



# Zion Messenger

February 2026

REJOICING, REACHING OUT, and RENEWING,  
we share the joy of the gospel, through a life of faith.



## Filled with Joy!

*<sup>15</sup>Mother, embrace your children; bring them up with gladness, as does a dove; strengthen their feet, because I have chosen you, says the Lord. <sup>17</sup>Do not fear, mother of children, for I have chosen you, says the Lord. <sup>18</sup>I will send you help, my servants Isaiah and Jeremiah. According to their counsel I have consecrated and prepared for you twelve trees loaded with various fruits, <sup>19</sup>and the same number of springs flowing with milk and honey, and seven mighty mountains on which roses and lilies grow; by these I will fill your children with joy.*

(2 Esdras 2:15, 17-19)

As a family was preparing for houseguests, the husband, Steve, ran to the store for some needed supplies. He scurried around the store, gathered up the goodies and headed for the checkout counter, only to be blocked in the narrow aisle by a young man who appeared to be about sixteen-years-old. He wasn't in a hurry, so he patiently waited for the boy to realize that he was there. This was when the young man waved his hands excitedly in the air and declared in a loud voice, "Mommy, I'm over here."

It was obvious now, he was mentally challenged and also startled as he turned and saw Steve standing so close to him, waiting to squeeze by. The young man's eyes widened and surprise exploded on his face as the husband, Steve, said, "Hey Buddy, what's your name?"

"My name is Denny and I'm shopping with my mother," he responded proudly.

"Wow," said Steve, "that's a cool name; I wish my name was Denny, but my name is Steve."

"Steve, like Stevarino?" he asked.

"Yes. How old are you Denny?"

"How old am I now, Mommy?" he asked his mom as she slowly came over from the next aisle.

"You're fifteen-years-old, Denny; now be a good boy and let the man pass by."

Steve acknowledged her and continued to talk to Denny for several more minutes about summer, bicycles and school. Steve watched his brown

eyes dance with excitement, because he was the center of someone's attention. He then abruptly turned and headed toward the toy section.

Denny's mom had a puzzled look on her face and thanked Steve for taking the time to talk with her son. She said that most people won't even look at him, much less talk to him.

Steve told her that it was his pleasure and then said something he had no idea where it came from, other than by the prompting of the Holy Spirit. He told her that there are plenty of red, yellow, and pink roses in God's Garden; however, "Blue Roses" are very rare and should be appreciated for their beauty and distinctiveness. You see, Denny is a Blue Rose and if someone doesn't stop and smell that rose with their heart and touch that rose with their kindness, then they've missed a blessing from God.

She was silent for a second, then with a tear in her eye she asked, "Who are you?"

Without thinking Steve said, "Oh, I'm probably just a dandelion, but I sure love living in God's garden."

She reached out, squeezed Steve's hand and said, "God bless you!" Then Steve had tears in his eyes.

The next time we see a "Blue Rose," whatever differences that person may have, let us not turn our head and walk off. Let us, instead, take the time to smile and say, "Hello," so that we might begin to know and appreciate ALL the flowers in God's beautiful garden. Thank God for our diversity of beauty and gifts!

Filled with joy  
for all the gifts and beauty  
of our church family,

*Pastor Carol*





# Corner



1. Make peace with your past so it does not affect the present.
2. What others think of you is none of your business.
3. Time heals most things, give it time.
4. Refrain from comparing your life to others and from judging others.  
You have no idea what their journey is all about.
5. Sometimes it is alright to not know the answer.  
It may come to you when you least expect it.
6. You are in charge of your happiness.
7. Smile. Try not to own all the problems in the world.

May the God of hope  
fill you with all joy and peace  
as you trust in him,  
so that you may overflow with hope  
by the power of the Holy Spirit.  
(Romans 15:13)

In Christian love,  
Tammy Reigle  
Council President



From the  
Vicar



<sup>28</sup>One of the scribes came near and heard them disputing with one another, and seeing that he answered them well, he asked him, "Which commandment is the first of all?"  
<sup>29</sup>Jesus answered, "The first is, 'Hear, O Israel: the Lord our God, the Lord is one;'  
<sup>30</sup>you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.'  
<sup>31</sup>The second is this, 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.'  
here is no other commandment greater than these."  
(Mark 12:28-31)

In this passage from Mark, Jesus is asked to name the greatest commandment. Jesus answered: "Love the Lord your God with all your heart...and love your neighbor as yourself." Most often we are great at remembering the part about loving God and loving others, but so often the final phrase, the part that says as yourself, is forgotten. Yet the word yourself is an essential part. Healthy love for others begins with a healthy understanding of our own worth in God's eyes.

Loving yourself is not selfish, as often we are led to believe. Loving oneself is recognizing that you are also a beloved creation of God. Accepting God's love for us fully and honestly, is an act of faith.

Many of us are quick to offer grace to others while withholding it from ourselves. We forgive neighbors, encourage friends, and show compassion to strangers, yet we remain harsh and critical toward our own actions and hearts. Jesus does not ask us to love our neighbor instead of ourselves. He asks us to love as ourselves. This implies a sense of balance; just as we would offer patience, kindness, and mercy to someone else, we are called to extend the same to ourselves.

When we learn to love ourselves in a God-centered way, our love for others becomes more genuine and sustainable. We are less likely to serve out of guilt, exhaustion, or resentment, and more likely to serve out of joy and compassion. A heart that knows it is loved does not need to compete nor condemn. Instead, it can listen deeply, forgive freely, and give generously.

Jesus modeled this rhythm. He cared deeply for others, yet He also withdrew to pray, rest, and reconnect with the Father. Jesus honored His own humanity while fulfilling His divine mission. In doing so, Jesus showed us that caring for ourselves is not a distraction from loving others; it is part of it.

As a church community, may we encourage one another to embrace God's love personally and wholeheartedly. Let us remind each other that self-care rooted in faith is not weakness, but wisdom. When we see ourselves as God sees us; worthy, forgiven, and cherished; we become better equipped to love our neighbors with the same grace.

May we grow in love that begins within, flows outward, and reflects the boundless love of Christ.

Blessings, Vicar Keith Powell

Love the  
Lord your God  
WITH ALL YOUR  
heart  
and with all your  
and with all  
your mind  
and with all your  
STRENGTH

Love  
your neighbor  
AS YOURSELF  
There is no commandment  
greater than these

**Call to Order:** The meeting was called to order at 5:57pm by Mary Kay Tisthammer.

**Present:** Kay Flanagan, Pastor Carolann Hopcke, Jim Meyer, Chris Nelson, Vicar Keith Powell, Tammy Reigle, Roberta Seda, Josh Thayer, Mary Kay Tisthammer

**Absent:** Amanda Reinhart, Sara Rasmussen

**Equipping Time:** Mary Kay Tisthammer – Shared a cookie and candy tray and we talked about the gifts of Christmas.

**Approve Minutes:** Chris Nelson made a motion to approve the minutes of November 18, 2025. Jim Meyer seconded. **Motion carried.**

### **Report of Officers**

**President:** Tammy Reigle – No Report

**Vice President:** Mary Kay Tisthammer – the elevator fund thermometer will be updated soon.

**Treasurer:** Nancy Ahlers – Roberta Seda made a motion to accept the treasurer's report. Jim Meyer seconded. **Motion carried.**

### **Staff Reports**

**Senior Pastor:** Rev. Carolann Hopcke – Leaving on vacation Christmas Morning and will return on January 2<sup>nd</sup>. Michael Miller, Clock Repairman from York (402-710-3202), serviced the grandfather clock on Tuesday, December 16<sup>th</sup>. He did maintenance on the grandfather clock in the lounge at a cost of \$100. The clock hadn't been touched since 2015; it should be serviced every 5-7 years. Annual reports are due on January 5<sup>th</sup>. The council has coffee fellowship in January: 4<sup>th</sup> – Kay Flanagan & Mary Kay Tisthammer; 11<sup>th</sup> – Chris Nelson & Roberta Seda; 18<sup>th</sup> – Jim Meyer & Tammy Reigle; 25<sup>th</sup> – Josh Thayer & either Sara Rasmussen or Amanda Reinhart. There is one baptism scheduled in January and another to be scheduled soon.

