

The Times They Are a-Changin'

With the staff transition in the office, we will not be offering a February Tidings, so this will be my last from The Pastor's Desk. This summer, Wayne and I enjoyed seeing the movie about Bob Dylan. A song featured in the movie was Dylan's, *The Times They Are a-Changin'* from 1964.

At least 15-20 years ago, when I was on staff in a congregation, we received a sample package in the mail - the kind they send out hoping that you will purchase their product. It was a small communion cup filled with grape juice, with a wafer securely wrapped on the lid. We laughed and laughed at this prospect. We even came up with a name for it - a Communion Happy Meal. Who in the world would use such a thing? Now, I realize that, especially in mega congregations that don't have multiple communion stations, this probably is helpful and makes sense to use. And who knew, fast-forward to the Covid years, that these little meals would be the body and blood of Christ for us. *The Times They Are a-Changin'*. Our Barnabas Ministers continue to use them for home communions.

Sometimes the word "change" gets a bad rap. We like what we know. It's safe, we don't have to go out on a limb, we don't have to worry about something flopping, or learning something different. And yet, change can bring new opportunities we might miss if we stay the same. And yes, sometimes change can be scary and intimidating, but it also can be so enriching. Two and a half years ago, it was time for me to leave my call, and the Lord called me to serve you as your Intentional Interim Pastor. New people and relationships to nurture, exciting new ministries to participate in, and learning and growth for Wayne and me. *The Times They Are a-Changin'*.

As we part ways, pastor and congregation, you are on the cusp of a new day. Our parting is certainly sad, and yet your future as the people of God here in Belvidere is wide open with new opportunities. Your next pastor will bring their special gifts, and you will grow, learn, serve, and love together. Wayne and I are moving into the next season of our lives, and it will be a new thing. You are also going to experience a newness of life as you move into Zion's next season of ministry. *The Times They Are a-Changin'*.

When I arrived at Zion, you were still struggling with pain and brokenness. Thank you for allowing me to be your pastor, to trust and confide in me, to let me try out some new things that you hadn't experienced before, and to invite Wayne and me fully into your church family. In what lies ahead for you and for us, we turn in prayer to God, trusting that Christ's cross and resurrection that brought us life, will meet all that is waiting for us, and bless us to be a blessing to others in a new way. That is the work of the church in these times that are a-changin' and in all times.

I thank my God for every remembrance of you, always in every one of my prayers for all of you, praying with joy for your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now. I am confident of this, that the one who began a good work in you will continue to complete it until the day of Jesus Christ. (Philippians 1:3-6)

Embracing change as Christ leads us on,
Pastor Elizabeth Martin

Community Meal



The December Community Meal featured a ham dinner with au gratin potatoes, a vegetable, and a variety of desserts and Christmas cookies. Unfortunately, attendance was down significantly, as only 38 people were there to enjoy the meal.

Thank you to these volunteers who braved the cold weather and made this meal possible: Dawn, Judy, Linda, Lyle, Patti, Rodney, Wanda, and Wayne.

The next meal will be held on Wednesday, January 14. We will need about 10 people for this meal. If you would like to help, be sure to get your name on the volunteer sign-up sheet posted on the bulletin board.

John Enright

Pioneer News

Thank you to Dawn Calkins and the Classic Chorale chorus for the Christmas music they provided at the December meeting of the Pioneer Club.



The January Pioneer Club will be held on Monday, January 12, starting at noon. Please bring your own table setting and a dish to pass for the potluck lunch. A meat dish will be provided with a free will offering to cover the cost.

For our entertainment, we are going to revert back to grade school and have a good old-fashioned Show-and-Tell. We are asking members to bring something they either bought, received as a gift, or made and tell us about it. Share your favorite Bible verse, poem or song and tell why it is important to you. Tell of a unique experience you may have had. Anything goes; it should be fun.

If you don't want to come for the potluck lunch but want to hear the stories, show up around 12:30. Have a cup of coffee and one of the many desserts, and enjoy the show.

Women of Zion



Thanks to everyone who contributed to the First Step Daycare Angel Tree this year. We were able to help 19 children with gifts of clothing and toys this holiday season. You are greatly appreciated!

Planning Meeting – Come be a part of the planning for 2026 events. Thursday, January 15, 2026 @ 9:30 AM – all are welcome to attend.

