



ZION'S FRIENDLY CHIMES

MESSAGE FROM THE PASTOR

We had a scheduled block of free time during the Adult Retreat. I generally don't have a few hours of dedicated leisure time, so I took the afternoon to feed my soul by going up the mountain to hike a few miles on the Laurel Highlands Hiking Trail. I had an amazing time outdoors, but I'll be honest, I almost blew the opportunity to get what I needed from it.

When I hit the trail I brought my typical hustle and bustle mentality along with me. Instinctively, I started walking as fast as my legs would carry me. I reached for my cellphone, popped in earbuds in, and started playing some music. In no time I was humming tunes and blazing through a world of green.

Busy in thought, I absentmindedly lost my footing on a wet rock and turned my ankle. It was nothing catastrophic, just a small jolt of pain. I decided I could push through the discomfort, but it was enough a nudge from God to say, "Cut that out. You're not out here to go fast and loud. Slow down and soak in the environment." And that's what I did. The earbuds came out. I decreased my pace. I stopped sporadically to take in a scene and to really observe what was around me. I needed this time and God knew I needed this time to be different.

Psalm 46 instructs us to "Be still and know that I am God." Ecclesiastes tells us that "For everything there is a season." Theologically we talk about Kairos, what we define as God's time, a qualitative time of divine interaction and intervention when God breaks into our lives. There are seasons to be productive, and there are seasons to be still, fed, inspired, and nourished.

What I needed that Saturday afternoon in September was to slow down and savor the moment. Perhaps we all need a little more of that in our lives. It's hard to appreciate nature if you are racing through it. It's difficult to commune with God if you are mentally rushing and overwhelming all your senses all of the time.

The world speeds us up and we never feel like we are going fast enough to keep up. And yet, God reminds us to be still. God reminds us that we don't have to feel pressed to do everything all at once. We have seasons, and one of those seasons can be intended for stillness so God can more easily permeate into our presence. May we feel the freedom and the invitation to slow down, savor our moments, and feel God's calm and quiet presence against the world's cacophony.



UPCOMING EVENTS

- **October**
31 Halloween Parade Outreach
- **November**
7 Apple Dumpling Baking
8 Gifting Hope Shopping
13 CFY Serving Squad
22 Zion Thanksgiving Worship & Dinner

NOVEMBER 22 @ 5:30 THANKSGIVING WORSHIP & DINNER

We will gather in the Sanctuary for worship. Please plan to bring a side dish or two to share for dinner. Home delivered meals will be available to our homebound members by calling the church office at 814-695-0091.

- **December**
5 Cookie Walk
18 Blue Christmas Service
24 Christmas Eve Services

DECEMBER 24 CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICES

Our Christmas Eve worship times will be 5:00, 7:30, & 10:00



FAITH FORMATION & OUTREACH

Fall is here! The air is changing, the leaves are changing, and another school year is well underway. For our young people, fall also means the return of activities, sports, and Friday night football games. And at Zion, Friday night football means the return of Afterburners! Afterburners have been a longstanding tradition at Zion, reaching all the way back into the 1990s. Following home varsity football games, young people from throughout our community come to Zion for a safe and fun place to spend time with their friends. So far this year, we have welcomed around 130 young people at each Afterburner!

On these Friday nights, our building comes alive. The fellowship hall becomes a dance room, plenty of snacks are available, and kids can enjoy our basement movie theater and youth rooms. Most importantly, young people are provided with a positive and safe atmosphere where they can gather, have fun, and simply enjoy being together.

The purpose of Afterburners is about more than providing something for kids to do after a football game. We offer Afterburners because we want to bless the lives of our local youth. We want young people to know that the Church values them and cares about their lives and experiences. We also want Zion to continue playing a helpful and positive role in the life of our Hollidaysburg community.

Thank you to all the adults who make Afterburners possible! We are especially grateful for our chaperones who give their Friday nights to spend time with our community's young people, as well as everyone who provides snacks and monetary donations. We are also thankful for other local churches that support this ministry through donations and by sending chaperones to help.

If you would like to help with an upcoming Afterburner, please contact the church office. Snack donations are always appreciated as well. Most importantly, please keep our community's young people in your prayers this fall, especially for their safety and well-being. As a congregation, may we always remember that young people are a blessing—even when they sometimes come with challenges! Together, we can help build a community where every young person is cherished and given opportunities to grow, learn, and thrive.

