

FOCUS

A Publication of
Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church
Chisago City, Minnesota

Message from Pastor Sarah

This past fall, my husband and I planted 40 various bulbs in our front yard. A few of them have already come up and blossomed. Everyday we check to see if others are peeping up. This time of year, the growth comes quickly. We woke up one morning after evening rain to discover that the trees have blossomed and the dandelions are blooming. Before you know it, the air will be filled with the sound of lawnmowers.

Growth can also take time. I also sprinkled a few packages of wildflower seed in the same part of the lawn as the bulbs. Some wildflower seeds can remain dormant for a year or even two before springing to life. Church growth sometimes happens quickly but more often occurs a long time after seeds have been planted. We plant the seeds of faith every time we welcome children into our midst, every time we invite someone to a church event, every time we welcome a stranger.

Just as the seeds and bulbs must crack open in order for the plant to grow, church growth can involve cracking open to new ways of being church together. Changes occur whenever new people bring their insight and idea. The change can be as simple as sitting with a different group at coffee hour to changing the configuration of the pews, so it is easier to accommodate walkers and wheelchairs.

Zion is embarking on a two year stewardship program called Stewardship for All Seasons. We will have both a consultant and a cohort group. Part of this program will be looking at where we are now and then doing some visioning work to see where God is leading us. I am excited to begin this program and hope that you will support those who step forward to undertake this adventure. (Let Emmy or I know if you would like to be on the Stewardship team.) Seeds and bulbs will be planted, and the growth may surprise us!

Peace,
Pastor Sarah



He who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will supply and multiply your seed for sowing and increase the harvest of your righteousness. You will be enriched in every way for your great generosity, which will produce thanksgiving to God through us, for the rendering of this ministry not only supplies the needs of the saints but also overflows with many thanksgivings to God. 2 Corinthians 9:10-12

Worship Services

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

Contemporary Worship
10:45 am Sunday
*(last service on May 31st
until the Fall)*

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.



LOOKING FORWARD TO MAY



Annual Clean-Up Day is on Saturday, May 2nd at 8:30 am. Jobs will be available for all ages and abilities.



A new, two year stewardship program will begin next month with a consultant. If you are interested in supporting this effort with your time and skills, the kick-off event is May 7th at 6:00 pm. We are looking for a team. If you want more information, Emmy will gather those interested during Fellowship on Sunday, May 3rd, where she will share more details.



Mother's Day is Sunday, May 10th.

Please join us to celebrate mothers and others who have cared for us, by taking a carnation in memory and in honor of those who taught us to love one another as Christ loves us. The Hospitality Committee will continue their tradition of serving strawberry shortcake during Fellowship Hour.

1 John 4:9 God showed how much He loved us by sending his one and only Son into the world so that we might have eternal life through Him.



First Communion Class will be held on Wednesday, May 13th at 4pm for all children who would like to prepare for taking their first communion or would like to refresh their knowledge of the Lord's Supper. We will then celebrate First Communion on Sunday, May 31st. Please notify Emmy or Pastor if you haven't already confirmed your participation; transportation is available from Lakeside Elementary School. Parents do not need to attend



High School Graduates will be honored on May 17th.



Wellness Sunday-Attend Fellowship Hour and Stay for a Talk!

On Sunday, May 17 at 10:45 am, we will host an ELCA organization, Dignity for Daughters, that supports girls in the Tanzania.



Memorial Day is Monday, May 25th. We will hold a service at Memorial Park Cemetery beginning at 10:00 am. Refreshments will be offered following the service. In addition, Pastor Sarah will be traveling with the Honor Guard to West Green Lake Cemetery for a 10:30am service and then onto South Green Lake Cemetery for an 11:00 am service.



On May 31st we will have the last 10:45 am service for the season.

This second service will reconvene in the Fall.



ST. PAUL SYNOD EVENT

The St. Paul Area Synod Assembly is May 15-16. The main order of business is the election of a new bishop. Zion will be represented by voting members Vicki Mickelsen, Karen Pederson, Emmy Lundeen and Pastor Sarah. In addition, the synod vice-president is our own George Mickelson. He will be busy working behind the scenes and giving a report.





CHALK THE WALK for HOPE!
 May is Mental Health Awareness Month
 Join Zion on Wednesday, May 6th at 4:00 pm

- We will create supportive messages through chalk drawings and words on the sidewalk of Old Towne Road.
- Tools are available for those who have mobility limitations.
 - Confirmation and NOIZ kids will be here and anyone who is interested in the fun is invited!
 - Treats will be provided.

