

# Connections



## The Promise of Spring and the Grace of God

By Jody Alford

Ah! Spring is here. Birds are singing, and the Boulevard Trail smells fresh. Everything feels like it is being reborn. It is also Lent, a season of self-discipline and reflection, a time of contemplating Jesus being tempted by Satan for 40 days and 40 nights in the desert. Finally, I'm celebrating an anniversary. On Easter, I will have been a member of this congregation for one year.

The welcome of longer days of spring, seeing little things poking their heads out from under the dry dead stems, leaves, and twigs, renews us. Winter is dark and cold. This winter has been especially dark, especially cold for our entire world. But spring always reminds us that winter doesn't last forever, and neither will these darkest of days.

During Lent, we try to give up self-indulgences and reflect on our bad habits, then realize we come short of the glory of God every day. Jesus was able to resist Satan, but we humans cannot.

Continued on Page 2

### Zion's Worship

Come worship with us at 10 a.m. each Sunday, 510 Pine Street, Trinidad CO.



### Easter Sunday Brunch

Our first Sunday Potluck in April will be a special Easter Brunch. Join us after worship in the Fellowship Hall, all are welcome!

### 5-Loaves

Our food ministry delivers meals to the community the last Saturday of each month. That's April 24 & 25 this month.



### Church Council

Council meets the second Sunday of each month, immediately after worship.

### Reconciling in Christ

Zion's Lutheran is a Reconciling in Christ Community. All are welcome!



### Holy Week (see page 6)

Lenten Soup Supper: 5:30 p.m. April 1  
 Good Friday Worship: 7 p.m. April 3  
 Easter Sunday Worship: 10 a.m. April 5

## The Promise of Spring...

Continued from Page 1

Only by God's grace can we be saved from death. During Lent we also contemplate the last days of Jesus's earthly walk. Those were dark days indeed. But, through his death, burial and resurrection, Jesus proved that darkness had no power over him.

This year for Lent, I tried to give up the hate and anger I hold in my heart. Most days I've failed and have to ask for forgiveness. Imagine, all the pain, humiliation, and betrayal Jesus endured.

But, instead of anger and hate, he still loved those who caused him harm and he forgave them. Again and again, I fall short of His glory, don't obey his commandment of loving my neighbor, but he loves me and forgives me.

Last year, in late January or early February, I walked into Zion's Lutheran by invitation from Becky McNeil. I was broken spiritually, emotionally, and



New Members Easter 2025: Mark Nelson, DeWayne Harris, Lorna Hassan, and Jody Alford.

psychologically. Immediately, I saw so many faces of friends.

When I sat in the pew next to Ena Sroat, the light streamed in through the stained-glass window and shone on my face. I cried. I finally felt like I was home. I was filled with the grace of God. Jesus didn't scold me; he welcomed me back into the fold.

On Easter Sunday, I joined. I felt as if I was born anew, just like the plants poking their heads out of the soil in spring after a long, dark, cold winter.

### Flower Sponsors Welcomed

During Lent, Zion's uses greenery in lieu of flowers to reflect the austerity of the season. At

Easter, we return to altar flowers and we need flower sponsors.

A donation of \$35 is asked for flower sponsorship. That donation can be placed in the offering plate (designated on a check or envelope as "flowers")

or given online via Tithe-ly, using the special offering tab and designating "flowers". After worship take the flowers home, or share them with someone who may need a day brightener.

The sign-up sheet is on the door of the Sanctuary robing room.



