



“What does this mean?”

Many of us think of October as “spooky season” and look forward to Halloween. In the church year, Lutherans (and other Protestants) also look forward to recognizing Reformation Day. We will mark Reformation

Sunday on Oct. 25, but the actual Reformation Day is Oct. 31. Do any of your kids or grandkids want to dress up as Martin Luther or Katharina Von Bora (Katie Luther) for Halloween? Maybe that’s a stretch.

Throughout Martin Luther’s Small Catechism, the question “What does this mean?” follows each commandment, article of the Creed, and petition of the Lord’s Prayer. There are many moments in my own Scripture study, worship planning, or other areas of life where I find myself thinking, “And what does this

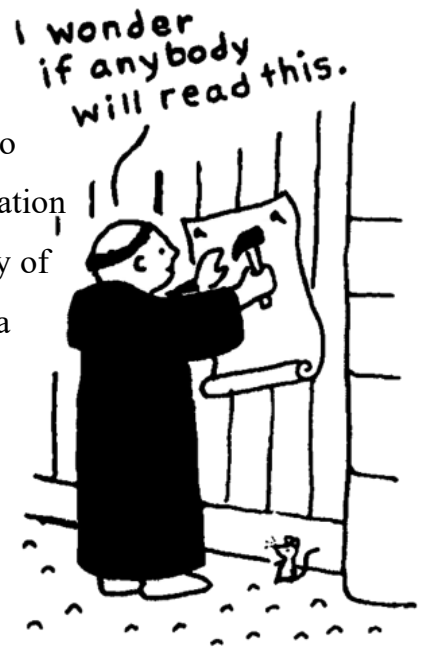
mean?” Part of our Lutheran faith is being curious about the world around us and thinking through possibilities of how God is at work throughout all areas of our lives. This year our confirmation students will learn about Lutheran Worship and Lutheran theology. We will use the Small Catechism, which has been used by students and families for 500 years. What do you remember from your time in confirmation?

We do not have students being confirmed on Reformation Sunday this year, but we will be giving NRSV Bibles to students on Reformation Sunday. Other students will receive Bibles on November 8<sup>th</sup>. I invite you to pray for them and all of our students as they reach faith milestones in their lives.

From Oct. 18- Nov. 8, we will have a stewardship season. This will connect with the Sunday School’s Superheroes of the Faith series. Your gifts, time, and financial donations are what make our ministry together possible. Talking about money is often taboo in our modern culture. As we have worked our way through the Gospel of Matthew, Jesus is often talking about money. (Matthew was a pragmatic tax collector!) Together, we will live into how to steward what God has given us in our lives as we work to share God’s love and care with all the world.

Your partner in ministry,

Pastor Marit Johnson



## Youth Events

### **Mark your calendars for the upcoming events:**

**Sunday, October 4** - Sunday School Coffee Hour after Worship Service

**Friday, October 16** - Youth lock-in. Overnight at the Church! 6:30 pm

We will have snacks, but not dinner. There will be breakfast in the morning before the cleanup. Pick up on Saturday at noon.

**\*Saturday, October 17** - Church clean-up (inside and out)

The congregation will also join us for breakfast at 9:00 am and help.

**\*Sunday, October 18** - Coffee hour after Worship Service *(These are fundraisers to help with our trips)*

Please bring muffins, breakfast bread, other pastries, fruit, cheese, or crackers. Please let Jody know what you are bringing, so she can make sure we have enough. The youth will serve, then go to class.

If the parents could help clean up, that would be appreciated!

**\*Wednesday, October 21** - ELCA early registration

**Wednesday, October 28** - Downtown Business Trick or Treat: 5-7 pm

Put on your Halloween Costumes and join us for the fun. We will meet at Marie Hagen's house. 503 S. Main Street. She has parking spaces, and it's only a block from downtown.

**\*Saturday, October 31** - Food Truck and Rock Climbing

Arrive at 9:00 am to help with the food truck. We will plan to go rock climbing at River's Edge when finished. More info to follow.

