

# **The Herald**

## **JANUARY 2025**



**Zion Lutheran Church**  
**zionyork.org**  
**(717) 767-4673**

# Zion Lutheran Church

Reaching Up, Reaching Out, Reaching In, with Faith and Love

Rev. Kevin C. Stout x. 2224

Pastor

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Phone: 717-877-8721

Office Hours: Tuesday and Thursday

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joyfulnoise@zionyork.org

## Office Hours

Monday through Thursday: 9:00 a.m. — 3:00 p.m.

Closed Friday

## Services

- Saturday 5:30 PM ~ Gathering, Come As You Are
- Sunday 8:00 AM ~ Traditional: Words, Hymns, Liturgy
  - Sunday 10:00 AM ~ Community Service
  - Sunday 10:00 AM - Online (Facebook)
  - Sunday 12 Noon—Online (YouTube)
  - Monday 7:30 PM - Online Prayer Service



## ***The Light That Breaks the Darkness***

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

The winter solstice came on December 21st, —the darkest day of the year. On this day, the sun sets earlier than ever, and the hours of light seem to slip through our fingers. This dark day continues into the cold days of January. For many, including me, this physical darkness reflects the shadows we face in life: sickness, loss, unemployment, strained relationships, war, and the overwhelming injustices of the world. It is easy to feel burdened by a world that seems to grow colder and darker each day of this winter season.

But as Christians, we know this darkness is not the final word. Scripture offers us a powerful reminder of hope even on the darkest days. The prophet Zechariah spoke of a coming dawn, declaring:

"Because of the tender mercy of our God, by which the rising sun will come to us from heaven to shine on those living in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the path of peace." (Luke 1:78-79)

No matter how heavy the night seems, God's mercy promises us a dawn. Just as the sun will rise again after the longest night, the Light of the World has come to shatter the darkness. The Apostle John testifies:

"The true light, which gives light to everyone, was coming into the world." (John 1:9)

This Light is Jesus Christ, who came to earth in the humblest of ways—as a baby in a manger—to redeem a broken and weary world. The darkness may be deep, but it cannot withstand the light of Christ. In Him, we find hope, peace, and strength to face our struggles. As Romans 15:13 encourages us:

"May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in Him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit."

We are reminded, especially during the Christmas and Epiphany seasons, that the birth of Jesus signifies a new dawn for all who believe. Even when we stand in the shadows of grief, uncertainty, and despair, we can trust that a day is drawing near when this darkness will break to light. As we hold onto our faith, we look forward to the promise of Revelation 21:4—a day when God "will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain."

Until that glorious day, let us walk by faith, remembering that Jesus has already overcome every trial, even the grave. He is our Light and our Salvation. He is our source of courage in the midst of darkness.

So, if you are facing your own "darkest day," take heart. The dawn will break, and the Light of Christ will shine in your life. Let His light guide you to peace, hope, and healing.

May the Light of Christ dwell richly in your hearts, and may you always remember that the darkness cannot overcome the Light.

Jesus' Peace,  
Pastor Kevin

Walk with *Jesus*

**Stewardship  
Campaign**

The final results of the stewardship campaign are in. Zion received 116 EOG cards, along with 23 additional participants signed up for Simply Giving who did not return EOG cards. Together, these groups pledged a total of \$383,671 for 2025.

Thank you for your generous response! We look forward to growing together in Christ in 2025.

## THE WELCOME TABLE

*Then people will come from east and west, from north and south, and will eat in the kingdom of God.*

*Luke 13:29*

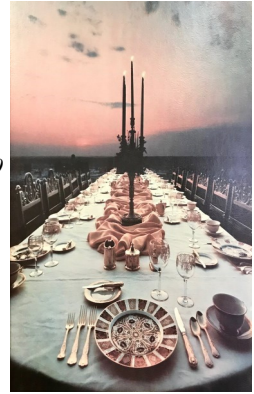
All are welcome, friend and stranger at the banquet of the Savior All are welcome, all are welcome here  
*"All are Welcome" by Dakota Road*

Imagine a long, expansive, banquet table, with a place for everyone at the table. No one is turned away; everyone will enjoy the feast. This is a powerful image of life as people of God. All are welcome- there is always room at the table.

Guiding Principle #1 for our congregation is: As the Body of Christ, we welcome, accept and embrace everyone. With that in mind, we rejoice to be together at the table of our Lord.

We rejoice this month that:

*Craig Adams, Scott Hake, Denise Wagner, and Lori Kain was received into church membership*



For the month of January we will be reading *The Frozen River* by Ariel Lawhon, a historical fiction novel about a midwife in 18th century Maine who investigates a murder and becomes involved in a scandal that threatens her community.

**January 22 at 6:30 PM**

We hope to see you there!

Your Book Club Leaders —  
Erin Ream & Amy Schanbacher



**Follow us at**

Facebook: [ZionYork](#)  
YouTube: [ZionYork2215](#)  
Instagram: [zionyork2215](#)



# Faith Formation

## **Adult Bible Studies**

**Sundays**

**9:00 AM—9:45AM**

### **Adult Bible Study Devotion & Dialogue**

Each week we discuss the lectionary verses and dive deeper into their meaning in our lives today. Held in the parlor.

### **Life with Jesus**

The 'Life with Jesus' adult Faith Formation class will begin a discussion of the book of Colossians which explains the supremacy of Christ, the fullness of life found in Him, and provides practical wisdom for living the Christian life. Come to learn, and to share your journey. (Find us in the choir room - down the hall past the restrooms, on the left.)

### **Lunch Bunch**

**January 15**

**12:00 Noon**

Join Pastor Kevin at Friendly's located at 423 Loucks Rd, to connect with like-minded individuals, share your thoughts, and deepen your understanding in a welcoming and supportive environment.

### **Gather & Grow**

**January 13**

**6:00 PM**

Women, join us in the fellowship hall for a pot luck and a time of fellowship and planning for 2025! We look forward to getting to know Jesus together.

