

THE BEACON

A MINISTRY OF ZION LUTHERAN CHURCH
FALL 2023 EDITION

Leaning In

Upcoming Events

First Sunday of the Month	Confirmation from 4-6 p.m. (First Session is October 1)
First Sunday of the Month	Youth Group from 6-8 p.m.
First Thursdays of Month	Table Talk at the Main Cup at 6 p.m.
Second Monday of the Month	Council Meeting
Third Wednesday of the Month	JOY Luncheon from 12-2 p.m.
Last Monday of the Month	Hope to Faith at 3 p.m.
September 4	Office Closed
September 7	Choir Rehearsal Resumes at 7 p.m.
September 9	Community Day of Service—Breakfast and Worship at MUMC
September 9	Vintage Vehicles on the Church Parking Lot
September 9 & 10	Bible Blessing Presentation at all Worship services
September 10	FootPrints at 9 a.m. and Garden Re-Dedication at 10 a.m.
September 11	GriefShare resumes
September 13	Wednesday Bible Study begins for the Fall
September 17	Sunday School Classes begin
September 23	Heritage Days Festival in Middletown (No Saturday Night Worship)
September 25	Day Off Program
October 1	Confirmation Classes Resume
October 8	FootPrints
October 8 & 15	First Communion Classes (both for new kids and refresher) at 12 p.m.
October 21	Apple Butter Making
October 29	Joint Worship for Reformation Sunday and FootPrints with a Potluck meal following worship
November 4 & 5	All Saints Sunday Worship
November 12	FootPrints
November 26	Christ the King Special Worship
November 23 & 24	Office Closed
December 3	Advent Craft Night
December 6, 15, 20	Wednesdays in Advent Meal, Worship, and Children's program
December 10	FootPrints
December 10	Children's Christmas Pageant at 6:30 p.m.
December 17	Christmas Caroling at 5:30 p.m.

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



A WORD FROM PASTOR DIANE

What keeps you going? I mean, when you want to give up and you have tried and tried and tried to change or do something, and all you want to do is give it all up but you keep trying. Is it because people are counting on you? Is it because it means a lot to you. Is it because you know you're doing the right thing? There are lots of reasons that we keep doing things. The most important thing when we feel like giving up is remembering the "why" - why are we doing this. This of course isn't anything you haven't heard before. Sometimes though we each need a reminder to stop and remember why we are doing something in the midst of our fatigue and feeling of giving up.

Periodically you have heard me say in worship why we have come to this place: to meet the living God, to hear words of forgiveness, to learn of God's love that we might go out from this place to do just these same things we have learned.

The Church is an imperfect place because she is made up of people. Any time people get together

there will be disagreement, different visions, and hurt feelings. That is especially hard with the church as the church should be better as followers of Jesus, right? We should be striving to get along and make sure that everyone feels included and agrees. Yet Jesus always knew we were never going to be perfect and get along. He knew our human hearts and minds.

Yet for all her and our imperfections, the church can be a tool for God's love to work. She is constantly in need of reforming and forgiving and growing into who God has created her to be. We, as a part of her, each are in need of reforming and forgiving and growing into who God has created us to be. What makes us different than any other social group is that we are called despite our differences to be united in Christ who has died that our shortcomings in community can be forgiven and we can continue to keep trying to live into the love of God that God first showed us.

Some days, it would be easy to give up on the church. Who needs one more commitment



or argument? Who needs one more meeting? Why do we keep on coming back? Because the church is a special place where we meet the living God. It's a place where we practice being God's people imperfectly but are reminded of who God has called us and is forming us to be. It's a place where we come to grow in relationship with God and with one another as we learn about God and God's love for this world.

Friends, don't give up. Remember why you are here. Share your "why" with someone you love. Write it down, or pray and talk to God about it to recommit yourself to this relationship with God and with others. Your presence and part in making up the body of Christ is important for this world God so loves.

In Christ's grace,

Pastor Diane Ray



A WORD FROM PASTOR MATT

I saw the sign on Instagram the other day that read, "I didn't say that." The quote was attributed to Jesus. It's kind of a humorous sign, but I think it holds a lot of relevance for us today 2000 years post Christendom world.

Many of us have probably seen the bibles that have the red letters that highlight words spoken by Jesus. The red letters are both good and bad. They're good in the fact that they really do highlight the words that Jesus spoke while he was with us on earth and that his followers recorded many years later. The bad is that this seems to say that Jesus doesn't speak anymore. Even though Jesus lives with the Father in heaven, he remains mute. Is God still speaking to us? Is Jesus still speaking to us?

I think the answer to that question is yes, but over the years I've become increasingly worried by what some

Christians think Jesus is saying. When I was younger, it was all the rage to wear these rubber bracelets with the letters WWJD? Which meant what would Jesus do? The problem is we don't know what Jesus would do in that moment because Jesus is not here telling us exactly what he would do. Instead, we usually have a lot of faith leaders making grandstand claims that Jesus would do this and Jesus would do that. As I mature in my faith, I think the real question to ask is what has Jesus done? Because we might not know what Jesus would do, but we certainly know what he has done. Knowing that information helps us to postulate what Jesus would truly do in the moment.

