

2025 Annual Report of Zion Lutheran Church

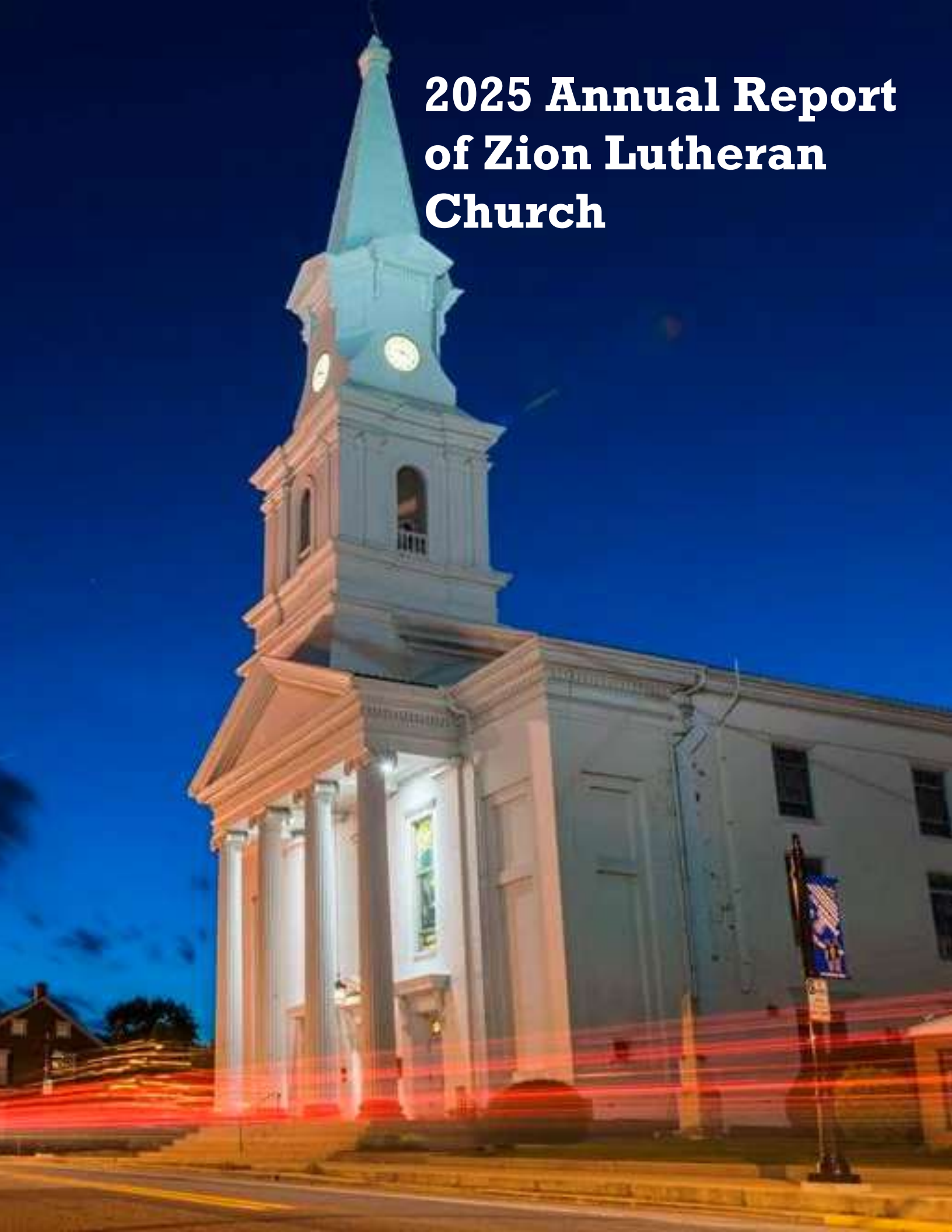


Table of Contents

Mission and Vision_____	4
Zion's Leadership_____	5
2025 Council Motions_____	6
Pastoral Acts_____	14
Weekly Attendance Numbers_____	15
Staff and Leadership Reports_____	15
Pastor Diane Day_____	15
Pastor Matt Day_____	17
Linda Kinna-Engel, Council President_____	22
Financial Reports_____	24
Report from the Financial Secretary_____	24
Financial Report from the Cemetery_____	24
Middletown Valley Food Bank_____	26
Financial Report from Zion's Memorial Garden_____	27
Zion's Year End Financial Report_____	28
Ministries of the Congregation_____	37
Joy Luncheon_____	37
Living History Ministry_____	37
Altar Guild Ministry_____	38
Christian Fellowship Ministry_____	39
Christian Formation Ministry_____	39
Clothing Closet_____	41
Hands to God Crafting_____	42
Visitation Ministry_____	43
Worship and Music_____	43
Contemporary Worship_____	44
Musical Ensembles_____	45
Sunday School Report_____	46
Grief Share_____	46
Stewardship Ministry_____	46
Safety and Security Ministry_____	47
Youth and Family Ministry_____	47
Food Bank_____	50
Design Team_____	51
Quilters_____	52
Committees of the Congregation_____	53
Personnel Committee_____	53
Property Committee_____	53
Finance Committee_____	61
Mutual Ministry_____	62
Nominating Committee_____	64
Appendix_____	66

Meeting Agenda _____	66
Minutes from Feb. 2nd, 2025, Annual Congregational Meeting _____	67
Proposed Budget _____	69
Council Nominees Bios _____	71

Our Mission

As a people of God, we share Christ's love, grow in faith, and serve others

Our Vision

Zion aspires to be a church where all are welcomed and loved; God's purpose for each of us is found; and lives are transformed.

2025 Zion's Leadership, Staff, and Council

Co-Pastors

The Rev. Diane Day—pastordiane@zionmiddletown.org

The Rev. Matthew Day—pastormatt@zionmiddletown.org

Directors of Music Ministry

Director of Contemporary Worship Team Matt Puziss—mattpuziss@gmail.com

Director of Traditional Music—Dr. Katelyn McClinton

Organist — Kirt Denton

Children's Choir Director— Emily Hopson

Treasurer

Deborah Reichelt—treasurer@zionmiddletown.org

Financial Secretary

Kaye Derr—financialsecretary@zionmiddletown.org

2025 Council

President: Linda Kinna-Engel; Vice-President: Jack Newkirk; Secretary: Bruce McIntosh; Bob Rockwell, Carolyn Milauskas, Sharon Finley, Jeff Derr, Addison Shupe, Darin Gordon, Clinton Appleby, Sheri Huckleberry, Lori Odell, Pastor Matt Day, Pastor Diane Day

2025 Council Motions

2025-01-1	To adopt the agenda (moved and seconded)
2025-01-2	To accept the minutes as presented.
2025-01-3	To adopt the consent agenda.
2024-01-4	To approve the recommendations of the Property Committee to bring in a consultant to evaluate our current heating system and determine if the system is functional.
2025-02-1	To adopt the agenda (moved and seconded)
2025-02-2	To accept the minutes as presented.
2025-02-3	To adopt the consent agenda.
2025-02-4	To approve the Child Protection SOP #20 with corrections and edits. The SOP will be reviewed annually
2025-02-5	To provide the Property up to \$3700.00 to improve the HVAC system in the church library.
2025-02-6	To budget \$30,000.00 for furniture upgrade throughout the church.
2025-02-7	To allow the pastors to develop a plan to hire a Youth Director in conjunction with Good Shepherd Lutheran Church in Frederick.
2025-02-8	<p>To add the following individuals to Zion membership:</p> <p style="text-align: center;"> Gary Beistel Brittney Walker Beth Ahalt Joann Barbara Engestrom Lisa Marie Engestrom </p>

2025-03-1	To adopt the agenda as amended (moved and seconded)																				
2025-03-2	To accept the minutes as amended.																				
2025-03-3	To adopt the amended consent agenda.																				
2025-03-4	to renew the Warner Service contract for one year but remove the auto renewal clause in the service agreement																				
2025-03-5	To refer the question of reviewing Zion’s vision statement and providing specific direction for its programs to a special (ad hoc) committee of 3 to be appointed by the chair, the chair to be Sharon Finley and the committee to report at the April meeting.																				
VOTED: 2025-03-6	to appoint the following 3 individuals to the Mutual Ministry Committee to replace the members completing their term on the committee: <div>Vince Bello Terry Poffenberger Jonathan Minchoff</div>																				
VOTED: 2025-03-7	to appoint the following individuals as chairs/facilitators and liaisons of Zion’s Standing Committees and Ministry Teams: <table><tr><th colspan="4">ZION LUTHERAN CHURCH</th></tr><tr><th colspan="4">COMMITTEES, Boards & MINISTRY TEAMS FOR 2025</th></tr><tr><th>Name of Committee</th><th>Staff</th><th>Council Liaison</th><th>Chairperson/Facilitator</th></tr><tr><td>Executive Committee</td><td>Pastor(s)</td><td></td><td>President of Council</td></tr><tr><td>Property Committee</td><td></td><td>Vice President</td><td>Larry Schaffert</td></tr></table>	ZION LUTHERAN CHURCH				COMMITTEES, Boards & MINISTRY TEAMS FOR 2025				Name of Committee	Staff	Council Liaison	Chairperson/Facilitator	Executive Committee	Pastor(s)		President of Council	Property Committee		Vice President	Larry Schaffert
ZION LUTHERAN CHURCH																					
COMMITTEES, Boards & MINISTRY TEAMS FOR 2025																					
Name of Committee	Staff	Council Liaison	Chairperson/Facilitator																		
Executive Committee	Pastor(s)		President of Council																		
Property Committee		Vice President	Larry Schaffert																		

	Audit Committee	Deborah Reichelt		Vacant	
	Nominating Committee	Pastor(s)	Outgoing Council Member(s)	Rosella Wilson	
	Finance Committee	Pastor(s)	Jack Newkirk	Ken Basler	
	Mutual Ministry Committee	Pastor(s)	Linda Kinna-Engel	Jonathan Minchoff	
	Personnel Committee	Pastor(s)		Sheri Huckleberry	
	Altar Guild Ministry Team	Pastor(s)		Flowers -Shirley Ferguson & Ruth Warnock Paraments -Marci Gordon Communion -Cindy Keller Vestments -Gwen Bowlus & Jo Ann Poffinberger	
	Christian Fellowship Ministry Team	Deborah Reichelt	Clinton Appleby	Gene Appleby and Shirley Ferguson	
	Christian Formation Ministry Team	Pastor Diane		Jeff Derr	
	Living History Ministry Team	Pastor Matt		Mary Ann Marcantonio	
	Prayer Ministry Team	Pastor Diane		Jo Ann Poffinberger	
	Safety and Security Ministry Team	Pastor Matt		Pastor Matt	
	Stewardship Ministry Team	Pastor Matt		Carolyn Milauskas	
	Welcome and Engagement Ministry Team	Pastor(s)		Jamie Derr	

	Worship and Music Ministry Team	Pastor Diane		Rep: Pat McIntosh	
	Communication and Technology Ministry Team	Pastor Matt		Vacant	
	Middletown Valley Food Bank Advisory Board		Bob Rockwell	Ann Pond	
	Cemetery Board of Managers		Sharon Finley	Dixie Eichelberger	
2025-03-8	To refer the question of evaluating the furniture proposal to a special (<i>ad hoc</i>) committee of 4 to be appointed by the Council President (Dixie Engelberger, Pastor Matt, Lori O'Dell, Lori Shupe, Deb Reichelt, the chair to be elected by the committee) to report at the April meeting.				
2025-04-1	To adopt the agenda as amended (moved and seconded)				
2025-04-2	To accept the minutes as amended.				
2025-04-3	To adopt the amended consent agenda.				
2025-04-4	to adopt the following vision statement: Zion aspires to be a church where all are welcomed and loved; God's purpose for each of us is found; and lives are transformed.				
2025-04-5	To extend the deadline for Mr. Bobby Staples leave status decision to the end of May				
2025-05-1	To adopt the agenda as amended (moved and seconded)				
2025-05-2	To accept the minutes as amended.				
2025-05-3	To adopt the amended consent agenda				

2025-05-4	To adopt the Archive Guide (SOP #9) as corrected.
2025-05-5	To receive confirmands Leah Gordon and Eryn Kline into membership.
2025-05-6	to accept RTM Engineering Consultants' proposed engineering services with clarification of specific issues in the contract
2025-05-7	to accept a proposal from Steeples Plus for the sanctuary roof washing and painting (\$10,800.00); Porch roof wash and painting (\$3,200.00); Rear gable work (\$3,200.00); and Belfry pilaster base-trim touch up (\$4,800.00).
2025-06-1	To adopt the agenda as amended (moved and seconded)
2025-06-2	To accept the minutes as amended.
2025-06-3	To adopt the amended consent agenda
2025-06-4	To adopt the Property SOP (SOP #21).
2025-07-1	To adopt the agenda as amended (moved and seconded)
2025-07-2	To accept the minutes as amended.
2025-07-3	To adopt the amended consent agenda.
2025-07-4	To approve the Property committee's basement foundation wall waterproofing proposal from Once and Done with the revision that they will use FRP panels (thicker than included in the original quote) for an additional \$629 for a total of \$6,429.

2025-07-5	To approve the request from the Food Bank for approval their \$25,000.00 check to Conestoga Builders for site design.
2025-07-6	To adopt the SOP #8 (Finance and Accounting Manual) as updated on 7/21/25.
2025-09-1	To adopt the agenda as amended (moved and seconded)
2025-09-2	To accept the minutes as amended.
2025-09-3	To adopt the amended consent agenda.
2025-09-4	To approve the recommendation from Worship and Music Ministry Team to accept bid from Sweetwater for RF Hearing System utilizing funds from memorial contributions.
2025-09-5	To approve the request from the Food Bank for approval their \$70,000.00 check (first payment/deposit) to Conestoga Builders for construction of the new Food Bank.
2025-09-6	To purchase the Select Copay 2000 Portico Benefit plan option for 2026.
2025-09-7	To approve the Property committee's proposal of termite treatment for Church Building and Clothes Closet.
2025-09-8	to approve \$2,000 +/- to correct improperly wired controls for the boiler.
2025-09-9	to accept Shane and Mary Boyd and their daughter, Grace into membership at Zion Lutheran Church.
2025-10-1	To adopt the agenda as amended (moved and seconded)

2025-10-2	To accept the minutes as amended.
2025-10-3	To adopt the amended consent agenda.
2025-10-3	To adopt the amended consent agenda.
2025-10-4	To accept the review of SOP #15 without change.
2025-10-5	To accept the review of SOP #5 with the addition of a section in the SOP by the Mutual Ministry committee that identifies the procedure for conducting the annual evaluation of rostered leaders.
2025-10-6	to approve the budget plan (enclosed) recommended by the Finance Committee for expenditures needed to support activities the congregation has decided to undertake.
2025-11-1	To adopt the agenda as amended (moved and seconded)
2025-11-2	To accept the minutes as amended.
2025-11-3	To adopt the amended consent agenda as amended
2025-11-4	To lay the question regarding a Youth Director position on the table (intent: lay aside temporarily).
2025-11-5	To postpone the question regarding the insurance review until January 2026.
2025-11-6	To approve up to \$18,000 for removal of ceiling tiles and application of insulation in the ceiling area in the administrative section at the back of the church.

2025-11-7	To postpone the question regarding the documentation of procedures for the annual review of rostered leaders until the December meeting.
2025-11-8	to approve a coffee and donut hour sponsorship at the same rate as the Altar flowers where families and/or individuals can sponsor the coffee hour in memory or in honor of someone or something.
2025-12-1	To adopt the agenda as amended (moved and seconded)
2025-12-2	To accept the minutes as corrected.
2025-12-3	To adopt the consent agenda.
2025-12-4	to approve the list of <i>members to be removed</i> .
2025-12-5	To appoint Mr. Chris Derr, Mr. Brian Lizzi and Mr. Ken Basler as members of the 2026 Audit committee.