**Intern Pastor:** Vicar Keith Powell – Classes ended on December 12<sup>th</sup>. He passed two classes for sure and is waiting to hear about the last class. J-term classes begin on January 6<sup>th</sup>; they're only four days a week and will end January 23<sup>rd</sup>. Vicar will attend Prolog at Wartburg Seminary February 2 – 6.

**High School Youth Coordinator:** Dorothy Grosch – They didn't sell a lot of pies for Thanksgiving. The candle light service was nice. They sold a lot of Christmas cookies.

### **Committee Reports**

**Evangelism:** The hospital bears and dogs arrived. The evangelism committee hosted free movies at Gateway Theater with over 80 people in attendance. The Albion Light Parade was on December 4<sup>th</sup>. Zion's float was Grinch themed and we had 13 kids participate with the float. The giveaways were Grinch themed. The committee is thinking about an alternate idea for May Day to the cookie plates given in the past. New Member gift bags have been given to folks as they join. The committee is thinking about a possible Easter Outreach with gift bags for the community.



**Faith and Fellowship:** 21 folks enjoyed the Holiday Dinner at the Albion Country Club on December 11<sup>th</sup>. Everyone was a winner at various Christmas trivia challenges.

**Fundraising Committee:** 227 calendars have been sold so far. There is discussion about a possible jigsaw puzzle competition. Initial thoughts include using 500-piece puzzles, cost of \$100 per team, and food would be provided by the Faith & Fellowship Committee. The hope is to do this at the Nest.

**Nominating Committee:** Chris Nelson, Josh Thayer, Mary Kay Tisthammer, Trina Hellbusch, Patti Meyer, Katie Rugg. They will need to meet soon to have nominees for the Annual Meeting.

**Parish Education:** The Christmas program went very well last Sunday. The parish education committee will be meeting again in January.

**Property & Maintenance:** There was a bat found above Pastor's door in November. The bat found in December was by the elevator. Vicar removed the bats. Josh is waiting to hear from Tyler Iverson about our heating and air conditioning units and thermostats. The thermostat by the sacristy is for AC only. The pulpit light doesn't show enough to be helpful. The sanctuary lightbulbs will be changed out soon. Tommy Heesacker will help Josh change the lights. The architect has been asked for the digitized plans for the church; he promised to email them to Josh Thayer. Thanks to the Property Committee for putting up the nativity scene. Now that the scene is complete, it can be put up sooner next year. The church needs to remove the griddle; we will ask if anyone would want it for a donation. If we can sell it, the money would go toward the elevator.

**Worship Committee:** The poinsettias will be here Wednesday. Confirmation and Luther League decorated the church. Pastor bought special candle lighters for the All Saints worship services.

### **Task Force Reports**

**Handicap Accessibility Project:** Elevator Fund = \$206,478.29 (+ \$30,000 Grant). This is as of December 16, 2025.

**Old Business:** None

**New Business:** None

The congregational meeting will be at 10:15am on Sunday February 8, 2026. The forum will be at 10:15am on Sunday, February 1, 2026.

**Next Meeting:** **Tuesday, January 20, 2026**, at 6pm. **Vicar Keith** has equipping time.

**Adjournment:** Tammy Reigle made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 6:50pm. Jim Meyer seconded. **Motion carried.** The meeting closed with the Lord's Prayer.

Respectfully submitted,  
Kay Flanagan



# FEBRUARY

## BIRTHDAYS

- 3 Norm Brugger, Penny Niemann  
Alan Ranslem
- 4 Doug Young
- 5 Amber Coakes, *Richard Heidemann\**,  
*Dustin Martin, Leroy Schroeder\**
- 6 Dana Cox, Rachel Lee, Laisha Winter
- 7 Daphne Brieze, Cale Moser,  
*Jane Rolf\**, Troy Sandman,  
Nolan Tisthammer, Mike Webster
- 8 Mark Niewohner
- 9 Andrew Texley
- 10 Keith Jacobson, Skylar Porter
- 11 Dalton Olnes
- 12 Halle Hanaway
- 13 Charlie Krohn, Tami Texley
- 14 Kent Carder, Tommy Heesacker,  
Taylor Sullivan
- 15 Bill Becker
- 16 Cal Rasmussen
- 18 Mark Hudson
- 19 Danielle Olson, Andy Tisthammer
- 20 Michelle Merten, Ember Rasmussen
- 21 Ashtin Kaumans, Kim Schaefer
- 22 Kayla Bruland, Ellie Wolf
- 23 *Larry Ransen\**, Colton Tisthammer
- 24 Jacque Dickey
- 25 Nash Heesacker
- 26 Josie Cox, Darci Lindgren,  
Zane Niemann, Wade Reigle
- 27 Chris Nelson, Gracyn Seier
- 28 Brynlee Ahlstedt, Emma David,

\*Denotes 80+ years young



## ANNIVERSARIES


- 2 **Carroll & Jane Rolf\***
- 11 Kevin & Martie Anderson
- 19 Chris & Heather Kohtz
- 24 Alan & Karen Ranslem
- 25 Ron & Zondée Coakes

\*Denotes 50+ years of marriage

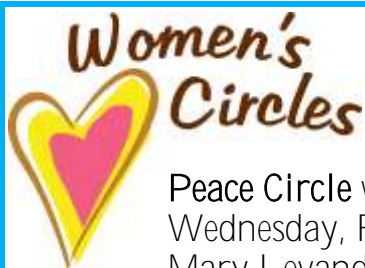


We are not perfect and sadly, neither is our database. If you know of folks whose names are missing from the birthday or anniversary lists, please let us know. We really would like to include everyone. Thanks!

Don't see your name?




"Be my valentine .... Be my valentine ....  
Be my valentine ...."



## February 2026

Peace Circle will meet at Zion on Wednesday, Feb. 18<sup>th</sup> at 9am. Mary Levander will be the leader.

Grace Circle will meet at Assisted Living on Wednesday, February 18<sup>th</sup> at 2pm. For more information, please speak with Doris Warner.

## 2026 Flower Committee

February  
Mary Kay  
Tisthammer

March  
No Flowers during Lent



## NewsLetter DEADLINE

**The March  
Messenger deadline is  
Sunday,  
February 15<sup>th</sup>!**



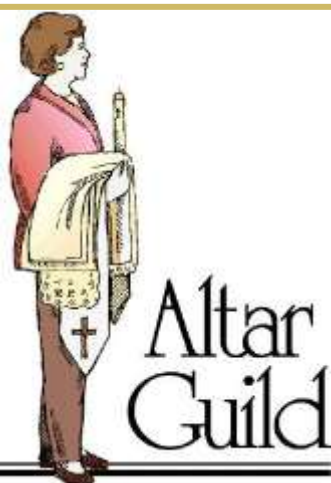
**Communion  
elements  
available!**

Individually packaged communion elements continue to be available for pickup in the church narthex. Take as many as you need for your household. This will let you take communion with us on Sundays as you watch Facebook live or Vyve Channel 21.