However, we shouldn't be so foolish to think the answers to what would Jesus do could be something that is easily answered overnight or in 140 characters on Twitter. It took the church centuries of prayer and consideration before officially establishing the biblical canon. It took centuries and numerous church councils to develop the Nicene Creed. Instant gratification when it comes to what would Jesus have us do is not a thing. It takes time and cannot be done alone.

Jesus never intended his followers

to be alone. Personal faith and personal savior are falsehoods. Scripture, while it can be read in private, was meant to be explored together because left to our own devices, we all would come up with different interpretations as to what Jesus would have us do. Instead, we are called to explore these things together in community with one another. The pandemic changed our view of community and how we do community, but there is power in being able to come together whether in person through

digital means to prayerfully consider what Jesus would have us do and what Jesus is saying to us today.

I am glad that you are part of this community. Our community here is made up people who

come from all different backgrounds and generations. The church remains one of the last remaining intergenerational communities left in our world today. We all have a place around the table as we explore the answers to these age old questions what would Jesus have us do and what is Jesus saying to us today. May Jesus be with us in our exploring, but more important, correct when we misquote him.

In Christ,



So, what's been happening?



Confirmation

On Pastor Matt's first Sunday back from paternity leave, five of our young people affirmed their faith through the Rite of Confirmation: Eliana Bergmann, Ali Devriendt, Amber Devriendt, Sophie McKenzie and Savannah Staples. Our Confirmation program runs roughly three years and is a mix of education and formation. Confirmation is one way we raise up our baptized members into the body of Christ by teaching them the basics of the faith using the Small Catechism and the Bible as our guide for teaching. We meet on the first Sunday of each month from October to May. Each confirmand is given a gift of a Harper Collins Study Bible as well as a hand picked confirmation verse Congratulations and we are blessed to have you as full members of the Body of Christ!



Air and Space Museum Trip

This summer, our Youth Group made a trip down to Dulles to check out the Air and Space Museum. Special thanks to Cindy Unangst for chaperoning the trip that day. The museum down at Dulles is a massive complex full of all kinds of aircraft, including the Space Shuttle Discovery. Who would of thought in 1903 that just over 60 years later, we would be launching humans off our planets in gigantic rockets into the heavens to visit a distant world. The museum was fun to walk around in, but hanging out with these kids was even better! Youth Group begins this fall and we look forward to more trips like this in the future!





Church Picnic

The weather was perfect on June 11th as we packed the Pavilion and enjoyed an old fashion picnic including hot dogs, tons of sides, and even more desserts. It was a great time to get to know people, meet new friends, and enjoy the gift of God's creation!



Park Vespers

We tried to do the Park Vespers a little differently this year and have it led by some of our lay leaders. Bobby played the keyboard while Gene, Barry, and Linda leading us in song, scripture, and prayer.





Take me out to Ball Game!

On a very humid night in July, we took our trusty van on a trip down to Baltimore to enjoy a baseball game at Camden Yards. The O's just got back from the All Stars Break and played pretty poorly, but that didn't matter! We had some great seats to watch the game which made the night even better! Grant Saxton tried his hardest every inning to get on the screen to no avail but we enjoyed his cheers and enthusiasm!



Lots of Baptisms

July 3rd is typically a low-attended Sunday but not this year. We packed the church and celebrated the gift of baptism which was bestowed upon Marc, James and Joseph. We have been blessed with a lot of baptisms this past year. God is certainly up to something! We continue to pray for all our members, regardless of their age, as they live out their baptismal callings!



Dogs, cats, and flying pigs!

VBS was “Fur”tastic this year

A week before the start of VBS, we had roughly 30 kids registered. In one week’s time, we nearly doubled that number. It was an all out scramble to get things together as we kept increasing our numbers every day. Only through the work of the Holy Spirit, we were able to pull it all off and make VBS a success. The theme this year was *Pet’s Unleashed* and the focus was on seeing how Jesus cares “fur” us. Every night, we had a wonderful home cooked meal prepared, an interactive storytime, crafts with a purpose, and games to help burn off some energy. At the end of the week, we invited parents, families members, and church members to come for a picnic and hear about the week. To make the night extra special, we invited Jennifer Bergmann to come and bring some of her exotic pets, Linda Kinna-Engel to bring her service dog, Steeler, and the Kona Ice Truck to come and keep us cool. Thank you again to all the volunteers who stepped up to make this week possible!



Pigs!

This year, we asked the VBS kids to bring in a special offering so that we could buy pigs through the ELCA’s Good Gift program. ELCA Good Gifts works with families, communities, and people in developing nations to get the help and support they need for sustainable farming and food practices. We set a goal of 7 pigs at \$30 a pig and were able to raise enough funds for 32 pigs! Way to go kids!

Thank you, Bishop Gohl!

While our pastors were out on leave for the birth of James and Joseph, Bishop Gohl and his staff filled in for both pastoral leadership and worship leadership. Bishop Gohl was here most Sunday mornings to lead us in worship, preaching, and teaching. Below are some of the pictures from his time at Zion.