### **Men's Huddle**

**January 16**

**7PM**

Men, join us in January at a restaurant to be announced for a time of fellowship, food, and faith as iron sharpens iron. Pastor Kevin will be leading us in a bible study. Questions contact Matt Engleman or Walt Marriott.



- 1 Roan Molinar  
Charlotte Wright
- 2 Jennifer Kessler  
Taggert Schanbacher  
Shinee Stout  
Richard Wingerd
- 3 Christine Scott
- 4 Robert Falkenstine
- 5 Sharon Grandstaff  
Madelyn Jorgensen  
Rodney Kershaw  
Diane Lutz  
David Portner  
Brett Schoonover
- 6 Ella Katz  
Courtney Spickler
- 7 Cathy Aguilar
- 8 Julie Brown  
Eileen Chindblom  
David Ream
- 10 McKenna Molinar  
Pastor Kevin Stout
- 11 Richard Sheibley

- 12 Mysta Johnston  
Susan Smith
- 13 Eric Glusco  
Kimberly Gruver  
Stacia Smith
- 14 Owin Anderson  
Clayton Brosend  
Kevin Drawbaugh  
Brock Fogle  
Parker Lam
- 15 Jenny Dreisbach
- 16 Sabrina Anderson  
Barbara Bricker  
Beverly Strine
- 17 Anna Davis  
Debora Steiner
- 18 Ben Reed
- 19 Janice Little
- 20 Katie Lundy  
Sara Strayer
- 24 Kaden Graham  
Emmy Hilty  
Timothy Mechler  
David Miller, II
- 25 Karen Mechler
- 26 Carolyn Kern
- 27 Makenna Zellers
- 28 Caitlyn Frey  
Reid Hotham  
Joseph Reed  
Bryson Rhoades
- 29 Madison Matylewicz
- 28 Elizabeth Villarose

### *January Anniversaries*

- 2 Troy and Nicole Smyser
- 3 William and Susan Renz
- 5 Charles and Stacia Smith



## Children, Youth & Family Ministry



How am I writing another Herald article for the beginning of another year? 2024 seemed to go by so quickly. We had a successful trip to New Orleans for the ELCA Youth Gathering. We spent many hours together in faith and fellowship during youth groups and lock-ins. We welcomed more young people into the membership of Zion Lutheran Church. It has been a momentous year!

December is almost at an end and another cookie walk was very successful for the youth group. The funds that were raised will go towards the costs of attending the ELCA Youth Gathering in Minneapolis, MN in 2027. I know that 2027 may seem far away but by this time next year we will be eighteen months away from the actual Gathering date. There will be two more cookie walks along with various other fund raisers to help offset the cost of the trip. December also brought along our Christmas lock-in. This event is well attended by our youth as it gives us a chance to gather, celebrate the coming of Christ, and enjoy each other's company while we play games, eat food, and watch movies.

January brings back our annual tradition of Epiphany word stars as well as Winterfest for our Sr High youth. Both events are eagerly anticipated by the kids. The Sr High youth are attending the Winterfest retreat January 3rd through the 5th. All three age groups will receive their new "word of the year" (Epiphany word stars) at our Youth group meetings on January 12th.

January also will find me in Louisville, Kentucky, for my annual continuing education at the ELCA Youth Ministry Network's Extravaganza. I



A blue speech bubble icon containing a white calendar grid with a red square in the top right corner. Below the grid, the words "UPCOMING EVENTS" are written in white, bold, sans-serif capital letters.

## UPCOMING EVENTS

**Jan 3-5**  
Winterfest  
Sr High Retreat

**Jan 17**  
11:30 Kidz Konnektion  
3:00 456  
6:00 ZEAL

**Feb 14**  
6-8 ZEAL MEGA-  
Retreat

**Feb 16**  
11:30 Kidz Konnektion  
3:00 456  
6:00 ZEAL

will be there from January 20th through the 27th. This is always a fantastic learning experience for me as I get to bring back new and exciting concepts that I can put to work right away in the youth ministry. I also get to connect with colleagues and friends that I haven't seen for about a year. It is always a fantastic time.

I know I say this a lot but it is worth repeating, if it wasn't for the support provided by this congregation, it would not be possible for the youth to do what we continue to do every year. I thank you from the bottom of my heart. I truly consider the work I get to do a blessing in my life.

I want to wish you the best possible new year and may God remain a powerful presence in your life as you and your children are a powerful presence in mine. Happy New Year!

See you on Sunday ~ Chuck



# Welcoming the Stranger: Supporting Refugees in America

In a world facing a global refugee crisis, over 120 million people are currently displaced—forced to flee their homes due to war, persecution, or violence. Of those, 35 million are refugees and 5 million are asylum seekers. Every day, nearly **40,000 individuals** are forcibly displaced. Despite common perceptions, poorer nations shoulder most of this burden. For example, Turkey alone hosts **3.6 million refugees**, while the United States ranks only **19th** in refugee admissions.

## Who is a Refugee?

A **refugee** is a person who has fled their home country due to a **well-founded fear of persecution** based on:

- Race
- Religion
- Politics
- National origin
- Social group



An **asylum seeker** is someone seeking protection in another country but whose refugee status is not yet officially recognized.

## How Refugees Come to the U.S.

Each year, the U.S. government sets a cap for refugee admissions. In the **2024 fiscal year**, approximately **100,000 refugees** were welcomed into the United States—a remarkable recovery compared to just **11,400** three years prior. Organizations like **Church World Service (CWS)** play a critical role in resettling refugees, including Lancaster, where around 580 individuals found safety and a fresh start last year.

## What Does Scripture Say?

The Bible calls us to **“practice hospitality”** (Romans 12:13), meaning to “love strangers.” Throughout Scripture, we see blessings when God’s people welcome outsiders:

- Ruth’s life was transformed through Boaz’s hospitality (Ruth 4:13).
- Elijah witnessed God’s provision through a widow’s kindness (1 Kings 17:7-24).
- Abraham unknowingly entertained angels (Genesis 18:1-20, Hebrews 13:2).

