

The United Methodist Church

Attica – Pershing, Zion

South Attica St.

Knoxville Iowa 50138

(641-943-2324)

January, February and March 2025



New Years Resolutions

It is January, the start of a new year, so naturally most people have probably put together a list of New Years Resolutions for 2025. It is said that the tradition of making New Years Resolutions goes back over 4,000 years to the ancient Babylonians. These were not the resolutions that we are used to today. Instead, the Babylonians made promises to the gods to pay their debts and return any objects they had borrowed and if they kept their promises, their gods would bestow favor upon them for the coming year. If they broke their promises, they would fall out of favor with their gods. The ancient Romans had a similar practice in offering sacrifices and making promises of good conduct for the coming year to their gods.

John Wesley, the founder of Methodism, created the Covenant Renewal Service that was usually held on New Years Eve or New Years Day, and were also referred to as watch night services. These services included scripture readings, hymn singing, prayer, etc. Many Protestant churches still hold watch night services as a spiritual alternative to some of the more spirited secular celebrations typically held.

Today, New Years Resolutions are more of a secular practice and have nothing to do with God or religion, but shouldn't God always be a part of our goal planning, resolution making, and vision for the future? After all, who and what are we without God?

As I sat down the first week of January, I reflected on last year and came up with a few New Years Resolutions of my own. At the very top of my list is the resolution to spend time with God daily. Now you might be thinking, 'You're a Pastor, don't you spend time with God every day? Why is that at the top of your list of resolutions?' Well friends, yes, I am a Pastor and yes, I do spend time with God daily, but I can always do better. My focus for this year is to make sure that my daily time with God is of high quality. Working in ministry full time, I read scripture each day, I typically read a devotional, and I pray. My work revolves around God and ministry, but sometimes I get caught up in this earthy life of being a mom, wife, farmer, and Pastor and I don't set enough time aside to spend with just me and God, without interruption, where I can truly open myself up to speak to God and listen for God to speak to me.

Think of it as spending quality time with your family. You might all be home but all doing different things in different rooms of the house, watching TV, scrolling through social media, cleaning the house, working in the lawn. You are spending time together, but it is not necessarily quality time verses when you can sit and eat a meal together, talking to each other without interruptions or distractions, enjoying a family game night, and so on. Quality family time involves each person paying attention to each other, not other distractions, interacting with each other and building memories. The same goes for our quality time with God.

How many minutes a day to you devote to spending with God, without letting the outside world seep in and distract you? Could you do better? Is this something that should make it to the top of your New Years Resolutions list? I think it should, even if you think you are doing well with your time with God, having it at the top of your annual resolutions keeps it at the forefront of your mind and helps you be more successful at spending that time with God, each and every day. Devoting your life to Him and only Him. And realizing that you cannot do life on your own, you need God's guidance, protection, love, and joy to live the life He has destined you to live.

I challenge you this month, to take some time to reflect on your spiritual practices of prayer, reading scripture, devotions, attending worship, and sitting in the quiet to listen for God to speak to you. See how you might improve your current habits to ensure you have quality time with just you and God every day.

Happy New Year everyone. I cannot wait to see what 2025 has in store for you!

Blessings,
Pastor Lauren

UNITED WOMEN OF FAITH

Attica United Women of Faith – The Attica United Women of Faith met November 7, 2024. Present were Lou Ann, Bobbi, Marlys Sue, Debbie and Frances. Minutes of the last meeting were read and treasurers report given. Lou Ann gave a devotional on Thankfulness. It was decided that we will hold a soup supper next spring. Sue gave the lesson "Choose to Have a Beautiful Tomorrow." We have an anchor in Christ Jesus, and our lives are not defined by our past, nor our circumstances. We are all Christians under construction – God hasn't finished with us yet. Hebrews 13:8 Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever.

Attica United Women of Faith met December 5, 2024. Present were Lou Ann, Bobbi, Sue, Debbie and Frances. Minutes of the last meeting were read and treasurer's report given. Lou Ann gave a Christmas reading "No Room". It was decided to give Freedom House \$100.00, Crisis Intervention \$100.00 and TC Lunch Program \$100.00. Frances gave the lesson "Choose Laughter" using Proverbs 17:22 "A cheerful heart is a good medicine but a down cast Spirit dries up the bones". Mark Twain was right "laughter is the hand of God on a troubled world." All of us need to laugh more. Our next meeting is February 6, 2025.

Zion United Women of Faith - The Zion UWF met on November 6, 2024 with a potluck lunch. We discussed the holiday season and made plans for our Thanksgiving luncheon. We also decided our next Puzzle Palooza date which will be December 2.

For December, instead of a meeting, Zion met on Tuesday, Dec. 17 in the morning where we all gathered to make baskets for some special people including shut-ins. This year we made 19 baskets that included fruit, nuts, cakes, & candy. Thank You Jan Mortensen for making the lovely bows to go on each basket. Then we made deliveries to homes, assisted Living & nursing homes. On Dec. 19 we filled the sacks for the following Sunday to give out after church.

Zion UWF met on Jan 8, 2025 with Leanna, Sue, Linda, Jan, Pat, Jody and Cindy present. Leanna had the program. We filled out our yearly schedule with program & refreshment dates. We discussed activities for the coming year. We closed our meeting with the reading of the Purpose.

RECAP OF PARISH EVENTS

The parish All Saints Day ceremony was held at Attica on November 3. The ceremony honored those who passed from Attica, Olive Chapel and Zion since 2008 were.

Zion hosted their annual Thanksgiving potluck luncheon following the Worship service on Sunday, November 24. Afterwards we played Olive Chapel favorite, now everyone's favorite, Corny BINGO with Lou Ann Willis calling out the numbers. It was a lively game with white elephant gifts. Looking forward to next year!

Zion held our parish's candlelight Christmas Eve service on December 24 at 5 p.m. We had social time with finger food before the service. Some of Pastor Lauren's family from northern Iowa joined us for this service.

For the December 22, 2024 Worship Service at Zion Pastor Lauren included a hymn sing of some of our favorite Christmas hymns with her message.

A tradition of Zion's for over 60 years of giving out sacks with an apple, an orange, and some candy the Sunday before Christmas was carried out again this year. Some of us can remember our parents helping fill the sacks and many of us can remember getting them.

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Coffee time at Zion is held every Thursday morning, 9 am – 10 am. Coffee, tea and sweets are available. Come meet and visit with friends and neighbors (no church business discussed). Everyone is welcome and please bring a friend. Please note that coffee time will be cancelled if severe cold or 3+ inches of snow.



PARSONAGE UPDATE - A parsonage Open House was held on Nov. 16 with Iowa Realty with 1 person stopping. After a discussion with Randy Chambers we decided to lower the price \$10,000 to \$215,000.00 January 2. He says the house is well worth that. But with winter, interest rates? economy post election & vacant house for a time? all play into selling/purchasing. A 2nd Open House was held on January 11, 2025 with a better turn out & good questions/comments. No offers yet. We will be replacing the septic system, but with delays with the county's approval it will be next spring when the weather warms up. Please contact Marlys, Lou Ann or Cindy with questions.

PARISH UPCOMING EVENTS

Coffee with Pastor – Join Pastor Lauren after worship for a fun and informal gathering where you can get to know her better, ask all those questions floating around your brain, and enjoy some delicious snacks and drinks! Pastor Lauren will also talk a little bit about what she has planned for upcoming sermon series, bible studies, and more!

Parish Upcoming Events continued:

February Sermon Series: To Know What Love Is: Unlocking the Power of God's Greatest Gift
What better way to kick off the month of LOVE than with a 5-week series focusing on God's love. During this series we will unlock the power of love, unravel its complexities, and help you discover its transformative strength. Join us as we learn to love with purpose and unleash a power that can truly change the world!

Care Team Meeting: The Care Team meeting will be held Wednesday, February 12 at 1:00 pm.

Soup Luncheon at Zion: On February 16 following the Worship Service at Zion we invite everyone downstairs for a soup luncheon. Everyone is welcome.

Lenten Series: The Third Day by Tom Berlin: Join us this Lenten season as we dive into Tom Berlin's book, The Third Day. In this series we will join Peter, Mary Magdalene, and Thomas as they feel the despair of losing Jesus and the surprise and joy that awaits them in the resurrection. Each Sunday, Pastor Lauren will introduce a new chapter of the book in her message and follow it up with a more in-depth discussion during her weekly bible study.

Lent Special Services: We will have a few special services during Lent. Watch our Facebook page and bulletins for details.

Lent Schedule:

March 5th - Ash Wednesday

March 9th - April 13th: Sunday Services at 10am

April 13th: Palm Sunday

April 20th: Easter Sunday Service and Breakfast

Bible Study held at Zion:

Thursday, March 13th at 1pm

Friday, March 21st at 1pm

Wednesday, March 26th at 1pm

Thursday, April 3rd at 1pm

Thursday, April 10th at 1pm

Thursday, April 17th at 1pm

Puzzle & Pie Paloozas – Mark your calendars, Zion will be having 3 puzzle days this winter. January 27 at 1:00 pm, February 24 at 1:00 pm and March 24 at 1:00 pm. Everyone is welcome!

Attica Annual Soup Supper – Attica will hold their annual soup supper on March 20 from 5-7 pm. A variety of soups and desserts will be served with Oyster Soup back on the menu. Come and enjoy fellowship with your friends and neighbors and some comforting soup and dessert!

Thank You!

Henry McCall wanted to thank everyone for the support, thoughts, cards, etc. for Diane Brown-McCall's funeral, it was greatly appreciated.

Thank you to Jo Heigele, for arranging for us to receive and delivering the huge, beautiful poinsettias for the altars at both Attica & Zion.

The Attica-Zion Parish would like to thank Pastor Lauren and the First United Methodist Church in Knoxville for the small Nativities given out at our Christmas Eve service.

REACHING OUT TO OUR SHUT-INS

It was decided to add a list of our shut-ins to each Challenger if you would like to reach out to someone. A friendly note or a visit is always welcomed.

Connie Baily, 2092 Hwy 156, Bussey, IA 50044
Harry & Elaine Hart, Westridge Reb & Care Nursing Home, Knoxville IA 50138
Rachel Hoehns, West Ridge & Care Nursing Home, Knoxville, IA 50138
Marilyn Rice, 1874 165th Avenue, Knoxville, IA 50138
Germaine Whitlatch, 1523 Hwy G76, Knoxville, IA 50138
Patty Fudge, 2042 Orange St., Knoxville, IA 50138
Carol Bruce, 1805 178th Place, Knoxville, IA 50138
Eloise Snow, West Ridge & Care Nursing Home, Knoxville, IA 50138
Dick Rowland, 705 E. Robinson, Knoxville, IA 50138
Ruth Little, Homestead Assisted Living 908 S. Park Ln Dr., Knoxville, IA 50138
Vickie Kephart, 1826 178th Place, Knoxville, IA 50138

SCHEDULE OF SUNDAY SERVICE AND LEADERS FOR NOVEMBER AND DECEMBER: (All services will be held at 10:00 am) There will be fellowship/coffee time from 9:30-10:00 at Attica only.