Pastoral Acts 2025

Received		Removed		
Baptism	Affirmation of Baptism or by transfer	Deaths	11	
Children - 6	Transfers - 0	Statistical Adjustments	Baptized 271	Confirmed 257
Adults - 0		Transfers	2	
	Affirmation of Baptism - 7			
<i>As of December 31, 2025...</i>				
Baptized Membership - 719		Confirmed Membership - 555		

Baptisms <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Richard Staples • Tucker Engestrom • Haley Ahalt • Xander Wilson • Amelia Leone • Melody Damskey 	New Member (by affirmation of baptism) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leah Gordon • Eryn Kline • Gary Beistel • Beth Ahalt • Lisa and Joann Engstrom • Brittany Walker • Shane, Mary, and Grace Boyd
New Members (by transfers) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 	Weddings <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lisa Dwyer and Gary Beistel • Tanya Miller and John Wells • Nicole Willem and Johathan Horrocks
Members Who Have Died	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Marc Antonio Long Crow Gunsallus • James Higdon • Leslie Lent-Santora • Christa Grunwald • Junior Wiles • Lorene Huffer • John Burrier 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • William Brent "Bim" Ahalt • Marie Boyer • John Brunner, Jr. • James Palmer

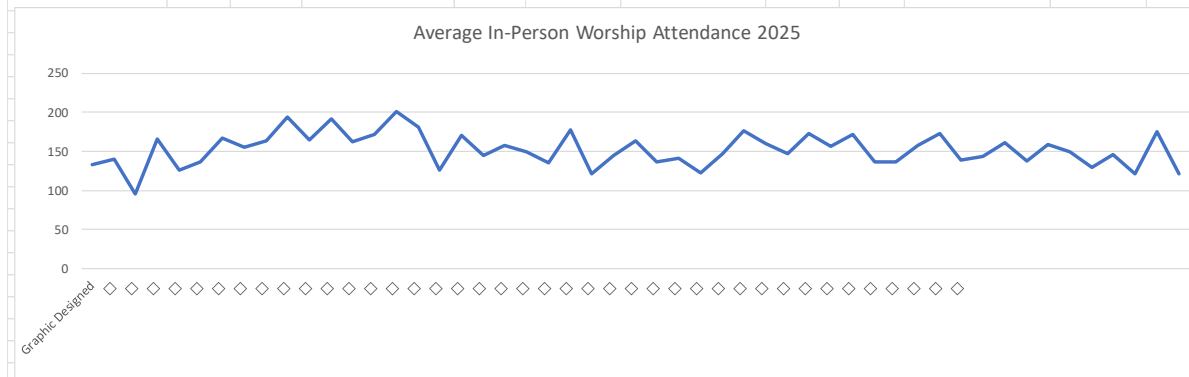
Worship Attendance

	2025		2024	2023	2022
In-person	152		162	151	144
Virtual	8		8	9	9*
Total	160		170	160	153

Running Averages		Midweek Lent 2024					Midweek Advent					
			In-Person	Kids Program	Virtual	Total		In-Person	Kids Program	Virtual	Total	
5 p.m.	27											
9 a.m.	80	Ash Wednesday	68			9	77	Night 1	26	6	5	37
11 a.m.	47	Wednesday Night 1	47	7		5	59	Night 2	27	9		36
Combined	115	Wednesday Night 2	44	13		6	63	Night 3	41	9	5	55
Total Inperson	152	Wednesday Night 3	32	5		6	43	Average	31	8	5	43
Live Stream	8	Wednesday Night 4	43	12		7	62					
Virtual and Inperson	160	Wednesday Night 5	43	10		4	57					
Total Bulletins		Maundy Thursday	60			10	70					
		Good Friday	60			13	73					
2024 Averages		Average Wednesday	42	9		6	57					
5 p.m.	27											
9 a.m.	86											
11 a.m.	50											
Combined	134											
Total Inperson	162											
Live Stream	8											
Virtual and Inperson	170											

Average In-Person Worship Attendance 2025

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Staff and Leadership Reports

Report from Pastor Diane Day

⁹ Let love be genuine; hate what is evil; hold fast to what is good; ¹⁰ love one another with mutual affection; outdo one another in showing honor. ¹¹ Do not lag in zeal; be ardent in spirit; serve the Lord. ¹² Rejoice in hope; be patient in affliction; persevere in prayer. ¹³ Contribute to the needs of the saints; pursue hospitality to strangers.

¹⁴ Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse them. ¹⁵ Rejoice with those who rejoice; weep with those who weep. ¹⁶ Live in harmony with one another; do not be arrogant, but

associate with the lowly;^[b] do not claim to be wiser than you are. ¹⁷ Do not repay anyone evil for evil, but take thought for what is noble in the sight of all. ¹⁸ If it is possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all. ¹⁹ Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave room for the wrath of God,^[c] for it is written, "Vengeance is mine; I will repay, says the Lord." ²⁰ Instead, "if your enemies are hungry, feed them; if they are thirsty, give them something to drink, for by doing this you will heap burning coals on their heads." ²¹ Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good. (Romans 12:9-21)

When I sit to write a report or newsletter article, I appreciate grounding my thoughts in scripture. As a people of God, we believe this is God's inspired word that speaks to us across time and teaches us how to live as God's people.

As I look back over my planner at the months of ministry and life, what comes across to me as most important are the moments we have done our best to follow the above instructions from Paul to followers of Jesus. 2025 was a hard year. Perhaps it's because I am getting older and I understand things more deeply, but it just seems things are getting harder as each year progresses instead of easier. But when I think back to those hard moments that presented themselves in 2025, I also see the way we showed up for each other and our community. I see the conversations and initiatives that were brought to me individually to help. I see the new relationships formed. I see hugs and tears shared together rather than bottled up and ignored as the world would have us do. I see people not giving up but asking questions about what things mean for us and how we can respond. I remember being present in classes where perspectives were shared and questions were asked for further clarification and understanding. I see smiles and hear laughter as we work to accomplish tasks that needed to happen and opportunities that presented themselves to celebrate life. There has been so much that has shown evil's side and yet, there has been so much that has been overcome by the good the Spirit has enlivened us to do.

Now perhaps you may also be a good Lutheran and feel convicted and go, "Wow. There are a lot of moments this past year where I haven't done those things." ME TOO! You are NOT alone. Did I have moments in my various vocations (including pastor!) where I certainly wasn't as hospitable as I could have been or that I threw some good curses in there instead of blessings? You betcha. Do we just throw up our hands and give up because we are lost causes? NOPE. Because God doesn't give up on us. Welcome to 2026! She's already had her share of difficult moments but we are also given the blessing of more days, more opportunities to live in God's love and hope. I am grateful to seek and receive God's gift of forgiveness weekly with our community and to go out and try my best to live in God's love. I will screw it up again, I promise, but I trust that the Holy Spirit is continuing to do the work of making me into the person of love God is creating me to be. And I believe the same is true for each of you.

I thank God for each of you and what God has done through you and our community this past year. I thank you for supporting one another and this world God so loves. It is work that is never done and gives us opportunity again and again to experience all the magnificent things

God is up to. May 2026 give you moments of joy and love amongst the hard things. May you seek forgiveness when you mess up and know that God loves you and isn't giving up on you. May we not be overcome by evil, but may we each seek to overcome evil with good.

In thanksgiving and hope,

Pastor Diane Day

Report from Pastor Matt Day

Introduction

In order to create my annual report to the congregation, I went back and reviewed all of my reports from Council that I submitted over the past year and pulled out pieces from those reports that I want to reflect upon and share with the congregation as part of my annual report. Below is an abbreviated report and reflection of this work as it aligns with the priorities the Council approved for 2025. If you would like to see my more comprehensive report, please contact me.

2025 Priorities

Leadership

Called by the Spirit to be transformed as God's loving people, the Council will continue to discern where God is calling Zion in its defining of vision. We will be open to new ways and opportunities God is calling us to serve beyond our building in sharing Christ's love. We will support one another in our ministries as we share cherished traditions and try new things.

- **Office Volunteers and church staff:** One of greatest assets at Zion is our staff and our volunteers. I am blessed to serve with an incredible group of people who are skilled and dedicated to the mission and ministry of Zion. This past year, we promoted Deb to Office Business Manager and Treasurer. She has become someone we can rely on and trust that the Church Office is functioning at its best. Kaye continues to do the fine work of recording the offerings each week and ensuring that privacy is kept. A group of about 10-12 people from Zion continues to serve as volunteers in many different capacities from answering the phones, welcoming members and guests, folding and sorting various projects, to stuffing bags for kids on Sunday mornings. The office is working today because of Deb, Kaye, and a group of volunteers. Matt Puziss and his team continue to lead us in our contemporary worship. Emily remains faithful to her work as our Children's Choir Director. Kirk Denton continues in his work of leading the 11 a.m. worship in song. Katelyn McClinton has done a fantastic job of working with choir, handbell choir, and orchestra as director of Traditional Worship. We have built an amazing team of people that are all really good at their jobs. The work is sometimes monumental, but together with the Lord's help, we continue to do amazing things. I am forever grateful to work with this group of people!
- **Building projects:** Zion's building, while very beautiful, takes a great deal of time and resources to keep it up and running. I am forever grateful to those volunteers who work tirelessly to maintain this historic structure. I especially want to thank Larry and the entire team for all that they do. The committee accomplished a lot this year thanks, in part, to

their tireless work and determination. If you remember back in December of 2024, we had no heat in the sanctuary and we were unsure if our boiler and current system were ever going to work again. After a lot of work and research, we have had heat this year without having to replace our current system. While replacement is still on the table, because of all the work and research that has gone into the system over the past 12 months, we have some time to make wise, better decisions.

- **Joint Stewardship/Finance Meeting:** After talking with the Executive Committee regarding concerns around stewardship, it was recommended that we regroup the Stewardship Ministry Team and involve the Finance Committee in this restructuring. We came up with a list of people we thought would be good for the Stewardship Committee and we set up a meeting to discuss the future. I am happy to say that bringing these two groups of people together has been very fruitful and produced, what I think, was a good Stewardship program for the Fall. The first big thing we decided was to move the Stewardship Campaign this year to later in the fall beginning on Oct 26 by blessing the pledge cards. Following the blessing of pledge cards, each week during worship we would have a short stewardship moment after the Prayer of the Day. The stewardship moments were all in the form of a short video because we have found that people tend to pay attention to better things like this when we use a short videos rather than someone speaking. The title of the campaign was, "Together, We Build for Tomorrow." Our goal was to show how, as a community, we can do amazing things when we all come together. I believe our community is the healthiest it has been in years, but we are a bit disconnected from each other and our common mission of our congregation. It is our hope that we might inspire people to see the power that our community has so that they can see for themselves the importance of supporting our community. Stewardship is not something you can fix overnight and there are no easy solutions. The work we started this Fall is just the beginning and over the next year, we need to continue this focus of showing how we can do more by working together.

Communication

Celebrating new tools we have learned to communicate information; we will hone and plan strategies to more effectively use them to share what God is doing at Zion. We will use these tools and new avenues to share how God's love is nurturing and changing us.

- **Hearing Aid and Listening Devices:** One of things I am most proud of is the installation and use of the Listening Devices we installed this past year. After receiving approval by the council to purchase the system by using money from our memorial funds, I went to work trying to figure out the best way to install the system. After the installation, I found an old stereo cabinet to house the devices, and I spent a few weeks fine tuning the system. I have noticed a number of people using the devices and I look forward to checking this box on the report we file to the ELCA letting them know that we now offer this as a part of worship. But this system only works for those who have a hearing impairment and not someone who is completely deaf. In consultation with the Welcome and Engagement ministry team, we are exploring some options from hiring a sign language interpreter to something as simple as a live captioning system. One major take away from our Wednesday in Lent study was this idea that we really need to focus on hospitality. It is not rocket science when it comes

to hospitality, but the work must be intentional. It is very easy to say, “See, we are accommodating...we have this listening system...” but then we become complacent and miss people on the margins. What are some other ways we can make sure we show hospitality and care to all people? I look forward to figuring that out with you all.

- **Website: While** I am still pleased with the overall usefulness of the website, I recognize that it is need of some reorganization. I have been in the church since I was a few days old. I am a pastor’s kid--meaning I know all the churchy language. I am insider if there was ever an insider. The problem with that is a church’s website is not for insiders, but for outsiders. We need to make sure the language and the feel of the website makes sense to those who are not familiar with the church or its language. One of my goals in 2026 is to work on our website’s site map, its language, and overall feel. While I don’t intend to delete much, I do plan to move stuff around in a more logical order for today’s usage.

Relationship Building

With Jesus as our example and guide, we will grow in building relationships with one another and those beyond our building through practicing welcome and invitation. We rejoice and celebrate our generational diversity. We will practice grace and understanding as we make mistakes. We will focus on serving one another in love, especially those in need and who are often forgotten.

- **DayOff Program:** We held two DayOff Programs this year including a trip to Urban Air and a trip to Jumbo’s. We typically try to hold three of these events every year. The only reason we held two was because the days off from school we either held on a Monday or a Friday and we found that these days are not as well attended due to families taking advantage of a long weekend. While they are a lot of work on my end, it is really neat seeing the kids build relationships with each other. As a pastor, I often hear about the days of Luther League. What I hear in those stories is the connection that many of us built because of Luther League and organizations like it. While times have changed, I am confident that the DayOff Program continues to serve as a place where children can build lasting friendships with one another outside of worship.
- **Trip to Gettysburg for Adults:** In October of 2024, we planned a “DayOff” program for adults. The plan was to attend the Museum of the Bible, and it went really well. So much so that we planned another trip but this time to Gettysburg. I capitalized on my experience living there for eight years and becoming a bit of a history buff, that I was able to give a tour of the battlefield and show some of the sites that most tour guides do not have time to visit. We also were able to visit Gettysburg Seminary’s museum and do a tour of the Copula. Not only did we learn something that day, but we got to know each other a little bit better. My plan for 2026 is to hold two of these events this year, one in the Spring and another in the Fall.
- **Baseball Night at Camden Yards:** I forgot how hot it can get down in Baltimore. There was absolutely no breeze that night in the ballpark and my shirt was soaked! But we got everyone down to the game safely and got to see one of the most impressive games ever. And they won! It was good night on so many different levels. I am interested in doing a

Keys Game one night next summer in addition to Camden Yards. My goal with these items is create space for people to build relationships outside of worship.

- **ULS Grant:** We got a \$1,000 to throw a block party. After the All-Committee Chair and Ministry Leader gathering, the idea of doing something on the same night as the Halloween Parade in town seemed to be the best idea. We planned to feed 1000 people, which meant we cooked a lot of hot dogs. While we didn't feed 1000 people, we are pretty confident that we did feed around 500 people. All of the leftover food was donated to the Middletown Food Bank, so nothing went to waste. Everything went surprisingly smoothly, which surprised me because something almost always goes wrong. We had a great turn out of helpers and volunteers. Burgess Miller came up to me after the event and thanked me for all that we did. He said that many people stuck around this year after the parade because of our block party. It was a great community event. I would like to do this block party again next year and I think we can fund it all with a series of Thrivent Action Team grants.
- **Table Talk:** This is the ministry that really sustains me and my ministry. Every month, I get to study a topic in Lutheran theology in order to have a conversation with 10-15 other adults. We gather around food as Luther did with his students many years ago to wrestle with theological questions. This year, we focused most of our attention on the Small Catechism, one of my favorite things to teach. We finished out the year by starting a discussion on the Nicene Creed, which turned 1700 years old in 2025. One of the biggest changes to Table Talk is the venue. We moved our discussions from the public sphere to the FootPrints room mainly due to the local restaurants not being well-suited for discussion groups. Perhaps we will move back to the public sphere but for now, this format seems to be working well.
- **Confirmation:** This past year, two of our confirmands completed their formal studies and were confirmed on Pentecost Sunday--Eryn Kline and Leah Gordon. Jeff Derr and I have been working together since I started at Zion, and we make a pretty good team when it comes to the Confirmation Program. He has also been my right-hand man for Youth Group. I am very much indebted to him for his hard work and dedication to the youth at Zion.
- **Youth Group:** We continue to meet monthly and have really expanded this school year. I really do love spending time with these kids because they not only challenge me, but they make me laugh. Recently, we have had a young woman from Transfiguration join our group since her congregation does not have many her age. We continue to struggle to engage High Schoolers, but I am really confident that with a dedicated staff member, we could really see this ministry blossom and grow.

Concluding Thoughts...

This year is one that I will not forget for some time. It was filled with great loss and worry. Pastor Diane's cancer diagnosis was difficult, but I am grateful for the support that you all have showed. I simply could not do all that I normally do because I had to care for Pastor Diane way more this year, and I appreciate everyone who picked up the things I needed to drop in order to care for her. Her treatments are almost done and will finish this May. We continue to appreciate all your prayers.

One of the things we did this past December was take the whole family to Disney World to celebrate Diane finishing up chemo and radiation and spend time together as a family. I am not someone who enjoys going to amusement parks. In fact, I will only willingly go to two amusement parks: Knoebels and Disney World. Knoebels is the only park that I know of that has free admission. Instead, you either buy tickets or a wristband to ride the rides. I do not do rides, so this is the perfect place. What I also like about Knoebels is the fact that the food is both good and reasonably priced. I can go to Knoebels, eat like a king, and only go on the rides I choose to while not breaking the bank. Disney World doesn't have free admission, but they do have some world class restaurants and the people who work there strive to make your experience at Disney World magical. They also have some amazing shows and a number of really slow rides that fit me just right.

