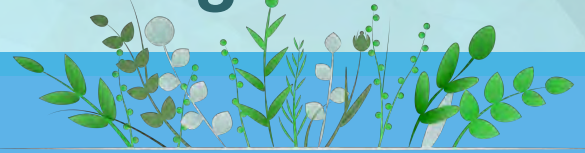


August 2025

FOCUS



A Publication of
Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church
Chisago City, Minnesota

The weather has been rather wild so far this summer. We go from heat warnings to severe storm warnings. We have also had a number of air quality alerts due to the fires in Canada. Most of us are fortunate to have air-conditioned homes and work places to shelter in.

Message from
Pastor Sarah

The state of our nation and of the world is also rather wild. Many people in our own country are living in fear of losing their jobs or losing their family members to detention camps. There are plenty of news stories that shake us up, have us shaking our heads, or shake up our perception of reality. It is tempting to seek peace in talking to people who think the way we think, who echo our own opinions or downplay the seriousness of these days.

Although there were no tv stations or podcasts in Jesus day, the common folk knew there was a lot going on in the world at the time. The Romans were ruling over Isreal, dissenters like John the Baptist were risking their lives, and the class divides were immense. Jesus comes into the cities and the countryside preaching healing and peace. Not a false peace or even a political peace; but a peace that starts when we start seeing the people around us with eyes of love and compassion. Jesus comes healing the hurting, eating with the outcast and breaking all human made lines of race and class. Not everyone was receptive to the words and actions of Jesus. But those who were receptive found purpose and meaning in the midst of troubled times. They also found new communities of acceptance and love.

All these centuries later we seek to follow the way of Jesus. We gather to worship together, to welcome people into our community of faith, and to share our gifts with the community and world around us. We speak out when we see evil at work. All of this doesn't make the wildness of the world go away, but it gives us a deep purpose and identity that cannot be shaken.

Pastor Sarah

For where there is envy and selfish ambition, there will also be disorder and wickedness of every kind. But the wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, willing to yield, full of mercy and good fruits, without a trace of partiality or hypocrisy. And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace. James 3:16-18

Worship Services

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

Facebook live and YouTube
recordings available
at 10:00 am

Find Us Online:

YouTube:
@zionevangelicallutheranchi6301
Facebook: zionlcc

Office Hours

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



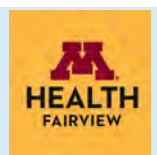
Upcoming August Activities



Sunday, August 3, 10:30 am, First Communion Class

Children beginning in second grade or older are invited to join us for this class.

Sunday, August 10, 9:00 am, Worship with First Communion



Tuesday, August 12, 12:00 pm, Dine and Discover-My Chart 101 hosted by Chisago Age Well

Learn to use MyChart confidently to make appointments, manage medications, and more!

Presenter Jack Castiglione of M Health Fairview and other assistants will be ready to help you.

New users will learn how to sign up and access their health information. Learn how to send messages, view tests, manage medications and schedule virtual visits. Caregivers are welcome!

Register by Friday, August 8 by calling 651-674-1025.// This FREE event will be held at Zion.



Sunday, August 17, 10:00 am, Memorial Cemetery Garage Dedication

The cemetery board has had a plaque made to honor Chet Garness' devotion to and dedicated work for the Zion cemeteries. After church on August 17, we will walk or drive across the street so we can pay tribute to Chet. The cemetery board will serve coffee and donuts.



Monday, August 24, 3:00 pm, Thrivent Member Workshop

Hosted by Thrivent representative Nathan McGuire, the goal of this workshop is to share the benefits of Thrivent membership. If you use Thrivent products, this is an opportunity to learn more about benefits like designating free Choice Dollars to an organization of your choice and to learn more about Action Teams, which is the free program that provides \$250 in funding for an activity of your choosing. Coffee and treats will be provided.



August Celebrations of Life

John Froberg - Friday, August 15

Visitation 10:00 am // Funeral 11:00 am // lunch to follow

Ruth Quarn - Saturday, August 23

Visitation 10:00 am // Funeral 11:00 am // lunch to follow

Database News:

Beginning in August, we will contact a small number of members who still use our old Vanco giving system to transition to our new Realm system.