God's command to care for the stranger is clear: we, as followers of Christ, have the opportunity to be His hands and feet.

## How Can YOU Help?

Here are some simple yet powerful ways to make a difference:

1. **Pray** – Lift up refugees and those helping them resettle.
2. **Caring Cooks** – Provide a hot meal for a family on their arrival day.
3. **Pantry Pals** – Stock two weeks' worth of groceries (a shopping list is provided).
4. **Culinary Caregivers** – Combine both: provide a meal and groceries.
5. **Kindness Catalyst** – Fund groceries for two weeks; others will shop and deliver.
6. **Welcome Teams** – Join a team to provide **8 core services** that help families adjust to their new home.
  - Set up housing with essential furnishings
  - Cook/Buy culturally appropriate ready to eat meal when family arrives
  - Provide sufficient food supplies – first 2 weeks
  - Pick up the family at Lancaster Airport
  - Take the family to the clothing bank
  - Enroll the adults in an English language program
  - Take the family to their health screening appointments
  - Enroll the children in school

Zion is currently helping refugee families in 3 ways:



- Assisting 4 Afghan families (25 people) already settled in York (URGENT NEED)
- Combining forces with other churches to make up a team called Mustard Seed Ministry to resettle a Sudan Family expect arrival shortly
- Working to create a Welcome Team to be ready to help a new refugee family yet to be identified

If you are interested in being a part of any of these groups contact Lori Wise with your interest at 717-487-4851 or email at [Isab1960@yahoo.com](mailto:Isab1960@yahoo.com).

As God's people, we are called to respond with love, compassion, and action.

Let's practice hospitality and show Christ's love to the stranger among us.

**"I was a stranger and you welcomed me." – Matthew 25:35**



## *Lectionary Scriptures for January*

### **January 6, 2025**

This year the liturgical calendar includes a second Sunday after Christmas before Epiphany, and the gospel is the Christological poem in John 1. On Christmas Day we heard John 1 in connection with Isaiah and Hebrews, and this Sunday with Jeremiah and Ephesians. For those of us who live in a cold climate, the psalm for the day is for us!

#### **Readings and Psalm**

Jeremiah 31:7-14

Psalm 147:12-20

*Worship the Lord, O Jerusalem; praise your God, O Zion. (Ps. 147:12)*

Ephesians 1:3-14

John 1:[1-9] 10-18

### **January 12, 2025**

The gospel this Sunday is about Jesus being baptized by John the Baptist. A voice speaks from heaven, and the Spirit descends like a dove. This story is also about us: we too have been baptized, we have heard God's loving call, and we have received the Holy Spirit. What is God's voice like? Psalm 29 says that God's voice can break the cedars and strip the trees bare, but also give a blessing of peace.

#### **Readings and Psalm**

Isaiah 43:1-7

Psalm 29

*The voice of the Lord is upon the waters. (Ps. 29:3)*

Acts 8:14-17

Luke 3:15-17, 21-22

### **January 19, 2025**

In Sunday's gospel, Jesus provides 175 gallons of wine for a newly married couple. Whatever for?! Come to worship and hear about God's good news in Christ.

## Readings and Psalm

Isaiah 62:1-5

Psalm 36:5-10

*We feast upon the abundance of your house, O Lord. (Ps. 36:8)*

1 Corinthians 12:1-11

John 2:1-11

## January 26, 2025

We now return for much of this year to hear the gospel according to Luke. This coming Sunday we will hear that Jesus is filled with the power of the Spirit, and so are we. Come to worship!

## Readings and Psalm

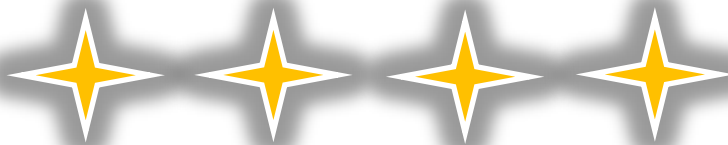
Nehemiah 8:1-3, 5-6, 8-10

Psalm 19

*The teaching of the Lord revives the soul. (Ps. 19:7)*

1 Corinthians 12:12-31a

Luke 4:14-21



## Refugee Support Needed Afghan Refugee Families in York

We have identified four Afghan refugee families in York who are in need of additional support. Our immediate need is for volunteers to assist with transportation to medical, food, or other appointments. Volunteering involves transporting family members to their designated location only, with no additional responsibilities required. If you are able to help, please contact Lori Wise at 717-487-4851 or email at [lsab1960@yahoo.com](mailto:lsab1960@yahoo.com).

## Sudanese Family in Lancaster

Zion is partnering with other churches (partnership is called Mustard Seed Ministry) to assist a Sudanese family in coming to the USA and establishing a home in Lancaster. The family is currently in the process of approval to enter the country. In preparation for their arrival, Zion is responsible for collecting bathroom essentials. Please scan the QR code to order their specific needs through Amazon and shipped directly to Lori Wise.



# Joyful Noise Events



## January Events



January 1st: Happy New Year



January 6th: Classes resume from holiday break



January 21st & 22nd: Closed for Conferences



January 27th—31st: Lutheran Education Week



January 29th & 30th: Vision Screening



Wishing you many blessings for a happy and healthy year!



# Joyful Noise News

We would love to have members of the Congregation come in to read to our students during Lutheran Education week! If you are interested, please email me at [Joyfulnoise@zionyork.org](mailto:Joyfulnoise@zionyork.org). There will also be a sign up sheet on the church info board in the Narthex. You can pick your favorite children's book or pick one from our library!



## Registration for 2025-2026

Our approach to early learning and socialization is through hands-on interest areas and involvement. Our activities are both teacher and child-directed. We allow the children to make their own discoveries by devising interest areas related to the themes or curriculum objectives.