While at Disney World, someone spilled an entire cup of coffee on a busy thoroughfare. We just stumbled upon the mess right after it happened. We were walking to get a picture. A cast member just arrived to clean up the spill. After getting our photo, we had to walk past the spill again and now there were about seven cast members, all on their hands and knees, cleaning up the mess. It got me thinking...Church members are like the cast members at Disney World. As a member of Christ's church, our job is clean up the messes and make sure the experience of guests and visitors is magical and holy. I think, after Covid, we got used to consuming content and experience at church that now we, as members, see ourselves as the guest and expect to be served rather than seeing ourselves as the cast members whose job it is make the experience of attending Zion the best it can possibly be. And that doesn't mean, as a church member, you don't get anything in return. I follow a number of former cast members from Disney and many of them talk about the experience of working at Disney World. It wasn't always perfect, but for many of them, it had a profound impact on who they are today. People of God, I would like to see us be more like the cast members. Let us be less consumed with what are we getting out of our membership in Christ's Church and of Zion and let us be more concerned with making the experience of attending Zion a magical and holy experience for others. Let us not so much seek to be served but to serve. When we see a mess, clean it up. When we see an area that needs work, let us roll up our sleeves and take on a new project. In the words of Paw Patrol, "No Pup is too big, no job is too small."

Report from the Council President

Dear Members of Zion Church community,

Representing the entire Church Council, I present you with the 2025 Annual Report.

During my second year as council president I have been very fortunate once again, with Jack Newkirk as vice president and Bruce McIntosh as secretary serving with me on the Executive Committee, along with Pastor Matt and Pastor Diane. We served with a group of dedicated and supportive council members: Addison Shupe, Bob Rockwell, Carolyn Milauskas, Clinton Appleby, Darin Gordan, Jeff Derr, Lori O'Dell, Sharon Finley and Sheri Huckleberry.

At our February 2025 council retreat, the pastors, council members and chairpersons of our various committees, came together at Mar-Lu-Ridge to discuss goals and priorities for 2025. We elected to renew the same goals that we had established last year: Leadership, Communication and Relationship Building. With the help of the Holy Spirit, we have done much work here at Zion to accomplish much within these three goals. Just as God's work is never done, our work within Zion, our community and the world is never done. All members of Zion Lutheran Church must prayerfully do their part to accomplish our goals. The work of the church does not fall totally on the shoulders of the pastors, staff, executive committee or council members. It takes the dedication and determination of all of Zion's members and friends to fulfill God's work.

We continued using the Take 5 approach to communicating council meeting highlights. This process seems to work out well and it is a means to get all council members up in front of the services to make announcements several times throughout the year.

Your council kept busy, not just attending Monday night meetings, but serving as liaisons at various committee meetings throughout the year. Council members were there, working along beside you again, during clean up Sunday. The project was supported by a few more than last year and the guys, and some girls, worked hard to get stored pews moved down to the social room area. No doubt, there were a few sore muscles the next day. Council members also worked together to provide a Wednesday night meal during Lent and Advent.

I especially want to thank all the chairs of our various committees, and the members, who worked diligently all year to help meet the needs of the congregation. Most of these dedicated members work behind the scenes without much fanfare. Believe me, all of you are greatly appreciated as you go about God's work here at Zion. May God continue to bless and keep you in His care.

It was no secret that, when I was asked to serve as your council president in 2024, I was very hesitant to do so and initially declined. Whether it was the Holy Spirit or what, I found myself

saying yes in 2024. I was a little less reluctant to say yes in 2025. Though the truth be told, I was hoping someone else would step up to the plate. It has been my honor and true privilege to serve as your council president these two years. My role as president has been supported by all of you and I especially thank Bruce McIntosh who was my Robert's Rules mentor. I am grateful to have had Pastor Matt Day and Pastor Diane Day providing guidance and support during this time as well.

I said it last year in my year-end report, and I say it again this year: Zion Lutheran Church, in Middletown, MD is coming alive again. The Holy Spirit is at work and all of us need to open our hearts and minds to let the spirit work within each one of us. We serve an awesome God and we are the body in Christ. May God continue to bless us here at Zion and keep us in His care.

Respectfully submitted, Linda Kinna-Engel

Financial Reports

Financial Secretary Report

Deposits 2025			Allocations 2025	
January	34,863.04		Current Expenses	478,830.18
February	40,154.47		Initial Offering	452.20
March	57,091.18		Loose Offering	8,933.11
April	43,605.21		Sunday School	480.05
May	38,439.20		Designated Benevolence*	6,200.59
June	48,176.34		Lenten	3,052.47
July	34,597.66		Garden	567.00
August	52,571.71		Easter	2,973.06
September	40,960.11		Good Friday	360.39
October	41,374.82		Building Fund	21,950.24
November	62,786.36		Christmas	3,974.54
December	68,217.75		Apple Butter/Heritage	1,001.50
			Designated**	12,323.25
	\$62,837.85		Memorial Income	4,875.43
			Historical Preservation	1,581.31
			New Years Eve	1,020.00
			Alter Guild	188.78
			Golf Committee	2,558.50
			Credit-Contributor	2,590.38
			Grand Total	\$53,837.98

*Includes Middletown Food Bank, Backpacks, Adopt A Family, Lutheran World Relief and Noisy offering

** Includes Clothes Closet, Youth, Vacation Bible School

Pledges 2025 **318,988.00** **Pledges 2026** **299,403.00**

I would like to thank the money counters who diligently help with the weekly offerings...
Robert Hetrick, Linda Kinna-Engel, Pat McIntosh, and Faith Hoover

Cemetery Report

Cemetery Board of Managers

Dixie L. Eichelberger, Chairperson; Terry E Poffenberger, Secretary/Treasurer; David B. Huffer, Gary R. Scott, E. Jim Hoover, Sharon Finley, Council Representative

Income:

Balance from Last Report..... \$ 6,009.02

Interest.....	9,574.36
Bequest and Memorial Donations.....	1,725.00
Sale of Burial Lots.....	6,100.00
For Upkeep of Burial Lots Sold.....	6,100.00
Grave Openings and Cremation Burials.....	16,700.00
Donation for Field Use.....	10,000.00
Transferred Money from Savings to Checking Account.....	<u>13,000.00</u>
	TOTAL \$69,208.38

Expenditure:

Wages and Taxes.....	\$20,039.60
Grave Openings.....	8,300.00
Material, Supplies and Maintenance.....	7,691.28
Equipment, Parts and Gas.....	2,538.26
Buy Back of Burial Lots.....	9,000.00
Balance in Checking Account.....	8,089.24
Purchase from Virginia Tractor (John Deere Z-Turn Mower)	12,500.00
Church Donations – Building Fund & Yard Sale (Air Conditioner)	<u>1,050.00</u>
	TOTAL \$69,208.38

Assets:

Various Investments.....	\$460,448.26
Middletown Valley Bank Savings Account.....	10,088.66
Balance in Checking Account.....	<u>8,089.24</u>
	TOTAL \$478,626.16

(\$435,963.12 in dedicated account, where interest only may be used) \$435,963.12
 AVAILABLE OPERATING FUNDS \$ 34,838.04

Respectfully Submitted,
 Terry E. Poffinberger
 Secretary/Treasurer

Middletown Valley Food Bank

Ann Pond - President
Marcie Gordon - Secretary
Deborah Reichelt - Treasurer

2025 Beginning Checking Balance	\$	53,082.24
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Income

Donations	\$	114,453.37
Interest	\$	10.63

Grant	\$	4,000.00
Edward Jones CD Maturing to MVB	\$	303,774.80
Total Donations	\$	422,238.80

Expenses

Groceries	\$	10,146.21
Utilities (phone)	\$	842.14
Insurance	\$	410.00
Website	\$	-
Misc. Expenses	\$	1,192.06
(copying, bags, toner, Blinds, cardstock thermometers, postbox, Heritage, mail, MD Fee)		
Gift Cards	\$	6,050.29
Freezer	\$	5,215.00
High School Blanket Program	\$	269.35
New Site Plan Expenses	\$	18,204.00
(App. Fee, site plans, Easement, storm water Site plan, Soil, Building Application)		
Total Expenses	\$	42,329.05

MVB Money Market Transfer	\$	267,173.00
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Conestoga	\$	95,000.00
2025 Ending Checking Balance	\$	70,818.99

Assets

MVB Money Market	\$	321,532.70
MVB Building Checking Acct.	\$	6,197.22
Edward Jones Investments	\$	152,916.08

Total Operating Funds	\$	551,464.99
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ZION MEMORIAL GARDEN REPORT, DECEMBER 2025

Balance on hand, December, 2025:

Savings Account: \$5,545.57

Checking Account: \$2,572.82

Expenses for 2025:

1. Purchase annuals for spring planting:
Cronise Market, Boonsboro: \$337.26
2. Mulching and trimming of trees and bushes:
Blue Sky Landscapes: \$2,980.00
((\$1,980.00 from Garden Account, remainder from a donation.)

Income for 2025:

\$1,000.00 donation for remainder of mulching and trimming bill.

The care of the garden throughout the year is done by the two "Garden Angels", Kaye Derr and Kathy Staciewicz with volunteers helping in "peak" times. Outside businesses assist with major projects, such as was done this year in complete mulching of the garden and necessary trimming of large trees and bushes. Funds to help maintain the garden are always appreciated.

Nancy Gordon

Secretary-Treasurer

Zion's Year End Financial Report

*Statement of Actual Income and Expense for Current Ministry
Year Ending December 31, 2025*

	Budget 2024	Actual 2024	Budget 2025	Actual 2025
<u>INCOME:</u>				
Current Income Contributions	597,799	495,769	642,120	478,755
Sunday School Offering	0	364	0	480
Loose Offering	0	8,396	0	8,933
Initial Offering	0	422	0	452
Lenten Offering	0	3,458	0	3,052
Good Friday Offering	0	385	0	360
Easter Offering	0	7,089	0	2,973
Christmas Offering	0	4,482	0	3,975
Thanksgiving Offering	0	-	0	-
New Year's Eve Offering	0	160	0	1,020
NOW Checking Interest	0	20	0	17
Total Current Ministry Income - Offering	597,799	520,544	642,120	500,018
Misc Income - Faith Around the Table	0	-	0	0
Misc Income - Christian Ed	0	-	0	542
Misc Income - Congregational Life	0	1,904	0	904
Misc Income - Caring Ministries	0	240	0	220
Misc Income - Outreach	0	0	0	0
Misc Income - Worship and Music	0	0	0	0
Misc Income - Children/Youth and Family	0	246	0	0
Misc Income - Operating	0	5,646	0	10,075
Misc Income - Thrivent Choice	0	1,082	0	2,191
Misc Income - Memorials/Bequests	0	481	0	232
Misc Income - Designated Benevolence	0	11,539	0	10,133
Total Current Ministry Income - Misc	-	21,138	-	24,297
Operating Income -Fees	2,000	1355	2,000	2320
Total Operating Fee Income	2,000	1,355	2,000	2,320
Total Current Ministry & Operating Fee Income	599,799	543,037	644,120	526,635
<u>EXPENSE:</u>				
Co-Pastor - Salary	86,746	86,746	90,216	90,216
Co-Pastor - Salary	86,746	86,746	90,216	90,216
Pastoral Resource Pool	3,000	1,907	4,000	2,091
Treasurer - Salary	31,827	35,299	37,564	37,564
CYF Youth Dir.- Salary	32,000	1,800	32,000	1,200
Total Staff Salary Expense	240,319	212,498	253,996	221,287
Co-Pastor - Pension & Benefits	28,037	28,442	29,102	29,135
Pastor - Continuing Education	1,500	1,519	1,500	1,635
Co-Pastor - Pension & Benefits	28,415	28,064	29,498	29,465
Treasurer/ - Pension & Benefits	3,501	3,883	3,944	3,944
CYF - Youth Director's Continuing Education	1,000	-	500	-
Staff Transportation	5,000	1,616	4,000	2,130
Sabbatical Contingency	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000
Total Staff Benefits Expense	68,453	64,523	69,544	67,308

Statement of Actual Income and Expense for Current Ministry
Year Ending December 31, 2025

	Budget	Actual	Budget	Actual
	2024	2024	2025	2025
Director of Worship & Music - Salary	17,035	17,035	17,378	22,415
Director Contemporary Worship - Salary	15,597	15,597	15,909	15,909
Financial Secretary - Salary	4,725	4,725	4,820	4,820
Junior Choir Director	-	-	1,530	1,403
Substitute Music Support	3,500	3,675	6,500	6,325
Total Support Staff Salary Expense	40,857	41,032	46,135	50,872
Employer's Share - FICA	22,601	18,914	22,205	19,980
Total Personnel Expenses	372,230	336,967	391,880	359,447
Adult Bible Study & Forum	455	249	500	1072
Seasonal Event Team	240	138	80	89
Milestone Ministry Team	500	201	465	334
High School Curriculum	65	0	65	0
Sunday School	700	333	595	567
Confirmation	325	113	590	56
Total Christian Education (CE) Expense	2,285	1,034	2,295	2,119
Christian Fellowship	2000	1,831	2400	1,716
Kitchen Supplies	3200	3,080	3600	3,071
Total Congregational Life Expense	5,200	4,911	6,000	4,787
Caring Ministries	300	393	350	183
Grief Share	200	200	200	200
Total Caring Ministries Expense	500	593	550	383
Outreach - Community Events	1,500	300	800	285
Outreach - Promotions	4,000	2,488	3,500	1,967
Outreach - Mobile App	4,200	3,691	4,000	3,501
Outreach - Sunday Coffee Hour	1,500	1,589	1,650	1,880
Outreach - Welcome/Hospitality	0	247	0	0
Outreach - New Member Hospitality	0	0	150	0
Total Outreach Expense	11,200	8,315	10,100	7,633
License & Operations	1,200	1,995	1,200	1,224
Choir/Orchestra Music	450	497	450	96
Choir/Acolyte Robes	0	0	0	0
Youth Music	0	0	0	0
Altar Guild	0	0	0	0
Contemporary Worship	500	-	500	74
Total Worship and Music Expense	2,150	2,492	2,150	1,394

Statement of Actual Income and Expense for Current Ministry
Year Ending December 31, 2025

	Budget	Actual	Budget	Actual
	2024	2024	2025	2025
CYF - Fellowship Events	500	439	500	222
CYF - Retreats Off-Site	1,250	0	1,250	0
CYF - Supplies/Materials	500	101	500	154
CYF - Mission Trips	1500	0	1500	0
CYF - Youth Group	3,000	428	3,000	784
CYF - Day Off Program	4,500	2411	4,500	856
CYF - Vacation Bible School	3,000	1,693	3,000	1,703
Total Children, Youth and Family (CYF) Expense	14,250	5,072	14,250	3,719
Total Congregational Ministries Expense	35,585	22,417	35,345	20,035

Office Supplies	3,500	2,480	3,200	1,981
Telephone	5,000	4,812	4,400	4,709
Church Supplies	3,650	3,217	3,870	3,552
Postage	1,080	1,456	1,200	1,434
Paper Products(Cleaning)	850	704	750	695
Electricity	28,000	28,466	31,800	32,768
Fuel	10,500	3,393	7,500	1,351
Water and Sewer	2,500	2,669	2,900	1,880
Equipment Maintenance Contract and Repair	12,500	17,542	15,058	12,060
Insurance	18,800	19,429	20,850	22,948
Reserve for Contingency	500	57	300	18
Synod Convention	2,000	1,446	2,000	1,269
Cleaning Services	9,280	9,235	9,650	8,961
Technology Operations	7,775	7,575	9,350	8,814
Payroll Services	2,250	1,006	1,400	1,123
Piano and Organ Maintenance	7,502	2,217	6,450	2,579
Van Expense	1,500	738	1,500	966
Property	16,510	13,464	36,620	34,460
Stewardship	260	125	260	200
Historic Preservation	897	376	622	521
Leadership Development	500	0	500	0
First Response	750	21	815	115
Background Checks	300	165	300	72
Staff Development	600	322	600	489
Total Operating Expense	136,984	120,916	161,895	142,967
Benevolence - DE-MD Synod	30,300	30,300	30,300	30,300
Benevolence - Mar-Lu-Ridge	12,000	12,000	12,000	12,000
Benevolence - Lutheran World Relief	2,250	2,250	2,250	2,250
Benevolence - St Dymas Prison Ministry	450	450	450	450
Local Benevolence	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000
Designated Benevolence	0	11,539	0	10,132
Total Benevolence	55,000	66,539	55,000	65,132
Total Current Ministry Expenses	599,799	546,839	644,120	587,581
Total Current Ministry Income Less Expense	0	(3,802)	0	(60,946)

