

the herald

NEWS OF ZION LUTHERAN | ANOKA

FEBRUARY 2026



ZION
LUTHERAN + ANOKA

WORSHIP SCHEDULE

In-Person Worship

5 pm (Sat)
8, 9 & 11 am (Sun)

Livestream Worship

9 & 11 am (Sun)

Cable TV

10 am & 5 pm (Sun)

Radio Broadcast

106.1 (BOB-FM)
9:10 am (Sun)

Scripture Readings

January 31-February 1

Matthew 5:1-12

February 7-8

Matthew 5:13-20

February 14-15

Matthew 17:1-9

February 21-22

Matthew 4:1-11

Lent Begins February 18

Ash Wednesday is February 18. Worship times will be noon and 6:30 p.m. and we will have the imposition of ashes and Holy Communion as part of both services. Our mid-week services will also be at noon and 6:30 p.m.

This year for Lent, as a part of Intern Pastor Katie's internship project, Zion is experimenting with a different style of worship called Dinner Church. Rather than a traditional service in the Sanctuary, Dinner Church will be happening around the table and over dinner. Beginning Wednesday, February 25, for both our noon and 6:30 p.m. worship services, you are invited to the Fellowship Hall for soup and worship around the dinner table. Each week we will focus on one of Zion's core values: Welcome, Worship, Grow, Care, and Serve. There will be discussion time at the table as well as a large group discussion facilitated by one of the pastors.

Please join us for this new worship experience! Want more information? Check out the adult forum on Sunday, February 1 to learn about Dinner Church.

Annual Meeting - February 22

The Annual Meeting of Zion Lutheran Church will be held on February 22 at 10 a.m. in the Sanctuary. You may attend the meeting in person or watch online on Zion's Facebook page, YouTube Channel or website at www.zionanoka.org (click on the livestream button). Copies of the annual report will be available at the front desk by mid-February. We will also be emailing the report to our membership email list. The agenda and all necessary information will be included. If you will not be attending the meeting in person, you may vote by absentee ballot. Two ballots are enclosed in this Herald. Ballots should be received no later than Wednesday, February 25. You may mail them in, drop them off, or scan and email them to kjohnson@zionanoka.org. Each confirmed member should only fill out and return one ballot. If you need additional ballots for your household, you may stop by or call the church office.

Family Promise Fundraiser - February 15

Join us at 5 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall for a Valentine's Dinner Fundraiser to support Family Promise in Anoka County. Meal choices are: beef fillet with baked potato, chicken with a cream sauce on wild rice pilaf or vegetarian lasagna. All dinners come with a salad, green vegetable, roll and dessert. Live music provided by Mary Jo Gothmann. Cost is \$50. Purchase tickets online at www.zionanoka.org or at the front desk through February 8.

a message from your pastors



I'm not necessarily one for New Year's resolutions. It's not that I'm opposed to self-improvement—lose a couple of pounds; read more; get more exercise; etc. It's more that my perceived self-improvement needs are constantly with me, constantly in my face, with or without a resolution. (Did you know the 2nd Friday of January is sometimes known as “Quitter's Day”?) Besides, I tend to make my resolutions around Lent—convenient topic since Lent begins this year on Ash Wednesday, February 18th. Even then, my “resolutions”—often called “disciplines” in churchspeak—tend to be focused on my faith, or more accurately, on *practices and habits* associated with faith in Jesus, for example...

- devotion and prayer;
- exercises in generosity;
- fasting—i.e., a withdrawal from “typical” postures of acquisition or consumption that instead allows growing attitudes of humility and simplicity;
- service to the vulnerable (often symbolized in Scripture in the trio of “*the widow, the orphan, and the alien stranger in your midst*”—Zechariah 7:9-10, for example: ⁹*“Thus says the Lord of hosts: Render true judgments, show kindness and mercy to one another; ¹⁰ do not oppress the widow, the orphan, the alien, or the poor; and do not devise evil in your hearts against one another.”*)

THESE are the roots of deep and ancient Christian practices that begin with Ash Wednesday's call to repentance, to be turned around, to be different. Some Ash Wednesday liturgies include an invitation from the pastor, right before the reminder of our ashen origin and destination are imposed on our foreheads for God and everyone to see: *I invite you, therefore, in the name of the Church, to the observance of a holy Lent, by self-examination and repentance; by prayer, fasting and self-denial; and by reading and meditating on God's holy Word. And, to make a right beginning of repentance, and as a mark of our mortal nature, let us now kneel before the Lord, our maker and redeemer.*

