

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 Covid-19 negative) plan to join us via online worship. Sunday Bible Study resumes Jan. 9. Worship and Bible Study links can be found in the weekly E-formation and on our website in the "News" tab, clicking on E-formation news for the week.

2022 Church Directory

Julie Wersal is preparing the 2022 Church Directory. Please look at previous directories and let Julie know of any changes or additions or if you need a new photo. 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.



Miracles!

By Jeff Smith

Miracles. They are everywhere. The miracle of creation. Nature. Us. Miracles are reported throughout the Bible. As Christians we are witness to the miracle of the birth of Jesus celebrated this past month. There are at least 83 occurrences of miracles in the Old Testament and over 80 in the New Testament. The Sun and the Moon standing still, the Red Sea parting, plagues over Egypt, pillars of fire, the appearance of Angels, water from rocks and water changed to wine. Lepers cleansed and tempests calmed. The blind to see. The lame to walk. Feeding 5,000 from a few scraps. Restoring an ear to a Roman soldier. The transfiguration and the resurrection. The list goes on.

As the Apostle John said, "Jesus performed many other signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not recorded in this book." (John 20:30)

So what is a miracle? The dictionary defines a miracle as, "A highly improbable or extraordinary event. A supernatural event that seems inexplicable by natural or scientific laws". The above events would seem to qualify by this definition, though some have attempted to use natural law and probabilities to explain some of the events, such as the plagues. Things like restoring a person's ear however, prove more difficult.

A majority of people believe in miracles. For example, 73 percent of people in the United States believe in the virgin birth. That is more than believe in climate change! As Christians, I believe it would be hard to deny the occurrence of miracles as noted in the Bible. However, a more prevailing question for our generation is, "Do miracles still occur today, and if not, why?"

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Before going on, I must note that the following discussion is certainly an oversimplification of the topic, and as observed strictly from a layman's (my) eyes. That said, I think we all would like to have some more concrete evidence of miracles, such as the appearance of an Angel at the foot of our bed. However, that sort of event seems to occur much more rarely, if at all, now, than it did in biblical times. Why is that?

Many modern biblical scholars appear to take the position that miracles were performed to prove that God and Christ were indeed who they said they were, and further proof is no longer needed. Also, we were granted the presence of the Holy Spirit to maintain our faith and belief in Christ. And the Holy Spirit granted us spiritual gifts (miracles?) to assist us.

Paul stated, *"To one there is given through the Spirit a message of wisdom, to another a message of knowledge by means of the same Spirit, ⁹ to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by that one Spirit, ¹⁰ to another miraculous powers, to another prophecy, to another distinguishing between spirits, to another speaking in different kinds of tongues,^[a] and to still another the interpretation of tongues."* (1 Cor. 12:8-10) He also noted, *"Therefore you do not lack any spiritual gift as you eagerly wait for our Lord Jesus Christ to be revealed."* (1 Cor. 1:7). And John says, *"Then Jesus told him, 'Because you have seen me, you have believed; blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed.'" (John 20:29)*

So maybe we can take some comfort in being more blessed for having belief through faith alone, rather than relying on miracles.

There are still many, I among them, who believe miracles continue in this age, though maybe not as spectacular as the parting of the sea. Take for instance the gift of healing mentioned above. I know that Zion's Church has a very active "Prayer Warriors" group that actively prays for physical and spiritual healing of those offered up. I am part of this group. But does healing prayer work?

Did Pastor Andrea's remission of cancer have an element of response to prayer involved? From a statistical standpoint only 20% of pancreatic cancer victims live beyond one year. Pastor has already beaten those odds. Is this miraculous or just part of statistical probability? I asked Pastor if she saw her remission as a miracle.

