

THE BEACON

A MINISTRY OF ZION LUTHERAN CHURCH

SUMMER 2025 EDITION

Together

Upcoming Events

First Sunday of the Month

Every Tuesday Night

First Sunday of the Month

First Thursday of the Month

Third Wednesday of the Month

Last Monday of the Month

Confirmation from 4-6 p.m. (Last Session is May 4)

GriefShare (Last Session is May 20)

Youth Group from 6-8 p.m.

Table Talk meets at 6 p.m.

JOY Luncheon from 12-2 p.m.

Hope to Faith at 3 p.m.

April 27

Intergenerational Sunday School

April 27

Liturgical Dancers join us at 9 a.m. and 11 a.m.

April 27

Servants in Christ Event

May 1

Table Talk at Zion at 6 p.m.

May 4

Intergenerational Sunday School

May 4

Women's Bible Study (every Sunday night)

May 4

Confirmation/Youth Group

May 5

Golf Tournament

May 7

Ladies' Spring Fling

May 11

Footprints

May 26

OFFICE CLOSED

May 30-31

Synod Assembly in Westminster, MD

June 5

Table Talk at 6 p.m.

June 8

Pentecost/Joint Worship at 10 a.m./Confirmation Sunday/Children's
Choir Sings/Footprints

June 8

Work Day

June 19

OFFICE CLOSED

June 22

Church Picnic at 3 p.m. at Memorial Park

June 23

Baseball Night at Camden Yards!

July 3

Table Talk at 6 p.m.

July 4

OFFICE CLOSED

July 6-10

VBS from 5:30-7:30 p.m.

July 13

Footprints/Summer Catch Up Breakfast

August 7

Table Talk at 6 p.m.

August 10

Footprints/Summer Catch Up Breakfast

August 16/17

Backpack Blessing

September 1

OFFICE CLOSED

Zion Lutheran Church Middletown, MD

Share Christ's Love, Grow in Faith, and Serve Others



A WORD FROM PASTOR DIANE

How do you know someone loves you? I have asked this question in the Children's Sermon so many times I think the kids might be sick of it and probably some adults too. I ask it because sometimes we forget. We just keep doing all the things we need to do and we forget how much people love us AND the different ways people show they love us without saying the words.

I, your Pastor, sometimes forget you love me. I, your Pastor, get so wrapped up in taking care of you because it's also my job, that I also have a hard time letting you love me. I, your Pastor, get focused on the tasks that need to be completed and forget the faces and feelings behind them. I, like many other

people, have learned how to compartmentalize things so that I do my job well and I forget we are also humans and emotions don't always do so well with definitive boundaries.

I love you very much, and I want you to know I have felt your love for me. You show me when you say the words. You show me when you look into my eyes as I give you communion. You show me when you shake my hand as you leave church. You show me when you step up to serve. You show me when you hug me. You show me when you have sent cards and gifts. You show me by texting and Facebook messaging me. You show me when you have brought my family food. You show me when you ask my husband



about me. And it feels so good to let down my walls and be loved by you. Thank you, for the ways you love me.

Please know how much you are loved, dear friends. Please take a moment and think about how those closest to you show their love for you. Think about your favorite ways to show others you love them. And think about the ways you can show love to those you don't know but who need to know just as much as those you do know. For friends, we are nothing if we do not have love- 1 Corinthians 13: 1-3.

In gratitude and love,

Pastor Diane Ray



A WORD FROM PASTOR MATT

This past Lent, we have been talking about the importance of creating sacred spaces that are welcoming to all people. We realize that we threw a lot of information at you all and it is going to take some time to digest, but I really hope that we can continue to talk and reflect on this subject matter for years to come. I concluded my final sermon in the series by telling a story that I wanted to reshare as a part of my newsletter article.

There was a guy who had these tattoos all over his body and spiky, orange mohawk hair. He started visiting churches and he walked in and most of the time the greeters would say "oh sir, you must be lost. Can we help you with directions to somewhere?" The man always wanted to say "Yeah I am lost. Can I find Jesus here?" But his fallback position was always to say, "Can you tell me where the closest Walmart is?" "Oh yeah, no problem" and they're very

nice. They took him outside. "Well, you just go down here. Hope you have a great day." One day, he ended up at a little, non-descript church parking lot with just a few cars on the lot. Not a lot going on. He walked through the door and these two little old lady greeters are there and they take one look at him and say, "young man your hair is on fire...Now young man, you go in there get some spiritual food. That's what you do and when you come out, we're gonna take you downstairs and give you some physical food. You're gonna love it." The man goes inside, the message was given and the worship experience comes to an end. Afterwards, they hunted him down and they say, "Now you come with us." They start to feed him like a king and put him up at a table. There's one young adult down there and the young lady whispers to the guy, "Can you go over and just say hi to him." The guy responds, "He scares me. I'm not going." The man has eaten his fill and is ready to head out and as he's going up the steps, the two little ladies come over and ask him, "Now what's your favorite pie?" "I don't know, I like blueberry pie and of course apple pie." He settles on apple pie. One of the ladies said to him, "Now, next week you come back here because she's gonna cook a pie and I'm gonna cook a pie and you're gonna tell us who has the best pie." In the meantime, he takes off all of the fake tattoos. He cleaned up his hair. He comes through the door and the same two greeters are standing there; they take one look at him and say, "What happened to you?" He said, "Yeah, I cleaned it up." They looked at him and say, "We liked the way you were, but we will take you as you are."

Truth be told, I got a little choked up at the end when I told that story because it reminded me of my home congregation and how they loved and treated me. For better or for worse, St. James played a major part in making me the pastor, father, and man that I am today. They were not perfect and in some ways, seeing their imperfections taught me what not to do. But one thing I will always remember was their encouragement. Mr. Bill, a member of St. James, taught me how to play the guitar for free. As I learned a new song, the congregation invited and encouraged me to play, even if it was a secular song. I played many of the Beatles' songs for the congregation, but they didn't seem to mind. They supported me and I never forgot that. Those ladies reminded me of the people of St. James. They took me for who I was and loved me. The moral of this story that I told was that we, as Christians, are called to take people as they are. We can encourage them where they need to go and guide them in their formation, but before we do any of that, let's start with taking people as they are.

We are by no means perfect and thank God for that because if we were perfect, we would never know what it means to be redeemed. Instead, let's spend this Easter season praying for God to send the Holy Spirit and guide us to where we need to go.

