

January 25 2026



Grace Notes

IN THIS ISSUE...

With Sympathy

[Page 2](#)

Together in Mission

[Page 5](#)

Green Mental Health

[Page 6 & 7](#)

On Immigration

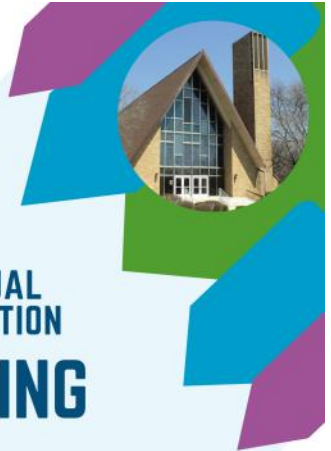
[Pages 8 & 9](#)

RIC Community Care

[Page 10](#)



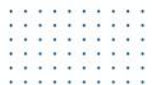
February 1



SEMI ANNUAL CONGREGATION MEETING

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 1

We will review the 2026 budget,
hear committee updates, and
enjoy a meal together.



Joyfully Growing Disciples in Christ

mtzionlutheran.org

(414) 258-0456

parishadmin@mtzionlutheran.org

12012 W North Ave

Wauwatosa, WI 53226

Sunday Community Dinner

February 1st's Community Dinner has been cancelled. Many of our members will be attending the Breaking the Chains 10th anniversary gala which is also being held that night. So we will not have enough volunteers to cook and serve dinner that night. Please join us on Sunday, March 1 for our next Community Dinner.



Meals During Recovery

Nancy Di Giacinto recently had a procedure and is recovering nicely. While she's recovering, it would be lovely to provide one daily meal for Nancy, Joe, and Edie.



Whether you make something you drop off hot, or prepped, frozen and just and ready to toss in the oven, Nancy **must** have a gluten-free option.

<https://signup.com/go/AnXoOpR>

Also, cards for Nancy are appreciated.

With Sympathy

We are sad to inform you that Carol Cobus, member of Mt Zion, died Friday, January 16th.

Carol's funeral will be Monday, January 26th, with viewing beginning at 11:30a and service starting at 1:30p.

Read Carol's obituary here:

<https://www.churchandchapel.com/obituaries/Carol-M-Cobus?obId=47012829>



January 25 to February 1

Sun Jan 25	9:30am Worship Service <u>Zoom ID: 841 6597 2335</u> <u>Passcode: 12012</u> 10:40am Faith Formation —Topic: Utah Rocks w/Steve D. 5:00pm Confirmation
Mon Jan 26	11:30am Visitation for Carol C. 1:30am Service for Carol C. 5:30pm MZ Accessibility Task Force 7:00pm Book Club
Tues Jan 27	Noon AA 12 Steps Meeting Room 211 6:30pm Hands of AA 12-Step Meeting Upper Room
Wed Jan 28	12:00pm Brown Bag Bible Study 1:00pm Prayer Warriors 6:00pm Voices of Zion Choir Rehearsal 7:00pm Festival Bells Handbell Rehearsal
Thurs Jan 29	
Friday Jan 30	12:00pm Mayfair AA Group 6:00pm ACA 12 Step Group Room 100
Sat Jan 31	
Sun Feb 1	9:30am Worship Service 10:30am Semi-Annual Congregation Meeting
Next Week	Together in Mission See page 5 for more details

Today's Volunteers

Altar Care: Jen and Andy Johnston

Assisting Minister: Jenny Hawes

Lector: Refilwe Magasa-Bockhorst

Communion, bread: Refilwe M.

Communion, wine: Jenny H., Gabby Goll, Lora Marheine

Ushers: Kurt Kleppek and Debbie Rack-Kleppek

Audio/Visual: Douglas Johnson, Jack Johnston, Lilly Snow

Greeters: Irene McCarthy and Dick Hollander

Tellers: Ellyn Steinke and Carl and Karen Engelhardt

Thank you to all our worship volunteers, Sunday School teachers, hospitality treats team, and MZY or Confirmation Volunteers who make our Sundays amazing!

Access the Worship Volunteer Schedule at: bit.ly/4jEMCPf

Learn about the many volunteer opportunities at Mt Zion through our Grow Magazine! mtzionlutheran.org/pages/grow


PLEASE PRAY FOR...

*Those concerns and praises
in this week's prayer list*

<https://bit.ly/44C1w2B>

**Need Prayer?
Submit prayer requests:**

 pastor@mtzionlutheran.org  414-258-0456

 Fill out a prayer card at the Prayer Wall



Synod Event of the Season

Together in Mission

\$25 includes lunch

February 7 from 8am - 3pm

St. Matthew's, Wauwatosa

Our synod's annual learning gathering of pastors, deacons and lay leaders from across Southeast Wisconsin! 2026 will be the year of Collaboration in the synod. One way we will be exploring this theme is through the design and production of a synod mural led by Tia Richardson, an integrative community artist. Our worship service will be a Lunch Church service led by Rev. Sarah Stumme and Rev. Jaime Larson-McLoone.



This event is open to all and you'll have a chance to:

- Collaborate on the synod mural with Tia Richardson
- Engage with people from across the synod on a variety of topics
- Participate in lunch church - a meal-centered worship experience
- Visit display tables hosted by ministries from inside and outside our synod

Easter Vigil Planning

We are looking for enthusiastic people - groups or individuals—who would be willing to volunteer to do a dramatic telling of one of the Old Testament stories. This could be through a poem, skit, song, or even a pre-recorded video presentation.

**Easter Vigil will be on April 4th from
7:00pm –8:30pm**

Please contact Pastor Tyler by February 16.
If you're interested but need resources,
also contact Pastor Tyler.



Steve's Science Tidbits

Nature-Based Mental Health Therapy

The internet has increasingly become central to our daily lives. Like many others, I never leave home without my smartphone in my pocket. Ninety percent of people report they are online every day. I guess I shouldn't have been surprised to learn that 65% of adults ages 18-29 report they are constantly online. (Only 15% of those 65 or older report the same.). Our increasing reliance on technology, combined with a global trend toward urban living, means many of us are spending less time outdoors—even as scientists compile evidence of the value of getting out into the natural world.

This is unfortunate, because experiencing nature has inestimable benefits as exemplified by innumerable studies. For example, green spaces near schools help promote cognitive development in children as well as self-control behaviors. Furthermore, being exposed to natural environments improves working memory, cognitive flexibility, and attentional control, while exposure to urban environments is linked to attention deficits.

In one study, students were given an attention-draining task on a computer, pressing a key when certain numbers appeared on the screen. Merely looking at a flowering green roof for 45 seconds led to significantly fewer mistakes. Even nature sounds produced positive results: listening to crickets chirping improved performance on demanding cognitive tests. In addition to green spaces, blue spaces—ie, those areas near water—are equally beneficial. One fond memory of my youth was being on a backpacking trip in Montana, sleeping under the stars near a stream, listening to the soothing sound of flowing water.

Beyond mathematical assessment, myriad studies show that contact with nature leads to increases in happiness, subjective well-being, positive social interactions, and a sense of meaning and purpose in life, as well as decreases in mental distress. One important study showed that children who lived in neighborhoods with plenty of green space had a greatly reduced risk of many psychiatric disorders later in life, including depression, schizophrenia, eating problems and substance abuse. Nature helps reduce stress hormones and boost mood-enhancing neurotransmitters.

Continued on Page 7

Join Steve This Sunday!



**On Sunday, January 25,
Join Steve Downs for a special Faith Forum:
"Utah Rocks: A Celebration of God's Creative Beauty!"**



Steve's Science Tidbits

Continued from page 6

One explanation I particularly like for the positive effects of nature, offered in a 2019 study, is the emotion of awe--the feeling that we are the part of a much bigger whole. I have experienced the unforgettable, overwhelming, transformative power of awe in nature on numerous occasions, as have many of you, I am sure.

Due to socio-economic reasons, not everyone has access to green or blue spaces. In addition, during inclement weather and cold winter months, the out-of-doors may not be very inviting. There are ways to bring nature inside when confined to our homes or workplaces.

1. Add plants—time spent around plants improves compassion, empathy and relationships.
2. 2. Decorate with paintings and photographs of nature—proven to lower stress levels.
3. 3. Download apps of soothing nature sounds—surprisingly relaxing.

Bottom line: less time spent on the internet with more time in nature is therapeutic and can be life-changing.

Steve Downs

Wild Church

You're invite you to join Wild Church for various events in the near future. Wild Church partners with and participates with nature; it lets nature contribute to the worship. Wild Church is site specific; the experience is different if you are under a large oak tree, by a lake or near a church. Wild church gathers in a circle, if possible, to acknowledge the rhythms of the earth.