Her response was, *"I do 100 percent think I'm a walking miracle. In fact ever since my PET SCAN came back I've been saying I'm not sure why I survived but I'll take the medical miracle. I believed God worked through the doctors and chemo— modern tools to accomplish God's work. And that if the sheer volume of prayers said on my behalf have anything to do with my healing, no wonder I've been healed! I am overwhelmed by the sheer number of people (many total strangers) who have/are praying for me. Yes, it is indeed a miracle to me!*

My own personal experience may be even more statistically improbable. On Christmas Eve (how's that for a coincidence), 2014, I suffered a sudden cardiac arrest while playing tennis with Carol and son Nate. When cardiac arrest occurs, within three minutes organs begin to die. At 9 minutes severe organ damage takes place. Statistically, only 6 percent of victims of sudden cardiac arrest survive. Of those who do survive, 18 percent of them have permanent moderate to severe functional impairment. I survived. I have no permanent impairment (though wife Carol says the jury is still out on the "reduced mentation" identified on my release report). Are Andrea and I the result of a miracle, or just a statistical improbability?

As Mark Twain famously said, *"There are three kinds of lies: Lies, Damned Lies, and Statistics"*. Well, it is difficult to statistically confirm the impact of prayer using scientific method. One study I found of interest, concluded, after comparing results of many previous studies, both positive and negative as to the effect of prayer on healing, *"God may indeed exist and prayer may indeed heal; however, it appears that, for important theological and scientific reasons, randomized controlled studies cannot be applied to the study of the efficacy of prayer in healing. In fact, no form of scientific enquiry presently available can suitably address the subject."* (<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2802370/>)

My background is in science. I do not think that God commonly alters natural law to perform miracles in this day and age but one thing I can confidently state from my experience was the deep sense of calm and peace I experienced throughout my hospital stay and after. I attribute this to the healing power of prayer, both my own and from outside sources such as the prayer warriors. And I, like Pastor, am convinced that miracles do still exist today.

So, as the Apostle Paul urged, "pray continually" (1 Thess 5:17)!



January 2022

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<p>Birthdays: 5 — Elaine Trujillo 17 — Doug Theige 21 — Jennifer Pierce 31 — Lee Navarette</p>						<p>1</p>
<p>2 10 a.m.: Worship</p>	<p>3 7 p.m.: Worship & Music Committee</p>	<p>4 5:15 p.m.: Budget Committee 6 p.m. LFSRM Refugee Volunteer Training (online)</p>	<p>5</p>	<p>6 11:30 a.m.: Welcoming All Committee EPIPHANY</p>	<p>7</p>	<p>8</p>
<p>9 8:30 a.m.: Bible Study 10 a.m.: Worship 6 p.m.: Bread & Belonging</p>	<p>10</p>	<p>11</p>	<p>12</p>	<p>13</p>	<p>14 9:30 a.m.: Women's Bible Study (Fellowship Hall & Zoom)</p> 	<p>15 Newsletter Deadline</p> 
<p>16 8:30 a.m.: Bible Study 10 a.m.: Worship 6 p.m.: Bread & Belonging</p>	<p>17</p>	<p>18</p>	<p>19</p>	<p>20</p>	<p>21</p>	<p>22</p>
<p>23 8:30 a.m.: Bible Study 10 a.m.: Worship 6 p.m.: Bread & Belonging</p>	<p>24</p>	<p>25</p>	<p>26</p>	<p>27</p>	<p>28 9:30 a.m.: Women's Bible Study (Fellowship Hall & Zoom)</p> 	<p>29 8-11 a.m. 5 Loaves Preparation</p> 
<p>30 7-11:30 a.m. 5 Loaves</p> 	<p>31</p>	<p>Worship Ushers: 2 — Peggy Gustafson & Cherie Holder 9 — Pierce Family 16 — Dick & Ann Rasmussen 23 — Mike & Becky McNeil 30 — Steve & JoAnn Karspeck</p>			<p>Worship Lectors: 5 — Peggy Gustafson 9 — Pierce Family 16 — TBD</p>	

(Send Lector & Usher Changes to j.karspeck@hotmail.com; send birthday info to Julie Wersal or Lynn Chase.)

