

“Blow the Trumpet in Zion” (Joel 2.15)

Zion Trumpet

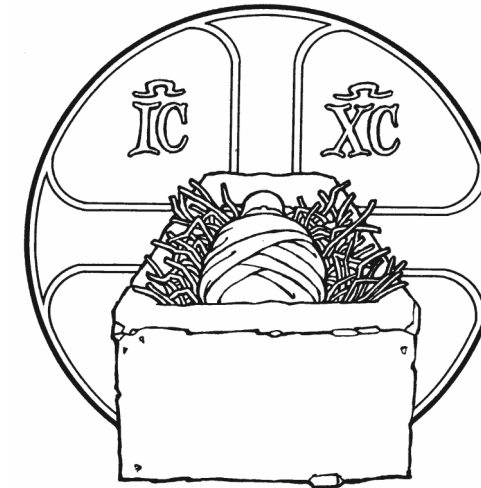
Zion Evangelical-Lutheran Church of Detroit

December 2018/January 2019

The Miracle of the Holy Incarnation

by Father Braden

“Being in very nature God”, the Second person of the Holy Trinity humbled Himself. “He did not consider equality with God something to be grasped”, writes the Apostle born out of due time. Honoring Christ and His loving willingness to humble Himself, we genuflect during the Creed. We genuflect at the words “came down from heaven” because the knowledge of what He did for us drives us to our knees.



It is the kinetic response of saving faith to the superabundant love of God.

That act, the act of leaving heaven and its glory behind to enter this fallen world, to immerse Himself in our sinful existence, we call the beginning of the “state of humiliation” of the Lord. But it is more than a theological distinction, although it is that, and an important one. We fall to our knees because what He did, He did for us. We fall on our knees, and hear the angel voices, the voices proclaiming His Holy Incarnation.

Leaving behind the brilliant heavenly throne room, separating Himself for a time from the angels and archangels and the whole company of heaven,

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“And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.” John 1:14

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leaving for 33 years the mysterious four living creatures, it pleased the Lord, the Eternal Word, to take on human flesh. That He did in love. That He did not to enter this dying world as a powerful king or a global ruler, but rather as an innocent, defenseless Babe.

The Mystery of the Holy Incarnation of our Lord, and the depths of His state of humiliation, are clearly manifest in this – that the God of heaven and earth, the God of all creation, the God of the cosmos, humbled Himself to be born of a poor virgin in the most lowly of circumstances. At this faith marvels: God became Man! He willingly put off His divine powers. He emptied Himself. He was conceived by the Holy Ghost of the Virgin Mary. God became an embryo with a rational soul. He grew for the normal period of human gestation, and then was miraculously born.

He who is without beginning or end, begotten of the Father from eternity, was born in time and space, and a humble space it was. The Master Craftsman of all creation was found in the form of a creature. The True Bread from Heaven was placed into a feeding trough. That same Flesh would be brought to maturity as the Fruit of the Tree of the Cross. For that He was born. His greatest humiliation lay not in the manger, but in the cross and sealed tomb, where His glory would be veiled in His torn Flesh, and by the crimson vestment of His shed Blood.

Your salvation is found indeed in the manger, for Christ your Savior filled it. But it is by His

death on the cross that your transgressions are removed, and it is by His three days in the tomb that the Sabbath is kept perfectly for all men of all time. It is by His glorious resurrection that you are declared righteous before God. His State of Humiliation is now ended. He now always and fully uses His Divine Powers according to both His Human and Divine Natures, still One Christ.



Faith daily remembers His great act of love in becoming Man. And to that daily remembrance we add the joyous annual celebration of His Birth, Holy Christmass. Faith can't wait for the next morning, faith rejoices that as the shepherds watched their flocks at night, the dark sky erupted with brilliant heavenly light, and the angels announced the Holy Birth of the Shepherd King of the Flock of Christendom. Faith can't wait for the next morning, we join together in thanksgiving at midnight to celebrate the Birth of our Savior and to receive His Saving Gifts. And we join together again on Christmas morning to celebrate the Virgin Birth, the fulfillment of all prophecy, the Coming of the Seed of the Woman promised to the first man and his wife.

day's work our "Tower Doors" now operate easily. This is more welcoming to visitors, and provides greater safety for the school children in our Undercroft during the day.

Annual Voters Assembly

Our congregation has two Voters Assemblies each year. One is held in the late spring or early summer, at which the budget is approved for the upcoming year. The second is held each October. At that meeting the officers for the upcoming year are elected, and all of our boards and committees give their reports. The 2018 Annual Meeting was held on Sunday, October 28 after Mass. All our offices are currently filled, the congregation heard reports from our various boards and committees, and the Trustees supplied pizza and salad which were consumed with some gusto when the meeting was adjourned. Minutes from the meeting should be available from our church office soon. Those elected to serve as officers of our congregation will be installed in January.

New Members

It has pleased the Lord once again to add souls to our congregation. For that we are very thankful. We recently joyfully received Luke Thompson-Kolar, and the Joseph family (James, Sarah, James Jr., and David) as new Zion members. We are thankful to the Lord of the Church for His gracious provision. Please take a moment to greet our newest members, welcome them, and make them feel part of our Zion family!

