

February 2024



Zion Lutheran Church

Sunday, February 4

Fifth Sunday after Epiphany/Communion

Sunday, February 11

Transfiguration of Our Lord/Communion

Sunday, February 18

First Sunday in Lent/Communion

Sunday, February 25

Second Sunday in Lent/Communion

Pastor's Corner



Dear Friends in Christ,

Wow, Lent starts early this year! I feel like we just finished the twelve days of Christmas, welcomed a new year, and celebrated Epiphany. Now here we are staring Ash Wednesday full in the face (February 14). So, how many of you are going to give up something for Lent? Why?

Ask yourself that question: “Why am I giving up something for Lent?” Well, here are some possible reasons:

1. Because that’s what people do.
2. It reminds us of what Christ gave up for us.
3. It teaches me to be more generous to others.
4. It helps me get started on leaving bad habits behind.
5. I want to do the right thing to get into heaven.

None of these reasons are bad, but I have one more question for you to answer:

Does giving up something for Lent draw you deeper into Christ and into God’s vision of the Kingdom?

That’s the biggest question of all because if giving up something or even adding something to our daily routine (bible reading, prayer, setting aside money for the poor) doesn’t make us more closely aligned with God’s vision, it’s not worth it. So, what is God’s vision? Kindness, compassion, mercy, forgiveness, and lavish welcome of all with no restrictions. We welcome all to Christ’s table

of mercy during worship; we must welcome all into—and with—our whole lives. So go ahead, choose your Lenten discipline, but look for the connections between what you are giving up and how it pulls you toward deeper faith in God. May the Holy Spirit deepen your faith during this penitential season.

“I want to know Christ and the power of his resurrection...” -Philippians 3:10a [NRSVUE]



Council

Corner

Pastor Amy will be on vacation from February 22 through March 9. If there is a Pastoral emergency you can contact Council President Dan Thompson at 715-384-3431 or the church office at 715-687-4110 or office@zionstratford.org. Pastor Katie Andersen will be the church’s contact during this period.

Media updates - February

Lenten Worship Services

February 14, 2024, Ash Wednesday

5:30 pm Worship Service

6:15 pm Soup and Sandwich (Worship Team hosting)

February 21, 2024, Wednesday

5:30 pm Worship Service

6:15 pm Soup and Sandwich (Evangelism Team hosting)

February 28, 2024, Wednesday

5:30 pm Worship Service

6:15 pm Soup and Sandwich (Faith Formation Team hosting)

Website - zionstratford.org



Look us up online zionstratford.org. Zion's website is full of information at your fingertips. Weekly sermons you can listen to with a link to the scriptures of the week and attached bulletin. The events calendar can be used as a quick reference for events here at Zion. The monthly newsletter and council minutes are also available each month. The church office is taking care of loading the information, so

please be patient as this is new to the office.

Hope you enjoy the website of Zion Lutheran Church.



Operation Christmas

Sweet Dreamz is a non-profit organization located in Spencer Wisconsin that provides comfort items to children ages newborn to 17 years who come from a home of substance abuse as they make their way into foster care – things these children cannot take with them during this very hard transition. When a child is removed from a home, they are not allowed to take anything with

them because it is contaminated. Sweet Dreamz serves 45 counties throughout WI including Marathon and Wood. Sweet Dreamz provides these things to give them hope for a brighter future. Each child receives a homemade pillowcase filled with a blanket, a stuffed animal, pajamas, and a book – all specific to their age and size. Currently, the greatest need is for age and size 2T to 10/12. Pillowcases must be homemade. Sweet Dreamz currently has volunteers making pillowcases but will accept any homemade pillowcases and blankets or quilts.

Thank you for your generosity and continued support of Zion's Operation Christmas! Thank you Alison Murphy for organizing this year's Christmas donation program.