On July 3rd, Bishop Gohl returned to lead worship as Bishop to baptize three of our newest members: Marc, James, and Joseph. As part of his children's sermon, he talked about the different symbols of his office and used the children to help model those symbols.



Bishop Gohl is known for his, "What's Hiding in the Pulpit" series on Facebook. On Pastor Matt's second week back in the pulpit, he captured this photo of Isaiah taking a nap in the pulpit while his dad preached. We guess the sermon was really good this day!



Back on June 11th, we welcomed Pastor Blaine Feightner, former Associate Pastor at Zion, back to worship. He and his wife were traveling back home and wanted to visit. Bishop Gohl invited Pastor Feightner to deliver the Benediction at worship. He and his wife later joined us at Memorial Park for our church picnic.



When Bishop Gohl began his first term as bishop, he visited Zion and snapped a photo with Patrica Staples and her daughter, Savannah. A few years later, Bishop Gohl and Savannah recreated this photo. Something to note is Savannah is a little taller than she was 8 years ago!

Worship Opportunities



Mark your calendars!

October 29, 2023

10am

Reformation Sunday

We will celebrate God's Word living, moving and breathing in our community with special music including both choir and orchestral music, recognition of 50 year members, and celebrating those who will be taking Holy Communion for the first time.

**Sola Scriptura | Sola Fide | Sola Gratia
Solus Christus | Soli Deo Gloria**

"From the beginning of my Reformation I have asked God to send me neither dreams, nor visions, nor angels, but to give me the right understanding of His Word, the Holy Scriptures; for as long as I have God's Word, I know that I am walking in His way and that I shall not fall into any error or delusion." - Martin Luther

29 OCT

REFORMATION

POTLUCK

BRING A DISH TO SHARE!

IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING WORSHIP ON OCTOBER 29

WE HAVE A LOT TO CELEBRATE THIS DAY: 50 YEAR MEMBERS, FIRST COMMUNION RECIPIENTS, AND GOD'S EVER ABIDING WORD LIVING AMONG US!

Memorial Garden Re-Dedication

After a year of refurbishing, we are ready to rededicate this space to God and in service to showcasing the goodness of God's creation. We will also take this time to dedicate the praying hands statue, the cross, and bless Christian Education leaders.

September 10 at 10am

Breakfast and coffee will follow in the Garden.



Worship Services

Saturday:


5 p.m. Casual Worship

Sunday:

9 a.m. Contemporary

Worship

11 a.m. Traditional Worship



All Saints Worship

November 4th and 5th
We remember those blessed saints who died this past year and now reside in God's care as well as those who have died but remain influential to us today.

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.



Donuts and coffee

Every Sunday
at 10 a.m.



CHRIST THE KING SUNDAY

A Journey through the Seasons

A special liturgy on Sunday, November 26 at both our worship services to help us wrap up the liturgical year and remind us of all that we have seen, heard, and learned.

Mark Your Calendars for December

Hey, we get it...December is busy but we want to make sure these dates get on your calendar before things fill up! More details about these events will be in the next edition of the Beacon.

Advent Craft Night—December 3rd

Wednesdays in Advent—December 6th, 13th, 20th

Children's Christmas Pageant—December 10th

**4th Sunday in Advent Worship—Sunday, December 24th at 9 a.m.
in the Chapel**

Christmas Eve Worship —4 p.m., 7 p.m., and 10:30 p.m.

Be sure to mark your calendars and look for details soon!

Being the Church...

M. Lee Ropp interviewed by Mary Ann Marcantonio



As the demographics of the church have changed over the years, Lee is a rare breed. He was baptized, confirmed, married at Zion. He was one of six children; four sisters and a brother who had died shortly before he was born. Lee has three sons, Rick, Kevin and Brian who grew up and began their faith journey at Zion; and Lee has eight grandchildren, and three great grandchildren and spoils all of them. Sadly, after a long bout with cancer, his wife of more than 46 years, Dorthalee, passed away in 1999.

Lee grew up on a farm north of Middletown where he was expected to help with the daily chores. As a young person, Lee was a member of Luther League, a youth organization here at the church, and he remembers that on one occasion, they had an event at Braddock for swimming. He took the trolley up to Braddock and back to Middletown at the end of the event. This was the only time he took the trolley.

During World War II, the family had no TV like most families, but they relied on radio for information. Lee remembers hearing the voice of Walter Cronkite as he reported from Europe of the war efforts. He remembers the black out practices, which required all residences and businesses to turn off all lights that would enable enemy aircraft to identify population centers. No streetlights or neon signs, no flashlights or car headlights were allowed and drapes were required to cover windows.

While still in high school, Lee was appointed Assistant Superintendent of Zion's Sunday School in September 1952 and by 1962, upon the retirement of George Carlton Rhoderick, Jr, Lee began serving the congregation as the General Superintendent of Sunday School. His leadership gifts began before he even graduated from high school as he was the president of his class and president of Future Farmers of America. Lee in his most humble way acknowledged that he was voted in because no one else wanted it. I'm afraid not, Lee, you were selected to serve because you were devoted to getting a job done.