In Christ,



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.

Our Top Ministry Priorities for 2025

• 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.

• 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.

• 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.



On Being the Church...

Interview of Dixie Shafer Eichelberger by Mary Ann Marcantonio



I met up with Dixie in her office at the cemetery building recently and I share with you what I learned about a woman whose faith is tried and survives. Her story, like the others before her, tell us how God walks besides us, both in good times and the worst of times.

Not many in our valley have the distinguished pedigree and can claim Middletown as their ancestral home; Dixie Shafer Eichelberger can. And that is not the only honor bestowed upon her, she is a direct descendant of a German immigrant, Conrad Crone, who arrived in Philadelphia on 17th of September 1738 on the ship, “Thistle.” Mr. Crone, her 4th great-grandfather, so generously presented the early Lutherans of the valley the land our church sits on. Dixie’s ancestors worshipped in the first building on this land, a log cabin circa 1783; the second church, a brick building of 1814; and the current building. Zion

didn’t have a full time pastor until about 1796 mostly due to no parsonage. Conrad Crone donated that land to the church as well for the purpose of building a home for a pastor and his family. That first parsonage, built about 1798, still stands today on Washington Street, now a private residence.

Like the six generations before, Dixie’s parents, Charles and June Shafer, brought her to Zion for baptism and was confirmed by Rev. Hoover on 30th May 1971. She recalls confirmation classes being held for two years when classes were offered on Wednesday evenings and Saturday mornings. As a confirmand, Dixie has one cherished memory that stands out, memorizing the names of the Books in the Bible, in order as they appear in the Sacred Book. This discipline learned has served her well over the years and she can easily find what Book she is searching for.

Dixie and her brother Joe, grew up under the shadow of Zion’s steeple, literally, making their home at 204 West Main Street. Her youthful years were spent carefree and everything that any young person wanted she found right in town. Dixie attended Middletown schools and upon graduation she attended Frostburg College and finished with a degree to teach. But farming was her passion and she just couldn’t see herself in a classroom; and she spent many years helping at the farms of the Burriers, Dick Ahalts, Brandenburgs and any other farmer who needed help. She loved her cows!

I asked Dixie to tell us something about herself that we might not know. Contrary to what many think, she can cook and crochet. She does cook for herself although not her favorite; she would always prefer to be outside either with animals or in her garden. Although she hasn’t picked up a crochet hook in a few years she has no doubt that it would be easy enough to remember. So now you know the truth!

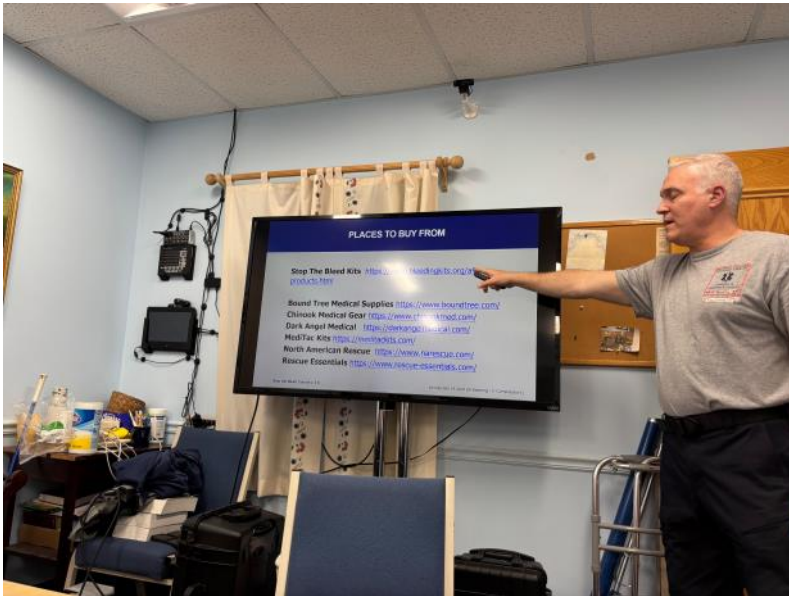
Having such an impressive lineage Dixie remains very humble. She follows the examples of her ancestors, if there is work to do for the kingdom of God, then get busy. Many don’t know that Dixie maintains the

cemetery records. She meets with families, in their most desperate times, in preparation of the burial of their loved ones. She is not the first in her family to be a member of the Cemetery Board; her great grandfather, Samuel Grove Crone, also served on the board. Dixie credits Kenneth Reeder as her mentor who gave her the encouragement to take on a board position in 2002, in a very much man's world. She arranges the maintenance and care of the cemetery and its building and arranges the opening of graves when needed. She works with local youth organizations that place flags on the graves of our veterans. And if you're at the church on a morning of the week, you might see the cemetery gator outside the door with a very handsome and well behaved dog, Buddy, who patiently waits for his master's return. Dixie doesn't get too far without her sidekick!

"How has your faith served you Dixie?" Our faith sustains us every day as we face the blessings and challenges that life presents us. But it is in the face of tragedy that our faith either holds us up or we walk away from it. Dixie was faced with the unexpected and tragic death of her husband, Wyatt. They were coming home from a softball tournament in Virginia when a drunk tractor trailer driver lost control and hit the vehicle Wyatt was a passenger in. Dixie was in the car behind and saw the accident as it happened and never felt so helpless to protect the one she loved. A marriage of eight years had tragically ended, a heart broken 34 year old widow faced the rest of her life alone, mourning the loss of her Wyatt and all the lost dreams of their future. Anger consumed her and over time God has granted her peace and comfort. It is the ever present loving God and the love of her church family that held her up in those early days and she credits Pastor Turley and Ruth Miller as the pillars of faith that were her strength and who she could lean on for support. Dixie has learned that it is through her pain and loss that she can be God's instrument in bringing healing to others who face the similar sting of death of a loved one. It is no surprise that the "face" of Zion's Cemetery is one who knows the gentle and caring path in which the grieving must walk. Dixie also has turned her pain into a ministry called "Hope to Faith" helping others to navigate the dark days of grief with the hope of learning to live with grief. This group meets on the last Monday of the month and she invites anyone to join who looks for healing.