Finally, 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.zionhollidaysburg.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.zionhollidaysburg.org under “Congregational Life” → “Newsletters”.

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

Please keep **The Weekend 2026**
(Allegheny Synod Youth Event)
& The **2027 ELCA Youth Gathering**
in your prayers and watch for
pictures, stories, and more info!



This is
The Weekend.





ZION ADULT RETREAT 2026

Puzzles, strolls, hikes, (eating), winery, knitting, cards(eating) sewing, pie shoppe, mural visits, (eating), chatting, games, bible study(eating) worship, singing and praising (eating)- this is adult retreat Sequanota style!

Although it is only 1 hour away, for me, it feels like a million miles. The moment you pull into the Enrichment Center (dormitory style) you take your belongings and nest in your room. Only essentials needed for the next 72 hours (except I do take my slippers). I shed my typical daily tasks, roll into a new setting, a new community and a singular focus- give me God- in a concentrated way.

For 5 years adult retreat has never disappointed. Pastor Dave masterfully plans the perfect balance of study(eating) and time to enjoy each other or read, nap or walk to soak up nature. It provides a freedom my typical life demands make more difficult.

As I shed the "outside" world, my spirit begins to waken into a peaceful state. Through a slower, simpler pace and sometimes silence, room for deeper connections, learning and seeing God jump to the forefront. The 20 brothers and sisters share daily living with faith that penetrates my being. Through study and casual conversation, we learn new things about God and each other. I love to see how God weaves us all together in His love and His will.

This year we focused on "Wisdom" through Tuesdays with Morrie by Mitch Albom. We discussed aging, death and dying, forgiveness, emotions and money. Pastor Dave guided us in a manner that opened our hearts, minds and mouths to enlighten and enrich each other. In that process we created a common "language":

I see you are having a big feeling

Forgive everything

What's wrong with 2nd?

When we learn to die, we learn how to live

Let emotions penetrate you

What do you give priority in your life?....and many others.

This language of shared memories will forever bind us.

No one goes home hungry mentally or physically. Our kitchen crew, Chef Gail Nedimyer, Sous chef Beth Lyon, and operations manager Mike Nedimyer, provide superb menus and food.

Deb Bunnell on the dulcimer and Brian Harshberger on the guitar make sure we have beautiful music to soothe our souls. The 24/7 snack table has amazing options.

Thank you, Jesus, for bringing us together as your people and your church. Thank you to all my retreat buddies. You shared your tender faith while we lived together in retreat. Each one of you is a blessing to me!

God's peace, Jolene Kopriva

P.S. Although I had a sadness to part today, I have a big feeling of joy as I write this!

NOTES OF THANKS

On August 25th, Joyfull Noise Trio performed a concert for Hillcrest Apartments & Cottages. It was great and truly appreciated. Thank you to Gail Nedimyer, Brenda Conway, & Bill Deremer for sharing their musical gifts!

Dear Zion Lutheran Church,

Please accept our sincere thanks and appreciation for the generous gift we received on Saturday, September 26. The flower garden area is one of our residents' favorite places to visit and the rebuilding of the boxes has greatly enhanced the area. Our residents and family members will be able to continue to enjoy for years to come.

Thank you also for your ongoing support of our ministry through participation in the annual Easter Egg Hunt, conference youth programs, and the outreach to Hillcrest Apartments. Each of these ministries touches the hearts of those who call here home. We look forward to many years of continued partnership and care for those in our community.

Sincerely,

Jeremy B. Schrader

Administrator, Lutheran Home Hollidaysburg



OUTREACH BOARD

What do you know about the Outreach Board? Do you think the Outreach Board is just about the Serving Squad? The Outreach Board's mission is to seek service opportunities within the congregation and our immediate community. Yes, the Serving Squad has become a huge part of this ministry and continues to feed many individuals who are facing food insecurity. The Serving Squad is responsible for providing 13,739 meals to members in our community since it was created in 2023! WOW! This group continues to meet twice a month to make nutritious meals for individuals who have a need.