Here's the beauty of Lent, as far as I'm concerned: I'm not very good at this discipline stuff. (I wonder if anyone's ever done any research into when “Quitter's Day” occurs in Lent?!) THAT'S not the beautiful part though—the beautiful part is God's grace that has already declared me called, chosen, and forgiven, EVEN WHEN I fail in my self-improvement projects. So when I miss a day of devotion and prayer this Lent, (which I will inevitably do), TOMORROW will be a new day in which God seeks to continue the renovations in my heart and practice. THAT'S the beautiful part!

Here are a few questions that might guide you into your Lenten discipline(s):

- Where in my life have I gotten away from God and what are the disciplines that will enable me to meet God anew and have God guide me back?
- How will I find ways to return to God with all my heart?
- What earthly treasures and distractions am I attached to and how can I let go? How will I fast—that is, how will I give up these treasures and distractions and what will replace them?
- How will I give? With my time? With my talents? With my resources?
- How will I pray? A fixed time every day? Using a devotion book or other resource?
- How will I be rooted in God's Word? (Try reading a chapter or so of the Gospel of Matthew each day of Lent.)

Won't you join me in failing and starting again?

Pastor MIKE

welcome and worship

What has Been Your Forever?

By Colleen Nelson

What has been your *forever*? It may have lasted minutes, hours, days, or even years. We can all attest to one or more *forever's* in our past; circumstances that have challenged our patience and perhaps even our core being. When our youngest was five, my *forever* lasted under 30 minutes but it felt like, well, forever. Following a July Fourth fireworks celebration, our son mistakenly followed the wrong group to their car. Fortunately, when all concerned realized the situation, we made our way back to a grateful reunion. I remember fervently praying for God to protect my son from the busy street and any strangers he encountered. Years later, when my elderly mother was placed on hospice due to a brain bleed, my *forever* lasted many excruciating days as I watched her fade from a confused state to no recognition, whatsoever. Again, prayer was my coping mechanism and God's grace was evident. What has been your *forever*? Perhaps you've waited for a phone call with biopsy results, a pregnancy test, a job offer, a college acceptance letter, an all-clear weather siren, a grade on a test paper, news regarding a home loan, a hug from your lost child at a store, a report on a loved one's emergency surgery, news of a grandchild's birth, an announcement that you made the team, or a response to your marriage proposal. In baptism we are promised, "You have been sealed with the cross of Christ forever." This forever promise certainly refers to our life after death, sealing our place alongside Jesus in heaven. But just as importantly, we are encouraged to live our lives every day with Christ by our side, especially during our difficult *forever's*. A portion of the prayer that Jesus taught us to pray in Matthew 6:10 asks, "Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven." It is Jesus' desire that we take a pause to be reminded that God is present in all things, at all times and that we respond to this knowledge by allowing God's grace, comfort and peace into our hearts and minds.

Chili Cook-Off and Dessert Auction is Back!

Join us for Zion's Chili Cook-Off and Dessert Auction on Sunday, March 8 at 3:30 p.m. in the CLC! Tickets are \$10, kids under 5 years old are free with a \$30 max for families. Tickets will be on sale February 1-22 at the front desk. You can help by making chili for the cook-off, donating a dessert for the auction or helping with cooking, setup, serving or cleanup. Sign up at the front desk or email Suzanne at sgaboury@zionanoka.org.

Noisy Offering - January 31 & February 1

Thank you to everyone who brought in their *Noisy Offering* in January! We gathered \$380.28 which will go toward our camp ministries. The next weekend our *Noisy Offering* buckets will be out is January 31 and February 1. We will also have a bucket at the Welcome Desk if you would like to drop off your *Noisy Offering* during office hours.

Scout Sunday - February 8

Join us for Scout Sunday on February 8 at the 9 a.m. service. Boy Scout Pack 233 will be greeting and ushering, and during the service they will receive their God and Family Award.



