



December 2025/ January 2026

Newsletter for the Congregation
And Friends of
ZION EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

101 N. Greenwood Street, Tamaqua, PA 18252

(570) 668-2180 ~ FAX (570)668-2181

Pastor ~ Cindy White

Melody Gensure ~ Parish Administrator - Email~ zionlcof@verizon.net

Parish website ~ www.ziontamaqua.com

Our Mission: Empowered and inspired by God to bring others to Christ.

“Through Christ’s birth, we are called to be instruments of peace and love in our communities.” Mother Theresa

I am very thankful to be the Pastor of Zion Lutheran church and our concern for the community of Tamaqua. We are all keenly aware of the rising food prices. Our People’s pantry is busy with activity at all hours of the day.

Our Blessings thrift shop ministry serves hundreds of people every year.

Our free community New Year’s Day meals feed many that cannot cook or that otherwise would be alone that day.

Our Diaper Depot is a much-needed gift for many children and families.

My Christmas message asks that each one of us choose a ministry that we can contribute to. These four ministries are a vital part of the fabric of who we are as the body of Christ.

I pray that this magical season finds us in a state of gratitude, appreciation and service.

“FOR UNTO US A CHILD IS BORN” Isaiah 9:6

Our community needs us, and God’s church needs you.

May the New Year bring us all good health and joy as we continue to be God’s hands and feet for our sisters and brothers in need.

Have a blessed Christmas and the happiest of New Years.

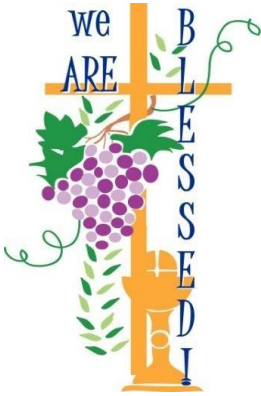
With love,
Pastor Cindy, Hardy and Gabe

Hope to see you in Church Christmas Eve at 4:00 PM (family service) and 9:00 PM

Morning Prayer on Facebook and Website: Rev. Cindy White reads a selected Bible verse and offers a brief message or song Wednesdays at 9 a.m. Individuals with specific prayer requests can email those requests to Pastor White at zionlutheranrev@gmail.com.



1st Holy Communion



This year 4 young people participated in the preparatory classes for First Holy Communion. They received their first Sacrament of Holy Communion on November 23, 2025.

Jacob Baddick
Axel Matalavage

Jackson Faust
Elijah Tirpak

May you always know the peace of Jesus, the light of his love, and the joy of his life within you.

ATTENTION! ATTENTION!

A REMINDER FROM THE TREASURER AND FINANCIAL SECRETARY...

The financial books of Zion will close on

Sunday, December 28, 2025

Remember, All contributions RECEIVED after that date will be credited to your
2026 financial statements



Happy New Year 2026 - Zion will host a Community Pork & Sauerkraut Dinner New Year's Day, 12:00 pm to 2:00 pm or when all dinners are given out. Dinners will be served, eat in or take-out. You can order a dinner beginning December 8 - **limit 2 per order**. Orders can be placed by calling Mary Ruth at 570-668-4451. Watch the Zion webpage and

Facebook to order dinners online. A Free will offering will be accepted. Everyone Welcome!!

Christmas Eve

CANDLELIGHT SERVICES

You are invited to join us for our Christmas Eve services on Sunday, December 24, 2025 at 4:00 pm & 9:00 pm. Both services will include the Liturgy of Word and Sacrament, Carols, Prayer and Candlelight. Please join us for the observance of the Nativity of Our Lord.

Blessings Thrift Update - The following items **ARE** being accepted at this time: coats, shoes, baby and children's clothing, toys/ games, household items in good condition. The following items **ARE NOT** being accepted at this time: adult spring/ summer clothing, jewelry, electronics, furniture too large to be moved by a single person. If you have items to donate, please call the church office at 570-668-2180 and leave your contact information. Someone from Outreach will contact you when we are able to accept your donations and arrange a time to meet. We kindly ask that you **Do Not leave bags or boxes on the stage, at random places throughout the church or outside of the building.** Thank you for your cooperation. Your donations are greatly appreciated.

