FOCUS

NOVEMBER 2026

A Publication of
Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church
Chisago City, Minnesota

Message from Pastor Sarah

I have started accumulating small items that remind me of people who have passed. I have a felted robin made by Julie Holmquist, an agate and staff from Wayne Driver, some of Arild Hagberg's Sunday School books, a clay hedgehog from Julia Anderson-Miller. Each of these items, however humble, contain memories and love.

We begin the month of November with All Saint's Sunday. In worship we will light a candle and ring a bell for each person who has died this past year (and whose funeral I have presided at). I know I will be holding back tears this year as I read the names. We also light candles, ring a bell, and say the names of those I have baptized. We will be reminded that we are all saints in the eyes of the one who created us.

Later this month we will celebrate Thanksgiving with a Thanksgiving Eve service (and pie). We will take time to be grateful for our lives, our friends, our families and our memories. We will end the month by beginning the season of Advent. We will again light candles as we prepare our hearts for the coming of Christ. It is the light, after all, the light of Christ, which gets us through the dark days of our lives. I encourage you to light a candle in your own home as a way to remember those we have loved and also as a reminder that Christ's light can break through the darkest nights.

Peace,
Pastor Sarah

For it is the God who said, "Light will shine out of darkness," who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ. *Corinthians 4:6*

Zion's Annual meeting will be held on Sunday, November 15th at 10:00 am. This is a time to review the past year, vote on council members and approve the annual budget. Please make every attempt to attend this important meeting.

The budget preview meeting will be between services on November 8. This is your opportunity to see the 2027 budget, ask questions and have input.

Worship Services
9:00 am Sunday
Coffee and Fellowship following the service.

Contemporary Worship
10:45 am Sunday
(no worship on November 15)

Facebook live is available at 9am and YouTube recording is available at 10:00 am.

Find Us Online:
YouTube: recordings are posted @zionevangelicallutheranchi6301
Facebook: 9:00 am Live (zionlcc)

Office Hours
Monday through Thursday
9:00 am to 2:00 pm
or by appointment.

NOVEMBER connection

All Saints Sunday will be held on November 1st. On All Saints Sunday we celebrate the victory won for all those we have lost this year, but we also grieve for for them as well, knowing that God honors our tears. We bring our grief to the table and find there a foretaste of the feast to come.

The **Annual Meeting** is scheduled for Sunday, November 15th at 10:30am.
There will be no second service on this day.

The nominating committee is active in asking members of our congregation to participate in council. Pray for God's guidance to find those who can lead our congregation toward fulfilling our mission.

Consider being a candidate to serve your church. Continue to pray for those already serving.

Thanksgiving Worship will be held on Wednesday, November 25th at 6:30 pm. We will enjoy our annual pie and fellowship following worship, hosted by the Hospitality Committee.

Pastor Ed Treat, of The Center of Addiction & Faith is confirmed to join us on Sunday, November 29th. He will offer a thoughtful, practical conversation about addiction, recovery, and how faith communities can respond with understanding and hope. For more details, visit www.addictionandfaith.com

Stewardship

We are continuing to build on Zion's foundation with the 2026 stewardship campaign. The committee has been working hard each week to deliver information outlining the goals for Zion's new initiatives. If you haven't been able to attend worship, you can request the bulletin inserts provided each week.

Pledge cards will be distributed Sunday, November 1st. They will be mailed to your home if you are unable to attend worship.
Contact the office if you'd like them put in your Zion mailbox.

The committee will gather pledge cards on Sunday, November 15th.

Youth Update

The **confirmation class** is studying the Old Testament and the Ten Commandments. We had an interactive class on the plagues of Egypt that will be remembered for years to come. (If you see plastic flies or locusts around the building, please return them to Pastor Sarah.)

HEY YOUTH GROUP! We are going to have our first meeting on Wednesday, November 18th at 7:00 pm. Parents are optional. We will discuss code of conduct, brainstorm activities, and set dates. Treats will be served. Meet in the youth room. See you there!
--Heidi Klecker

Member Update

NEW MEMBER

We welcome Jim St. Onge during the month of November

Engaging with Emmy

Game Day will be Wednesdays, November 4,11,18 at 1:00 pm
Connect with Emmy if you have a specific game in mind.

