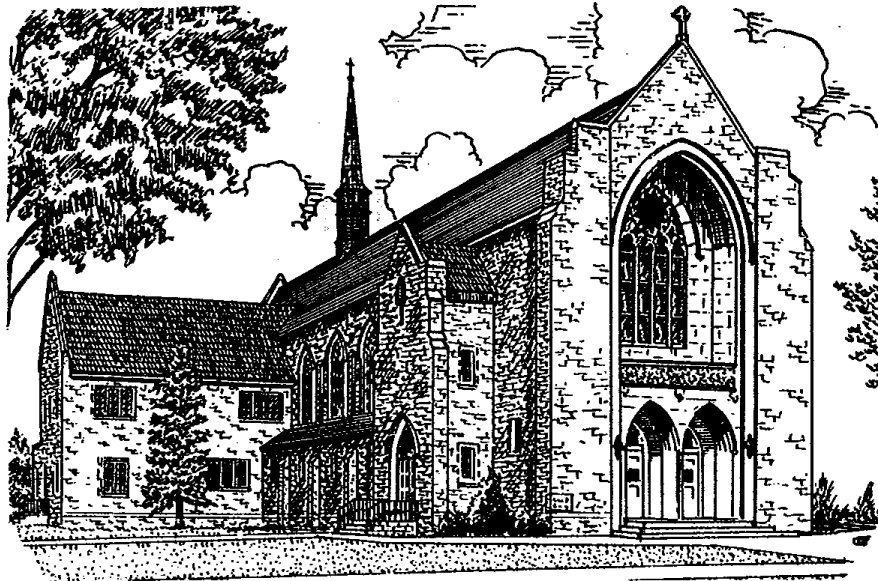


Inside This Issue:

WHAT'S COMING UP?

A Survey of the Next Four Months



Zion Lutheran Church

*“Those who trust in the Lord shall be like Mount Zion,
which cannot be moved, but abides forever.” (Psalm 125:1)*

August 27, 2023

Remembering

Examples of the faith in August

August 28: St. Augustine of Hippo

Born in northern Africa to a pagan father and Christian mother, St. Augustine lived his earlier years in a lusty pursuit of pleasure. However, his father became Christian shortly before dying, and Augustine's mother, St. Monica, prayed for his conversion. In time, Augustine not only converted, but also became bishop of Hippo. He wrote several treatises, contending for salvation by grace alone, through the merit of Christ alone, and not by our own works.



The “What’s Coming Up?” Issue

“For everything there is a season.” ~ Ecc. 3:1

This week’s newsletter looks a little different. Rather than our normal layout of Zion’s bustling life, you will find on the following pages an overview of coming events, September through December. Sometimes even important things can get lost in the details, so it seemed good to highlight a few of those things in a bigger way.

Paying attention to our congregation’s life and activities is no matter of mere personal interest or leisure time. We can fall into the trap of thinking so, because so much of the world teaches us to regard ourselves as *consumers*, people who exist to buy and use resources. That perspective can start affecting everything we see.

Suddenly, not only businesses but also schools, government, and even our churches and families become “providers of services” that we may or may not choose as the mood strikes us. Our main questions become *How can this benefit me? Why is this relevant to me? What do I get out of it?* They’re fair questions in the right context, but when they become *the* way in which we look at everything, it corrupts our soul with greed.

God calls us to something different. He calls us to love, cherish, and serve what He gives us. One thing He gives us is the congregation of saints who confess His Name and receive His gifts. He promises to be with His congregations always (Matthew 28:20), and so if we love Him, then we follow where He goes and abide with His people, in person where we are able, in spirit where we are not.

The Church is “a holy nation” (1 Peter 2:9). Our congregation is part of our primary citizenship and identity. An anecdote from World War II illustrates it well: an American soldier came across an Italian priest in a bombed out church, crying. “You’ve got to leave, old man,” the soldier said to him. The priest looked up. “But who am I without my church?” he asked. Who, indeed?

Peace!
Pastor Gjerde.

Blessing for A New School Year: September 6

This event is for everyone heading back to school (from children to teachers and helpers) as well as everyone who cares about them.

Zion's **Second-Annual Back-to-School Blessing** will take place on Wednesday, September 6, starting at 6:30 PM:

6:30 PM: Vespers with Blessing for Children (chapel)

7:00 PM: Potluck (Meat Provided) for All (fellowship hall)

Please bring a dish to pass! Like last year, children will receive a back-to-school gift as well as a gift to take to their teachers, bus drivers or other school helper with a message from Zion. What a great way of witness!

Come, bring the kids, bring their friends, and let's start a new school year with prayer and the Lord's good Word and blessing.

Choir and Bell Practice Start: Sept. 7 & 20

Zion's adult choir, or *Kantorei*, will begin practices again on Thursday, September 7, at 6:30 PM. *Kantorei* (CANT-oh-rye) simply means "singers," the plural of *kantor*. Practices will take place in the organ loft. People who are able to read music are especially suited to this choir, and it may include anyone in high school or older.