Treasurer's Report - Assets
(Summary of all church Financial Assets)
As of December 31, 2025

ASSETS	12/31/23	12/31/2024	12/31/2025
<u>Undesignated:</u>			
Operating Checking Account	90,418.89	81,692.83	46,439.13
Savings	4,494.44	6,075.74	7,433.81
Edward Jones Savings	279.30	798.95	35,488.88
Future Needs	145,809.16	140,430.65	143,901.93
Life Insurance Policies	51,184.98	52,164.91	53,944.83
Flexible Payout Deposit Agreement(s) (FPDA)	318,511.85	332,938.39	340,381.07
Stocks	n/a	84,136.40	144,692.58
TOTAL Undesignated Assets	610,698.62	698,237.87	772,282.23
<u>Designated:</u>			
<u>Community Need:</u>	4,672.49	6,908.45	5,437.96
<u>Property and Fixture:</u>			
Building/Capital Expenditures Money Market	87,907.98	71,451.95	47,701.62
George Rhoderick Organ Memorial Money Market	3,722.82	3,816.25	3,910.57
Historic Heritage Preservation	10,130.20	9,665.11	8,162.52
	<u>101,761.00</u>	<u>84,933.31</u>	<u>59,774.71</u>
<u>Children, Youth and Family:</u>			
Youth Trust Fund Money Market	31,748.87	34,728.83	41,964.71
Youth Camp Scholarship Money Market (Int Only)	29,540.13	26,712.63	24,259.59
	<u>61,289.00</u>	<u>61,441.46</u>	<u>66,224.30</u>
<u>Seminarian Scholarship:</u>			
Bartgis Seminarian Scholarship Money Market	4,640.63	5,316.50	6,068.62
Bartgis Scholarship CD (Int Only)	4,000.00	4,000.00	4,000.00
Bartgis Scholarship CD (Int Only)	10,000.00	10,000.00	10,000.00
	<u>18,640.63</u>	<u>19,316.50</u>	<u>20,068.62</u>
<u>Miscellaneous Other:</u>			
Designated Savings	91,525.03	80,232.71	65,969.90
Undesignated Savings Fund CD (Interest Only)	50,000.00	50,000.00	50,000.00
Mission Term CD	30,409.13	31,918.67	33,783.09
Edward Jones CD	92,000.00	95,000.00	36,407.88
TOTAL Designated Assets	450,297.28	429,751.10	337,666.46
TOTAL Assets	1,060,995.90	1,127,988.97	1,109,948.69

Benevolence - 2025*(This report details how 2024 benevolence was distributed)***For the Year Ending December 31, 2025****(1) Budgeted Local Benevolence:**

2025 Budgeted Local Benevolence:	Budget 2025	End of Year 2025	Noisy Offering 2025	Total Offering 2025
Frederick Rescue Mission	1,000.00	1,000.00	300.31	1,300.31
Friends for Neighborhood Progress	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Heartly House	1,000.00	1,000.00	439.86	1,439.86
Beyond Shelter (formerly Religious Coalition)	1,000.00	1,000.00	264.82	1,264.82
SHIP	1,000.00	1,000.00	358.32	1,358.32
On Our Own - Frederick	500.00	500.00	257.89	757.89
Sleep in Heavenly Peace	500.00	500.00	0.00	500.00
Middletown Valley Fire Department	500.00	500.00	374.83	874.83
Total Maryland Organizations	5,500.00	5,500.00	1,996.03	7,496.03
Middletown Organizations:				
Community Needs (Zion)	3,000.00	3,000.00	0.00	3,000.00
Backpack	500.00	500.00		500.00
Weekend Food Program	1,000.00	1,000.00		1,000.00
Total Middletown Organizations	4,500.00	4,500.00	0.00	4,500.00
Total 2024 Budgeted Local Benevolence	10,000.00	10,000.00	1,996.03	11,996.03

(2)

Community Need - Prior Year Funds:	Expense 2025	Ending Balance
1/1/25 Mission Community Need Balance		6,908.45
2025 Interest and Donations		3,048.48
Community Needs - Pastor Discretionary	(4,518.97)	
12/31/25 Mission Community Need Balance	(4,518.97)	5,437.96

(3)

2025 Designated Benevolence	Income 2025	Expense 2025
Samaritan's Purse - Operation Christmas Child	1080.00	1080.00
Mexico Mission Trip	407.99	407.99
Total National Organizations	1,487.99	1,487.99
Allan P Linton Emergency Shelter	478.58	478.58
Beyond Shelter	264.82	264.82
On Our Own	257.89	257.89
SHIP	358.32	358.32
CareNet Pregnancy Ctr (Lent Baby Bottles)	439.73	439.73
Frederick Rescue Mission	300.31	300.31
Heartly House	439.76	439.76
Total Maryland Organizations	2,539.41	2,539.41
Middletown Valley Food Bank	-	-
MVPHP Craft Fair Basket	305.00	305.00
MVPHP -	200.00	200.00
Middletown Volunteer Fire Department	374.83	374.83
Weekend Backpack Program	50.00	50.00
Mar-Lu Ridge	250.00	250.00
Total Middletown Organizations	1,179.63	1,179.63
Lutheran Disaster Relief	348.27	348.27

	0	0.00
Lutheran World Relief - Animals(Poinsettia donations)	1780.00	1780.00
ELCA World Hunger Fund	230.14	230.14
Global Referee	242.19	242.19
ELCA Good Gifts	70.00	70.00
Lutheran Campus Ministry	217.80	217.80
Tanzania Task Force	2036.38	2036.38
Total Lutheran Organizations	4,924.78	4,924.78
Total Designated Benevolence	10,131.81	10,131.81

Summary Statement of Income and Expense
(Summary of all church funds-checking & savings)
Year Ending December 31, 2025

<u>INCOME</u>	2023	2024	2025
<u>Current Ministry & Local Benevolence Income (Donations)*:</u>			
Current	509,098.98	495,769.10	478,755.18
Sunday School	363.00	364.00	480.05
Loose	7,680.05	8,395.60	8,933.11
Other (Initial, Lent, Advent etc.)	13,777.90	15,996.09	11,832.66
Misc. Income (Bequests, Thrivent, Tax Credit etc.)		9,598.67	14,665.55
Designated Benevolence	13,053.52	11,538.97	10,131.81
Checking Interest	14.36	19.61	16.61
Total Current Ministry Income	543,987.81	541,682.04	524,814.97
<u>Community Need - Pastor Discretionary</u>			
*Community Need	3,840.00	3,055.65	2,938.46
Total Community Need Income	3,840.00	3,055.65	2,938.46
<u>Operating Income - Fees</u>			
VBS	1,791.00	1,214.98	1,304.83
Day Off Program	190.00	140.00	515.51
Total Operating Fee Income	1,981.00	1,354.98	1,820.34
Total Current Ministry, Local Benevolence & Operating Income	549,808.81	546,092.67	529,573.77
<u>Designated Income (Designated donations)</u>			
<u>Building/Capital Expenditures Fund:</u>			
Building/Capital Expenditures Fund Donations	57,466.26	60,876.14	85,822.51
Building/Capital Expenditures- Poffinberger A/C Fund Donations	15,635.00	0.00	0.00
Historic Heritage Preservation	4,055.50	8,928.29	20,644.35
Total Building/Capital Expenditures Fund Income	77,156.76	69,804.43	106,466.86
Designated and Youth Account	13,155.64	4,355.02	234.20
Undesignated Savings	1,130.91	1,581.30	1,508.07
Youth Trust Memorial Donation	1,540.00	2,161.12	6,264.96
Total Designated Income (Donations)	92,983.31	77,901.87	114,474.09
<u>Passive Income (Interest, Dividends):</u>			
Interest from MVB Savings Accounts	101.86	71.04	36.67
Interest from Mission Plus Money Market Accounts	6322.45	7002.62	7068.08
Interest from Mission Term Select CD's	409.13	1509.54	1864.42
Interest from Edward Jones CD's	1524.95	3519.65	6097.81
Interest from Mission Term Select CD - Bartgis	405.59	552.79	612.88
Interest from Flexible Payout Deposit Agreement	9277.04	14426.54	7442.68
AT&TWamer Stock Dividends (A) (to Youth savings)	234.2	5048.28	1665.94
Exelon/Constellation Stock dividends (B) (to Youth Trust money market)	1373.47	79088.12	58890.24
Insurance Policy Dividends	726.63	979.93	1,779.92
Total Passive Income (Interest and Dividends)	20,375.32	112,198.51	85,458.64
Total Income	\$663,167.44	\$736,193.05	\$729,506.50

* Community Need is included with Current Ministry

Summary Statement of Income and Expense
(Summary of all church funds-checking & savings)
Year Ending December 31, 2025

	2023	2024	2025
EXPENSE			
<u>Current Ministry & Local Benevolence Expense*</u>			
Staff Salaries	207,660.49	212,498.44	221,287.22
Staff Benefits	64,978.90	64,522.81	67,308.35
Support Staff Salaries	35,730.64	41,032.00	50,871.50
Congregational Ministry	19,852.40	22,416.57	20,035.28
Operating Expenses	117,836.79	120,916.23	142,966.68
ELCA and Synod Benevolence	43,650.00	45,000.00	45,000.00
Local Benevolence	10,000.00	10,000.00	10,000.00
Designated Benevolence	13,053.51	11,538.97	10,131.81
FICA	18,203.46	18,914.10	19,980.28
Total Current Ministry Expense	530,966.19	546,839.12	587,581.12
Community Need*	2,421.91	819.69	4,518.97
Total Current Ministry and Local Benevolence Expense	533,388.10	547,658.81	592,100.09
<u>Designated Expense</u>			
<u>Building Fund/Capital Expenditures:</u>			
Clothes Closet	144.95		
Roofing and Heat/AC contract	36,270.28	8,552.26	
3 new Air Conditioners & A/C Repairs	33,159.45	1,067.16	10,275.89
Concrete padding for new A/C's			5,400.00
Steam pipe repair & Asbestos removal		46,084.86	
Boiler Repairs			11,505.36
Plowing		3,684.00	
Sealing & RFB Panels			6,429.00
Fire/Smoke alarm		14,572.50	17,986.50
Efficiency Lighting building wide			30,122.06
Lower lot lighting	11,800.00	-	
Insulation 2 new Electric panels			2,550.00
Office insulation & Ceiling tiles			16,534.36
Termite Preventive			5,277.40
Misc Repairs- Plumbing, carpet cleaning, Heat study, motor burnout	11,669.44	5,338.05	5,424.55
<u>Heritage Preservation</u>			
Memorial tree leaves & Steeple inspection/Bracing/Painting & Repair	950.75	9,600.00	22,350.00
Total Building Fund/Capital Expenditures	93,994.87	88,898.83	133,855.12
Youth Camperships	0	3,000.00	2,600.00
Youth Trust	3,090.10		-
Future Needs -	30,000.00	9,000.00	-
Designated & Youth	32,674.51	15,718.38	14,683.68
Total Designated Expense	\$159,759.48	\$116,617.21	\$151,138.80
Total Expense	693,147.58	664,276.02	743,238.89
Income Less Expense	(\$29,980.14)	\$71,917.03	(\$13,732.39)

2025 Designated Benevolence

Samaritan's Purse - Operation Christmas Child

Samaritan's Purse - Operation Christmas Child

Mexico Mission Trip

Total National Organizations

Allan P Linton Emergency Shelter

Beyond Shelter

On Our Own

SHIP

CareNet Pregnancy Ctr (Lent Baby Bottles) Frederick Cty 4H Therapeutic Riding (VBS donations)

Frederick Rescue Mission

Heartly House

Total Maryland Organizations

Middletown Valley Food Bank

MVPHP Craft Fair Basket

MVPHP -

Middletown Volunteer Fire Department

Weekend Backpack Program

Mar-Lu Ridge

Total Middletown Organizations

Lutheran Disaster Relief

Lutheran World Relief - Animals (Poinsettia donations)

ELCA World Hunger Fund

Global Refugee

ELCA Good Gifts

Lutheran Campus Ministry

Tanzania Task Force

Ministries of the Congregation

JOY +50 (Just Older Youth) Lunch

The Joy+50 Lunch group met monthly this past year. We were happy to say that we averaged approximately 45 people for lunch each month. Entertainment was provided at each luncheon which included bingo, travel slides and singing. Joy lunch distributed additional funds to the kitchen and building funds. Lunches in the coming year will be held on the third Wednesday of the month. Our weather policy is that if FCPS schools are closed or delayed we will cancel the lunch that month. We are hoping that this ministry will continue to grow over the upcoming year.

Living History

This year is the biggest change we have had in the vault and archive workroom since we occupied the space back in 1993. Due to moisture that has seeped into the space, our historical records were exposed to high risk of damage. Special panels were installed this year that prevent the moisture seeping into the area, and it helps keep the humidity in a normal range. This not only did the job of protecting our records but also now covers thirty years of water stains on the cement block walls. Upon completion, the storage space on the shelves was maximized freeing up space as the vault was filling up. As things were returned to their proper place a lot of organization and labeling was done making it easier for someone to find what they are looking for. Also, mechanical equipment was installed in both rooms that now maintain a constant temperature and will also help in maintaining recommended humidity levels. We continue to participate in Heritage Days through telling our story through interactive presentations and displays of information.

We continue to maintain the Church Records as required by our Church Constitution, work with our Pastors and church leaders, Cemetery board, our community partners, answered many genealogy requests and worked with the directory committee in compiling our history through pictures and information.

For 2026:

- We continue compiling an inventory list with pictures of church property in our area as part of a church wide project that is in progress
- The United States is celebrating its 250th Anniversary of Independence. Research is being done on Patriot members of Zion who sacrificed and fought for freedom; as of now five can be documented.
- Looking for opportunities where we can tell Zion's story through presentations, both within for members and for the community.

Committee chair wishes to express gratitude to Lois Ahalt and Terry Poffinberger for their help in presenting our history and deep appreciation for Shannon Baker for dedicating many Monday evenings in assisting on whatever work needs to be done.

Altar Guild 2024 Annual Report

The Altar Guild is entrusted with preparing the chancel and its furnishings for worship, baptisms, weddings, and funerals. The overall goal of the Altar Guild is to see that the worship space is always beautiful and in order, both to glorify God and to provide a setting that enables the congregation to worship in a meaningful way.

Altar Guild members made sure everything was in place for each church service. We changed paraments in the Sanctuary as required, set up for communion, arranged for altar flowers and filled candles with oil. Members also cleaned, laundered, and pressed vestments and linens. The Altar Guild purchased all communion supplies, candle oil, baptismal supplies, and other items needed to carry out its responsibilities. Pastor Matt obtained a Ciborium (a silver vessel for consecrated communion wafers) from the ELCA for the Altar Guild's use. Altar flowers were delivered to sick and homebound members and to nursing homes after Sunday services. We set up for all baptisms, weddings and funerals as required. Dorothy Moler made a funeral pall for a child's casket, and it is now on loan to the ELCA.

Seventy-four Easter lilies and tulips and sixty poinsettias were purchased by the congregation and arranged by the Altar Guild to beautify the church. The congregation donated \$834 for Lutheran World Relief gifts at Christmas and \$946 at Easter. Altar Guild members, with the help of Dixie Eichelberger and Mike Ferguson, decorated the church at Easter and Christmas. We made sure all battery-operated candles were working, and we cleaned and placed all wax candles in holders for Christmas Eve Services. The Altar Guild purchased a new artificial Christmas Tree for the Chapel. We prepared palms and arranged for potted palms to be placed in the chancel and chapel for Palm Sunday.

The Altar Guild consists of three committees: The committees take a month at a time and are responsible for flowers, paraments, communion, candles and vestments and linens. The chairpersons for the three committees in 2025 were as follows: Marci Gordon, Jo Ann Poffinberger and Ruth Warnock.

We usually meet three times a year. Pastor Matt or Pastor Diane attended our meetings. We welcomed Sonja Harsch as our newest member this year. We especially thank Jo Ann Poffinberger who served on the Altar Guild for 43 years and was Chairperson for most of that time. Her dedication, hard work and contributions to the Altar Guild will not be forgotten. We also are thankful for all past and current members for their dedication and service to the Altar Guild and to Zion.

