

THE BEACON

A MINISTRY OF ZION LUTHERAN CHURCH
LENT & EASTER 2026 EDITION

Contemplate

Upcoming Events

First Sunday of the Month	Confirmation from 4-6 p.m.
First Sunday of the Month	Youth Group from 6-8 p.m.
First Thursdays of the Month	Table Talk at 6 p.m.
Second Sunday of the Month	Footprints Sunday
Second Monday of the Month	Council meets at 6:30 p.m.
Third Wednesday of the Month	JOY Luncheon from 12-2 p.m.
Last Monday of the Month	Hope to Faith at 2 p.m.
Wednesday, February 18	Ash Wednesday Worship at 7 p.m.
Tuesday, February 24	GriefShare every Tuesday from 6-8 p.m. through May 19 th
Every Wednesday in Lent	Dinner at 6 p.m., Children's Activities at 6:30 p.m. and Worship at 7 p.m.
Sunday, March 29	Palm Sunday Worship at 9 and 11 a.m.
Thursday, April 2	Dinner at 6 p.m. followed by Family Maundy Thursday Worship at 7 p.m.
Friday, April 3	Good Friday Worship at 7 p.m.
Saturday, April 4	Community Easter Egg Hunt at 10 a.m.
Saturday, April 4	Easter Vigil at 5 p.m.
Sunday, April 5	Easter Sunday with Contemporary Worship at 9 a.m. & Traditional Worship at 11 a.m.
Wednesday, May 6	Ladies' Spring Fling

Zion Lutheran Church

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

On February 21st, the Council will spend the day at Mar-Lu-Ridge reflecting on the past year and planning for the future. Last February, the council adopted the list of priorities below. Please keep your council leaders in your prayers as they discern Zion's future and decided where the Holy Spirit is leading us into 2026 and beyond.



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 that 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.





A WORD FROM PASTOR DIANE

26 Consider your own call, brothers and sisters: not many of you were wise by human standards, not many were powerful, not many were of noble birth. 27 But God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise; God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong; 28 God chose what is low and despised in the world, things that are not, to abolish things that are, 29 so that no one might boast in the presence of God. 30 In contrast, God is why you are in Christ Jesus, who became for us wisdom from God, and righteousness and sanctification and redemption, 31 in order that, as it is written, "Let the one who boasts, boast in the Lord." (1 Corinthians 1:26-31)

The Corinthians lived in a time and understanding that is socially not much different than our own. Those with the money, social standing, and backing

make the rules of the game of life even if they are rules not meant to care for the common good. In fact, it is quite subjective about what we mean when we talk about the common good. The Church at Corinth is mostly those without money, social standing and backing, i.e. those that would not be cared much about in human standards. Paul is trying to remind the Corinthians that they follow God who works in ways opposite of the way society works- God cares for all, God doesn't show preference based on finances or social status, God uses each person to make God's love known. Where some of the Corinthians would be absolutely nothing, now they have value and worth just as they are, not because of anything they have done, but because of the God who created and loves them.

In these days, we may feel much like the Corinthians. The powers that be in our world are swirling and do not care about us. We are thinking conservatively with our finances because what little we have seems to be disappearing quicker as costs rise. Our voices feel so small in systems where the checks and balances that were created are being ignored. Is there a place for us? Do we matter? What about the ones even further below us without resources and status? We are not much if anything by our world's standards but we are invaluable by God's because of the work of Jesus. We boast in that we are so loved that Jesus gave his life so that we might always know life in abundance with God rather than the ways of death prowling around us. We are invited into living those ways of life with others so death may be silenced and life may shine

all the more.

Take heart that God chooses you for life and goodness. Hold on to that in the midst of confusion and sadness. Death and suffering do not have the final word.

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

¹⁴ Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse them. ¹⁵ Rejoice with those who rejoice; weep with those who weep. ¹⁶ Live in harmony with one another; do not be arrogant, but associate with the lowly;^[b] do not claim to be wiser than you are. ¹⁷ Do not repay anyone evil for evil, but take thought for what is noble in the sight of all. ¹⁸ If it is possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all. ¹⁹ Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave room for the wrath of God,^[c] for it is written, "Vengeance is mine; I will repay, says the Lord." ²⁰ Instead, "if your enemies are hungry, feed them; if they are thirsty, give them something to drink, for by doing this you will heap burning coals on their heads." ²¹ Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good. (Romans 12:9-21)

In God's love,

Pastor Diane Day



A WORD FROM PASTOR MATT

I have been spoiled the last few years having Lent beginning in March and not in February. I like having a few more weeks to get things ready before we dive into the great fast of Lent. But alas, we follow the lunar calendar for Easter and this year, Easter is earlier which means these past few weeks in between Christmas and Ash Wednesday have flown by. I keep thinking I have a few more weeks to get things prepared but I don't and that's okay because I really work best under a deadline. In college and seminary, I was notorious for pulling all-nighters the night before a project was due or there was a test. In my 20's, I used to be able to function quite well on just three or four hours of sleep (though, there was this time when I stayed up all night to write my exegetical paper for Dr. Mark Vitalis Hoffman and when I showed up the next day for class with my paper in hand, I found out that he scheduled the class to watch a movie in a very nice, dark room. I may or may not have dosed off numerous times during this film and had to have my friend, Alex, wake me up when I started to snore.) Now that I am 40, I can't

seem to do those all-nighters anymore but I still work really great under pressure and deadlines.

I love this time in the Church Year. I think it has a lot to do with my personality. I am not one of these touchy-feely pastors. I like the somberness of this season in the Church. I like how Lent forces us to look at ourselves and contemplate who we are as followers of Jesus Christ. I like taking on spiritual disciplines, and because the season of Lent is designed to eliminate extracurricular activities in our lives (it is why we slowly strip out part of our liturgy so that we can focus on what the narrative is telling us), it frees us up to explore our faith through a new discipline.

Every year, I usually get up and make a plea to everyone to take on a spiritual discipline because I do believe that a discipline can help us form better habits in our faith. I am not someone who pushes disciplines that force us to give up something. Like why should I give up coffee? Will giving up coffee get me closer to God? However, I do know many find giving up something during Lent is a good discipline. If you are going to give up something, I would suggest that you tie it with doing something. For example, if you give up coffee, take the money you would use to buy a cup of coffee and give it to a charity like the ELCA Good Gifts. If you gave up buying a cup of coffee each day during Lent and gave what you would have spent on that coffee to buy a pig through Good Gifts, you could, in theory, buy seven pigs! Last year, my discipline involved reading the book, *Canoeing the Mountains* (something I had read two other times before) but this time, I kept a journal/notebook to write down some quotes from the book and ideas I had as I read the book. I was doing well with my discipline last lent until Pastor Diane was diagnosed with cancer. Taking care of her and our family took priority, but even in the midst of that chaos, I kept trying to finish this discipline and I eventually did complete my study this past January 2026. A spiritual discipline is designed to help you form better spiritual habits and for me, I struggle the most with making time for God. Now before you go and

call the Bishop on me and report me for not spending time with God (I send him a copy of our Beacon so he already knows this confession), remember that we all struggle with this in one way or another. The world demands a lot of us, pastors included. Making time for God is sometimes hard, but the thing I learned most from my discipline last Lent, is that God is always faithful to me even when I am not so faithful.