Now, what else happens on this board? The simple answer is LOTS. This year alone, our board has held several work projects to assist individuals and organizations in our community. Outreach had a spring cleanup project at Mending Hearts Animal Rescue to assist with an area that needed some major decluttering and cleanup. Our board has also assisted a member of our congregation with a large garden cleanup to help these gardens look their best. At the time of printing, we will have completed a flower box project at The Lutheran Home at Hollidaysburg. This project, part of God's Work Our Hands, repaired a large flower box that many of the residents enjoy for many months. Outreach also serves as a liason for Bridge of Hope and will be available for assistance when our new family is in place.

Outreach is always looking for new projects and ways to include our congregation in the efforts to assist our community. If you are interested in getting involved, please feel free to reach out to one of our board members for more information.

Thank you,
LeeAnn Lightner, Outreach Board Director



FINANCIAL REPORT

General Fund

July 1, 2026 thru September 30, 2026

Income (Giving)	\$81,712.00
Expenses	\$101,116.03
Income vs. Expenses (Giving Only)	(\$19,404.03)

(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.)



WREATH OF CHRIST

Could you use a spiritual break twice a month—a time when you can simply focus on God’s love and what it means to you? That can be difficult to imagine in our lives of constant distractions. But on the 2nd and 4th Wednesdays of each month, we gather for a half hour in the theatre room for a guided meditation using words on the screen, meditative music, and a beaded bracelet called the Wreath of Christ.

We begin with a reading from Psalms and some breath work, then follow the prompts on the screen for individual meditation and reflection. We close with the Lord’s Prayer. If you don’t have a bracelet, there are extras available to use. They can also be homemade—one person even made theirs from buttons!

The Wreath of Christ is an 18-bead prayer tool created in 1995 by a retired Swedish bishop. Each bead represents an aspect of God’s love. For example, the first bead we touch is the Golden Bead of God. This message appears on the screen for 66 seconds: “You are immense, You are near, You are the light and I am Yours.” I love that message. I also love the Pearly I-Bead’s words: “You created me as Your own image. Let me see Your image in myself.”

Other beads invite us to reflect on Baptism, mercy, worries, God’s love, sacrifice, secrets, darkness, and the resurrection. Each meditation offers a quiet opportunity to pause, listen, and simply be present with God.

Jan Martin highly recommends it. “It’s a wonderful pause in the middle of a busy week. Simple, easy meditation reminds us of the deep spiritual connection just waiting for us...when we slow down, breathe, and focus on our relationship with God.”

Bonnie Barry hates to miss one. She values the calm feeling of peace and friendship among the people gathered with the Pastor. “The music and meditations and prayers are very simple but very heartfelt and they really mean something. It helps me a lot.”

Sue Graupensperger likes the welcoming and calming atmosphere. “I like the fact that it encouraged me to be focused, thoughtful and intentional in prayer.”

Karen Freet goes to Wreath of Christ because it allows her to be more focused on her prayer life away from busy household happenings. “It is a nice, soothing atmosphere and it has made me more aware of prayer aspects that match to my faith.”

This deep dive by Denny Rodriguez details the mighty possibilities of a Wreath of Christ session: “The Wreath of Christ is a meaningful time for meditation and introspection, especially amid our busy lives. As we gather around this symbol of hope and renewal, it offers a quiet space to step back from chaos and reflect on what truly matters.

In this serenity, we can take a deep breath and let go of the stresses and pressures that often consume our thoughts. It invites us to turn inward, examining our values, aspirations, and even the things we wish to release.

This time of reflection can lead to powerful insights, as we consider how we want to move forward in our lives with intention and purpose. The Wreath of Christ isn’t just a ritual; it’s a gentle reminder to embrace stillness, cultivate gratitude, and reconnect with our inner selves amidst the noise of everyday life.”

By: Deb Bunnell



FAITH NUGGETS FROM RUTH CIRCLE

October brings to mind the season of harvest. As a young child I have fond memories of Harvest Home Sunday. The altar area overflowed with baskets of apples and cornstalks along with hundreds of canned jars of fruit, vegetables, and jellies ready for donation to the Lutheran Home (fewer regulations in those days).

Some fun facts about harvest:

>Every single row of corn on a cob has the exact same number of kernels and an average ear of corn has about 800 kernels.

>It takes only 9 seconds of harvesting work by modern machines to gather enough wheat to make 70 loaves of bread.

>The word “combine” comes from how the machine joins 3 distinct harvest jobs together: reaping, threshing and winnowing.