Additional members are needed to carry out the duties as mentioned above. Being a member of the Altar Guild does not require a lot of time. New members work with one of our three committees four months out of the year to set up communion, change paraments, etc. They would be trained by the chairperson of that group. Both men and women are welcome to join; if you think you might be interested in joining, please talk to any of the individuals listed below and they can provide details about our different committees and activities.

Members serving during 2025: Marcia Ahalt, Sharon Boyer, Shirley Ferguson (Chairperson), Sharon Finley, Marci Gordon, Sonja Harsch, Lola Haupt, Linda Huckleberry, Cathy Kehoe, Cindy Keller, Diane Kepler, Connie Kinna, Dorothy Moler, Jo Ann Poffinberger, Loretta Rapp, Kathy Shankle, Kathy Stasiewicz, Ruth Warnock, and Sue Whitter.

Christian Fellowship

The Christian Fellowship Committee plans events such as the Spring Fling, the Church Picnic, Reformation Sunday and other smaller events throughout the year. The Committee provides the opportunity for church members to gather for fellowship. The Committee members plan and prepare meals and clean up after the various events.

During 2025 Christian Fellowship hosted the Spring Fling Dinner (previously the Mother/Daughter Dinner) on May 7, 2025. We sold 48 tickets and 48 (including adults and children) were in attendance. The entertainment for the Spring Fling was Paint Night. Each person received two stones and were given markers to paint or write on the stones. Each person kept one and one was given to Zion youths to hide throughout Middletown. Everyone enjoyed this activity.

We planned and coordinated the Church Picnic which was held on June 22, 2025. There were approximately 40-45 people in attendance. All committees were asked to participate in some way with the picnic. Our goal was to increase participation and fellowship among church members. Unfortunately, it was very hot and attendance was low, with only a few children in attendance.

We prepared a Lenten Meal and coordinated and assisted with potluck lunches. We played a major role in planning and assisting with Heritage Day on September 28th. Christian Fellowship members also assisted with Bishop Gohl's 25th Ordination Celebration.

Christian Fellowship has dedicated volunteers, but we are always looking for more members. We welcomed Lisa and Gary Beistel this year. Anyone who is interested in joining our committee can call the church office or email Deborah Reichelt, treasurer@zionmiddletown.org.

Members serving during 2025:

Gene Appleby, Lisa and Gary Beistel, Doug Davis, Shirley and Mike Ferguson, Bob and Kathy Hetrick, Cathy Kehoe, Jo Ann and Barry Poffinberger, Deb Reichelt, Blaine Shatzer, Ruth Warnock

Christian Formation Ministry Team

Church Council authorized the creation of the Christian Formation Ministry Team via continuing resolution as follows:

‘There shall be a **Christian Formation Ministry Team**. This ministry team, in consultation with the church staff, shall have responsibility for the organization, promotion and supervision of the educational opportunities of the Congregation and work with all youth and family ministries. It shall promote the value of service- taking what we learn in education of our faith and turning it into action and evangelism.’

Christian Formation takes Christian Education a step farther. Not just growing in knowledge, we actively take our faith into the world to be the fulfillment of our congregation’s mission to share Christ’s love, grow in faith, and serve others.

Christian Formation at Zion takes place in many ways. In addition to leading worship, our pastors engage in Christian Formation in many ways, including **Lectionary Bible Study, Table Talk, Confirmation, Youth Group, Vacation Bible School, Day Off Programs/Trips, First Communion Classes** and more. **Walk in the Park Bible Study** and the **Women’s Bible Study** are organized and led by lay leaders. One Sunday a month ‘**Footprints**’ presents children with a special learning opportunity during worship. Faithful teachers and helpers offer **Sunday School for Children, Youth and Adults**.

Children’s Sunday School: Zion offers a class for toddlers through 2nd Grade and another class for children in grades 3-5, Sunday mornings at 10:00am. At least 2 adults, a teacher and a helper, are present in each classroom, as is good policy. In January 2026 a Cradle Roll class is being formed. It will be for children from birth to Pre-K and a parent(s). Zion relies upon many faithful volunteers each week to teach and help in the classrooms. And it is a good thing because Zion is blessed with many children! Contact Pastor Diane if you would like to volunteer for a Sunday (or Sundays) as a teacher or helper. Come form and nurture faith in our little ones!

Adult Sunday School: The Adult Sunday School meets on Sunday mornings at 10:00am. The responsibility of facilitating the class is shared among numerous members of the class and there is a special guest speaker from time to time. Scripture, theology, seasonal themes and books by Christian authors serve as subjects for the class. Typically, 2 to 5 Sundays are devoted to any one subject and then the class moves to another subject or theme. Thus, interest in various, diverse, entertaining, and challenging subjects is offered throughout the year. Join in!

Youth Sunday School: A Middle School-High School class meets on Sundays at 10:00am. Focusing primarily on the Gospels, the students read an assigned passage each week and bring their questions about it to class. We then seek to know what Jesus said and what he did, what that meant to the people then, and what it means for the youth today. Faith is nurtured and strengthened. And we also offer ‘2nd Breakfast’ (a light meal between breakfast and lunch) so that growing tween and teen bodies are strengthened as well!

Other Events:

Intergenerational Sunday School--Tanzania: Several members of Zion are members of the Synod Tanzania Task Force and had recently travelled to Tanzania with the Task Force. The Delaware-Maryland Synod is a companion synod with the Mara Diocese of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania. Drawing on the experience of the Task Force, Zion students of all ages were led to discover all things Tanzanian. Our intergenerational Sunday School on April 27 and May 4 allowed us to experience Tanzanian culture, language, worship and even Tanzanian food! We learned of the struggles of our Lutheran family in Tanzania, especially children who must walk long distances to attend school. In response, the people of Zion raised over \$1,700 to repair a school bus to transport children to the Kiabakari School.

Vacation Bible School--Christmas Science: Our evening Bible School was held July 6-10. 47 children, 9 middle and high school mentors, and 28 adult volunteers came together to experience Christmas in July. The participants were fed dinner, and proceeded to the opening session of music, memory verse and theme presentation. Small group rotations included Story Time, Crafts, Science and Games. Despite the screwball science antics of Dr. Hairball and Dr. Lipschtick, they learned the Christmas Story! And 371 food items were brought in to support the Middletown Valley Food Bank!

Teacher Training and Appreciation: This event, held on August 17, 24, and 31 was planned and presented by one of Zion's gifted teachers for the benefit of all of Zion's teachers. Organized around the book, "Teach Like Jesus" by Josh Hunt, the participants learned from Jesus, the Master Teacher. Copies of Teach Like Jesus were gifted to the attendees in appreciation of their faithful service as teachers, helpers and volunteers in Christian Formation.

Thanks:

I have avoided recognizing by name those to whom I am indebted for all their efforts for the sake of this Ministry Team. There are so many who volunteer their time as teachers and helpers, chaperones for day-off trips, who help with Vacation Bible School, who give to support our programs. All who engage in building up one another in our community of faith are part of this ministry team! I am deeply grateful to all for their faithful service.

Clothing Closet

The Clothes Closet continued in its ministry to provide community families time to "shop" for clothing and shoes for those in need for free. Families shop on Saturday mornings from 9 a.m. to 11 a.m. On average, we have eight families visit each week.

In early December, I learned from our volunteer that there was a shopper who was crying because she was so happy to have something to give to her family for Christmas. She was so

thankful to have something to wear and something to share. I was reminded by our volunteer that this IS WHY we do this ministry. I couldn't agree more!

Donations are accepted ANY TIME by placing the clothes in the large brown bin located on the deck of the Clothes Closet building at 118 W. Green Street, Middletown MD 21769.

Our congregation and community members continued their generosity with donations of clothing—with over 670 bags of clothing donated in 2025. There is ALWAYS a need for Sorting at the Clothes Closet which can be done on YOUR schedule. If you are interested, email me at rstaples17@comcast.net or call/text at 301-606-0041. Many thanks to all the dedicated Clothes Closet volunteers who kept the closet area neat and well stocked, who accepted donations and/or welcomed the families on Saturday mornings. Clothing that we do not use is picked up by Greg from the Frederick Rescue Mission to be offered for free at Rescued Treasures – their clothing donations on-site.

One idea we are considering is being open on Wednesdays from 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. when the Middletown Food Bank is open. This would allow our families to shop for clothing and food at the same time. If you would be able to provide support during these hours, contact me at 301-606-0041 ASAP.

Information about our clothes closet can be found by visiting the “Middletown Community Clothes Closet” Facebook page - Don't forget to LIKE and SHARE our page.

Hands to God Crafting

Hands to God crafters meet at 7:00pm on Tuesday evenings in the Garden's Edge to knit, crochet, cross stitch or just work on any type of craft. We make knitted, crocheted and sewn prayer shawls, pocket prayer crosses, baby blankets, and baby hats for the hospital, hats and scarves for the cold weather shelter and chemo hats that went to the Stockman Cancer Center. This year we have sent many hats, scarves and warm shawls to the cold weather shelter. We estimate that we have sent over 200 preemie baby hats to Lily's Hope this year. We took prayer shawls to local nursing facilities. We are excited to announce that we hosted two Winter Wooly Retreats at Mar-lu-ridge in Feb and in Nov. This is an event where you can either stay all day or come and go as you please. Tickets to cover the cost of the facility and food are \$10 each. We thank all who have contributed with yarn and fabric and time to help others. We encourage anyone who is a crafter to join us for fellowship on Tuesday evenings. We are always looking for more members. POC: Alexa Masser, 301-514-4479 alexamasser@gmail.com

Visitation Ministry

In the fall of 2022, I began overseeing the coordination of visitors to our shut-ins. While the pastors continue to make their visits, there is a need for others to visit as well. We have an average of 19 shut ins each month. Our regular visitors are Lois Ahalt, Jim and Nancy Allen, Diana Baker, Shirley Ferguson, Sarah Holter, Jill Lizzi, Bruce McIntosh, Judith Smith, and Rosella Wilson.

Our regular Visitation Ministry volunteers typically visit 1-2 people per month. I coordinate with them to find someone who is local. Once they are connected with a shut in, they call and schedule a time for a visit that works for both of their schedules. **There is a need for ONE more person who visits. If you have an hour or two to spare each month and would like to volunteer, I can be reached at rstaples17@comcast.net or call/text at 301-606-0041.** I've learned through this Ministry that my "gift" is connecting people. You may find that your gift is the enjoyment you give and receive when you visit someone who needs to still feel connected to their Zion family. For this my village is how we all make a difference. One smile/visit at a time:)

Worship and Music

Worship and Music

We are so very blessed to continue our three worship services every weekend. Thanks to our many worship assistants. Thanks also to our musicians who accompany this time. We still are in need of increasing our amount of Saturday night accompanying musicians. Please share that invitation with pianists you may know!

Combined Worship: Four times a year we gather together for a combined worship service on Sunday mornings. We thank our Music Staff for coordinating and moving around schedules to help make that happen, and for all of you making it a point to change your routine to worship together.

Servants in God's House (SIGH): Great thanks to Bre Bybel, our SIGH scheduler, and ALL our worship assistants who make worship possible. If you feel like you want to do more or we aren't getting you on the schedule enough, please do not hesitate to contact Bre and let her know! We are trying our best to make sure things are covered among busy schedules. If you have questions about how to do a certain position, please do not hesitate to talk with a pastor.

Transition of Music Staff: With joy, we celebrate almost a year with Kirk Denton (organist) and Dr. Katelyn McClinton (Director of Traditional Music) serving no longer as interims but now on our staff. Their gifts and perspectives enrich us greatly. We also thank our members, Chris Derr and Fran Taylor for helping with Advent and Lenten special services.

Ensembles: Dr. McClinton is doing a great job in working with handbells and coordinating orchestra. These are areas of new direction and we are grateful she is taking them on. We also thank the Worship Choir for their continued service and beautiful anthems that enrich our worship who are also under Dr. McClinton's leadership.

Children's Choir: Emily is doing a fantastic job of being flexible to increase our Children's Choir participation. This year we tried a different schedule bi-monthly at the end of Sunday School in order to create more time for relationship-building and musical retention. Our Sunday School teachers have been wonderful in accommodating this. This is one of those important ministries that challenges us and creates unexpected joy beyond our best plans.

Lent 2025: During our midweek gatherings, we looked at the theme of hospitality and welcome in our space during Vespers. Our children used the movie *Encanto* to examine the same thoughts of welcome within community led by Noah Nunberg, a local Shepherd University student and Washington County Lutheran.

Holy Week/Easter 2025: We are getting down the traditions and patterns around Holy Week worship that work post-COVID and take into account the Spring Break schedule for local schools.

Pentecost 2025: Another great Pentecost with two confirmations. It is now a stated tradition to read the Acts story with streams and sounds. Prepare for it again next year! It brings a lot of joy.

Advent 2025: This Advent we tried a different worship format from Sundays and Seasons focusing on slowing down in what is usually a very busy season. It used less liturgical music than our normal Vespers. Using the movie *Inside Out*, our children focused on feelings and what they tell us.

Christmas 2025: With beautiful music from our Music Staff and ensembles, great preparation from our Altar Guild, and joyful participation from worship assistants, we had our three lovely Christmas Eve services. We had an increased attendance overall of 60 people from last year. Thanks to those who helped advertise in a new way with yard signs!

Submitted by Pastor Diane Day

Contemporary Music Team

2025 was another good year for the Worship Team at Zion.

Long time members Chris Derr, Joe Harsch and Jim Moler are still the backbone of the team. Aaron Moler, after graduating with a bachelor's degree from Penn State, has rejoined the Worship Team and his participation is much appreciated!

I continue to search for new songs for congregational singing. We try to introduce one new song per month. After I choose a song, we rehearse it and introduce it during offering. Then we

sing it the next week and another time or two that month to acclimate the congregation to the song.

This past Christmas Eve, the Worship Team lead the congregation and visitors in singing familiar Christmas carols at the 4pm service. Although we play them in a contemporary style, we don't stray too far from the familiar versions.

It's been a satisfying year for me as the team leader, and I thank all past and present members for their service. I thank the Pastors, council and members of Zion for trusting and supporting me in this position.

Matt Puziss

Music Ensembles

Choir: From January through June, the senior choir met on Thursday mornings. There was a summer break from June to August, and the choir resumed Thursday morning rehearsals in September. In October, the senior choir participated in the Washington County Conference Community Reformation Service at St. Marks Lutheran Church in Hagerstown, Maryland. Through this participation, the senior choir joined 45 other singers from other Lutheran and Episcopal churches within Washington County. I also served as the director for this community choir for the Reformation service.

Handbells: The Handbell Choir met from the end of November through December in preparation for Christmas Eve services. Rehearsals occurred on Tuesday evenings. The Handbell Choir performed at the 7:00pm Christmas Eve service.

Orchestra: The Orchestra met on Saturday, December 20th at 10:00am for rehearsal in preparation for Christmas Eve services. They performed at the 10:30pm Christmas Eve service.

Children's Choir: Children's Choir has been going well this year! Our turnout was low for Palm Sunday, but after making some schedule changes, attendance has been better and reevaluating the expectations has made it more accessible to the kids who are choosing to participate. Including music at VBS had a huge impact on children's choir overall and greatly improved the participation for the Christmas pageant. Changing the schedule to the last 15 minutes of Sunday school every other week is better meeting the needs of our kids and has not negatively impacted Sunday school. The kids who are there are enjoying it and we are having a good time learning music together. I hope that we can grow the numbers more in 2026 for both rehearsals and performances. Overall, Children's Choir has been going better in 2025 than the short time in 2024! I am looking forward to how it continues to grow and change this year.

Thanks!

Emily

Sunday School Report

	2024	2025
Total Attendance	895	1147
Total Offering	\$348.00	\$452.00

Sunday School Children classes held - 29 weeks

Adult Classes held - 43 weeks

Submitted by M. Lee Ropp

GriefShare

The GriefShare ministry, a faith-based grief support group, completed its 9th year with the Fall 2025 Cycle. GriefShare is offered twice a year, and each cycle is 13 weeks long. Participants may attend Griefshare cycles as often as they need. The materials used, including videos, and participant workbooks, provide education and the understanding of the emotions of grief. During our weekly sessions, we take time to share grief stories, process the emotions of grief and support one another in the grief journey. The participant's workbook provides homework each week that encourages each individual to spend the days, between meetings, to work on their grief in a more private and individual way. Once again at the end of the Fall GriefShare cycle, the Blue Christmas service was offered during the Advent season. Participants and leaders from the group are invited to assist with the Blue Christmas service. The Blue Christmas service is offered with validation that not everyone is able to joyfully celebrate the Christmas season because of their grief. The service provides a safe place to worship and to feel emotionally supported. That is why it is so important for their families and the community of Zion to support the Blue Christmas service. The GriefShare Ministry leaders are Chris Perry, Jennifer Perry, Janet Venneri and Linda Kinna-Engel I pray for God's continued blessings on this ministry. Respectfully, Linda Kinna-Engel

Stewardship Annual Report

The Stewardship committee collaborated with the financial committee this year to launch the stewardship campaign.