You will find some general information on the pre-school, its philosophies and program overviews by visiting our website at:  
[www.zionjnp.org](http://www.zionjnp.org)

If you have already decided that you would like your child to attend Joyful Noise, please contact me at 717-764-9467 so that I can provide you with a registration packet. Once our current students are placed, we do offer preference to church members before opening remaining spots to the public. There is a 10% tuition discount given to Zion Lutheran Church members!

Please contact me if you have any other questions or if you would like to schedule a visit!

[joyfulnoise@zionyork.org](mailto:joyfulnoise@zionyork.org)

Sincerely,  
Arieta Beamesderfer  
Director of Joyful Noise Preschool

# January 2025

Mon

Tue

	Mon	Tue
<p><b>5</b>      <b>2 Christmas</b></p> <p><b>LSS Winterfest @ Lancaster Host</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Worship Times In-person: 8 am and 10 am</li> <li>• Faith Formation-9am</li> <li>• Worship Times Online                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Facebook/YouTube-10:00 am</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p><b>6</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• LOF Rehearsal – 6:30pm</li> </ul>	<p><b>7</b></p>
<p><b>12</b>      <b>Baptism of Our Lord</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Worship Times In-person: 8 am and 10 am</li> <li>• Faith Formation-9am</li> <li>• Worship Times Online                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Facebook/YouTube-10:00 am</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Kids Konnection-11:30am to 1:30pm</li> <li>• Club 456– 3 to 4:30pm</li> <li>• ZEAL-6 to 8:30pm</li> <li>• Team Meetings 11:30am-1pm</li> </ul>	<p><b>13</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gather and Grow –6pm</li> <li>• LOF Rehearsal – 6:30pm</li> </ul>	<p><b>14</b></p>
<p><b>19</b>      <b>2 Epiphany</b></p> <p><b>Tortilla Weekend</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Worship Times In-person: 8 am and 10 am</li> <li>• Faith Formation-9am</li> <li>• Worship Times Online                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Facebook/YouTube-10:00 am</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p><b>20</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• LOF Rehearsal – 6:30pm</li> </ul>	<p><b>21</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Council Meeting-6:30pm</li> </ul>
<p><b>26</b>      <b>3 Epiphany</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Worship Times In-person: 8 am and 10 am</li> <li>• Faith Formation-9am</li> <li>• Worship Times Online                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Facebook/YouTube-10:00 am</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p><b>27</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• LOF Rehearsal – 6:30pm</li> </ul>	<p><b>28</b></p>



Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Choir Practice –12:00 pm</li> </ul>	2	3  <b>LSS Winterfest @ Lancaster Host</b>	4 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Worship- 5:30pm</li> </ul>
8 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Choir Practice –12:00 pm</li> <li>We Are Wednesdays –6:30pm Prayer Group</li> </ul>	9	10	11 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Worship- 5:30pm</li> </ul>
15 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Choir Practice –12:00 pm</li> <li>Lunch Bunch Friendly’s–12noon</li> <li>We Are Wednesdays –6:30pm Discipleship</li> </ul>	16 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Men’s Huddle 7 pm</li> </ul>	17	18 Tortilla Weekend <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Worship- 5:30pm</li> </ul>
22 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Choir Practice –12:00 pm</li> <li>We Are Wednesdays –6:30pm Book Club</li> </ul>	23	24	25 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Worship- 5:30pm</li> </ul>
29 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Choir Practice –12:00 pm</li> </ul>	30	31	Deadline to submit items for the February Herald is January 14.

# Council Meeting Minutes

**Date: November 19, 2024**

## In attendance:

### Member

### Attendance

Pastor Kevin Stout, Dave Schneider, Denise Moyer, Christy Bucks, Kim Alloway, Al Abruzzese, Andrew Doerr, Wade Markel, Jill Lordan, Sara Strayer, Anmarie Hazelton, Mary Jane McCluskey, Krista Zellers

**Excused/Missing:** Alex Engleman,

## Opening Devotion

- Christy Bucks shared the opening devotion focused on navigating current events in the world and life after the election, highlighting that it is encouraging to remember that the God of yesterday is the God of today who is the God of tomorrow.
- No devotion will be scheduled for December, because there will be no Council meeting. Council will gather for the Fireside Service on December 17. Council devotions will restart in January 2025 and presenters are to be determined.

## Thank you cards

- Thank you to Karyl Keller for the Stewardship Campaign and Annual meeting mailings. Mary Jane McCluskey will write the thank you note.
- Thank you to for Trevor Hoffman for the budget presentation at Annual meeting. Christy Bucks will write the thank you note.
- Thank you for Arieta Beamesderfer and Laine Knaub for the Joyful Noise Preschool children singing during the November 17<sup>th</sup> Sunday service. Krista Zellers will write the thank you note.

## Meeting minutes and reports

### Report

### Comments

3.1 The Meeting Minutes from October 2024 were submitted by Sara Strayer

No questions or comments. Motion to approve by Mary Jane McCluskey, seconded by Anmarie Hazelton. Motion carried.

3.2 Treasurer's Report - Report submitted by Wade Markel

- October 2024 Operations (does not include preschool): Receipts (Giving) \$43,502.41, Expenses \$45,344.91, Surplus/Deficit -\$1,842.50.
- YTD Operations: Receipts (Giving) \$384,777.88, Expenses \$475,049.34, Surplus/Deficit -\$89,535.55.
- YTD Budget: Receipts (Giving) \$369,869.17, Expenses \$443,789.17, Surplus/Deficit -\$73,920.00.

- October 2024 open plate and giving increased due to one-time gifts that came in during the month. Denise Moyer reported that she is unsure if some of those gifts were planned. Some of the gifts may also come from members' required minimum distributions. It is also believed that the Stewardship Campaign may have contributed to the increase in giving.
- Income is improving and moving in the right direction.
- Motion to approve October Treasurer's Report by Kim Alloway, seconded by Jill Lordan. Motion carried.

