

December 14 2025



Grace Notes

IN THIS ISSUE...

Daycare Positions

[Page 2](#)

No Fuss Pageant

[Page 5](#)

Who's the Nativity For

[Pages 8 & 9](#)

Prison Ministry

[Pages 10 & 11](#)

Member News

[Pages 12 & 13](#)



Let's Celebrate!

**Breaking the Chains Church
is celebrating its 10th Anniversary!**

Breaking the Chains Church began 10 years ago due to the efforts of a small group of people from the Greater Milwaukee Synod. It was spearheaded by Pastor Joe Ellwanger and Joyce Ellwanger. They realized that no religious services were being offered within the prison walls of the Felmers Chaney Correctional Center.

Breaking the Chains was the first prison congregation in Wisconsin.

View the Church's history online at
<https://breakingthechainschurch.org/>



mtzionlutheran.org

(414) 258-0456

parishadmin@mtzionlutheran.org

12012 W North Ave

Wauwatosa, WI 53226

Continued on Page 10

Daycare Positions Available

Are you interested in a pre-school teaching position, full-time or part-time? As Kidz Cave prepares to open their daycare at Mt Zion in 2026, they are looking at hiring. Hours of operation are Monday through Friday, 6:00am-8:00pm.

KIDZ CAVE & LEARNING DEN

Now Hiring – Lead Teachers & Assistant Teachers

■ New Location Coming Spring 2026
12012 W. North Avenue, Wauwatosa, WI 53226

Lead Teachers – \$18.50/hr

- Plan and implement age-appropriate curriculum
- Maintain a safe, engaging classroom environment
- Communicate with families and support classroom staff
- Must meet DCF Lead Teacher requirements



Assistant Teachers – \$16.50/hr

- Support teachers with classroom routines and activities
- Maintain safe and clean learning areas
- Must meet DCF Assistant Teacher requirements

DCF Required Trainings Include:

- Introduction to the Childcare Profession
- Skills & Strategies for Lead Teachers
- Abusive Head Trauma (AHT)
- CPR & First Aid Certification
- Mandated Reporter Training
- Registry Enrollment



Apply Today!

Email your resume to: kidzcaveandlearningden@gmail.com

December 14 to December 21

Sun Dec 14	9:30am Worship Service First week of Advent <u>Zoom ID: 841 6597 2335</u> <u>Passcode: 12012</u> 10:40am Faith Formation 12:00pm Christmas Caroling Departs
Mon Dec 15	6:00pm Leadership Board Meeting 7:00pm NA 12 Step Meeting Fellowship Hall
Tues Dec 16	Noon AA 12 Steps Meeting Room 211 6:30pm Troop 27 Meeting Room 100 6:30pm Hands of AA 12-Step Meeting Upper Room
Wed Dec 17	12:00pm Brown Bag Bible Study 1:00pm Prayer Warriors 4:30pm Staff Meeting 6:00pm Voices of Zion Choir Rehearsal 7:00pm Festival Bells Handbells Rehearsal
Thurs Dec 18	5:30pm Public Theology
Friday Dec 19	12:00pm Mayfair AA Group 6:00pm ACA 12 Step Group Room 100
Sat Dec 20	
Sun Dec 21	9:30am Worship Service 10:30am Faith Formation 12:00pm Parents' Night Out see page 13
Next Week	CHRISTMAS!!!!!!

Life On Earth

Throughout much of human history, peoples have fought over the control of water sources. Experts studying global climate change predict that scarcity of water will mark future centuries and will cause untold misery for human populations. On this week when we hear the poem from Isaiah celebrating water in the desert, we can pray that clean water continue to be available to people around the globe and that people will learn how to conserve God's gift of water.

Sundays and Seasons



This Sunday's Volunteers

Altar Care: Liv and Dom Juel

Assisting Minister: Lynda Yanny

Lector: Jean Morack

Communion, bread: Jen Johnston

Communion, wine: Susan Kenny, John and Lynda Yanny

Ushers: Suzy Morgan and Dave Nelson

Greeter: Jenny Hawes and Erin McDougal

Audio/Visual: Janet McCarthy

Tellers: Brad Hext and Tom Morgan

Volunteer Schedule: mtzionlutheran.org/pages/member-resources

Access the Prayer List

<https://bit.ly/3Y2pNem>

The printed prayer list is updated
every two weeks.



Submit prayer requests

Email: pastor@mtzionlutheran.org

Call: 414-258-0456

Write: on the prayer cards at the
prayer share wall in the
north narthex.

Podcast

Introducing

THE NO STRESS, NO FUSS CHRISTMAS PAGEANT!

Now with
50%
Less Fuss!

Brought to you by the
Mt Zion Sunday School Kids

We invite you on an exciting journey to a humble little stable in Bethlehem...When an innkeeper performs a small act of compassion...but ends up getting more than he bargained for!