**Sunday, November 8** - All-Church Outing to Edwards Apple Orchard. Please join the Youth as we go to Edwards Apple Orchard after coffee hour. More information to follow.

**\*Sunday, November 15** - Coffee hour after Worship Service *(These are fundraisers to help with our trips)*  
Same as October 18th

**Monday, November 16** - Make Christmas ornaments 5:30-6:30 pm Linda's Lounge

**Friday, December 4** - Hometown Christmas Parade.

Join us to help pass out stocking hats as we walk in the parade. More info to follow - there might be a float to decorate.

**Sunday, December 13** - Coffee hour after Worship Service *(These are fundraisers to help with our trips)*  
Same as October 18th

**Monday, January 18** - Ski Trip to Cascade Mountain in Wisconsin. More info to follow

**Friday, February 5 through Sunday, February 7** - Wisconsin Dells Waterpark weekend at the Wilderness

**Saturday, February 13** - Cookie decorating fun with WOZ at 9:30 am

**Sunday, February 14** - Butter Braid Kickoff. We will sell Butter Braid Pastries until Monday, March 1.

**Sunday, February 21** - Spaghetti Dinner Fundraiser 4:00 pm

**Wednesday, March 3** - Butter Braid orders and money are due

**Wednesday, March 10** - Youth pick up Butter Braid orders 4:00-4:30 pm

**Sunday, March 14** - Butter Braids will be passed out to the congregation during coffee hour

**Sunday, March 21** - Palm Sunday Breakfast after Worship Service

Things in the works: Ice Skating, Apple Orchard, roller skating, Urban Air, River tubing, and much more!

**\*Counts for service hours**



## ELCA Youth Gathering is in Minneapolis, MN June 28-July 2, 2027

This is open to those who will be in 8th -12th grade this year.  
Early registration is Oct. 21-Nov. 11, 2026.

Pastor Marit and Jody are looking forward to attending.

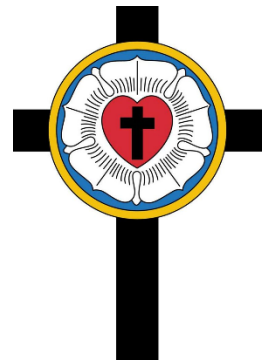
Please let us know if you are interested!

(For all our 6th and 7th graders, there will be another gathering in 3 years)

### Confirmation Dates:

**September 20 & 27, October 4 & 18, November 1 & 15, December 6 & 13,  
January 10 & 24, February 7 & 21, March 7 & 21, April 4 & 18, May 2 & 16**

*Due to the Wisconsin Dells trip, we will find another date for February 7th.*



Fall Clean-Up: October 17 at 9:00 a.m.

Calling all gardeners, small brush cutters, dusters, and sanitizers!

Join our youth as we clean up the church, inside and out.

We will start with breakfast (egg casserole, coffee cake, and fruit) at 9:00 a.m.

### Inside

- Vacuum the Bible/hymnal shelves in each pew. Remove cushions and vacuum benches.
- Clean and sanitize the nursery.
- Clean the cobwebs from the lower-level windows (Sunday School, Linda's Lounge, Baby Bank).
- Clean the cabinet below the crucifix.
- Use a tennis ball to remove black marks on the lower hallway.

### Outside

- Clean the Peace Garden of dead flowers.
- Cut all the wild shrubs from the fence line around the grass area.
- Tear the small house and pergola down.
- Pick up all the dead brush along the back fence.

Please bring your clippers, small saws, gloves, soft towels, and tennis balls.

With lots of hands, we should be done by 11:15 a.m.!

## Christian Nurturing News

We kicked off our Sunday School year on Sunday, September 13th. We had five kids join us. This year's theme is God's Heroes. The kids colored papers and wrote words about what they do to be one of God's heroes. We also played some games after worship. We will continue to have Sunday School during Sunday's worship time. Kids will be dismissed for Sunday School after the Children's Sermon and then will return for Sharing of the Peace.