If you have any questions, please talk to Pastor Carolann or Amy Zaruba.



**February 18<sup>th</sup>!**



## 2026

February:  
Mary Staub\*  
Pam & Doug Young  
Zondee & Ron Coakes

March:  
Amanda Reinhart\*  
Roberta Seda



## Snow Shoveling Volunteers Needed!

We need help to scoop or shovel all of the church and parsonage sidewalks! If you are able to help, please add your name to the signup sheet or just come by after a snow and start! Thanks!

**FYI Confirmation Students:**  
Each sidewalk is worth 5 points!





## LOVE CODE BREAKER

Change some of the letters below to reveal this verse!

**Change:**

C's to L    Z's to H    P's to R  
J's to A    Q's to T    X's to E  
K's to O

(The other letters stay the same.)

" L C K V X Q Z X C K P D Y K U P  
G K D W I Q Z J C C Y K U P  
Z X J P Q J N D W I Q Z J C C  
Y K U P S K U C J N D W I Q Z  
J C C Y K U P M I N D J N D  
W I Q Z J C C Y K U P  
S Q P X N G Q Z "

**Mark 12:30**



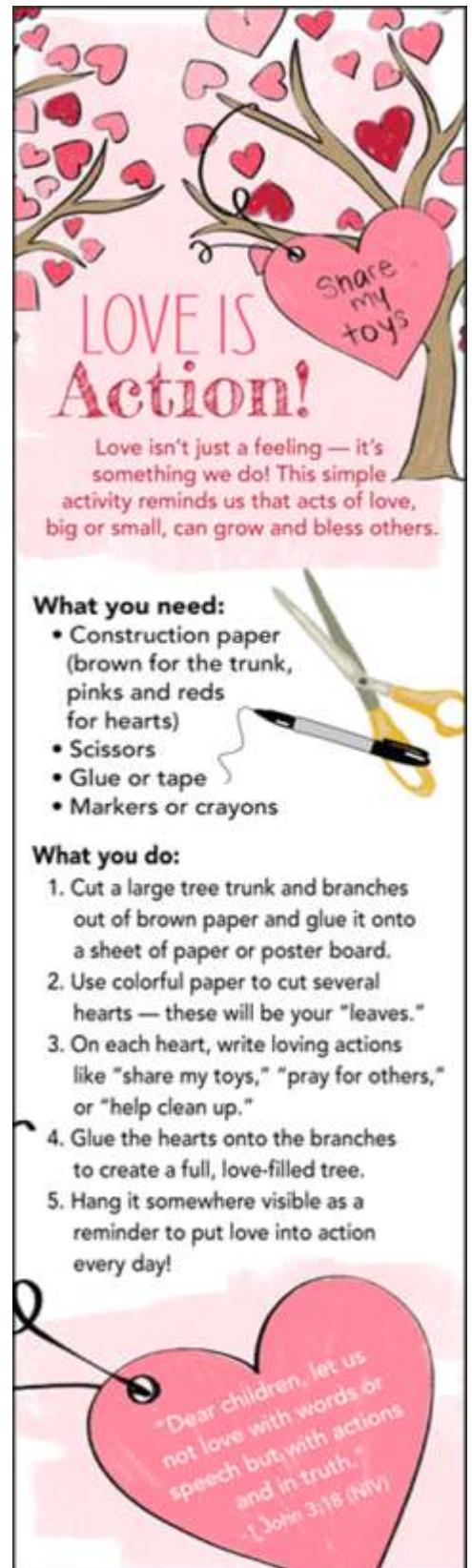
## Bible Quiz



The New Testament uses several Greek words to describe love. Which of the following best represents the **selfless, sacrificial love** that God shows to humanity?



- A) Eros
- B) Phileo
- C) Agape
- D) Storge



### What you need:

- Construction paper (brown for the trunk, pinks and reds for hearts)
- Scissors
- Glue or tape
- Markers or crayons

### What you do:

1. Cut a large tree trunk and branches out of brown paper and glue it onto a sheet of paper or poster board.
2. Use colorful paper to cut several hearts — these will be your "leaves."
3. On each heart, write loving actions like "share my toys," "pray for others," or "help clean up."
4. Glue the hearts onto the branches to create a full, love-filled tree.
5. Hang it somewhere visible as a reminder to put love into action every day!

**Puzzle Answers are on page 13**







## LUTHER LEAGUE

for all in grades 9-12  
Join us on **Wednesday Nights!**  
Dinner begins at **6pm.**

Mark your calendars and invite your friends! Everyone is welcome at any and all of our Luther League events!

Blessings, Dorothy Grosch

## Luther League Meals

Want to help provide meals for Luther League meetings on Wednesday nights? Go to signup genius at <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/60b0c44acac28a1f58-luther> to volunteer! Thanks!



## Luther League Schedule



### FEBRUARY

Wed., Feb. 4	6pm	LL Room Meeting
Wed., Feb. 11	6pm	LL Room Meeting
Fri., Feb. 13	6:30pm	Concessions at Gateway
Sat., Feb. 14	6:30pm	Concessions at Gateway
Sun., Feb. 15	6:30pm	Concessions at Gateway
Wed., Feb. 18	5-7pm	Soup Supper
Wed., Feb. 25	6pm	LL Room Meeting

### MARCH

Wed., Mar. 4	6pm	LL Room Meeting
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## FUND RAISER



**Eat-in or Take-out Soup**  
**Ash Wednesday, Feb. 18<sup>th</sup>**  
**5pm — 7pm**

On Ash Wednesday, February 18<sup>th</sup> we will host a Soup Supper that you may eat-in at the church or take-out. The menu includes: *Potato Soup*, *Chicken Noodle*, *Chili* and *Cinnamon Rolls*! Soups will be available in bowl, pint & quart containers.

To place a take-out order, call the church at 402-395-2043, call or text Dorothy at 402-741-0624, or use the sign-up sheet on the church bulletin board outside the offices. Please include your name, phone number, order and your preferred pick-up time. Pick up will be in the narthex, OR Zion's south parking lot and the youth will bring it out to your car. We are also willing to deliver to those unable to come to church.

Pre-orders are due by **Sunday, Feb. 8<sup>th</sup>!**



# SignUpGenius®

All of Zion's Sign Ups  
can be found online!

To volunteer, use one of the links below:

Worship Assistants: [https://  
www.signupgenius.com/  
go/60B0C44ACAC28A1F58-worship](https://www.signupgenius.com/go/60B0C44ACAC28A1F58-worship)

Food Pantry Volunteer Signup:  
[https://www.signupgenius.com/  
go/60B0C44ACAC28A1F58-54444846-  
food](https://www.signupgenius.com/go/60B0C44ACAC28A1F58-54444846-food)

Confirmation Meals:  
[https://www.signupgenius.com/  
go/60B0C44ACAC28A1F58-meal](https://www.signupgenius.com/go/60B0C44ACAC28A1F58-meal)

Luther League Meals:  
[https://www.signupgenius.com/  
go/60B0C44ACAC28A1F58-luther1](https://www.signupgenius.com/go/60B0C44ACAC28A1F58-luther1)

This is an easy and convenient way to  
volunteer for the dates and ways you  
would like to help. If you need  
assistance, contact the church office.



Zion  
Church  
Council Will  
MEET on  
Sunday, February 8<sup>th</sup>  
after the Annual meeting



Next  
Meeting:  
Tuesday,  
January 27<sup>th</sup>  
At  
5:30pm



**Next  
Meeting:  
Sunday,  
Feb. 15<sup>th</sup>  
at  
10:15am**

## Sunday Bulletins

Sunday bulletins are now  
available in the narthex.  
They are in the tract rack by  
the Thursday before the upcoming Sunday.  
Feel free to stop by and pick one up.