### 3.3 Membership Report submitted by Pastor Kevin Stout

- October Losses: Donald Nauman and Frances Greiman
- Recommended for membership: Craig Adams, Dennis Wagner, Charles & Stacia Smith, Lori Kain
- Recommend approval for transfer request: Lee & Suzie Hipkiss
- Recommend removal from roll: John & Lisa Angell, Cassidy & Emma Kibler, Mark Downs, Eric & Nancy Isaminger
- Motion to approve by Andrew Doerr, seconded by Wade Markel. Motion carried.

### 3.4 Investment Treasurer Report submitted by Adam Strayer

No questions or comments.

### 3.5 Pastor Report

Report submitted by Pastor Kevin Stout

- Thank you to Jim Rowlands, Jen Lau, Chris Owens for filling in for Pastor Kevin while he was out.
- Pastor Kevin inquired how his time off should be handled. He is officially allowed 4 weekends off a year. Pastor Kevin had time off this year to go to funerals and marriages. It was shared that some people in the congregation were upset or concerned when Pastor Kevin was not in service due to his time off. The reason for these feelings is unclear.

Christy Bucks suggested not having communion when Pastor Kevin is out, but he believes that would not make a difference as the meal is blessed and the words are different. Paying for substitute pastor could be an option but can be costly. Pastor Kevin could ask lay leaders within the congregation to provide the sermon, but he would still be present. This option would relieve his workload of preparing a sermon. Strong lay leaders are available within Zion.

It was shared that members should not come to church for Pastor Kevin, but rather to come to encourage other people and worship God. Anmarie Hazelton suggested posting online when Pastor Kevin will not be in services so people are aware, but Zion has not done that historically and other churches do not do that.

- Morrie Hooper had surgeries. Pastor Kevin visited him, and he is doing well
- On Sunday at 2pm Lori Wise, Byamba Stout, and Pastor Kevin met with 4 Afghan families who are new to York. Church World Services does not have sponsors for them. There is a search for churches that can sponsor them. Sponsorship would include support with ESL, jobs, vehicle, and food. Lori Wise already took them to the food bank. The Service Team is aware and will keep everyone informed. A plan is being developed to help the families.

- Byamba Stout made Afghan tea and the men were impressed by Zion's China.
- An individual who was formerly sponsored by St Johns church served as an interpreter for the families
- Christmas schedule is out: Fireside on Tuesday, December 17 and two Christmas eve services at 7pm and 10 pm. The children's play will be held the Sunday before Christmas on 12/22 and directed by the Doerr family.
- Discussion of using electric versus real candles during Christmas services. The 7pm uses electric candles and the 10pm uses real candles. Pastor Kevin will talk to Juliann Roderick and the Thursday team about the use of candles.
- 12/22 10 am service will hand out candles for the children's play.
- Fireside service to be held 12/17 at 7 pm. Christy Bucks asked for donations of refreshments. Fellowship Team will provide hot cocoa. Council will bring refreshments. Bring your own chair.

### 3.6 Parish Administrator's Report submitted by Denise Moyer

- Denise handed out the budget that was passed at the Congregation meeting.
- To date from the Stewardship Campaign, 107 estimates of giving cards were returned totaling \$336,358.60 in pledges. Simply Giving is not included in this number. This is the highest number since 2003.
- \$483,000 is needed to balance the budget.
- More giving is needed.
- Pastor Kevin distributed a document of church members who did not return their estimate of giving card. Council members were assigned to call them as a follow-up.

### 3.7 Children, Youth and Family Ministry (CYFM) Report submitted by Chuck Bissell

No questions or comments.

### 3.8 Youth Representative

No questions or comments.

### 3.9 Joyful Noise Preschool Board Report

No questions or comments.

## Old Business

### Teams Debrief

- We want our Teams to be inviting! Anyone who wants to help should be welcomed to help in any capacity.
- Next Teams meeting is December 8 after the 10 am service in the Sanctuary.
- It was suggested that a social media post or Facebook event can be created for the week prior to Teams meetings as a reminder. Team leaders can also email Team members to remind them.
- Service Team update: February 10 & 11 and April 7 & 8-Volunteers needed to supply meals for the tutoring program. Service Team should submit a request to Denise to put this need in the bulletin.
- A standard form will be provided to Teams to make requests to Denise.
- A process and form for requesting purchases will be available in December.

# **New Business**

## **Congregation Meeting Debrief**

- The meeting went well.
- A nay was shared during the Annual meeting regarding the change in church conference. The concern was that Zion is shifting away from a less fortunate area where our presence could be a positive impact.
- Pastor Kevin shared that Zion is still participating in the tutoring program, and he will be on the Board of the Salvation Army which will allow for more opportunities in the city.
- People were happy the budget improved from last year's -\$89,000 deficit.

## **Planning for 2025**

- New Member Orientation
- Discussion on facilitating New Member Orientations.
- Dave Ramsey Financial Peace University
- A Congregation member approached Christy Bucks with interest.
- This could be an outreach to the community, as well.
- Sara Strayer is willing to facilitate.
- 5-year vision and growth for the church will be part of 2025 Council meetings.

## **Book Study – Anatomy of a Revived Church: Chapters 7 and Conclusion**

- Discussion questions and reflections on Chapter 7: Choosing Meaningful Membership
- Reflections on what New Member Orientation should include.
- Denise Moyer will gather previous resources.
- Falls under Outreach Team.
- Discussion questions on Conclusion: Change or Die

# **Adjourn**

Council will not meet in December. Council members should attend the Fireside Service held on Tuesday, December 17, 2024.

Next Council Meeting will be held at 6:30 pm on Tuesday, January 21, 2025.

Motion to close by Kim Alloway, seconded by Jill Lordan. Meeting adjourned in prayer.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Sara Strayer, Council Secretary.

# Zion Lutheran Church ~ Annual Meeting Minutes

Date: November 17, 2024

## Opening Prayer

Pastor Kevin provided an opening prayer for the meeting.

