The TIDINGS

Zion Lutheran Church

VOLUME 86 | December 2026 | Number 512

"I came that you may have Life, and have it abundantly!" -Jesus

Good Tidings to you Zion Members,

As I approach the end of my time here, I find myself thinking about the beginning. That one April day in 2018, we moved to Zion in the midst of a big snowstorm. *It almost felt like we brought the U.P. weather with us!* Mary was 2, Nora was 6 months, and Isaac wouldn't come along until 2020. We didn't know anyone yet other than the call committee, but **a group of Zion folks showed up anyway, bundled up in their snow gear, to help unload the truck!**
Now, nearly 9 years later, I think about what a blessed place this has been to call home. This faith community, the elementary school, and the opportunity to raise our family in **the great big, historic parsonage made life here pretty idyllic.** There are so many memories of faith and life here that we will always cherish.

A few ministry highlights come to mind: Trunk-or-Treat, apple picking & delivering, and the live nativity in the square that felt like a scene straight out of a Hallmark special. Christmases together, especially the one in the school parking lot during COVID—a cold, starry night that was so special. I appreciate how we have strengthened our partnerships with the Presbyterian Church and other Lutheran churches through our VBS program, **which has now grown to become the largest in the synod with 7 partnering churches.** It has been especially rewarding to see kids who loved VBS so much over the years that, after aging out of the program, they now step into leadership roles themselves.

And then there is the beauty of this location. I can understand why that old eccentric preacher, Reverend David O. Van Slyke, thought this was the literal Garden of Eden! Bishop Jim Arends once said to me in my office that Zion must have the **prettiest nature view of any of the synod's 73 congregations.** I think God knew I needed a little nature to look at each day.

As I reflect on this time of transition, I truly feel like Zion is truly blessed with the right people to step into various roles; from our current council, and the wonderful staff with Sarah Bob and Sheryl, the three of the best staffers I've had the privilege of working with.

Some of you may not know that **Sarah also has a degree from Luther Seminary**, and I'm excited that she will get to step further into parish ministry leadership roles, including confirmation ministry and worship planning. Kristy has brought new life and vibrance to our Sundays school, and she still could use another person, so please think if that could be you on occasion.

Every Pastor has a few lessons that they really try to get across, teachings that come up more often than others. I want to close with two of mine, rooted in the Gospel: John 10:10, where Jesus basically gave us his vision, "Why" statement. Why did he come here? That we may have life together, and **not any kind of life, but Abundant Life! in following Him.** God cares about our lives together. Then from Matthew 22, the *three parts* of What Jesus would call his greatest commands. Love God, Love your neighbor, as you Love yourself. All three are important and all three can be hard, nearly impossible sometimes, but that doesn't change the call.

So may God bless you as Zion moves forward, remembering that the mission is still the same, Thank you for this time we've had. And have a blessed Merry Christmas.

In God's Grip of Grace ><>
Pastor Joe Iverson

Contact Information

Pastor	Joe Iverson	608-865-0203
President	Carmen Nuland	608-582-4327
Vice President	David Erickson	608-534-7461
Secretary	Betty Crawford	507-450-6590
Financial Secretary	Marilyn Braunreiter	608-484-2481
Treasurer	Sheryl Arms	608-582-4376
Membership and Shepherding	Kathy Meunier	608-780-3242
Outreach/ Social Concerns	Jennifer Seiling	608-865-0190
Property and Grounds	Dave Nuland	608-582-4327
Music and Worship	Beth Meunier	608-484-1310
Youth Ministry & Education	Kristy Braunreiter	608-386-4394

Summer Lunch Program Snapshot!

Dear Zion Lutheran Church Members,

Year 10 of the Galesville Community Summer Lunch Program was very successful in so many ways. We served over **2,439** lunches during the 12 weeks of summer lunches to people in our community, especially to families with young children, in the Cance Park shelter.

Over **900** pounds of lettuces, cucumbers, carrots, zucchini, garlic, onions, strawberries, raspberries, and so much more were shared with everyone. Over **60** volunteers, with some helping as many as 14 times, prepared and served the meals. Since this program began in 2017, the Galesville program has served over **15,511** lunches to very grateful people and families.

Over **755** weekend food bags were given to Galesville Elementary, the GET Middle School, and the GET High School for school counselors and staff to distribute. Since 2018, we have given over **2,396** food bags. We will continue this support of needy families during the 2026-2027 school year.