Bulletins

*Faith* + SHARING =  
**EVANGELISM**

**The Evangelism Committee  
will meet on Tuesday,  
March 3<sup>rd</sup> at 7pm.**

## CONFIRMATION



**Classes:  
Wednesdays,  
February 4<sup>th</sup>, 11<sup>th</sup> & 25<sup>th</sup>!**

Dinner will be at 5:30pm  
Class will begin at 6:00pm



Transfiguration  
Sunday,  
February 15<sup>th</sup>





*Sponsored by Zion's Luther League*  
*Ash Wednesday, February 18<sup>th</sup>*  
*5-7pm*

*Menu: Potato Soup, Chicken Noodle Soup, Chili, and Cinnamon Rolls!*

*Suggested Donations:*

*Cup of Soup \$4.00 (8 oz.)*  
*Quart of Soup \$12.00 (32 oz.)*

*Pint of Soup \$7.00 (16 oz.)*  
*Cinnamon Roll \$3.00 each*

*The Take-Out Order Deadline is Sunday, February 8<sup>th</sup>.*

Menu	# Cup	# Pint	# Quart	# Rolls	Amount Enclosed	Check # or Cash
Chicken Noodle						
Chili						
Potato Soup						

*(Call or text Dorothy at 402-741-0624 with any questions.)*

*Name: \_\_\_\_\_*

*Phone number: \_\_\_\_\_*



**"We're textin' with our  
 Alphabet soup."**



**PRAYER PILLOWS**  
**Sunday,**  
**February 1, 2026**

On Sunday, February 1<sup>st</sup> we will be giving Prayer Pillows to all three and four-year-olds during worship. Please bring your preschooler to worship on February 1<sup>st</sup> to receive a prayer pillow.

After all the three and four-year-olds have chosen a pillow, the older children will be invited to choose a pillow too!

Special thanks to Lisa Skillstad for making all the pillows! They are wonderful and we're certain that the children will LOVE them!

**Hope to see you on February 1<sup>st</sup>!**



## Boone County

### Food Pantry



1108 W. State Street  
Albion, NE 68620

**Open EVERY Thursday**  
**2-4pm**

### Ongoing Needs:

Canned Soup	Crackers
Canned Fruit	Toilet Paper
Cereal	Bar Soap
Kleenex	Toothpaste
Hand Sanitizers	Paper Products
Miscellaneous Personal Hygiene Products	

Donations may be brought to the Pantry on Thursdays between 2-4pm.

For more information, call Nancee Krohn (402) 741-1184 or Lynn Bygland (402) 920-3552



**Mission Quilters**  
will meet on  
**Fridays,**  
**February 13<sup>th</sup> & 27<sup>th</sup>**  
**at 1:30pm.**

**All are welcome to join us!**



### **Boone County Food Pantry** **Zion Volunteers Needed!**



Zion is responsible for hosting the Food Pantry on the following Thursdays, from 2pm to 4pm:

**February 12, April 23, July 9,**  
**September 17 & December 3**

If you are able to help, let us know by using the sign-up sheet on the narthex bulletin board or Signup Genius (<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/60B0C44ACAC28A1F58-54444846-food>).

Two to four volunteers are needed each week. Thanks!

## Mobile Food Pantry ~ Sat., February 7<sup>th</sup>

The next Mobile Food Pantry will be held on Saturday, February 7<sup>th</sup> at 9:00 am at the Boone County Fairgrounds. This is set up as a drive-through only. All patrons will need to enter the fairgrounds from the 11<sup>th</sup> and Fairview entrance. Vehicles will be taken in order of arrival in a designated line. The first vehicle to arrive is asked to follow the road into the fairgrounds and stop and park directly in front of the cones that will be set out. All other vehicles entering that are there for the mobile pantry need to follow in line and wait until you have been asked to do otherwise.

If anyone is coming to volunteer their time, please park in the west parking lot next to the Casey Building. If you are willing and are able to volunteer, please arrive around 8:15 am.

If any volunteers or patrons have any symptoms of illness, please refrain from coming to the mobile pantry this month but feel free to ask someone else to pick up for you.

The Food Bank of the Heartland will provide pre-packaged boxes, along with some other produce and food products. Each patron will be required to take what is already packed in each box.

A specific number of vehicles at a time will be sent down to the distribution area. All people attending must remain in their vehicles unless asked to get out. All cars in the distribution area must remain parked until all of those vehicles are told to move. This is a big change as to how things are generally done so we ask for your patience and cooperation as the volunteers are doing their best.

Everyone is reminded that there is always the possibility that the mobile pantry could be cancelled or postponed due to the current events. Coordinators will do their best to update the information in the newspaper or through the Boone County Nebraska Sheriff's Facebook page.



## ✝ Christian Symbol ✝



### CORNERSTONE

The cornerstone is a symbol for Christ. It has Old Testament roots in Isaiah's prophecy (*Isaiah 28:16*). In the New Testament, Christ is called the cornerstone in Ephesians 2:20. The IHC and XP on the stone's sides are abbreviations for "Jesus" and "Christ" in Greek.

## Prayer Shawls

The Prayer Shawl Ministry Team has been busy making prayer shawls. Please remember that all **Prayer Shawls are FREE!**

If you know of someone in need of prayer, simply take a prayer shawl and give it to that person.

It would be nice to know how many we give away, so we ask that you sign your name and at least the first name of the person receiving the shawl on the sheet in the narthex.

God Bless You!



## Table Grace

(Spoken)

God is great,  
God is good,  
and we thank him  
for our food.  
By His hand  
we all are fed.  
Thank you Lord  
for our daily bread.  
Amen.



"I gave up making my own valentines,  
'cause all my hearts were lopsided."

## Puzzle Answers

Bible Quiz Answer: C (See John 3:16 & 1 Cor. 13)

Answer: Love the Lord your God  
with all your heart and with all your souls and  
with all your mind and with all your strength.



## 2026 Offering Envelopes

Please don't forget to pick up your  
2026 offering envelopes! They are  
available in the church

In order to be prepared  
for our annual meeting,  
there will be an  
**Informational  
Congregational  
Forum**

(after worship)

**on Sunday, February 1<sup>st</sup>**



Please join us!

**Annual  
Congregational  
Meeting  
Sun., February 8<sup>th</sup>  
at 10:15am**



**Sunday  
School**



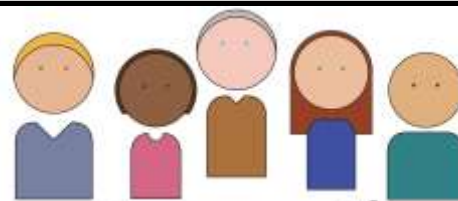
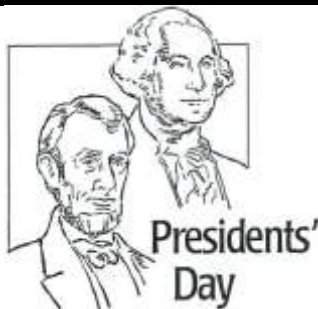
**NO  
Sunday School  
on February 8<sup>th</sup>!**

So that teachers and parents may  
attend the annual meeting, there will be  
NO Sunday School on February 8<sup>th</sup>.

Childcare will be provided by some of  
our teenagers for those families who may  
need it.



The church  
office will be  
closed for  
**Presidents' Day,**  
Monday,  
Feb. 16<sup>th</sup>.