Sunday, December 21st

Curious to know what a Christmas Pageant would look like without hours of tedious rehearsals??

So are we!

Does this mean my kid can participate even if we just show up the day of the pageant?

Yes!

December 14th

**Christmas Caroling
Today!
Leaving Church at Noon**



HELP US GRANT A
A VERY TOSA CHRISTMAS!

Please wrap each gift, include the gift tag, and
place under the Gift Tree in the Narthex by

Thursday, December 18.

Thanks for sharing the joy of Christmas with
this act of kindness.

December 24

Christmas Eve

Wednesday, December 24

4:00pm Family Worship Service

8:00pm Candlelight Service

MEIJER HOLIDAY CAMPAIGN

THROUGH DECEMBER 27

Purchase a SIMPLY GIVE card
At Meijer Supermarket checkout
and donate to Tosa Cares!

Double match day- SATURDAY, DECEMBER 13
Each \$10 card purchased will be matched by
Meijer \$20 = \$30

MEIJER WAUWATOSA
11111 W. BURLEIGH

meijer
TOSA
CARES



Who is the Nativity For?

'Twas the night before Christmas, and my family gathered together at my grandma's house for chili or oyster soup – your choice. And then on Christmas we ran from relative's home to relative's home. That's what Christmas was all about growing up: Family.

Is that all Christmas is about? Family?



'Twas the night before Christmas, and we Christians gather together in churches around the world. Most of the year, our worship centers around the Cross, but this night is the exception, as we gather around the Manger instead. We hear the story of the Holy Family – Joseph and overdue Mary – traveling to Bethlehem, finding no room in the house and being relegated to the barn. Our Nativity scene grows to include a few shepherds from the hills and a few sages from the East, along with a few angels and a star.

Is that what Christmas is about?
A dozen people and heavenly beings
celebrating a birth in a barn?



Sometimes I see Nativities with a hodgepodge of characters. Maybe there's a Star Wars themed Nativity, with Baby Yoda representing Christ. Or there's a Simpson's themed Nativity, with Maggie representing Christ. And many people find these scenes bordering on sacrilegious, but they remind me of something important about Christmas. It was those words the angel said...

*"I am bringing you good news
of great joy
for all people."*

For all people...

(Continued on page 9)

Who is the Nativity For?

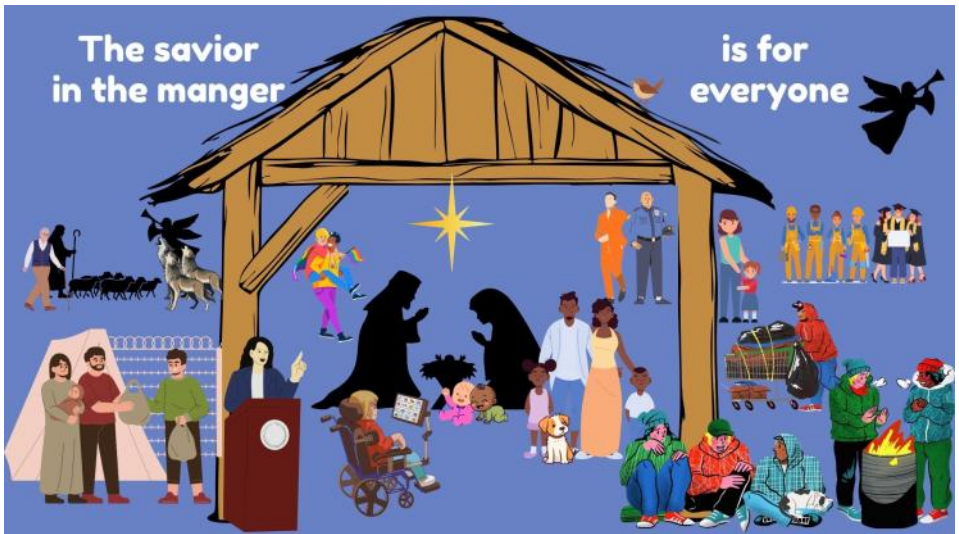
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And I wonder: Why aren't our nativities full of characters? Why don't they include Chewbacca and Mr. Burns, Stitch and Elmo, George Washington and Cleopatra, and The Doctor and a Dalek? Sometimes the Little Drummer Boy or Santa show up, and to that I say, "Amen! Christmas is for them too!" Who else belongs in our scene? Who else needs good news this holiday? Who doesn't yet have joy this Christmas? Why haven't we including them in Christ's nativity?

The image below tries to answer that question. Christmas is good news of great joy for all people (and animals too!). So who are we going to invite this year to come and be a part of Jesus' nativity?