**Save the Dates:
Two VBS options this year!**

July 20-24, 9am-2pm
Theme:
Tell Me a Story

August 10-14, 9am-2pm
Theme:
What Just Happened

Cost is \$10 per child
Ages 5 to 12 invited.
Registration is required.

*We are looking for
volunteers to support a
variety of tasks. Look for a
list coming soon!*



WEEKLY PROGRAMMING

NOIZ kids will meet one more time on May 6th to participate in Chalk the Walk. See event below.

Game Days will continue during the summer on Wednesdays at 1:00 pm.

Join us for an afternoon of games. We'd like to establish a variety of groups who like to play a particular game. We also realize there are those who are very competitive and those who'd rather chat while playing a game. Connect with Emmy if you have a specific game in mind; so far, there is an effort to create a group to learn the game Samba. We meet in the Fellowship Hall.

Thrift Store Adventure: Tuesday, May 26th, 9:30 am

Sign-up for our next outing to the Forest Lake & Wyoming Family Pathways Thrift stores! We will have lunch afterwards at The Village Inn. See Emmy's board to sign-up.



Confirmation Class

Thank you to everyone who has supported our confirmation kids this past school year. The class is especially grateful for the snacks! We have had a good year of learning more about God, ourselves, and our neighbors. We have a large group that will be preparing for confirmation this fall. Our last day of class is May 6 and we will be chalking the sidewalk with positive messages. Everyone is invited to join us!

The youth group attended a Feed My Starving Children event on Sunday, April 19th.



photo courtesy of Heidi Klecker

Ge Howard...Words to Challenge and Inspire

A GODLY TOUCH

Oh, the power of a godly touch. Haven't you known it? The doctor who treated you, or the teacher who dried your eyes? Was there a hand holding yours at a funeral? Another on your shoulder during a trial? A handshake of welcome at a new job? Can't we offer the same?

Many of us already do. Some have the master touch of the Physician himself. You use your hands to pray over the sick and minister to the weak. If you aren't touching them personally, your hands are writing letters, making phone calls, baking pies. You have learned the power of a touch.

But others of us tend to forget. Our hearts are good; it's just that our memories are bad. We forget how significant one touch can be.....

Aren't you glad that Jesus didn't make the same mistake?

Max Lucado from "Just Like Jesus"

Life is 10% what happens to you and 90% how you respond to it.

Lou Holtz



Notes of Gratitude



Thank you to everyone who supported the Youth Breakfast and Silent Auction, either by attending, participating in the auction, or assisting with the breakfast. \$1216 was raised to fund the mission trip.

Thank you to everyone who blessed me with kind words, cards and gifts at Easter and for my Birthday. Thanks to the Sandy and Denny for the Birthday cake. It was a surprise! Pastor Sarah

Thank you to Sue Schneider and the Altar Guild for all of their work during Holy Week and Easter. Thanks to the musicians, the tech folk and all the volunteers who made the week really special. There are a lot of moving parts behind the scenes of a worship service, and we are blessed with the talents it takes to make our services run smoothly.

Thank you to the Prayer Chain and for all the cards, visits, prayers, and loving care from Zion after my recent surgery. Bob Butte

Thank you to everyone who has lead with their gift to payoff our second mortgage.

A sincere Thank You to all who contributed money in memory of or in honor of your loved ones for our Easter Garden. Looking at the beautiful plants and thinking they represent many loved ones is amazing. Also thank you to all who came to prepare the garden for our Easter service and those who were able to help hand out the plants and clean up the Sunday after Easter. All of your willing hands are so appreciated and make these things possible. Thank you and God Bless you.

Vicki Mickelsen

Pave the Way- Part Two

Our church family continues to make steady progress in caring for the financial commitments that helped provide our much-needed parking lot.

The remaining balance on our second mortgage is \$86,000 and requires annual payments of \$21,000. The interest rate is 4.25 %, and it would be paid off in about 5 years.

By working together through prayerful generosity, we can reduce or eliminate the debt, ease future financial pressure, and free additional resources for ministry and outreach.

We invite you to consider making a special gift toward this effort. Any contribution would be above and beyond your regular annual giving and would not reduce or replace the commitment that you already have made.

Various gifting techniques could be used: Qualified Charitable Distribution from an IRA, appreciated stock or property, or just writing a check. You may want to consult your tax preparer if necessary. To discuss this further, feel free to contact Gary Kerkow @ 651-308-9225.

Update: We have received \$25,000 to date. Look for the progress poster coming soon!





APRIL COLLECTION

Thanks to you, during the month of April we collected a total of **2,002 ounces** of lemonade mix for the Community Meal. Zion also collected **217 pounds** of food and supplies in March.

awesome!

MAY COLLECTION: Cleaning Supplies for the Family Pathways Food Shelf. We request any household cleaner useful for daily upkeep, such as laundry detergent, surface spray, & toilet cleaner.