Barb Longwell
Galesville Community Summer Lunch Program Coordinator

A Note from the Council President

As we begin the process of calling a new pastor, there are several steps ahead of us.
Our first priority is to arrange for pastoral coverage, including pulpit supply and home visits, and to get at least the next few weeks planned.

A Transition Team with four members in it was approved by the Council. The four members consist of Lori Nastvold, Craig Schiller, Carmen Nuland, and Kristy Braunreiter. They will gather input from the congregation about our hopes, thoughts, and ideas for the ongoing mission and vision of our church. This input will help us complete a Mission Site Profile, which the Synod will use to identify and refer potential pastoral candidates to our Call Committee. When completed a Call Committee will be formed.

I will continue to keep everyone informed as we move through this process. In the meantime, please feel free to reach out to me with any questions or concerns.



Thank you for your continued support, patience, and prayers as we take these next steps together.

—Carmen Nuland

November Reports

Attendance & Giving Reports

Sunday November 1	**73 people**
Sunday November 8	**83 People**
Sunday November 15	**80 People**
Sunday November 22	**56 People**
Sunday November 29	**N/A**

Please include in your prayers those of our Zion family who reside in extended care facilities in the area.

- Anna Marie Brudos
- Virginia Anderson
- Carol Fratzke
- Janice Engen
- Larry Jacobs



QUILT RAFFLE:



Our quilt is being raffled off! Proceedings are ongoing. Tickets available in the Office!

We officially have the raffle license through June 2027. Contact the office or Nancy Goller for more information!

Operation Christmas Child

We delivered 202 shoeboxes to Winona in November. Thank you to everyone who has donated items, money and their time to make our 21st year of this project a great success. The suggested shipping cost is $10 per box, which we send out in early January. Money from the December Noisy offering will go towards OCC shipping this year. We accept money donations anytime during the year to build up our OCC fund so that we have money available for start up next year. With those funds we purchase items for the boxes and the preprinted shoeboxes. I appreciate Zion members for making Jesus' love go to children who need it. Please pray for them. Thank you for 202 smiles!

Lori Nastvold, Zion OCC Coordinator

Monthly Financial Report:

As a response to requests for a more current financial picture, the monthly budget, offerings and expenses will be published in Tidings. Following are the totals for **October** plus year to date. In **October**, we spent less than was budgeted, and expenses were more than offering income. Please keep this information prayerfully in mind as you make your offerings.

	October	**Year to date**
Offerings	$11,871	$144,222
Dale Trust	$4,039	$15,073
Other Receipts	-$154	$8,319
Budget	$21,251	$212,510
Actual expenses	$19,394	$190,252

Expenses this year at the end of October are $22,638 more than receipts.

Additional Reports & Updates:

The following memorials were received for July, August, and September 2026

IMO/IHO	GIVEN BY
IHO Joanis 55th Anniversary	Jerald & Jackie Joanis
IHO Russ & Betty Glomstad	Russell & Betty Glomstad
IMO Donna Parkhurst	Randy & Lori Nastvold, Anonymous
IMO Michael Dale	Laurie Dale
IMO Perry Trim	Jane Johnson, Jim & Marilyn Reedy, Betty Crawford
	Non-members

FUND	AMOUNT
LUTHERAN WORLD RELIEF	$55
UNDESIGNATED MEMORIAL	$245
GENERAL FUND	$25
IMPROVEMENT FUND	$20
DRIVEWAY FUND	$25
FOOD PANTRY	$120
SUMP PUMP	$400
TOTAL	$890

W-ELCA Workings — November Report

President Arlene Severson opened the meeting with the *W-ELCA Purpose Statement* and a Thankfulness to God selection. Our Thank-Offering was collected and it was decided that the ladies of Zion will give a gift to Pastor and his family during the December 6th service.

Mariah Forester Olson wrote a book concerning how to find help when one receives a cancer diagnosis. We are considering asking her to speak at our next W-ELCA North Conference Meeting which will be held in Galesville. We will give a financial contribution to the organization which she founded in order to help parents of children with cancer in finding assistance.

We adjusted and confirmed our donations for 2026. We ended with a selection which encouraged prayers with a purpose, especially those of thankfulness. Meeting ended with thankfulness prayers and our *Table Song*.

32 holiday containers of food were assembled and six holiday letters were sent.
—Thank you to all who contributed to this cause!