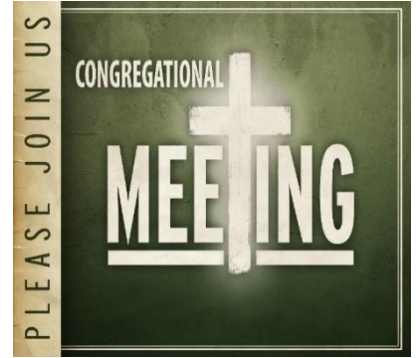
From Zion Council and the Parish
Staff may you and your family have
a blessed Christmas and a
Happy New Year.





Please note that the church office will be closed December 24th, 25th, 31st and January 1st. If you are in need of assistance please leave a message, the answering machine will be checked periodically. Thank You!

Annual Fiscal Meeting Announcement - The Annual Fiscal Meeting will be held on Sunday, December 7, 2025 immediately following the service. The agenda items will be restricted to the establishment of a 2026 budget, and the election of Church Council members. The meeting will be brief but your participation is **Very Important** as a quorum needs to be met. Copies of the budget will be available in the Gathering room.



Upcoming Events

November 25 – Community Thanksgiving Service/ Trinity UCC

November 30 – 1st Sunday in Advent/ Advent Breakfast

December 5 & 6 – Blessings Thrift Store

December 7 – Annual Fiscal Meeting

December 11 – Hoagie Sale

December 24 – Christmas Eve Services at 4:00 and 9:00 pm

January 1 – New Year Pork and Sauerkraut Dinner

Attention Committees:

All committee chairpersons are reminded to submit a report outlining the activities of your committee in 2025 for the annual report. These reports are to be submitted to the church office no later than January 12, 2026. You can e-mail the church office at zionlcof@verizon.net or stop by the office. Thank you for your co-operation.



Inclement Weather Policy

If we get inclement weather preceding a worship service, members of our congregation will be able to get information by doing the following:

- Check out our website at www.ziontamaqua.com and our Facebook page
- Listen to WLSH AM 1410 and WMGH FM 105.5



Zion's Blessings Thrift Shop sale is on Friday, December 5th from 9 am to 5 pm and Saturday December 6th from 9 am to 2 pm. The sale features gently used clothing for all ages, toys, books, and general household items. Come take a look! Limited Take-Out Menu. **PLEASE DO NOT LEAVE DONATIONS OUTSIDE BY THE HANDICAP ENTRANCE.** Thank you all for your continued support!

Culinary Hoagie Sale December 11th - deadline to order is December 7th - Regular Hoagies are \$8 each. Pick up is from 11:00 am until 1:00 pm and 5:30 – 6:45 pm. Order at <https://www.ziontamaqua.com> or by calling 570-668-4451. Thank you for your support!!



Sunday Church Advent Breakfast

November 30, 2025

10:30 AM TO 12:00 Noon

A Time of Fellowship

Join us as we begin the Advent season with a special breakfast hosted by the Culinary Crew. Menu: Scrambled eggs, sausage or bacon, and toast. A free will offering will be accepted.

Hope to see you there!

Altar Flower and Bulletin Sponsors needed for 2026
- The Altar Flower and Bulletin Sponsor list for 2026 is on the bulletin board. The costs of the flowers TBA and individuals will be billed from the florist. The cost of the bulletin sponsorship is \$16.00 and monies are due when you place your name on the list. You can also sponsor the Candles for the month at \$40. **Please remember to fill out a card with your honorarium or memorial, this information is needed for the bulletin. Please do not sign up without filling out a form.** These sponsorships are on a first come first serve basis; this is to ensure that everyone has equal opportunity to sponsor these memorials. Please contact the church office if you have questions. Thank you in advance for your sponsorship!



ALTAR FLOWER POLICY approved by Church Council: November 9, 2010 - We shall only place flowers on the altar when someone is sponsoring. If there are no sponsors, there will be no flowers placed on the altar. Zion ELC will not pay for flowers that are not sponsored.

Reminder: If you have sponsored Altar Flowers or Candles, please fill out the information cards in the gathering room. The information is needed for the bulletin and the Florist. If payment for the sponsorship is not received prior to the date, the information will not be printed in the bulletin, please pay and fill out a form when you add your name on the list. Thank you in advance for your cooperation.



Zion is on Instagram. Go to the website or Facebook for complete instructions or scan the QR code.