Disciples needed

Every year, the folks at Marshfield: Wesley UMC put on a live Last Supper the Monday and Wednesday evenings of Holy Week. While it started twenty years ago with mostly Wesley members, it has since grown to include people from multiple different churches. Those leading it very much appreciate the ecumenical nature of the program and look forward to partnering with the wider community each year.

That said, there are a number of individuals who have had to step back from their roles this year (due to conflicts and other life circumstances). This has left us short six (out of twelve) disciples. If you know of someone (or multiple someones) in your church who might be interested and willing to be a disciple this year, we would really appreciate you connecting them with us.

The disciples needed are Simon, Thomas, Judas, Peter, Andrew, and Matthew.

Rehearsals are February 29 and March 14 at 6:30 pm, with dress rehearsal on Palm Sunday at 6:00 pm.

"Performances" are March 25 and 27th at 7:00 pm.

We need to hear from those interested in participating by February 12 so we can make proper plans for moving forward.

Again, if know of someone who might be a good fit, please email me directly with their contact information so I can connect them with the event organizers. wumcpastor@wesleyhopeconnection.org 262-902-5914 cell

Blessings,
Reverend Doug Clement

LUTHERAN MEN IN MISSION

There will be a **One Year to Live (OYTL) Men's Retreat** at **Good Earth Village near Spring Valley, MN** on **May 3-5, 2024**.

It is an ***Experience*** meets men wherever they are in their lives. It can be impactful for the man who thinks he needs it the most, and the man who thinks he needs it the least.

For more information about the retreat, including the brochure, online registration and video testimonies, go to:

lutheranmeninmission.org/Experiences/One Year To Live or via this QR Code.



This event is brought to you by **Lutheran Men in Mission (LMM)** in collaboration with **Good Earth Village** and the **SE MN Lutheran Men in Mission Board**,

Feel free to contact either of the following for more information, if needed.

Lon Buss

608 516-7875 lonabuss0406@gmail.com

Tyler Anderson

507 346-2494 tyler@goodearthvillage.org

February's Faith Journey

Tuesday morning Bible Study

Bible study will be each Tuesday morning. We invite anyone interested in exploring the scriptures and a time of fellowship to join us on Tuesday mornings at 10 a.m.

Tuesday Morning Bible Study Schedule 2024 (10 am)

Date	Topic & Scripture Notes
<i>February 6, 2024</i>	<i>Feed the Multitude Mark 6:30-44</i>
<i>February 13, 2024</i>	<i>Jesus Heals Luke 5:17-26</i>
<i>February 20, 2024</i>	<i>Good Samaritan Luke 10:25-37</i>
<i>February 27, 2024</i>	<i>No Bible Study Pastor Amy is on vacation</i>

Evangelism

The Evangelism team would like to send cards to individuals or families who are hospitalized or have experienced a loss in their family. If you have someone that you wish for the church to reach out to you can contact the church office at 715-687-4110 or office@zionstratford.org.



***Continue to pray
for all the children
and leaders as they
begin a new year
of their faith
journey.***

Little Lutherans/J-Team

February 14, 2024

Prodigal Son

February 28, 2024

Good Samaritan

Little Lutherans and J-Team (K-6th grade) will be focusing on the Bible 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 p.m.**

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/>

Confirmation

CORE Class

February 7, 2024 6:00 pm - 7:30 pm

New Testament

Parables and Sayings of Jesus

Class runs from 6:00 p.m. - 7:30 p.m. Confirmation students are required to participate in all CORE classes. Elective classes are selected by the student. Sermon notes and activity verification are required throughout the year and should be returned to the office or dropped in the basket in the narthex or on the information table in the lobby. Confirmation registration forms, class schedules, and more information available at:

<https://zionstratford.org/faith-formation/7th-9th-grade/>.

Disciples For Christ

Sunday, February 18, 2024 at 5:30 p.m.

Staying In Touch with God Book: Why the Church? Pages 17-20.

The schedule and more information can be found at:

<https://zionstratford.org/faith-formation10th-12th-grade/>.