February 7, 10 am - Celtic Coffee with Pastor Larry and Steve Stretz

February 15 - 4 pm Sunday Bonfire_at Christ The King, Brookfield.

March 1 , 2pm – Circle Gathering at Ascension Lutheran, Waukesha

Check out Milwaukee Wild Church on Facebook.



On Immigration Enforcement

Like many of you, I have been watching what has been unfolding in the Twin Cities with increasing amounts of fear and anxiety. While the recent events surrounding the increased presence of federal immigration enforcement officials are unprecedented and alarming, they are also becoming more and more common, leading many to wonder how we would respond if Milwaukee and the surrounding communities are next.

In my conversations with various leaders, I have come to believe that the question is not if, but when. While I certainly hope that we do not experience what our neighbors are experiencing, I think we need to be prepared, and I am writing here with some steps we can be taking now to care for our neighbors and protect our rights and our freedoms.

First, we need to be truth-tellers. What we are seeing in Minnesota and elsewhere is largely not an effort to target “the worst of the worst.” While I affirm the responsibility of our law enforcement officials to apprehend violent criminals regardless of their citizenship status, we are seeing countless individuals arrested and detained, including citizens and those with legal resident status, simply because they look like an immigrant. Furthermore, immigration-related offenses are not criminal, but civil offenses, and all residents of this country have a right to due process, regardless of their citizenship status.

Second, we need to bear witness. When Immigrations and Customs Enforcement (ICE) or Customs and Border Patrol (CPB) agents detain our neighbors because of the color of their skin or the language they speak, we need to show up, take videos, and document what is taking place. I do not encourage violent or obstructive behavior, but we need to make sure that those who violate our constitutional protections are held accountable.

Third, we need to love our neighbors. We are seeing that immigrants and other people of color in Minnesota are afraid to leave their homes to work, shop, or even attend school, for fear that they will be swept up indiscriminately, even though they may be citizens or have legal resident status. We will need to come together to provide food, transportation, and other resources for our friends and neighbors, and I encourage us all to take time now to get to know our neighbors and identify the community resources wherever we live that may be called upon to provide support.

Continued on Page 9

On Immigration Enforcement

Continued from Page 8

Through it all, we need to stay grounded in our faith, a faith which Martin Luther described as “a living, busy, active, powerful thing!” Our faith compels us to love our neighbors and to make sure they have what they need to live in peace and unafraid; our faith compels us to boldly bear witness to the truth; our faith compels us to stay connected, to our God and to one another, as we confront these unprecedented challenges together.

We will continue to post resources and opportunities to learn and engage in advocacy and support on our synod website, and I ask us all to be in a spirit of prayer, reflection, and action on behalf of our neighbors, our church, and our nation.

*God of grace and God of glory,
on your people pour your pow'r;
crown your ancient church's story;
bring its bud to glorious flow'r.
Grant us wisdom, grant us courage
for the facing of this hour,
for the facing of this hour.
-God of Grace and God of Glory (ELW, 705)*

**Bishop Paul Erickson
Greater Milwaukee Synod**

The Good Samaritan



January's Mission of the Month is Mt Zion being the Good Samaritan. We think of ways of contributing as gifts of time, talent, and treasure. There are no obligations, only opportunities. Mt Zion is not a “bystander”.

Mt Zion reaches out to our neighbors as our families. Through Tosa Cares, Mt Zion reaches out to our neighbors with food and clothing. Through the Good Samaritan Fund, Mt Zion hopes to help our neighbors with needs like utilities, transportation, rent.

Please support our January Mission as Good Samaritans with a financial contribution of a check or online giving.

Do you need support? Please contact Pastor Tyler or the church office.

Reconciling in Christ

NEW RESOURCE: COMMUNITY CARE FROM RECONCILINGWORKS



In times of uncertainty and challenge, care for one another is both a sacred calling and a practical necessity. ReconcilingWorks is pleased to share our Community Care page—a growing collection of faith-rooted tools designed to help individuals, small groups, and congregations live out care, connection, and mutual support.

These resources invite reflection and meaningful action grounded in love of neighbor. Whether you use them personally, with a small group, or within the life of your congregation, they are designed to support communities seeking to show up for one another with compassion, courage, and hope.

We invite you to explore these tools, share them widely, and join us in nurturing communities where care is practiced boldly and faithfully. Follow the QR Code to access these free resources.

- **Devotional Journal** – A 30-Day reflective, prayerful resource offering short devotions and guided prompts to help you slow down, listen for God's presence, and discern how you are being called to care for yourself and others.
- **Community Care Prompts Worksheet** – A practical tool with thoughtful questions to help identify needs, map local support systems, and spark conversation about how we can show up for one another with intention and compassion.
- **Loving Your Neighbor Worksheet** – An action-oriented guide that offers concrete ideas and space for reflection on how to build relationships, practice everyday care, and respond faithfully to the needs of neighbors near and far.

<https://www.reconcilingworks.org/community-care/>

Printed copies of RIC's
"Loving Your Neighbor" packets
Can be found in the Gathering Space

COMMUNITY
CARE HERE



Birthdays & Anniversaries

Birthdays

Cody D. 1/3	Jim G. 1/18	Mickie R. 2/1
Aaron P. 1/4	Morgan R. 1/18	Dave F. 2/1
Val K. 1/5	Abby S. 1/19	Robert J. 2/1
John P. 1/5	Ben S. 1/21	Debbie F. 2/2
Kristin F. 1/7	Emma W. 1/21	RJ J. 2/2
Mascon S. 1/8	John M. 1/22	Mara M. 2/2
Roy D. 1/9	Kelsey L. 1/23	Loretta B. 2/2
Bryce R. 1/13	Lauryl P. 1/24	Nancy K. 2/2
Isaac R. 1/13	Caleb S. 1/25	Natasha P. 2/3
Madeline E. 1/14	Tom M. 1/31	Sherry D. 2/6
Angela R. 1/16		Eliza F. 2/6
Curt P. 1/17		Dean S. 2/9

Wedding Anniversaries

Tina and Jim K. 2/17
Andrew and Kelsey F. 2/23

Mt Zion Staff Anniversaries

This year, we're celebrating these anniversaries with our staff!

10+ years

Douglas as *social media coordinator*

7 years

Jess (April)

6 years

Pastor Tyler (January)

Janet as *volunteer coordinator* (Jan.)

5 years

Brenda as *Sun. School Super.* (Sept)

4 years

Danielle (March)

Mark (August)

Jasmine (May)

Nancy as *volunteer coordinator* (Jan)

2 years

Liana (August)

Thank you for all you do to support
Mt Zion and the community!

At Mt Zion we are
Joyfully growing disciples in Christ
so that
Everyone we meet comes to know themselves as a reflection of
God's image, worthy of life and love
by prioritizing
Faith Community
Hospitality Justice

Mt Zion Staff

Pastor
The Reverend Tyler D. Rasmussen
pastor@mtzionlutheran.org

Parish Administrator
Jess Monahan
parishadmin@mtzionlutheran.org

**Director of Choirs
and Contemporary Music**
Danielle Lawson
choirs@mtzionlutheran.org

Director of Traditional Music
Mark Schroeter
music@mtzionlutheran.org

Office Volunteers
reception@mtzionlutheran.org

Worship Volunteer Coordinator
Nancy Di Giacinto (volunteer)
Janet McCarthy (volunteer)
worshipvol@mtzionlutheran.org

Maintenance
Jasmine Pruitt
maintenance@mtzionlutheran.org

Sunday School Superintendent
Brenda Marciniak (volunteer)
sundayschool@mtzionlutheran.org

Social Media
Douglas Johnson (volunteer)
socialmedia@mtzionlutheran.org

Website
website@mtzionlutheran.org

Leadership Board

Anna Kissel, President
president@mtzionlutheran.org

Kevin Burke, Vice President
vp@mtzionlutheran.org

Joe Di Giacinto, Treasurer
treasurer@mtzionlutheran.org

Mike Marciniak, Secretary
boardsecretary@mtzionlutheran.org

Chasity Brimeyer
Andy Johnston

Dave Nelson

Linda Havlicek
Bob Young



**Church Office
Hours**

Monday — Friday 10:00am — 3:00pm

Stop by in-person, call 414-258-0456,
or email parishadmin@mtzionlutheran.org

12012 West North Avenue
Wauwatosa, WI 53226
(414) 258-0456
parishadmin@mtzionlutheran.org



mtzionlutheran.org
facebook.com/mtzionlutheran
instagram.com/mtzionlutheran
youtube.com/mtzionlutheran