"What do you miss about the years passed?" Living on the main street here in Middletown for 65 years, she misses the quiet, laid back town she fondly remembers. She grew up at 204 Main Street and shortly after she and Wyatt were married they bought the home next door at 206. Now the street has a constant flow of traffic, and the noise and the loss of the nostalgia of a small town add to the longing for the "good old days." Looking for a more peaceful and tranquil life, Dixie left Main Street for more peaceful days in the countryside. As life slows down, Dixie still enjoys the fellowship while helping the Ruritan Club when they do butchering and the preparing of apple butter which has been a financial blessing to the church treasury over the years. This fall marks the 40th anniversary of the tradition of making apple butter which Dixie has helped nearly every year. The social aspect of this custom has left fond memories of the saints that have met their heavenly reward. Even though these social events, are as enjoyable, she still looks forward to the solitude of working in her garden. But her greatest loss is her father, who was the greatest man she has ever known and who had the most influence on her life.

So, what's been happening?



Stop the Bleed Class

The Safety and Security Ministry Team from time to time holds special trainings for all members in order to be able to handle an emergency at Zion. At the beginning of April, we welcomed Brunswick Volunteer Ambulance and Rescue to Zion to lead a nationwide class called Stop the Bleed. It was very informative and we really appreciated our trainer taking the time to show us how to prevent someone from bleeding out in an emergency. We are hoping to offer another CPR/First Aid training this fall.

Confirmation Class Silliness

On the first Sunday of every month, our confirmation class gathers to talk about faith and Jesus. In February, we were talking about the Lord's Prayer and we got to the fourth petition (Give us today our daily bread) and how God gives us all that we have. To drive that point home, we did a skit called "The Rat Race" which describes two lab rats. One of them has realized that if he pushes the button, a scientist will give him a snack. This rat assumes that he is making the food every time he pushes the button, when in reality, he is just pushing a button. It was a good conversation to talk about God giving us that daily bread and explaining what that daily bread is according to Luther's explanation.



Video Feed in the Nursery

If you do not know, the Welcome and Engagement ministry team did a makeover of our nursery room. They painted, cleaned out the toys, acquired new furniture, added some artwork and added a TV so that we could have a video feed of the worship service. However, getting that live feed to the TV has posed some challenges and high cost. Thankfully, Pastor Matt specializes in getting square pegs to fit into round holes and he figured out a way to use Zoom and a \$140 micro-computer to make it all work. Now if you need to utilize our nursery, you can not only hear the service, but see it on the big screen. In the coming months, we plan to rededicate this space. Be sure to check the bulletin for more details.



Welcome to the Family!

Since the start of the year, we have welcomed four new members into the body of Christ here at Zion: Haley Ahalt, Tucker Engestrom, J. Richard Staples, and Xander Wilson. Luther described baptism as “no greater jewel” and we certainly agree!!! Welcome to the family, y’all!



A new spot for breakfast

It feels like this has been years in the making because the Middletown Lions Club and our Church Council have been talking about hosting a breakfast in our Social Room for a while. This past year, they finally were able to make all the arrangements and they had their first breakfast in February. They sourced a lot of their ingredients locally including the sausage. They

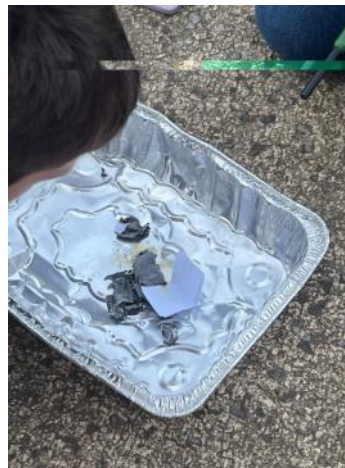


just recently held their second breakfast and it was almost standing room only! We hope that the success will continue this fall when they return to host another breakfast on October 11. Mark your calendars and make sure you get here early to find a seat!



Science experiments in Sunday School?!?!

Sort of...it was more like lighting things on fire! These photos were taken right as we started Lent and Mrs. Jamie was talking to her class about Ash Wednesday, Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, and Easter Sunday. And what better way to talk about Ash Wednesday than to show them how we make the ashes! We have a pretty great Sunday School with many dedicated teachers and volunteers along with a pretty great group of kids. Check it out sometime at 10 a.m.! We always have room for everyone!



Our Dedicated Tech Team is growing!

Covid brought some new digital ministries, including livestreaming of our worship services so that those who cannot be physically present can still be a part of our community. It takes a dedicated team of volunteers to make this ministry happen and we are grateful for each of them and the work they do. If you want to learn a new skill, we would be happy to teach you how it all works. Thomas Day has even started running the livestream for us!

Palm Sunday

Let's just start out by saying that it was warmer this year than it was last year. After lots of reminding from the Pastors to dress appropriately, we donned our light jackets and started worship outside where we read the story of Jesus entering into the city before his death. We blessed our palm branches and then made our way back into our Sanctuary singing our hosannas.



Once we were inside and warmed up from the cold, we saw and heard just how quickly those shouts of praise and thanksgiving from the crowd turned to shouts of "Crucify him!" Palm/Passion Sunday is always a hard Sunday to grasp but it is

important to keep both of these stories together because otherwise we would go from celebration to celebration and forget the part where God overcomes death and the grave. Special thanks to our Children's Choir for performing, our extra lectors at the 11 a.m. service for adding a special touch to the Passion reading, and to the Handbell and Worship Choirs for their special music!



The Three Days—Holy Week 2025

Maundy Thursday

Holy Week is unique in that it takes three days to tell the story of God overcoming the grave. Part 1 began on Maundy Thursday. We gathered downstairs for dinner prepared by the Council. Afterwards, we made our way upstairs for worship. Maundy



Thursday is the weirdest of the Three Days in that the focus is on the last commandments that our Lord gave the Church: Confession and Forgiveness, Foot Washing, and Holy Communion. Most of us don't like to have our feet touched but the command from our Lord is clear: "Unless you wash one another's feet, you have no share with me." In most traditional Maundy Thursday services, you would simply focus on the three commands or mandatums, but we know people experience things differently and learn through different means. So we again utilized different stations where people could explore and experience during the washing of feet. These stations included a sensory table, coloring station, journaling station, and prayer and anointing station. It is a weird service but it is in these weird moments that God tends to show up. The liturgy ended with the Stripping of the Altar which lead us into part 2.