Worship in person Saturdays at 5 p.m. and Sundays at 8, 9 & 11 a.m.
Livestream on Sundays at 9 & 11 a.m.
Cable TV Channel 6 Broadcast Sundays at 10 a.m. & 5 p.m.
Radio Broadcast BOB-FM 106.1 Sundays at 9:10 a.m.

"The Chosen": Season 4 Small Group Study - *Note Time Change

Lent begins on Ash Wednesday, February 18. Part of our Lenten discipline this season will be centered around Season 4 of *The Chosen*. Sign up at the Welcome Desk.

February Schedule:

- Week of Feb 1: Episode 1 "Promises" MONDAYS | 1 PM | LEGACY ROOM LED BY PASTOR SUE
- Week of Feb 8: Episode 2 "Confessions" TUESDAYS | 8:45 AM | LEGACY ROOM LED BY PASTOR MIKE
- Week of Feb 15: Episode 3 "Moon to Blood" WEDNESDAYS | 10 AM | LEGACY ROOM LED BY INTERN PASTOR KATIE
- Week of Feb 22: Episode 4 "Calm Before" WEDNESDAYS* | 6 PM | LEGACY ROOM LED BY PASTOR MIKE

***Because our evening Lenten Dinner Church coincides with our Wed evening small group time, the schedule for Feb 18 will be changed to 7:30 p.m. Feb 25 (and all subsequent Wednesdays in Lent) will be changed to 7:15 p.m.**

February Adult Faith Forums

Grab a cup of coffee and join us Sundays at 10 a.m. in the Fellowship Hall.

- **Feb. 1 - Dinner Church Preview:** As a part of Intern Pastor Katie's internship capstone project, Zion is experimenting with a different style of worship during Lent called Dinner Church. It's not "church and then dinner," nor is it "dinner and then church"—instead, worship and dinner will be experienced TOGETHER. This forum is a preview of what to expect when Dinner Church begins (noon and 6:30 p.m.) on Wednesday, February 25.
- **Feb. 8 - Lutheran Social Services of MN:** Pastor Kathryn Tiede, Associate Vice President of Philanthropy will be with us to cover a number of topics related to LSS-MN's mission and ministry, including a RE-introduction to LSS-MN; information about LSS-MN's role in refugee and immigration issues and other LSS-MN updates as well as stories and a video from Freedom School Minneapolis, a free after-school and summer opportunity for kids K-12 and a past Zion Foundation Recipient.
- **Feb. 15 - All-Congregation CYF Activity: MARDI GRAS!!**
- **Feb. 22 - Annual Meeting**

Zion Pages Book Group - February 23

On February 23 at 6:30 p.m. in the Legacy Room, we will be discussing *Sipsworth* by Simon Van Booy. All are welcome to this lively discussion.

Mission Milwaukee - Youth Summer Trip

Register now for the youth summer trip to Milwaukee! The trip will be July 12-16 and it will be a full week of service packing meals, working in food shelves, community gardens and learning more about hunger, poverty, and the needs of our neighbors. \$100 deposit due at the time of registration. Register online through March 15 at www.zionanoka.org or scan the QR Code on the right.



Lutheran Late Night - February 20

Join us at Zion for Lutheran Late Night from 7-10 p.m. This event is for middle and high school students. Snacks will be provided and games will be played. Friends welcome. Please register here <https://cutt.ly/feb26lln>.

Cinnamon Roll Sunday - February 22

Our high school youth are partnering with Service Learning Camps to do a service trip in Milwaukee, WI this summer. On Sunday, February 22 we will be serving fresh baked cinnamon rolls during coffee hour as a fundraiser for this trip. Thank you for supporting our youth!

Zion Lutheran Church 2026 Absentee Ballot

VOTING INSTRUCTIONS: Please remove this absentee ballot from your Herald. There are two ballots (back to back). If your household needs additional ballots, please stop by the front desk or call the church office. Each confirmed member should only fill out and return one ballot. When voting, please vote for the number of nominees indicated on the ballot for that position(s). An * indicates incumbent. When done voting, mail your ballot to Zion Lutheran Church, 1601 4th Ave., Anoka, MN, 55303; drop it off at the front desk; or scan it and email to kjohnson@zionanoka.org. All ballots must be received no later than **Wednesday, February 25**.