Faith & Fun Day will be held on Friday, November 6th, 9am-2pm. Formerly known as "Play & Pray", this event is held during a non-school day for anyone who wants to have an interactive day. Pizza will be served for lunch. Let Emmy know if you plan to attend! Registration form required.

Come Play! Friday, November 27th, 1:00-3:00 pm.
Join us for an after Thanksgiving afternoon of puzzling. Gather a group of four players to complete a 350 piece puzzle and compete against other teams. Sign up using a creative group name for the competition. $10 per team
Puzzles, snacks, and prizes will be provided.

Reminder: We have a puzzle exchange in the church library. This is open to anyone. It is proven that doing jigsaw puzzles is a good brain exercise.

2026-2027 NOIZ SCHEDULE

kids 2nd-5th grade

- November 4, 18
- December 2, 9, 16
- January 6, 13, 20, 27
- February 3, 10, 17, 24
- March 3, 17, 24, 31
- April 7, 14, 21, 28

Transportation from Lakeside available.

Life at Zion

Congratulations,Confirmation Class of 2026!
Sienna Frederixon, Tate Storlie, Malia Berneking, Liam Edholm, Elin Jorgensen, Peter Overgaard.

NOIZ kids!

photos courtesy of Pastor Sarah Kerkes & Emmy Lundeen

Gee Howard...Words to Challenge and Inspire

I heard her say, "Why is God doing this to me?" I understood her anger, her desire to place blame for unimaginable circumstances. We live in a random world. Horrendous things occur. Answers to the "whys" are scarce. Yet I have learned that God is not about making things tough for us; God is about loving us through any situation. And in the hardest times of our lives, the Holy Spirit encourages others to support us....to pray for us when we have no energy to pray or are questioning our faith. I no longer blame God when bad things happen; instead, I am confident that God weeps with us and walks every difficult step with us, saving us in his love.

MaryJo Anderson from Christ in Our Home

The trouble with opportunity is that it is often disguised as hard work.
M. Brown

Notes of Gratitude

Thank you to the quiet volunteers who do so much to keep Zion looking good and running smoothly.

Thank you to our office volunteers, Amy Green and Linda Parker.

Thank you to Josh and the Zion Pipers for the phenomenal organ concert! The concert raised $2,000 to help pay off the parking lot mortgage.

Thank you to Jackie Berneking for taking confirmation photos.

Thank you to Barb Garness for picking up the cake and corsages.

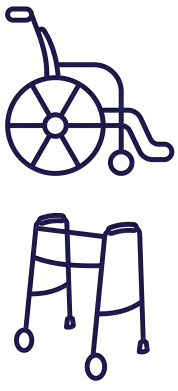
Thank you to the parents who made sure their children go to class and walk through this program!

Thank you to the Stewardship Team who is working hard on our current appeal. Please check your church mailbox if you haven't been able to attend worship..

Thank you to Emmy, Karen Pederson and Linda Parker for helping with our table at the recent Age Well event. It was well-attended event and we had many conversations about Zion's ministries.

Medical Equipment

Thank you for thinking of those in need when donating your valuable medical equipment to Zion. At this time, we can no longer take donations of medical equipment like walkers and wheel chairs etc. If you have equipment in the future, please consider donating your equipment to Family Pathways, Goodwill or a medical lending service.
We encourage anyone who needs equipment to visit the Equipment Lending program at First United Methodist Church in Lindstrom. They have an abundance of many types of equipment that have been cleaned and serviced to be in good working order. They have volunteers that clean and check the equipment for any problems before it is lent out. We do not have anyone to provide that service for us. Their hours are Mon, Wed, Fri, 9:30am-1pm. They can be reached at (651) 257-4306. This is a free service. They are very friendly and easy to work with. Thank you. --Vicki Mickelsen



Food Shelf Ministry & Community Support

OCTOBER COLLECTION

Thanks to you, during the month of September we collected our goal of **150** cans of corn for the Family Pathways Thanksgiving Meal kits!

Zion was credited with collecting **549** pounds of food and supplies in September. This ongoing robust collection is thanks to Pat Pojanowski's loved ones. Many thanks!

NOVEMBER COLLECTION: 150 Cans of FRUIT
To Benefit the Chisago Lakes Family Pathways Christmas Meal kits.