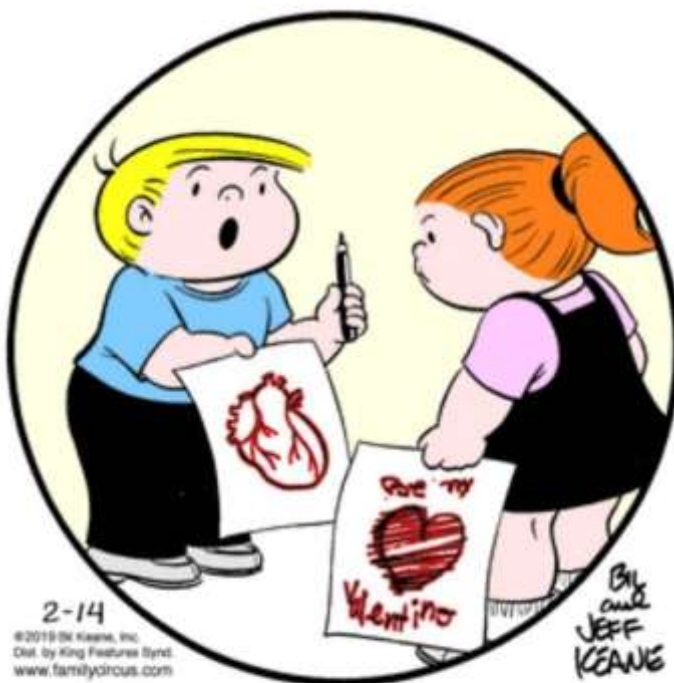
## Council Installation

The Installation of Church  
Council Members & Officers  
will take place during worship on  
**Sunday, February 15<sup>th</sup> at 9am**



*Worship Committee*

**NEXT MEETING:  
Tuesday, February 3<sup>rd</sup>  
at 5:30pm**



**"No, Dolly, I looked online and  
THIS is what a heart's s'posed  
to look like."**





## First Communion Classes Planning Meeting

First Holy Communion instruction for 5<sup>th</sup> graders will take place during Lent, the traditional time of instruction for the Church. An informational meeting will be held on **Sunday, February 15<sup>th</sup>** after worship in the conference room.

Classes will be held in the conference room at Zion on Tuesdays after school. Classes will begin on February 17<sup>th</sup>.

First Holy Communion for these students will be received on **Maundy Thursday, April 2<sup>nd</sup>** during 7pm worship.

If you have any questions, please speak with Pastor Carolann.



## Average Church Attendance

	In person	Online
May	124	130
June	96	129
July	97	141
August	105	128
September	160	137
October	139	161
November	152	163
December	198	219

**Year to Date:** 126 In person  
142 Online



## PRETZELS & LENT

Did you know that the easiest and perhaps most significant Lenten food custom for our time might be to serve a small pretzel to every member of the family with their main meal? It sounds surprising, but the pretzel has a deep spiritual meaning for Lent. In fact, it was the ancient Christian Lenten bread as far back as the fifth century. To remind themselves that Lent was a time of prayer, they shaped their breads in the form of arms crossed in prayer (in those days they crossed their arms over their hearts while praying). Therefore they called the breads “little arms” (bracellae). From the Latin word the Germans later coined the term, “pretzel.”

Thus the pretzel is the most appropriate food symbol in Lent. It still shows the form of arms crossed in prayer, reminding us that Lent is a time of prayer. It consists only of water and flour (hard pretzels), thus proclaiming Lent as a time of fasting. Besides, its custom came down to us from the early Christians who had invented it as the bearer of such a great spiritual message.

On the last Sunday before Lent, we will be sharing pretzels as a reminder of this ancient tradition and as a way to begin our preparation for the journey of Lent. Please join us on **Transfiguration Sunday, February 15<sup>th</sup>!**

# February 15



# Easter Flowers

It is time to order flowers for Easter. This year we are offering the following varieties: (6" pots)

Easter Lily		\$19.00
Mums		\$20.00
Tulips		\$16.00
Kalanchoe		\$21.00
Begonia		\$20.00

The order deadline is Sunday, February 22<sup>nd</sup>. Please attach your payment to this form and place it in the offering plate or mail to:

**Zion Lutheran Church**  
319 S. 5<sup>th</sup> Street  
Albion, NE 68620

Name of Sponsor: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

In memory of: \_\_\_\_\_

In honor of: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Easter Lilies  
\_\_\_\_\_ Mums  
\_\_\_\_\_ Tulips  
\_\_\_\_\_ Kalanchoe  
\_\_\_\_\_ Begonia

Amount enclosed \$ \_\_\_\_\_



*Coffee*  
and  
CONVERSATION

February 5<sup>th</sup>  
9:30am



at Dotted Daisy

The Faith & Fellowship Committee is inviting everyone for Coffee & Conversation at the Dotted Daisy on the first Thursday of each month at 9:30am.

Please join us  
and feel free to invite friends!



## 2026 Fellowship Coffee Serving Schedule

February: Finance &  
Mission Endowment

March: Evangelism



The Mission Endowment Committee  
will meet on Monday,  
February 9<sup>th</sup> at 5:30pm.

Feb.  
14!



Happy Valentine's Day

## PEOPLE SPOTS

# Katie Rugg



Katie Ann Zaruba was born on March 17, 1993, to Pat and Amy Zaruba at Boone County Health Center. She was welcomed home by her older siblings, Josh and Danielle.

Katie grew up in Albion, Nebraska, and attended Boone Central Public Schools from kindergarten through twelfth grade, graduating with the Class of 2011. During her high school years, she discovered her passion for caring for others while babysitting. In addition to babysitting, Katie also worked at Wells Drug, further strengthening her interest in the medical field.

After high school, Katie was uncertain about her exact career path but knew she wanted to work in healthcare. Following her graduation from Boone Central, she enrolled at Southeast Community College in Lincoln, where she earned her CNA certification. After completing her studies, Katie returned to Albion and continued her education at Central Community College in Columbus, Nebraska, pursuing nursing. She currently works as PRN on the nursing floor at Boone County Health Center. When not working, Katie enjoys her favorite role, which is as a stay-at-home mom.

Katie began dating Haydn Rugg while they were in high school. On October 3, 2020, they were united in marriage at Zion Lutheran Church. Together, they have been blessed with two wonderful children, Hesston and Halsey.

In her free time, Katie enjoys spending time with family and friends, attending concerts, and supporting her niece's and nephew's activities. She also loves to travel, with Yellowstone National Park and Scotland being among her favorite destinations.

Katie was baptized into the Lutheran faith on March 28, 1993, at Zion Lutheran Church. She later received her First Communion in 2002 and affirmed her faith on April 22, 2007. As a member of Zion Lutheran Church, Katie has served on the Nominating committee and the Fair Dining Hall Committee. She currently serves on the Parish Education Committee and helps with Vacation Bible School. We are certainly grateful for the many ways Katie continues to serve God and her church family at Zion.

Written & submitted by  
Vicar Keith Powell







## Worship Song Leaders FEBRUARY

- 1 Jacque & Tom Dickey
- 8 Kay Flanagan
- 15 ***Volunteer Needed!***
- 18 ***Volunteer Needed!***
- 22 ***Volunteer Needed!***



## FEBRUARY

- 1 Tami Texley
- 8 Tami Texley
- 15 Tami Texley
- 18 Tami Texley
- 22 Tami Texley



## FLAT SHEETS & FLANNEL FABRIC

are **NEEDED!**

Our quilters are in need of FLAT sheets—they need to be full size or larger and they can be any color you like. These flat sheets are used for the backs of the quilters' beautiful quilts.

They can also use flannel fabric. This is being used to make blankets for babies born at Boone County Hospital.