Good Friday

Good Friday's focus is on reading the Passion according to St. John, prayer, and reflection. What is unique about our liturgy is that it is mostly led by the congregation as a reminder that we all are active participants in the Passion. Our Good Friday liturgy is steeped in old traditions dating back to the 3rd and 4th centuries. The service begins with a large candle being carried in but hidden throughout the liturgy. It is brought back into the sanctuary and left on the altar near the cross at the end. The words, "We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you. For by your holy Cross you have redeemed the world." remind us of the hope that still is to come on Easter. The Good Friday liturgy doesn't end on a note of despair but on hope. A single lit, which has been hidden since the beginning of the service, is brought back out to remind us that God's light still shines in the darkness and that we have one more part of the story, remaining to be told.



Easter Vigil

On Saturday night, in joyful expectation we gathered to join in a tradition that dates back to the first century—the Easter Vigil. On the night before Easter, the Church would gather to read scripture starting at Genesis 1 to hear the salvific story of God. The liturgy moves from one location to another and along the way, we follow the Pascal Candle. Eventually, we made our way back to the Sanctuary and joyfully proclaimed, “Alleluia, Christ is risen!”

Easter Morning

Almost 400 people joined us on Easter Sunday to shout Alleluia and praise God for the gift of the resurrection. Our Christian Fellowship Ministry provided a breakfast of coffee and items that could be eaten in the Social Room or taken to-go, but we were delighted to see so many people stay and join in conversation with one another. We had two great worship services on Easter morning. Matt and the Worship Team sang their hearts out to a packed congregation. The Orchestra, Hand Bells, and Choir sounded fantastic as always. Thank you to everyone who made Easter Sunday so special!



Community Easter Egg Hunt

On April 19, a silly little rabbit left a bunch of Easter Eggs all around our campus, but thankfully, a bunch of eager volunteers showed up to clean them all up. And you know we could not only do a massive Easter Egg hunt...We also had snack station, crafts to make, popcorn to eat, story time, and a community service station where we put together baggies of hygiene supplies donated by Zion to the Middletown Valley Food Bank.



A Walk in the Park

A whole lot of people went for a walk in the park. This Bible Study was originally started after Covid as a way to study the Bible safely outside. After fears around covid subsided, the group continues to meet twice a year at Othello Park to study different books of the Bible. You are always welcome to join them. To learn more about their group, check out the announcement on page 16.



Worship Opportunities



Pentecost

with the Rite of Confirmation
Combined Sunday Morning Worship
on June 8, at 10 a.m.

Join us as we celebrate and
give thanks to God for working
in the lives of our confirmands.

Worship Services

Saturday:

5 p.m. Casual Worship

Sunday Services:

**9 a.m. Contemporary
Worship**

11 a.m. Traditional Worship

Zion Worship Service

Viewing Options:

To view our weekly recorded worship service any time during the week, click on the webpage link at www.zionmiddletown.org and it will take you directly to the video. The link for the livestream can be found on our website; click the link and it will take you directly to the video.

Carnations for Mother's Day

JOIN US IN CELEBRATING MOTHERS AND ALL WOMEN WHO PROVIDE MOTHERLY LOVE AND CARE ON MOTHER'S DAY WEEKEND. WE WILL BE GIVING CARNATIONS OUT TO ALL WOMEN THIS WEEKEND AT WORSHIP.

Pops for Pop!

In celebration of Father's Day Weekend, we will be giving out "Pops for Pop" to everyone on June 14th & 15th at all worship services.



Christian Education

The 4th Annual Walk in Othello Park Bible Study

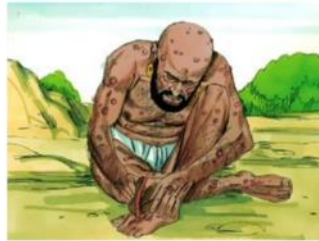


1901 Jefferson Pike, Knoxville, MD
Wednesday's @ 6:30 – 7:15 pm
April 23-May28

**Guess what book of the Bible
we are studying?**

And you thought you had problems...

Grab your copy from the office today!



For more information, contact Donna Huffer
at donnajhuffer@comcast.net

Dogs are welcome too!

Sunday Mornings

Unless otherwise
noted, Sunday Morning
Christian Education is
always available! Grab
a cup of coffee, a
doughnut and join in
the conversation no
matter your age!

SUNDAY SCHOOL EDUCATION

SUNDAYS AT 10 A.M.

**ELEMENTARY, MIDDLE, &
HIGH SCHOOL CLASSES**

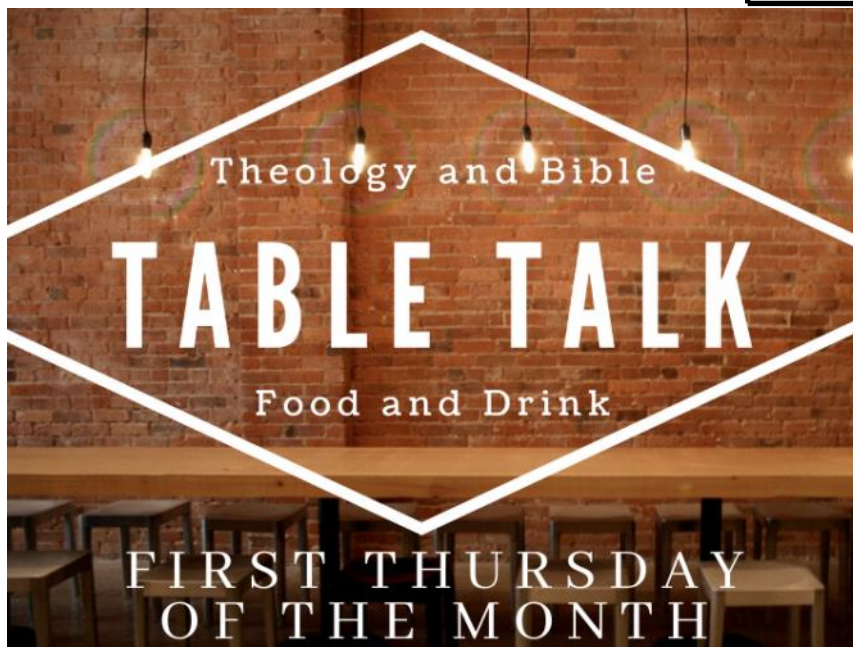
SUNDAY MORNING ADULT EDUCATION OPPORTUNITIES



**ADULT FORUM
MEETS IN THE CHAPEL
AT 10:00 A.M.**

**&
MUTUAL CARE AND SUPPORT
MEETS IN THE LIBRARY
AT 10:00 A.M.**

What is Mutual Care and Support? Sometimes we all just
need a place to come, enjoy a cup of coffee, chat with
others, and hear you are not alone. Try it out this Sunday!