Zion's By the Numbers

Sharing and Caring: Volunteers, Donations, Support

2,378

Meals delivered by Zion's **5 Loaves Ministry**. Delivery teams made almost 1,100 stops to provide lunches the last Saturday of each month — January to October — that are intended to supplement weekend meals for those in need, including many who receive Meals on Wheels on weekdays, but lack adequate food on weekends.

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Church Council members serve for 3-year terms and can serve multiple terms if so willing. Our current church council is headed by president Julie Wersal, vice president Lisa Rygiel and secretary Peggy Gustafson. Other council members are: Carol Schulzkump, Jeff Smith, Joni Jones, Norine Hazen, Vicki Rienks, and Mark Nelson. Three council positions are open for 2021. Nominated for the 3 positions on the council are Joni Jones, Jeff Smith and Mark Nelson. Anyone interested in serving let Julie Wersal or Lisa Rygiel know.

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Throughout the Pandemic, social distancing and limited group gatherings has forced businesses to shutter their doors, or limit gatherings. Churches are no exception and many have closed doors or replaced Sunday services with online videos, or other limited access. At Zion's, with the help of our technology team and worship assistants, **we have not missed a single service since the onset of the virus in 2020**. We were able to do so via Zoom Worship, Outdoor Services, and our ongoing expectations that for indoor gatherings people wear masks and stay home to worship via Zoom if not feeling well (even if Covid negative). We are grateful to everyone for their support and patience throughout this process.

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Worship Assistants play an important part in the life our congregation and in our Sunday Services and many Zion's friends and members willingly enhance our worship time, in 2021 that included 57 people. Their roles include worship assistants and leaders, guest preachers, ushers, lectors, musicians and soloists, audio-visual, communion preparation, performers, safety, children's messages, banners, and altar flowers. If you would like to become involved, please let Pastor Andrea know or leave a message via phone or church email at zionsluth@gmail.com. Also, JoAnn Karspeck coordinates ushers, lectors, and communion preparation and Lynn Chase oversees the Flower Guild.

4,063

Each year we have months that have five Sundays. On those days we collect **special offerings** for a group(s) serving God's people in a variety of ways. For example, in October we focused on supporting global, national and local missions. We collected \$4,063 for Sudan missionary Wal-Reat & for Lutheran Family Services, Rocky Mountains for Afghan Refugees. Other 5th Sunday offerings in 2021 helped RIP Medical Debt, Diane Hagen's mission work in Panama, school supplies, coats for area young people. In addition, during Advent our special offerings support LFSRM and Advocates Against Domestic Assault here in Trinidad.

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Zion's welcomed seven **new members** in April (Pentecost) and October. In addition, Skylar Jones' baptism at Easter allowed us to welcome another member. If you are interested in becoming members, contact Pastor Andrea Doeden.



We congratulate Pastor Andrea Doeden on her **10th Anniversary** as pastor at Zion's Lutheran (pictured with Rocky Mountain Synod Bishop Gonia following her ordination at Zion's).

This milestone not only marks a decade of dedication and love to our congregation and community, it also makes Pastor Andrea the second longest serving pastor at Zion's.

(The Reverend A.J. Shandrick served Zion's from July 1961 to March 1985.)

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Mail Call

Trinidad Youth Club Sends Thanks for Winter Coats

Not only did Zion's donate gently used coats, sweaters and sweatshirts to the homeless and others in need this Fall, but we also donated funds from one of our 5th Sunday Offerings to buy new coats for area young people. Those gifts meant a lot to these youth, as reflected in the many thank you messages they shared with us.