First Communion Class

Anyone who would be interested in taking the First Communion class on April 7th following the 9 am worship.

First Communion would be held on April 14th. If you are interested, please contact the church office at 715-687-4110 or office@zionstratford.org and we will get you signed up for the class.

Supporting Ministries



Simply Giving

Your congregation works hard to support your faith journey, respond to your pastoral needs, and plan for educational and worship opportunities all year long.

Make it easy for yourself (and for us) by signing up for Simply Giving. Through Simply Giving, you can “set it and forget it” when it comes to donating to Zion’s ministry. Your donation will automatically come out of your account in whatever amount and on whatever schedule is best for you.

Forms are available just outside the worship space and can be completed and returned to the office. Or just give Kathy a quick call in the office and she will be happy to help you out.

Treasurer's Report

To keep everyone informed of the financial status of Zion Lutheran, we include 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 good stewards (managers) of God's gracious provision to fuel Jesus' ministry.

January 1, 2023 through December 31, 2023:

- General Offering Received \$175,796.00
- Ministry Expenses (salaries, utilities, supplies, etc.) \$209,818.63
- **Giving vs. Expense Deficit \$ 34,022.63**
- Undesignated Cash Balance (12/31/23) \$ 6,802.32

(The undesignated cash balance is a positive number because \$8,116.00 was used from the Belgea-Zuelke estate land sale funds to pay for a portion of the new carpet .

Note: Our ministry teams were well below their budget expenses throughout the year.

Benevolence Goals through December 31, 2023: (These are additional goals, not included in annual budget.)

Crossways Camping Ministries	\$ 100.00	3.6% of goal
Lutheran Social Services	\$ 900.00	50.0% of goal
Missionary	\$ 1,943.00	55.5% of goal
ELCA World Hunger Appeal	\$ 3,425.00	105.4% of goal

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.

Building Update 2024

Total monthly principal payments	\$ 10,079.34
Total monthly interest payments	<u>\$ 770.66</u>
Balance of loan as of 12/29/2023	\$ 67,294.65

Partners Bank

Building checking acct. balance as of **01/01/2024** \$4,843.06

Payment Bi-Weekly	Start Balance	Payment Amount	Interest Paid	Principal Paid	Ending Balance
10/06 & 10/20	\$77,373.99	\$3,100.00	\$231.02	\$2,868.98	\$74,505.01
11/03 & 11/17	\$74,505.01	\$3,100.00	\$222.37	\$2,877.63	\$71,627.38
12/01 & 12/15	\$71,627.07	\$3,100.00	\$213.69	\$2,886.31	\$68,741.07
12/29	\$68,741.07	\$1,550.00	\$103.58	\$1,446.42	\$67,294.65

Thank you to all who continue to give generously toward the Debt Reduction (Building) Fund.

The following books were purchased for the Zion Library in 2023. They will be featured in the library in January. Come and enjoy the Zion Lutheran Church library.



1. **The Mitten** by Jan Brett
2. **God Gave Us Love** by Lisa Tawn Bergren; art by Laura J. Bryant
3. **Discovering Life in the Tree** by Petra Bartikova and Magdalenda Takacova
4. **The Light in Hidden Places** by Sharon Cameron
5. **Diary of a Wimpy Kid** by Jeff Kinney
6. **Everything You Always Wanted to Know About God** by Eric Metaxas.
7. **The Light We Cannot See** by Anthony Doerr
8. **Flight Behavior** by Barbara Kingsolver

Fellowship

Join us each Sunday following worship for coffee, tea, and hot cocoa fellowship. It is a wonderful time to catch up with friends, family, and other members of your congregation. Often, there are tasty treats to enjoy as well. Consider hosting a fellowship for your fellow members, it is as easy as signing up.

If you have never hosted a fellowship, no worries! Several people are willing to help you out with making coffee and setting up. Let the office know and those arrangements will be made.