A reminder that both a record of communion AND a record of contribution is necessary to maintain voting active member status. Please remember to complete a communion card and to use your offering envelopes. Thank you, Church Council





HAVE A HAPPY

Thanksgiving

Community Thanksgiving Service

Trinity UCC

Tuesday, November 25, 2025

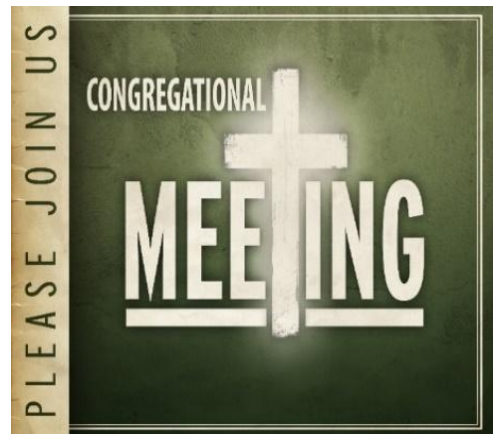
7:00 pm

Sponsored by the Tamaqua
Ministerial Association



Attention parents: The ELCA Youth Gathering will take place in **Minneapolis, MN, June 28-July 2, 2027!** The Gathering is open to all students who are entering grades 9-12 at the time of the Gathering. If your student is interested in attending, please text Brian Lawfer at (570)952-5966 before October 30. We need to know how many are interested in attending, so we can begin to plan. We do not need a firm commitment yet, just an idea of who may be interested.

OUR ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING will be held Sunday, February 8, 2026, following the 9:00 am Service. Our agenda will consist of the approval of the 2025 Annual reports for all committees and organizations. As always, we encourage all members to attend this meeting as a quorum needs to be met.



CHRISTMAS 2025

POINSETTIA PLANTS and MEMORIAL GIFTS

Christmas poinsettia plants will decorate the Church on Christmas Eve. Plants ordered through the church office are \$10.00. December 8th is the last day to order your plants. **This is a firm deadline; no orders will be taken after that date.** Please return the bottom of this form with all monies no later than December 8, 2025; all checks should be made out to Zion Evangelical Church. All Plants and Monetary Christmas memorial gifts will be listed in the handout on Christmas Eve. Monetary gifts should be in the church office **NO LATER THAN DECEMBER 15th. PLEASE FILL OUT THE FORM BELOW** and return it to the church office, be sure to indicate whether monetary gifts go to **Endowment fund, Current fund, Cemetery, Fuel, Capital Campaign** or towards the candles that decorate the sanctuary. Extra order forms are available by the bulletin Board.

IN MEMORY OF _____

BY _____

POINSETTIA (\$10.00)

MONETARY GIFT TO: Amount: _____

____ Red @ \$10.00

____ Current

____ Endowment

____ Cemetery

____ Fuel

_____ Total

____ Candles

____ Capital Campaign

SIGNATURE _____

PHONE NUMBER _____



Looking for a way you can help serve your church, but don't have a lot of extra time? Are you able to commit to a half hour, on a day you will already be here? We are looking for greeters to welcome people to the church on Sunday mornings, hand out bulletins, and answer questions from visitors. We would like to have enough people to make up at least 6 teams, with 2 people per team. Please text or call Brian Lawfer at 570-952-5966 for more information.



In talking with the people John says in Luke 3:11 *“Whoever has two tunics should share with him who has none, and whoever has food should do the same.”* This is a reminder that the People Pantry is being used heavily and in need of donations. While grocery shopping pick up an extra item to share with our less fortunate community neighbors. *“Each one must give as he has decided in his heart, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.”* 2 Corinthians 9:7



DID YOU KNOW ...Zion is now a Tamaqua Narcan distribution site? You may be wondering what is Narcan? Narcan is a life-saving medication used to reverse the effects of accidental opioid overdoses.

This medication is good to have on hand because:

1. You could end up saving a friend or neighbor in need. You never know when you'll encounter someone in need of this life-saving medication. Keep it in your purse or your car for when you might need it.
2. Parents with teenagers are encouraged to keep naloxone in their homes.
3. Senior citizens can mistakenly overdose on medications. Having more of this life-saving drug in the community is important.



Narcan kits are available free of charge. Feel free to grab one off the table. Our Parish Administrator will pass on Narcan requests to Michele Valentine who is heading this ministry.