In May, we will meet at Zion. At the May gathering, we will
plan where our summer meetings will be held!



Restarting on
Sunday, May 4 at 6:30 p.m. and every
Sunday for 6+ weeks

Location:
The Derr Farm Pavilion
At 7800 Picnic Woods Rd.

More details to follow but if you have
questions in the meantime,
contact Jamie Derr.
Email: frmrgrl17@aol.com

Adult Sunday School Calendar

Date	Topic	Teacher
April 20	Easter/Breakfast (No Adult Sunday School)	////////////////////
April 27 May 4	1st Intergenerational Sunday School (All ages together in one class!) Tanzania Project	David Baker Lois Ahalt
May 11 May 18 May 25 June 1	<i>Redirection: Discovering Hope in the Unexpected</i> Book by Susan Vitalis	Sheri Huckleberry
June 8	Pentecost: Combined Service (No Adult Sunday School)	////////////////////



THE FIRST SUNDAY OF EACH MONTH
FROM 4-6PM
AVAILABLE BOTH IN-PERSON AND ON ZOOM

Last Confirmation Class for the School year is May 4th. Youth Group will continue through the summer on the First Sunday of the Month.

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IGNITE YOUR FAITH

YOUTH NIGHT

YOUTH GROUP WILL MEET
ON FIRST SUNDAY OF
MONTH FROM 6-8 P.M.

YOUTH GROUP IS OPEN TO 5TH
GRADERS, ALL MIDDLE AND HIGH
SCHOOL AGE KIDS!

2025 Footprints Upcoming Dates



May 11th

June 8th

July 13th

August 10th

September 14th

Join us on the second Sunday of each month at the 9:00 a.m. service for Footprints! Youth of all ages will gather together after the Prayer of the Day for a lesson, activity and craft. We will return to worship in time for communion.
If we have a 10 a.m. Combined Worship then we will also have Footprints at that service.

VBS

SAVE THE DATE

Vacation Bible School at Zion Lutheran Church

JULY 6-10 • AGES 2-11

5:30 p.m. - 7:30 p.m.

Dinner Included



Are you a Christmas lover? Do you wish you could celebrate and decorate more than once a year? Let's do it! This year, we are going to celebrate Christmas in July at Zion. We are going to pull out some decorations and add some sparkle that we always love to our halls and Sanctuary. During worship, we'll sing Christmas carols and use our Advent and Christmas liturgical texts. Knowing how donations slow in the summer, let's serve our community by collecting food for the Middletown Valley Food Bank just like we would give in November and December. Let's remember God, Immanuel, is with us all year to rejoice and teach us to love and let's do it with that Christmas spirit!



**Registration for
VBS will go live**

June 1

Be sure to check out our
Youth and Family page.

Help Needed!

Vacation Bible School is just around the corner and we need you to help make it a success! This is also a great way for youth to get service learning hours. Let the Office know if you are interested!



And don't forget about Summer Camp

Registration is now open!

We have a number of kids from Zion attending Mar Lu Ridge this Summer. Don't be left out! If you are not sure if you're ready for overnight camp then you should definitely check out DAY CAMP.

Register today at www.mar-lu-ridge.org

Scholarships from Zion are available!

May 4, 2025

MLR FAMILY WORSHIP DAYS

In partnership with MLR we are offering an engaging, youth centered worship for families with young children living in the greater South Mountain area from Hagerstown to Frederick

3:30pm - 4:15pm

Worship in the outdoor chapel & barn @ MLR - get ready to sing, move, hear stories, worship God, and have FUN!

Snacks are provided

4340 Mountville Rd. Jefferson, MD 21755

RSVP with Pastor Charlie Frekot

PastorFrekot@gmail.com | 301-834-8003



Ways to Give

Food donations are needed now more than ever!

Food items in demand include: Canned tomatoes diced or crushed, Rice-a-Roni, Canned peas, Canned fruit, Sugar, Tea bags, Small cans of coffee, Crackers, jam or jelly, Jell-O or pudding mix, Salad dressing, & Instant potatoes

Donations can be dropped off outside the chapel or taken directly to the Food Bank on Wednesdays from 1-3 p.m.



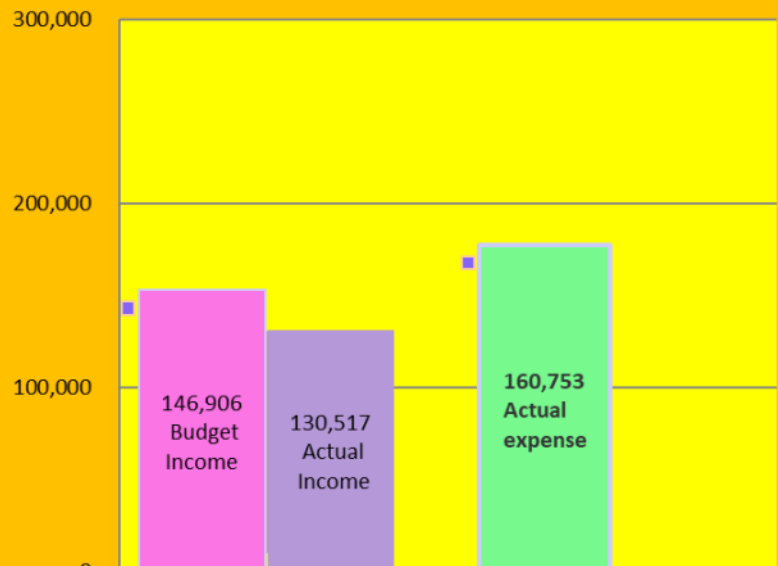
WEEKEND BACKPACKS

Hunger doesn't take the weekend off

Our Backpack Ministry will be meeting the needs of students on the weekends when they do not receive food at school.

Please consider donating a food item or writing a check to Zion to show your support. Make sure you write "Weekend Backpack" on the memo line to help children throughout the school year.