I was proud when I finally finished my notebook at the end of January. It was weird taking it out of my work bag and putting it on my bookshelf to be used in the future, but I did enjoy that feeling of accomplishment. For Lent this year, I think I want to focus on something a little bit different. As a pastor and a parent, I don't have a lot of free time for me and that is okay. I love being a dad and pastor, but before I was any of these things, I also enjoyed things like HAM radio. For Lent this year, my discipline is going to be making time to learn about DMR in HAM radio. My plan is to spend an hour or so a day (or maybe a few hours on a Friday when the kids are down for a nap) to research and learn a little bit more about DMR. Hopefully by the end of Lent, I will have learned a little bit more about my hobby and learn some ways I can better myself outside of my work and my chief vocation.

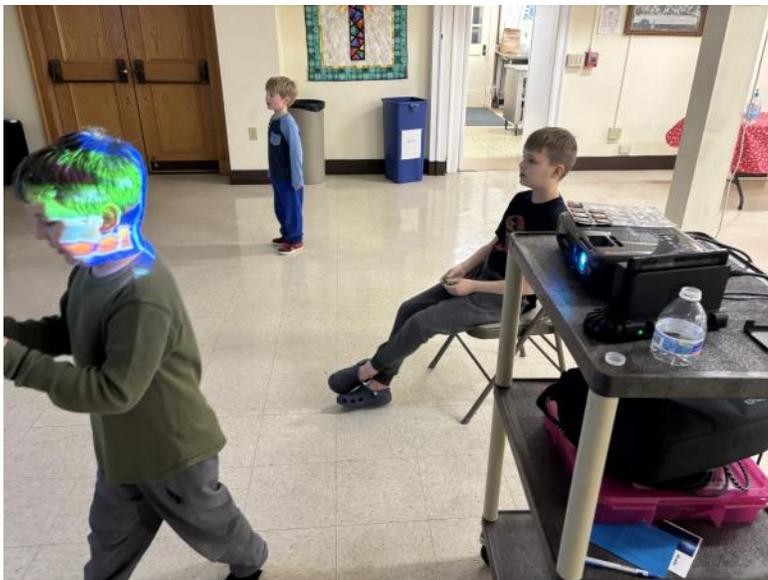
Think about your spiritual discipline this Lent and when you figure out what you want to do, talk to someone about what you are doing such as your spouse, a co-worker, or even Pastor Diane or myself about it. Find someone to hold you accountable this Lent because faith was never meant to be done alone. It is why Christ gave us a community we call the Church. God be with you this Lent and Easter Season.

In Christ,

So, what's been happening?

Advent Craft and Game Night

One of our goals every Advent season is to create a space where people can take a break from all the busyness of the season. One of those ways is to offer a craft and game night where you can leave all the cares and worries outside. This year, we gathered around tacos and games. Whether it was playing a game of checkers, watching teenagers goof around with a 2 year old, trying your hand at a Nintendo Switch game or simply just drinking some hot chocolate while the world rushes by—it was a lot of fun and a great way to take a break from the busyness of December.



Christmas in the Valley

Special thanks goes out to our many volunteers who helped usher and create a welcoming space for our community to gather around music and festivities. The Sanctuary was packed on the first Saturday in December! After the performance, a lot of the audience made their way down to our Social Room to enjoy some punch and cookies. It takes a lot of people working in the background to make events like Christmas in the Valley happen. Thank you to all those who came and enjoyed the festival and especially to all those who helped!





Christmas Pageant

We have heard from many parents that adding one more thing to their schedules is hard to do. We have decided to keep doing the pageant differently. Instead of the pageant at night, we did it during worship. Instead of having weekly play practice, we used a pageant that required little to no practice. Our Children's Choir Director, Emily Hopson, worked with the kids starting in September to learn a few songs to sing during the pageant. Sandy Bell stepped up to ensure everyone had a costume that wanted a costume. It was

certainly a team effort that we all got to enjoy! Special thanks to all our staff, volunteers, parents and especially to our kids.



Baby, it's warm in here!

After a number of really cold winters, we took a leap and installed spray foam in the 1994 addition of our building. The insulation that was installed in the early 90's was simply inadequate and made the space very uncomfortable in the summer or winter. After a week of spray foam, the Property Committee worked to replace all the ceiling tiles. So far this winter, we have found a very comfortable office area that is hopefully going to be more energy efficient in the future for us.



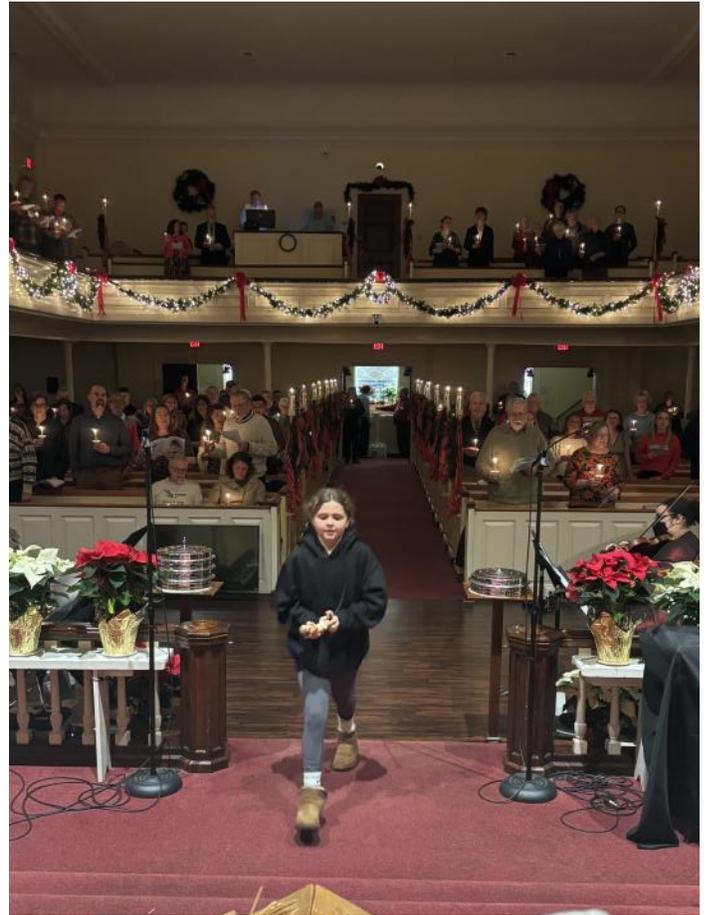
Operation Christmas Child Boxes

For the last 16 years, Zion has participated in the Operation Christmas Child Boxes. This past year, we filled 167 boxes which are then taken and shipped throughout the world to kids in the developing world. Along with the boxes, we also send a group down to a packing and sorting facility that takes all the boxes from the area, inspects the boxes, and then properly seals the boxes so that they can be shipped. Samaritan's Purse is a nondenominational evangelical Christian organization providing spiritual and physical aid to hurting people around the world. Since 1970, Samaritan's Purse has helped meet needs of people who are victims of war, poverty, natural disasters, disease, and famine with the purpose of sharing God's love through His Son, Jesus Christ.



Christmas 2025

Over 500 people joined us on Christmas Eve this year as we told the old yet familiar story of God coming into our world to live among us. It was a beautiful night filled with a spirit-filled worship and beautiful music.



DayOff

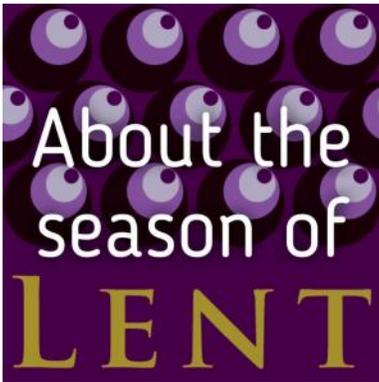
Our last DayOff Program of the 2025-2026 school year happened on MLK Jr. Day. We spent the day hanging around church. We started with a team building game where the group had to get one person do something but could only say “yes” or “no.” We also did a beefed up version of rock, paper, scissors. After lunch, we took the kids over to Urban Air to burn off all that energy they normally would use while learning at school. We had about 20 kids registered for the day which made this January DayOff Program one of our largest ones. We hold a DayOff program 3-4 times a year. Not every day off of school is a good day to hold one of these programs, hence why our January program is the last one of the year. We are able to offer this event free of charge thanks to generous donations from people like you. If you would like to donate to help make sure this ministry remains free, you can do so today by sponsoring a child for \$50. So, thank you for your generosity and we look forward to the next day off from school!



The Knitters hold a retreat at Mar-Lu-Ridge

A group of incredibly talented ladies, many from our congregation, spent the day at MLR knitting hats for charity. Not only did they make hats, but they spent the day in fellowship and enjoying one another’s company. Their next retreat (Winter Woolly Retreat) is scheduled for Saturday, March 7 starting at 9 a.m. at MLR. Speak to Alexa Masser for more information if you would like to participate. 10

Worship Opportunities



Definition

Lent is the forty-day season (excluding Sundays) of penitence and preparation for the Three Days of Holy Week and Easter.

A Very Brief History

The term "Lent" originally comes from the Anglo-Saxon word "lencten" which means "spring." This is the time, in the Northern Hemisphere, when the days are lengthening. The season began as a period of fasting leading up to the Vigil of Easter. Catechumens, those preparing for baptism at Easter, would fast and spend days in intense preparation. For those that were already baptized, Lent

was a period to be renewed in their faith by studying the Bible, the Creed and the Lord's Prayer.

Although it was originally only a two-day period of preparation, Lent became a three-week preparatory period in the middle of the fourth century and then this was further expanded into six-weeks, or forty days. By the end of the fifth century, there was a desire to exclude Sundays from Lent since Sundays are always celebrated as feasts of the Resurrection. Thus, Lent begins not on Sunday, but on Ash Wednesday.

The current practice of forty days of Lent recalls Jesus' forty-day fast in the wilderness after his baptism (Matthew 4:2, Luke 4:1-2) as well as Moses' forty-day fast on Mount Sinai (Exodus 34:28).

A Few Notes on Current Practice

- The appointed liturgical color for Lent is purple because purple has long been associated with royalty. In this case, Christ reigns from a cross.
- Currently, the ancient understanding of Lent as both a time for baptismal preparation and baptismal renewal is being rediscovered in Lutheran rites and practice. Many congregations hold mid-week services during Lent and a baptismal renewal theme is particularly appropriate for these.
- Many congregations refrain from speaking or singing the word "alleluia" during Lent. "Burying" the alleluia occurs at the conclusion of worship on Transfiguration Sunday and it is restored at either the Vigil of Easter or Easter Sunday. A Lenten acclamation replaces the alleluia verse in preparation for hearing the Gospel.

Lent at a Glance

Lent begins...

Ash Wednesday - February 18 at 7 p.m.

Wednesdays in Lent - Collecting with Matthew

Dinner at 6 p.m.

Children's Activity at 6:30 p.m., Evening Prayer at 7 p.m.
Every Wednesday in Lent starting February 25 - March 25

HOLY WEEK

Palm Sunday with the reading of the Passion from Matthew - March 28/29

Maundy Thursday - April 2 at 7 p.m. Dinner at 6 p.m.

Good Friday - April 3 at 7 p.m.

Easter Vigil - April 4 at 5 p.m.

Easter Sunday: Contemporary at 9 a.m. and Traditional at 11 a.m.

When are we going to bury the Alleluias?

Weekend of February 14/15

at all worship services.



Remember that
 you are dust,
 and to dust
 you shall return.



Ash Wednesday

February 18 at 7 p.m.

Lent begins with a solemn service of reflection and prayer. We will ponder the meaning of life and death. We will be reminded of our fragility and mortality. We will also commit ourselves to a time of intentional prayer for these next six weeks leading up to Easter.

Be a part of this journey this Lent and come on Ash Wednesday and make a commitment to engage your faith throughout these 40 days.



Wear your Easter bonnet!
 Don't forget on **April 5th** to wear your favorite hat or fascinator to celebrate the glorious joy of spring and resurrection!

Worship Services

Saturday Night:

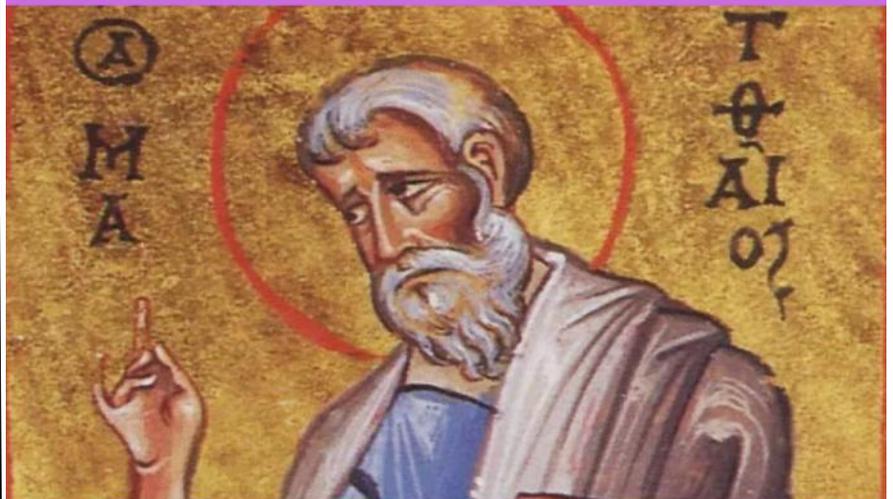
5 p.m. Casual Worship

Sunday Morning:

9 a.m. Contemporary
 Worship

11 a.m. Traditional Worship

WEDNESDAYS IN LENT



COLLECTING WITH MATTHEW

6 P.M. | Dinner

6:30 P.M. | Children's Program

7 P.M. | Evening Prayer

A guide to choosing a Lenten Discipline

For many people, Lent is a time when we give things up, but there is so much more to Lent than just giving up cake or coffee. Instead of giving something up for Lent, try doing something instead:

Reading a book, waking up in the morning and praying, reading a chapter from the Bible at night, working at a soup kitchen, walking to work, walking once a night with your family, playing a game with your family once a week, turning off your phone one day a week and spending that time with your family, volunteering to help around church, doing some manual labor, or simply cleaning the garage. These are a few ideas, but really, all you need to do is look at your life and see the places that are lacking your presence. The possibilities are endless. Here are a couple of good ones that people have done over the years...

Come to both the Maundy Thursday and Good Friday Services. These are very important worship times in the Church for we will hear how Jesus won our salvation. These services remind us of our salvation and the story we so love to tell. Without these two services, Easter makes no sense. So come and learn why we gather on Easter.

Give up a meal once a day and use the money for that meal to help the needy. This has also been a tradition in the Roman Catholic Church for years. You simply skip a meal and place that money that you normally would have spent on that meal and give it to the poor. Put that money aside that you would have spent and donate it to the ELCA World Hunger or another cause close to your heart.

Do not eat meat on Fridays or maybe Monday (Meatless Monday). This has been a tradition in the Catholic Church for years, but it is another way you might find some spiritual growth. Sometimes, failing at this discipline teaches more than actually keeping the discipline. For in failing, you will see just how dependent we are on meat in our diet where many in the world are lucky to have meat once a month.

Come on Wednesday for food and prayer. This is not just self-promotion. Come and fellowship with other Christians and deepen your faith. Martin Luther once said, "Anyone who is to find Christ must first find the Church. How could anyone know where Christ is and what faith is in him, unless we know where his believers are?" So, come find Christ and see Christ in the face of your brothers and sisters.

Turn off all notifications on your cell phone. Sounds simple right? These notifications help us stay connected but they can interrupt family time and sabbath time. Consider turning off your notifications this Lent and get to the emails and text messages later.

Read the Entire New Testament. Martin Luther used to read the whole Bible once a year. Not too many of us have ever done this, so start small. You can read the whole Bible in 40 days but if that seems too large, try the New Testament. Remember that the Bible is not just available in print but there are audio copies of this book available. There are even free versions available as a podcast. Just be thoughtful with the translation. Instead of listening to the music or the news, use your commute time to read/listen to the Bible.

SPEND TIME WITH YOUR FAMILY. I don't think we can stress this enough. Spending time with your family is so important these days. In the blink of an eye, tragedies can strike. Take as much time as you can to be with the people you love and who love you the most.

The most important thing to remember this Lent with whatever discipline you might pick, is to not be afraid to fail at it. Failure teaches us what we did wrong so that we can fix it for the future. Don't be afraid to fail, but come and bring your failures to worship where they can be forgiven. And do tell others about what you are doing this Lent! Don't hide what you are doing. Telling others will help hold you accountable and will help you succeed. And maybe, if you are lucky and you build a habit out of your spiritual discipline, you will be able to continue to do it after Easter. The goal of any good discipline is that you continue to keep on doing it throughout the year. So, pick up a new discipline this Lent!

Why should we bother with Holy Week?

Holy Week began because the Church, after the Roman Empire converted all its citizens to Christianity, had to find a way to educate large groups of people about the Passion of our Lord. However, these times of worship are not us crucifying Jesus once again but rather, as a way for us to remember.

To help answer some of your questions about these three days, we have gathered a few resources for you to read and watch. They can be found by clicking on the Lent and Easter Celebration link on the front page of the website under worship times.

The Triduum are the three holy days that happen the week in between Palm Sunday and Easter. These days are called: Maundy Thursday, Good Friday and Easter Vigil. These are three days in the Church Year when we physically walk with Jesus from the table, to the cross, and to the tomb so that we might ponder the mystery of Easter. On Easter morning, we go with Mary Magdalene and witness with her Jesus rising from the dead; but the three days before Easter we explain why we even need to gather on Easter. These three days are important and go hand-in-hand. One does not make sense without the other. Though it might be hard to make it to church three times in a row, coming to these services is a great reminder of why we gather on Sunday mornings in the first place! Of course, the best way to learn more about these Three Days is to experience them firsthand!



Last year, over the course of a week, over 500 people encountered the story of Jesus saving the world by meeting him in the upper room, standing at the foot of the cross, and going with Mary and the other women to the tomb on Easter Sunday. Every year we tell this timeless story and we are all made active participants just like the disciples were active participants. You can be an active participant this year too!



The Stations of the Cross will return this Lent (once the snow melts). Enjoy the beauty of our garden as you remember the final last moments of our Lord's life.

Maundy Thursday Worship
Thursday, April 2
7 p.m. worship service
Worship either in-person or virtually

Confession | Foot Washing | Eucharist

Good Friday Worship
Friday, April 3
7 p.m. Worship Service
Worship either in-person or virtually

We adore you, O Christ, and bless you.
By your Holy Cross, you have redeemed the world.

Easter Vigil
Saturday, April 4
5 p.m. Worship Service

Rejoice now, all you heavenly choirs of angels; Rejoice now, all creation;
Sound forth, trumpet of salvation, And proclaim the triumph of our King.
This is the night!

Easter Sunday
Contemporary Worship 9 a.m.
Traditional Worship at 11 a.m.

The tomb is empty!

Being the Church...



Interview with Michael and Renee Damskey by Mary Ann Marcantonio

If you attend the Contemporary Services on Sunday mornings, hopefully you have stopped and introduced yourself to Michael and Renee Damskey and their infant daughter, Melody. This young family has already settled in and feels right at home. But how did they land here at Zion? They liked what they saw on our website and realized it was something they could be a part of. In just a short few months they have already gotten involved. We are so glad they have joined us!

Although born in Montgomery County, Renee's parents moved to Frederick County when she was five which has been the only home she has known. Many young people look forward to going away to college and escape the familiar to experience "freedom" but she chose to stay close to home at Hood College, graduating in 2014 with a degree in elementary education and special education. Being influenced by many of the teachers she had in her early education, Renee has chosen to follow the admirable path to educate the young and give back as she encourages and shapes the next generation of third graders here at Middletown Elementary. In 2024, she was recognized and honored as a semi-finalist as FCPS teacher of the year.

Her love of dance was inspired when she put on her first dance slippers at a very young age and she hasn't stopped. Her dedication to practice and doing her best offered her opportunities to enter and receive numerous competition awards and scholarships. As she got older, Renee danced right into a teaching position at the studio she grew up in and since 2009, continues her passion of dance and working with the youth.

Michael grew up in Montgomery County and attended Montgomery County Schools. Michael's parents are both Navy veterans, and wouldn't you expect their son to follow the same path? No...closest he got in following their patriotic passion and love of country is by joining Jr ROTC in high school and ROTC at VMI (Virginia Military Institute). He was ready to serve our country but due to a knee injury, changed his career path. With disappointment, Michael's military aspirations came to an end, but when one door closes, another opens. That door was an opportunity as a police officer in Montgomery County. Michael patrolled the streets of Wheaton, Maryland for nearly ten years and most likely could share many interesting stories. But on one particular night, he was patrolling the midnight streets of Wheaton and with a little research I located a story that ended well because Michael was there. In March of 2019, during a routine traffic stop, a vehicle traveling 117 mph in the opposite lane, struck a car from behind that was stopped at a light. The stopped car immediately burst into flames. In spite of the danger, Michael ran to the aid of the car engulfed in flames and through the video you could hear him encourage the woman "keep breathing" as he grappled to free her from the burning car. Through his heroic efforts, Michael was honored at a press conference by his superior for his daring, yet caring actions. The woman survived and along with her grateful family attended the press conference and were able to thank him for his bravery. Michael told me that the woman underwent over 30

surgeries during her yearlong recovery. This is not the only near death experience he had serving his community, surviving a too close for call explosion and the exchange of gunfire, brings a young man to a reality check... the danger was too costly with dreams of a future family, not to mention the commuting that took away such valuable family time. Michael has hung up his uniform as a police officer but continues in a legal line of work. He now helps officers, all from his home office in Myersville, as they prepare for court cases. We have heroes among us!

The Damskeys were both exposed to church life in their early years. Renee grew up as a member of The Church of the Redeemer Lutheran Church and Michael's experience was less formal as a child but while attending VMI he attended a Lutheran church for a while and then different campus ministries. Growing up in the church is never a guarantee that we will not face challenges; we only hope that along the way that our faith will see us through it. Their faith would soon be tested. As a young married couple, they looked forward to becoming parents. God wanted that for them also but in his appointed time, not according to their timeline. After miscarriages and many expensive and unsuccessful doctor appointments and procedures, they were childless. Anger and frustration towards God was growing in their hearts, especially for Renee. For Michael, the feeling of helplessness as he watched Renee suffer through disappointments and failed procedures. It was heartbreaking. Months turned into years and then the God of grace blessed them with the good news she was pregnant. As each month passed, the fear of disappointment began to fade as Renee got closer to her due date. And it happened! Their infant daughter, Melody HOPE was born. Did you get it! Yes Melody's middle name is Hope. The gates of fertility were not closed, in spite of anger and frustration, the possibility of being parents is now hope realized. Melody was recently baptized here at Zion and is the last baptism in the year 2025, our 285th year as a Lutheran congregation here in Middletown.

Finding time to relax in a stressful world can be a challenge but they both have managed to find ways to unwind. Both Michael and Renee have a love of reading and young Melody will learn through their example that the world can be explored through books. Renee's escape is found through the love of dancing and Michael enjoys a good round of golf. But their favorite pastime is down on the floor playing with their sweet daughter and romping with their two favorite fur babies.

Is there a lesson that the adult Renee would like to share with her younger self? When all things seem impossible...don't give up. In her youth, Renee saw this live out as her grandmother walked through trials and it is something she has never forgotten. It has been the rod and staff that has led her to a place where she is at peace with God. We underestimate the influence our walking with God will have on others, especially as we navigate through the tough times.

My take away from our visits is that God is relational and wants us to meet him right where we are at. We can only trust God fully when we rely on our experiences with him. It is very difficult to trust someone you don't know so getting to know our God is paramount in understanding who he is. Trust is a learned discipline which through experiences and remembrance of those experiences we learn how to rest in God's perfect love for us. Trusting in God we learn he is reliable no matter the circumstances even when they seem impossible or even when our limited understanding is at fault. Trust involves a faith that no matter what life brings, we know we are not alone, God walks with us. We can count on it!

Aero Energy HOUSE OF WORSHIP PROGRAM

**We'll Donate To Your Church
When You Choose Aero Energy
For Propane, Heating Oil or HVAC
Services!**

Aero Energy will donate \$0.04/Gallon of propane and heating oil used annually to your church. In addition to the donation for fuel we also now offer a HVAC/plumbing component to our program. Customers enrolled in our House of Worship program will receive a 10% (up to \$250 /year) donation to their church for heating and cooling/plumbing system sales and service.

Following the 2023-2024 heating season, Aero Energy was able to donate over \$35,000 to churches, and with your help we can top that number this year! If your church is able to round up 20 participating members, they could receive on average a donation of \$600 a year.
Call 717-624-6721 for more information.



Bishop Gohl celebrates 25 years of Ordination in Christ's Church

As part of the celebration, the Synod put on three events around the territory and one of the locations was at Zion. Members from around the area came to Zion to give thanks for his ministry and presence among us. Numerous pastors and friends were invited to share some words about Bishop Gohl.

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

SAVE THE DATE

**32nd Annual
Middletown
Empty Bowls Banquet**



March 26, 2026

Entrance: Middletown High School Cafeteria

5:00 PM Doors and Silent Auction open

6:00 PM Dinner

Raising money to fight hunger in our community by supporting Middletown Valley

People Helping People

**More information will be posted
on their website**

<https://www.mvphp.org/>

Middletown



Lions Club

Pancake Breakfast

in Middletown

Delicious pancakes, french toast, eggs, sausage, tater tots, biscuits,
sausage & chipped beef gravy, fruit, orange juice & coffee!

Saturday, Feb 14 & April 11 • 7:30 - 10:30 AM

\$13 Adult

\$12 Senior

\$9 Child (5-10)

Free < 5 yrs.

ALL YOU CAN EAT!

Proceeds benefit the
Middletown Community

Event Location

Zion Lutheran Church

107 E Main Street

Middletown, MD





MIDDLETOWN 2026 GREEN EXPO

NEW LOCATION

MIDDLETOWN LIBRARY
31 E. GREEN STREET
MIDDLETOWN, MD 21769

SAVE THE DATE

SATURDAY,
MARCH 28, 2026

SPECIAL HIGHLIGHTS:

ANIMAL AMBASSADORS

FOOD TRUCKS

'GREEN' EXHIBITS

CRAFTS & ACTIVITIES

10:00 A.M.
– 2:00 P.M.

CALL FOR VENDORS

If you'd like to participate, please
complete this interest form:

<https://forms.office.com/r/DwFdvhTgFd>

SPONSORED BY:



FREDERICK
COUNTY
PUBLIC
LIBRARIES



Christian Education



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

We are looking at the Nicene Creed over the next few months. Come and bring your questions that you never got to ask in Confirmation Class.

Adult Sunday School Calendar

Date	Facilitator	Topic	Comments
February 8	Ike Ahalt	Unafraid: Living with Courage and Hope in Uncertain Times Author: Adam Hamilton	Back of Chapel
February 15	Ike Ahalt	Unafraid (2)	Back of Chapel
February 22	Ike Ahalt	Unafraid (3)	Back of Chapel
March 1	Ike Ahalt	Unafraid (4)	Back of Chapel
March 8	Ike Ahalt	Unafraid (5)	Back of Chapel
March 15		TBA	
March 22		TBA	
March 29		TBA	
April 5	////////////////////	Easter (No SS)	////////////////////
April 12		TBA	
April 19		TBA	
April 26	Mary Ann Marcantonio	A Shepherd Looks at Psalm 23 Author: W. Phillip Keller Book: \$7.00	Back of Chapel
May 3	Mary Ann Marcantonio	Shepherd (2)	Back of Chapel
May 10	Mary Ann Marcantonio	Shepherd (3)	Back of Chapel

VBS

SAVE THE DATE

Vacation Bible School at Zion Lutheran Church

JULY 5-9 • AGES 2-11

5:30 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.

Dinner Included



New Sunday School Class—Cradle Roll

We have a unique problem here at Zion—we've got a lot of babies! It is a great problem to have and since Christian Formation begins at an early age (John does leap in his mother's womb at the sound of Mary's voice), we thought it would be best to add a new class for kids under the age of 4. If you have a child under the age of 4 who you think would benefit from this class, you should check it out the next time you are at church! And spread the word about this amazing new ministry.

Discover Zion Lutheran Church

Get Involved • Stay Connected • Grow with Us



Scan me!



Across the board in churches in America today, youth ministry has seen a sharp drop in participation since the start of the pandemic. The only way to change that trend is by building, and in some cases rebuilding, relationships with youth, their parents, and their mentors. From the DayOff Programs, to FootPrints, Youth Group, Confirmation, and those Wednesday Night activities in Advent and Lent for children, we are committed to doing this work and we thank you for your support!

Confirmation

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

Midweek Lenten Children’s Program!

On Wednesdays in Lent, youth of all ages are invited to come at 6:30 p.m. for an interactive lesson while parents worship in the church!
And dinner is provided at 6 p.m.!

Maundy Thursday

One way we can teach the faith is through acting it out. Maundy Thursday worship is a perfect way to teach kids about Jesus’ final hours before his death. Worship this night will be interactive for everyone, especially kids! Dinner will be served at 6 p.m. and worship is at 7 p.m.

IGNITE YOUR FAITH

YOUTH NIGHT

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

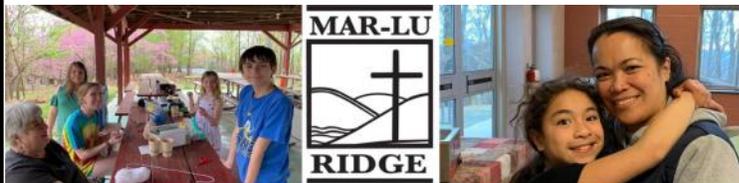
YOUTH GROUP IS OPEN TO 5TH GRADERS, ALL MIDDLE AND HIGH SCHOOL AGE KIDS!

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



Summer Camp Registration is now open!

Special Early-Bird pricing runs through February 16th.
Register Today at www.mar-lu-ridge.org
Scholarships from Zion are available!



SAVE THE DATE: CAMP DAY
MARCH 22, 2026 1-4 pm

For more info, check out mar-lu-ridge.org

Camp tours, arts & crafts, archery, hiking, camp games, & snacks! Check out cabins, meet the staff, & enjoy a family afternoon at camp!



2026 Footprints Upcoming Dates



March 8th

April 12th

May 10th

Join us on the second Sunday of each month at both worship services 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. Joint Worship, then we will also have Footprints at that service.

Community Easter Egg Hunt

Hop on over and join us!

SATURDAY, APRIL 4
10 AM - NOON
ZION LUTHERAN CHURCH
107 WEST MAIN STREET
MIDDLETOWN, MD

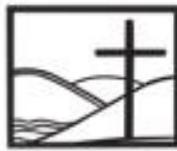
Join us for a very special Easter celebration! There will be crafts, activities, a service project and an egg hunt! And don't forget to bring your baskets!



We are exploring the possibility of a Mission Trip for our Middle and High school students in the summer of 2026.

What do we need to know?

If you are interested, please send me your child's name, age, grade in 2026-2027 school year, and availability this summer. Once we see who is interested and availability, we will be able to choose an appropriate trip for those wishing to attend. Please email Pastor Matt at pastormatt@zionmiddletown.org with your information ASAP



Mar-Lu-Ridge Camp & Retreat Center

Get ready for Summer 2026!

For program descriptions, information regarding our tiered pricing system (tiered prices are listed behind each program below), FAQs, and more, please visit our website:

www.mar-lu-ridge.org/summer-camp

Registration opens January 1, 2026. Early bird discount ends February 16, 2026.