Zion's 2025 Church Council officers: Michael Haspe, President, Brian Lawfer, Vice-President, Amanda Hascin, Secretary, Dave Gensure, Treasurer, and Ann Marie Hadesty, Financial Secretary. Other members of Council include Arlene Derr, Glenn Fritzinger, Thomas Graham, Carol Hartung, Brittany Scalfani Mary Ruth Taylor, Michelle Valentine; and Shelly Woodring; if you have suggestions or concerns, please seek out a member of Council so that we can promptly address the needs of the congregation.

Please note if you have recently become a member or feel there are changes in your membership information please fill out a membership packet located in the Gathering Room. If you need them sent to you, please contact the church office. Thank you for keeping our records up to date.

Would you like to make a gift to our Capital Campaign today? Do you need an envelope for your gift? Blank envelopes can be found in the rear of the church on either side. Please just write your name and Capital Campaign on the envelope so we can give you credit; and place the envelope in the boxes found on the wall on either side at the back on the sanctuary. For information on our Capital Campaign, please visit our website at <http://www.ziontamaqua.com/capital-campaign/>



Gebert Society - If you know of someone who has remembered Zion in their will/estate with a gift (past and present), please contact the office with that information which will be used in the annual report. Names can be added to the Gebert Society at any time. Thank you.

Please Join Us!
Saturday Worship - 6:00 pm
Sunday
Worship - 9:00 am
Christian Education - 10:15 am
Confirmation - 11:00 am

DEADLINE: All information for the **February 2026 issue of the "Herald"** is due at the church office no later than **Monday, January 19, 2026. Please note this is a combined issue.** You may e-mail your information to zionlcof@verizon.net or stop in during regular office hours. Thank you for your co-operation!

Hospitalizations - If you or someone you know is hospitalized, please call the church office at 668-2180. Due to HIPAA Law names are no longer published in the newspaper and we are not contacted by the hospital unless the patient requests it, when admitted, let them know you are a member of Zion Lutheran church. Zion Lutheran Church Lehigh Valley System Hospital Code is 356; If you are admitted to a hospital in the Lehigh Valley Hospital system (not St. Luke's/ Miner's) and you want our church and Pastor to be notified, provide Zion's Code # 356 when you provide admission information.



NEPA SYNOD
NORTHEASTERN PENNSYLVANIA SYNOD

Synod E-News - E-News is a weekly e-newsletter for rostered leaders (pastors and deacons), congregational leaders and members, and anyone interested in keeping up to date with happenings across the Synod and around the ELCA. nepasynod.org/e-news/

Office Hours ~
Monday & Wednesday
12:00 – 5:00 pm
Tuesday & Thursday
8:00 am – 1:00 pm

Please use door located on
Mauch
Chunk Street, ring bell



Luke 1:14
**You will have joy
and gladness, and
many will rejoice at
his birth,**



Please continue to use your Boyer's key tag every time you shop in any Boyer's Markets. If you do not have a Boyer's tag, they are located in the Gathering room. Please use the swipe card, the receipt does not need to be turned in. Thank you for your participation in this program. Keep using those cards!

When submitting Redner's receipts:

1. You must have a Redner's card & swipe the Redner's card upon checkout so the save a tape amount is on the receipt.
2. Please do not cut the information with the save a tape code off the receipt.
3. Please hand in the receipt to our container in the gathering room or mail them to the church office.

If you have any questions, please see Beth Marcavage. Thank you and keep saving!

Sharing your story - As part of an ongoing emphasis on Zion's impact, we'd like to share ways in which Zion has made a difference in the lives of its members and its community. Please respond to any **ONE** of these questions and include **your name** at the end. Send your response to zioncof@verizon.net (subject line "Impact story" or Zion Lutheran, 101 North Greenwood St., Tamaqua, PA 18252 Attention: Impact

1. How has Zion made a difference in your life? OR
 2. What impact has Zion had on your life the last 2 1/2 years? OR
 3. What is your vision for the future of Zion's ministry? OR
 4. How has serving in a Zion ministry made a difference in your life?
-



Do you like to clean? Some people really like to clean--honest! If you do, why not join the Cleaning Angel team? We are looking for about 2 or 3 more members to add to the team. Cleaning Angels are members of the congregation who each week clean the Sanctuary, Gathering Room and Library. When two people do that cleaning, it can take 2-3 hours. Being a Cleaning Angel is not intended to be a lifelong commitment and so we thank those who have served and "retired." That means there are openings in the cleaning schedule for other members of the congregation to step up and help keep the church clean. This is a great opportunity to serve your church. The hours are flexible and there's lots of great fellowship involved. Please contact any member of the Property Committee or Cleaning Sexton Kim Eckert or Parish Administrator Melody Gensure.