Page Turner's Book Club

On Monday, December 7th at 6:00 pm we'll discuss *Time of the Child* by Niall Williams.

A compassionate, life-affirming novel about the Christmas season that transforms the small Irish town of Faha. Doctor Jack Troy was born and raised in Aha, but his responsibilities for the sick and his care for the dying mean he has always been set apart from the town. His oldest daughter, Ronnie, has grown up in her father's shadow, and remains there. but in the Advent season of 1962, as the town readies itself for Christmas, Ronnie and Doctor Troy's lives are turned upside down when a baby is left in their care.

For further information contact Marilyn Rue at mrue.rue@gmail.com. Books previously reviewed by Page Turners can be found in the church library. If you'd like a comprehensive list of the planned book choices, contact the office.

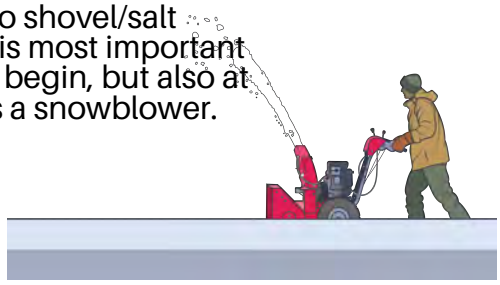
Staff Update

Sheryl Mellgren has been managing our cemeteries for the past 2 years. She is no longer in that position. We are grateful for her hard work! Karen Pederson is now the cemetery manager. If you are thinking about buying a plot or a niche in the columbarium, call the office and ask for Karen.

Zion has a cemetery board to oversee this ministry. We could use a few more people on that board so please speak to Pastor Sarah or Jonathon Dodge if you are interested.

Now Hiring

Zion has an open paid position to shovel/salt sidewalks this winter. This need is most important in the mornings before activities begin, but also at other times. Equipment includes a snowblower.



MEETINGS

Finance Committee
Tuesday, November 10, 1:00 pm

Zion Council
Wednesday, November 11, 6:00 pm

Property Committee
Monday, November 16, 4:00 pm

Adult Education

Pastor Sarah's Bible study meets on Thursday mornings at 10:00 am in the library, year-round. You are invited to join us at any time. No Bible study experience necessary. The group is now taking a deep dive into the seasons of the Church Year. Join us! Coffee is provided.

Men's Bible Study is led by Pastor Richard Baumann, on Saturday mornings at 8:30 am in the Fellowship Hall.

Pastor Sarah continues to host a book study Mondays at 3:00 pm in the library. The book is "*Better Ways to Read the Bible: Transforming a Weapon of Harm into a Tool of Healing*" by Zach Lambert. Copies of the book are available.

VOLUNTEER CORNER

Readers, Ushers, Greeters, Communion Assistants, and Coffee Hosts are needed every week. Online sign-up is found at zionlcc.org or see the paper schedule after worship on the bulletin table. Dates through October are listed.

The **Quilting Group** meets once a month on the first Thursday from 12:30-2:30 pm. There are also opportunities to assist with Missions at these gatherings.

Minutes from the October Council meeting is available upon request.

Contact Emmy to sign up or for more information.

The Community Meal will host their annual **Veteran's Day dinner on Monday, November 9th, 4:00-6:00 pm.** Special guest Julie Lauritzen will entertain us and play military anthems during the meal. Menu will be pork loin or chicken breast, mashed potatoes, green beans, salad, & apple crisp.

CHISAGO LAKES COMMUNITY MEALS

Community Meal Committee Meeting
November 17th, 5:00 pm
Zion Fellowship Hall

Sources of Support at ZION CHISAGO CITY

Pastor Sarah is available to minister to anyone in need of spiritual care and comfort. Please let her or the church office know if there is someone she can pray with or help.