What is something about Lee that many of us do not know? The answer was unexpected...He is ordained in the state of Pennsylvania to perform weddings. He had gone through the online training so that he could be the officiant at the wedding of his granddaughter. What grandparents will do for their family!

Lee's faith was influenced by the former Pastor McCarney, who served Zion from 1951-1957. McCarney confirmed him, married Dorthalee and him and baptized their first son. This relationship lasted for many years even after the McCarney's left the parsonage for a new call.

If Lee could turn back the clock to a specific time it would be before the 'Blue Laws' came to an end. It was a time when families gathered at church instead of running off to the malls.

He has remained close to some of his dearest friends by sharing "a no cook meal" every Thursday evening. I think this is the secret to his youthfulness. Hey Lee, how does one get on this list?

I could have done this article without an interview because you can't help but notice how he is always

there with a helping hand and a smile. Lee's life is an example of John 13:35 says, "By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another." He has and is serving the church and community through lifelong acts of kindness to anyone who is in need. Besides being superintendent of Sunday School for over 50 years, he has been a godly influence on so many youth in our church by chaperoning our youth on 12 workcamps, a volunteer at Safe House for many years (an after school program for middle school kids) , the hot dog chef for VBS, and a constant presence at Mar-Lu-Ridge with his paintbrush in hand (if it is wood and has paint on it, chances are Lee painted it). He has also donated countless pints of blood to the American Red Cross, served as a driver for elderly people (many of them now are younger than him) to doctor appointments, and has done many projects on houses of those who cannot do for themselves. The list is endless because if there is a need, Lee is there. Now, age is catching up to him and the cane is his new sidekick. He moves a little slower but, still finds ways to serve his church and community. He is an example to all of us of what worship truly should be.

The take-a-away from my time listening to Lee is "We are the church... The living stones that worship and praise God through our acts of service." Worship is more than just attending church on Sunday, although it is a very important part of our Christian life. It is too easy to say "I am busy" or any other excuse that may pop up. Real worship involves what Paul writes in Romans, "to present your bodies as a living sacrifice," and the Holy Spirit empowers us to offer our lives back to God...this means you are led to share love, joy, peace, patience, goodness, kindness and more with others. All of our life is an act of worship and too often it reveals who and what we worship. Reflecting on Lee's well-lived life, each act of service is worship and a stone building up the Spiritual house of Christ. What stone is God putting before you today and how will you use it as a living sacrifice?



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.



Community Events



ANNUAL

Vintage Vehicles IN THE VALLEY

CAR - TRUCK - MOTORCYCLE SHOW

September 9, 2023

MIDDLETOWN, MD



FUN FOR THE *Whole Family!*

\$15.00 entry fee.

Open to all makes and models.

Trophies awarded at 2:00 PM. Dash plaques for first 50 cars.

50/50 drawing

Food by Quilters will be available all day

Spectators are welcome to come and vote for their favorite car.

Location: 8 W. Green Street, Middletown, MD 21769

Heritage Day Luncheon

The annual Heritage Day Luncheon at Zion will be held on Saturday, September 23rd from 10 a.m. - 2 p.m. Soup, sandwiches, desserts and drinks will be available. We are limiting the dessert items at the luncheon because of the restrictions placed on us from the Health Department. Based on this, we are asking for your help to make and donate certain desserts to go along with the luncheon.

****Your donations are greatly appreciated.**

The desserts we are asking for are:

Fruit Pies: Apple, Peach, Blueberry, Cherry, Raspberry

Cakes: White, Yellow and Chocolate

Icings: Coconut, Chocolate, Vanilla or White Frosting

Cookies: Chocolate Chip, Oatmeal Raisin only

Brownies: Plain Brownies, no brownies with nuts or other ingredients.

Food donations may be dropped off between 7 a.m. and 9 a.m.

on Saturday, September 23rd in the Social Room.

Thank you so much for your help!

**Any questions, call Deb Reichelt
at the Church Office at 301-371-6500**

Zion's Heritage Day Luncheon Committee

Seeking Volunteers for Zion's Heritage Day Booth!

Zion will have a booth in front of the church for Heritage Day. We need volunteers to fill time slots between 7 a.m. and 4 p.m. This is a great time to share and showcase all the ways that God is living and breathing in our congregation and town. Please consider spending part of your day representing Zion! See the Welcome and Engagement signup sheet to sign up for a time spot or contact the Church Office.

A Fiber Show at Heritage Days!



The Zion Quilters are hosting a Fiber Arts Expo which will feature quilts, both antique, modern and specialty quilts, as well as quilting demonstrations. Included will be examples of other fiber arts to include knitting, crocheting, sewing and counted cross stitch, both traditional and modern. A Dresden Plate quilt raffle will be held to benefit the local food bank. Fiber Arts show will be held during Heritage Days on September 23 from 9-2 p.m. in the Chapel and Library. Please come and enjoy!!

Christian Education

WEDNESDAY BIBLE STUDY

Crow in faith and help prepare for the coming week's lessons

WEDNESDAY MORNINGS AT 10:30 A.M.
IN THE CONFERENCE ROOM

•••
WEDNESDAY NIGHTS AT 6:30 P.M.
IN THE CONFERENCE ROOM

Our plan is to meet both in the morning and in the evening for the Fall and adjust as needed. We will be looking at the upcoming week's lessons for worship plus some other fun tidbits that Pastor Diane and Pastor Matt want to share about the Bible.