The theme for the campaign was "Together, We Build for Tomorrow." Letters were sent to each family, accompanied by pledge cards for each family member. These cards requested financial commitments, as well as contributions of time and talents.

Each week, a video was shown at worship to demonstrate how Zion fosters connections with members and how they can contribute through financial pledges and by sharing their time and talents. Members were encouraged to return their pledge cards or complete them online.

The pledge cards were blessed during the services on Sunday, December 7th. Members were encouraged to submit their pledge cards if they had not already done so.

Respectfully submitted,
Carolyn Milauskas
Stewardship Committee Chair

Safety and Security

In 2025, the Safety and Security Ministry team has worked to maintain the safety of all those who enter and use our campus. This year we held a Stop the Bleed Class; CPR/First Aid Class; and a training session for Ushers, Greeters, and Worship Assistants. We also continued with our quarterly meeting to address and talk about concerns throughout the year. We have also taken on a number of projects including maintenance on our door locks and developing better signage such as adding room numbers to each of our rooms. We hope to complete this last project early in 2026. A lot of what Safety and Security does is talk about possible emergency scenarios and how we can and should respond. If this is something you are interested in doing, please contact Pastor Matt.

Our safety protocols were put to the test this fall when a motor in one of HVAC systems caught fire. While the first caused some stress, the fire taught us that most of our safety protocols worked and only needed some minor adjustments. A major takeaway that we learned after the first is that when the fire department is called, they always go to the front of a building. Normally this is fine, but all of our Knox Boxes are located at the rear of the building by the parking lot. After we learned this, we recommended to the Council that an additional box be purchased and installed at the front of the church so that in the event of another fire or emergency, crews can access our building without destroying our historic front doors.

While the safety and security of our campus remain a high priority, we are also intent on making sure people feel welcome at Zion. As we continue in this work, we will endeavor to create policies and procedures that are not intrusive or prohibit people from worshipping at Zion.

Youth and Family Ministry

This past year has been a time of learning and developing the Youth and Family Ministry. Since the pandemic, we have been trying to find ways to help the youth of our congregation and our families deepen their faith. Many of the programs we started before the pandemic no longer are feasible for multiple reasons which require us to adapt and pivot. Looking back over the past few months, we would like to reflect on some of the most memorable and positive moments.

Midweek Lent

This past Lent, we contracted with Noah Nunberg to lead our program with the children. Noah is a first-year student at Shepherd University and has been a part of our Synod's LYO program while in high school. Noah brings a lot of youthful energy to the program and since Lent, we have also been using him to help with the FootPrints program.

DayOff Program

This past year, we had two DayOff Programs. We spent our first DayOff at Urban Air and our second at Jumbo's Pumpkin Patch. We can offer these DayOff programs free because of generous support from people like you and we are grateful for your support. This program has become a place that many of these kids can build relationships with others outside of worship. In the coming year, we plan to continue hosting three programs.

VBS

There are so many little things that go into making VBS possible and we always seem to forget that until we are in the thick of it. This year was one of the smoothest years we have had when it comes to VBS. Over the past 3 years, we have been putting together a manual for VBS of what works and what does not work. Following that VBS program three years ago, we had a wrap up meeting where we identified the things that worked and the things that did not. We have kept our notes and each year, we add to them so that we don't forget them. This year, we only had two planning meetings. The first was to assign assignments and then we trust the leaders to make it happen. We are happy to report that it not only worked, it succeeded way beyond our hopes. And to top it all off, it appears that we are significantly under budget when it comes to VBS this year. Below is a snapshot of our budget and some interesting stats.

Income	Budget 2024	Actual 2024	Difference	Budget 2025	Actual 2025	Difference
Income Budget (Funds needed to be donated)	\$1,500.00	\$1,500.00	\$0.00	\$1,500.00		\$1,500.00
Thrivent Action team grants	0	\$500.00	-\$500.00	0		\$0.00
Expenses						
Food (50 people per night at \$3 a person)	\$1,500.00	\$484.23	\$1,015.77	\$1,300.00	\$734.23	\$565.77
Crafts	\$350.00	\$388.20	-\$38.20	\$350.00	\$208.00	\$82.00
Decoration	\$300.00	\$0.00	\$300.00	\$300.00	\$40.24	\$259.76
Circulmn and Learning Aids	\$150.00	\$0.00	\$150.00	\$150.00	\$100.00	\$50.00
Games	\$100.00	\$11.99	\$88.01	\$100.00	\$0.00	\$100.00
Advertising	\$200.00	\$760.33	-\$560.33	\$200.00	\$62.96	\$137.04
Thursday Night Celebration	\$400.00	\$320.00	\$80.00	\$400.00	\$340.00	\$60.00
Staff and Volunteer Appreciation				\$200.00	\$165.00	\$35.00
Total Budget Expense	\$3,000.00	\$1,964.75	\$1,035.25	\$3,000.00	\$1,710.43	\$1,289.57
Breakdown of Numbers						
53 Registered Participants				49 Registered Participants (2 no shows)		
4 High School Volunteers				9 Middle/High School Mentors		
13 Adult Volunteers				28 Adult Volunteers		
17 Volunteers Total				35 Volunteers Total		
350 Meals / Total Food Cost =(\$3.45 per meal)				380 Meals / Total Food Cost per meal=	\$1.93	
Total Cost for VBS per Child 2023	\$44.46			Total Cost for VBS per Child 2025	\$36.39	

Take special note to the breakdown. In 2023, we considered that to be a very successful VBS. In comparing 2023 to 2025, you will notice a slight decrease in registered participants but notice the number of Middle and High School Mentors. These same kids aged out of our program but came back to help. And also notice the number of Adult Volunteers. In a world where volunteering for things at church is at an all-time low, we increased the number of adult volunteers from 13 in 2023 to 28. And because Lacey and Darin have been doing the food for the past three years and kept really good notes, they were able to feed everyone for just \$1.93 a meal! Those numbers alone are worth celebrating but the big take away is that our mission of sharing Christ, growing in faith, and serving others was all accomplished during that week of VBS. The kids built relationships with adults and each other, they learned about the Christmas story (and parts of the story that rarely get heard), and they brought in 371 food items to support the Middletown Valley Food Bank.

Youth Group

Our Youth Group continues to meet once a month on the first Sunday of the month after Confirmation Class. We try to do a mixture of trips and staying in. We have seen a pickup in Youth Group attendance this fall and have welcomed a number of new members. In this ever-changing world, we are having to adopt and pivot quickly to meet our kids where they are at. We will continue to work on building relationships and fostering good faith practices for our middle and high school students.

Summer Camp

For the second year in a row, we sent an astounding 15 kids to Mar-Lu-Ridge this summer. Because of the generous support of many donors over the years, we are able to offer a \$200 scholarship to anyone from our congregation to attend summer camp. Two years ago, we sent six kids and we thought that was a large group. We give thanks to God for the experience all 15 kids had this summer, and we thank God for the amazing partnership we have with Mar-Lu-Ridge.

Midweek Advent

We learned some things from our Midweek Lenten program and found that many of our kids are overstimulated on Wednesday nights and need a place to come and decompress. Pastor Diane provided a space where they ran off some energy and then finished out the night by watching a movie and enjoying a snack. This year, we talked about feelings by watching the movie, Inside Out.

Advent Craft and Game night

Our goal for this event is to offer a space for everyone, not just our youth and families to come and take a break from the busyness of December. We brought out a bunch of board games, a Nintendo Switch, and some simple Advent crafts. Pastor Diane made walking tacos, and we all just gathered in the Social Room for a fun, relaxing night of Christian fellowship.

Christmas Pageant

For the second year in a row, we have succeeded in doing a low stress Christmas Pageant. Many thanks to all the parents and our Children's Choir Director, Emily and Sandy Bell, for making this year's pageant go so smoothly. Last year, we moved the pageant from a Sunday night to a joint worship service and have found that it works really well for everyone involved.

Searching for a Youth Director

As we reflect on this next year, one goal we have is to find someone who has the skill set for Youth Ministry and bring them onto the staff. Someone with the skill set to meet our kids' needs would really make our youth ministry grow and shine. This past year, with the blessing of Council, we have embarked on a possible partnership with Good Shepherd Lutheran Church to hire a Youth Director that we can both share. While we are still searching, we do believe that the right person is out there and with this new partnership, we should be able to find the right person.

Thank you

Finally, we wish to say thank you to all the chaperones and volunteers who have stepped up over the past 12 months to help with our Youth and Family Ministry program. We are grateful for your support and especially of your time.

MIDDLETOWN VALLEY FOOD BANK

The Middletown Valley Food Bank continues our mission to serve our neighbors in need. Due to multiple factors including the federal shutdown and cuts to the federal workforce, the number of clients increased again this year. We continue to receive donations from individuals in the community, local churches, civic organizations, and businesses. The traditions of the annual food drive and Blessing Baskets continued in strong fashion. We are grateful for the support we receive from all of these sources.

Our team of volunteers completed the required Civil Rights and Food Safety Training with the Maryland Food Bank. As a strong recommendation from the Maryland Food Bank Regional Director, we have joined the Network Partnership Program. This partnership gives us access to food at reduced costs.

We participate in community events that advertise our mission to provide assistance to the food insecure members of the community. These events include: the Health and Wellness Expo, Empty Bowls Banquet, panel discussion on food insecurity, Heritage Day Festival, and articles written in the local paper and The Frederick Magazine.

Applications were submitted for grant funding. As of this date, we have received a \$10,000 grant and a \$4000 food grant.

The website will be updated in January. It will include a link that will allow supporters to make electronic donations.

The MVFB leadership team, Middletown town officials, and Conestoga Builders are collaborating to fulfill our goal of completing the food bank building project. The project is moving in a positive direction as we navigate the complicated process of permitting. We have satisfied the requirements set by the town by receiving a special exception, setback variances, and fulfilling easement requirements. Currently we are working with Frederick County to meet stormwater management requirements. Once our stormwater application is successfully completed, we move on to applying for the building permits.

AVERAGE NUMBER OF CLIENTS SERVED PER MONTH
2022 48 families per month receiving food for 133 family members
2023 72 families per month receiving food for 206 family members
2024 75 families per month receiving food for 211 family members
2025 83 families per month receiving food for 245 family members***

*** As of December 20, 2025

Design Team

The council appointed a team of four people to come up and implement a plan for updating our spaces to make them more comfortable and usable for ministry. Those appointed were Lori Shupe, Lori O'Dell, Dixie Eichelberger, Deb Reichelt, and Pastor Matt.

In order to figure out how we should approach the project, we first went and toured a church that recently did a bunch of this work to gain some ideas as well as talk through their process. This visit was very valuable, and we learned a great deal about design and the process needed to get the work done. After this, we talked about what needed to change at the church. To help in this process, we went to a commercial office furniture store to get ideas of price and what is available to us. After this, we put together a budget, so that we could implement our dreams into reality. We have completed work in the Chapel by installing new carpet and flooring in both the worship area and the FootPrints room. We have also installed a countertop and cabinets to use in the FootPrints room. We have ordered new Chapel chairs and those should arrive sometime in January or February of 2026.

Moving forward, we have plans to make updates in the Garden's Edge, Living Library, Conference Room, and Youth Room. While the work is not moving as fast as I thought it would, the group is being very methodical in their design choices, which is good because we don't want

to have to redo this work in a year from now. One of the biggest struggles we are facing is the rising cost of furniture and supplies. To help offset some of the expenses, we have put together a Chapel Chair Sponsorship where part of the proceeds goes to purchasing new Chapel chairs and the other portion goes to offsetting the cost of other projects. The goal is to have 100 chair sponsors, and we are at 57 chairs. If you would like to sponsor a chair, you can do so for \$100. You can contact the Church Office or simply write Chapel Chair Sponsor on the memo line of your donation. And thank you!

Quilters

Zion Quilters group has been busy with all kinds of projects at the church. Pillowcases were made and distributed to the local hospitals. Quilt tops were quilted for individuals providing us with the pieced tops. The Quilters sponsored soctoberfest in Oct which saw us donate over 550 pairs of socks plus additional undergarments to the Rescue Mission. The Quilters served several funeral and church luncheons during the year. We purchased the flooring for the entry way into the Garden's Edge from the outside. Because of use the Quilters decided to replace two of the crockpots plus the frying pans in the kitchen. We have also donated additional various knives for the kitchen. Additional funds will be given to the building fund and Rescue Mission and other monies were happily given to the church. Quilters meet every Tuesday through Thursday in the social room at 8:00am – 1:30 pm with a potluck lunch enjoyed by all. We make and work on sewing projects on Tuesday and hand quilt on Wednesday and Thursday. If interested, contact the Church office. Respectfully submitted: Zion Quilters: Alexa Masser, Dianne Shafer, Jeanne Mauro, Liz Kurtz, Kathy Shankle, Elsie Warnock, Denise O'Rear, Sharon Thomas, Judy Zeck, Linda Sanders, Sherry Miller.

Committees of the Congregation

Personnel Committee

The Personnel Committee's activities this year centered around action on several ongoing housekeeping tasks to include completing the annual review of the Personnel Manual, coordinating annual evaluations of church staff, determining proposals for salaries for 2026. Linda Kinna-Engel volunteered to serve on the Personnel Committee when her term as Council President ends. Dr. Katelyn McClinton was brought on to serve as the Choir Director and Kurt Dent will serve as Organist. These two positions are currently contracted Positions.

Bruce McIntosh
Chair, Personnel Committee

Property Committee

2025 was a very busy year for the Property Committee (PC). We have made many necessary and long overdue major improvements that pushed the limits of Zion's ability to fund these projects. We also have been investigating future improvement options for worn out systems and needed repairs.

January

- We continue to have problems with the boiler heating system. For the record, Warner Service seems to be unable to service our system to allow trouble free operation. Matt Weddle with Warner never followed up with us so we started looking for other alternatives to repair our system. The following repairs were done in January:
 - Larry worked with Bill Traube to clean out a blocked screen in a fitting on the condensate return line at the boiler and replace a blocked condensate drainpipe. This allows condensate to now properly flow back to the boiler and eliminate the autofill valve constantly adding water to the boiler. Bill donated his labor; he is a retired plumber/steamfitter; we only had to purchase parts.
 - Larry again worked with Bill Traube to replace a defective steam trap in the boiler room. Eddie Main was able to obtain the steam trap at a discount through the company his son works for.
 - Warner repaired a steam pipe leak in the crawl space under the Sunday School.
- Fluorescent ceiling light replacement with LED lighting was completed. The system includes an app that will allow us to adjust features of the lighting. The Property Committee (PC) discussed who should have access to the app that controls lights and decided the following would be able to make adjust settings:
 - PC Chair (Larry Schaffert)
 - Pastors
 - Dixie Eichelbergerger

- Clinton Appleby
 - Treasurer (Deb Reichelt)
- Putting covers on the light switches in areas with the new lighting to allow the automatic occupancy sensors to control the lighting and block the switches. Deb Reichelt worked with Pastor Matt to select, and order covers which have been installed.
- During the cold snap, the heat in the Choir room and Pastor's offices did not seem to be working. Warner checked the heat, and it was working. The problem is the insulation in the ceiling is improperly installed. Air is getting through the insulation, and the temperature in the space between the drop ceiling and the bottom of the insulation was 37 degrees. Larry and Matt Sanders spent about 4 hours trying to seal up gaps in the vapor barrier foil faced paper with a duct sealing tape but were unable to significantly improve the wind driven air infiltration. We will need to pursue another solution, as this situation is what caused the pipes in the ceiling above the bathrooms to freeze at Christmas time in 2023.
- The lock on the door at the bottom of the handicap access ramp at the rear parking lot continues to be a problem, it sticks. Eddie Main was able to get it working, but we may need to consider replacing some of the exterior doors that do not have seal and operate poorly.