The Bell Choir will begin its practices again on Wednesday, September 20, at 7:10 PM. This will now be Zion's second year with a set of handbells as well as handchimes. Practices take place in the organ loft.

Zion's Sunday Schoolers and Confirmation Students also meet with Kantor Beethe to learn the Church's song and liturgy. You may look forward to some of their offerings in the year to come.

Sunday School and Confirmation Begin

Sunday School Starts on Sunday, September 10 for Pre-Kindergarten through Grade 6. Visitors and friends are always welcome to join Zion's children in these lessons. Here's the schedule:

10:00: Music in the Balcony with Kantor Beethe
****On Sept. 10, there will be no Music in the Balcony so the students and teachers can get settled. Sunday School will proceed to their classes.**

10:20: Pre-K — Grade 4 (Church Hall)
Grades 5—6 (Conference Room)

10:50: Instruction ends. Families pick up children.

Confirmation instruction begins on Wednesday, September 13 at 6:30 PM in the chapel. Confirmation is for children aged 12 or older who have attended worship for at least a year prior to starting classes.

Bible Study, Old . . . and New!

Both familiar and new Bible studies will take place at Zion this year. Here are the long-standing studies and what they'll be studying this autumn:

Tues.: **Bible Study, 9 AM.** The Book of Judges

Thurs.: **Men's Bible Study, 8 AM.** The Gospel of Mark

Sun.: **Bible Study, 10:15 AM. *NEW STUDY Sept. 17***
"Treasures Old and New: the Divine Liturgy." Why do Lutherans worship as they do? Where does the liturgy come from, why is it there, and how does it help us?

To learn about another New Study, turn the page!



New Study: Living in These Last Days

What exactly are Christians waiting for?

What does Holy Scripture teach us about the end of the world?

What does Revelation have to do with it? And how does that teaching inform our faith and how we live in our homes, our nation, and our church?

This 8-week class will not only dive into what Scripture promises us about the end of the world, but it will also explore how the promise of Christ's second coming inspires and directs our faith, worship, homes, work, behavior, and love. A good class for adults, teenagers, parents, and those exploring the Lutheran faith!

Every Wednesday in the Church Hall at 7:00 PM (following Vespers), from September 20 through November 1. *If possible, please call the Church Office to let us know you're coming!*

Did You Know?

Zion's pastors hold **online devotions every day**, Monday through Thursday, at 8:30 AM and 8:30 PM. You may view these devotions via Facebook (you don't have to belong to see them!) or download the Zion app, and you'll find them there. God's Word is our daily bread, food for faith!

Acolyte Fellowship and Training, Sept. 24

After the 11AM Divine Service on Sept. 24, Zion will host the first Acolyte Fellowship and Training session of the new school year.

This is for all our acolytes, those just learning the ropes and those who have been involved faithfully for years.

As always, lunch will be provided. We should be done with training by 1:30 PM.

Tentative: **Dedication of Roof & Street, October 1**

The world looks at a street and sees a street. The Church looks at it and sees a bit more.

Our newly-repaired-and-paved Grant Street is a gift and blessing that helps people come to church. God Himself gives us good roads, working through our neighbors in the city government and contracting outfits to accomplish this good work.

Zion will therefore process outdoors after the 9 AM service on Sunday, October 1, for a brief service of thanksgiving for the new street. We hope to invite members of the city government and workers for this small recognition.

This event is *tentative*, subject to change as the street project nears completion. **If Zion's roof is completed by then**, it may also be included in the dedication.

Strassenfest Weekend: October 14-15

Zion will hold its annual **Fall Festival, Strassenfest (German for "Street Fair")** on the weekend of Saturday, October 14. Look forward to visiting your favorite booths in Zion's gym and tasting delicious treats! More information is yet to come—keep watch!

Items Needed for Strassenfest Pantry

Marion Zahrt is looking for donations of nicely decorated flower pots, garden produce and/or indoor plants for the Strassenfest Pantry. Please contact her at 715-842-8662 with questions or donations.

More Items Needed for Strassenfest

Ellie Martin is looking for donations of jelly jars in preparation for canning for Strassenfest. She states that she already has enough pints and quarts. Please contact her at 715-842-4908 with questions or donations (and if you leave a donation, Ellie would love to know who they are from, so please leave your name).

Reformation Chorale Service, October 29

“Lord, keep us steadfast in Your Word!” So prayed the Lutheran reformers, and so pray we.

In thanksgiving for the Lutheran Reformation, Zion will hold its annual Chorale Service on **Reformation Sunday**, October 29, at 9 and 11 AM.

This service uses sturdy hymns of the Reformation and the pattern of liturgy drawn from the ancient catholic Church and carried forward by Martin Luther. *Soli Deo Gloria*, to God alone be glory!

New Member Reception, October 29

“Love me, love my family,” goes the old saying, and so it goes for Christ. To love Him is to love our brethren in Him (1 John 4:7-12), and Zion welcomes new brethren into its fellowship every year.