Determination of the Quorum/Call to order of meeting

Dave Schneider indicated that there is a quorum for the meeting and called the meeting to order.

## Opening remarks

Christy Bucks provided opening remarks and a prayer, highlighting the role of Zion in the surrounding community. In addition, Christy recognized the role of Pastor Janyce in the history of Zion and the transition to Pastor Kevin, as well as the growth of Zion through Teams, We Are Wednesdays, the church picnic, community band festival, VBS, Youth Gathering, and church giving, among other activities, to live out Zion's mission and the revitalization of the church. Christy also shared a story about learning to trust growth, to be slow and steady, accelerating when needed, and trusting the process. Christy thanked the congregation for attending the Congregation Meeting.

## Meeting minutes and reports

### Report Comments

4.1 The Meeting Minutes from 2023 Annual Meeting were submitted by Amy J. Schanbacher. Spelling change requested under 3a: School kids should be changed to school kits. Motion to approve by Jill Lordan, seconded by Suz Smith. Motion carried.

4.2 Annual Congregational Report from the Pastor - Report submitted by Pastor Kevin Stout

Pastor Kevin provided a summary of his report, highlighting the following from November 2023 through October 2024:

- Attendance has risen to 182, up from 138 in 2023.
- 5 new confirmands, 5 baptisms, and 18 new members
- Pastor Kevin thanked lay leaders for stepping up to support services
- Growth of all youth groups and activities
- Pastor Kevin thanked the congregation for his welcome service and reception
- Zion Has Heart raised \$6,781, surpassing \$5,000 goal
- SpiriTrust Mother's Day geranium sale raised \$575 to support the SpiriTrust Auxiliary, along with a donation of more than \$1,500.
- Pastor Kevin thanked the congregation for donations and boxing of the Lutheran World Relief international school kits
- Monthly Stuff the Bus projects, included 156 pounds of toothpaste, deodorant, and toilet paper donated to LifePath Christian Ministry, 100 Blessing Bags, 400 single-ride bus passes for community members in need, \$309 for Lutheran Disaster Relief to aid hurricane victims,

- Souper Bowl cereal donations and \$191 to support the WELL, gifts to 15 residents of Sprengle No questions or comments from the congregation.
- Village through the Holiday Angels program, 150 coats donated for children through Kathy's Koats, and Carols for a Cause raised \$555 for Olivia's House.
- Zion Teams were restarted
- We are Wednesdays began, including prayer group, GriefShare, Discipleship, and Book Club.
- Pastor Kevin thanked Congregation for their generosity of giving their time, talents, and treasures to share God's service and caring for the least of these. No questions or comments from the congregation.

#### 4.3 Parish Administrator Report

Report submitted by Pastor Denise Moyer

Denise provided a summary of her report, highlighting the following:

- A smooth Pastoral transition from Pastor Janyce to Pastor Kevin.
- Denise noted property updates and improvements, thanking the following people:
- Christy Bucks for painting the parlor, Rick Marshall, Terry Turko, and Don Dreisbach for repainting parking lot lines, Rick Marshall, Keith Plowman for installing new flooring in the preschool and nursery restrooms, and Christy Bucks, Anmarie Hazelton, and Terri Abruzzese for cleaning and organizing the storage room.
- Over 90 giving cards were returned for the October 2024 Stewardship Campaign, which indicated an increase in giving. Denise did not provide specific numbers. No questions or comments from the congregation.

#### 4.4 Membership Report

No questions or comments from the congregation.

#### 4.5 Treasurer's Report

Report submitted by Wade Markel

No questions or comments from the congregation.

#### 4.6 Investment Treasurer Report

Report submitted by Adam Strayer

No questions or comments from the congregation.

#### 4.7 Faith Formation and Youth Ministry Report

Report submitted by Chuck Bissell

No questions or comments from the congregation.

#### 4.8 Fellowship Team Report

Report submitted by Suz Smith

Suz Smith shared that there will be a coffee social will be offered between services, and they are requesting refreshment donations.

#### 4.9 Joyful Noise Preschool Board Annual Report

Report submitted by Arieta Beamesderfer and Andrayea Contract

No questions or comments from the congregation.

#### 4.10 Music Director's Annual Report

Report submitted by Laine Knaub

#### 4.11 Property Team Annual Report

Report submitted by Nick Dreisbach and Dan Wise

No questions or comments from the congregation.

#### 4.12 Service Team Annual Report

Report submitted by Deb Anderson

No questions or comments from the congregation.

#### 4.13 Nominating Committee Report

Report submitted by Kim Alloway

- The need for Council members was announced at services and people were asked to serve.
- The Committee nominates the following persons for a first 3-year term starting in 2025: Jim Rowlands, Karl Peckmann, Kelly Kessler, Andy Parr, and Rose Hartzell
- The Committee nominates the following persons for a second 3-year term: Wade Markel
- Christy Bucks indicated that there is an opportunity for the congregation to nominate other people and voting is available. No other people were nominated.
- New Council members Jim Rowlands, Karl Peckmann, Kelly Kessler, Andy Parr, and Rose Hartzell, as well as returning Council member Wade Markel, stood to be recognized.  
Motion to approve by Suz Smith, seconded by Elaine Mann. Motion carried.

## **2025 Budget presentation and vote**

Trevor Hoffman presented the proposed 2025 budget, highlighting the following.

- The Finance Team began working on budget in June 2024, with the goal of a balanced budget. However, a balanced budget was not achieved but Zion is much closer to a balanced budget than the past 3 years.
- The initial 2025 budget draft included about a -\$45,000 deficit. The final 2025 budget draft approved by Council includes a -\$33,803 deficit, which is a \$55,000 improvement from the 2024 budget.
- Income is estimated to be \$731,493, which includes an increase of \$73,489 in Current and \$5,115 in Open Plate for a total increase in those categories of about \$78,000.
- The preschool is expecting the same income as the 2024 budget.
- The Finance Team, and specifically Denise Moyer and Adam Strayer, worked to identify possible areas of savings. They feel the expenses are as tight as possible without reducing staff and eliminating programs.
- The 2025 budget includes a 3% increase in staff salaries.
- The property budget was increased by about \$14,000. As the building ages, more things will need to be replaced. One expense may be a new HVAC unit. However, the 2025 budget does not have enough to cover the full cost of a unit.