Sunday, February 1, 2026: Join Pastor Elizabeth and Wayne for breakfast as we celebrate her retirement from Zion - immediately following the service.

We will have 2 sign-up sheets:

- 1 - for attendance (for meal planning purposes)
- 1 - to help with the event. Check the bulletin board at the parking lot entrance. Many hands make light work!

Zion's Youth

Mark your calendars for the upcoming events:

Friday, January 16, 5:30 pm Ice Skating at The Riverside Ice Arena in Doty Park. It is Retro night at the skating rink. There will be a DJ and lights. The cost of ice skating and skate rental is being donated by Jean and Jim Twyning. We will walk up to Sips and Sprinkles when we are done, walking tacos \$8 or hotdogs/fries \$10, both include a soda or hot chocolate. All church members & friends are welcome. **Back-up date is January 23 if the weather doesn't agree**

Friday, February 6 - Sunday, February 8 Wisconsin Dells water park. We will be staying in a 3 bedroom condo at Glacier Canyon which is attached to the Wilderness. I have 2 rooms if needed. \$25 a person to help cover the food/drinks/snacks. We will eat in the rooms. The price of the water park is included. Extra spending money can be brought for arcade games or other activities at the resort. Once I know who is going, we will figure out departure times. We will be back by 2:00 on Sunday.

Ski Trip planned for Monday, February 16 (No school). Everyone is welcome. **Cascade Mountain in Wisconsin.** We will meet at the church at 12:00 and leave by 12:15. We will ski from 3 - 8 pm.

Adults (13 and up) \$60 lift ticket Rentals \$42

Kids under 13 Free with adult Rentals \$42

Those wanting to snow tub it is \$45 for 7 and above, \$25 for 6 and younger. We will need to get tickets ahead of time. They only allow so many on the mountain. Sign up by **February 10th** if you are interested. All church members & friends are welcome

Butter Braids Fundraiser: We will sell from February 15 - March 2. Orders turned in by March 3. They will be delivered on March 14, pick up 11-1. The congregation will get them on Sunday, March 15.

Summer - 2 summer trips are being planned - We will return to Crandon, WI, and a 1-2 night stay at Lutheran Outdoor Ministries Center (LOMC) in Organ, IL

We will be planning fundraisers soon.

Please let Jody know as soon as possible what activities you will be able to attend.

815-978-1691 - Check the bulletin board for sign-up sheets.

Chili Cook Off

The Chili Cook-Off will be held on Thursday, February 5th. In addition to chili, there will be soup, bread, and desserts. This annual event is a fundraiser for Lutheran World Relief.

If you'd like to bring a pot of your favorite chili or soup, or some bread or desserts, please utilize the sign-up sheet posted on the bulletin board. It is important that we know how many people are bringing items so we can set up an appropriate number of tables. Try and bring your food items between 4:30 and 5:00, as the Cook-Off is from 5:00 - 6:30. Bring your friends and bring your appetite.

New Members

Have you been worshiping with Zion and consider this your church home? Would you like to make it official by becoming a member? If so, Pastor Elizabeth will hold a short informational meeting, answer your questions, and send you with resources. You can then decide if you would like to become a member of Zion Lutheran. The meeting will be in the library after worship on Sunday, January 18th. The date to receive new members during worship is the following Sunday, January 25th. Please let Pastor Elizabeth know if you are interested so that materials can be ordered and prepared.

Christian Nurturing News

December was a busy month for the youth. They participated in decorating a Hometown Christmas tree. Thanks to Ms. Pat for organizing this. Decorating the CASA float and walking in the Hometown Parade was a cold but fun experience. Thanks to Heather and Jody for making this happen. Practicing the Christmas play to perform during church was a great time. The kids did a great job in the performance on Sunday as well.





Wishing Mandy the best in her new job! Your Zion family will miss you.



Thank you Zion for your "Generosity " to help our church move forward in 2026.



Thanks to all who helped decorate the church before the big snow arrived. Your hard work is appreciated and will help us celebrate Jesus' birthday in beautiful ways: Jane and Al Schuessler, Beth Hong, Kris Beever, Wayne Martin, Dawn Calkins, Sharon and Gary Yunto, Arlyn Groen, Michelle and Jeff Ernest, Marge Olson, Melissa and Scott Sell, and Donna Brookbank. As always, if anyone's name was not included, it was not intentional.