"And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth." John 1:14



Baptism Anniversaries

December

15 Paula MacMunn
29 Theodore Krey

January

17 Janet Schulz
20 Alexandria Atkins
25 Rose Atkins

Birthday Anniversaries

December

2 Jessica Chavez
14 Theodore Krey
17 Kathleen Atkins

19 Fayth Atkins
22 Michael Anderson
25 Thomas Habitz Jr.
27 Janet Schulz

January

2 Alexandria Atkins
8 Nancy Gramzow
23 Anna Dalton
23 Judith Donnell
23 Richard Schultz

Marriage Anniversaries

December

January

HOLY MASS is celebrated every Sunday and Wednesday at 10am, and on major feasts as announced.

COMMUNICANTS are baptized Christians who have been instructed in and publicly confess the Evangelical-Lutheran Faith. If you desire to commune, please visit with the Pastor before approaching the Altar.

THE DIVINE OFFICE is prayed in the Chapel of the Holy Incarnation in the Rectory. **MATINS:** Daily 8:45am (except when there is a morning Mass); **VESPERS:** Thursday 6:30pm.

PRIVATE CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION is available on Saturday from 9-10am or by appointment.

PASTORAL CONSULTATION based on the Holy Scriptures is available by appointment.

THE SACRAMENT OF HOLY BAPTISM is for infants and adults, and may be arranged by contacting the Pastor.

COUPLES DESIRING HOLY MARRIAGE should contact the Pastor before finalizing the wedding date. Bible instruction in Holy Marriage is required. All marriages are conducted by the Pastor according to Zion's usual order.

NEW MEMBERS are received by baptism, confirmation, transfer or profession of faith. Instruction in Luther's Small Catechism and Private Absolution are required for all new members. Visit with the Pastor for further details.

THE SICK AND HOMEBOUND are visited regularly by the Pastor. Please contact the Parish Office if you know of any parishioner in need of pastoral visitation.

PARISH ORGANIZATIONS Adult Choir, Altar Guild, Children's Choir, Jubilate Deo Women's Choir, St. Seraphim Prayer Guild, Society of St. Samuel (Altar Boys), Usher Club, Zion Endowment Board.

DEACONS Archdeacon David Stecholz, William Gramzow, Thomas Habitz, Jr., Michael Anderson; **TRUSTEES:** Silas Gray, Paul Snoes; **PARISH EDUCATION:** Shirley Cross, Robert Kelly III, Sarah Braden; **ENDOWMENT BOARD:** Fr. Mark Braden (chairman), Tom Habitz Jr., Paul Snoes, Alan Kroske **OFFICERS OF THE VOTERS:** Thomas Habitz, Jr. (chairman), Alan Kroske (vice-chairman), Pamela Ruffin (secretary), Kevin Wiedelman (treasurer), Jessica Chavez (financial secretary).

American and Caribbean Missions for our church has invited me to attend a forum on the Venezuelan church in the spring. The forum will most likely be held at our new seminary in the Dominican Republic. As the Lord wills, and with His help, we may be able to interest other congregations in our circuits in providing some kind of ongoing support for our Venezuelan churches and Pastors. I ask you to keep the initiative, and the church and Pastors in Venezuela, in your prayers.

Church "Tower Doors"

For the last year we've been having trouble with the "Tower Doors" of the front entrance of the church. Many years ago there were hydraulic closers buried in the granite below the doors that operated them. When these closers failed, new closers were mounted on the inside faces of the doors. Over the years, the old, abandoned hydraulic openers rusted and swelled. This pushed up on the threshold of the doors, making them very difficult to open.

Since the north "Tower Door" is also a fire escape route during the day for the school children, our Board of Trustees mounted a project to make the doors easier to open. The repairman removed the threshold, removed the old closers, filled the holes under the doors, and then ground the granite so that it was again flat, and could support the threshold. The threshold was reinstalled and waterproofed, and after a

The Zion Trumpet is the informational and educational newsletter of Zion Evangelical-Lutheran Church. It communicates the news of Zion and instructs members in various aspects of the Christian Faith.

The **Trumpet** is published six times each year. It is free for members of Zion. Non-members are invited to contribute toward the production and mailing of the **Trumpet**.

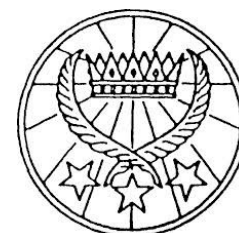
Zion Evangelical-Lutheran Church is a parish of the one, holy catholic and apostolic Church and is affiliated with the English district of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod.

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Zion is also
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Of that rejoicing faith never tires. God's mercies are new each morning. Christmastide affords the opportunity for those in a state of grace to congregate around the Word preached in its purity and the Sacraments rightly



administered. Zion offers the faithful the opportunity to attend daily Mass during Christmastide. We remember and give thanks to God for St. Stephen, Protomartyr, for St. John, for St. Titus, and for the Holy Innocents, as we celebrate the Twelve Days of Christmas. That

glorious celebration leads us into the Commemoration of the Circumcision of our Lord, and the giving of His Name: Jesus.