First Communion Classes

Each week we celebrate the gift of Holy Communion as a way of reminding us that Jesus is truly present in the wine/grape juice and wafers. On Sunday, Oct. 8th and 15th, we will be hosting classes around Holy Communion at 12 p.m.. This is for those who are ready to receive their First Communion, those who are exploring but not yet ready, and a refresher course for those who already receive. We will start with a pizza lunch at 12:00 p.m. and then talk and do an activity ending by 1:30 p.m. Those who will be receiving their First Communion will be recognized on Oct. 29th. **Please RSVP to the Church Office by Oct. 6th if you will be joining us.**

Sunday Mornings



**ADULT FORUM—SUNDAYS
AT 10:00 A.M.
MEETS IN THE CHAPEL
EVERY SUNDAY
&
MUTUAL CARE AND SUPPORT
—SUNDAYS AT 10:00 A.M.
MEETS IN THE LIBRARY**

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

Theology and Bible

TABLE TALK

Food and Drink

FIRST THURSDAY
OF THE MONTH

6pm at the Main Cup

I Am Loved

A WOMEN'S BIBLE STUDY
BY WENDY BLIGHT

Women of all ages are invited to strengthen one another as we turn to God's word to remember how much we are loved and how we live into that love.

Aug 20th - Sept 24th at 6:30pm

Valley-Ho Farm Pavilion
7800 Picnic Woods Rd.

Questions: Jamie Derr 301-305-9796

In September, we have a special guest joining us for Table Talk. Because of our special guest, we will meet at Zion in the Conference Room for dinner. Starting in October, we will gather back at the Main Cup in the front Dining Room.

Music Ministry

LOOKING FOR CHOIR MEMBERS

If you have a passion for singing, join us!

EVERY THURSDAY NIGHT
FROM 7-8:30 P.M.

No Experience Necessary



Choir Rehearsal Resumes September 7

Zion's Music Ministry

The psalmist says, *"Make a joyful noise to the LORD, all the earth. Worship the LORD with gladness; come into his presence with singing."*

The music ministry at Zion helps us express ourselves that spoken words alone cannot always do. The worship experience is not only about hearing a message from a minister or learning a new interpretation of Scripture. It is also a complete and fulfilling worship experience that involves community-building, bonding and creating an atmosphere through physical vibration as only music can.

God has blessed us all with the gift of music. Perhaps you feel called to share your gifts with others and help us make a joyful noise. Consider joining our choir, playing in our worship band, or participating in special orchestral ensembles.

More information can be found at www.zionmiddletown.org/music-ministry



We are always looking for new musicians and sound techs who have a passion for playing and leading our Contemporary Worship

Service in song. Rehearsals happen on Sunday morning. Speak with Matt Puziss to set up an audition today!



Handbell Rehearsal

Reasonable music-reading fluency is required in both rhythm and notes. Treble or bass clef space is available if desired. Rehearsals are from 7pm to 8pm during the academic year. Visitors and interested persons are welcome to stop by at any rehearsal if interested in finding out what we're all about!

Upcoming Rehearsal Dates

9/5

9/19

10/3

10/10

10/17

10/24

The first performance will be on Reformation Sunday



Do you know a college student who would like a care package?

We will be sending college care packages in mid-October. Please let the church office know the name and addresses of college students. They don't need to be members of Zion to receive a care package! Anyone who you think might like a little pick me up, let us know!

Confirmation

THE FIRST SUNDAY OF EACH MONTH

FROM 4-6PM

AVAILABLE BOTH IN-PERSON AND ON ZOOM

**First Confirmation Class Begins October 1
in the Conference Room**

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!**

An opportunity for the youth to grow in spirit through worship, prayer, good food, fun games, and amazing company!

Youth Group starts back up Sunday, September 3 at 5:00 p.m. for a Pool Party and Smores at Pastor Matt and Diane's home.

WE GOT A DAY OFF!

**The Fall Day Off Program is on
Monday, September 25
at 9 a.m.**

We are going down to D.C. to visit the Spy Museum. The plan is to leave Zion a little after 9 a.m. and drive down to the museum. **SPACE IS LIMITED!** Please RSVP by September 12 to secure your spot. Cost is FREE thanks to generous donations. Kids need to bring their own lunch. This is open to Elementary, Middle and High School Kids. Extra chaperones are always needed and appreciated!!!!



*Are you joining us
in New Orleans?*

**2024 ELCA YOUTH GATHERING
July 16-20**

Talk to Pastor Matt if you are interested! 8th graders to Seniors in High School are eligible to participate!





2023 Footprints Upcoming Dates

September 10th

October 8th

October 29th

November 12th

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 and activity.

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.

Bible Presentation - September 10th

The logo for 'Bible Presentation' has the word 'Bible' in large, colorful letters (blue, green, red) and 'Presentation' in smaller, red letters below it. A small icon of an open book is positioned between the two words.