November Memorials

GIFTS GIVEN TO THE GLORY OF GOD

THE ALTAR CANDLES are given to the Glory of God and

In loving memory of my parents and brother by Martha Zellner

THE ALTAR FLOWERS are given to the Glory of God and

In loving memory of my parents, Jim and Beauty White by Pastor Cindy

In loving memory of Marlin Tirpak by David Tirpak

In loving memory of Ed Haldeman, one year that you left me, by Catherine Haldeman

THE BULLETINS are given to the Glory of God and

In honor of Abigail's first birthday by Nikolas and Sabrina Smith

In loving memory of Bernice Ferris on her November 18th birthday by Sandy Scott

In loving memory of Marlin Tirpak by David Tirpak

In loving memory of my grandmothers, Anna Kohler and Ida Rebecca Zeigler by Gerry Zeigler

CURRENT FUND DONATIONS are given to the Glory of God and

In honor of the 58th wedding anniversary on October 14th of Dave & Louise Schock

A birthday remembrance for Jay Follweiler with love, from his brother and sisters

In loving memory of my husband John and all the family and friends who now rest in eternal peace

with our Lord & Savior Jesus Christ by Sharon Haldeman

ENDOWMENT FUND DONATIONS are given to the Glory of God and

In loving memory of Paul Pecha on his October 22nd birthday by Bob and Gail Jones

In honor of the work by George Taylor and Kevin Lawfer to livestream the services by Bob and Gail Jones

CAPITAL CAMPAIGN FUND DONATIONS are given to the Glory of God and

Thank the LORD for our 3 daughters by Mr. and Mrs. Walter Weston

In loving memory of his parents and brother, Phil by Paul Wolfe

ORGAN FUND DONATIONS are given to the Glory of God and

In loving memory of Margaret Clark by Sandy Ferris Scott

Practicing for the Holiday...



ADVENT KINDNESS

We invite all members of Zion to follow the Reverse Advent Calendar. The items that you collect while shopping in the coming weeks will be used in our People's Pantry during the holiday season. You can imagine that our pantry is well-used during this time of great concern. You can bring your items to worship or drop them off during regular parish office hours. Acts 20: 34-35 ***"You know for yourselves that I worked with my own hands to support myself and my companions. In all this I have given you an example that by such work we must support the weak, remembering the words of the Lord Jesus, for he himself said, 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.'"***

REVERSE ADVENT CALENDAR

**EACH DAY ADD AN ITEM TO A BOX.
ON CHRISTMAS EVE DONATE THE CONTENTS TO A
FOOD BANK.**

December 1 - box of cereal
December 2 - peanut butter
December 3 - stuffing mix
December 4 - boxed potatoes
December 5 - macaroni and cheese
December 6 - canned fruit
December 7 - canned tomatoes
December 8 - canned tuna
December 9 - dessert mix
December 10 - jar of applesauce
December 11 - canned sweet potatoes
December 12 - cranberry sauce
December 13 - canned beans
December 14 - box of crackers
December 15 - package of rice
December 16 - package of oatmeal
December 17 - package pasta
December 18 - spaghetti sauce
December 19 - chicken noodle soup
December 20 - tomato soup
December 21 - can corn
December 22 - can mixed vegetables
December 23 - can carrots
December 24 - can green beans



Growing New Communities of Faith: Updates on SAWCs, SAOMs, and Mission Leadership

Written by: Deacon Kat Tigerman, NEPS Directors for Evangelical Mission



Every year, the Synod Council re-authorizes our Synod-authorized ministries, typically in October. It is also a great opportunity to hear updates from these ministries, the people they are serving, and the stories of their communities. It is always a powerful testament to God among us – often in ways we might consider “non-traditional” – ministries made possible by our NEPA congregations’ mission support and the mission support to the ELCA.

Synod-Authorized Worshipping Communities (SAWCs for short) are communities committed to worshipping together but who may do so outside the normal “walls” of the church. A SAWC may look like a recovery worship service, dinner church, messy church, or church on the streets. SAWCs are also communities discerning and taking steps to become formal (known as “organized”) ELCA congregations. They are led by a Mission Developer. Our NEPA Synod currently has 3 SAWCs: Common Ground in Wyomissing, Common Ground in Reading, and the Indonesian Lutheran Church of Scranton (which just became a SAWC in September!).