JANUARY

Jan. 5 – Leanna Kennedy @ Zion, **Communion**
Jan 12 – Bobbi Bassett @ Attica
Jan. 19 – Jan Mortenson @ Zion
Jan. 26 – Lou Ann Willis @ Attica (Coffee with the Pastor following service)

FEBRUARY

Feb. 2 – Linda Kizer @ Zion, **Communion**
Feb. 9 – Tim DeGeest @ Attica
Feb. 16 – Jan Mortenson @ Zion
Feb. 23 – Debbie Phipps @ Attica

MARCH

March 2 – Linda Kizer @ Zion, **Communion**
March 9 – Marlys Hollingshead @ Attica
March 16 – Jan Mortenson @ Zion
March 23 – Bobbi Bassett @ Attica
March 30 – Leanna Kennedy @ Zion

ATTENDANCE

ATTICA: November – 3-17, 10-12, 17-9, 24-11, December – 1-10, 8-10, 15-11, 22-10, 29-12

ZION: November – 3-11, 10-14, 17-7, 24-15, December - 1-5, 8-13, 15-3, 22-17, 24-22, 29-12

Prayer Concerns (including families)

Carole Bruce
Germaine Whitlatch
Pastor Bud Lane
Wanita Banks
Connie Bailey
Mary Clifford
Jim Pelong
Sue Pelong

Rachel Hoehns
Bertha Gibbons
Mary Pinegar
Elaine Hart
Keith Bailey
Dwain Kennedy
Harry Hart
Max Smith

Charlene Stevens
Everett Provenzano
Heather Brown
Vickie Kephart
Buck Pettyjohn
Kodis Rawlings
Casey Ryan

January, 2025

SUN 29	MON 30	TUE 31	WED Jan 1	THU 2	FRI 3	SAT 4
● 10am Service			Julia Gullion (i) Buck Pettyjoh	CANCELLED -		
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
Communion S	Joy Smith (z)		Zion UWF-1:0 Bob Willis (oc)	Zion Coffee Ti		Linda Brown (i)
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
Service @ Atti		● 1pm Attica Ad	Michael Bruce	Zion Coffee Ti		Kevin Clark (a)
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
Zion Ad Counc ● 10am Service	Nevaeh Cliffor			Ronda DeGee: Zion Coffee Ti		Dixie Brown (e)
26	27	28	29	30	31	Feb 1
Harry & Elaine Denyse Flemir ● 10am Service ● 11am Coffee	Puzzle Day @ Mary Pinegar			Zion Coffee Ti		

February, 2025

SUN 26	MON 27	TUE 28	WED 29	THU 30	FRI 31	SAT Feb 1
Harry & Elaine Denyse Flemir 10am Service 11am Coffee	Puzzle Day @ Mary Pinegar			Zion Coffee Ti		
2 Jayden Clifford 10am Commu	3	4	5 Zion UWF- 1pr	6 Zion Coffee Ti 1pm Attica U	7	8
9 10am Service	10	11	12 Care Team Mt	13 Zion Coffee Ti	14	15
16 10am Service 11am Soup Lu	17	18 Kadi DeGeest	19	20 Zion Coffee Ti	21 Jarad Whitlat	22 Germaine Whi
23 10am Service	24 Zion Puzzle D	25	26	27 Zion Coffee Ti	28	Mar 1 Tina Maddisor Bob & Lou Anr

March, 2025

SUN 23	MON 24	TUE 25	WED 26	THU 27	FRI 28	SAT Mar 1
● 10am Service	Zion Puzzle D			Zion Coffee Ti		Tina Maddisor Bob & Lou Anr
2 Communion S	3	4 Dixie Feagins	5 Ash Wednesd Anthony Zout Zion UWF- 1pr	6 Zion Coffee Ti ● 1pm Attica U	7	8
9 ● 10am Service	10	11	12	13 Zion Coffee Ti ● 1pm Bible Stu	14	15
16 Dick Rowland ● 10am Service	17 Harry Hart (a)	18	19	20 Zion Coffee Ti ● 5pm Attica S	21 ● 1pm Bible Stu	22 Doug Phipps (Carol Rowlanc
23 ● 10am Service	24 ● 1pm Puzzle D	25	26 ● 1pm Bible Stu	27 Zion Coffee Ti	28	29 Connie Bailey
30 Ruth Little (z) ● 10am Service	31	Apr 1 Elaine Hart (a)	2 Zion UWF- 1pr	3 Zion Coffee Ti ● 1pm Attica U ● 1pm Bible Stu	4	5