For more information please speak with Marcia Seier 402-395-6163.



2pm on February 19<sup>th</sup> at Wolf Home  
Volunteers Needed!

We host Bingo at Wolf Home on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday of each month. We need at least two volunteers each month.

We could use donations of beanie babies, chips, candy, etc. Donations are being collected in the marked box in the narthex.

For more information, please speak with Pastor Carolann (402-395-2043).





## Choir Schedule

### Epiphany/Lent

Rehearsal	Sunday, February 15 <sup>th</sup>	10am
Rehearsal	Sunday, February 22 <sup>nd</sup>	10am
Rehearsal	Sunday, March 1 <sup>st</sup>	10am
Rehearsal	Sunday, March 15 <sup>th</sup>	10am
Rehearsal	Sunday, March 29 <sup>th</sup>	10am

To SING:

**Ash Wednesday, February 18<sup>th</sup> at 7pm**

**Good Friday, April 3<sup>rd</sup> at 7pm**

**Easter Sunday, April 5<sup>th</sup> at 9am**

\*If anyone would like to prepare a vocal or instrumental special music, please contact Tami Texley (402-741-2330).



## Save the Dates!

### Vacation Bible School 2026

VBS will be held

June 8-12, 2026

9am — 12noon



♪ J u s t a N o t e ♪

Zion's Handbell Choir will practice on Wednesday at 4:30pm, beginning on February 18<sup>th</sup>.

New members are always welcome!

If interested, please contact  
Jacque Dickey  
(402) 741-1709

### Valentine's Day Jokes for Animal Lovers



What did one sheep say to the other?  
*I Love ewe!*

And how did the second sheep respond?  
*You're not so baaaa-d yourself!*

Why do skunks like Valentine's Day?  
*They're very scent-imental creatures.*



What did the enamored deer say?  
*I'm very fawned of you!*

What did the penguin ask on February 14<sup>th</sup>?  
*Waddle I do without you?*

What do you call two birds in love?  
*Tweethearts!*

What did one bee say to the other?  
*I love bee-ing with you, honey!*



## Can You Tie A Knot?

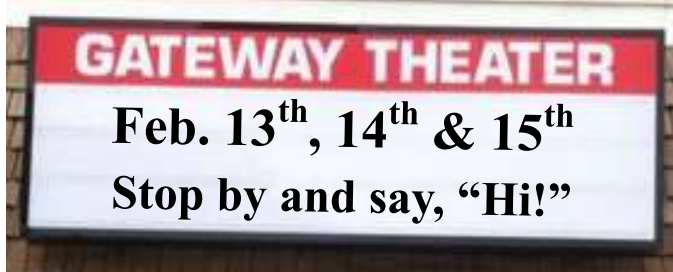


Zion's Sew Happy Mission Quilters are always looking for people to help them quilt! You are welcome to join them on the 2<sup>nd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> Fridays to help tie & pin quilts. If you like to sew, they always need help to sew quilt blocks together. The blocks and strips are already cut and put together in a bag ready to be sewn together. For more information, contact Barb Michael (402-395-6377) or Marcia Seier (402-395-6163 or 402-741-1837).



# Luther League

will be hosting Movie Theater Concessions!



## Prayer Chain & Prayer Concerns

If you would like to add someone to the prayer chain, please call Sharon Waters (402-741-2358) or the church office (402-395-2043) and they will start the chain. If you'd like to add someone to our Sunday prayers, please call the church office (402-395-2043).

*"Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you."  
(1 Thessalonians 5:16-18)*



# JIGSAW PUZZLE COMPETITION

**Sunday, March 8, 2026**  
**Cardinal Inn, Albion**  
**2588 State Hwy 14**  
Competition begins: 3:30pm  
Team Check-in: 3pm

**First team to complete a 500 piece puzzle wins!**  
**\$100 per team of 4 players includes Food & Prizes**

Separate competition for kids 12 and under:  
\$40 per team of 4  
(300 piece puzzle)

**SPONSORED BY ZION LUTHERAN CHURCH**  
All proceeds benefit Zion's Elevator Fund

For more information or to Register, call 402-395-2043  
Registration Deadline: March 1, 2026

Split the Pot (50/50) & Raffle Baskets too!

Drinks will be available for purchase at the bar or you may bring your own soft drinks.

Made with PosterMyWall.com



# Prayer Concerns this Month

## **Wolf Memorial Home Residents**

Bob & LaVonne Kruse  
LaVonne Mills

## **Good Samaritan Estates (Assisted Living)**

Cynthia Kraus Donna Kruse  
Marilyn Ramm Dorothy Young

## **Genoa Assisted Living (Genoa)**

Arletta Francis

## **Heritage of Bel-Air (Norfolk)**

LaVonne Olnes

## **Mid-Nebraska Lutheran Home**

Harold & Lois Thewke

## **Community Memorial Health Center (Burwell)**

Dale Sheldon

## **Out of State**

Elva Bartels (Texas)  
Joy Haas (Colorado)

## **In Our Sunday Prayers**

Max Grosch, Dennis Lynch, Nancy Mohn,  
Bruce Smith, Mark Smith, Marlys Smith,  
Pat Tobiason, Becky Wright, Amy Young,  
and the families of Steve Beard,  
Ruby Dobias, Judy Harder, Eric Reiss,  
Chuck Roberts, Jan Wauben, Muriel Young



## **Our Congregation**

Our Forum & Annual Meeting  
Outgoing Church Council Members  
Newly elected Church Council Members  
Newly elected volunteers

## **Other Concerns**

Our Military  
All those affected by war, violence & hatred  
Those affected by natural disasters  
Levander's Funeral Home Staff  
Boone County Hospital & Clinic Staff  
Snow Removal Crews

Other prayer concerns are welcome



The following people  
made donations to  
**Zion's Memorial Fund**  
in loving memory of  
**Judy Harder**

**Nancy & Terry Ahlers** (Scholarship Fund)

**Janet Atkinson** (Elevator Fund)

**Lorene & Steven Bartos** (Elevator Fund)

**Rev Carolann Hopcke** (Scholarship Fund)

**Kim & Scott Kruse**

**Chuck & Julie Long** (Elevator Fund)

**Cheryl & Ralph Pilkington**

**Bob & Gay Sandman** (Elevator Fund)

**Gerald & Jenny Schmitz** (Scholarship Fund)

**Mike & Roberta Seda** (Elevator Fund)

**Dave & Lisa Skillstad**

**Jim & Mary Staub** (Scholarship Fund)

**Doris Warner** (Scholarship Fund)

**Pamela & Steven Wright** (Bell Choir)



The following  
people made  
donations to  
**Zion's Memorial  
Fund** in loving

memory of **Muriel Young**

**Nancy & Terry Ahlers** (Elevator Fund)

**Kristie & Steven Camp**

**Kim & Tracy Coakes**

**Kim & Scott Kruse**

**Mary & Ron Levander**

**Tracy Long**

**Dave & Lisa Skillstad**

**Doris Warner**

Intern  
Committee  
Meeting  
6pm on Monday,  
February 23<sup>rd</sup>



## Handicap Accessibility Project



### Elevator Update

**Total Cost: \$232,945\***  
(Custom Elevator for caskets)

Elevator T-bill Account	\$206,428.29
December Income	\$35,555.88
December Expenses	\$0.00
December Interest	\$590.71
Total	\$242,574.88**

\*This does NOT include the Sprinkler system estimated @ \$252,000.

\*\* Does NOT include the \$30,000 grant!