### **Mark your calendars for the upcoming events:**

**Sunday, October 18** - 1st Craft Sunday after the worship service.

**Sunday, November 15** - 2<sup>nd</sup> Craft Sunday focusing on Christmas ornaments for the Hometown Christmas Tree

**Monday, November 16** - ALL are welcome to help make ornaments for Hometown Christmas and enjoy some treats in Linda's Lounge from 5:30-6:30 pm.

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## Sewing & Quilting



Beautiful quilts that were blessed and raffled off on September 27<sup>th</sup>

## Women of Zion

A heartfelt thank you to everyone who helped make our Arcot Church in India's boarding school project fundraiser coffee hour and breakfast events a success. Whether you shopped for ingredients, baked, set tables, cooked in the kitchen, served, or stayed afterward to clean up, your generosity and teamwork made these gatherings truly special.

We are also deeply grateful to **Thrivent** for providing an Action Team monetary gift, which helped cover the cost of food for breakfast.

Thanks to all who attended and supported these events. Together, we raised **\$1482.00** at our first event, and once we receive the total from Stephanie for the September 20 breakfast, we will be sending **Arcot Church in India** the combined amount.

Be on the lookout — **Sara Lee, Jennie-O, and Tom Turkey** are getting ready to make their grand appearance this October! Rumor has it they'll be popping up on **Sunday, October 18**, so keep your eyes open.

We will be collecting items for **First Step Daycare families and others in need** from **Sunday, October 18 through Thursday, November 5, 2026**. Thank you in advance for your generosity and support.



### **Mark your calendars for the upcoming events:**

November 29 - Angel Tree for the children of First Step Daycare. More information to follow.



### **Zion Food Truck Volunteers!**

Mark your calendar for the next food truck event  
October 31<sup>st</sup> – 10:00 – 11:30 am  
Sign up to volunteer outside the Fellowship Hall.

## Pioneer Luncheon

Please join us for our next Zion Pioneers Potluck Lunch on October 12th at noon!  
We will provide the meat for a small donation. Please bring a dish to share.  
Our guest speaker for the day will be Lyle Lee, who will share about his Vets Roll trip.  
We look forward to sharing a meal and a wonderful time of fellowship with everyone!  
By Patti Lee

## Community Meal

Ham & cheese sandwiches and pasta salads filled 46 stomachs at the September Community Meal.  
Thank you to the volunteers who served that evening: Dawn, Jean, Judy, Kathy, Kay, Larry, Linda J, Linda P, Marge, Nancy, Patti, Terry, and Wanda.  
The next meal will be held on Wednesday, October 14. Loaded baked potatoes will be on the menu. A volunteer sign-up sheet is posted on the bulletin board. Should the ten spots be filled, consider helping at the November meal.  
By John Enright



**BUCS FOOTBALL  
HALL OF FAME**  
**CLASS OF 2026**

- William "Chow" Lambert**  
Guard  
Last season in 1937
- Charles Holsker**  
Tackle  
Last season in 1947
- Jerry Cunningham**  
Defender  
Last season in 1956
- Giles Turner**  
Halfback & End  
Last season in 1956
- Jeff Hall**  
Center  
Last season in 1988
- Tim Kenney**  
Defensive back  
Last season in 2002

*Come celebrate with us!*

**HALL OF FAME GAME  
SEPTEMBER 11, 2026  
VS. FREEPORT PRETZELS**

FUNDERBURG STADIUM | HALL OF FAME NIGHT | REMEMBERING SEPT. 11TH

CHUCK HOLSKER



Let's congratulate Jeff Hall on receiving this award and being inducted into the Football Hall of Fame at Belvidere High School  
Go Bucs!