Our traditional delicious potluck was enjoyed by all, and we dismissed with containers and letters which we delivered.

W-ELCA meets on the third Thursday of the month at 1:00pm in the Fireside Lounge for a bible study or meeting! No meetings in January or July.

All women of Zion are welcome!

Children & Family Ministries









Sunday School Overview:

- Children will be dismissed for class during worship after the Children's Sermon and will return to the Sanctuary by Communion
- Children are encouraged to utilize the Prayground area before and after Sunday School!
- Kristy Braunreiter is serving as our Sunday school teacher and has AMAZING lessons in store!

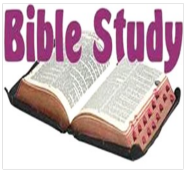


All are welcome to join for Sunday School!

If you would like to volunteer as a Sunday School assistant, please contact the office or Kristy Braunreiter to get plugged in!

December Bulletin Board

Join us in the Fireside Room following Sunday worship service for Bible Study at 10 a.m.



Women of the ELCA

W-ELCA Bible Study December 17th; 1:00pm Fireside Lounge

Monthly WIC Clinics at Zion

Fireside Lounge — all day!

November 12th December 10th



December Noisy Offering

Each week, we will take time for a noisy offering to raise money for **Operation Christmas Child.**

Noel Night
Dec 10th — 6-7:30 pm

Featuring:
Beaver Creek Band, Julie Malestycki, Selisa Erickson, Mary & Nora Iverson, and a special performance from Kristy Braunreiter and the Sunday School students!

We will have activities for kids in the Fellowship Hall 6-7pm. We will begin with a Christmas story with Wina from the Library, followed by cookie decorating, crafts, hot chocolate and treats. The kids will end with their performance in the Sanctuary.

Come join the fun!

Mark your Calendars

December 2nd *— Eden House Caroling*

December 5th *— Advent Decorating*

December 6th *— Pr. Joe's Final Sunday*
-Senior Luncheon 10:45am
-Beers & Hymns with Eddie Kim (4:00pm Mike's Bar)

December 10th *— Noel Night*

Christmas Senior Luncheon "Peace on Earth"

Sunday, December 6th — 10:45am
Senior Luncheon will follow a cake and coffee reception for Pastor Joe and family upstairs after worship.

Zion members 62 and older and welcome to come and enjoy a time of fellowship, merriment, and tasty food! No gift exchange, just come, relax, and enjoy our special time for seniors and their significant others!

RSVP to the office (608)-582-2818 by December 3rd.

Co-sponsored by Thrivent

Zion Outreach Update!



Eden House
Please join us for **Christmas Caroling** and coffee at the Eden House on Wed, Dec 2 at 9:30 am. We need singers but we also need people to come and enjoy a visit with the Eden House residents! Let's make it fun for them!

Looking for volunteers to help **deliver Christmas gifts** to the Eden House and Marinuka Manor with Lori. No date set yet but would love a few people to go with me. Call or text Lori N at 608-865-0630 by Dec 5th if interested.

Bakers needed for Noel Night on December. Call or text Lori 608-865-0630 by Dec 2nd to sign up to provide treats. We hope to get a variety of cookies and bars.

December Birthdays & Anniversaries

Happy Birthday!

Dec 3	Lois Kaste
Dec 7	Janice Engen
Dec 7	Brianna Iverson
Dec 10	Emma Nuland
Dec 12	Kristina Craney
Dec 12	Jacqueline Martin
Dec 13	Robin Dagendesh
Dec 14	Duane Evanson
Dec 16	Sherry Brady
Dec 16	Robin Thesing
Dec 17	Chuck Forster
Dec 18	Brynlee Johnson
Dec 18	Jean Mahutga
Dec 24	Kelly Gardner
Dec 28	Elizabeth Fritsch
Dec 28	Nathan Knights
Dec 30	Daniel Dahl

Happy Anniversary

John & Sue Breitung
December 17th

David & Selisa Erickson
December 19th

Did we forget someone?
If you do not see your birthday or anniversary date in the Tidings, please contact the church office so we can update our records.
Thank you.