THRIVENT

An update was made to the **Thrivent Choice® program** recently. In the past, members were required to request their Choice Dollars throughout the year. Now, when you call or request your distribution to the organization of your choice, they release the entire amount at once, instead of spacing the dollars quarterly.

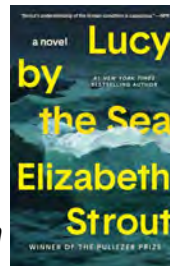
If you have an opportunity to request a **Thrivent Action Team card**, Emmy is currently in need of funds for future Senior Luncheons, Health Ministry events, and shepherding projects.

Page Turner's Book Club

On Monday, May 4 at 6:00 pm we'll discuss *The Lies They Told by Ellen Marie Wiseman.*

On Monday, June 1 at 6:00 pm we'll discuss *Lucy by the Sea by Elizabeth Strout.*

As a panicked world goes into lockdown, Lucy Barton is uprooted from her life in Manhattan and bundled away to a small town in Maine by her ex-husband and on-again, off-again friend William. For the next several months, it's just Lucy, William and their complex past together in a little house nestled against the moody, swirling sea. The book vividly captures the fear and struggles that come with isolation, as well as the hope, peace and possibilities that those long, quiet days can inspire.



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.

Missions

School Backpack Project Time

Looking for people who would like to sew some Backpack Bags for our on-going Backpack project. Needy children around the world would surely appreciate them. Directions are available as well as material for the constructing the bags. If you are interested, contact: Virgi Johnson - 203-500-0611

A list of school items is located on the MISSIONS Board, and ...Hint/Hint/Hint... we surely could use some THRIVENT \$250.00 ACTION TEAN CARDS. Thanks in advance!



MEETINGS

Finance Committee
Tuesday, May 12, 1:00 pm
.....
Property Committee
Monday, May 18, 4:00 pm
.....
Zion Council
Wednesday, May 20, 6:00 pm

Adult Education

Pastor Sarah's Bible study meets on Thursday mornings at 10:00 am in the library, year-round. Pastor's Bible Study continues to delve into the stories of women in Scripture. You are invited to join us at any time. No Bible Study experience necessary. Coffee is provided.



Men's Bible Study is led by Pastor Richard Baumann, on Saturday mornings at 8:30 am in the Fellowship Hall. Although our primary intent is a Bible study, we seem to digress often and cover a wide range of subjects. Join us any time!

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 July 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.

COMMUNITY

FREE Dine & Discover at ZION

Wednesday, May 13, 2026, 12:00pm

Topic: Safe Use of Medications/Hidden Hazards of on-line and over-the counter drugs and more

Register by May 8th. Call 651-6741025 or online through North Branch community education.

Sponsored by Chisago Age Well, Chisago County Public Health, Thrifty White, and North Branch Area Public Schools

Point Pleasant Heights is celebrating their 40th anniversary on May 14th at 2:00 pm. The public is invited to the party. Pastor Sarah will be speaking at this event.



Community Meal event: Chisago County Public Health will offer Blood Pressure Screenings May 18th, 4:00-6:00 pm.



Finance Update

SING AS ONE
PRESENTED BY UNEXPECTED COMPANY CHORALE

UC
UNEXPECTED COMPANY CHORALE

7:30 PM
Friday, May 1st
Faith Lutheran Church
886 North Shore Drive, Forest Lake, MN

3:00 PM
Sunday, May 3rd
Chisago Lakes High School
Performing Arts Center
29400 Olinda Trail, Lindstrom, MN