Zion's March Generosity



Budget/Income Information– YTD as of March 31, 2025

YTD Proposed Budget income \$146,906 vs YTD Actual Income \$130,517.

YTD Proposed Budget Expense \$162,502 vs YTD Actual Expenses \$160,753.

Actual Income is less expenses in March 2025 by \$30,236



CARENET
BABY BOTTLE
CAMPAIGN

Baby Bottle Campaign Update

Many thanks for all of your support for the Carenet Baby Bottle donations. Zion members and friends have always been great supporters. Thanks again and may God continue to bless Zion.



Become A Zion Ministry

SPONSOR

Give today either by check or online. Make sure you write in the memo line where you wish to be generous. **And thank you!**

WE GOT A DAY OFF!

3-4 times a year, we invite children from our congregation and community to join us on their day off from school. We spend the day playing games, exploring, and having fun. These events are offered free but do come at a cost. Are you interested in sponsoring a child in the Day Off Program? It only costs \$50 to sponsor one child. Perhaps your kids have all grown up. Give a gift today and make sure the next generation has the same amazing opportunities your children did. Got a parent who is hard to shop for at Mother's Day, Father's Day or a birthday? Sponsor a child in their honor.

Camp Scholarships

Mar-Lu-Ridge is an amazing place where relationships are formed each and every summer between other campers and with our Lord. At Zion, we offer a \$200 scholarship to anyone connected with Zion to go to camp. Last year, we sponsored 6 kids. This year, even more kids from Zion are going to camp which is amazing! You have an amazing opportunity to make Summer Camp at Mar-Lu-Ridge possible for a child here at Zion. Just like the Day Off Program, you can give in honor of someone, make it a gift for that hard-to-shop-for member of your family, or simply to make an impact in the life of a young person.

VBS



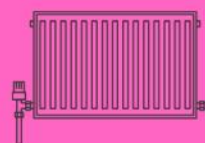
VBS is a great mission and ministry of Zion. We make sure every child who comes through our doors is welcome, fed, and included. We offer VBS free to everyone interested in participating, but that doesn't mean there isn't a cost.

It costs about \$50 a child to make VBS possible.

Make a contribution today and help make sure VBS remains a central and important ministry here at Zion. Give the gift of VBS today and help ensure that VBS remains a place where all children can learn, grow, and feel welcome.

A Fire Alarm Pull Station

Our nearly 40 year old fire alarm system has finally reached the end of its life. Nobody really ever notices the fire alarm system but it is important part of making our space safe. The total cost of the project is \$30,000. Your donation or \$100 helps ensure that our building remains a safe place for all those who come to Zion for worship and community functions.



A Radiator

Our heating system in the church is getting older and harder to start up each year. We spend a significant sum of money to repair leaking pipes. We are beginning to research new options to heat the sanctuary but that will be a major expense. Your gift of a \$100 helps us make sure our holy space is warm and comfortable this winter and for many winters to come.

Community Events

4th Annual
Middletown's Memorial Day Ceremony
Honoring Our Fallen Heroes

Monday, May 26, 2025

Flag Court at Memorial Park

South Church & Franklin Streets
Middletown, Maryland



Hope to see you there **11:00 AM** Bring a chair

★ Master of Ceremonies, Ed Moser, ★

Invocation & Benediction, Rev. Michael Rubeling from Holy Family

★ ROHRERSVILLE CORNET BAND CONCERT ★

★ Clopper-Michael Post #10 American Legion Honor Guard/Boonsboro ★

🇺🇸 Presenting the Colors with a Three-Volley Rifle Salute 🇲🇩

★ Burgess Miller & Commissioners Honor Our Fallen Heroes ★

★ Commentary on Sacrifices of Those Who Served ★

★ Laying of Wreaths at Memorials ★

🎺 TAPS 🎺



Special thanks to the Sons of AMVETS Squadron 9 for being our Tent Sponsor

Middletown's Memorial Ceremony is not an official component of the Department of Defense or any Military Service.



2025 Country Roads & Gardens Tour

June 28 & 29, Sat. & Sun., 10am–4pm

Tickets Available On-line at Eventbrite at

<https://2025CountryRoadsandGardensTour.eventbrite.com>

Enjoy a delightful day exploring charming country roads and beautiful gardens throughout the picturesque Maryland mountains and valleys of Braddock, Middletown, Myersville, Wolfsville, and Smithsburg! This self-guided driving tour will take you to a variety of lovely landscapes, views, and garden spots to take in the natural beauty of history rich farmlands, memorial gardens, extensive landscapes, woodlands, private outdoor residences, and school educational gardens. In addition to the inspiring gardens, various locations will also feature garden and rock scavenger hunting, "en plein air" artists, specific garden activities and other garden and craft products from local vendors available for purchase. So get your tickets that are good for either day, mark your calendars and get ready for a scenic day of natural creativity and beauty at the following gardens:

- Dahlia Den & Gardens on Stone Rd near Braddock
- Valley Ho Farm on Picnic Woods Rd, Middletown
- Zion's Memorial Garden on W. Main St, Middletown
- Surreybrooke Gardens on Balt Nat Pike, Middletown
- New Bremen Garden on Myersville Rd, Myersville
- Six Wicket Vineyards on Church Hill Rd, Myersville
- Stoney Gardens near Myersville and Wolfsville
- Wolfsville Elementary School Garden in Wolfsville
- Woodland Trail on Wolfsville Rd, Smithsburg
- Painted Pastures on Little Antietam Rd, Smithsburg

Country Roads & Gardens Tour tickets are valid for both Saturday, June 28 and Sunday, June 29 and the tour will be a rain or shine event. You can start the tour at any of the garden locations by showing your online Eventbrite purchase confirmation or green ticket (301-639-3862 for advance purchase) to receive a tour wrist-band ticket and brochure with map and garden descriptions (each garden can only be visited once over the course of the tour weekend). Advance Eventbrite On-line tickets can be ordered at \$25 (plus processing fee) and Tour Day Tickets will be \$30 (only available at Myersville Town Hall). You can plan to visit the gardens all in one day or spread them out to cover each during the two days. Food trucks may be located at specific gardens or you can pick-up a lunch along the tour to enjoy a garden picnic. You can participate in garden scavenger hunts and search for painted rocks to take and rehide at other locations to pass a smile onto the next finder. Tour proceeds will benefit local non-profit organizations like the Myersville-Wolfsville Area Historical Society (MWAHS), community programs and further beautification enhancements of participating gardens. The MWAHS will provide a local display at the Myersville Town Hall on Main Street, Myersville and will be the exclusive location to purchase tour tickets during the tour weekend in-person.