Synod-Authorized Outreach Ministries (SAOMs for short) are ministries committed to evangelism, outreach, and discipleship. A SAOM may look like a food truck ministry, a small group ministry, or a prison ministry. They are led by a SAOM Leader. Our NEPA Synod currently has 2 SAOMs: Free to Be in Bethlehem and Hope’s Table in Reading. Free to Be is a ministry dedicated to reaching out to moms, families, and folks in recovery by building intentional small groups on the road of faith and discipleship. Hope’s Table was initially a SAWC but is in the process of transitioning to a SAOM. While Hope’s Table continues to offer weekly worship, it is a feeding ministry which builds community and creates a safe and welcoming space for all to find the love, grace, and warmth of Jesus.

Each year, to help support these leaders and connect them to one another, the ELCA hosts a Mission Leadership Training Conference for Mission Developers, SAOM Leaders, Strategic Ministry Leaders, and key leaders of various SAWCs and SAOMs. This year Seminarian April Mulvey was invited to attend as a Mission Developer Scholarship recipient along with Deacon Kat Tigerman as DEM. 118 leaders from across



the country attended the 3-day training in Chicago the last weekend of September.

The first week of October, the Region 7 DEMs (Directors for Evangelical Mission) hosted a 2-day retreat for Mission Developers, SAOM Leaders, and other new ministry leaders. There were 35 participants across the 6 Synods of Region 7 who came together to worship, reflect, connect, learn, and pray. The Retreat was facilitated by the ELCA's Organizing for Mission who grounded the time theologically as well as provided practical on-the-ground skills and tools for these leaders are the margins and cutting edges of Church. NEPA Synod participants included:

- Rev. Lauren Applegate, Free to Be
- Seminarian April Mulvey, Hope's Table
- Rev. Tom Scornavacchi, Common Ground
- Deacon Kat Tigerman (DEM)
- Rev. Dr. Jennifer Hope-Tringali (Director for New Ministries).

Region 7 was blessed to receive an ELCA grant to help make this retreat affordable to leaders who are serving ministries on the margins. Our Director of New Ministries will be piloting a learning opportunity in early 2026 to work alongside leaders who have a new ministry idea that they want to develop into a plan of action. Interested leaders are encouraged to email Pr. Jennifer at jennifer@nepsynod.org.



Thank you for all you and your congregations do to pray for and support these leaders and these ministries across our Synod and across the country!

DID YOU KNOW that your Mission Support helps fund areas of the synod and ELCA like this one and many other important initiatives? Your contributions are making a significant impact and helping others grow in faith, supporting the synod's lanes of Growing Young, Gaining Strength, and Going Beyond Death to Life, along with the directions of loving like Jesus, healing like Jesus, and engaging like Jesus. To learn more, visit godsllove.org/missionsupport.

SAWC & SAOM

godsllove.org/sawc-saom

Want to learn more about the NEPA Synod's Synod-Authorized Worshipping Communities and Synod-Authorized Outreach Ministries? Visit our website for details.





O HOLY NIGHT

A D N H P W P J Q B T G F F S Q V
Y D M Q M I A A S T A R R L G F R
F X F A G R D O N K E Y A S Q L J
F S B U G S A V I O R M N F W U W
H H E A X W I X H Z I E K J A C B
E E T M B Y J R S N M V I N Z X I
M P H I N Y R O A E H H N U G L B
I H L B K Y P G S Z B N C Z O Q J
W E E Z M Z N I M E U Q E X L M E
K R H I M Z W F M E P S N P D N S
Z D E R A S K T A B A H S L D Y U
G N M Q J J J S N Y I A E S R V S
V A N F Q F A T G F T G I A Z T X
N J C U R Z Z X E U N O M N G L Z
B K Y M W I H F R A P E A C E G W

ANGEL
ANIMALS
BABY
BETHLEHEM
DONKEY
FRANKINCENSE

GIFTS
GOLD
JESUS
JOSEPH
MANGER
MARY

MYRRH
PEACE
SAVIOR
SHEPHERD
STAR
WISE MEN



ZION EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

101 N. Greenwood Street

Tamaqua, PA 18252

Return Service Requested

This Newsletter was prepared
Especially for:

