

# THE BEACON

A MINISTRY OF ZION LUTHERAN CHURCH

LENT & EASTER 2024 EDITION

*Who are we?*

# Upcoming Events

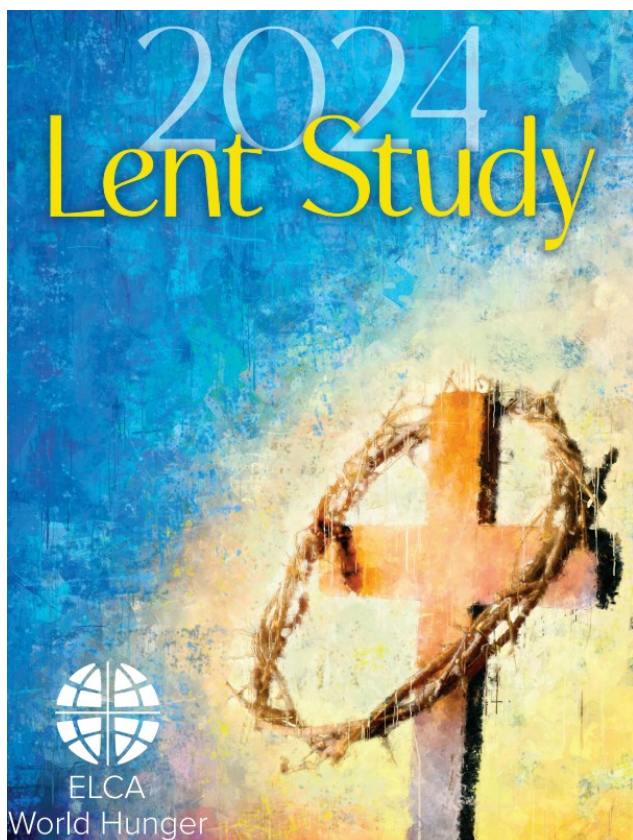
<b>First Sunday of the Month</b>	Confirmation from 4-6 p.m.
<b>First Sunday of the Month</b>	Youth Group from 6-8 p.m.
<b>First Thursdays of Month</b>	Table Talk at the Main Cup at 6 p.m.
<b>Second Sunday of the Month</b>	Footprints Sunday
<b>Second Monday of the Month</b>	Council meet at 6:30 p.m. in the Social Room
<b>Third Wednesday of the Month</b>	JOY Luncheon from 12-2 p.m.
<b>Last Monday of the Month</b>	Hope to Faith at 2 p.m.
<b>Saturday, February 3</b>	Winter Wooly Retreat at Mar-Lu-Ridge
<b>Wednesday, February 14</b>	Ash Wednesday Worship at 7 p.m.
<b>Every Wednesday in Lent</b>	Dinner at 6 p.m. followed by Children's Activities and Worship at 7
<b>Tuesday, February 27</b>	GriefShare every Tuesday from 6-8 p.m. through March 20 <sup>th</sup>
<b>Sunday, March 24</b>	Palm Sunday Worship at 9 and 11 a.m.
<b>Thursday, March 28</b>	Dinner at 6 p.m. followed by Maundy Thursday Worship with Children's Activities at 7 p.m.
<b>Friday, March 29</b>	Good Friday Worship at 7 p.m.
<b>Saturday, March 30</b>	Community Easter Egg Hunt at 10 a.m. i
<b>Saturday, March 30</b>	Easter Vigil at 5 p.m.
<b>Sunday, March 31</b>	Easter Sunday with Contemporary Worship at 9 a.m. & Traditional Worship at 11 a.m.
<b>Sunday, April 21</b>	Women's Bible Study reconvenes at the Valley-Ho Farm Pavilion
<b>Wednesday, May 8</b>	Ladies' Spring Fling
<b>Sunday, May 19</b>	Confirmation Sunday with Combined Pentecost Worship at 10 a.m.

**Zion Lutheran Church Middletown, MD**

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



## A WORD FROM PASTOR DIANE



EVERY year we have this discussion about Lenten disciplines. By now you may know the gist of it by heart: take something on, don't give something up.

We wish to share with you a resource to think about taking something on that can help people around the world or right in our backyard in addition to

your own spiritual growth. ELCA World Hunger has offered a calendar to help you in biblical study and prayer and also the practice of almsgiving. Each day from Ash Wednesday until Easter Sunday offers a hymn stanza, a biblical reading, or a prayer to reflect around hunger. It also offers the encouragement to set a goal for a financial gift to ELCA World Hunger. And if ELCA World Hunger might not be your cup of tea, why not consider giving a gift to another feeding/provision ministry

like the Middletown Valley Food Bank or Middletown Valley People Helping People right here?

Beginning Saturday, February 10th and Sunday, February 11th, we will have these calendars available where you pick up your bulletins to take home and share as a family.



If you would like further study, ELCA World Hunger offers a weekly devotion around the Sunday readings and themes. You can find it digitally <https://shorturl.at/aDQV6> OR if you'd like us to print you a copy, please let me know! We hope this Lent is another way of bringing you closer to God and who God is creating you to be. May your Lenten disciplines aid you in that relationship!

In Christ,

*Pastor Diane Ray*



confirmed. Had I had to do something like that, I doubt I would have stayed in the Church as, I am not very good at memorizing anything. Because we associate catechumenal study with Confirmation, we often think of it as a one and done type of thing. You “complete” confirmation and then you become a confirmed member. But catechumenal study doesn’t end when you get confirmed. Christian formation doesn’t stop after we turn a certain age. How I view God is very different from how I viewed God as a teenager or when I was in my 20’s. Catechumenal study should be seen as a lifetime of learning and growing.

Martin Luther believed that the church should set aside time each year for catechumenal study. With that in mind, we are going to set time aside this Lent and take time to study some of our catechumenal theology. On Wednesdays in Lent, we are going to explore the Small Catechism. Some of us have a unique relationship with the Small Catechism. Some negative and some positive. I remember in

seminary, Dr. Strobert (who preached for us on Reformation Sunday) told us when his grandmother was dying, he would read the Small Catechism to her as she lay in her bed. The last words she heard were that of Luther answering that age, old question—what is this? The Small Catechism is more than just a medieval torture device that we use on Middle schoolers. It is a devotional that we should come back to throughout our life. I hope you do join us on Wednesdays in Lent this year as we explore this wonderful gift of Martin Luther.

Lent is something that we do really well here at Zion. Yes, it is my favorite season of the church year because it is a time that we intentionally slow down as a church, strip away the things that distract, and attempt to grow closer to God. Whether you are a lifetime member or new to the body of Christ, take time this season to pray and grow.

In Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Pastor Matt Dyer".

## A WORD FROM PASTOR MATT

I wrote a couple of years ago that as a pastor, I have a passion for liturgy and catechumenal study. Other pastors feel the call to advocate for social justice. Others have a passion for youth ministry. My passion lies in these very basic things that the Church does—worship and formation of Christians. And a few years ago, I got the chance to share my passion of liturgy during Lent. This year, we are going share in my other passion—the Small Catechism.

Often when we think of catechumenal study, we think of Confirmation Class. Many of us have memories of sitting at the pastor’s house for 3 hours every Saturday studying the Small Catechism. Often, many of us remember the days of having to memorize the Small Catechism and then needing to recite parts of it in worship before they were

# So, what's been happening?

## Advent Craft and Game Night

One of our goals this Advent season was to create a space where people could take a break from all the busyness of the season. Our first event in this endeavor was the Advent Craft and Game night. We gathered around tacos and games. Pastor Diane prepared some timely crafts that incorporated the season of Advent. 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 different 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

Who doesn't enjoy seeing little kids dress up in bathrobes and angel wings? Special thanks go out to Stacey Black, all the kids, and parents who helped make the pageant possible. It is not easy convincing a bunch of kids to stand up in front of people and speak loud, but sometimes it is these little voices who tell the story better than us adults!



## Advent 2023

The theme for Advent this year was Out of Time. We explored how God shows up always at the right time which sometimes means our time is not God's time. On Wednesdays in Advent, we continued our conversation that started on Sunday mornings.

On December 20, we held our annual Longest Night service. This year, we used a different liturgy from Barn Geese Worship. Barn Geese Worship supplied commentary and our liturgy resources throughout Advent. This year also saw a large increase in our GriefShare Ministry. We welcomed GriefShare leadership and participants to help lead this service. It was a holy service where people could grieve and those who were not there to grieve, could prayerfully support those who were grieving. It was a wonderful way to end the season of Advent. If you would like to learn more about GriefShare, check out page 20 of the Beacon. Their next session starts on February 27.





## Christmas Caroling

Santa might have a sleigh that can fly, but we had a John Deere Tractor and wagon all decked out with lights and hay. We drove through the streets and neighborhoods of Middletown spreading some Christmas cheer. Thank you to Welcome and Engagement for organizing and making sure we had lots of hot chocolate to keep us warm.



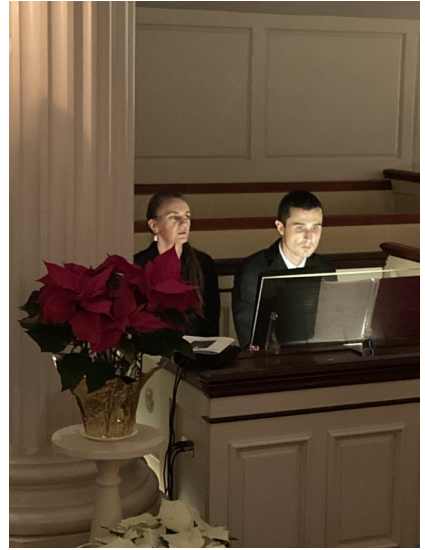
## A new Christmas Tradition?!?!

Many of you might remember last year on Christmas Eve we had a burst pipe that caused some significant damage to our office area. Well this year on December 23, the hot water heater in the first floor men's room rusted out and flooded our front Narthex. Luckily, the orchestra was here practicing and found the leak before any significant damage was done. A bunch of volunteers showed up and made quick work of the mess and the Property committee has replaced the hot water heater. Let's hope this tradition doesn't continue!



## Christmas 2023

Almost 600 people joined us on Christmas Eve this year as we told the old, familiar story of God breaking into our world at just the right time!



## So many kids!

We had so many kids at our family service that we actually ran out of room on the steps in front of the altar during the sermon. It was a wonderful problem to have this year! Special thanks to our musicians, some of whom were at all three Christmas Eve services this year. We are blessed by many talented people here at Zion and our Music Program really adds something special to the Christmas Celebration at Zion.



Hail the heav'n-born Prince of Peace  
 Hail the Son of Righteousness  
 Light and life to all He brings  
 Rise with healing in His wings  
 Mild He lays His glory by  
 Born that we no more may die  
 Born to raise each child of earth,  
 Born to give us second birth

Children's  
 Message



## DayOff

Despite the threat of snow flurries, we spent the day off of school with some of our kids playing games, tie dying some shirts, and burning off a bunch of energy at Urban Air. The DayOff Programs are held throughout the year on certain days off from school. Our next day off is scheduled for May 14 and we expect it to be a big event as both Frederick and Washington County school systems have off on the same day. We are planning to travel to Baltimore to check out the ministry of Christ Lutheran Church and then spend the afternoon at the Zoo. 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 either dropping a check in the offering plate or contributing online. Just make sure you mark on the memo line "DayOff Program." And thank you!



## Growing and learning!

Our goal for Youth Ministry is to provide a safe place for middle and high school age kids to come, meet others their age, and grow. One of the ways we are trying to help them grow is by teaching them some life skills. Pastor Matt has offered two cooking classes during Youth Group. This time, he taught them how to make General Tso's chicken, fried rice and crab wontons at home. Youth Group is held on the first Sunday of the month at 6 p.m.



# Need a spiritual discipline for Lent?

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 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!***

# 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 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 14 at 7 p.m.

**Wednesdays in Lent - In Love and Awe: Luther's Small Catechism**

Dinner at 6 p.m.

Evening Prayer and Children's Activity at 7 p.m.

Every Wednesday in Lent starting February 21 - March 20

### HOLY WEEK

Palm Sunday with the reading of the Passion from Mark - March 24

Maundy Thursday - March 28 at 7 p.m. Dinner at 6 p.m.

Good Friday - March 29 at 7 p.m.

Easter Vigil - March 30 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 10/11

at all worship services.



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



# Ash Wednesday

February 14 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.

## Mar-Lu-Ridge Sunday

**February 11 at both  
 worship services**

Sarah and Diana will join us to talk about the ministry at Mar-Lu-Ridge and how we can continue to support their work and ministry.

### Worship Services

#### Saturday Night:

5 p.m. Casual Worship

#### Sunday Morning:

9 a.m. Contemporary  
 Worship

11 a.m. Traditional Worship

## WEDNESDAYS IN LENT

*In Love  
 and Awe*



Exploring Luther's Small Catechism

6 P.M. | Dinner

7 P.M. | Evening Prayer and  
 Children's Program

## 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 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 400 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!



**Maundy Thursday Worship**  
Thursday, March 28  
7 p.m. worship service  
Worship either in-person or virtually

Confession | Foot Washing | Eucharist

**Good Friday Worship**  
Friday, March 29  
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, March 31  
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!

# Community Events

## 30th ANNUAL MIDDLETOWN EMPTY BOWLS BANQUET



Thursday, March 14, 2024

6:00 PM MHS Cafeteria

Raising money to fight hunger in our community

Tickets include:

Meal provided by Fratelli's Italian Seafood and South Mountain Creamery

Entertainment - Fertile Soil (Bluegrass Band)

Ceramic bowls crafted by local students at MHS, MYES, MiMS, MPS

Silent Auction

\$15.00 Adults , \$13.00 Students (13 thru 17) and \$8.00 children (12 and under)

Tickets available now

Contact: Donna Jean Brandenburg  
djb6025139@gmail.com OR 301-371-5139  
till 7 P.M.

Thank you



**Fratelli's**  
ITALIAN & SEAFOOD



Fertile Soil

# Christian Education

## A New Christian Formation Ministry Team

What is Christian Formation? In 2023, the Council saw a need to develop a ministry team which would focus on equipping fellow Christians with tools to help us all grow in faith. Traditionally, faith formation has happened through education ministry such as Sunday School and Confirmation. As we come out of these pandemic years, we have seen a need to think out of the box from traditional ways of doing ministry in order to help us engage our faith in new and different ways while also supporting those tried and true ministries as well. In January 2024, a group of people from Zion came together to explore to meet, to plan, and to discuss our Christian Formation Ministry process and will continue to meet throughout the coming months to dream and vision what formation could look like here at Zion. **If this sounds like something you are passionate about and want to help in creating a Formation Program, please speak to Pastor Diane or Jeff Derr who is serving as the Council Liaison for this team.**

## SUNDAY MORNING ADULT EDUCATION OPPORTUNITIES



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

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

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

A graphic for a 'Table Talk' event. It features a white diamond shape on a brick wall background. Inside the diamond, the text reads 'Theology and Bible', 'TABLE TALK', and 'Food and Drink'. Below the diamond, it says 'FIRST THURSDAY OF THE MONTH' and '6pm at the Main Cup'. The background shows a wooden table and chairs in a room with string lights.

## BIBLE Women's STUDY



Restarting on Sunday, April 21 at 6:30 p.m.  
and every Sunday for 6+ weeks

Location:

The Derr Farm Pavilion  
At 7800 Picnic Woods Rd.

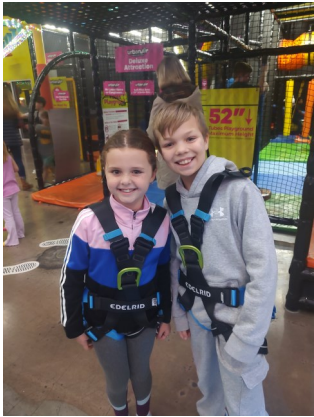
More details to follow but if you have questions in the meantime, contact Jamie Derr.

Email: [frmgr17@aol.com](mailto:frmgr17@aol.com)



# YOUTH AND FAMILY MINISTRY

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 Program, 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!



**Know someone who is interested in joining our Ministry Team?** We are actively seeking a part-time Director of Youth and Family Ministry. This role focuses on fostering faith formation, community building, and service initiatives. Grounded in relationship-building with God, one another, and the broader community, the position requires strong interpersonal skills, the ability to manage multiple tasks and projects, and maintain confidential information. Effective communication and collaborative relationships with Staff, congregation members, Church Council, and committee members are essential. For more details or a comprehensive job description, please contact Bruce McIntosh at [macbru@comcast.net](mailto:macbru@comcast.net), chair of the Personnel Committee.

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!



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.



### Summer Camp Registration is now open!

Special Early-Bird pricing runs through February 18th. The theme for 2024 is "Created to Be." Water is an essential part of our physical existence, but did you know it also plays a key role in our spiritual life? Campers will explore all the ways created us to be through bible study, nature activities, arts & crafts and much, much more!

**Register Today at [www.mar-lu-ridge.org](http://www.mar-lu-ridge.org)  
Scholarships from Zion are available!**





## 2024 Footprints Upcoming Dates

February 11th

March 10th

April 14th

May 12th

May 19th

June 9th

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

WE GOT A

# DAY OFF!

The Spring DayOff Program is on

Tuesday, May 14

at 9 a.m.

We are going to take a trip to Baltimore to tour Christ Lutheran Church and learn more about their many ministries include their Women's Shelter, LIRS, and Lutheran World Relief. After lunch, we are going to the Maryland Zoo.

SPACE IS LIMITED! Please RSVP by May 1 to secure your spot.

Cost is FREE thanks to generous donations.

This is open to Elementary, Middle and High School Kids.

Extra chaperones are always needed and appreciated!!!!

SCAN ME! >>>



DAYOFF PROGRAM REGISTRATION

## Community Easter Egg Hunt

Hop on over and join us!

SATURDAY, MARCH 30

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 and an egg hunt! Don't forget to bring your baskets!

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!

CREATED TO BE

If you are interested in going, we need to know ASAP! 8th graders to graduating seniors are eligible to go as a youth!

# 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



### 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 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 and handbells.



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 see how we might use your gifts!



### 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

2/13 - Rehearse

2/20 - Rehearse

2/27 - Rehearse

3/5 - Rehearse

3/12 - Rehearse

3/19 - Rehearse

**3/24 - Perform (Palm Sunday)**

# Ministry Updates



What could be better than crafting in a cabin in the woods with other yarn-loving humans making hats for cancer and hospice patients?

When: Saturday February 3, 2024  
When: 9:00 AM – 5:00 PM  
Where: Mar-Lu Ridge – Potomac Lodge  
Cost: \$10.00 per ticket

## Other Details:

- Knitted/crocheted and crafted hats will be donated to local cancer and hospice patients.
- Only 30 tickets available due to room size.
- Ticket price includes entry fee, light lunch (soup and sandwiches), coffee, tea, water and snacks.
- Each attendee will receive a goodie bag with a skein of yard and a ticket for a grand prize drawing.
- Bring your own yarn, there will be extra there if needed.
- Come when you can, stay all day or leave when you want.
- The Potomac Lodge has handicap ramp.
- Snow date will be available should bad weather occur.
- Come as you are and enjoy the fellowship.

Contact Shelly Gladhill 301-788-7585 or Alexa Masser 301-514-4479 for tickets or questions. This is the first of many future wooly events.



## JOY +50 (Just Older Youth) Lunch

J.O.Y. 50+ seniors have been enjoying lunch and programs/bingo for the past few months. The J.O.Y 50+ usually meets on the third Wednesday at noon for lunch and a fun program. HOWEVER the November and December J.O.Y. 50+ lunch will be combined due to the way the holidays fall



this year. Cost is \$10 per person. Advance reservation is a must for planning purposes; please call Zion's office at 301-371-6500 or Alexa 301-514-4479 or email Alexa at amasser202@comcast.net. Everyone is welcome!

### Upcoming 2024 JOY 50+ Lunch Dates

Feb 21

Mar 20

Apr 17

May 15

## GriefShare

Begins February 27th



The Spring cycle of GriefShare will begin on Tuesday, February 27th. 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 from 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

## 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 2 p.m. in the parking lot.



### Noisy Offering Updates

November—World Hunger	\$307.98
December—Frederick Rescue Mission	\$303.56
January—Student Homelessness Initiative Partnership (SHIP)	\$267.60
Thank you to all who donated!	

### Upcoming Noisy Offerings

February 18th and 19th	Allen P. Linton Emergency Shelter
March 16th & 17th	TBD
April 20th & 21st	Lantern Hill
May 18th & 19th	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.



## 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.

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.

## Crafting Retreat

Don't want to be STUCK by the television watching John Wayne ....Join us at the Crafting Retreat on Feb 23 & 24, 2024. Any craft is WELCOME. Knitting, crocheting, cross stitch, scrapbooking, quilting...you name it. The fun starts in the Church Social Room. Come and set up your craft on a table and keep your table set up both Friday & Saturday. Retreat will start at 8:00 am on Friday and close down Friday evening at 8:00 pm. We will begin again at 8:00 on Saturday and close down at 3:00pm. Crafters are encouraged to come and go as needed. Plenty of food, snacks and games will be available. Free will offering will be encouraged with funds raised going to Historic Preservation Fund – Steeple. For more information call Alexa at 301-514-4479 or amasser202@comcast.net.



## 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!



## Order Easter Flowers



The Altar Guild will be selling lilies and tulips and collecting for LWR Monetary Gifts through February 29, 2024. Easter flowers and LWR gifts are \$12.00 each. All Easter flower orders and LWR gifts must be in by February 29. No orders after that date please!

Order forms for Easter flowers and LWR gifts are on pages 25 & 26. 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 and quarts still available for purchase in the Church Office.

**\$6 for a  
Pint**

**\$10 for a  
Quart**



**CARE**♥**NET**  
Pregnancy Center of Frederick

Please help collect

Zion will be helping the Frederick Carenet Pregnancy Center again this year during Lent by taking an empty baby bottle and filling it with loose change or a check made payable to **THEM**.

They need to be returned to the **PURPLE** box in the church office by Easter.

Many thanks for always being a great supporter. May God continue to bless you and your families. Any questions, please email me at [djb6025139@gmail.com](mailto:djb6025139@gmail.com). Thank you  
Donna Jean

# Donuts and coffee



**Every Sunday**

at 10 a.m.

# Thank You Notes

Dear Pastors Matt and Diane,  
 We learned of your "noisy offering" collected in October by the Children of your congregation. How appropriate that they would be part of your effort to raise money for the Children's Early Literacy Center at our new library, a space that they will enjoy for years to come! Please convey our heartfelt thanks to your entire congregation for their generous donation of \$335. As friends of the Middletown Library, we greatly appreciate your commitment to our library and community.  
 Sincerely,  
 Lexi, Sharon, Janet, and Daryl

Many thanks to our Zion Lutheran Church friends for your continued support with the Christmas Adopt a Family again this year. This year we helped 180 local children who will have a very special Christmas. Again, many thanks for your support. May God bless you and your family with a Merry Christmas and Happy Safe New Year.

Middletown Valley People Helping People

Many thanks for your Continued Support for the MVPHP School Supply Drive. We helped 85 children in 68 families in our area. Thanks again!

*With Sympathy*



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

**Lyla Scott  
 Janet Young  
 John Gladhill**



**Jackson Odell**

Mira Aesoon Kim

Sophia Josephine Moeslein



## 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.**



Beth H., Mike Lingertot, Janet Rhinecker, Evelyn Hawker, Ruth Kuhn, Ursula Powell, Diane Elizabeth, Marianna Bere, Julie Swiney, Family of Isabella Kelly, Pat Hansen, Jane Nalborczyk, John Wiegand, Deborah Shinault, Ron Trusty, Lucretia Reaves, Jessie Maxwell, Eric Kinna, Ronnie Kinna, Tex and Linda Stottlemeyer, Anita, Dawn Shinault, Linda Crummitt, Frank Roys, Cathy Baker, Gary, Kay & Michael Wachter, Michael Easton, Frank Mrazek, The Hubble Family, Sheri Huckleberry, Pat McIntosh, Linda Huckleberry, Nancy Newkirk, Tristan Vail, Beth Smith, Kris Marcantonio, Lorene Huffer, Bruce Albright, Marty Appleby, Judith Smith, Jim Pearson, Darlah Adams, Jackie Bello, Trish Tollefson, Skippy Zimmerman, Sarah Gladhill, Anna Kepler, 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 look under the member's tab.*

# Aero Energy HOUSE OF WORSHIP PROGRAM

*Small donations from a committed congregation make a difference.*

The Aero Energy House of Worship Program is a donation program established by Aero Energy to provide Aero Energy customers an opportunity to give to our church. To participate, Aero Energy customers sign up by phone or online after which Aero Energy donates 4 cents for every gallon of fuel they use to us. Just think, if 100 Aero Energy customers from our congregation participate, our church could receive an annual \$3,000.00 donation (*this number is based 750 gal/year average fuel use per participant*).

## COMMON QUESTIONS:

**1. If I become a House of Worship Program member, will I pay more for my fuel?**

No, you pay the same price per gallon you are paying now. This is a donation from Aero Energy to the church. Aero Energy donates 4 cents for every gallon of fuel you use, that is all.

**2. Does my church need to use propane gas or heating oil to receive the donation?**

No.

**3. Does my church need to be an Aero Energy customer in order to receive the Aero Energy House of Worship Program donation?**

No, but they are welcome to use Aero Energy and receive four cents in donations for every gallon of fuel they use.



EMPLOYEE OWNED, CUSTOMER APPROVED.

Sign up for the Aero Energy  
House of Worship Program  
online at [AeroEnergy.com/HOW](http://AeroEnergy.com/HOW)  
or call 888-827-1713.



## Lee Ropp is Crushing Cans for Our Youth!

Lee Ropp has crushed and recycled 231,895 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"

## SAVE THE DATE!!!!

### Ladies Spring Fling

Wednesday, May 8 at 6 p.m.—Social Room

More information after Easter





## Time to Order Easter Flowers

Easter flower orders will be accepted through February 29, 2024. The cost for lilies and tulips is \$12.00 each.

**All orders must be received by February 29.** 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".

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### 2024 Order Form for Easter Flowers

Total Amount Enclosed \$\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Lily (\$12.00)

\_\_\_\_\_ Tulips (\$12.00)

**In Memory of:**

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**Given by:**

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**In Honor of:**

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**Given by:**

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\_\_\_\_\_ 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 February 29, 2024, by mailing the completed form below with a check to Zion Lutheran Church, 107 West 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”.

**2024 Monetary Gift for LWR**

**Each gift is \$12.00**

**Total Amount enclosed**  
\$\_\_\_\_\_

**In Memory of:**

**Given by:**

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**In Honor of:**

**Given by:**

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## 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](http://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!**