**Give God what's right  
Not what's left**

### Financial Secretary

Recently, there has been some confusion around check writing for some fundraising activities at church. To clarify the proper check-writing procedure for all fundraising activities. Checks should be made out to Zion Lutheran Church, and in the memo field, please indicate what fundraising activity the check is for. For example, "WOZ - Thanksgiving Meal" or "1st Step". Just indicate an event, and the counters will know how to record the information correctly. This is necessary as Zion only has one checking account, and if checks are made out to anything other than Zion Lutheran Church, the bank will not accept them, causing additional work to track down the individual and have them rewrite the check. Our counters will not make changes to any checks, as the bank again will not accept checks that have been altered. This is not a bank policy, but a government requirement. If you have any questions, please let me know.

By Stephanie Skelnik

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### From the Treasurer

#### **General Fund**

August/2026 Beginning Balance \$ 60,426.20  
Total Income \$ 12,559.32  
Total Expense \$ 13,790.73  
Balance \$ 59,194.79

#### **Building Fund**

August/2026 Beginning Balance \$ (821.20)  
Total Income \$ 3,427.00  
Total Expense \$ 4,310.00  
Balance \$ (1,704.20)

#### **General Fund Reserve Savings**

August/2026 Beginning Balance \$ 89,124.06  
Income \$ 18.92  
Expenses \$  
Balance \$ 89,142.98

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### October Scriptures

|                   | <u>1<sup>st</sup> Reading</u> | <u>2<sup>nd</sup> Reading</u> | <u>Gospel</u>    |
|-------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|------------------|
| <u>October 4</u>  | Isaiah 5:1-7                  | Philippians 3:4b-14           | Matthew 21:33-46 |
| <u>October 11</u> | Isaiah 25:1-9                 | Philippians 4:1-9             | Matthew 22:1-14  |
| <u>October 18</u> | Isaiah 45:1-7                 | 1 Thessalonians 1:1-10        | Matthew 22:15-22 |
| <u>October 25</u> | Jeremiah 31:31-34             | Romans 3:19-28                | John 8:31-36     |



## **Happy Birthday from your Zion Family!**



|                    |                    |                    |                      |
|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|----------------------|
| 1-Shirley Persson  | 1-Renee Balabuszko | 1-Khloe Minson     | 2-Norm Archer        |
| 2-Keith Ballweg    | 2-Tyler Downey     | 2-Jean Twying      | 4-Kathryn Ernest     |
| 5-Xavier Foley     | 6-Melvin Johnson   | 9-Riley Magnuson   | 10-Isaac Pearson     |
| 12-Adrian Girone   | 12-Lillianna Ogan  | 15-Kelly Kotajarvi | 17-Marilyn Smaha     |
| 19-Patti Lee       | 20-Lee Bierman     | 21-Marge Olson     | 21-Stephanie Skelnik |
| 22-Lily Armstrong  | 22-Jeffrey Hall    | 24-Carlos Ernest   | 24-Jon Huffman       |
| 24-Walita Johnson  | 24-Delilah Long    | 26-Patricia Castro | 27-Brady Kotajarvi   |
| 31-Kirstin Ahlberg |                    |                    |                      |

### **Council Members**

#### **Term Through January 2027**

Kris Enright  
Michelle Ernest  
Kelly Kotajarvi  
Terry Miller  
Gary Yunto

#### **Term Through January 2028**

Jody Archer  
Dawn Calkins  
Jeanne Marnen  
Stephanie Skelnik

#### **Term Through January 2029**

Rodney Brandmire  
Melody Johnson  
David Schumann

### **Nominating Committee**

Nancy Brendum  
Marilee Sellers  
Cheryl Sturges

### **Worship Schedule**

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

Find Worship Videos at  
[www.zionbelvidere.com](http://www.zionbelvidere.com)

OR

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

Email  
[zionlutheran1300@gmail.com](mailto:zionlutheran1300@gmail.com)