We will be handing out new Bibles on Sunday, September 10th to all Kindergarteners (and 1st and 2nd graders who haven't received one yet), 3rd graders and new Confirmation students. We will also have Bibles for adults if you are in need of one!



Zion showed up at Mar-Lu-Ridge!

For the past few years, we have not had any kids from Zion participate in any Lutheran Summer camps mostly due to the pandemic. This year we had 6 kids participate at Mar-Lu-Ridge. A big hinderance for summer camp is the cost but we have been blessed with many generous people throughout the years to help create a fund to provide scholarships for kids to attend camp. For many of the kids that went this year, it was the first time being away from home and on their own. They learned about God, how to care for themselves, and created lasting memories! Hopefully next year we can send even more kids to Mar-Lu-Ridge!



Ministry Updates

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 in the Ramp or taken directly to the Food Bank on Wednesdays from 1-3 p.m.



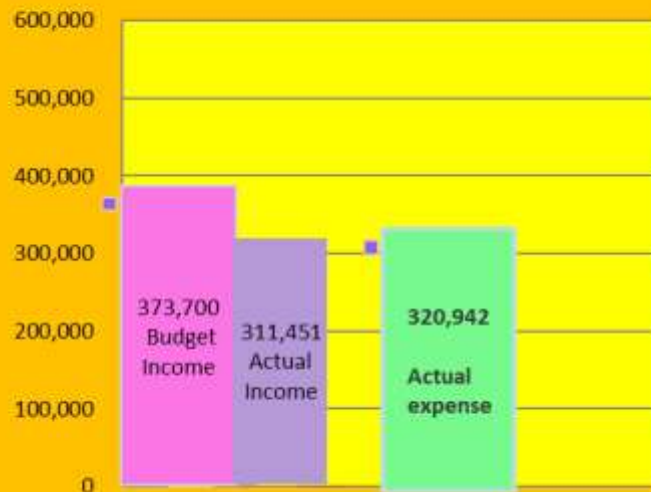
WEEKEND BACKPACKS

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 July Generosity



Budget/Income Information– YTD as of July 31, 2023

YTD Proposed Budget income \$373,700. vs

YTD Actual Income \$311,451.

YTD Proposed Budget Expense \$386,261. vs

YTD Actual Expenses \$320,942.

Actual Income is less expenses in July 2023 by \$9,491.



Did you know that the number one most needed item of the homeless is a clean pair of socks? People donating clothing rarely donate new socks. Socks provide a layer of warmth that could be worsened by smoking which constricts blood vessels making toes more susceptible to damage by cold. The homeless are susceptible to severe frostbite which could lead to amputation. Zion Quilters are sponsoring a Socktoberfest drive for the month of October. A box will be located in the Welcome Center at Zion Lutheran, Middletown MD for new clean packages of socks. Please help us beat our last year collection of 632 socks. All donations will be taken to the Religious Coalition for distribution to the needy.



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+ meets on the third Wednesday at noon for lunch and a fun program or a rousing game of bingo. We have fun-we share, eat, remember, learn and LAUGH! Monthly luncheons include a time to dine together, fellowship and enjoy some special entertainment or speaker.



The upcoming dates for the rest of 2023 are:

Sep 20 – September’s menu focuses on recipes from **Cleta Ahalt** (renowned Zion cook). Main course is Goulash and the dessert is Hot Milk Sponge Cake.

Oct 18 - Ham

Nov 29 – Thanksgiving/Christmas Combo Dinner

Everyone in the Middletown Valley community is welcome! In case of inclement weather we will follow FCPS guidelines. Come and enjoy the J.O.Y. 50+. Cost is \$10 per person. Advance reservation is a must for planning purposes, please call the Zion’s office at 301-371-6500 or Alexa 301-514-4479 or email Alexa at amasser202@comcast.net.



Community Day of Service September 9, 2023

Did you know that since 2016 the National Day of Service occurs every year in September? National Day of Service (in remembrance of Sept 11, 2001 attacks) is a time set aside for volunteers to make a difference in their community.

September 9, 2023 is Middletown’s Ministerium Day of Service. The day starts at 8 a.m. at Middletown United Methodist Church for breakfast and prayer. On this day volunteers from all over the valley will come together to fulfill services and comfort our neighbors in need. Please consider volunteering just a little of your time. The more hands we have the lighter the load! Most jobs are fix & repair, painting & clean-up. Just go to this sign-up link, <https://Tinyurl.com/DOS9923> or use the QR link below. Any questions, contact Deb Reichelt at 301-371-6500 or by email at treasurer@zionmiddletown.org to sign up to volunteer.



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.

Noisy Offering Updates



May—Heartly House	\$386.19
June—Lantern Hill	\$403.25
July—Middletown Vol. Fire Department	\$431.81
August—Community Day of Service	\$287.32

Thank you to all who donated!

Upcoming Noisy Offerings

September 16th and 17th
October 14th and 15th
November 18th & 19th
December 16th & 17th

Lutheran Disaster Relief
Middletown Library
ELCA World Hunger
Religious Coalition

Zion's Car Magnet Available!