Homebound Visits



Several members of Zion are homebound. This makes it difficult for them to come to church and receive communion. Pastor Amy makes frequent visits to these members and encourages other members of Zion to visit their fellow members and serve communion. Pastor Amy will walk you

through how to serve home communion. Consider taking a few hours a month to visit with a fellow member and brighten their day.

Choir Rehearsal 8:00 a.m.

February 4, 11, 18, and 25 in the balcony.

March 3, 10, 17 and 24 in the balcony.



Christ in Our Home

The devotional *Christ in Our Home* for January, February, and March is now available in the Narthex or the information table in the church lobby.

***RaiseRight* new name for SCRIP**

RaiseRight is available year-round! Each order supports Faith Formation Youth Programs such as Camp Scholarships and National Gatherings.

Thousands of gift card options are available! Some of them are in stock, and always available for pickup, and others need to be ordered. To make our orders as profitable as possible, we will be placing special orders on the 10th of every month. Log into the Raise Right app to place your order or contact Kathy in the church office and ask for information on RaiseRight. She will provide you with a phone number. This phone number can be used to call or text in your order. Once your order has arrived, you will be contacted with details on how to pick up and pay for your order! Simple as that!

Many vendors offer e-cards as well! E-cards are sent via e-mail and can be ordered anytime! No waiting! Simply place your order on the Raise Right app and contact Janet or Wendy to send the order. The e-card will arrive in minutes!

Worship Duty Signup via Signup Genius



Worship Schedule

Please take a moment to sign up to participate in our worship service as an usher, reader, acolyte, media, communion assistant (server), or assisting minister. The winter signups

are now available. Sign up by February 17 for March 2024. I appreciate and can't thank you enough for signing up! Brenda Huther

Here is the link for March:

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/60B0844A5A92B0-46986092-march>

Thank you!

I would like to express a heartfelt thank you to all of you who shared Christmas blessings, New Year wishes, and thoughtful gifts and cards. Your kindness is appreciated.

Administrative Assistant
Kathy Busche

Stratford Food Pantry

Stratford Food Pantry would like to extend a thank you to individuals who have generously given to the Food Pantry during the summer months. There continues to be a need in the Stratford community for support from the Food Pantry. Please prayerfully consider donating supplies to the Food Pantry. You can drop off donations in the lobby of the church or the Narthex here at Zion.

The Stratford Area Food Pantry provides food to individuals and families within the Stratford School District. If you need food, we are here for you! Hours are Tuesday mornings from 9:00 - 11:00 a.m. and Wednesday evenings from 5:00 - 7:00 p.m. or by appointment. If you would like to volunteer, please contact Dan Wieland at wieland.dandeb@gmail.com or 715-506-0020 and he will help you get connected.

Supply Need:

Sugar	Pancake mix	Can fruit	Rice
Beans	Syrup	Crackers	Paper Products

PRAYER CHAIN

One of the great privileges and ministries listed in the New Testament is the opportunity to remember one another in prayer – to “bear one another’s burdens.” Zion has a dedicated group of people who do just that. When a prayer request comes into the church office, an email is sent to the volunteer group with the request just as it is sent to the church office. They can start praying as soon as they get the message. Thanks to everyone who has been involved in the Prayer Chain. If anyone would like to join the prayer group, please call the church office.

The Prayer Chain prayed for 9 people this year. If you would like to be part of this ministry, contact the church office. You may submit prayers by calling or emailing the church office, marking your communion card, or on the web.

Submit your prayer requests on the [Zionstratford.org](https://zionstratford.org) website. You can also let people know that people are praying for them. Check it out at <https://zionstratford.org/prayer>

Technology Ministry

Council Minutes

Council minutes are 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.



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/>.

Zion Lutheran Church
213501 Legacy Street
Stratford, WI 54484-5908
www.zionstratford.org

We're on the web!

