



Zion Lutheran Church

February 2023

Open Doors, Open Hearts, Open Hands

Sunday, February 5

Fifth Sunday after Epiphany / Communion

Sunday, February 12

Sixth Sunday after Epiphany / Communion

Sunday, February 19

Transfiguration of Our Lord / Communion

Wednesday, February 22

Ash Wednesday / Communion

Sunday, February 26

First Sunday of Lent / Non Communion

Pastor's Corner



When my kids were little, they would ask me a question and I would respond with, "Wait a sec." After pawing through the Valentine candy conversation hearts, I'd pull out one that somehow related to their question, and give it to them. There was a lot of eye-rolling and "Mo-o-o-o-ommm!", but I enjoyed it immensely.

So I started wondering what God's conversation hearts would be like. I'm sure they would be mostly the same as some of the classics: Luv u, Be mine, Yes?, Crazy 4 u, Cutie Pie. Those are pretty obvious. God loves us; God wants us to remember whose we are; God says yes to us and we say yes in response; God is so crazy about us that God even entered our world in the flesh to accomplish our salvation. And Cutie Pie? Well, I would think our Creator probably thinks that of us much of the time!

I noticed there are newer ones too: Text me, Let's boogie, LOL, High five. We can contact God any time we need help or need to vent or need to celebrate; God's love brings such joy that even those of us with two left feet will want to dance; God has a sense of humor and encourages us to laugh at ourselves and at the devil; God's "high five" is worth more than "much fine gold." [Psalm 19:10].

Here's a challenge for you.

Do you think God's candy conversation hearts can answer your questions? Calm your fears? Help you find direction? God has many more conversation hearts waiting for you in scripture; check it out and see what God might be up to for you, and with you. [John 3:16-17; John 13:34-35]

XOXOXO!

In Christ's service,

Pastor Amy

Out of the Office

Pastor Amy will be out of the office on vacation February 24 through March 11. If you have a Pastoral emergency during those three days. Please reach out to church office 715-687-4110 or office@zionstratford.org. You may also reach out to Council President Dan Thompson 715-384-3431.

Dear Members and Friends of the Northwest Synod of Wisconsin,

I am very excited to invite you to participate in this transformative trip to the Holy Land with me in January of 2024. Below is the link with registration information.

It is an amazing experience to see with our own eyes, the lands of the Old Testament stories and walk in the footsteps of Jesus. We will visit Bethlehem, the Jordan River, Nazareth, Capernaum, and Cana, take a boat ride on the sea of Galilee, walk on the Road to Damascus, and the way of the cross in Jerusalem. We will visit with Palestinian Lutheran Christians, visit a Lutheran school, a Lutheran church, and the Bishop of the Holy Land and Jordan, Bishop Azar. This is a profound way to grow in faith and biblical understanding. I hope you will join us!

Here is the link with all the information.

[Northwest Synod of Wisconsin Holy Land Trip with Bishop L... \(eliastours.com\)](#)

Let me know if you have any questions!

Bishop Laurie Skow-Anderson
Lskow-anderson@nwswi.org

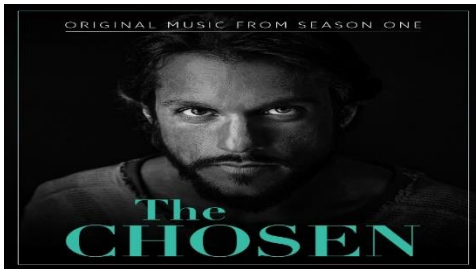
Let's Watch The Chosen Together!

The Chosen Begins Feb. 5!

If you're interested in binge-watching a few episodes of *The Chosen*, be sure to join us at 6 pm on Sunday, Feb. 5. Bring a bible if you like, some snacks to share, a snuggly blanket, and something to drink.

"A charismatic fisherman drowning in debt, a troubled woman wrestling with real demons. a gifted publican ostracized by his family and his people. A religious leader struggling with his beliefs. See Jesus through the eyes of those that met him." -from angel.com/watch/the-chosen/about#departments.

The episodes are 30-45 minutes, leaving lots of time in-between for snacks and discussion. Bring your kids (middle school and high school ages especially) and invite your friends!



Library News

Seven great new books are now ready for checkout in the library. They are located at the checkout desk. Come in and see all the possibilities for readers and viewers of all ages.

Operation Christmas 2022

Zion's Operation Christmas for 2022 provided household and monetary gifts for Jaimie and Cole Kaiser and their beautiful 7 month old daughters Callie and Jollie after losing their home to a fire on December 3, 2022.