Support Zion by displaying this magnet on your car!



Magnets are available in the Welcome Center—there is no cost, but donations are appreciated. All donations will go towards wrapping the van in a Zion logo.

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 225,920 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"

CPR & FIRST AID TRAINING

NOVEMBER 6TH AT 6 P.M.

COST IS FREE MEMBERS AND MINISTRY LEADERS

RSVP 30-371-6500



Decorate a Window in the Sanctuary

Individuals, families and/or groups within our church are invited to decorate windowsills in the Sanctuary!

Decorations will be on display from September 17th through November 26th. The sills will be covered to protect the paint.

Decorate anytime before September 17th. Displays will need to be removed by November 27th.

Display size is approximately 16” deep by 54” wide

Contact the Church Office to reserve your spot! Windows will be reserved on “first-come, first-served” basis.

Don't miss this opportunity to be creative, have fun and work together to decorate the church!



Operation Christmas Child

October 15-November 12

How might you demonstrate God's love and share the gospel of Jesus Christ? Every shoebox gift placed into the hands of a needy child provides that opportunity.

Filling a shoebox with age appropriate school supplies, hygiene items and toys is a wonderful way to involve our children/grandchildren or neighborhood youngsters in caring for others less fortunate than ourselves. Praying for the child who will receive the gifts, including a note and photo is also encouraged.

Our main drive this year will be October 15th to November 12th. Our goal is 200 boxes. \$10 per shoebox donation is requested to defray international shipping and other processing costs. It also goes toward providing The Greatest Journey, a 12-lesson follow-up discipleship program for shoebox recipients. More than 2.4 million boys and girls made decisions for Christ in 2022.

Brochures detailing packing information (what and what not to include) will be available, as well as empty shoeboxes for you to take home; fill and return. Monetary gifts are also welcome. Donation boxes will be available the Welcome Center.

There is the option to shop at the Shoebox Supply House in Shippensburg, PA, where for \$17.50 you can fill a box which includes the \$10.00 shipping fee. Linda Sanders and Linda Huckleberry will be going there the last part of October if you'd like them to shop for you.

Let's be the hands of Jesus as we pack one or more shoeboxes for needy boys and girls, knowing we will be bringing joy to the hearts of God's children. Any questions please contact, Linda Huckleberry at 301-371-6677 or email huckhuff@gmail.com. Or Linda Sanders at 301-676-3272 or email lfnelson76@gmail.com





GriefShare Begins September 11th

The Fall cycle of GriefShare will begin on Monday, September 11th, and will end on Monday, December 4th. GriefShare is a support group designed to help and provide encouragement after the death of a spouse, child, family member, or friend. The program is non-denominational and features biblical concepts for healing your grief. The group meets weekly for 13 sessions and there are three key parts to each session:

- Video Seminar
- Support Group discussion
- Workbook for personal study

Meetings will be held in the Living Library at Zion Lutheran Church and is offered from 6:00 p.m. until 8:00 p.m. If you have questions about GriefShare and want to talk with one of the leaders, please call Zion Church at 301-371-6500

2023 Pledge and Commitment Card	I will serve/am interested in serving in the following ministries:	I will practice the spiritual discipline of giving.
<p>Name: _____</p> <p>Address: _____</p>	<p>Committees, Ministries, Musical Ensembles, Special Events (Check on back for ideas!)</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>Other (List other ideas of ministries you would be interested in participating in!)</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>	<p>I intend to give \$_____ of my/our gifts each week/month/year (circle one) for 2024 Current Ministry Expenses and Benevolence</p> <p>*Please note you are pledging to the Current Ministry Expenses and Benevolence. All other Offerings to other areas are greatly appreciated. We will be tracking and reporting back to you your Offerings given to the Current Ministry Expenses and Benevolence.</p>

Pledge Cards

The Stewardship Ministry team is working on getting pledge cards out this September to a mailbox near you. Every year we ask members to prayerfully consider different ways to be generous over the coming year. You matter to

the ministry here! Consider how you might be able to invest in the ministry here at Zion today through the giving of your time, talents and treasures. And thank you!!!

Zion's Archives Team is compiling a list of Military Veterans who are interred in Zion's Cemetery. Currently we have identified 280 Veteran Graves for Service Men and Women who served as far back as the French and Indian War (1755-1762) and up to the Persian Gulf Wars. Many have Served our Country during Peaceful periods of our history and those Veterans are being included as well.

We are asking the congregation to help us honor and remember anyone who we may have missed in this endeavor. There will be a Master List of Veterans located in the Welcome Center. If you are aware of a Veteran who has been buried in Zion's Cemetery whose name does not appear on this list, please complete a Data Sheet and return it to the Church Office. Your contribution to our project is greatly appreciated.



Zion's Archivist/Historian Contact Information

Mary Ann Marcantonio mamarcantonio@gmail.com 240-675-1140 (m)

Ron Moss ronmoss11@verizon.net 301-471-9867 (m)

Wondering about apple butter?

IT'S BACK!!!!

We found the apples, got the experts, and now all we have got to do is stir some kettles.

Date for the Apple Butter making is October 21st at 5 a.m.