Planning Ahead: Important September Dates

- Confirmation will begin on Wednesday, September 10 at 4:00 pm. Contact Pastor Sarah or the office to enroll.
- Stay tuned for the choir season to resume in September.
- See 'Engaging Emmy' for additional activities and events!

Lakes and Pines Head Start Update:

On Monday, August 4, a new exterior door will be installed in the Lakes and Pines Head Start wing. This door will help them utilize their space to host additional children. A Head Start grant is paying for this project.

The director of Head Start is seeking community volunteers to come and talk about their professions; nurses, plumbers, any person interested in helping little ones learn more about their community. Contact Nina in the office if you are interested, and she can put you in touch with the director.

God loves you

Engaging with Emmy

Current Events



Zion is hosting a **National Night Out** event on Tuesday, August 5 at 6:00pm.
We are gathering donations of spoons, vanilla ice cream, and root beer.
JOIN US FOR ROOTBEER FLOATS!

The **MiChiLu Picnic** will be held at Zion on Sunday, August 24 at 12:30 pm.



NOIZ SCHEDULE for the 2025-2026 School Year

Join us for Bible stories, games, and fun!

All second through fifth grade students are invited to participate in our NOIZ weekly group on Wednesdays. These are the dates we'll be together during the 2025-2026 school year:



- Sept 10, 17, 24
- October 1, 8, 22, 29
- November 5, 12, 19
- December 3, 10
- January 7, 14, 21, 28
- February 4, 11, 18, 25
- March 4, 18, 25
- April 8, 15, 22, 29



- End of year bowling or swimming event

Please Note: After school transportation from Lakeside Elementary is available. Enroll your child by contacting Emmy Lundeen.

SAVE THE DATES: SEPTEMBER EVENTS

Sunday, September 7

Blessing of Teachers and Backpacks

Monday, September 8, 4:00 pm

Community Meal Anniversary Spaghetti Dinner

Monday, September 15, 4:00 pm

Community Meal Fundraiser picnic

Thursday, September 18, 11:00am

Senior Worship & Luncheon

Monday, September 25, 6:00 pm

Community Meal meeting

September 28
Mission Sunday

Youth News

The youth mission trip in July was a success.

Thank you to everyone who made this possible!



Photos courtesy of Heidi Klecker

Gee Howard...Words to Challenge and Inspire

For all we know about the next life, this much is certain. The day Christ comes will be a day of reward. Those who went unknown on earth will be known in heaven. Those who never heard the cheers of men will hear the cheers of angels. Those who missed the blessings of a father will hear the blessings of their heavenly Father. The small will be great. The forgotten will be remembered. The unnoticed will be crowned and the faithful will be honored. The winner's circle isn't reserved for a handful of elite, but for a heaven full of God's children who "will receive the crown of life that God has promised to those who love Him".

James 1: 12

Max Lucado

If you hang around the barbershop, sooner or later you're going to get your hair cut. So I try to stay away from temptation.

Stephen King



Why should someone be a member of Zion?

10. You will get your own church mailbox and giving number.
9. You will get a name tag.
8. You get a vote and a voice at the annual meeting.
7. Joining a committee or team is a great way to work together on a project
6. A commitment to the church keeps us faithful in worship and prayer.
5. You will make new friends.
4. Your gifts and talents will be encouraged and utilized for the good of the community.
3. We are stronger together.
2. The church is a place for mutual support, encouragement, accountability and honesty.
1. Belonging to a church community connects you with others who share your faith and your values, which strengthens our presence in the larger community.

If you are interested in becoming a member of Zion, please contact Pastor Sarah.
There are membership forms available in the office.



Notes of Gratitude

Dear Zion Friends,

Thank you for the outpouring of support you have shown our family over the past months of Dave's illness and passing. Every single card, text, visit, donation, hug, and prayer is appreciated more than we can fully express. I especially need to recognize Kris Opheim Skoog and the army of kitchen staff for their amazing luncheon after the service. In a time when these events are becoming more and more rare, catering these are most common, it was especially poignant for me to have such a huge and wonderful presentation of a "Lutheran Funeral Lunch." My grandmother served at these luncheons at Zion in the 1930's, with the "Ladies Aid", or some such organization, and this show of God's mission is especially important to me. Thank you.

Life is forever changing, but God's love is our constant.