*Thanks for your support  
of this very important project!*

**Faith &  
Fellowship**

**Committee  
will meet  
on**

**Sunday, January 25<sup>th</sup>  
at 10am**

**All are welcome to join us!**



**March 6-7, 2026**

**8pm Friday through 8am Saturday**

Carol Joy Holling Camp is hosting a Middle School Lock-in this spring! Join in the fun of night camp activities, fellowship, and learning more about God. This lock-in provides youth the opportunity to have a fun time while diving in to God's grace and growing in faith. This lock-in is an experience they can take with them for the rest of their lives.

The Lock-in cost is \$40 per camper. Families are responsible for the \$20 deposit, and Zion's Camp Ambassadors will pay the balance. Cost includes lodging, meals & programming.

Parents/Guardians are responsible for registering their youth. If you plan on attending, please let Vicar Keith know by Wednesday, February 25, 2026.



**Zion's Puzzle Competition  
Planning Team**

**Will meet on  
Tuesday, February 10<sup>th</sup> at 6pm  
All are welcome to help us plan!**





\$40. for Lent

Every year, Lent gives us the opportunity to sacrifice something for 40 days. In the past, some people give up chocolate, coffee, going to the movies, etc. This year, we are asking that you take the money you would have spent on whatever it is you are giving up and give it to the church instead. Save the money you would have spent on chocolate, coffee, eating out, etc. and give it to the church on Easter Sunday.

If that doesn't work for you, you can simply make a Lenten Love Offering by giving a set amount for the 40 days of Lent. You might give 40 pennies, 40 quarters, 40 dollar bills, or even 40 ten-dollar bills, etc.

During the 40 days of Lent, let us remember all that Christ gave up for each of us as we give up something for Him.

Whatever you give as your Lenten Love Offering will benefit God's ministry at Zion Lutheran Church! It will be put in the ADA Accessibility Fund. (We are in need of funds to help cover the cost of phase II) Don't forget, Lent begins on **Ash Wednesday, Feb. 18<sup>th</sup>**.



**Wine & Word**  
6pm on Thursday,  
February 19<sup>th</sup>  
at the  
**Gateway Terrace  
Community Room**

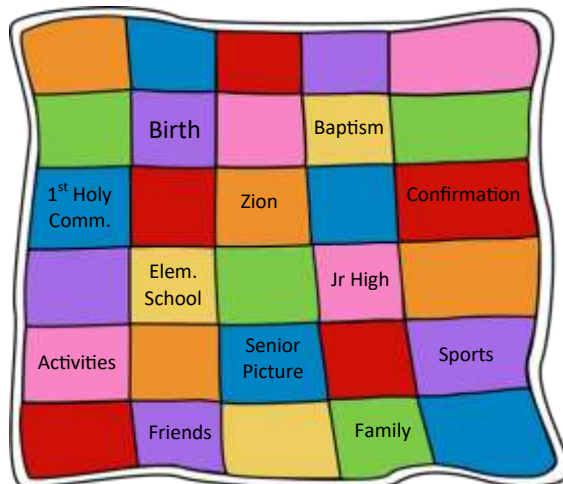


Everyone is invited to the Gateway Terrace Community Room (11<sup>th</sup> St) for a casual evening of faith, food, and fellowship.

If you have any questions or concerns, please speak with Pastor Carolann (267-374-7762).

**Please mark your calendars  
and join us!**

### Personalized Graduation Quilts!



Zion would also like to make each graduating senior a personalized quilt. In order for us to do that, we need your help! Letters were mailed to graduating seniors that included a Graduate Information Form, instructions for the fabric needed as well as suggestions, such as birth, baptism, school, family, friends, hobbies/activities. Fabric, flat sheet, and pictures need to be brought/emailed to the church office no later than **Sunday, March 1<sup>st</sup>**.

For more information, please speak with Pastor Carolann (267-374-7762).



# PLACES of the PASSION

## Schedule for Lent

- Wed., Feb. 18<sup>th</sup> Ash Wednesday  
Soup Supper: 5-7pm (Luther League)  
7pm Worship: *Jerusalem*
- Sun., Feb. 22<sup>nd</sup> 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday in Lent  
9am Worship: *Bethany*
- Sun., March 1<sup>st</sup> 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday in Lent  
9am Worship: *Mount of Olives*
- Sun., March 8<sup>th</sup> 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday in Lent  
9am Worship: *Gethsemane*
- Sun., March 15<sup>th</sup> 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Lent  
9am Worship: *Courtyard*
- Sun., March 22<sup>nd</sup> 5<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Lent  
9am Worship: *Pilate's Judgement Hall*
- Sun., March 29<sup>th</sup> Palm Sunday  
9am Worship: *Bethphage*
- Thur., April 2<sup>nd</sup> Maundy Thursday  
7pm Worship: *Upper Room*
- Fri., April 3<sup>rd</sup> Good Friday  
9am Worship: *Golgotha*
- Sun., April 5<sup>th</sup> Easter Sunday  
7am Worship: Luther League  
8am Easter Breakfast  
9am Worship: *Garden Tomb*

In Lent, we will journey with Jesus to explore the spiritual relevance of places along the path of Christ's passion. These locations remind us that Jesus walked this earth and stood in places we can still find today. There were serious reasons he found himself in certain places and at particular times on his way to the cross.



## Mid-Week WORSHIP SERVICES

### The Hills of Lent Midweek Lenten Worship Wednesdays at 7pm

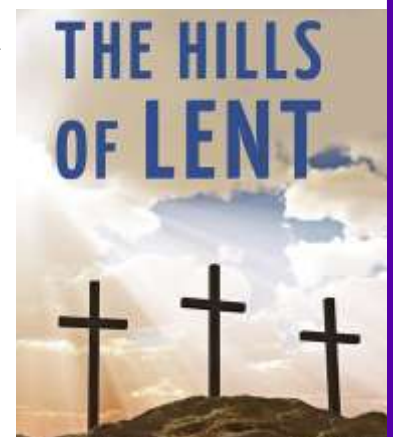
Our midweek Lenten worship, will lead us on a biblically journey to "mountaintop experiences" which all focus on the suffering, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

