 – Choir Rehearsal
Friday, December 8:	Between 9-Noon – Food truck delivery and prep
Saturday, December 9:	9-11-Food Pantry Open – Hybrid procedure

Usher Schedule for December:

Sunday, December 3	Marc Schuler	Joe Balaban
Sunday, December 10	Mike Patchen	TBD
Sunday, December 17	Tony Lamorte	Ray Rall
Sunday, December 24	Tony Lamorte	Joe Balaban
Sunday, December 31	TBD	

Bread-Baker/Provider Schedule for December:

Sunday, December 3	Jeannette Christensen
Sunday, December 10	Pat Hauser
Sunday, December 17	Clarissa Clark
Sunday, December 24	Lauren Hearn
Sunday December 31	TBD