ANNUAL

Vintage Vehicles IN THE VALLEY

CAR - TRUCK - MOTORCYCLE - TRACTOR SHOW

June 7, 2025



FUN FOR THE *Whole Family!*

REGISTRATION 9:00^{am} to 11:00^{am} SHOW OPEN FREE TO THE PUBLIC 11:30^{am} to 3:00^{pm}

Tricycle Riding Event - Children 2-4

Bicycle Riding Event - Children 5-6

MAIN STREET
MIDDLETOWN



Dash plaques: For the First 100 Registered Vehicles

Registration Fee: By Donation

Live Classic Rock and Roll By: Vinyl Fever

Benefit for: Main Street Middletown and Warrior Canine Connection

Food Vendors, Games, Raffles and More!

PEOPLE'S CHOICE TROPHY: (Voted by spectators only)

ENTRY OWNERS WILL VOTE FOR: Best in Show (Best Total Votes by Owners)

Best Stock Automobile – Best Modified Automobile – Best Stock Truck

Best Modified Truck – Best Motorcycle – Best Specialty Vehicle

Best Import – Best Vintage Tractor

Register Your Vintage Vehicle Now at: WWW.MAINSTREETMIDDLETOWN.ORG



Ministry Updates



JOY +50 (Just Older Youth) Lunch

J.O.Y. 50+ seniors have been enjoying lunch and programs/bingo for the past few months. The J.O.Y 50+ usually meets on the third Wednesday at noon for lunch and a fun program. HOWEVER the November and December J.O.Y. 50+ lunch will be combined due to the way the holidays fall this year. Cost is \$10 per person. Advance reservation is a must for planning purposes; please call Zion's office at 301-371-6500 or Alexa 301-514-4479 or email Alexa at amasser202@comcast.net. Everyone is welcome!



Upcoming 2025 JOY 50+ Lunch Dates

May 21

Jun 18

Jul 16

Aug 20



BASEBALL *Night*

TICKET ONLY

\$35

MONDAY

23
JUNE

**6:35 P.M. START TIME
AT CAMDEN YARDS**

WE HAVE 14 SEATS AVAILABLE IN THE VAN

We will meet at Zion at 4:30 p.m.
and drive down to
Christ Lutheran to park and then
walk up to Camden Yards.

If we have more than 14 people
interested, we will find a way and
get everyone down to the park!

We will see you at the Yard!

Hope

To

Faith

Hope to Faith

If you have experienced a loss recently or at any time in your life, please know that you are welcome to attend for a time of fellowship and food!

Contact Dixie Eichelberger at 301-667-7586
for more information.



Your Heart. Your Hands.

You have a heart for service, and the work of your hands is a blessing.

GHM's hands-on projects are a meaningful way to make a difference in the world. Our partners have asked for these specific items - they will be joyfully received overseas. Once delivered to GHM's warehouse in Minnesota, these projects are shipped by container along with vital medical supplies and equipment also requested by our partners.



Rolled Bandages Project

Mission hospitals and rural clinics are the frontline for healthcare for millions of people across the globe. Most lack even the most basic supplies, including bandages, and many have little or no access to clean water. Sterilization is difficult and it can be a challenge to have enough clean bandages for daily patient care. GHM rolled bandages help meet that need. Although most often used for wound care, the bandages can be useful in other ways at hospitals and clinics where resources are scarce. GHM rolled bandages have been spotted holding an IV in place, and tying up broken surgical lights. By the end of 2023 GHM had sent almost 2,800,000 bandages to international partners - that's more than 3,100 miles of bandages!

How can you get involved?

Please donate any used laundered **white** sheets to Zion and place them in the labeled bin located in the Quilters area. The sheets will be cut into long strips and then rolled using a handmade crank rolling machine. Various groups at Zion will be participating in this mission project.

For Questions see Lois Ahalt 301-514-5735

Noisy Offering Updates

February—Allen P. Linton Emergency Shelter

\$478.58

March—Lantern Hill

\$357.99



Thank you to all who donated!

Upcoming Noisy Offerings

April 18th and 19th

On Our Own

May 16th & 17th

Heartly House

June 20th & 21st

Lutheran Campus Ministry

July 18th & 19th

Middletown Vol. Fire Department

August 15th & 16th

Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service

Homemade Apple Butter

We have pints still available for
purchase in the Church Office.

**\$6 for a
Pint**



Clothes Closet Update

We are open for donations on Saturday mornings
from 9 - 11 a.m. If you need to drop off after
hours, there is a drop location below the front
porch. Thank you!



Lee Ropp is Crushing Cans for Our Youth!

Lee Ropp has crushed and recycled 236,414 Aluminum
cans for the benefit of Zion's Youth and Family
Ministry! Cans can be dropped off on the deck of the
Clothes Closet.

Lee says "Keep em' Coming"

ALTAR GUILD—WE NEED YOU!

Would you like to
participate in something that is
meaningful and
rewarding? If so, the
Altar Guild is the place for you.
And it doesn't require hours

and hours of your time. Every third month you would be helping with communion setup/cleanup, checking candles for oil, delivering altar flowers, etc. You would receive training and assistance with each task. It really isn't hard! We meet several times a year and have an annual luncheon. At least think about giving the Altar Guild a try and if it isn't for you we will understand. If you are interested, please give Shirley Ferguson a call (301-662-7775) or talk to any Altar Guild member after services. You will find them in the Altar Guild Room (Sacristy) right outside the Sanctuary.





We are in need of servers to help prepare food in the kitchen on May 7th for the Ladies'

Spring Fling Dinner. We also need helpers to serve food to the ladies in the Social Room. Anyone available to help with either, please let me know by Shirley Ferguson or Deb Reichelt know. Please consider helping with this wonderful event!

Ladies Spring Fling Dinner – May 7th

Ladies, you are cordially invited to join in Zion's annual Ladies' Spring Fling Dinner. Tickets will go on sale starting April 6. The cost is \$12 per person, kids ages 6 to 16 are \$6 and 5 and under are free. The menu will be fried chicken, scalloped potatoes, mac n cheese, green beans, fruit cup, dinner rolls and drinks! Dessert will be cake and ice cream. There will



be a Paint Night to follow. You can paint inspiration rocks for yourself and for the community. Zion's youth will

distribute rocks throughout neighborhoods.