Donna Brookbank

Thanks for the card shower for Bill's 90th Birthday!

Bill & Diane Vorndran

Thank you to everyone for the outpouring of support, cards, and gifts!
I love you all!

Mandy Minson





Happy Birthday from your Zion Family!



6-Yvonne Miralrio
7-Kerry Thies
9-Gerry Trieloff
15-Dawn Brunschon
17-John Bender

18-Lily Brandmire
19-Melita Ogan
19-Melody Johnson
23-Lesley Ahlberg
24-Trish Zastrow

25-Jim Twynning
26-Sandra Rubeck
27-Kris Beever
27-Cindy Foster
28-Wayne Martin

From the Treasurer:

General Fund

Nov/2025 Beginning Balance \$ 12,020.32
Total Income \$ 13,488.90
Total Expense \$ 17,105.47
Balance \$ 8,403.75

General Fund Reserve Savings

Nov/2025 Beginning Balance \$ 88,958.80
Income \$ 17.06
Expenses \$
Balance \$ 88,975.86

Building Fund

Nov/2025 Beginning Balance \$(7,279.48)
Total Income \$ 12,874.00
Total Expense \$ 1,284.24
Balance \$ 4,310.28

Council Members

Term Through January 2026

Melody Johnson
David Schumann
Gary Yunto

Term Through January 2027

Kris Enright
Michelle Ernest
Kelly Kotajarvi
Terry Miller

Term Through January 2028

Jody Archer
Dawn Calkins
Jeanne Marnen
Stephanie Skelnik

Worship Schedule

Sundays at 9:00 am
Thursday at 7:00 pm

Find Worship Videos at
www.zionbelvidere.com

OR

On Facebook at
[ZionBelvidere+](https://www.facebook.com/ZionBelvidere+)

Email
zionlutheran1300@gmail.com

Staff & Leadership

Rev. Elizabeth Martin
Intentional Interim Pastor

Administrative Assistant

David Schumann
Council President

Dan Albrecht
Choir Director

Melody Johnson & Melita Ogan
Sunday School Directors

Jody Archer
Director of Children and Youth
Ministries

Diane Vorndran
Financial Secretary

Sharon Yunto
Treasurer

Scripture for the Month of January

January 4

Jeremiah 31:7-14
Ephesians 1:3-14
John 1:1-18

January 11

Isaiah 42:1-9
Acts 10:34-43
Matthew 3:13-17

January 18

Isaiah 49:1-7
1 Corinthians 1:1-9
John 1:29-42

January 25

Isaiah 9:1-4
1 Corinthians 1:10-18
Matthew 4:12-23

January 2026						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
OFFICE HOURS Monday-Thursday 9am-1pm Closed Fridays				1 New Year's Day Office Closed No Thursday Worship Service	2 Office Closed Annual Reports Due by 9am	3
4 Sunday Service of the Word Worship 9am & Sunday School Adult Bible Study after service Christian Nurturing Meeting after service	5 Worship & Music 5pm	6	7 Council Reports Due by 9am Sewing/Quilting 9am Bible Study 9:30am Baby Bank 4pm-6pm	8 Thursday Worship 7pm	9 Office Closed	10
11 Sunday Worship 9am & Sunday School Adult Bible Study after service Congregation Budget Meeting Confirmation Class 10:20am	12 Pioneer Lunch 12:00pm Witness 6pm	13 Lunch with Ray study and soup lunch 11:30am	14 Sewing/Quilting 9am Bible Study 9:30am Community Meal 5pm-6pm Council Meeting 6:30pm	15 Thursday Worship 7pm Congregation Budget Meeting	16 Office Closed Youth Skating Event 5:30pm	17
18 Sunday Worship 9am & Sunday School Adult Bible Study after service Congregation Budget Meeting	19	20	21 Sewing/Quilting 9am Bible Study 9:30am	22 Barnabas Meeting 6pm Thursday Worship 7pm	23 Office Closed	24
25 Sunday Worship 9am & Sunday School Annual Meeting after service	26	27 Lunch with Ray study and soup lunch 11:30am	28 Sewing/Quilting 9am Bible Study 9:30am	29 Thursday Worship 7pm Holden Sundae	30 Office Closed	31