Jaimie (Garrigan) has been a lifelong member of Zion. Through your generosity over 100 household items and monetary gifts were given to Jaime and Cole. Thank you for your generosity and support to Zion's Operation Christmas. Please continue to keep Jaimie, Cole and the girls in your prayers.



!SCAM WARNING!!

Once again, someone is using my identity and role as pastor to try to steal from members of my congregations. So far, they have not “ghosted” my phone number; the number on the text or phone call is one you most likely will not recognize. Please do not respond to these text or phone requests for gift cards or money. The current scam requests include:

1. My name signed as Pastor Amy Heinz or Amy Heinz (If I know you, I will never sign my full name. I’m not that formal.)
2. A request to be discreet (Although I do keep confidentiality, I will never ask to keep something secret. If it’s confidential, you won’t hear about it in the first place.)
3. A request for gift cards or money sent to an undisclosed location (I will never, ever ask for anything like this unless you and I have spoken personally and it is in support of something our congregation is sponsoring.)
4. Some kind of charity such as cancer or homelessness (I have my own personal means of supporting charities. Our congregation will be very public and very clear about which charities we are supporting at which time.)

If you receive a text or phone call like this, please contact the police and ask how to report a scam situation. Then ignore the contact and block that number on your phone.

Monthly Newsletter Deadline

The deadline for the February newsletter is January 21. To submit an article about an upcoming ministry opportunity, please email the church office at office@ziontratford.org. Thank you

Zion Church Cancellations

Zion will now be posting cancellations on WAOW channel 9.

Treasurer's Report

To keep everyone informed of the financial status of Zion Lutheran, we will be starting a monthly Treasurer's Report in the newsletter. The overall purpose is to be transparent about how Zion is building a culture of generosity and being a steward (manager) of God's gracious provision in order to fuel Jesus' ministry.



Through December 31, 2022, **income** received to the Current (general offering) was **\$155,174.28** This money is used to provide financial support for the ministry budget expenses such as faith formation, evangelism, worship, staff salaries, property, etc. This amount does not include the 10% benevolence. Thank you to everyone who is going above and beyond to financially support the mission and ministry of Zion.

The ministry **expenditures** were **\$159,534.71** as of December 31, 2022. Our expense budget was \$182,685.29. We ended the year at 87.3% of expenses. Thank you to the ministry teams for being good stewards.

As of December 31, 2022, the church's **undesignated cash balance** was \$23,258.24. This is money that is not specifically designated to a specific purpose, such as utilities, mortgage debt reduction, lawn mowing, GermanFest, etc. The undesignated cash balance is like our savings account or reserve fund when our

expenses are more than our income. This can be quickly depleted if actual income doesn't match expenses.

As of December 31, 2022, our **benevolences (ministry to the world)** were:

Crossways Camping Ministry	\$ 1,456.00	52.9% of goal
ELCA 10% Benevolence	\$16,145.90	100.9% of goal
Lutheran Social Services	\$ 1,135.00	63.1% of goal
Missionary Support	\$ 2,424.00	69.3% of goal
ELCA World Hunger	\$ 4,984.80	153.4% of goal

As of December 31, 2022, the balance available in the **GermanFest/Crisis Bank** account was \$11,553.40.

Thank you to everyone who continues to support Zion's ministry in Jesus' name with financial gifts. It takes all of us together to fuel our ministry plan.

With a grateful heart, Marge Redetzke, Council Treasurer

SCRIP

Your Scrip gift card purchases (gift cards to tons of stores across the country) provide funds for Zion youth experiences like mission trips and regional/national youth gatherings! Let's prepare for Zion youth to participate in upcoming opportunities by using Scrip cards for your shopping and gift-giving needs. It's easy! Each card purchase returns a percent back of Zion, netting hundreds of dollars to the youth fund each year. Thank you for continuing to support Zion youth experiences!

Faith Formation for All Ages

Little Lutherans/J-Team

Little Lutherans and J-Team (K-6th grade) will be focusing on various aspects of Worship this year with games, crafts, and Bible stories. **These faith formation classes will be held every 2nd and 4th Wednesday of the month from 3:15-5:15 pm.**

Children may arrive anytime between 3:15 and 3:50 pm, for

those coming from a non-Stratford school district. Information and calendar can be found at: <https://zionstratford.org/faith-formation/k-6th-grade/>.



Your invited to come hang out with the Little Lutheran's and J-Team!