Zion’s Board of Elders will therefore hold a New Member Reception on **Sunday, October 29, between the morning services (around 10:15 AM) in the Church Hall.**

Come to meet your new brothers and sister in Christ and welcome them into this congregation.

Tentative: **Halloween Outreach, October 31**

Last year, Zion reached over 240 trick-or-treaters and their families on Luther Square by handing out treats with prayer cards and information about Zion. Shall we do it again this year?

It was a fairly simple endeavor: Zion prepared the treats in bags and handed them out, along with warm drinks of cider and chocolate. Two fire pits were also maintained, so folks could warm themselves.

If you are interested in helping with this event, please let the Church Office know.

All Saints Sunday, November 5

“Whoever lives and believes in me shall never die” (John 11:26).

Because of this amazing promise from our risen Lord, the Church commemorates all who have died in the faith on All Saints Day (Nov.1), which we celebrate on the first **Sunday in November, November 5**. All who have been buried from Zion in the past year will be named and the bell tolled in their memory. Loved ones may come forward to receive a white carnation, and a candle will be lit for the deceased loved one in the Baptistery, remembering the indestructible bond of Holy Baptism.

Hunters Service, November 15 at 6:30 PM

Hunting is part of our culture and affirmed by Holy Scripture. Each year, Zion holds a special prayer service for the hunt, thanking God for the bounty of His earth while also asking His blessing on the hunters for safety and a godly hunt.

Zion will hold its Hunters Service on Wednesday, November 15, at 6:30 PM. Hunters, bring your hunting family and friends to mark this yearly event with thanksgiving and the Word of God.

Thanksgiving Day Service, Nov. 23 at 10 AM

“Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord” (Psalm 33:12). Our nation has again called on all people of faith to render due thanksgiving to God for the blessings of this past year.

Zion will gather for its **Thanksgiving Service on Thursday, November 23, at 10:00 AM.** Full choir and brass will support our praise to God for His all-sustaining hand. It's a good time to gather your family and friends for a blessed service of worship.

Zion 150: Advent Vespers, December 3 at 4 PM

Why is Zion called Zion? What does that name mean in Holy Scripture?

Zion will celebrate 150 years of being a congregation in 2024. The 2024 Church Year begins this December with Advent, and so to kick off a year of thanksgiving and celebration, Zion will host an **Advent Vespers and Hymn Festival on Sunday, December 3, at 4:00 PM.**

Trinity Lutheran Church's choir will join Zion's choir and congregation to sing hymns of Zion as we listen to Holy Scripture teach us the promise of Zion, the city of God. Zion's sister congregation, Bethany, will also be invited.

What is more, an original hymn (text and tune!) written in honor of Zion's 150th Anniversary will be unveiled at this event. The author of the hymn text is the Rev. Stephen Starke, and Kantor Kevin Hildebrand of Concordia Theological Seminary in Fort Wayne has composed the original hymn tune, named after our beloved city, Wausau. *Soli Deo Gloria!*

Advent Services and Preaching Series

Zion and her friends and visitors will have many opportunities for Advent devotion in the weeks leading up to Christmas.

In addition to Zion's Advent Vespers (see above), Zion will hold its **Outdoor Advent Devotions** on Luther Square at **4:30 PM on December 10 and 17.** Advent preaching will also be featured at the weekday Holy Communion services, with a focus on the "Advent saints" of **St. Nicholas on December 6** and **St. Lucia on December 13.**

Finally, Zion's regular weekend services (Sunday, 9 & 11, Saturday, 5:15) will feature an **Advent Sermon Series on Zion, the City of God** on the weekends of December 3, 10, 17, and 24 (morning service).

Christmas 2023

Zion will celebrate the Nativity of our Lord Jesus Christ with the following schedule:

Fourth Sunday in Advent (Dec. 23 & 24)

Saturday, 5:15 AM: Holy Communion

Sunday, 9:00 AM: Holy Communion (*No 11 AM Service*)

Christmas Eve (December 24)

3:00 PM: First Service, with Carols and Handbells

5:00 PM: Festival of Lessons and Carols (with Choir)

8:00 PM: Holy Communion (Live Broadcast WSAU)

Christmas Day (December 25)

10:00 AM: Holy Communion (Live Broadcast WSAU)

There will be no daily services of Holy Communion, Dec. 26-29.

“How May I Help?”

Zion is blessed with many prayers, volunteers, and supporters. Thanks be to God!

People often ask how they can help. Your prayers, goodwill, and support are always welcome. At the present time, two areas of service at Zion would be blessed by more helping hands: **ushers and Altar Guild.**

Ushers assist with welcoming people to worship and directing them during Holy Communion. Altar Guild cares for the sacred vessels of the altar, sets and cleans up the bread and wine for Holy Communion, cleans the altar linens, and the like.

If you're willing to help, please contact the Church Office (715-848-7286).



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