February

- Larry worked with Bill Traube to replace some condensate drain lines that had to be disconnected in 2024 due to a leak. With this repair all known leaks were resolved.
- Larry met with Frank Wisley of All Steamed Up (an expert in older steam boiler systems from Baltimore) to evaluate our system. He recommended some corrective work, and we scheduled a date for him to return to do this work.
- We discussed the service contract with Warner Service; we are stuck with them for another year at this point as they have a 60-day cancellation notice requirement in their automatically renewed contract. We will revisit this in 2026 as we look for an alternative contractor to service our equipment.
- Our fire alarm system was replaced by Somerset Fire Alarm. They replaced the Fire Alarm Control Panel, all sensors and pull stations. Vince Bello headed up the Firewatch that we were required to provide while the alarm system was disabled. We had training for the volunteers so everyone would know what to do. Congregation members signed up for shifts during the times the church buildings were occupied.
- We continue to work on a photo inventory of the various rooms and contents of the church. Clinton Appleby is indexing the photos that were taken by Bruce Albright, and others, so we can identify what additional photos are needed. This project is essential to provide us with a record of the contents of the building and features such as stained glass and millwork throughout in the unfortunate event of a fire or other loss.

- Potomac Edison has a grant program that will provide significant funding for replacement of the HVAC units serving the Library, Vault and work room outside the Vault. Barry and Joann Poffinberger will contribute to this project.
- The exterior foundation wall adjoining the parking lot at the rear of the building has a significant moisture problem. This is causing higher than acceptable humidity levels in the Vault, where we store irreplaceable historic records. In the Social Room, the quilters are battling humidity which affects their quilts and fabrics that they use. We are looking for the best solution as it will get worse once the spring and summer humidity return.
- John Minchoff asked Dixie about putting stones around the HVAC compressors on the East side of the church. Dirt splashes onto the compressors when it rains, this needs to be corrected. The PC discussed options, Dixie was concerned about stones being kicked around when maintaining the lawn in the growing season. The committee will investigate having concrete put around them to eliminate this problem. We will try to coordinate this with the pad for the new compressors for the Archive and Library heat pumps.

March

- Fire alarm replacement is complete, pending final electrical and fire inspections.
- Three fire extinguishers were missed during the annual fire extinguisher inspection, Deb will add them to the list, so they are included next year.
- We discussed the deck on the Clothes Closet building which should be cleaned and sealed this year.
- Vall Boring with Steeples Plus had given us a list of priorities for exterior maintenance and repair of the Church. Eddie will contact Vall to identify the most urgent that should be done this year.
- We continue to have a problem with the boiler not staying lit. Gary with Warner determined that he thought it was the flame sensor. Larry drove to Timonium and picked up a new flame sensor. When Gary went to install it, he discovered there was a loose wire which apparently was the problem. We now have a spare sensor. The burner now stays running.
- We had our annual boiler inspection on March 12; this was performed by a representative from our insurance company.
- Larry met with Frank Wisley of All About Steam for a consultation and evaluation of our system. His opinion is that the first step is to correct the improper control wiring and re-pipe the improperly installed existing control assembly. Where the piping is now located is below the flood level of the boiler which allows water into the steam sensor if the boiler overfills. He will work up an estimate for the cost to correct the improper control installation (primary and overpressure steam sensors and pressure gauge) and modify our control wiring so the boiler can run at low speed and not have to run constantly to maintain a head of steam. He would also adjust the flue gas damper to optimize the burner efficiency. The control modifications should reduce our gas consumption significantly.

- The fans in the bathrooms are frequently left running. We will get Alan Coblentz to give us a price to install occupancy sensors.
- Council approved our cost for replacement of the HVAC systems for the Library and Vault/Archive rooms. Larry will coordinate the work with the contractor.
- Dixie agreed to do mowing again this year for the same price as last year.

April

- There is a spotlight out on the church roof that lights the steeple, Vall Boring will replace the bulb and inspect the steeple to see what work he recommends at that time.
- The Fire Marshall performed an inspection of the new fire alarm system on April 8; they checked every device to be sure everything functioned properly.
- Coblentz Electric completed several electrical repairs/upgrades:
 - Occupancy sensor controls for the bathroom exhaust fans were installed. The fans are now entirely controlled by the sensors; the switches have been removed and blank plates installed in their place.
 - Switches were added to the lights over the kitchen sink and serving window between kitchen and social room since they are not controlled by motions sensors.
 - The problem with the electric receptacle next to the coffee makers was corrected.
 - A double duplex receptacle was added at the serving line area to better provide more adequate and safer power in that area.
- Deb reported that the auto-renew for Warner for the boiler service and HVAC service has been cancelled, we are waiting for a contract that is just for HVAC and does not include the boiler. We will be using All About Steam for boiler service going forward.
- Larry met with two heating contractors, RH Lapp, and will meet with Borlie Mechanical to review our boiler and steam heat situation. Both indicated they would need some kind of design prepared by a design professional (a Mechanical Engineering firm) to give us any prices. We were referred to RTM Engineering, located in Hunt Valley MD, and Larry will meet with them in May.
- Property Committee members met with Pastor Matt to learn how to use the lighting APP. Pastor Matt explained how he went through the entire building and labeled all the rooms and has them grouped by area. This will allow us to adjust how long lights stay on and turn lights on and off along with some other features.
- Larry and Dixie met with Sean Daly, a local concrete contractor, to get pricing on the concrete work we need for around the existing AC compressors and the new heat pumps for the Library and Archive/Vault.
- The PC reviewed Steeples Plus proposal for painting of the exterior roof and steeple base and forwarded it to the Council recommending approval.

May

- Warner performed the seasonal AC systems service, this included changing filters.

- The thermostat wire between Classroom 3 and the Air Handling Unit (AHU) in the attic does not work, there is a break in the wire. Larry will work with Gary with Warner to fish a new wire.
- The wrinkled carpet in the balcony area of the Sanctuary was discussed; we will contact some carpet companies to research a repair.
- We received a proposal from Steeples Plus; the committee members will review and make a recommendation to the Council.
- Our Church Mutual Insurance Company Property and Casualty insurance is up for renewal. They have requested that we fill out a questionnaire and provide them with photos on some items. Larry worked with Deb to complete this.
- We received a quote from Monocacy Chimney Care to caulk around the perimeter of the church where the sidewalks meet the walls. There are some areas that are not sealed, and some of the existing sealant needs to be replaced. No action was taken on this.
- Larry met with Jeff Auburn with RTM Engineering and discussed our existing boiler and steam heating system. RTM will provide us with a proposal to evaluate our existing systems and make recommendations as well as preliminary budgets for various options. We obtained Council approval for this study. The purpose of this is future planning.
- We also scheduled a follow up visit with Frank Wisley of All Steamed Up to tune up our boiler and control system to see if we could correct the deficiencies that caused us constant headaches this past winter. He will come in July to do this work.
- While gathering information for the Church Mutual Insurance questionnaire, Larry discovered that one of the two lightning protection cables in the attic is laying on the ductwork from the Sanctuary air conditioning. This was identified as a defect in the 2012 Capital Asset Survey paid for by Zion, but we never corrected. The second cable is very close to the duct on the opposite side of the attic. Eddie discussed it with Vall Boring who said he could splice the cable to raise it.
- Another electrical item (defect) identified Survey is the two Federal Pacific electrical panels in the Sanctuary area, one is in the short hallway entering the Sanctuary itself and the other is in the equipment room at the rear of the balcony area. We will get a quote from Alan Coblentz to correct.
- Another item identified in the Survey is the outdated electrical switches, located in the organ blower room and kitchen pantry. These are large high voltage type switches and are very old. We will have Alan Coblentz check these out as well.

June

- There are two sets of 3 phase electrical lines in the ground in a vault located near the ramp outside the library. Larry met Alan Coblentz to try to determine what the lines are powering; they were unable to determine and will spend more time in the future.

- While researching the termite treatment for the Clothes Closet building at 118 Green Street, we discovered that there is no record of a termite inspection for the church building at 107 W. Main Street. Larry will set up inspections with Erlich, who does our pest treatments at the church, and Home Paramount, who did the termite treatment at the Clothes Closet building.
- Jon Minchoff has offered to replace bathroom faucets with automatic style, wants to know whether we want to use sensor style or auto shut off mechanical style. The PC voted to approve replacing the faucets with Delta SST1053 Two Handle Metering Slow-Close faucets. We will also replace the shutoff valves at each location at the same time. Eddie will investigate the cost for our plumber to replace the cost for the shutoff valves and labor.

July

- Eddie repaired leaking kitchen sink faucet.
- Larry cleaned condensate drain and corrected refrigerator condensate water puddling in bottom of refrigerator compartment.
- Keith McFadden, PE, with RTM engineering met at the church with Eddie to evaluate our boiler and HVAC systems. Larry provided them with additional documents and plans.
- There is a 3" steam line that has sagged due to Warner Service removing and not reinstalling a support. We have contacted Warner and are awaiting their return to correct the sag.
- On July 5 Frank Wisley with All Steamed Up to perform a service call. The boiler has been operating improperly. He used a probe to analyze the exhaust when the boiler was operating and made extensive adjustments to the operation. It was so out of adjustment, he indicated that is most likely why it kept shutting itself off. It no longer runs at full speed, the roaring when it is running has been quieted. The plan is to have him return in the fall to re-work our controls, so the boiler operates at the correct pressure, and only comes on when there is a call for heat as opposed to running constantly to maintain a head of steam.
- Steeples Plus completed roof and steeple painting included in their proposal.
- The PC reviewed the proposal from Once and Done to apply FRP panels to the exterior walls of the Archive Room, Vault and Garden's Edge. The PC voted to recommend the Council approve the work.
- Concrete around the AC compressors and pad for new mini-split compressors completed.
- New flooring installed in entry vestibule at Garden's Edge.

August

- Deb reported that Warner has told her the AC units serving the sanctuary were low on Freon charge. Most likely because of running on a low charge, two of the compressor fan motors need to be replaced.
- Both termite inspectors found evidence of termites in the crawl space under the Sanctuary. The PC voted to recommend that the Council accept the Erlich proposal.
- Warner serviced the HVAC unit for the Clothes Closet building.

- The PC voted to ask for Council approval to have Frank Wisley return in September to correct the control wiring for the boiler. We will need to have some line voltage wiring corrected by Alan Coblentz as well.
- Icemaker in kitchen failed Health Department inspection, it needed to be cleaned. The quilters took care of this and will monitor this in the future.
- FRP Wall panels installed on foundation walls in Gardens Edge, Quilters and Archive areas.
- New Mini-split HVAC units in Library and Archive areas complete.
- New cabinets were installed in Kitchenette area behind the Chapel and new flooring was installed in same area and in the Chapel.
- We received the RTM Engineering feasibility report. This will assist us in planning for the future of the heat system, replacing the boiler system will be expensive.

September

- There was a fire alarm scare when the motor in the AHU for the Garden's Edge and Archive area burnt up, the fire department showed up and tracked down the source of the smoke filling the area. We will need a new motor; there was no other damage.
- We have a request from Pastor Matt to consider and make a recommendation for installing the sensors (which are free) from Church Mutual, our insurance company. The Council has asked us to research and make a recommendation as to how many sensors are needed and what the cost would be.
- The committee voted to recommend that the Council approve replacing the insulation in ceiling area above the 1992 addition (Pastor's offices, Choir room, etc. We will recommend the Wester Cary proposal, depending on what we hear from Potomac Edison about availability of any grants from them. Volunteers will move contents and remove and replace the ceiling tiles.
- Alan Coblentz corrected improper wiring for the boiler fifth zone, so all zone controls are powered off when the main boiler switch is turned off.
- Frank Wisley added the fifth zone control to the control panel and added modules to the other four zones so the boiler could be set to allow it to only run when heat was called for vs always maintaining a head of steam. He also corrected some improper wiring in a junction box on the boiler and redid some loose wiring which corrected the problem with the air intake fan that is supposed to come on with the boiler not working.
- PC voted to approve obtaining a CM sensor recommended by Church Mutual. We need to determine who will receive text alerts if the alarm goes off.
- Potomac Tile and Carpet looked at our balcony carpet and determined it cannot be stretched as it is glued down. We discussed option and will research runners.
- The folding wall at rear of Social Room was repaired, it was out of adjustment and lubrication.

October

- We had several of the hinged doors serviced, they needed adjustments and lubrication.
- When we had the AHU motor fire we realized we do not have a Knox Box at the front of the church. This allows the Fire Department access without breaking down our door. Pastor Matt has obtained a box for the front door; Larry will install it.
- We pressure washed and stained the Clothes Closet deck and railings. We also cleaned the ramp up to the front porch; the ramp was sealed a few years ago.
- Warner replaced the wire to the thermostat in classroom 3 and the system is now working.
- The defective motor in the Garden's Edge AHU was replaced.
- Erlich has completed the termite treatment around 107 W. Main St. and 118 Green St. We will now have an annual inspection on both buildings going forward.
- Warner added one hanger to the sagging steam pipe; he will need help to get the line straight again. They will most likely need to cut a section of pipe to straighten it. Larry called Warner to ask about schedule and is awaiting a response.

November

- The ceiling insulation over the 1994 addition was replaced. Volunteers removed the existing ceiling tiles, Western Cary Insulation applied spray foam insulation to the bottom of the roof deck, eaves and down the outside wall to the ceiling. This provided insulation and eliminated the main problem which was air infiltration. Volunteers then installed new ceiling tiles. Jack and Amy Newkirk then painted the conference room and three offices.
- Defective steam trap in organ bellows room below altar replaced by Bill Traube.
- Alan Coblenz identified what wires in vault outside Library are for, they power the Sanctuary and Social room AC compressors. Alan will get us a price to replace the vault as the lid is broken and it is unsafe. He also determined that the circuit breaker for the Sanctuary AC unit is over amperage, he will replace it with the proper size breaker.
- PC voted to approve the snow removal proposal from Matthew Adams, salt price went up \$10 to \$35, pre-treat went up \$100 to \$500.
- Ceiling tiles disturbed in the archive room during installation of the new mini split refrigerant lines have been replaced.
- Eddie painted the short sections of wall above the new FRP panels white to match the panel color.

December

- We realized that we never received notice that the final fire alarm inspection had been completed. After exchanging emails with Frederick County Permits, they acknowledged that the inspection had passed back in April with one additional item needed. We needed a copy of the approved plans to be next to the Fire Alarm Control Panel (FACP). We provided this and they completed their final inspection on December 15, 2025.

- Deb has gotten complaints about the Sanctuary being cold. The heat works fine now; the problem is we keep the thermostat set at 68 and it needs to be adjusted for services. We are researching programable thermostats for the zones for the boiler heat system.
- Replace front stained glass window fluorescent lighting with LED lighting which is also now on a timer. Eddie Main provided the new lights, Alan Coblentz installed them.
- Replace Sanctuary and Balcony electric panel interior components and breakers with new.
- Projects we will be researching and working on for 2026:
 - Replace deteriorated lintels over windows on 1924 addition.
 - Caulking building perimeter at sidewalks.
 - Painting of interior walls in areas where the walls are soiled.
 - Repairs or replacements of exterior doors that are in poor condition and/or have no weatherstripping.
 - Identify and correct problem with piping causing the water hammer on boiler zone 5.
 - Magnetic hold-opens and automatic door closers for key fire doors.

Finance Committee

Members: Ken Basler (Chairman), Bob Hettrick, Deborah Reichelt, Rev. Matt and Diane Day, Chris Derr, David Gordon, Linda Kinna Engel, Brian Lizzi, Jack Newkirk, Kim Marcantonio

The committee address several issues in 2025. Three of the issues are standing responsibilities the committee addresses on an annual and as need basis. The first issue is managing investments of various funds determining what will yield best rates of return. The second issue is preparing for recommendation the annual budget for presentation to the Church Council for their approval. Our third major responsibility is for the committee to conduct an audit of the financial records of the church for the preceding year. This year the committee also made three other recommendations to Church Council.

This past year the Finance Committee also reviewed the standard operating procedures as related to the Church's finances. There were several important changes in the document; the first change was in terminology from restricted/unrestricted funds to designated/undesignated funds which reflects terminology our church uses. The second major change was changing language giving the Finance Committee responsibility over the organization funds to the congregation's funds and the third change was changing language stating we were using an accrual basis accounting method to a cash basis accounting method.

In 2026 the committee plans to revisit the church's insurance coverage to attempt to reduce premiums and achieve more stability in coverage.

Kenneth Basler

Mutual Ministry Annual Report 2025: Zion Lutheran Church

What is Mutual Ministry?

