



# ZION'S FRIENDLY CHIMES



## MESSAGE FROM THE PASTOR

Several times a day I hear the bells of St. Mary's happily ringing through the community, reminding the town of their presence and beckoning people to come to worship. There may have been a time in Zion's history when we did the same; Zion had a bell tower on the church building in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. Perhaps that's why our newsletter of old used to be called "Zion's Friendly Chimes," and for nostalgic purposes it will resume that name once again. This newsletter is a visual note reverberating through the people...not in the airwaves, but in the mail.

What's different about Zion's Friendly Chimes? First, this will be a quarterly publication instead of monthly. Second, the newsletter will be less about announcing upcoming events and more about reflecting on what we've done in ministry together. After an audit of all our forms of communication, the Communication Board realized that we spend all of our efforts informing the congregation on future events and no effort sharing the impact of our ministry. From now on you will find articles in our newsletter written by different groups in our ministry highlighting what's been happening at Zion.

I hope you appreciate the different approach. If you are searching for information for future ministry events, please consult our bulletins and sign up for our weekly email blasts, both are available through our website ([www.zionholidaysburg.org](http://www.zionholidaysburg.org)).

Yours in Christ,  
Pastor Dave



## UPCOMING EVENTS

- **April**
  - 10 7-12<sup>th</sup> Grade Lock-in at 7:00 PM
  - 25 Healthy Kids Day at 9:00 AM (Y)
  - 25 Mending Hearts Clean Up at 1:00 PM
  - 25 Faith Riders Ice Cream Social 2:00 PM
- **May**
  - 1 Blood Drive at 11:30 AM
  - 5 Girl's Night Out at 6:00 PM
  - 9 Mother's Day Market at 11:00 AM
  - 15 Arts in Recovery at 7:00 PM

### MAY 17 ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

Sunday, May 17, at 10:30 a.m. in the Fellowship Hall. There will be one worship service held at 9:30 a.m. Saturday worship time remains the same.

- **May (cont.)**
  - 17 Baccalaureate at 7:00 PM
  - 31 Graduate Recognition

### MAY 31 - JUNE 4 VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL

From 5:15 to 8:15 here at Zion. Ages Preschool - 6<sup>th</sup> Grade. Begins with a meal followed by VBS.

- **June**
  - 15-21 Ocean City Mission Trip



## FAITH FORMATION & OUTREACH

The daffodils have poked out of the ground outside the church, the weather is slowly warming up, Easter is fast approaching! Spring is a wonderful time in the life of Zion as we get outside more and prepare for all of our wonderful summer programs and ministries. These days, Zion is full of small groups of adults, youth, and children gathering around our weekly scripture lessons. You can also find the Serving Squad and Outreach Board utilizing our newly updated kitchen with feeding ministry. Many Friday and Saturday nights find the building full of fun and fellowship at game nights, fundraisers, Lock Ins, and more. Music is also vibrant and active among all ages with our choir, special music, NOIZ, and “Big” NOIZ groups.

Looking back at this winter, we had lots of snow fun this year! I want to highlight our time at Camp Sequanota for the Zion Family Winter Retreat. About 50 people of all ages spent a weekend together in the Bowersox Enrichment Center in February. I was blessed to lead this Retreat with worship, bible study, crafts, games, and more. This year, we actually had snow for the winter retreat (imagine that!). Our group had a great time building snowmen, sledding, and having some friendly snowball fights. We had a few “first timers” with us, and I am always inspired to see how our group folds new people in. There is something special that happens every time we set aside a weekend to gather in faith. The group grows together in community, children of all ages play together, and relationships are formed. Families that participate in our Family Winter Retreat and Family Camp have come to treasure these retreats. Our candlelight worship on Saturday night is a personal favorite of mine every year. I encourage everyone to consider attending a future Family Camp, Winter Retreat, or Adult Retreat. Retreats are an increasingly rare ministry in the church at large, and we are richly blessed.

The next few months will bring lots of opportunities here at Zion! Coming up we have Vacation Bible School, Zion Family Camp, Sequanota Summer Camping, the Zion Mission Trip, our Fall Afterburners and more! See the weekly bulletin for information and announcements about upcoming opportunities at Zion! (Did you know? You can see the weekly bulletin announcements online each week at [www.zionholidaysburg.org](http://www.zionholidaysburg.org) under the “worship” tab). Finally, if you do not currently receive informational emails from Zion, you can add your name to the email list at [www.zionholidaysburg.org](http://www.zionholidaysburg.org) under “Congregational Life” → “Newsletters”.

God’s peace,  
Ryan Custead, Dir. of Faith Formation & Outreach

Scan this QR Code to register for  
**Vacation Bible School 2026!** May  
31st-June 4th, 5:15-8:15pm. Begins  
with dinner, preschool-6th Grade.