Church Council Nominee (vote for 1):

Kat Davis
 Other _____

Nominating Committee Nominees (vote for 3):

Kurt Allen
 Mark Arvesen
 Taryn Eichstadt
 Other _____

Zion Foundation Nominees (vote for 2):

Paul Hanson
 Cathy Westrum
 Other _____

Voting Members for Minneapolis Area Synod Nominees (vote for 6):

Andy Johnson
 Karen Johnson
 Doug Jones (Conference Secretary)
 Tim Sheie
 Bill Travis
 Pam Travis
 Other _____

Zion Pre-K Board (vote for 1):

Kathy Quade
 Other _____

I vote for the 2026 General Fund, Building Fund and Pre-K Budgets Yes No

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 Other _____

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grow and serve

Camp Wapo Registration Now Open

Camp Wapo registration is now open! Seeds Weekend for completed grades 1-3 is June 19-21 and week-long camp for completed grades 4-12 will be June 14-19. 8th graders are expected to attend camp as completion of their 8th grade retreat in preparation for their confirmation day in the fall of 2026. Please use the following link to register <http://lwlbc.com/zion-anoka>. Only pay the deposit at time of registration. All members of Zion will receive some scholarship dollars for camp thanks to the generous support of the congregation. For more information or if you have financial concerns, please email kweiland@zionanoka.org.



Mardi Gras Family Event - February 15

Join us Sunday, February 15 from 10-10:50 a.m. in the Fellowship Hall for pre-Lent festivities. Make prayer calendars, offering bowls and more! (This will be in lieu of Sunday School.)



Early Childhood Ministry News

- Toddler Tuesday: Zion PreK + Early Childhood Ministry are pleased to partner up for Toddler Tuesday! Join us on the 2nd and 4th Tuesdays of the month for a fun-filled morning of meeting other families, crafts/art activities, toddler yoga and dance, music, facilitated conversation and more. This is a FREE event for children ages 0-2 with an adult. Register at www.zionanoka.org or in person. Now through April 28, 9 a.m. to 10:30 a.m. in the Family Lounge. Contact Lee Neitge lneitge@zionanoka.org with questions.
- Preschool Music and Dance: Come sing, dance, play ukuleles, and have a ball with us Wednesdays, 11:15-11:45 a.m. through February 11; for children ages 2-5. This is a FREE, separating class; adults do not need to join their child, but must remain in the building for the duration of class. Register at www.zionanoka.org and complete a Health Form or in person at the front desk. Contact Lee lneitge@zionanoka.org.

From the Zion Addiction Awareness Ministry (ZAAM)

Mark your calendars! On May 16, Zion will host a conference "Recovering Peace." The goal and vision for this conference is to share stories of healing, hope and learned wisdom about addiction, mental health and recovery as they relate to life today. The keynote speaker will be John Noltner of 'A Peace of My Mind' <https://apeaceofmymind.org/>. John is internationally recognized and has received awards for his photography, writing, and speaking. Zion hosted John at our domestic violence conference, 'Discovering Peace' on October 13, 2017. Since then he has traveled all over the U.S. and abroad collecting people's stories, including a recent series of stories on addiction and recovery titled "SOBR". After the opening ceremony on Saturday morning, John will have his photography equipment set up and will film people's stories. He will work all day filming and have photos back to us by the next day for display here at Zion. John will also speak at all of Zion's worship services that weekend, Saturday, May 16 at 5 p.m. and Sunday, May 17 at 8, 9, and 11 a.m. as well as be the presenter at the Adult Faith Forum on Sunday.

The ZAAM team is in the process of getting the registration set up in Realm and will announce when registration goes "live" online as soon as things are in place. We hope Zion members will participate by attending, signing up to volunteer or helping us find donors to make this conference accessible to those who would most benefit. We are also in the process recruiting additional speakers for breakout sessions. We hope that those we've invited say "yes", but we welcome recommendations of others you may know who are resources in the community for addiction and/or mental health.

caring for each other

GriefShare Support Group

Join Pastor Sue and Leslee Curtis for a grief support group Tuesdays Feb 3-April 28 at 11 a.m. in the Library. Sign up at <https://find.griefshare.org/groups/283760> or stop by the front desk. If you have participated in this support group in the past, you are welcome to continue to use your old book or, if you are new to the group, you will need to purchase one for \$21. Contact Pastor Sue for more information swallager@zionanoka.org.