Our nativities, I think, reflect our celebrations. They are usually a gathering of what, after years of seeing the same people there, seem like a family – Mary, Joseph, Jesus, their guardian angel, the rancher uncles, and the wise aunts. And so we celebrate with our families. But the real nativity, it's not about who was there that night – it's about who the good news was for, who was invited into the party, and who has become a part of the nativity because of the grace of God. Who will be added to the nativity this year? Who will you invite to your Christmas celebration this year? Who will hear the good news for the first time because they were welcomed to Christ's nativity?

Pastor Tyler Rasmussen



Breaking the Chains Church

Continued from page 1

During the pandemic we grew and now worship in two correctional facilities O Felmers Chaney in Milwaukee and the Kenosha Correctional Center. One of our congregants transferred from O Felmers Chaney to Kenosha and he talked to the captain about the lack of religious services at the center. The captain called our pastor and through zoom we added another site to our ministry. The Holy Spirit moved through a participant and we call him our evangelist.

We will be celebrating 10 years of ministry with a dinner/fundraiser on February 1, 2026. The event will be held at Redeemer Lutheran Church 631 North 19th Street, Milwaukee, WI 53233, Sunday February 1, 2026 from 4 to 7 pm.

We are requesting your presence and/or financial donation to the tenth anniversary of our prison ministry.

As a congregation within the Greater Milwaukee Synod we need your help. While we have a dedicated group of financial supporters our congregants face a lot of poverty. They are often unable to assist the ministry financially.

If you would like to donate to Breaking the Chains, you can do so through Mt Zion. Make your check payable to Mt Zion with the memo of "Breaking the Chains". Submit donations by **January 4th**. Thank you!

Caroling at FCCC?

Under the new administration, only approved volunteers can join for the Christmas caroling at Felmers Chaney Correctional Center. So we won't be able to do that this year, but we can still send cards and letters to prisoners to let them know they are not alone.

Check out our Prison Ministry table in the Gathering Space for more information.

SIP Toy Drive

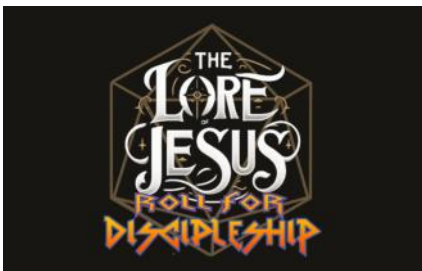


Season's greetings to you and your loved ones! We're excited to share that Supporters of Incarcerated People (SIP) has officially rebranded as **Supporters of Impacted People (SIP)**. Over the past year, MICAH and SIP have developed a relationship built on care and dignity for individuals and families impacted by the justice system.

As we close out the year and enter the holiday season, we are proud to host a **Toy Drive** to support children with loved ones who are currently incarcerated.

The Toy Drive will take place on **December 20, 2025, from 9:00 AM to 12:00 PM at 2821 Vel R. Phillips Ave, Milwaukee, WI 53212**. During this time, adults are welcome to stop by and pick up toys for children in families affected by the justice system. Our goal is to help provide gifts on behalf of family members who are unable to do so themselves due to incarceration. Please share this opportunity with your loved ones so they can help make the season a little brighter for the children in their lives.

Roll for Discipleship



Did you know?

Table top role-playing games have helped prisoners develop social skills and problem solving abilities in a safe and healthy setting!

If you enjoy playing Dungeons and Dragons, listening to podcasts, or exploring different ways to experience faith and ministry, check out the new Podcast "The Lore of Jesus: Roll for Discipleship". This podcast follows four Lutheran church members and ministers who are transported into a world of magic and mystery where no one has ever heard about, or frankly cares about, Jesus. What does it mean to follow Jesus when you can't go to church?

Available at the link below and at Spotify and Apple Podcasts

<https://bit.ly/4iPfsj>

More Christmas Traditions

When I was a child my grandmother always made stollen at Christmas. When she was no longer able my mother continued the tradition. When she informed me that she would not longer due it I said, "Give me your recipe". I have been baking stollen for the last 30+ years and sharing with friends. Unfortunately neither of my girls like it. Their loss!!



Tom Morgan

Getting Ready for the Pageant



Luke and Erik putting together the stable for the Sunday School's Christmas pageant.

Thanks, guys!

We're looking forward to next week's performance!



Way to Bowl!



Congratulations to Joey Havlicek who got 4th place and qualified for State during the Special Olympics SE Regional Bowling Tournament.

Parent's Night Out

Parents' Night Out

December 21, 5p to 8p

Preschool and Elementary kids welcome.

Must be potty-trained.

Meal included. We'll have crafts, a movie, and play games.

We do not plan to do outdoors play.

Children must be picked up by 8:00pm



Steve's Science Tidbits

In Praise of Peanuts!