Monica Tosteson and family

To my many friends and my Zion Family,

Thank You all for your concern for me in my recent mishap. I'm mending, but much slower than I like. I surely appreciate all of your prayers and love.

Virgi Johnson

Thank you to the people who make desserts and help serve at the Community Meal.

Thank you to all those who directed Thrivent Choice Dollars to Zion.
In July we received \$93.00!



Food Shelf Ministry



JULY COLLECTION

You donated a total of 30 playground balls for the kids of Zion.
There was an additional 28 pounds of groceries donated.

Thanks so much!

AUGUST COLLECTION: toilet paper and toilet bowl cleaner
for Family Pathways

please note: egg cartons are no longer being collected

Page Turner's Book Club

**Join us on Monday, August 4th at 6:00 pm to discuss
The Maid by Nita Prose.**

A clue-like, locked room mystery and heartwarming journey of the spirit, *The Maid* explores what it means to be the same as everyone else and yet entirely different—and reveals that all mysteries can be solved through connection to the human heart.



**Up Next: On Monday, September 1st at 6:00 pm we'll discuss
The Wedding People : A Novel by Alison Espach.**

In turns of absurdly funny and devastatingly tender, this story is ultimately an incredibly nuanced and resonant look at the winding paths we can take to places we never imagined - and the chance encounters it sometimes takes to reroute us.



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.

Book Discussion with Pastor Sarah

Pastor Sarah will be leading a book study on "**The Rapture Exposed: The Message of Hope in the Book of Revelation**" by Barbara Rossing. If you are interested, books are available in the office. She will meet Mondays at 2:30pm to review one chapter weekly, beginning August 11th.



A Big Endowment Thank You!

Two gifts recently came in to Zion's Endowment Fund. One was a distribution from an IRA account from Shirley Lofgren. The other check was as a result of a Charitable Gift Annuity estate settlement, on behalf of the Raymond L. Mehl Estate.

These are two good examples of ways that members have chosen to honor and remember Zion and it's charitable outreach to students, community and its missions. Our members' support is a vital part of our continual ability to make annual distributions.

**Again, a sincere thank you to Shirley and Ray
for their foresight and planning!**

*Any questions regarding how YOU too can make Zion's Endowment part of your philanthropic efforts, please contact me: Gary Kerkow
651-308-9225*

AUGUST MEETINGS

Finance Committee
Tuesday, August 12, 1:00 pm

.....

Property Committee
Thursday, August 14, 6:00 pm

.....

Zion Staff Meeting
Tuesday, August 19, 12-2:00 pm,

.....

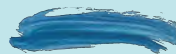
Zion Council
Tuesday, August 19, 6:00 pm,

.....

Worship and Music
Sunday, August 24, 10:00 am,

Adult Education

Pastor Sarah's Bible study meets on Thursday mornings at 10:00 am in the library, year-round. We welcome all!



Men's Bible Study is led by Pastor Richard Baumann, on Saturday mornings at 8:30 am in the Fellowship Hall. Our final summer study is on Saturday, August 9, at 8:30 am.
Stay tuned for our fall schedule.

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.



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

Sources of Support



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 **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.
- **NEW IN 2025! (and FREE) Contact a Mental Health Navigator** at 612.642.1220 (text/call) or email at 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 at 9:30 am in room 124.
 - **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.*



Absent: Virgi Johnson

Devotions: Mary Redgrave

Call to Order: Heidi Klecker

Additions/Approval of Agenda (motion) Kelly/Vicki

Official approval of Minutes from (motion): Vicki/ Kelly

New Business

- Triathlon water station: July 27. Twelve people needed. Emmy will have sign-up sheet.
- KiChiSaga Parade: August 17. Need volunteers to participate in parade. Building will be open for convenience of parade participants.
- Youth Mission Trip: August 27, the youth group will give a presentation to the congregation about the "mission service" trip to Kenosha, WI. The youth participated in helping at a food shelf, a facility that helps the homeless and a variety of other 'service' activities.

Ongoing Business

- Visions and Victories: Attendance numbers range in the 80's which is an increase in people attending Zion.
- The council members discussed the "future of Zion". Members made a list of a statement or word answering the question: "Who Are We"? Several words and phrases were discussed.