- The Finance Team spent several meetings analyzing healthcare options outside of Portico for staff and received multiple quotes from 2 different brokerage firms. The Finance Team ultimately decided to stay with Portico for 2025 but selected a lower coverage plan changing from gold plus to silver plus, which resulted in savings.
- The preschool has a balanced budget for 2025.
- The combined deficit over the 5-year period is -\$75,612.
- The Council has requested that the Finance Team be very clear that we cannot run a deficit forever as Zion will run out of money. Zion has been able to fund the deficits in the past few years through COVID relief funds, drawing funds from the investment portfolio, and growth in the investment portfolio. But we cannot count on that going forward.
- Zion needs to meet or exceed projected income levels in this 2025 budget. To meet these goals, we will need to for those who give regularly to increase their giving, those who do not give regularly to start giving regularly, those who do not give to start giving, and for members to invite people to church to increase attendance/membership.
- Losses will be covered by investment funds, if needed, but those funds are limited.
- If giving is not on track to meet or exceed the budget as of June 2025, Zion will need to reduce staff in 2026.
- Budgeted \$78,604 increase in Current and Open Plate.
- Received 96 estimates of giving, which is 18 more than 2024 and those members pledged about \$80,000 more than what was pledged in 2024.
- The Finance Team requests the congregation to follow through on pledges, to return an estimate if you have not, and to invite new people to attend Zion.
- Following the approval of the budget by Council, the Finance Team received final health insurance information. The updated information decreased our expected benefit costs by (\$3,486) for 2025. We would like to request a motion to adjust the budget to decrease the budgeted expenses by that amount. This would bring the 2025 budgeted deficit to (\$30,317).
- Questions from congregation members include the following with answers from Trevor Hoffman:

- \* How do we estimate income for budget?  
Budget cannot be based on pledge cards. Council and the Finance Team decided on 20% increase over last year's giving. This number has changed and will be a 17% increase for the final budget.
- \* Seeing significant increases in benefits year to year, what can the congregation do to stop or slow increases to benefit costs?  
The Finance Team looks at other insurance providers.
- \* How much runway is there to use the investment income?  
Expecting a 1-2 year runway to use investment income, noted as about 1.5 years on page 16 of budget. Unrestricted funds can never be more than 50% or less than 25% of our budget.
- \* Why did the preschool surplus decrease?  
Surplus decreased the last few years, because salaries were increased to retain staff.

Motion to approve the 2025 budget with the -\$33,803 deficit by Jim Rowlands, seconded by Erin Ream. Motion carried.

Christy Bucks thanked the Finance Team, Trevor Hoffman, and Adam Strayer for their work on the budget.

### **Proposed constitutional changes report and vote**

Jim Rowlands provided an overview of the constitutional changes that need to be implemented to align the constitution with the ELCA Model Constitution (mandatory and non-mandatory paragraphs). Constitutional changes take two votes and are up for a final vote this year.

Second and final vote for non-mandatory changes regarding the following:

- There is a non-mandatory paragraph in the Model Constitution regarding endowment funds. The current Zion constitution does not contain the paragraph. Zion calls endowment funds "Restricted Funds". The task force believes Zion should define restricted funds in the constitution as noted in the proposed paragraphs.
- The model constitution contains a non-mandatory paragraph on the use of a non-Lutheran temporary pastor in cases of Synod shortages. The task force recommends the inclusion of the proposed paragraph in the Zion constitution.
- The model constitution contains a non-mandatory paragraph which allows and governs the use of meetings held by remote communication and defines "Ex officio". The task force recommends the inclusion of the model constitution paragraphs as written.
- The task force recommends adding parliamentarian to the listing of officers to match current practice and noting the treasurer and investment treasurer need not be Council members.

- The task force recommends changing the means by which the youth representative is appointed to Council. The current constitution stipulates the youth shall select the representative. Current practice is to have Council select a youth based on CYFM recommendation. The youth is to be at least a sophomore in high school and no beyond their sophomore year in college. The proposed wording states that if there is no voting member of the congregation that meets the criteria, Congregation Council shall appoint one to represent the youth of the congregation.
- The task force recommends giving the Council president the option, versus requirement, to fill a vacancy on Council. Existing paragraph C12.01 specifies Council to be no more than 12 confirmed members.
- The task force and finance committee recommend providing an allowance in the constitution to allow Council to approve non-budgeted repair or replacement of capital equipment that failed. Council can enter contracts up to 5% over what was approved in the budget. Council can enter contracts for more than 5% of unrestricted funds with congregation approval, such as in cases of emergency repairs.
- The task force recommends inclusion of the non-mandatory paragraph from the model constitution which allows Council and committee meetings to be held remotely. This brings our current practice into compliance.
- The task force recommends restructuring the constitution, bylaws, and continuing resolutions as separate independent documents rather than the current structure where they are incorporated into a single document. Each have different approval requirements.

Motion to approve by Jen Lau, seconded by Amy Schanbacher. Motion carried.

First vote on the following non-mandatory changes to the Zion constitution:

- Changes to the constitution require congregation approval by a majority at a congregational meeting and approval by a 2/3 majority at the next congregation meeting. They must also be approved by the Synod. The task for recommends removing this paragraph from the constitution and relocating the information in the bylaws.

Motion to approve by Jill Lordan, seconded by Elaine Mann. Motion carried.

The first vote for non-mandatory change to Zions bylaws regarding the following:

- The current bylaws state that the treasurer shall not reimburse any person or organization for sales tax in excess of one dollar imposed on the purchase of goods or services by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. Any reimbursement for sales tax in excess of one dollar must be approved by Council. The proposed change states that any person

or organization purchasing goods or services on behalf of the congregation shall try to utilize the tax-exempt status of the congregation to avoid the imposition of such tax.