Zion Lutheran Congregation Council Minutes October 20th, 2026

Present: Carmen Nuland, **President**; Dave Erickson, **Vice-President**; Betty Crawford, **Secretary**; Dave Nuland, **Property and Grounds**; **Pastor** Joe Iverson; Sheryl Arms, **Treasurer**; Marilyn Braunreiter, **Financial Secretary**; Beth Meunier, **Music and Worship** Kathy Meunier, **Membership and Shepherding**; Kristy Braunreiter, **Youth and Education**

Absent: Jennifer Seiling, **Outreach and Social Concerns**.
The meeting was called to order by President Carmen Nuland at 6:37p.m. Devotion and prayer were led by Pastor Joe.
A motion was made by Dave Erickson to approve the September Council Meeting minutes. The motion was seconded and passed.
A motion was made to approve the September Treasurer's report by Kathy Meunier. This was seconded and passed.

Old Business:

Noisy Offering for November: The Noisy Offering for November will go to the local Food Pantry.
New Computer for the Office: Kathy Meunier made a motion to authorize a new computer for the Administrative Assistant up to the cost of $1300. This was seconded and passed.
Renewal of CD: Carmen Nuland made a motion to not renew the CD in January, when it becomes due. This was seconded and passed.
Switching Web Site Provider: A motion was made by Carmen Nuland to approve the website improvement to Vision Design Group and that the funds will be requested from Undesignated Memorials. This was seconded and passed.

New Business:

Fifth Sunday in November: There will not be a potluck lunch on November 29, 2026 as there will be a Pancake Breakfast planned for November 15th.
Transition Team: With Pastor Joe leaving Zion Lutheran Church in December, a Transition Team is being formed in preparation for the Call Committee.
The refrigerator in the kitchen is no longer working. A new refrigerator will be purchased under the recommendations from those using the kitchen. The money will come from the Kitchen Fund.
Office Administer, Sarah Kempf, will be assisting with the Confirmation classes. The Executive Committee will meet to determine additional duties needed during the transition period of Pastor's move to a third call.

Information and reports:

1. **Pastor Joe:** Pastor has asked Sarah to co-lead confirmation class in preparation with the transition when he leaves. He reported that Sarah has experience with youth ministry. He spoke highly of her insight with working with students. Pastor visited a member at Marinuka Manor and was able to do four home visits this past month. Pastor's full report is on file.
2. **Property and Grounds:** Dave Nuland reported that the hole in the roof by the elevator has been repaired. The smoke alarm replaced and the panel has been fixed. The sump pump has been replaced. Dave pressure washed the outside front of the church building.

The next Zion Council meeting is scheduled for November 17, 2026 at Zion in the Fireside Room at 6:30 p.m. Motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Beth Meunier. It was seconded and passed. The meeting was adjourned at 8:33 p.m. with the Lord's Prayer.

Respectfully submitted,
Betty Crawford, Secretary

Update from the November Council Meeting:

The Council authorized the congregation to apply for a short term line of credit up to $20,000, if needed. We are doing this because the interest on the line of credit is substantially less than the penalty for early withdrawal of the CD. The CD of $50,000 comes due in January. This will pay off the line of credit.

A Letter of Conclusion of Ministry — Pr. Joe Iverson

Dear Members and Friends of Zion Lutheran Church,

With both a heavy heart and high hopes for the future ahead, I am writing to formally share with you that I have accepted the call to serve as the Pastor of Good Shepherd Lutheran Church in La- Crosse.

This update is truly bittersweet. Zion has been home to me and my family and a blessed place to serve and do ministry for almost 9 years. I am deeply thankful for the relationships, ministry, and memories we have shared together. I am thankful to have walked alongside so many of you through celebrations, and challenges, ordinary days, and special sacred moments, that left me changed and inspired my faith.

From our very start, my family and I will not forget the warm welcome you extended when we moved here in 2018—in the middle of that snowstorm, no less!—and we have made so many wonderful memories here, both at church and while raising our family in the parsonage.

As difficult as it is to leave, I do so with assuredness that Zion is in a good place for the next chapter of ministry. This faith community has a healthy, strong foundation, with faithful people, and a good sense of our gifts and how God has called us to use them. It's normal to have a range of emotions during times of transition, but remember God has been working through this church long before and long after any pastor has come and gone, and will continue to do so.

When I reflect on our years together, so much comes to mind: the building projects—the kitchen, elevator, and driveway; building the vibrant, annual VBS with 6 other churches, now hosting over 120 kids! We've strengthened our partnership with the Presbyterian church; and the Sunday School we started again, and 5th Sunday Potlucks! Together we worked to gain vibrancy after covid, and even grow our confirmation program. These ministries are just a few of the highlights that remind me of what we have been able to accomplish together.