	Juniors (Ages 6-10)	Middlers (Ages 11-14)	Senior High (Ages 15-17)	Family Camp (All ages!)
June 14-19	Day Camp 1 \$350 for 5 days <i>for day-to-day options see website</i>	Middler 1 \$600/\$550/\$500	SIT (Age 17) \$610/\$560/\$510	
	Junior 1 \$600/\$550/\$500			
	Jun. Horseback (Ages 8-10) \$690/\$645/\$600	Middler Horseback \$690/\$645/\$600		
June 21-26	Day Camp 2 \$350 for 5 days <i>for day-to-day options see website</i>	Middler 2 \$600/\$550/\$500	Adventure 1 (Ages 14-17) \$675/\$625/\$575	Family Camp 1 (June 24- June 27) <i>See website for pricing</i>
	Junior 2 \$600/\$550/\$500			
June 28- July 3	Day Camp 3 \$350 for 5 days <i>for day-to-day options see website</i>	Middler 3 \$600/\$550/\$500	Senior High \$630/\$580/\$530	
	Wacky & Wild (New Name!) \$610/\$560/\$510	Middler Pioneer \$610/\$560/\$510		
July 5-10		Night Owls (Ages 12-15) \$640/\$590/\$540		Family Camp Weekend (July 10-12) <i>See website for pricing</i>
July 12-17	Day Camp 5 \$350 for 5 days <i>for day-to-day options see website</i>	Middler 5 \$600/\$550/\$500	Adventure 2 (Ages 14-17) \$675/\$625/\$575	
	Junior 5 \$600/\$550/\$500			
	Music Camp** (Ages 8-12) \$610/\$560/\$510			
July 19-24	Jun. Nature Explorers \$610/\$560/\$510	Middler 6 \$600/\$550/\$500		Family Camp 2 (July 22-25) <i>See website for pricing</i>
		Middler Arts \$625/\$575/\$525		
July 26- 31	Junior 7 \$600/\$550/\$500	Middler 7 \$600/\$550/\$500		

****New for 2026!**

Rooted in Christ, we welcome ALL people to encounter God's love through sacred hospitality, deepening relationships, and care for Creation. Full and partial scholarships are available for ANY family in need. Contact the camp office for more information (301-874-5544). **We never turn campers away!**



We can't wait to see you this summer!



Ministry Updates



Ladies Spring Fling Dinner – May 6th

You are cordially invited to join Zion's annual Ladies Spring Fling Dinner. Tickets will go on sale starting April 5th. Dinner is at 6:00pm. Design your own wreath craft to follow at 7:00pm. Stay tuned, dinner menu is changing and still in the planning phase. Please RSVP to Church Office by April 30th to purchase your tickets! Questions? Contact the Church Office – 301-371-6500

2026 Zion Golf Tournament
June 1st, 2026 9:30am
Shotgun Start
Richland Golf Club
Middletown, MD 21769

Format:
Best Ball
(Captain's Choice)
Mulligan Package
Available
Putting Contest
Longest Drives
Closet to the pin
Awards Banquet
Silent Auction
50/50 Raffle

Exclusive Sponsorships Available
\$1,500, \$1,000 and \$500
Hole Sponsorships \$100

We are a 501c3 Non Profit

Cost
\$400 per foursome
(\$100 per individual)
Before
May 15, 2026

Benefiting Zion Heritage Preservation Steeple Fund
Built in 1859

\$420 per foursome
(\$105 per individual)
After May 15, 2026

ZION GOLF TOURNAMENT ENTRY FORM



DATE: June 1st, 2026
TIME: Registration at 8:30 A.M. Shot Gun Start at 9:30 A.M.

PLACE: Richland Golf Club
50 Glenbrook Dr.
Middletown, MD 21769

ENTRY FEE: \$400 per foursome \$100 per single (includes: green fees, cart & catered Awards Banquet)
Payment due with Registration form before May 15, 2026.

****Lunch Banquet is Provided at 2:00pm**

\$420 per foursome \$105 per single after May 15, 2026

Format: Tournament will be played in Scramble with 4-person teams.

Procedure: Best Ball – Captain's Choice

ENTRY FORM:

Golf Outing Sponsorships available:

Gold— \$1500
Silver—\$1000
Bronze—\$500
Hole sponsorships—\$100

TEAM CAPTAIN NAME
(or single entry): _____

ADDRESS: _____

**Tournament Director
Deb Reichelt**

TELEPHONE: _____

240-490-1961 Cell
301-371-6500 Office
office@ Zionmiddletown.org

EMAIL: _____

Team Members:

Player 2 Name: _____

Mailing Address*

cell phone # _____

*** Send Entry Forms & payment
to the address below**

Player 3 Name: _____

**** Credit Card Payment is available
through Vanco**

Cell phone # _____

**Zion Lutheran Church
Zion Golf Tournament
107 West Main Street
Middletown, MD 21769
301-371-6500**

Player 4 Name: _____

Cell phone # _____

Benefiting Zion's Heritage Preservation Fund for the restoration of church steeple originally built in 1859.

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.



Noisy Offering Updates



November—ELCA World Hunger	\$230.14
December—Religious Coalition	\$264.82
January—Student Homelessness Initiative Partnership (SHIP)	\$282.61
Thank you to all who donated!	

Upcoming Noisy Offerings

February 14th and 15th	Fresh Step Laundry
March 14th & 15th	Lantern Hill
April 18th & 19th	On Our Own
May 16th & 17th	Heartly House

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 shopping cart on the ramp or taken directly to the Food Bank on Wednesdays from 1-3 p.m.



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

WEEKEND BACKPACKS

Hunger doesn't take the weekend off



The critical need item for February is juice boxes and for March is individual cereal boxes including oatmeal.

Please consider donating one of those or writing a check to Zion and make sure you write "Weekend Backpack" on the memo line to help children throughout the school year.



JOY +50 (Just Older Youth) Lunch

J.O.Y. 50+ seniors have been enjoying lunch and programs/bingo for three years now.

The J.O.Y 50+ 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 still \$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 alexamasser@gmail.com. Everyone is welcome!

Upcoming 2026 JOY 50+ Lunch Dates

	Feb 18	Mar 18	Apr 15
May 20	Jun 17	Jul 15	Aug 19
Sep 16	Oct 21	Nov 18	

Snow policy: Joy +50 will follow the FPCS snow closings



GriefShare

The Spring cycle of GriefShare will begin on Tuesday, February 24th. 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 nondenominational 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 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



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.

We meet on the last Monday of the month at 1 p.m. in the parking lot.