- The term committee shall be synonymous with teams with the proposed change to Chapter 13 Congregation Committees to Congregation Committees/Teams.
- The duties of non-mandatory committees will be changed to state in the event there is no Personnel Committee/Team, the duties will be performed by the Lead Pastor and the Executing Committee/Team from Council.
- Removal of the following committees/teams: Worship & Music, Christian Ed, Stewardship, Parish Health, Social Ministry, and Joyful Noise Board.
- Five new proposed teams and their functions, including Faith Formation Team, Outreach Team, Property Team, Fellowship Team, Service Ministry Team.
- Proposed change in constitution acknowledges Council may form organizations within the church, which are separate but affiliated with Zion, such as the memorial gardens and the preschool. Organization will be approved by majority vote of Council. An organization's initial board will be approved by Council and subsequently board members of the organization will be elected in accordance with the constitution of the organization. The organization will prepare a constitution within 6 months of the creation of the organization. Council will provide oversight of organizations.
- Joyful Noise Preschool's constitution was moved under Zion's bylaws.
- Council approved the preschool and columbarium. First vote change to acknowledge organizations and moving JNP out of constitution.

Motion to approve by Suz Smith seconded by Rose Hartzell. Motion carried.

Zion resolution updates in 2024 that do not require vote:

- Council approved an employee handbook.
- The preschool board and Columbarium board are established organizations of the church.

## **New business**

### **Mutual Ministry-Pastor Kevin**

- Pastor Kevin shared that he is not sure when Zion had an active mutual ministry, but it has not been around for a number of years.
- Mutual Ministry serves to review mission statement and if congregation fulfills the mission; Serves as a mediator for pastor, staff, and congregation.

- Mutual Ministry would be made up of 6 members for 2-year terms.
- Three volunteers for 2025 to serve for their first 2-year term: Penny Heisley, Karen Engleman, Chris Owens. Three more volunteers will be identified for 2026. Volunteers will rotate every 2 years.
- Question from congregation member: Understood that mutual ministry is for pastor, and personnel committee is for staff. Will they now be combined?

Answer from Pastor Kevin: There will still be a personnel committee made up of the executive team and pastor.

### **7.2 Lay Voting Members for Synod Assembly**

- Need 3 volunteers. No vote required for volunteers.
- Michelle Sine and Karen Bissell volunteered.
- Still need 1 male, 1 youth, and a person of diversity (person of color or English as a Second Language).
- Volunteers to attend two Synod Conference Assemblies and the annual meeting. The annual meeting is on June 5 (evening) and June 6- 7 (daytime). The agenda is still a draft, but time is usually 8:00/30 am through dinner. Saturday ends by dinner. Lunch is provided. The purpose is to call a bishop with several other elections. Meeting to occur at St. Matthews in York, PA in their auditorium.

### **7.3 North York Conference**

- Pastor Kevin shared that Zion has been part of the York Conference which includes churches below Route 30. He has started to go to the North York Conference, which includes churches in the Shiloh, Dover, and Roundtown areas.
- Pastor Kevin believes Zion is a fit better with the North York Conference and would like Zion to attend. This conference change requires a vote.
- This change of conference was first considered under Pastor Janyce.
- Even with this change, Zion will not leave the WELL, mentoring program, and other activities downtown,
- Question from congregation member: Explain why it is better fit and the implications.

Answer from Pastor Kevin: There are no implications. York city churches do not work well together, and many do not attend. Pastor Kevin believes firmly that a conference should work well together. North York works very well together.

- Jen Lau shared it would be a benefit to change to the North York Conference for cooperative ministry. Working with other congregations is a big deal and extremely important to develop ministries together. Several other congregations in North York are in the Central York School District with Zion. In addition, some North York congregations are smaller and do not have resources which Zion could share with them.
- Question from congregation member: What does the conference do and what is it for?  
 Answer from Pastor Kevin: It is a geographic or historical partnership to discuss common ministries and share challenges and solutions. They get together once a month to worship, fellowship, and discuss.
- Motion to approve Zion moving to the North York Conference by Jill Lordan. Seconded by Kelly Kessler. Motion carried.

#### **7.4 Family in Need**

Pastor Kevin shared that he met someone who works with an Afghan family in York who needs help. A meeting is scheduled with Pastor Kevin, Lori Wise, the referring individual, an interpreter, and the family to identify and discuss how Zion can help. The Service Team is aware.

### **Thank you to out-going council members**

Christy Bucks shared a thank you and recognition of the following outgoing council members: Kim Alloway, Krista Zellers, Jill Lordan, Al Abruzzese, and Regina Peckmann.

Ryan Engleman was also thanked and recognized for serving a year as youth representative on Council. Alex Engleman will be the new youth representative.

### **Adjourn**

Motion to close by Suz Smith, seconded by Karen Bissell. Meeting adjourned in prayer.

Minutes Respectfully Submitted by Sara Strayer, Council Secretary.

## CONGREGATION COUNCIL

Pastor Kevin C. Stout

Christy Bucks - President\*  
Anmarie Hazelton - Vice President\*  
Sara Strayer - Secretary\*  
Andy Parr - Assistant Secretary  
Dave Schneider - Parliamentarian  
Andrew Doerr -Treasurer\*  
Adam Strayer - Investment Treasurer  
*(non-council member)*

Rose Hartzell  
Kelly Kessler  
Mary Jane McCluskey  
Karl Peckmann  
Jim Rowlands

Alex Engleman—Youth Representative

\*Executive Team

Council Email  
[zionyork.congregationcouncil@gmail.com](mailto:zionyork.congregationcouncil@gmail.com)

### **Zion's Mission Statement**

**“Reaching up, Reaching out, Reaching in,  
with faith and love.”**



**Zion Lutheran Church**  
**2215 Brandywine Lane**  
**York, PA 17404**