When: Wednesday, February 8th and February 22nd

Time: 3-5:15 pm

Where: Family Center

Why: to help us Celebrate 1 Corinthians 13 and Ash Wednesday

What will I do: join us for snack and fellowship, help with activities, and dig into God's word

We look forward to spending the afternoon with you. Please let the church office know if you are able to join us! Zion Church office 715-687-4110, email office@zionstratford.org

Puppet Day

New Date: **Thursday, March 16 2023**

New Time: 12:30 -5:00 pm

New Information: Please register by March 8, 2023 to office@zionstratford.org or schoenherr11@gmail.com this gives me time to plan and prepare. Thank you! Janet Schoenherr

Confirmation - "Bible Part 2"

On Wednesday, February 1, from 6:30 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.,

Confirmation students are required to participate in this CORE class about the 10 Commandments.

Elective: Wednesday, February 8, from 6:30 pm - 8:00 pm. Bread of Life with Mary. Parent participation is highly encouraged. Adult congregation members are also encouraged to participate. Confirmation registration forms, class schedules, and more information are available at: <https://zionstratford.org/faith-formation/7th-9th-grade/>.

Disciples in Christ

Disciples in Christ (10th grade) will meet on **Sunday, February 19 at 5:30 p.m.** Schedule and more information can be found at: <https://zionstratford.org/faith-formation10th-12th-grade/>.

Dwelling in the Word

Learn, discuss and enjoy fellowship on **Wednesday** mornings at **10:00 a.m.**

We will be studying the scripture for the upcoming Sunday worship. No experience is required. We look up the scripture together with love and encouragement. Bibles are available or bring your own.

Lent Soup and Sandwich



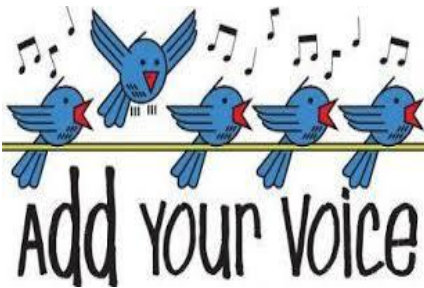
If there are family teams that would like to provide and serve Lent soup and sandwich meals please contact the church office for the available dates.

- Feb 22 - Council -
- March 1 - Worship Team / Choir and Bell Choir
- March 8 -
- March 15 - Faith Formation Team
- March 22 -
- March 29



Do you enjoy working with IT (information technology)? The Media and Worship Teams are interested in picking your brain to help plan for future technology needs. Please contact Kathy in the office or talk to Pastor Amy if you are interested.

No commitment is required.



Choir Rehearsals are held at 8:00 AM in the balcony. Next rehearsal dates: **February 5,12,19,26** New members and all voices are always welcome. For more information, contact Mary Wussow

music@zionstratford.org.

Serving Our Savior Opportunities



Come join us in fellowship following worship each Sunday. If you wish to host fellowship, there is a sign-up sheet on the table in the fellowship area.

There are no longer restrictions on only bringing pre packaged food. Feel free to bring in home made goods. See you at fellowship.

Calling all Ushers, Assisting Ministers Media, Acolytes, etc.

For those people interested in signing up to serve at worship services please go to SignUpGenius.com on the web or use the free app. Search for sign ups using the email address: hutherbk@yahoo.com. Sign ups are usually available each month until the 17th for the following month. At that point the service schedule needs to be completed and sent to the church office.

Serving in Worship Substitutions

On vacation? At a sporting event? Family wedding? If you are scheduled to serve in worship as an assisting minister, acolyte, communion server, reader, usher, etc. and are unable to serve on that date, please look at the calendar and contact another person to switch with you. If you need a list of people to contact, please reach out to Brenda Huther at hutherbk@yahoo.com or at 715-581-2485. Thank you.

Altar Guild Needs Families & Individuals

The Altar Guild is seeking a few people to help keep the Chancel area looking great! A two month-a-year commitment is all that's asked of anyone. There's a book in the room to the south of the Chancel area you can look through to see if this is something that might interest you. Contact Marge Kollmansberger at mpkollman@yahoo.com Please prayerfully consider participating in this ministry.

Homebound Visits

Zion's Homebound Members are ready for home visits from congregation members. It helps them to feel connected, Less lonely and cared for. The commitment is one or more members per month. If you can serve this way, please contact Pastor Amy Heinz at pastor@zionstratford.org.



Technology Ministry

Council Minutes

Council minutes are now available on the church website at zionstratford.org/publications. You can also get a copy of the minutes by contacting Kathy in the church office or on the Information table by the church office.

Prayer Requests

Did you know that you can submit your prayer requests on the new ZionStratford.org website? You can also let people know that people are praying for them too. Check it out at <https://zionstratford.org/prayer>



Listen on
Podbean

Sermons by Phone or Podcast App

Audio recordings of Sunday sermons are now available by calling **848.204.2721**. You can also find it on the podcast apps *PodBean* and *Bullhorn* under the podcast name "Open Doors Open Hearts Open Hands." You can also find a recording and a copy of the bulletin at <https://zionstratford.org/publications/>.