>When farmers harvest fruit today, they continue traditions that began between 6,000-3,000 B.C. with figs standing as one of the earliest harvested crops.

Our God of harvest not only provides us crops and food- he also provides us a spiritual harvest.

We can plant “seeds” of scripture in our hearts to grow and be available for “harvest” as we face life challenges. We can also plant “seeds” by attending church, spiritual retreats, Sunday School, Faith Riders, Ruth Circle, Choir, Stephen Ministries and many other “seeds” available for planting. What we sow, we shall reap. We are promised a “harvest” of love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Galatians 5:22-23

See you in the fields of planting and thank you Jesus for the harvest you provide, physically and spiritually.

“A man reaps what he sows. Whoever sows to please their flesh, from the flesh shall reap destruction; whoever sows to please the spirit, from the spirit will reap eternal life. Let us not become weary in doing good for at the proper time we reap a harvest if we do not give up.” Galatians 6:7-9

By: Jolene Kopriva, Ruth Circle Member

SEMINARIAN STORIES

Greetings Zion! I am in my last year at United Lutheran Seminary. I spent last year completing my internship at Faith Lutheran Church in Upper St. Clair, in the South Hills of Pittsburgh. It was a wonderful and formative experience. Throughout the year, I was able to grow in my understanding of what it means to serve as a pastor, from preaching and leading worship to walking alongside people through the joys and challenges of life. My internship was an important opportunity to put what I have learned in the classroom into practice, and it helped me continue to discern and prepare for the ministry to which I feel called.

I will spend this and next semester finishing up my remaining coursework. In April, I will sit for my approval interview with the Southwestern Pennsylvania Synod Candidacy Committee where they will determine if I am ready for ordination next year.

I want to take this opportunity to thank you for your continued support these past few years. Your prayers, encouragement, and financial support have gone a long way in helping me complete my studies as I prepare for ministry. Knowing I have your support in this process has been a tremendous blessing. I ask for your continued prayers during this last stretch of seminary as I prepare to serve the Church and its people.

In God's Grace,
Lindsie (Hammaker) Struth

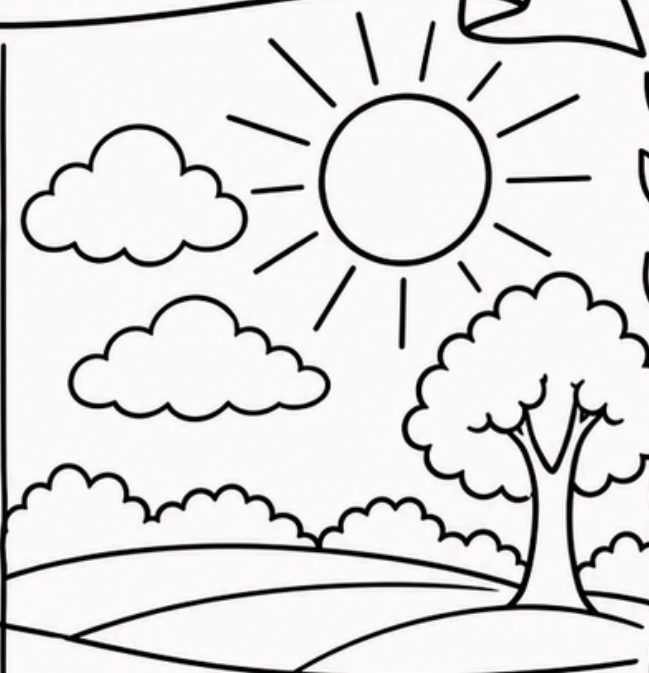


United
Lutheran
Seminary



There is a time for everything,
and a season for every activity
under the heavens.

Ecclesiastes 3:1



Zion Lutheran Church
500 Allegheny Street
Hollidaysburg, PA 16648

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CONTACT US

CPC President - Justine Clark
814.207.4931

Zion Lutheran Church
814.695.0091
office@zionhollidaysburg.org

Pastor - Rev. David Bowman
814.330.8025

500 Allegheny Street,
Hollidaysburg, PA

Worship Times

Saturday 6:00 p.m.

Sunday 8:00 & 10:45 a.m.

Sunday School (All Ages)

9:30 a.m.

Director of Faith Formation &
Outreach - Ryan Custread
814.695.0091



www.zionhollidaysburg.org