The Mutual Ministry Committee connects our leaders and congregation as one "Body of Christ." We are here to support the mission of Zion Lutheran by caring for our leaders and ensuring we all grow together in faith. Our work is built on five pillars:

- **Communication:** Listening to the congregation and speaking openly.
- **Growth:** Encouraging our leaders to keep learning and developing.
- **Accountability:** Checking in on the health of our shared goals.
- **Affirmation:** Celebrating the unique gifts of our members and staff.
- **Vision:** Dreaming together about where God is leading our church.

Essentially, we act as a bridge—listening to your needs, praying for our pastors, and making sure our church family has the resources to thrive.

More information on Mutual Ministry can be found at

[\[https://www.zionmiddletown.org/files/ugd/f93d68_4528f68940d047a99e4514b63ad9c511.pdf\]](https://www.zionmiddletown.org/files/ugd/f93d68_4528f68940d047a99e4514b63ad9c511.pdf). If this is a committee you would be interested in joining, please speak with the Pastors or any current committee member.

Committee Roster & Terms

According to our constitution (C13.04), the committee consists of six congregational members serving staggered two-year terms. Each member is eligible for reappointment at the end of their term.

Name	Role	Email	Status / Renewal Date
Jonathan Minchoff	Committee Chair	jminchoff@gmail.com	Renewed Feb 2025

Terry Poffinberger	Committee Member		Renewed Feb 2025
Vince Bello	Committee Member	VPBello@comcast.net	Renewed Feb 2025
Linda Kinna-Engel	Council Rep	smlginfinity@comcast.net	Review Feb 2026
Bre Bybel	Committee Member	branan.roys@gmail.com	Review Feb 2026
Stacey Black	Committee Member	black1988@comcast.net	Eligible for Renewal Feb 2026
Pastor Matt Day	Clergy	pastormatt@zionmiddletown.org	N/A
Pastor Diane Day	Clergy	pastordiane@zionmiddletown.org	N/A

Year in Review: 2025

This year, the committee focused on organizational stability, leadership evaluation, and aligning our staff's time with the congregation's evolving goals. While our meeting schedule faced some interruptions in the latter half of the year, we made significant strides in defining the future "Transformation" of our ministry.

Key Accomplishments

- **Pastoral Evaluations:** A major milestone was the completion and submission of comprehensive Pastoral Evaluations to the Personnel Committee in August.
- **Leadership Continuity:** Successfully processed Mutual Ministry membership renewals for Jon M. (Chair), Terry P., and Vince B. to ensure stable leadership.
- **Budget & Governance:** Reviewed and provided feedback from the congregation on new communication techniques, church budgeting, Council's "Take 5," and meeting minutes to improve transparency.

Major Topics of Discussion

- **Vision for Transformation:** We focused on the theme of "Transformation"—the change experienced when encountering Christ—and explored how to move from being "reactive" to "proactive" in our mission.
- **Staffing & Adjustments:** Discussed critical staffing needs, including the search for a co-Youth Director, a Media Specialist to manage digital outreach, and grant-writing support.
- **Community Engagement:** Explored new ways to communicate church needs, such as a "Day in the Life" internship for local college students and the "Index Card Idea" to identify the unique talents within our congregation.

Looking Ahead to 2026

The fall of 2025 proved to be a busy season for Zion. Our September meeting was cancelled to allow members to prepare for Heritage Day, and subsequent meetings were delayed due to spray foam insulation projects and Christmas preparations.

We are excited to resume our regular meeting schedule in **January/February 2026**. Our focus will remain on fostering mutual vision and ensuring our leaders have the support they need to lead our congregation in service and faith.

Nominating Committee for Council

Committee – Linda Kinna-Engel, Bruce McIntosh, Jeff Derr, Carolyn Milauskas.

The committee was formed to find 4 people to serve on council for 2026. 4 members were nominated by the Committee: Mrs. Lois Ahalt, Mrs. Kaylin Luther, Mrs. Sandy Bell and Mrs. Sharon Boyer. Mr. Bruce McIntosh agreed to remain on the Council for 1 more year to fill the

seat vacated by Ms. Sheri Huckelberry. We are grateful for the members that have agreed to serve.

Appendix

Agenda for the Annual Congregational Meeting

February 1, 2026

CALL TO ORDER AND ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

PRAYER

DETERMINATION OF THE AGENDA

READING AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES [of the 2025 Annual Congregational Meeting Minutes]

CONSENT AGENDA

- **STAFF AND LEADERSHIP REPORTS**
- **FINANCIAL REPORTS**
- **MINISTRY REPORTS**
- **STANDING COMMITTEE REPORTS**

RECOGNITION OF RETIRING COUNCIL MEMBERS

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None

NEW BUSINESS

- Adoption of Proposed 2026 Budget
- Council Elections

(see page 71 for a short biography of each nominee)

ADJOURNMENT WITH THE LORD'S PRAYER

BENEDICTION

Zion Lutheran Church Congregational Meeting Minutes

Annual Congregational Meeting Minutes

February 2, 2025

The annual meeting of the Zion Church Congregation was held on Sunday, February 2nd, 2025, at 10:00 AM in Zion's Sanctuary the President being in the chair and the Secretary being present. A quorum was met with 74 voting members present at the meeting.

The agenda item was displayed on a screen above the altar. A motion was made and seconded to adopt the agenda. There being no discussion, the chair called for the vote. The motion was adopted.

Prayer: Pastor Matt Day

The President summarized the procedures incident to debate explaining that every member of Zion has a right to speak to the motion before it is finally acted upon and subject only to general limitations on debate established by parliamentary law or the rules of the congregation. The rules were adopted without objection.

The reports of the Staff and Leadership, Ministry and Standing Committees were received and placed on file. There were no requests for items to be removed from the consent agenda. The President called for a motion to accept the consent agenda. The items on the consent agenda were adopted.

VOTED:

ACM 2025-02-1 To adopt the consent agenda.

The Financial report was presented by the treasurer, Mrs. Deb Reichelt. The congregation was asked if there were any questions. No questions were asked.

The Council President continued the meeting by thanking all Committee and Ministry Team leaders for their work and support throughout the year. She then asked the retiring Council members to stand and be recognized.

The only item of unfinished business considered during the meeting was the resolution proposed by the Church Council to ratify the amended constitution approved by the Congregation during the November 2024 Special Congregational meeting. The President opened the floor for debate. Following debate, the president called for a voice vote. The resolution for adoption of the amended constitution was accepted unanimously.

VOTED:

ACM 2025-2 -2 To ratify the amended constitution proposed by the Constitution Committee, endorsed by Zion's Church Council, and approved by the Congregation at the special Congregational meeting in November 2024. (enclosed)

Under new business, the Chair of the Finance Committee, Ken Basler was called upon to present the proposed 2025 budget. A motion to approve the budget was received and seconded. Following discussion a voice vote was taken; the vote to approve the budget was unanimous.

The last item under new business was the election of new council members. A slate of nominees was presented by the nomination committee. The congregation was asked if there were any more nominations from the floor. No further nominations were presented. A vote was then taken, and the following members were elected as new council members: Lori Odell, Sharon Finley, Addison Shupe and Jack Newkirk

VOTED:

ACM 2025-2 -3 To approve the election of Lori Odell, Sharon Finley, Addison Shupe and Jack Newkirk to Zion's Church Council

Following the elections the President asked if anyone would like to present any remarks during the open forum. Mrs. Pat Staples came forward and thanked all individuals who helped with the recent sorting of clothing at the clothes closet and Mr. Doug Davis thanked the Congregational President for the outstanding service that she provided over the past year.

The Annual 2025 Congregational meeting adjourned following the benediction at 11:59 AM on February 2nd, 2025.

Bruce McIntosh, Secretary

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Evangelical Lutheran Church Zion
Current Ministry
2026 Proposed Budget
(Will be voted on at the annual congregational Meeting)

	Budget 2025	Budget 2026	25 to 26 Variance	25 to 26 Var %
<u>STAFF SALARIES</u>				
Pastor	90,216	92,680	2,464	2.7%
Pastor	90,216	92,680	2,464	2.7%
Pastoral Salary Resource Pool	4,000	3,000	(1,000)	-33.3%
Church Administrator	-		0	N/A
Youth Co-Director	32,000	32,800	800	2.4%
Financial Treasurer	37,564	39,067	1,503	3.8%
Asst Administrator	-		0	N/A
Total Staff Salaries	253,996	260,227	6,231	5.4%
<u>STAFF BENEFITS</u>				
Pastor's Pension and Benefits	29,102	30,213	1,111	3.7%
Pastoral Continuing Education	1,500	1,500	0	0.0%
Co Pastor's Pension & Benefits	29,498	30,653	1,155	3.8%
Administrator & Youth & Family Director Pension & Benefits	-		0	N/A
Financial Treasurer Pension & Benefits	3,944	4,102	158	3.9%
CYF Director Continuing Education	500	300	(200)	-66.7%
Sabbatical Contingency	1,000	1,000	0	0.0%
Staff Transportation	4,000	3,000	(1,000)	-33.3%
Reserve for Contingency	300	300	0	0.0%
Total Staff Benefits	69,844	71,068	1,224	1.3%
<u>SUPPORT STAFF SALARIES</u>				
Director of Traditional Music	-	13,200	13,200	N/A
Organist	17,376	9,717	(7,659)	-78.8%
Contemporary Worship Leader	15,909	16,307	398	2.4%
Financial Secretary	4,820	4,941	121	2.4%
Jr Choir Director	1,530	1,868	338	18.1%
Music Support	6,500	7,800	1,300	16.7%
Total Support Staff Salaries	46,135	53,833	7,698	11.4%
Employer's Share-FICA	22,205	23,199	994	4.3%
Total Personnel Expenses	392,180	408,327	16,147	5.0%
<u>CONGREGATIONAL MINISTRY</u>				
Christian Education	2,295	3,040	745	24.5%
Congregational Life	6,000	5,700	(300)	-5.3%
Caring Ministries	550	550	0	0.0%
Outreach	10,100	8,850	(1,250)	-14.1%
Worship and Music	2,150	2,300	150	6.5%
Children, Youth and Family	14,250	11,850	(2,400)	-20.3%
Total Congregational Ministry	35,345	32,290	(3,055)	-9.5%

Evangelical Lutheran Church Zion
Current Ministry
2026 Proposed Budget

	Budget 2025	Budget 2026	25 to 26 Variance	25 to 26 Var %
<u>OPERATING EXPENSES</u>				
Office Supplies	3,200	2,600	(600)	-23.1%
Telephone	4,400	5,500	1,100	20.0%
Church Supplies	3,870	3,750	(120)	-3.2%
Postage	1,200	1,400	200	14.3%
Paper Products (cleaning)	750	950	200	21.1%
Electricity	31,800	35,000	3,200	9.1%
Fuel	7,500	7,500	0	0.0%
Water and Sewer	2,900	2,200	(700)	-31.8%
Equipment Maintenance Contracts/ & Repairs	15,058	14,000	(1,058)	-7.6%
Insurance	20,850	28,000	7,150	25.5%
Synod Convention	2,000	1,600	(400)	-25.0%
Cleaning Services	9,650	9,300	(350)	-3.8%
Technology Operations	9,350	10,000	650	6.5%
Payroll Processing	1,400	1,400	0	0.0%
Piano and Organ Maintenance	6,450	6,297	(153)	-2.4%
Van Misc. Expenses	1,500	1,500	0	0.0%
Property	36,620	40,720	4,100	10.1%
Stewardship	260	400	140	35.0%
Archive	622	700	78	11.1%
Leadership Development	500	500	0	0.0%
First Response	815	800	(15)	-1.9%
Background Checks	300	300	0	0.0%
Staff Development	600	800	200	25.0%
Total Operating Expense	161,595	175,217	13,622	7.8%
Total Personnel, Congreg Ministry & Operating	589,120	615,834	26,714	4.3%
<u>BENEVOLENCE</u>				
Synod Benevolence (DE/MD ELCA)	30,300	30,300	0	0.0%
Benevolence - Mar-Lu-Ridge	12,000	12,000	0	0.0%
Benevolence - Lutheran World Relief	2,250	2,250	0	0.0%
Benevolence - St. Dysmas Prison Ministries	450	450	0	0.0%
Total ELCA/Synod Benevolence	45,000	45,000	0	0.0%
Local Benevolence*	10,000	10,000	0	0.0%
Total Benevolence	55,000	55,000	0	0.0%
Total Current Ministry Proposed Budget	644,120	670,834	26,714	4.0%

* Local Benevolence: Distributed to entities as decided by council.

Agencies that have received funds include, but are not limited to: Heartly House, SHIP MVFD,
 Beyond Shelter and Frederick Rescue Mission

Council Nominees' Bios



Kaylyn Luther

I moved to Middletown in 2005. I have been a member at Zion since 2008. I joined the Congregation with my mother, Carolyn, and sister, Andrea. I have been married to my husband, George since November 2014. I am a mom of three; Nicole (10), Georgie (6) and Natalie (2). They were all baptized at Zion. We currently live in Brunswick, Md. I have been an in-home childcare provider for over 9 years.

At Zion, I volunteer to assist with Sunday school, help with VBS, chaperone the day-off program and have helped lead crafts for special events. In my free time I enjoy painting, arts & crafts, and reading.



Lois Ahalt

I am honored to be asked to serve in a leadership role at Zion. My family has been a part of Zion for six generations; I've been deeply connected to this congregation. I was born in the valley and baptized here in 1958. As a teenager, my faith came alive through the many youth programs at Zion. One of the most meaningful programs was the Martha Circle (a Young Mothers Bible study group) in the 1980s. After getting my BS in Nursing from Albright College, I worked in healthcare for a while, first at Frederick Memorial (now Frederick Health) and then returned to school at Georgetown University to become a Family Nurse Practitioner. I have also worked for the National Cancer Institute and the Dept of Defense in occupational health. I fully retired in 2024. I married another lifelong member, Ike Ahalt in 2013. I have three children and two stepchildren: Jonathan Minchoff, Jill Lizzi, Jana Horne, Kaithlin Pivonski, and Becca Aquilar. Currently I love spending time with my 11 grandchildren, sewing, and gardening. The community of faith at Zion is vibrant, and I hope we can continue to glorify the Lord for many more generations.



Sharon Boyer

Zion Lutheran Church and Middletown have been a part of my life since the day I was born. My parents, John and Hilda Seachrist, my brother, John Jr and I lived at 18 W Main St. which was located very close to the church.

I graduated from MHS and then attended college in Frostburg. Upon graduation, I got married and taught music in the public schools for five years until my husband, Larry, and I had our children, Jeffrey and Anna Beth.

Once our children were both in school, I worked for the Clerk of the Circuit Court for 30 years until retirement. Sadly, Larry passed away from ALS just a few years after I began working again.

Presently, I am a member of the Altar Guild, the Worship Choir and I volunteer in the church office a few days a month. Church council will be a new opportunity for me to serve God and the members of Zion.



Sandy Bell

Hello, my name is Sandy Bell. Thank you for giving me this opportunity to serve as a Council member to our church.

I was born in Frederick County and grew up in the Lewistown/Mountaindale area. When I was twelve, my family moved to Walkersville. Our family attended St. Paul's Lutheran Church in Walkersville. I was baptized, confirmed and married there. As a child I attended Sunday School, Yourh Group (called Luther League) and sang in the junior and senior choirs.

After graduation from Walkersville High, I attended Pfeiffer University in Misenheimer North Carolina. I received a teaching degree in early childhood education with a concentration in science. After graduation I came back home and began my teaching career at Green Valley Elementary school teaching first grade. Throughout my 32-year career, I taught at Kemptown, Yellow Springs, Myersville and Monocacy. I also earned my master's degree from Hood College in Pre-K through third grade education.

My husband, Lee Bell, is originally from Trimble, Tennessee. He became a Marylander after serving in the Naval Cryptologic Service and then worked as an Electrical Engineer for the Boeing Company. We have two children, Katie Bell and Will Bell. Katie teaches English at Middletown High and lives in Brunswick. Will is an Engineering Software Developer, coaches track at Middletown High and lives in Walkersville.

The activities that keep me busy are reading, working on craft and sewing projects, helping my family and taking care of my two cats, Maggie and Ziggy. I also play tennis at the Tuscarora Tennis Club three days a week.

In 2021, I became a member of the DAR and also participate in their voluntary activities. My sister's extensive research into our family genealogy found very deep ties to early colonial

Frederick County, and to numerous patriots of the American Revolution. We recently found the names of some third and fourth great grandfathers who were baptized here at Zion. Guess I really need to check that out in the Archives!!

I have a very busy mind. Sometimes I think inside the box. At other times when trying to solve problems, my mind thinks outside the box. Please know that as a Council member I will always be open to listen to all points of view and help in any way I can.