Thank for the jacket I really like it. Happy Holidays!
Manny

Thank you for the jacket, I appreciate you for thinking of me! ♡
Happy Holiday's
Zariah



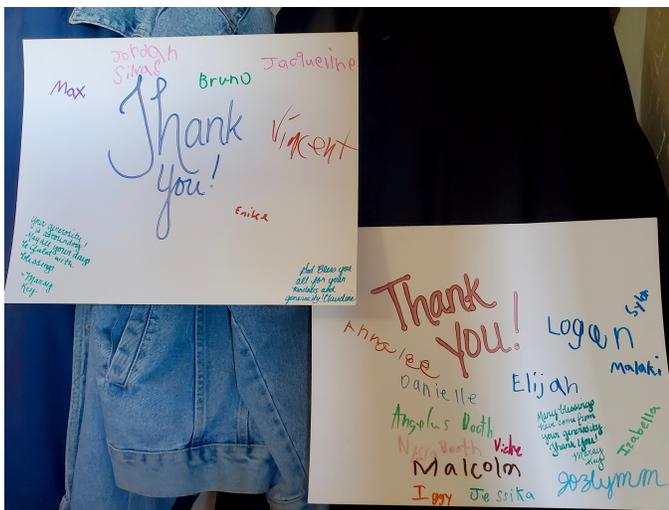
Thank you!
Zion Lutheran Church

We would like to express our sincerest gratitude for blessing these youth and more with coats.

Your generosity blessed so many of our youth, many do not realize how far kindness goes. One youth was so excited not receiving a coat that they wouldn't take it off for fear someone would take it away. That my friends is a NEED for that little one.

Thinking of you at Christmas, and sending a wish for happiness at the holidays ...and all year!

Thank You again, from the bottom of our hearts!



Zion's Staff Send Thanks for Gifts
Thank you for your continued prayers, support and gifts with which you have surrounded us this entire year. Your added Christmas gifts and wishes were an added blessing for each of us, and we are most grateful for the kindness and support.

ELCA Update

Support for Those Affected by December Tornado Outbreak

On the night of Dec. 10, a devastating outbreak of more than 30 tornadoes swept through six states. Kentucky was impacted the most, with more than 70 people reported dead. Homes and businesses were destroyed, including a candle factory in Mayfield, Ky., The full extent of the damage will take an extended period of time to assess.



John Pyron, national director of Lutheran Disaster Response and Indiana-Kentucky Synod Bishop Bill Gafkjen have been working together since the disaster to assess and to respond to immediate needs of victims. Given the initial damage assessments, recovery likely will take years.

Bishop Bill Gafkjen and other IN-KY Synod staff also have been in touch with pastors and deans in the affected areas of Kentucky to ascertain how communities, congregations, and individuals have been impacted.

There are two ways to donate: 1) targeted to damage in Kentucky through the IN-KY Synod Disaster Response fund; or 2) donations to Lutheran Disaster Response that will support all states impacted by the tornadoes. For more information on how to give visit ELCA's website at: <https://community.elca.org/USTornadoRelief?erid=ce86ba71-e071-4397-964a-3450d5869dc7&trid=ce86ba71-e071-4397-964a-3450d5869dc7>.

Spotlight On:

Angels in Aprons a Ministry of Food & Fellowship

By Lynn Chase

Zion's Angels in Aprons Ministry was inspired by Pastor Andrea, who in turn, was inspired by her mother, who is part of her church's team by the same name. The concept is simple — since we are pretty good at helping one another every day, a specific ministry was created that helps each other when there is a need.

Currently, there are 16 wonderful *Angels in Aprons* who give generously whenever the need arises for help.

In the first week or so after someone has surgery, medical issues, bereavement, etc., we simply help by delivering a few meals. The gifts are collected and delivered to "our mission".

Our dear sister, Lanae Rossi who is now with our Lord, was the first coordinator of this ministry which was began in 2018. Since her passing, Lynn Chase has taken over as coordinator.

When people know of someone who is in need, the coordinator is notified. She then sends out an email to the Angels asking if they are available for giving a blessing of food for that particular "mission". If you have such a need, or know someone who does have a need, please let Lynn know.

If you would like to join these angels, please contact Lynn Chase or send an email to Zion's at zionsluth@gmail.com.



Some of our Angels in Aprons: (from left) Lynn Chase, Julie Wersal, Paula Little, JoAnn Karspeck, Jennifer Erickson, Cherie Holder.

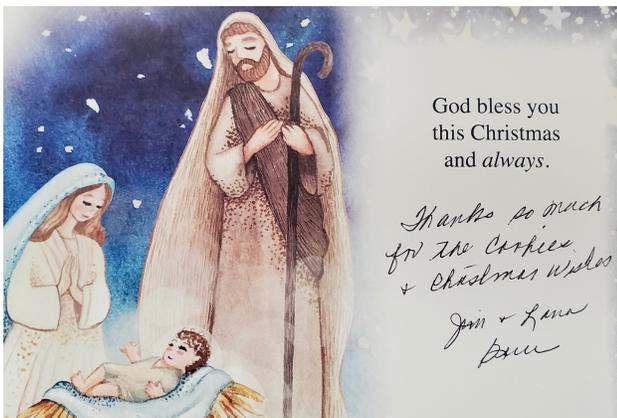
Zion's Giving Brings Thanks and Smiles Year Round



For Christmas 2021, Zion's provided gift-wrapped presents of socks and puzzles/games to 33 Trinidad Youth ages 6-13. Their smiles in the photo at top left speak volumes, and were accompanied by messages of thanks.

High school and college students gathering each Sunday evening for Bread & Belonging made and delivered Christmas Cookies and holiday messages to our senior citizens.

The gifts were well received by our seniors, as one of thank you notes (at left), shows.



In June 2021, our 5th Sunday Offering was dedicated to Diane Hagen's missionary work in Panama. She has shared some of her photo (at right), which speak volumes to her work, the need, and value of our support.



Zion's also received thanks from Rainbow Trails Camp in appreciation for our gifts to the camp foundation.

LFSRM Refugee Online Training Opportunities Still Available

In December, many of our members took advantage of the Lutheran Family Services Rocky Mountain (LFSRM) online training in support of refugee and asylum families and individuals. The interactive volunteer training is free-of-charge and provides an overview of LFSRM programs.

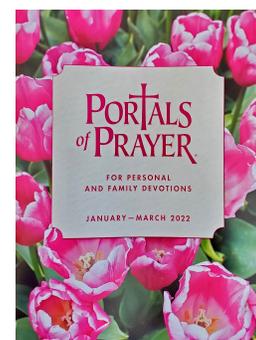
Whether it be compiling welcome baskets or working closely with refugee families themselves, LFSRM offers an array of opportunities suited to a person's specific preferences.

Volunteering with the LFSRM refugee program provides people with an opportunity to learn about the current refugee situation and different cultures, and participate in refugee advocacy. The first step to volunteering with LFSRM refugee programs is to review the opportunities available in our area and attend the online orientation training session.

The next online trainings are Jan. 4 and Feb. 1. To register, use this link: https://www.lfsrm.org/event/refugee-volunteer-orientation-colorado-springs-online-3/?instance_id=4085.

New Portals of Prayer Available

You can pick up the January-March



2022 Portals of Prayer at the back of the sanctuary and in the Fellowship Hall.

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From Our History Books:

Imaginative Evangelism — A Pastor's Daughter and Chalk

In 1966, Lutheran Brotherhood's **Bond** magazine featured a two-page article in its Landmark *Churches of Our Faith* series focusing on Zion's.

In the article, writer Charles B. Foelsch shared an anecdote about Pastor Albert J. Shandrick's young daughter. Here is the story:

"Now recapture this 1965 scene. Pastor Albert J. Shandrick falls into conversation with a man painting a Trinidad store front. He invites him to worship at Zion's.

"Well," laughs the painter, "you'll just have to draw a chalk line for me so I can find it."

"Next day, Becky, the pastor's small daughter, sallies out armed with chalk and a long-handled holder and carefully draws a line seven blocks long. On Sunday the painter is in church."

In closing this story, Foelsch noted that little Becky's actions were "imaginative evangelism" mirroring Paul's "all things to all people."



Pastor Shandrick leads the Zion's congregation in worship, circa 1965-66.

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