## About Us:

### Church Council:

- ◆ Kathy Broman, financial secretary
- ◆ Norine Hazen
- ◆ Steve Hanson
- ◆ Mary McKenna, secretary
- ◆ Mike McNeil, president
- ◆ Julie Morris
- ◆ Mark Moss, vice president
- ◆ Terri Watson, trust fund
- ◆ Julie Wersal, treasurer

### Staff:

The Rev. Lisa Rygiel  
Jo Moss, Assistant to the Clergy

### Contact Information

Website: [ZionsLuth.org](http://ZionsLuth.org)  
Phone: (719) 846-7786  
Email: [zionsluth@gmail.com](mailto:zionsluth@gmail.com)



# April

2026



	ASSISTANT	LECTOR	USHER	COMMUNION
3	Julie Wersal	Jody Alford	John Rygiel	N/A
5	Jo Moss	Steve Hanson	Steve Hanson & Mark Moss	Carol Hanson & Jo Moss
12	Mike McNeil	Becky McNeil	T. M. Garner & Terri Watson	Lisa & John Rygiel
19	Becky McNeil	Kathy Broman	Kathy Broman & Cherie Holder	Steve & Carol Hanson
26	Julie Wersal	Erin Ogletree	Jody Alford & Cheryl Leef	Kathy Humphrey & Erin Ogletree

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
29	30	31	1	2	3	4
			10:30 am Book Club 5:30 pm Soup Supper	6 pm Maundy Thursday Meal & Worship, 1st United Methodist	5:30 pm Yoga 7 p.m. Good Friday	
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
<b>Easter Sunday</b> 10 am Worship 11:30 am Easter Fellowship 	5:30 pm AA		10:30 am Book Club		5:30 pm Yoga	
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
10 am Worship 11:30 am Fellowship & Council Mtg. 3 pm Child. Choir	Noon PTO. 5:30 pm AA		10:30 am Book Club		5:30 pm Yoga	
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
10 am Worship 11:30 am Fellowship 3 pm Children's Choir	5:30 pm AA	Newsletter Deadline for April	10:30 am Book Club		8:30 am 5-Loaves Prep 5:30 pm Yoga	8:30 am 5-Loaves Deliveries
26	27	28	29	30	1	2
10 am Worship 11:30 am Fellowship 3 pm Child Choir	5:30 pm AA					

## Birthday Wishes

- |                                |                     |                   |
|--------------------------------|---------------------|-------------------|
| 1 — Charlotte Strecker-Baseler | 2 — Tony Hass       |                   |
| 3 — Anthony Campbell           | 6 — Sherry Gartside |                   |
| 11 — Nicole Madden             | 11 — Mike Blackmore | 13 — Terri Watson |
| 19 — Marla Morris              | 20 — Lyric Morris   | 29 — Jeff Morris  |

## What's Happening in Zion's Lutheran Family?



❖ On Easter Sunday, Zion's welcomes its newest member by faith acclamation, **Coralie Lashbrook** (photo at left). Coralie grew up in Northern California. After obtaining her doctorate in Plant Biology from the University of California at Davis, she pursued a career as a research scientist and biology professor in the midwest. Late in life, she met her future husband, Pastor Robert Hoenike, online. He was in Missouri and she was in Iowa, but it was a match made in heaven. The rest was history. Coralie and Robert retired to Trinidad in 2001.

❖ **Jody Alford** (author of this month's page 1 feature) is not the only writer in the family, her husband Rich has published a history book about Trinidad. Among the people he profiled is Isaac Rapp, one of architects who designed Zion's Lutheran.

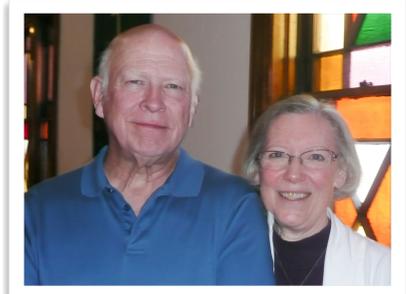
❖ Zion's food ministry received a \$6,000 grant from Las Animas County to support 5-Loaves and a \$500 grant from ELCA.

❖ Congratulations to **Sharon Sorenson & Ernie Parker** (photo at right) on the occasion of their 50<sup>th</sup> Wedding Anniversary.

❖ This year's Rocky Mountain Synod assembly will be April 23-25 at Bethany Lutheran in Denver. **Pr. Lisa** and **Terri Watson** will be the delegates attending from Zion's. This year's assembly theme is Vida en Cristo/Life in Christ and invites people to root our life together in Jesus —receiving grace, being renewed by the Spirit, and sent in love for the sake of our neighbors.

❖ **Norine Hazen** is one of the nominees for this year's prestigious J. Edgar Chenoweth Public Service Award. This annual honor is awarded by the Trinidad and Las Animas County Chamber of Commerce to people demonstrating outstanding service to the community. Named after the former U.S. Congressman from Colorado, the award is distinct from other honors as it focuses specifically on community service in southern Colorado. The award announcements will be made at a special ceremony on April 11.

❖ After more than 50 years of service as a Wildlife Officer, **Bob Holder** has retired. Bob began his career with the Colorado Division of Wildlife in 1975 and spent his career serving the Trinidad West District. Bob's contributions to wildlife management are historic. He was instrumental in the acquisition of the 30,000-acre Bosque del Oso State Wildlife Area (SWA). He also helped protect more than 78,000 acres of critical habitat through perpetual conservation easements. Pictured at right are **Bob & Cherie** at the state capitol during retirement honors there.



## Presiding Bishop Curry Issues Pastoral Message on Gender-based Violence



If you have not had the opportunity to do so, please take a few minutes to read ELCA Bishop Curry's March 24, 2006, statement regarding Gender-Based Violence. This message also includes some important links to resources and additional ELCA statements and resources.

“Dear church,

“It is hard to avoid the crushing news of the headlines and what they mean for individuals every day. Today, I am writing specifically to address the sexual and gender-based violence that is all too familiar to many of us. I know many of you who are survivors live with this trauma and that the news cycle of these stories can push you deeper into despair and anxiety. I want you to know that I hear you. I see you.

“I can only imagine what you are feeling. I understand that the trauma of sexual and gender-based violence goes deep. This church stands with you to say that all forms of sexual and gender-based violence are wrong. At their roots, these forms of violence are dehumanizing misuses of power. “No one deserves this evil. All people are made in God’s own image. The abusive actions of others cannot change this truth. As the psalmist wrote:

‘For it was you who formed my inward parts; you knit me together in my mother’s womb. I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made. Wonderful are your works; that I know very well’” (Psalm 139:13-14).

All people bear the image of God. It is my prayer that those who have been abused will know the healing power of God’s presence. It is my prayer that those who have wielded power to abuse another will come to know the gravity of their actions and, through the Spirit’s power, seek repentance and reparations wherever possible.

As a church, we must continue to seek the welfare of all people for the sake of the abundant life Jesus came to give (John 10:10). We continue to, in the words of the Lord’s Prayer, seek the reign of God “on earth as in heaven.”

In Christ,

The Rev. Yehiel Curry, Presiding Bishop

## ELCA Offers Gender-Based Resources

More information about ELCA teaching on gender-based violence and steps the synod is taking to prevent abuse and support survivors includes Social message found at the following links:

- “[Gender-based Violence](#)”
- “[Commercial Sexual Exploitation](#)”.
- “[Child Protection](#)”.

The [ELCA domestic violence resources](#). If you or a loved one are experiencing violence or threats of violence, this site provides valuable Assistance.

You can find this important message at: <https://www.elca.org/news/presiding-bishop-curry-issues-pastoral-message-on-gender-based-violence>.

(March 31 is International Day of Transgender Visibility.)

## ELCA Website is Updated

ELCA has an updated website with a new look and updated features such as:

- ▶ One place to look: A central location to nurture faith and discover community.
- ▶ Enhanced search and guided exploration: Includes the resource library, congregation information, Living Lutheran articles and the ELCA’s seeker site for better search results.
- ▶ Easier navigation: Find and connect with the ministries and programs that help you act on your faith.
- ▶ Made for everyone: Discover accessibility best practices.



Introducing:  
The New ELCA.org



# Zion's Enters Holy Week and Our Walk to Easter

Holy Week is the most sacred time in the Christian year, when we remember Jesus' journey from his triumphant entry into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday, through his suffering and death on the cross, to the hope of resurrection on Easter.

In the ELCA, we walk this path to reflect on God's deep love and sacrifice for all people, seeing both the brokenness of humanity and the promise of new life in Christ. This week invites us to humility, service, and trust in God's grace, as we are called to have the same mind as Christ – one of self-giving love.

By journeying through Holy Week, we are reminded that God's love is stronger than death, and we are empowered to share this hope with the world.

## Holy Week

Holy week at Zion's began on Sunday, March 29, with Palm Sunday and continues with opportunities to worship and gather throughout the week.

### Wednesday Soup Supper:

Zion's invites everyone to share the final soup supper of Lent at 5:30 p.m. on Wednesday, April 1, in the Fellowship Hall.

**Maunder Thursday:** We are invited to join our friends at First Methodist Church, 216 Broom St., at 6 p.m. on Thursday, April 2, for soup in their Fellowship Hall followed by a brief informal service of worship.

**Good Friday:** Worship service begins at 7 p.m. on Friday, April 3, in the Zion's Sanctuary with the stripping of the altar which symbolizes the abandonment of Jesus by his disciples and the

stripping of Jesus by the soldiers before his crucifixion.

It represents the humiliation of Jesus and the consequences of sin as a preparation for the celebration of new life.

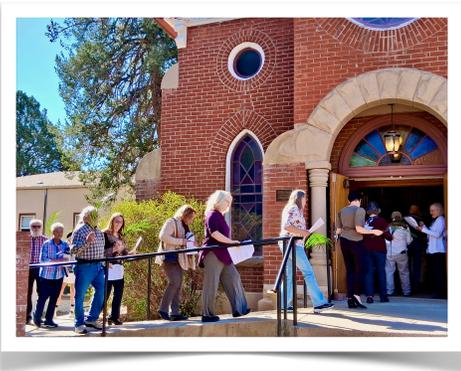
As we enter into Good Friday, life and death stand side by side. In John's passion account, Jesus reveals the power and glory of God, even as he is put on trial and sentenced to death. Standing with the disciples at the foot of the cross, we pray for the whole world as Christ's death offers life to all. We gather in solemn devotion, but always with the promise that the tree around which we assemble is indeed a tree of life.

## Easter Celebration

**Easter Sunday:** Christ is risen, and through him all creation is made new! Indeed, "God shows no partiality" (Acts 10:34).

We gather for Easter worship at 10 a.m. on Sunday, April 5, in the Sanctuary, followed by an Easter brunch in the Fellowship Hall.

Christ's resurrection truly brings life to everyone. We sing hymns of praise, gather around sacred words, and proclaim God's faithfulness, power, and love in the feast of holy communion. With the women at the tomb, we are astonished, elated, and grateful. We depart with joy to proclaim the good news of God's endless love.



## Join Us for Easter Brunch

Following worship on Easter Sunday, we gather in the Fellowship Hall for brunch. The main dish will feature ham, egg bake, breakfast tamales, and other entrees. A sign-up sheet is in the Fellowship Hall for people to indicate the side dishes, salads and desserts they plan to bring. The Easter Brunch replaces our regular First Sunday Potluck for April.

# Worship Stands at the Center of Our Lives

At Zion's we come together as a community of faith. We come from all walks of life, from different generations, and from different economic, political, and social backgrounds. God gathers us through the Holy Spirit to worship. Connected with and central to everything we do, worship unites us in celebration, engages us in thoughtful dialogue, and helps us grow in faith. It grounds us in our Christian and Lutheran roots, while demonstrating practical relevance for today's world (ELCA).

The Bible teaches that *worship* stands at the center of our life of faith. We do not think about worship as much in terms of what we do, rather about what God is doing and our response to God's action. Through God's word -- water, bread, and prayer -- we are nurtured in faith and sent into the world equipped to experience the difference God's grace and love in Christ make for all people and creation.

While approaches to worship may vary among congregations, there is a basic pattern for Lutheran worship (the ordo). This pattern is reflected in the italicized headings of our Sunday bulletins – *Gathering, Word, Meal, and Sending*:

- ✦ We gather as God's people.
- ✦ We encounter God's word in scripture, preaching, and song.
- ✦ We share a meal at Christ's table.
- ✦ We are sent into the world for mission and service in daily life.

In the coming months, we will look at the ordo -- *Gathering, Word, Meal, and Sending* – using the resources of the ELCA, Clergy, Luther's Catechism, and the Bible.

## Sharing Our Recipes: Aunt Carol's Tuna Casserole

From Jo Moss

### Ingredients

- 1 Can Cream of Mushroom Soup
- 1 Soup Can of Milk
- 1 to 2 inch Slice Block of Velveeta Cheese (cubed)
- ½ Small onion (chopped)
- ¼ tsp. Black Pepper
- 2 Cups uncooked Elbow Macaroni
- 1 Large Can White Tuna in Water



### Directions

- Heat soup, milk, cheese, onion, and pepper over low heat.
- Drain and rinse tuna.
- Cook macaroni according to package directions, drain and rinse.
- Add soup mixture to drained macaroni, stir in tuna.
- Put mixture in greased casserole dish.
- Bake at 350-degrees for 20 minutes or until it bubbles.

### About This Recipe:

When we visited my Uncle Bob & Aunt Carol Bridenbaugh in suburban Chicago, my aunt would have tuna casserole waiting.

It was an easy meal and it didn't matter when we arrived.

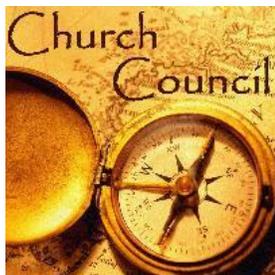
It also is a recipe that my cousin Jean Bridenbaugh Schmidt, Bob & Carol's daughter and the pastor at Our Saviors Lutheran Church in West Salem, WI, shared in her church's cookbook and that I now share.

# Council Updates: March

## Zion's Lutheran Church Council

### Members Present

The regular meeting of the Zion's church council was brought to order at 11:35 a.m. All members were present. The invocation was offered by Pr. Lisa Rygiel



### Reports

**Minutes:** Minutes of previous meeting were approved with one minor correction

**Treasurer:** Reviewed and approved budget status. Reviewed tax-exempt status for purchases from Amazon, Wal-Mart, and Safeway.

**Financial Secretary and Trust Fund** — Reports reviewed and approved. Including payment of bills.

**Food Ministry** — 5-Loaves distributed 282 meals. Discussion of rising food costs has prompted meal deliveries to include additional food staples. Zion's received grants from both Las Animas County and the Rocky Mountain Synod to support the food ministry.

**Pastor** — Coralie Lashbrook will join Zion's on Easter Sunday. Palms were ordered for Palm Sunday. The Trinidad Ministerial Alliance met and reviewed the city's warming center with 75 guests and 75 trained volunteer staff. ACTS received a large donation to assist those in need.

### Old Business

- Zion's council scheduled a work session for March 22 to discuss committees.
- Mary McKenna will draft a booklet for new council members.

- 5<sup>th</sup> Sunday Offering for the month of March was designated for the Soup Kitchen.
- Council discussed capital improvements needs, including:
  - Fellowship Hall flooring replacement, with carpet cleaning continuing in the interim.
  - Terri Watson and John Rygiel will work on welding of outside sidewalk and ramp railings to improve safety.
  - Painting of the exterior bases on the Sanctuary will be completed as weather allows.
  - The lightning rod project was canceled as current building codes do not require it.
  - Electrical upgrades have been completed.

### New Business

- Council discussed a campout and other ideas for ways to involve as many people as possible. Pastor Lisa will organize the camping event.
- Committee lead reviews identified Mark Moss as Safety and Security team lead; Stephen Hanson as safety team member; and Mike McNeil as Building and Grounds team lead.
- Council discussed the unhoused needs in with Erika Gonzales, coordinator for the Las Animas-Huerfano **County** Coalition for the Unhoused.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:30 p.m. The next regular meeting will be at 11:30 a.m. on Sunday, April 12, downstairs in the Fellowship Hall.

-Submitted by Council Secretary Mary McKenna

**Acknowledgements:** Contributors — Jody Alford, Pr. Lisa Rygiel, Mary McKenna, RMS, ELCA.

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