Regarding transition details, I will continue to serve this call until December 13th at Zion. My *Final Sunday in the Pulpit is December 6th. My final Zion event will be the Noel Night December 10th.* After my Call at Zion ends, according to synod guidelines, I will be unavailable to lead any services at Zion including Baptisms, funerals or weddings. But I am in prayer for you, this faith community, and the Pastor God is preparing to step into leadership at Zion.

But until that time, we can simply keep being Zion together in our mission, called to **"Love Jesus, Grow in Faith, and Serve our Neighbors,"** trusting God will continue to lead us.

Thank you for the privilege of being your pastor. Thank you for trusting me, challenging me, encouraging me, forgiving me when I needed it, and allowing me to be part of your lives. I will always be grateful for the nearly 9 years we have shared, and I will carry the people and ministry of Zion with me wherever God leads.

With deep gratitude and in the love of Christ ><>
Pastor Joe Iverson

December Serving Schedule

Date	Ushers / Greeters	Organist/Pianist	Communion Server
December 6th 9:00 am	U: Gordon Hoff G: Jane Johnson	Kathy Meunier	Craig Schiller
December 13th 9:00 am	Carol & Mike Rasmusson	Trevor Dupej	Chuck Forster
December 20th 9:00 am	Mike & Kelly Oslie	Nancy Martinovici	Lori Nastvold
December 24th 9:00 am	U: Gary Meunier G: Judy Roehl	Kathy Meunier	Joe Roehl
December 27th 9:00 am	G: Mary McKeeth U: Earl Trim	Selisa Erickson	Dave Nuland

Date	Lectors	Offering Counters	Coffee Fellowship
December 6th 9:00 am	Craig Schiller	Mary McKeeth & Joe Roehl	Dave & Carmen Nuland
December 13th 9:00 am	Chuck Forster	Mary McKeeth & Joe Roehl	Hugh Kohlmeyer & Mary McKeeth
December 20th 9:00 am	Lori Nastvold	Mary McKeeth & Joe Roehl	Louise & Harry Janke
December 24th	Joe Roehl	Mary McKeeth & Joe Roehl	TBD
December 27th 9:00 am	Carmen Nuland	Mary McKeeth & Joe Roehl	Duane & Julie Evanson

Communion: Nancy & Tom Goller **Candle Care:** Dave Nuland



Volunteers needed to serve as a greeter/usher, lector, or for other worship service tasks, please sign up on the sheet that is on a clip board in the Narthex.

PowerPoint Assistants Needed

Contact the office to learn more!

December 2026

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
		1 **9:00 am** Quilting **9:30 am** Pastor Meeting	2 Caroling at Eden House 9:30am Confirmation 5:15pm Worship 6:30pm	3	4	5 Advent Decorating 9:00am
6 **9:00 am** Worship & Sunday School Senior Christmas Luncheon 10:45am Beers and Hymns with Eddie Kim 4:00pm	7	8 **9:00 am** Quilting **9:30 am** Pastor Meeting	9 Confirmation 5:15pm No Worship	10 **WIC Clinic—Fireside Lounge** **Noel Night 6:00-7:30**	11	12
13 **9:00 am** Worship Sunday School 10:15 Word after Worship	14	15 **9:00 am** Quilting **9:30 am** Pastor's Meeting Council 6:30	16 No Confirmation or Worship (Christmas Break!)	17 **W-ELCA Meeting** **1:00pm Fireside Lounge**	18	19
20 **9:00 am** Worship 10:15 Word after Worship	21	22 **9:00 am** Quilting **9:30 am** Pastor's Conference Meeting	23 **Tidings articles due** No Confirmation or Worship (Christmas Break!)	24 **Christmas Eve Worship**	25	26
27 **9:00 am** Worship 10:15 Word after Worship	28	29 **9:00 am** Quilting **9:30 am** Pastor Meeting	30 No Confirmation or Worship (Christmas Break!)	31 **Tidings crew folders**		

WORSHIP SCHEDULE

Sunday 9:00am
Wednesday 6:30pm

Church Website: ziongale.com

Contact Information

Church office

Phone: 608-582-2818

Open 9:00 am to 2:00 pm,
Monday-Thursday

e-mail: *zziongale@gmail.com*

Pastoral emergency:

Pastor Joe Iverson

608-865-0203

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