Phone: 715-687-4110
Fax: 715-687-3541
Email: office@zionstratford.org

Return Service Requested

February 2024

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1	2	3
4 <i>9am Worship/ Communion Baptism Calen Patrick Reno</i>	5 <i>6pm Worship Team Meeting</i>	6 <i>10am Bible Study 7pm Faith Formation Team Meeting</i>	7 <i>6pm Confirmation CORE class 6pm Trust/Memorial Team Meeting</i>	8	9	10
11 <i>9am Worship/ Communion</i>	12 <i>6pm Executive Team Meeting</i>	13 <i>10am Bible Study</i>	14 <i>3:15pm JTeam/ Little Lutherans 5:30 Ash Wed. Service 6:15pm Soup & Sandwich</i>	15	16	17
18 <i>9am Worship/ Communion 5:30pm Disciples for Christ</i>	19 <i>6pm Council Meeting</i>	20 <i>10am Bible Study 6pm Evangelism Team Meeting</i>	21 <i>5:30pm Lenten Worship Service 6:15pm Soup & Sandwich</i>	22 <i>Pastor Amy begins vacation</i>	23	24
25 <i>9am Worship/ Communion</i>	26	27	28 <i>3:15pm JTeam/ Little Lutherans 5:30 Lenten Service 6:15pm Soup & Sandwich</i>	29		

Date	02/04/2024 5th Sunday of Epiphany 9:00 AM	02/11/2024 Transfiguration of our Lord 9:00 AM	02/14/2024 Ash Wednesday 5:30 PM	02/18/2024 1st Sunday of Lent 9:00 AM	02/21/2024 1st Wed of Lent 5:30 PM	02/25/2024 2nd Sunday of Lent 9:00 AM	02/28/2024 2nd Wed of Lent 5:30 PM	03/03/2024 3rd Sunday of Lent 9:00 AM
Assisting Minister	Dan Wieland	Brenda Huther	Dan Wieland	Connor Kreft	-----	Marge Kollmansberger	Brenda Huther	Carmella Moon
Reader	Dan Wieland	Brenda Castellano	Dan Wieland	Gary Wussow	Anika Weber	Marge Kollmansberger	Olivia Ballerstein	Carmella Moon
Acolytes	Abby Ballerstein Ruby Casperson	Ella Schulz Ryleigh Schiller	Charlotte & Nolan Peirce	Jackson & Jevin Spindler	Anika Weber Emmercyn Schiller	Dayton & Finley White	Olivia & Hudson Ballerstein	Reese & Reid Spindler
Ushers	Rhonda Knoll Sharla Dreikosen	Phil & Kerri Schulz	Frank & Angie Guralski	Brian & Darla Leick	Brenda Huther	Mark & Sandy Andersen	Ray & Lindsay White	Rod & Brenda Huther
Communion Assistants	Dan & Deb Wieland Lois Miller	Brenda Castellano Brenda Garrigan Brenda Huther	Deb & Dan Wieland Sandy Andersen	Connor & Tim Kreft Carmella Moon	-----	Marge Kollmansberger Wendy Spaeth Tierra Messerschmidt	-----	Lois Miller Carmella Moon
Basket Holder	Averi & Mila Johnson	-----	-----	Colton & Jordy Trachte	-----	-----	-----	Ellie & Turner Southwick
Communion Steward	Deb Wieland	Sandy Andersen	Deb Wieland	Deb Wieland	-----	Wendy Spaeth	-----	Lindsay White
Fellowship	Wieland Family	Volunteer	Worship Team	Volunteer	Evangelism Team	Volunteer	Faith Formation Team	Foley Family
Host	Vice President Maryel Schoenfuss	Treasurer Marge Redetzke	-----	Evangelism Brandon Aschenbrenner	-----	Property Robin Curtis	-----	Stewardship
Bell Ringer	Kevin Miller	Phil Schulz	Brenda Huther	Brian Leick	-----	Mark Andersen	-----	Kevin Miller
Media	Rod Huther	Ted Dasler	Rod Huther	Marge Kollmansberger	Rod Huther	Connor Kreft	Rod Huther	Kevin Miller