SCAN ME





## CONTINUOUS CHURCH IMPROVEMENT

The Coffee Hour is back and it's better than ever! The opportunity for fellowship after services had been missing since the Covid Pandemic in 2020 so we decided to restart this opportunity to extend the meal of communion beyond the service. So far, we're hearing great comments, and it's being well received by our members.

Don't miss this opportunity for coffee, tea, snacks and fellowship following both the 8:00 AM and 10:45 AM services. Sunday Schoolers can even pick up a cup of coffee or tea and a snack on their way to class.

To maintain the success we're enjoying thus far, we need your help! First, we hope you will be willing to sign up to serve as a host for one of the services. Hosting is easy. You just need to pick up or bake a snack, serve it and make coffee. If you're uncertain of how to do this, we will show you how! You can contact John Mancinelli or Sally William with any questions. The sign-up schedule is listed in the hallway inside the entrance on Union Street.

Second, we hope you will ATTEND!! Come and meet your old friends and make some new ones.

## FINANCIAL REPORT

### General Fund

July 1, 2025 thru February 28, 2026

Income (Giving)	\$276,830.75
Expenses	\$241,865.02
Income vs. Expenses (Giving Only)	\$34,965.73

(REMINDER: The above income figure reflects money given in the "Current Expenses" portion of your giving envelopes and undesignated loose offering only. Benevolence and money given to designated funds is not included.)

## NOTES OF THANKS

Dear Zion Friends,

Thanks to your generosity, Zion's Caring Tree cheered many seniors this Valentine's Day. What a surprise for them to receive gifts on that special day. Through Blair Senior Services, we were able to help seniors from ages 63 through 93. Your participation by purchasing and wrapping wonderful gifts made their day very special. Thank you for reaching out to help.

Your Adult Board

Pastor, Youth Group Pastor, and Soup & Smile Committee,

Thank you for the wonderful events you have done at Hickory Commons. We are new to CLSM and your activities have been very enjoyable and appreciated by us.

Sincerely,  
Tim & Cathie Mingling

Greg & I would like to send a very heartfelt thank you out to everyone. The cards, prayers, words of encouragement, and food during my recent bout with shingles and Ramsey Hunt syndrome were greatly appreciated. Recovery is going faster than anticipated, and we are feeling truly blessed.

We would also like to thank everyone who has a hand in televised services. We were so glad to be able to tune in and watch when we were unable to attend.

Greg & Sue Swope

To my Zion Family,

Thank you so much for the nice flowers and scripture book They were very much appreciated.

Ann Stubbs



## A Stephen Ministry Story

# Sent by God, Just for Me

I was 26, newly divorced, living far away from family and friends, and dealing with a lot of guilt, shame, and low self-esteem. *Was I a total failure? Would anybody ever want me? Was God condemning me because of my divorce?*

I found a new church and made some friends, but still struggled. It seemed like all my church friends were perfect, happy, and full of faith—while I was flawed, gloomy, and full of doubts.

When I shared some of this with my pastor, he suggested a Stephen Minister.

Before I met my Stephen Minister, I was worried she would judge and reject me once she learned about my past and got to know the real me. But she didn't. She was patient, loving, and accepting. I truly believe she was sent by God just for me.

We got together weekly. She'd ask me questions, get me talking, and then listen as I shared my struggles and doubts. She showed me God's love even when I didn't feel it. Over time, her faithful care helped me to see that perhaps I wasn't such a terrible person after all. Through her

loving care, I began to think that if God loved me, then maybe I could love myself too.

After a while, I got to a better place emotionally, and our Stephen Ministry relationship ended. A few years later, I remarried and had a miscarriage, and she was there for me again as a Stephen Minister, providing the care and support I needed. We now live over a thousand miles apart—but she will always hold a special place in my heart.

She was  
patient, loving,  
and accepting.

If you're dealing with any kind of difficulty, if you're struggling with faith questions or doubts, if you're wondering whether you are a worthy person, then I encourage you to consider getting a Stephen Minister.

It just might be that God already has a special one picked out just for you.

*Some details in this story have been changed to preserve confidentiality.*



## COMPETITION & TRADITION

### Super Bowl – NFL Championship

### Souperbowl – Chili & Soup Cookoff

This year marked the 60<sup>th</sup> (LX) anniversary of the Superbowl, which was held on February 7. Our Souperbowl (or Chili and Soup Cookoff) has taken place for a little less than 14 years as it was interrupted by COVID and the recent kitchen remodel.

I understand that our Souperbowl was established in 2012 when Nancy Pisanick led the Adult Board and tied it to the American tradition of the Superbowl. What a great idea! Our event originated in the earlier tradition of using frozen turkey leftover from Thanksgiving to make nice hot soup in the cold days of winter. We were excited to bring it back this year.

Zion’s competition was postponed a week to accommodate those church members attending the Family Retreat at Camp Sequanota. Although they would be able to attend the Cookoff, they probably wouldn’t have had time to bring their own creations and take full advantage of the competition.

This event offers a great opportunity to meet church members who may attend different services.