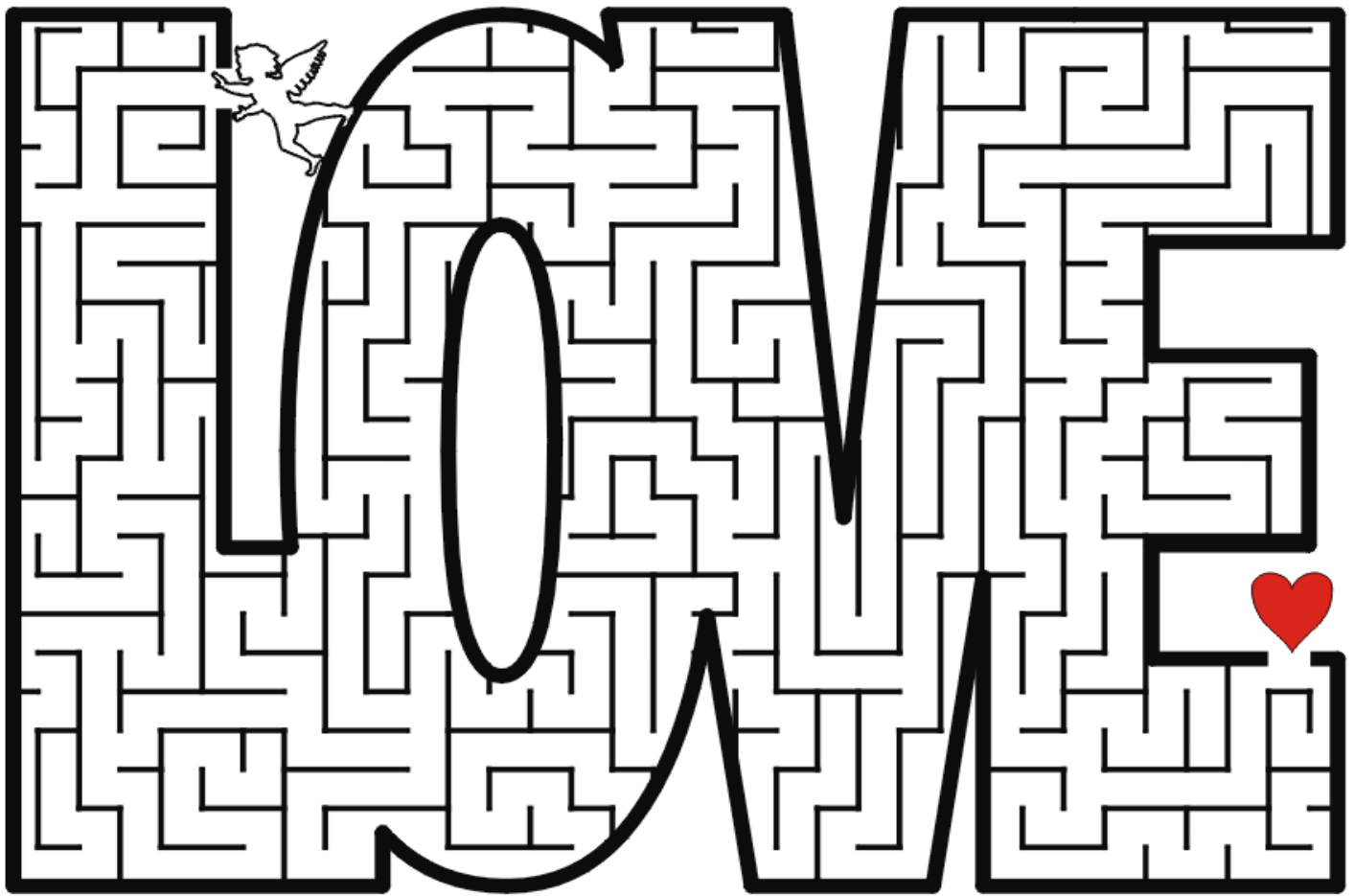
#### Midweek Schedule:

- |                             |             |
|-----------------------------|-------------|
| Wed., Feb. 25 <sup>th</sup> | Mt. Sinai   |
| Wed., Mar. 4 <sup>th</sup>  | Mt. Carmel  |
| Wed., Mar. 11 <sup>th</sup> | Mt. Zion    |
| Wed., Mar. 18 <sup>th</sup> | Mt. Olive   |
| Wed., Mar. 25 <sup>th</sup> | Mt. Calvary |

At Mount Sinai, Moses & the Israelites receive the word of God. At Mount Carmel, Elijah calls for faith and faithfulness. Jesus joins the faithful in worship at Mount Zion. On Mount Olive, Jesus assures us that we too are the children of God. Finally, at **Mount Calvary**, we view "God's own sacrifice complete."

Services include dramatic homilies for a narrator and as many as four other readers. Please let Pastor Carolann or Vicar Keith know if you would like to participate in the Homilies.





## Do you want to fast this lent?

*(In the words of Pope Francis)*

- ◊ Fast from hurting words and say kind words.
- ◊ Fast from sadness and be filled with gratitude.
- ◊ Fast from anger and be filled with patience.
- ◊ Fast from pessimism and be filled with hope.
- ◊ Fast from worries and have trust in God.
- ◊ Fast from complaints and contemplate simplicity.
- ◊ Fast from pressures and be prayerful.
- ◊ Fast from bitterness and fill your hearts with joy.
- ◊ Fast from selfishness and be compassionate to others.
- ◊ Fast from grudges and be reconciled.
- ◊ Fast from words and be silent so you can listen.

# LENT



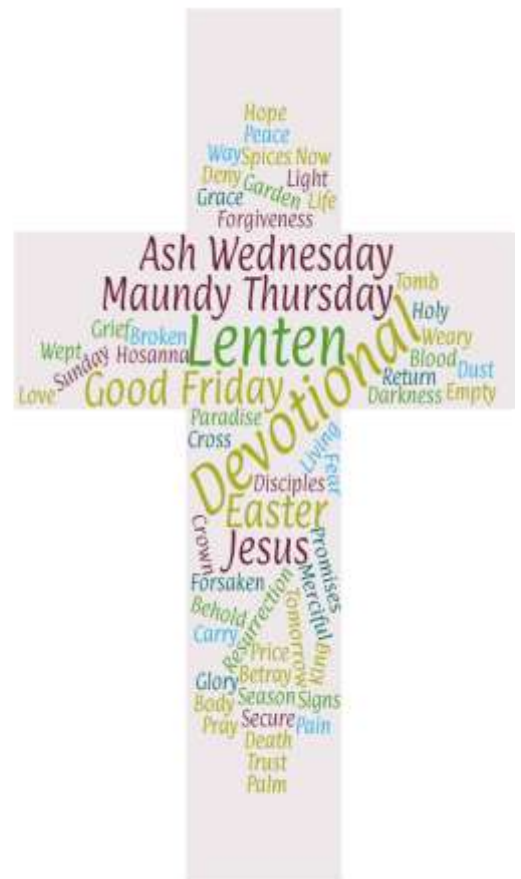
PRAY



FAST



GIVE





Zion continues to worship in person, but please do what makes you feel safe and comfortable. Feel free to social distance or wear a mask as desired.



Please DO NOT COME if you are not feeling well, or have flu like symptoms. We certainly want to see everyone, but we also need everyone to be safe.

Happy Valentine's Day

For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not Perish, but have Everlasting Life.

For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, That whosoever believeth in Him should Not perish, but have Everlasting life.

Worship with us from HOME

Zion Sunday Services are broadcast LIVE on Vyve Cable Channel 21 and repeated on Wednesdays at 8am, 10:30am, 12pm, 4pm, 7pm, 8pm & 9pm and Saturdays at 8am and 12pm.

You may also join us each Sunday morning at 9am on Facebook Live!



You may worship with us live, or watch the service by clicking the link on our Facebook page at [www.facebook.com/zionalbion](http://www.facebook.com/zionalbion)

Zion Messenger is a monthly publication of  
Zion Lutheran Church  
319 S 5<sup>th</sup> St., Albion, NE 68620  
Worship Services - Sunday 9:00am

### Office Hours:

Monday - Thursday 9:00am - 4pm  
Friday Office Closed  
Phone 402-395-2043

Pastoral Care Concerns after hours:  
Pastor Carolann Hopcke, 267-374-7762

Email: [office@zionalbion.org](mailto:office@zionalbion.org)  
Website: [www.zionalbion.org](http://www.zionalbion.org)

### Zion's Staff

**Pastor Carolann Hopcke, Senior Pastor**  
[PCA@zionalbion.org](mailto:PCA@zionalbion.org)

**Vicar Keith Powell, Seminarian**  
[vicarkeith@zionalbion.org](mailto:vicarkeith@zionalbion.org)

**Office Administrators**  
Cynthia Kraus & Cheryl Sherburne  
[office@zionalbion.org](mailto:office@zionalbion.org)

**High School Youth Coordinator**  
Dorothy Grosch  
[youthcoordinator@zionalbion.org](mailto:youthcoordinator@zionalbion.org)

**Nancy Ahlers, Treasurer**  
[treasurer@zionalbion.org](mailto:treasurer@zionalbion.org)