Life Recovery Bible Study

The Life Recovery Bible is a unique tool that brings Twelve Step recovery back to its original source – the Bible. The Life Recovery Bible Study is offered for all whose lives have been impacted by addiction or mental illness. We invite you to join us in a safe and supportive space where hope and healing are shared through God's Word. This study continues Thursday nights in the Legacy Room from 6-7:30 p.m. throughout the program year. Join in anytime!

Thank You Recent Radio Broadcast Donors

Carol Mann
Jon & Liz Fredlund
Marvin & JoAnn
Christensen
John & Carol Loyd
Marlin & Darla Fillipi
Mary Wheeler
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Ann Lown in memory of Dianne Edling
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Dianne Pederson in memory of Dianne Edling
Florence Shebetka in memory of Bev Fraser
Kristine Johnson in memory of Bev Fraser
Larry & Kathy Nelson in memory of Dianne Edling
Chuck Wallace in memory of Wayne Wallace
Larry & Kathy Nelson in memory of Eloise Miller
Margaret Steinbring in memory of Dianne Edling
Jane Freeburg in memory of Irene Steffenson
Ken & Sandy Benson in honor of Greg Bergeron's Encouraging Words Ministry

about our people

Baptisms

Jan 18 - Penelope Bartels

Deaths

Eloise Miller
Dianne Edling
Jackie Sorenson
Irene Steffenson
Mary Flaten

Deaths

Florence Olson
Sue Gardiner
Jerry Eyler
Emil Magnuson

New Members

Grace Evenson
Jean Crain
Kurtis Tirevold

a message from Pete Erickson, Interserve Ministries

Dear Friends in Christ,

I have formally or informally met many of you, but I am Pete Erickson, interim youth staff at Zion Lutheran Church. Fine, you say, but what does that mean? Well, mostly it means I am excited to be partner with you to look at what's possible for youth ministry and implement a youth ministry staffing model that aligns with mission, vision and values of Zion Lutheran Church in 2026. Here's what that looks like:

SUPPORTING A VISION FOR THE FUTURE

The purpose of this process is to develop a team and a plan to help evolve the current model of youth ministry to a model that aligns with the mission, vision and values of the greater community at Zion Lutheran. Here's what that part of the process might look like:

- Pray a lot (seriously)
- Look at the past and present through assessment exercises and surveys
- Form a team that will help with different parts of the process (planning, research ministry models, communication, job descriptions and interviewing)
- Work the plan
- Celebrate and learn

Here's what's happening between January and May:

Learning/Listening Events (*2/1 during education hour, 2/4 during confirmation, 2/11 during confirmation*):

One product of the "listening circles" facilitated by council was the dream of greater engagement of youth and families. The Vision Team will facilitate these additional listening events to encourage the congregation to articulate those dreams more specifically. There will be two events for the congregation.

Team Meeting Ministry/Staffing Model development & Hiring Process (*March-April*). This will take all of the feedback, best practices in churches today as well as what's happening in the context of other churches to define a ministry model and staffing model to support the ministry. Finally, there will be a hiring process designed to find the best fit for the congregation in next evolution of youth and family ministry. **THE GOAL:** Having a person in place by the end of May, beginning of June.

PLEASE SHARE YOUR VOICE IN THIS PROCESS!

AND REMEMBER – FIND JOY IN THE JOURNEY NOT JUST THE DESTINATION.

If you feel anxious or a sense of loss at any time during the interim, that's pretty normal. You should have strong feelings about ministry and leaders that have been present for you in the joys and the pains of life. I would be grateful to help you process those feelings as they arise.

And hopefully, we can all take some comfort in what the prophet Jeremiah reminds us about God's intentions for us in chapter 29: "For I know the plans I have for you; plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future."

I look forward to exploring a hopeful, prosperous future of children and youth ministry at Zion Lutheran.



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A WELCOMING FAITH COMMUNITY.
GROWING. CARING. SERVING.

Zion Pre-K News



Enjoying the winter and the snow, avoiding the cold.
Pre-K is fun!!!!

WELCOME

You are invited, you are welcome to come and experience God's love at Zion Lutheran Church.

CONTACT US

1601 4th Avenue
Anoka MN 55303
763.421.4656
www.zionanoka.org