The family of Franny Eaves would like to express how thankful it is for having Zion be such an important place in her life even though health issues kept her away from church for many years. We especially would like to thank Pastors

Matt and Diane for their many visits to the hospital, nursing homes and the family home. These visits helped Franny so much. She never lost her faith. This strong faith kept her going even in the darkest hours, which were many. With this faith and support she fought the good fight. She has been freed of pain and worry. For 54 years she was the heart of our immediate family, which she loved in so many ways. She will always be with us!

We would also like to thank the Altar Guild, via Ruth Warnock, for several beautiful bouquets. These flowers really meant so much to Franny and brightened many days! Thanks to Anna and Gary Crouse for participating in this celebration of Franny's life. Thanks also to Barry Poffinberger who sang Going Home, one of Franny's favorite songs, Last, but certainly not least, we would like to express our sincere appreciation to Alexa and kitchen staff for preparing the meal following Franny's burial. Thanks to all others, especially Kelly Zimmerman, funeral director, who worked closely with Pastor Matt to have a memorable event. Thank you again Zion Lutheran Church family and may God continue to bless you!

With sincere appreciation,

Ed, Danny, Brian, Tyler, Brady and Riley Eaves

Our Mission

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

Our Vision

At Zion we strive to provide a sanctuary for prayerful and joyous worship within a respectful and welcoming environment and to meet the spiritual needs of our intergenerational congregation and community, using Christian ideas and values.

Our Top Ministry Priorities for 2023

Leadership Development – We need to better equip our members to be the ministry of Zion, not just task the Staff with this work. We need to write things down and better organize our information so we can pass on details to those who follow after us. We need to be better mentors as leaders so that those who follow feel equipped and comfortable in moving forward even if in different ways than we had. In addition to our resource of ourselves, we need to better utilize our resources of technology to assess and keep track of those gifts we each possess that can be used for the sharing of the gospel through Zion.

Communication – We have avenues of communication but we need checklists and other triggers to check in with groups within our congregation so information is shared efficiently and effectively. We need to better utilize and streamline the modes of communication we already have so they are understandable and easy/quick to gather information from.

Growing in faith to Christ and relationship with one another – We come together to share Christ's love, grow in our faith, and serve others. We are a large congregation in which some of us know one another and some of us do not. We need to work across our worship services to get to know one another and to encourage one another to grow in faith through our worship and education opportunities. This growth needs to lead us out from Zion to serve the world God so loves AND help us share the good news of the gospel in word.



**Marc Antonio Ruger Gunsallus
James Conrad Day
Joseph Vincent Day**



**James Day
Joseph Day
Natalie Luther**



Congratulations to:
Blade Swiger and Samantha Cannon
on May 20, 2023

With Sympathy



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

**Mary Smith
George Harne
Harry Pettit
Robert Guyton
Chuck Rapp
Anna Hough
Donna Musser
Frances Eaves
Matthew Perkins
D. Gaither Dean
Betty Wachter**

News to share?

**Please let us know of important events, births,
deaths, etc. that have happened over the past
few months. Email or call the Church Office.**



Frank Mrazeck, Kate Stevens, Sheri Huckleberry, Bill Eisentrout, Pat McIntosh, Patsy Hall, Linda Huckleberry, Nancy Newkirk, Tristan Vail, Beth Smith, Gil Stroup, Kris Marcantonio, Lorene Huffer, Bruce Albright, Marty Appleby, Judith Smith, Tex and Linda Stottlemyer, James Day, Jim Pearson, Darlah Adams, Juergen Jaath, Nancy Smith, Cheryl, Casey Newtown, Kathy Chaney, Jason Minnick, Linda Crummitt, Jackie Bello, Trish Tollefson, Ron Trusty, , Clark Kline, Dolores Para, Eric Kinna, Skippy Zimmerman, Sarah Danner, Pat Rudy, Melvin Smith, Harold "Bubby" Webber, Tom & Bonnie Remsberg, Janet Young, John Bagent Jr., Sarah Gladhill, Kathi Hayter, Anna Kepler, Marianna Bere, Ruby Pyles, Addison Hopson, Kevin Kinna, Deb Kahihikolo, Janice Wisner

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

COMMEMORATIVE BRICK FUNDRAISER ORDER FORM

These custom engraved bricks will be installed in the Memorial Garden around the cross and the circle area in front of the cross.

Your commemorative brick is a wonderful opportunity to leave a lasting legacy to Zion Lutheran Church.

Bricks can be engraved with your name, or to honor or remember an important person, event, family, accomplishment, or donated as a special gift.

Each 4 x 8 brick costs \$100.00.

Your inscription must fit into the white boxes below, 1 character per box. Each brick can have a maximum of 15 characters per line. A character is defined as a letter or a number, a space or punctuation mark.

USE UPPER CASE BLOCK LETTERS. PLEASE PRINT CAREFULLY!

RETURN COMPLETED FORM TO

Zion Lutheran Church
107 West Main Street
Middletown, MD 21769

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____

Contact Number _____

Email* _____ *Important

Make checks payable to "Zion Lutheran Church". Include "Brick Fundraiser" in Memo Section.

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!