Contact the Church Office – 301-371-6500



Church Picnic

Mark your calendars for the Church Picnic on June 22nd!

Zion will be having our annual Church Picnic on Sunday, June 22nd at 3:00 p.m. at Memorial Park. Family fun activities will begin at 3:30. Dinner will be served at 4:15 p.m. We will have hot dogs with all the trimmings. If you are able, please bring a side dish or dessert. Christian Fellowship will provide the hot dogs, steamers and drinks. **An RSVP for this event is helpful. Please let us know by June 13th if you are able to attend by calling 301-371-6500 or office@zionmiddletown.org** However, if your plans change and you are able to come, don't worry! We always have plenty of food to share. Anyone wishing to help with the picnic can also contact the Church Office.

After our picnic, Music and Worship will lead Vespers. Please bring a lawn chair to join in Vespers.

WORK DAY AT ZION

June 8th After Worship

Lunch Provided!

Our goals are to do some deep cleaning of different areas around the building and throw out things that we no longer need.

Bring some work clothes to change into after church.

To make the workload easier, we need as many as can stay to help take care of some much needed projects around our church campus!

With Sympathy



With our deepest sympathy we keep in our thoughts and prayers the families of:

Mark Newman

James Higdon

Leslie Lent-Santora

Emil Kahihikolo



Have you Checked out the Website lately?

It has all kinds of things in the Member's area including worship leaders schedules, new educational resources, information about upcoming and Youth and Family Ministry opportunities, and you can access all our old worship services.

Check it out at www.ZionMiddletown.org



Please be sure the church is notified if you are hospitalized and if you wish to be placed on the prayer list or would like visitation. For the most up-to-date prayer list, visit our website and look under the member's tab.

Elsie Warnock, J. Richard Staples, All Federal Workers, Beverly Smith, Jimmy Nichols, John Lettire, Pastor Anita Disbrow, Pastor Diane Day, Dana Carmichael, Brenda Ward, Gwen Bowlus, The Gunsallus Family, Christa Grunwald, Kathi Hayter, Junior Wiles, Samn Huffer, Barry B., Katana Lewis, Mike Fath, Ursula Powell, Pat Hansen, Jane Nalborczyk, Eric Kinna, Ronnie Kinna, Linda Stottlemeyer, Anita, Gary, Kay Wachter, Michael Easton, Tristan Vail, Lorene Huffer, Bruce Albright, Marty Appleby, Judith Smith, Jackie Bello, Trish Tollefson, Skippy Zimmerman, Sarah Gladhill, Ruby Pyles, Addison Hopson, Kevin Kinna, Deb Kahihikolo

A WORD FROM THE VALLEY

A PODCAST FROM ZION LUTHERAN CHURCH
MIDDLETOWN, MD

A Word from the Valley is a our podcast that features Pastor Diane and Pastor Matt's sermons as well as some other special content that we will produce throughout the year. You can learn more by visiting our website, or search for "Word from the Valley" wherever you download your podcasts.



Creating Sacred Spaces

This past Lent on Wednesday nights, we talked about theology around why evangelism matters and how we, as a congregation, can become better at welcoming strangers, visitors, and each other into our sacred space. Let's keep these conversations going and work together to provide a sacred space for all people. Consider becoming a greeter. Right now, we only have one greeter stationed at the top of the ramp. It would be really nice to have an additional greeter at the bottom of the ramp to open the door and welcome people into Zion. Perhaps you can help us identify areas around Zion that need improvement. If you visit our website, we have created a page called Creating Sacred Spaces that has all the sermons

from the past Lent as well as some resources like a Mystery Worshiper Sheet that you can fill out to help identify areas we need to fix. Together, we continue to make Zion a Sacred Space.



CREATING SACRED SPACES

The need for welcome, hospitality, and love of neighbor



PastorSheper.com

The whole church watched with nervous anticipation as the visitors sat where the Martins have sat for 42 years.

Servants of Christ



"In every community there is work to be done. In every heart is the power to do it."

A new ministry is developing here at Zion for all ages. We encourage all to participate young and old, even friends & family. On the 4th Sunday of the month (time depends on each project), we will gather and do service projects. What a great way to come together, learn and serve!

First Project: Sunday, April 27, 4 p.m., meet at Church — Community Assistance with Flower bed clean-up.

*Looking for community weeding and bed clean-out projects, please contact Jamie Derr @301-305-9796 or

valleyhomemadeandhomegrown@gmail.com

All are welcome and help is needed in many ways. Anyone interested that would like to be involved in brainstorming and facilitating an event, contact Jamie Derr @301-305-9796 or

valleyhomemadeandhomegrown@gmail.com



The ladies are back and funnier than ever. A *Second Helping* picks up the story in 1969 with a changing world. As Vietnam War protests swell and women everywhere demand equal pay for equal work, the ladies in the church basement kitchen face changes of their own. From the matriarch to the mom-to-be, the women find strength in each other as they deal with the changes from below the House of God! Playing at Way Off Broadway, Frederick MD. When: Sunday May 4, 2025. Doors open at 12:30 – Show starts at 2:15. Tickets are \$61 per person (includes dinner and gratuity). Contact Shelly Gladhill at 301-788-7585 or shellygladhill@gmail.com for tickets.

Prayer Team Ministry Update

Zion's Prayer Team meets every Sunday evening at 6 p.m. via Zoom . All prayer requests are confidential.

You may submit a request at the Prayer Wall in the Sanctuary. There are slips of paper to write your request on and then place your request in one of the openings on the wall. A Prayer Team member will retrieve the paper and then pass the request on to the other team members.

You also may call the Church Office at 301-371-6500 and they will contact a team participant or you can contact a team participant directly. Our contact information is in the Church Directory. When we receive a request, each Prayer Team Member is contacted immediately and the prayers begin.



Evangelical Lutheran Church Zion
107 W Main Street
Middletown MD 21769

www.zionmiddletown.org



The work and mission at Zion can only happen through your gifts of time, talent and treasure. We cannot do our work without your support. To give financially, please give either online or drop your Offering in the offering plate as the ushers come up and down the pews. You can also scan the QR code to be taken to our online giving portal.

AND THANK YOU!