Committee Reports

Finance: Arlen Strehlo: Reimbursement for stove is in process. The electronic on-line giving function expired this month. The congregation needs to be notified. Members will receive a Donation Statement this month. The congregation needs to be updated about the finance status of the church. Arlen Strehlo will develop a visual for presentation to the congregation.

Property: Several updates and information topics were discussed. The fire suppression system for the stove needs to be charged. A new seal for the freezer door was completed. An individual is available to help through the Community Service program for tasks in the church. A fence is needed for the garbage cans, the rain barrel needs modifications, security signs are needed in the area outside of the building, and Head Start has their own security system.

Youth Group: Kia Frederixon: See notes from New Business above.

Missions: Virgi Johnson: Mary reported the school bags are the main project at this time.

Hospitality: Barb Garness: Nothing at this time.

Stewardship: Mary Redgrave: Nothing at this time.

Technology: Pastor Sarah: WiFi has been upgraded to have open connection for the congregation. There is a need for a new computer, monitor and sound board in the balcony at an approximate cost of \$2,700. To have a TV in the narthex area for announcements and funeral use would cost approximately \$600-\$700. The electronics needed are for the benefit of the members of the church. The staff has updated computers.

Worship and Music: Kelly Lachmiller: A music meeting will be scheduled for the end of August. The date for the Organ Recital is Monday, October 6, 2025, after the Community Meal. The recital will feature Josh, Joy, Julie and "John" (Wayne). The blessings of the pets is Sunday, October 5, 2025.

Shepherding/Health Ministry Team: Vicki Mickelsen: Liz Aldritt and Pastor Sarah had resources available for Advance Directives and Funeral Planning. A health presentation in September or October is in progress.

Mutual Ministry: Sherri Baumann: A meeting will be scheduled.

Community Meal: Emmy Lundeen: Churches in the area are scheduled to serve through August. The need for groups to serve is needed by September. Donations from local restaurants for paper products would be helpful for the Community Meal Program. The Anniversary Spaghetti dinner is on Monday, September 8, 2025 and the Bar-B-Que fundraiser will be on Monday, September 15, 2025.

Intergenerational Ministry Director's Report: Emmy Lundeen: Several events have been planned and completed these past few months. The events scheduled and needing volunteers are Triathlon, Sunday July 27 (support water stand), National Night Out is August 5, Vacation Bible School, August 4-8, Ki Chi Saga Days, Sunday, August 17. The MiChiLu Picnic is at Zion on August 24 at 12:30 p.m. with community people welcome. On September 7, Back packs will be blessed, The Anniversary Spaghetti dinner is September 8, the Bar-B-Que Fundraiser is September 15, Mission Sunday is September 28 with the theme "God's Work, Our Hands", October 5 is the Blessing of the Pets and October 26 is Confirmation Sunday. Jennie Green is a new member of the Community Meal Board.

Pastor's Report: Pastor Sarah: A list of several events and commitments Pastor Sarah has participated in within the past few months is on file. Vacation for Pastor Sarah will be the first week of September.

Approval of Reports: (Motion) Barb/Vicki

Adjourn: (Motion) Kia/Barb

Next meeting dates are Aug 19, Sept. 16, Oct. 21, Nov. 18, at 6:00 p.m.

Next Devotions: Aug - Arlen, Sept - Kelly, Oct - Sherri

Submitted: Sheila Strehlo

note: a large print version of the council minutes is available upon request

ZION EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

28005 Old Towne Road
Chisago City, MN 55013
Phone: 651.257.2713
Web: www.zionlcc.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, 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
Custodian & Groundskeeper: Dexter Bylander
Cemetery: Sheryl Mellgren, ext. 5, cemetery@zionlcc.org
Sound Tech: Rod Sietsema

ZION COUNCIL

Heidi Klecker, President, Education
Sheila Strehlo, Secretary
Arlen Strehlo, Treasurer
Sherri Baumann, Shepherding
Kia Frederixon, Youth
Barb Garness, Hospitality
Virgi Johnson, Missions
Kelly Lachmiller, Music & Worship
Vicki Mickelsen, Parish Nurse, Shepherding/Health Ministry
Mary Redgrave, Stewardship



What we need
is a way to be honest
about what's broken
while still leaving the door
cracked open for hope.

-Kate Bowler

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.