I am fond of the adage, You are what you eat. In the age of so many hyperprocessed foods, this is a critical concept to keep in mind.

One of my dietary staples is Smuckers natural peanut butter. It is high in protein and good (unsaturated) fat. In this brand, peanuts are the only ingredient other than a little salt. I never buy or consume cheaper peanut butters like Jif or Skippy, for they have added sugar and hydrogenated oils. When you bubble unsaturated fat with hydrogen, it saturates the oil and makes it much less healthy. They do this because the process solidifies the oil and it doesn't separate (think Crisco—ugh!). You know you have healthier peanut butter when you have to stir the oil into the solids at room temperature (well worth the minor hassle).

When taken in moderation, natural peanut butter is a much healthier dietary choice than hydrogenated varieties. Of course, consuming too much of anything can be harmful, but you can't go wrong if you follow the 2 Tbsp serving suggestion.

This being said, I just came across an exciting article from the Netherlands concerning peanuts and the brain. The researchers chose to look at peanuts because of the following benefits—high protein, healthy fats, antioxidants and L-arginine (an amino acid known to aid blood flow). The study specifically used skin-on peanuts for the extra protein, antioxidants and fiber.

There were 31 men and women in the study, ages 60-75. People with peanut allergies, diabetes, heart disease, or other conditions that could impact the results did not participate. The goal was to study the impact of peanut consumption on vascular function, including cerebral blood flow. This is important because blood flow delivers oxygen and other essential nutrients for cognitive functions that include memory, focus, and problem-solving.

Each participant went through a 16-week control phase, followed by an 8-week break, then a 16-week test phase. During the control phase, no peanuts or nuts were consumed, while in the test phase each participant consumed 60g of unsalted, skin-in peanuts daily. At the end of each 16-day phase, blood pressure was measured, blood samples were taken, and MRI scans and memory tests were administered.

During the peanut phase, the participants saw a boost in brain blood flow. Overall, cerebral blood flow increased by about 3.6%, and blood flow in gray matter rose by around 4.5%. Areas of the brain involved in memory and decision making showed even greater increases. In cognitive tests, small improvements in verbal memory were observed. Participants also showed a 5 mm improvement in systolic blood pressure, which helps reduce the risk of heart attack and stroke.

These findings suggest that peanuts can enhance brain function by improving cerebral blood flow and build on previous research linking diet to cognitive health. Not bad for an enjoyable snack food! For those unable to eat peanuts, the authors suggested similar benefits with dark chocolate (a minimum of 70%), berries, or tree nuts.

Steve Downs

Birthdays & Anniversaries

Birthdays

Jakob M. 12/1	Brian H. 12/10	Tom C. 12/23
Kim M. 12/1	Kay C. 12/11	Bob Y. 12/23
Lynn P. 12/1	Milt D. 12/13	Mark J. 12/24
Kevin B. 12/1	Jeff D. 12/15	Jen J. 12/24
Julian M. 12/1	Angella G. 12/16	Chasity B. 12/25
Kim M. 12/1	Emma B. 12/16	Jesus C. 12/25
Mitch L. 12/1	Troy M. 12/17	Heather T. 12/28
Judy G. 12/2	Maverick S. 12/18	Jean M. 12/28
Meg L. 12/4	Natalie B. 12/19	Khloe L. 12/20
Julie S. 12/4	Jasmine P. 12/20	DeAnn B. 12/30
Bradley S. 12/6	Mick C. 12/21	Xavier H. 12/31
Lorre G. 12/8	Carrie T. 12/21	Stella S. 12/31
Molly S. 12/8	Caroline W. 12/21	Angelina G. 12/31
Kelly P. 12/9	Mark S. 12/21	Linda R. 12/31
	Dudley R. 12/21	Nancy D. 12/31

Wedding Anniversaries

Jean and John M. 12/19

Stewardship Pledge Cards

Thank you to everyone who has submitted their 2026 pledge cards. If you have not submitted your pledge card yet, please turn them in as soon as you're able. The pledge cards help us prepare the annual budget.

Submit your cards



During worship



Through the mail



[Online](#)

At Mt Zion we are
Joyfully growing disciples in Christ
so that
Everyone we meet comes to know themselves as a reflection of
God's image, worthy of life and love
by prioritizing
Faith Community
Hospitality Justice

Mt Zion Staff

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**Director of Choirs
and Contemporary Music**
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Director of Traditional Music
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Kevin Burke, Vice President
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Joe Di Giacinto, Treasurer
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Mike Marciniak, Secretary
boardsecretary@mtzionlutheran.org

Chasity Brimeyer
Andy Johnston

Dave Nelson

Linda Havlicek
Bob Young



**Church Office
Hours**

Monday — Friday 10:00am — 3:00pm

Stop by in-person, call 414-258-0456,
or email parishadmin@mtzionlutheran.org

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