### **Staff & Leadership**

Pastor  
Rev. Marit Johnson

Administrative Assistant  
Cynthia Reynolds

Council President  
David Schumann

Choir Director  
Dan Albrecht

Sunday School Directors  
Melody Johnson &  
Melita Ogan

Director of Children and  
Youth Ministries  
Jody Archer

Financial Secretary  
Stephanie Skelnik

Treasurer  
Sharon Yunto

| October 2026                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |                                                                                   |                                                       |                                                                                                                        |                                                                                                                               |                                                     |                                                                                                                                                   |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Sun                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | Mon                                                                               | Tue                                                   | Wed                                                                                                                    | Thu                                                                                                                           | Fri                                                 | Sat                                                                                                                                               |
| OFFICE HOURS<br>Monday-Friday<br>9am-1pm                                                                                                                                                                                                       |  |                                                       |                                                                                                                        | 1<br>Choir 5pm/Bells 6pm<br>Thursday Worship<br>7pm                                                                           | 2                                                   | 3                                                                                                                                                 |
| 4<br>Sunday Worship 9am<br>& Sunday School<br>Adult Bible Study after<br>Worship<br>Confirmation Class<br>after worship                                                                                                                        | 5<br>Worship & Music<br>Meeting 5pm                                               | 6<br>Pr. Text Study 2-3pm                             | 7<br>Bible Study 9:30am<br>Baby Bank 4pm-6pm                                                                           | 8<br>Choir 5pm/Bells 6pm<br>Thursday Worship<br>7pm                                                                           | 9                                                   | 10                                                                                                                                                |
| 11<br>Sunday Worship 9am<br>& Sunday School<br>Adult Bible Study after<br>Worship                                                                                                                                                              | 12<br>Pioneer Lunch<br>12:00pm<br>Witness Meeting<br>6pm                          | 13<br>Lunch w/ Ray<br>11:30am<br>Pr. Text Study 2-3pm | 14<br>Council Reports Due 9am<br>Bible Study 9:30am<br>Community Meal<br>5pm-6pm                                       | 15<br>Choir 5pm/Bells 6pm<br>Thursday Worship<br>7pm                                                                          | 16<br>Youth Lock In<br>6:30pm                       | 17<br>Church Cleanup<br>Breakfast-9:00am<br>Youth Lock In Pick<br>Up at Noon                                                                      |
| 18<br><b>Sunday Worship</b> 9am &<br>Sunday School<br><b>Adult Bible Study</b> after<br>Worship<br><b>Confirmation Class</b> after<br>worship<br><b>WOZ</b> Thanksgiving Food<br>Drive Begins<br><b>Youth Coffee Hour</b><br><b>Fundraiser</b> | 19                                                                                | 20<br>Pr. Text Study 2-3pm                            | 21<br>Bible Study 9:30am<br><b>Council Meeting 6pm</b><br>ELCA National Youth<br>Gathering Registration<br>10/21-11/11 | 22<br>Pr. Marit @ Wartburg<br>First Call Retreat<br>Choir 5pm/Bells 6pm<br>Barnabas Meeting<br>6pm<br>Thursday Worship<br>7pm | 23<br>Pr. Marit @<br>Wartburg First<br>Call Retreat | 24<br>Pr. Marit @<br>Wartburg First Call<br>Retreat                                                                                               |
| 25<br>Sunday Worship 9am<br>& Sunday School<br>Adult Bible Study after<br>Worship                                                                                                                                                              | 26<br><b>Tidings Articles Due<br/>by 9am</b>                                      | 27<br>Lunch w/ Ray<br>11:30am<br>Pr. Text Study 2-3pm | 28<br>Bible Study 9:30am<br><b>Downtown Business<br/>Trick or Treat<br/>5:00-7:00pm</b>                                | 29<br>Choir 5pm/Bells 6pm<br>Thursday Worship<br>7pm                                                                          | 30                                                  | 31<br><br>Food Truck<br>10-11:30am<br>Youth Rock<br>Climbing |