The Altar Guild will be selling lilies and tulips and collecting for LWR Monetary Gifts through March 6, 2026. Easter flowers and LWR gifts are \$13.00 each. **All Easter flower orders and LWR gifts must be in by March 6.** No orders after that date please!

Order forms for Easter flowers and LWR gifts are on pages 31 and 32. Please complete the appropriate form and mail it with your check to Zion Lutheran Church, 107 W. Main Street, Middletown, MD 21769, or drop it off at the Church Office during office hours or after any service.

Homemade Apple Butter

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

\$6 for a Pint



Hip, Hip Hooray! Hip, Hip Hooray!

Thanks to members from Zion, community members and Dempsey's Restaurant, we have recycled 271,059 aluminum cans. All the proceeds from the cans go to fund our Youth Activities. Lee says, "Keep them coming!"

2025 Annual Report

A copy of the 2025 Annual Report can be found on Zion's website. In it, you will find the budget for 2026 as well as a recap of the ministry happening here at Zion.

Visit

www.ZionMiddletown.com/members-area to find a copy today.

Donuts and coffee

Every Sunday

at 10 a.m.



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!





Time to Order Easter Flowers

Easter flower orders will be accepted through March 6, 2026. The cost for lilies and tulips is \$13.00 each.

All orders must be received by March 6, 2026. No orders after that date, please! Our supplier needs to know our total number early to meet our request.

Orders will be accepted by completing the form below and mailing it with a check to Zion Lutheran Church, 107 West Main Street, Middletown, MD 21769. You may also drop the form and check off at the church office during office hours or after any church service. Please mark your envelope "Easter Flowers".

2026 Order Form for Easter Flowers

Total Amount Enclosed \$_____

____ Lily (\$13.00)

____ Tulips (\$13.00)

In Memory of:

Given by:

In Honor of:

Given by:

____ I will pick up ____ tulip ____ lily (Put in number you are picking up)



**Monetary Gift in Memory or Honor of
Loved One
(Alternative to Lily or Tulip)**

Zion is providing an opportunity to remember or honor a loved one with a monetary gift to Lutheran World Relief (LWR)—an alternative to purchasing a lily or tulip. All gifts will be combined to make a purchase from the LWR gift catalog to help a family and/or a community in need.

Monetary gifts will be accepted through March 6, 2026, by mailing the completed form below with a check to Zion Lutheran Church, 107 W. Main Street, Middletown, MD 21769. You may also drop off the form and check at the church office during office hours or after any service. Please mark your envelope “LWR”.

2026 Monetary Gift for LWR

Each gift is \$13.00

Total Amount enclosed
\$_____

In Memory of:

Given by:

In Honor of:

Given by:

Reimagining Stewardship

Highlights from the end of 2025

- Over 180 people pledged to give their time, talents and treasure to Zion in 2026.
- \$303,707 have been pledged this year towards our ministry!
- We increased our giving units from 206 in 2024 to 212 in 2025.
- 68% of our Active membership financially contributed in 2025 which is up from 64% in 2024.
- In January 2026, 18 kids both from our congregation and from our community were able to participate in the DayOff Program for FREE thanks to your generosity. Your giving to Zion makes ministries like this possible.



Finance Snapshot

YTD Income: \$44,677

YTD Expenses: \$59,721

What do we need each month to meet our budget?

\$50,652.83

How much do we need each week to meet our Budget?

\$11,689.12



Being the beacon in the valley beyond worship...

Our building is not only used on Sunday mornings but is a meeting place for many community groups. Your generosity allows groups to meet and take action. Here are a few:

- Zion Quilters & Knitters
- JOY Luncheon
- DayOff Program
- Youth Group & Confirmation Class
- Middletown Historic Society
- 4 H Meetings
- One God, One Voice practices
- Lifeline Screening
- Lion's Club
- One God, One Voice
- CODA Meetings
- AA Meetings
- Girl Scouts
- NA Meetings

You can make a difference today! Scan the QR code to see how you can reimagine your generosity!





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 12 kids. This year, we hope to sponsor more kids from Zion. You have an amazing opportunity to make Summer Camp at Mar-Lu-Ridge possible for a child here at Zion. Just like the DayOff 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.

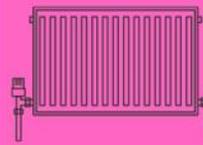
Make a contribution today and help make sure VBS remains a central and important ministry here at Zion. Give the gift of VBS today and help ensure that VBS remains a place where all children can learn, grow, and feel welcome.

Sponsor a New Chapel Chair



Be a part of Zion's transformation. The chapel is just the beginning. Your sponsorship will help us as we update our facility and become a more welcoming space for visitors, guests, members, and neighbors. Would you or your family be willing to sponsor a chair \$100. Maybe consider your donation in honor of or in memory a loved one. Your sponsorship would make a major difference in making this idea become reality.

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.

Thank You Note

Dear Zion Lutheran Church Staff,

Thank you so much for allowing us to use your facilities to hold our monthly board meetings.

Since establishing ourselves we have been able to hold events and partake in events like Middletown Heritage Day and Museums by Candlelight. This year we're holding monthly Programs and could not have done any of it without having a comfortable space to meet.

Attached is a donation from the Middletown Valley Historical Society with our sincere thanks!

Your friends at MVHS

P.S. Please check out our website
MiddletownValleyHistoricalSociety.org

With Sympathy



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

**John Burrier
Marie Boyer**

**Lillian Margaret Moselein
Sophie Michele Newkirk**



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.



Wes Keller, Linda Wiles, Mike Lingertot, Kieffer Crummitt, Sr., Heather Pendleton, Bridget Ely, Jim Hoover, Robert Berkey, Brittany Mushuda, Lynn Schenkelberg, Karen Summers, Carrie Basler, Peggy Kinna, Dianne Shafer, Tim Shafer, Benedict Phelps, Mary Fymer, Colin Sweigert, Ronnie Jessen, Beth Reed, Jo Ahalt, Diana Fath, Pat McIntosh, Shirley Hyssong, Ronnie Kinna, Dave Gouker, Richard Brandenburg, Vicki Ringwelski, J. Richard Staples, The Gunsallus Family, Samn Huffer, Eric Kinna, Linda Stottlemyer, Anita, Gary, Bruce Albright, Marty Appleby, Judith Smith, Jackie Bello, Trish Tollefson, Addison Hopson, Kevin Kinna, Deb Kahihikolo

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.

The LORD is my strength and my shield; my heart trusts in him, and he helps me. My heart leaps for joy, and with my song I praise him.

Psalm 28:7

Evangelical Lutheran Church Zion

107 W Main Street

Middletown MD 21769

www.ZionMiddletown.org



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