There were 14 contestants this year, including four chilis and ten soups. Our competitors distinguished their entries with spices, cheeses, and unique ingredients. The most unique was a Vietnamese Fruit Soup from Deb Bunnell, which was served cold. All Yummy! And the winners of the “golden ladles” were:

- Laura Wagner for her Winter Squash Soup
- Jim Lucey for his No Bean Chili

(full disclosure-votes were counted by independent judges and no favoritism was shown to my husband, Jim)

Many thanks to all our cooks, planners, tasters, and extra helpers for their assistance in continuing the Competition & Tradition.

And we topped off the day with a Birthday Celebration for Pastor Dave with cake, ice cream, and many blessings. Everyone left with full bellies, full hearts, and fond memories. See you next year!

By: Ruth Lucey, Adult Board Director

## SEMINARIAN STORIES

Dear Members of Zion Lutheran,

I can’t thank you enough for your generous gift! The money will be used to help further my seminary education by allowing me to attend in-person intensive courses on Campus.

Seminary is going great! I am completing my internship this July at Faith Lutheran Church in Upper St. Clair, followed by one more year of classes.

God’s Blessings,  
Lindsie (Hammaker) Struth

## DID YOU KNOW?

### Stitch & Sew sent

- 168 Quilts to Lutheran World Relief
- 8 Laprobes to the VA Home
- 21 Laprobes to the Lutheran Home
- 30 Laprobes to Maybrook
- 20 Blankets to Blair County Children & Youth
- 15 Walker bags to the Lutheran Home & Maybrook



## FAITH NUGGETS FROM RUTH CIRCLE

In years past, Ruth Circle has hosted a bulletin board in the hallway outside the library door. In this space the women have posted a word of the month. Each member spent time looking at that word through scriptural references. The board would then be adorned with each woman's favored piece of scripture containing the word of the month to provide small bites of scripture or "Faith Nuggets" to passersby. In an attempt to modernize, reach more hearts and minds, and support the new newsletter format Ruth Circle is excited to announce we are moving our Faith Nuggets off the wall and into this publication!

Word of the Quarter: SERVE

"For the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life a ransom for many." Mark 10:45

"Like good stewards of the manifold grace of God, serve one another with whatever gift each of you has received." 1 Peter 4:10

The word serve seemed apt for the Ruth Circle's spot in the maiden newsletter as we are indeed a women's service group. We take great care to explore opportunities to serve our Zion family, our community and beyond. As I reflected on this idea of service and thumbed through a rather large list of scriptural references to service/serving I was drawn to the two specific verses above.

The verse from Mark seems so timely as we are heading into the Easter season as I write this and will be well immersed by the time you are reading these words. The very idea that the Son of Man came to serve and not to be served is humbling, is it not?

As for 1 Peter, this verse is a great reminder that each of us has a gift worth sharing.

In this season of reflection, may we remember that Christ's example calls each of us to serve with humility and love. As we share our gifts with one another, even the smallest acts of service can become meaningful "faith nuggets" that nourish the hearts of those around us.

By: Justine Clark, Ruth Circle President

## CHILDREN, FAMILY & YOUTH

On Shrove Tuesday in February, both youth and adults helped to serve a delicious pancake and sausage dinner to church members and the community. The dinner was held to help raise money for those attending the upcoming 2027 ELCA National Youth Gathering in Minneapolis, Minnesota. The dinner was themed after Mardi Gras with bright purple, green, and yellow decorations that lit up the fellowship hall. Adult volunteers helped in the kitchen to cook the pancakes and sausage, while youth volunteers helped to set up the decorations and tables, as well as serve the food to those who attended the dinner. The youth did a great job seeing and interacting with all of the guests. During the dinner, thanks to many gracious donors from the church and community, there was also a basket raffle held. Lucky winners who purchased tickets, with all the proceeds going to the Youth Gathering, went home with some terrific prizes. There was a great turn out with dinner tables staying busy throughout the night and lots of guests being served. One guest was quoted saying, "Those were the best flap jacks and links I've ever tasted!" Another even asked what the secret recipe was. For now that will remain a Zion Lutheran Church secret, but if you missed out this year make sure to stop by the Shrove Tuesday dinner next year to try some pancakes and sausage that are "out of this world!" Thank you to everyone who made this possible and came out and enjoyed the meal!

Adam Naugle, CFY Board Director



# KID'S CORNER

John 3:16 NIV

For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.

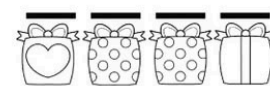
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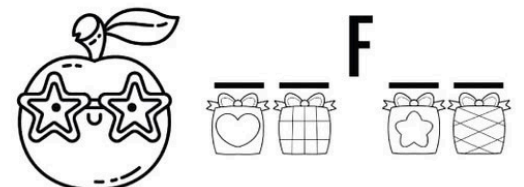
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*May your days be filled with prayer, joy, and the peace that  
comes from walking with God.*

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