- **The Prayer Chapel**, located in a small room in back of the sanctuary, is always available for anyone in need of a quiet space to pray or meditate. Someone can be available to pray with you, if you wish.
- Zion has a strong **prayer chain** group. If you have prayer requests or would like to be a part of the prayer chain, please call Sandy Patrias, 651-674-2029 or dennysunrise11@gmail.com.
- The **Caregivers Courage** support group, led by Vicki Mickelsen, parish nurse, meets the first and third Wednesday mornings of the month at 9:30 am in the library. If you or someone you know is a caregiver, please come and invite them to join the group. Bring a beverage if you wish. For more information, contact Vicki at gandvmick@frontiernet.net.
- The **Grief Support Group**, led by Pastor Sarah, meets in the library on the second and fourth Wednesday mornings of the month at 10:00 am in the library. This group is open to people in the larger community as well. If you know someone who has lost a loved one and could use a caring group that understands the pain of grief, please let them know about this group.
- Ziion hosts the free **Community Meal** every Monday of the year from 4-6pm in our Fellowship Hall. Year round, this weekly event brings together 250+ people from all walks of life to share a meal. No reservations necessary.
- **Contact a Mental Health Navigator for free** at 612.642.1220 (text/call) or email navigator@mhconnect.org. Navigators are available Monday-Friday 9am-5pm. If you reach out outside these hours, they'll return your message the following day. Help with access to mental health services and support with resource navigation.
- **Mental Health Crisis Help** call or text 988
- For **local crisis help**, call 800-523-3333 or Text "MN" to 741741
- Questions about Mental Health? **You are not alone**. One in four adults will experience at least one diagnosable mental health problem in any given year. People in all walks of life, and those they care for, can be affected at any point in their lives. You can find information and resources in our local area: **AdultMentalHealth.org**

Serving counties of Chisago, Isanti, Kanabec, Mille Lacs, Pine, and the Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe.

Are you worried about your mental health but don't know where to start?
Find a free Mental Health Screening at: mentalhealthmn.org

Movement Opportunities

- **Tai Chi meets** every Monday morning from 9:30-10:30 am.
- **Strength and Flexibility** (**55**+) meets every Tuesday and Thursday from 8:30-9:15am
- **Cardio class** meets immediately after at 9:30 am. Cardio class is dance based .
- **Yoga** meets Wednesday morning at 8:30 am in the Choir Room.

Classes are open to the general public. Donations are welcome to pay the instructors.

ZION EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church
Where the Hungry are Fed

28005 Old Towne Road
Chisago City, MN 55013
Phone: 651.257.2713
Web: www.zionlcc.org or www.elca.org
Email: office@zionlcc.org

ELCA

ZION STAFF

Pastor Sarah Kerkes, ext. 2, pastor@zionlcc.org
Intergenerational Ministry: Emmy Lundeen, ext. 3, emmy@zionlcc.org
Office Administrator: Nina Ball, ext. 1, office@zionlcc.org
Bookkeeper: Melanie Torborg, ext. 4, bookkeeper@zionlcc.org
Organist: Josh Miller
Auxiliary Organists: Julie Lauritzen, Joy Sietsema, Wayne Hulting
Bell Choir & Choir Director: Kelly Lachmiller
Accompanist: Melanie Torborg
Youth Director: Todd Freeman
Maintenance: Hal Becker, Linda O'Donnell
Cemetery: Karen Pederson, ext. 5, cemetery@zionlcc.org
Sound Tech: Rod Sietsema

ZION COUNCIL

Vicki Mickelsen, President
Shepherding/Health Ministry
Barb Garness, Vice-President
Hospitality
Sheila Strehlo, Secretary
Arlen Strehlo, Treasurer
Roger Edholm, Property
Kia Frederixon,Youth
Virgi Johnson, Missions
Kelly Lachmiller, Music & Worship
Mutual Ministry/HR
Linda Letourneau, Stewardship
Emmy Lundeen, Christian Education
Karen Pederson, Outreach

When you do nothing,
you feel overwhelmed and powerless.
But when you get involved,
you feel the sense of hope and accomplishment
that comes from knowing
you are working to make things better.
--Pauline R. Kezer

Advent begins Sunday, November 29th. We will hold mid-week services on Wednesdays at 6:30pm

If you have photos from a day in the life of Zion's community, please send them to office@zionlcc.org. We'd love to share them!

If you would like to donate to Zion's ministry, you can use this QR code. Thank you.

Regular Giving

If you view services from home and would like to be on the email list to receive the bulletin each week, notify the office.

Focus design-Nina Ball// graphics supplied by Adobe Express or Freepik.com

If you'd like to receive this newsletter via email and Zion's weekly E-news on Thursdays, contact the office to be sure your information is in our database.