Building Update 2023

Total monthly principal payments	\$ 31,065.85
Total monthly interest payments	<u>\$ 1,384.15</u>
Balance of loan as of 12-30-2022	\$104,202.60

Partners Bank

Building checking acct balance as of **12-30-2022** \$ 9,989.85

Payment Bi-Weekly	Start Balance	Payment Amount	Interest Paid	Principal Paid	Ending Balance
12/02 & 12/16	\$129,871.62	\$3,100.00	\$389.36	\$2,710.64	\$127,160.98
12/30	\$127,160.98	\$1,550.00	\$191.62	\$1,358.38	\$125,802.60
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12/30	\$125,802.60	21,600.00	\$.00	21,600.00	\$104,202.60

Birthdays & Anniversary

The listing of the dates for birthdays and anniversaries will now be posted in the weekly Monday email, in the weekly Sunday announcements, and on the Sunday PowerPoint announcements. This is to protect people's privacy and not make it easier for scammers to have access to this information. If you would like a complete monthly list to send out cards, please contact the office.



February 2023

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1 10 am Bible Study 6:30 CORE confirmation class	2 6pm Trust & Memorial Team Meeting	3	4
5 9am Worship/ Communion	6	7 6pm Worship Team Meeting	8 10 am Bible Study 3pm JTeam/ LL 6:30 Confirmation / Elective	9	10	11
12 9am Worship/ Communion Property Team Meeting following worship	13 6pm Executive Team Meeting	14	15 10 am Bible Study 7pm Faith Formation Team Meeting	16	17	18
19 9am Worship/ Communion 5:30 pm Disciple for Christ	20 6pm Council Meeting	21	22 Ash Wednesday 10am Bible Study 3pm JTeam/LL 5:30pm Ash Wednes- day Service. Soup & Sandwich to follow	23	24 Pastor Amy on vacation	25 Pastor Amy on vacation
26 9am Worship/ Communion Pastor Amy on vacation	27 6:30pm Evangelism Team Meeting Pastor Amy on vacation	28 Pastor Amy on vacation				

Date	02/05/2023 5th Sunday of Epiphany 9:00 AM	02/12/2023 6th Sunday of Epiphany 9:00 AM	02/19/2023 Transfiguration of our Lord 9:00 AM	02/22/2023 Ash Wednesday 5:30 PM	02/26/2023 1st Sunday of Lent 9:00 AM	03/01/2023 1st Wed of Lent 5:30 PM	03/05/2023 2nd Sunday of Lent 9:00 AM
Assisting Minister	Riley Spindler	Brenda Castellano	Brenda Huther	Darla Leick	Dan Thompson	Dan Wieland
Reader	Riley Spindler	Brenda Castellano	Brenda Huther	Darla Leick	Dan Thompson		Dan Wieland
Acolytes	Reese & Reid Spindler	Garrett Smazal Avery White	Ella Schultz Olivia Ballerstein	Charlotte & Nolan Peirce	Jackson & Jevin Spindler		Abby & Hudson Ballerstein
Ushers	Jim & Cory Wiesman	Tom & Nancy Schoenherr	Phil & Kerri Schultz	Ray & Lindsay White	Garrett Smazal Brenda Huther		Gary & Mary Wussow
communion assistants	Riley Spindler Wendy Spaeth Sandy Andersen	Lois Miller Kevin Miller Brenda Castellano	Brenda Huther June Krueger Carmella Moon	Brian & Darla Leick Angie Guralski	No Communion	Dan & Deb Wieland Nancy Schoenherr
communion steward	Rhonda Thompson	Wendy Spaeth	Patti Casperson	Deb Wieland	No Communion	Deb Wieland
Fellowship	Dan & Rhonda Thompson	Floyd Zopfi	Pat Emon Angie Guralski, Amy Reno	Soup & Sandwich Council	Barb & Harold Wrench	Soup & Sandwich Worship/ Choir/ Bell Choir	Cournoyer Family
Host	President Dan Thompson	Secretary: Carmella Moon	Vice President: Maryel Schoenfuss		Treasurer: Marge Redetzke	Evangelism: Cory Wiesman
Bell Ringer	Jim Wiesman	Tom Schoenherr	Phil Schultz	Ray White	Brenda Huther		Gary Wussow
Media	Marge Kollmansberger	Ted Dasler	Rod Huther	Marge Kollmansberger	Kevin Miller	Connor Kreft	Kevin Miller