Revealed to Mary and Joseph and the shepherds, the Babe of Bethlehem is made manifest to the Gentiles in His Holy Epiphany, as gold, frankincense and myrrh are made prophetic symbols of the life and death of the Newborn King. Soon after, although John protests, the same Lord is baptized by the hand

of the one crying in the wilderness "Prepare the way of the Lord, make His paths straight", fulfilling the ancient Words of the Prophet Isaiah.



That you be able to join in this rich celebration, again this year we have varied our service times, offering several evening Masses for those unavailable during the day. Our Christmastide calendar is presented below. Join us, won't you, for the glorious Celebration of the Incarnation and Birth of our Lord Jesus Christ? What He did, He did for you!

Christmastide Schedule:

The Nativity of our Lord, Midnight – Sung Mass in the Church at 12:00 a.m.

The Nativity of our Lord – Sung Mass in the Church at 10:00 a.m.

St. Stephen, Proto-Martyr (12/26) – Spoken Mass in the Chapel at 10:00 a.m.

St. John, Apostle & Evangelist (12/27) – Spoken Mass in the Church at 7:00 p.m.

The Holy Innocents, Martyrs (12/28) – Spoken Mass in the Church at 7:00 p.m.

Fifth Day of Christmas (12/29) – Spoken Mass in the Chapel at 10:00 a.m.

Sunday in the Christmas Octave (12/30) – Sung Mass in the Church, 10:00 a.m.

Seventh Day of Christmas (St. Sylvester, 12/31) – Spoken Mass in the Chapel at 10:00 a.m.

The Circumcision of our Lord (1/1) – Sung Mass in the Church at 10:00 a.m.

The Holy Name of Jesus (1/2) – Sung Mass in the Church at 10:00 a.m.

The Tenth Day of Christmas (1/3) – Spoken Mass in the Chapel at 10:00 a.m.

St. Titus, Bishop & Confessor (1/4) – Spoken Mass in the Church at 7:00 p.m.

The Twelfth Day of Christmas (1/5) – Spoken Mass in the Chapel at 10:00 a.m.

The Epiphany of our Lord (1/6) – Sung Mass in the Church at 10:00 a.m.

The Feast of the Holy Family (1/9) – Spoken Mass in the Chapel at 10:00 a.m.

The Baptism of our Lord (1/13) – Sung Mass in the Church at 10:00 a.m.



Advent:

The Church fasts before She feasts. Again this year we offer expanded opportunities to worship the Lord who came in prophecy, the Lord who came in the Flesh, the Lord who comes now in His Means of Grace, the Lord who comes again soon to judge the living and the dead, and to take His Church home. Because Christmas falls on a Tuesday this year, there will only be three

Wednesdays in Advent. Midweek Masses are spoken in the Church, with a sung hymn led *a capella*.

This year's Advent Midweek Mass schedule, with sermon themes:

Wednesday of Advent I – *Ad Te Levavi*: December 5, 2018, Mass at 9:30 a.m. & 7:00 p.m.

“The Acceptable Year of the Lord”

Wednesday of Advent II – *Populus Zion*: December 12, 2018, Mass at 9:30 a.m. & 7:00 p.m.

“He who has ears to hear, let him hear”

Wednesday of Advent III – *Gaudete*: December 19, 2018, Mass at 9:30 a.m. & 7:00 p.m.”

“You have found favor with God”.

Venezuela Support

I've written before about the horrible conditions in the country of Venezuela. Socialism has created great poverty and shortages among the people. There isn't enough food or medicine. A significant percentage of the population has simply fled the country. Many faithful Christians remain, and are in great need of help. Most of our Venezuelan Pastors, historically of humble subsistence, are existing on next to nothing, while continuing in faithful service to the Church.

I previously wrote and publicly talked about the need in the Venezuelan Lutheran Church (the ILV) for a vehicle. Pastor Miguelángel Perez, the President of the ILV, travels across country to supervise the churches there. Last summer Pr. Perez was involved in a serious accident, and the only vehicle owned by the church was totaled. Pr. Perez, and ex-student of mine and a personal friend, contacted us seeking help in procuring a new vehicle.

Several congregations in the Detroit North and Detroit South circuits of our church have joined together, and at this writing we have raised enough money to purchase a used van, already

identified by the ILV. Half of the money has been transferred to the ILV, the other half should be in their account by the time you read this newsletter.

The ILV is very thankful for Zion's generosity, and for our continued participation in supporting the Lutheran Church in Venezuela. My first trip to Venezuela was in 2006, over 12 years ago, to teach theology in the Juan de Frías Theological Institute in Caracas. One of the men who were students then is now a professor at our seminary in the Dominican Republic, and another, Pr. Perez, is President of the ILV. With God nothing is impossible!

I have given classes in the east, in Ciudad de Guyana, in the capital of Caracas, and further south and west in Maracay. A few years ago Venezuela began requiring special visas for American citizens to enter the country, but at the same time weren't issuing such visas, so I was prohibited from returning. It is my hope to return to Venezuela, and to be reunited with the many friends I have there.

The Regional Director of Central and South