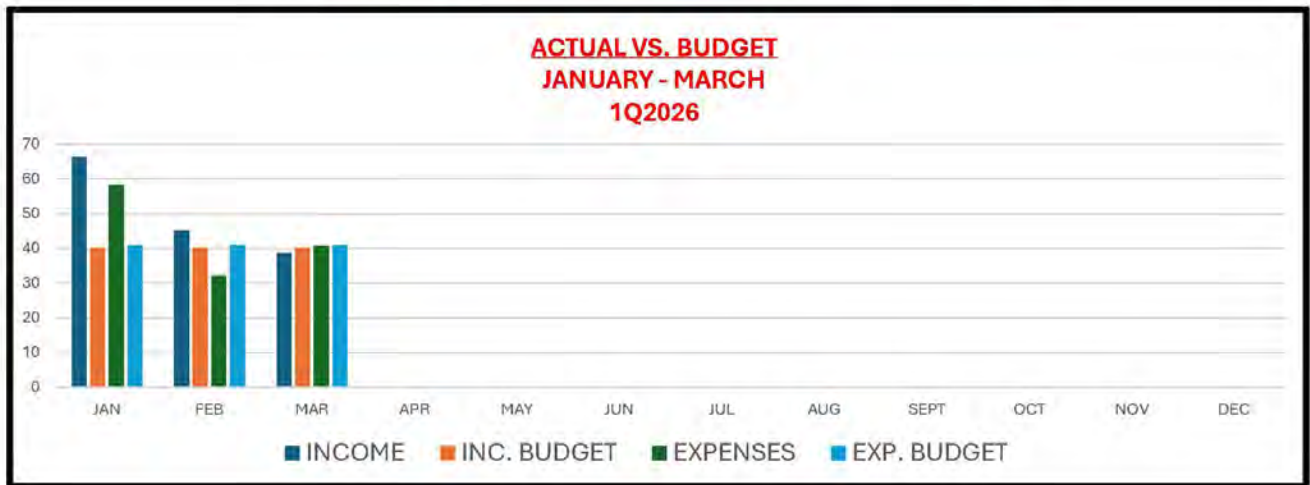
ALL TICKETS \$15
Tickets available online at ucchorale.org, in advance from chorale members, or at the door

FOR MORE INFORMATION CHECK OUT UCCHORALE.ORG

LIKE US ON FACEBOOK AT [UCCHORALEMN](https://www.facebook.com/UCCHORALEMN)

This activity is made possible by the voters of Minnesota through a grant from the East Central Regional Arts Council, thanks to a legislative appropriation from the Arts and Cultural Heritage Fund.

ZION MONTHLY INCOME AND EXPENSES VS. 2026 BUDGET



2026 1Q (JAN - MAR)

o ACTUAL INCOME	\$ 156,123
o BUDGET INCOME	\$ 120,450
o ACTUAL EXPENSES	\$ 131,082
o BUDGET EXPENSES	\$ 126,731

chart courtesy of Arlen Strehlo

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 email at sd.patrias@q.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.
- Zion 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.
- Tuesday/Thursday classes are open to the general public. Donations are welcome to pay the instructors.



COMING IN MAY: Wednesday morning Yoga with Teresa Rosen. Begins May 6 at 8:30 am.



ZION EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

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

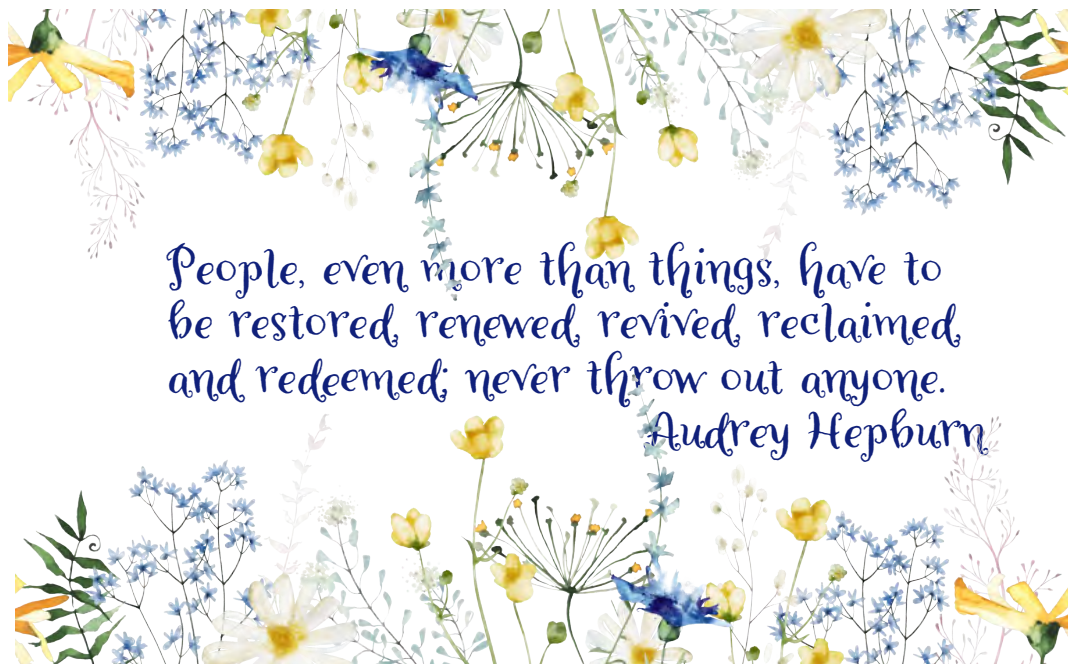


ZION STAFF

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: Deb Hoffmeister/ 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: Sheryl Mellgren, 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



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



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.