



Zion Lutheran Church

The Messenger

September 2026

A Message from the Zion Lutheran Council President:

As we approach Labor Day, we can reflect on our summer which is usually a time to kick back and relax. While enjoying summer, Zion's outreach ministry continued in earnest. Thankful Thursday in local parks asked for what people are thankful for wrapped in delicious ice cream. Habitat served noon meals to the dedicated volunteers who build homes for deserving families, and we witnessed the presentation of the key to one such family who now has a place to call "HOME". Then July 27th happened. The rains came, the wind blew and darkness descended over Menasha, Fox Crossing, Neenah and parts of Appleton. While nature displayed its awesome power, like the angel in the Old Testament Passover, God's hand gave a miracle that no lives were lost and there were few serious injuries.

So now September is here. Summer slips away; white clothing is put away in favor of the oranges, reds, and browns of Autumn. A new school year is beginning with football season starting and autumn brings new opportunities and challenges for Zion. Faith Formation begins on September 13th. Sunday School with Pennie Reis, director, and confirmation led by Stephanie Draheim with assistance from parents and musical participation by Cheryl Meyer. Choirs will begin practice thanks to Cheryl Meyer and Paula Staedt, bell choir. Welcome to a new year of learning and music.

September 13th is also God's Heart, Our Hands Sunday. Watch the bulletin for details of Zion's project for this year. There are new opportunities to become involved in the life of the church. Waffle church ??? will be one of those opportunities. Stay tuned. Zion will also be involved in the ongoing Synod Pivot program to examine "Where are we headed as a congregation". Details will be forthcoming and we encourage everyone to participate. The Real Estate Committee anticipates a report on the ongoing feasibility study from Martin Riley (architect) and Hope Community Capital regarding the Affordable Housing Project as we move forward.

Therefore, as Autumn begins, take a minute to savor the summer we leave behind. Join in all the exciting opportunities Zion has to build stronger relationships with one another and with the surrounding neighborhood and wider community.

Remember and pray for those who continue to rebuild and heal from July's storm. Proceeds from Zion's participation in Porchfest were designated for recovery efforts. This highlights that WE ARE THE CHURCH TOGETHER, not confined to a church building but in the hearts of men and women who carry out God's ministry.

Sue Bunkert

If you have any questions or concerns, don't hesitate to call: 920-734-5138

A Message from the Pastor:



Coming Back, Not Starting Over

The bell choir folders are coming back out. Sunday School and Confirmation will be starting again. Ministries that may have taken the summer “off” are finding their way back onto the calendar. September in churches always feels like this – everything filling back in all at once.

It would be easy to talk about all of it as a fresh start – a new program year, a clean slate, a change to reinvent. I don’t think this is quite what is happening. What is actually happening is smaller, and I think, more faithful that that: people are coming back to something that never really went away. The bell choir did not stop existing over the summer. The faith that shows up in a Sunday School classroom will not need to be rebuilt from nothing. It was there all along, quieter, held by fewer hands for a season; and now more of us are showing up to carry it again. That is not reinvention (and never was). That is return.

I think that is true of faith more broadly, too. We do not always need a dramatic new beginning to be faithful. Most of the time, faithfulness just looks like coming back. Coming back to the pew, to the practice, to the people – again and again, whether or not anything about it feels new. So as the building fills back up this month, I am not going to tell you this is the year to reinvent yourself. I am going to say something quieter: welcome back! Whatever you are returning to – choir, a class, a committee, just your seat on Sunday morning – it was worth returning to. It was already worth something, all summer long.

+Pastor Jason



FALL ADULT FAITH FORMATION

Faith & Civic Life: *Seeking the Wellbeing of All!*

In 2025, the ELCA Churchwide Assembly adopted a social statement on faith and civic life, addressing the relationship of religious organizations and political authority, and related matters. Join Pastor Jason for a six-session study on the social statement and our call as Lutheran Christians to seek the well-being of all people by engaging in our civic life together.

- SESSION 1 - SEPTEMBER 13**
Foundational Teaching: God Acts for the Well-being of All
- SESSION 2 - SEPTEMBER 27**
God Calls All People to Robust Civic Participation
- SESSION 3 - OCTOBER 11**
Assessing the U.S. Constitutional Form of Government

- SESSION 4 - OCTOBER 25**
Religion and the First Amendment
- SESSION 5 - NOVEMBER 8**
Constructive Relationships Between Religious Organizations and Political Authority
- SESSION 6 - NOVEMBER 22**
Selected Contemporary Concerns in Civic Life

SUNDAYS AFTER WORSHIP

Join ZLC for an evening of

CANDLE MAKING

- ✓ Learn the basics of making a custom candle and/or other self-care items.
- ✓ Experienced and friendly instructors
- ✓ Take home your creation(s)



Tues., September 15
6:30 PM - 8:00 PM



Nana's Apothecary
1117 N Badger Ave

Cost is based on
what you decide to
create but starts at

\$18+

REGISTER NOW



Sign-up on Sundays
in the Narthex or Contact
the Church Office.



Zion Tower RingerZ will resume rehearsals on Wed., September 2nd at 4:15pm in the balcony. We are looking for a couple more ringers. Paula would be happy to introduce you to Paula's handbell basics. You won't know until you try. Please give her a call at 920-810-2225 if you are interested.



Choir Practice will begin on Sunday, September 13 at 8:00 AM.

Call Cheryl Meyer at 920-731-9474 if you are interested in joining or for more information.

Blessing of Backpacks Sept. 13th

Bring your backpack with you to church on Sept. 13 to have it blessed during worship. You don't need to be a child to get your backpack blessed.



FAITH *formation*

Do you have children in your life who are ready to explore their faith? Our Faith Formation classes will begin again September 13. Children, age 3 (by September 1st) - 5th grade participate in our Sunday School Program and 6-8th graders participate in confirmation. Interested in more information? Please go to:
<https://forms.cloud.microsoft/r/yzBsmXbxj>

WAFFLE CHURCH – IT'S A REAL THING!



Join us on Labor Day Weekend Sunday, September 6 for a special and unique worship service called "Waffle Church". This service will take place at the regular service time of 9:00 a.m. in the Fellowship Hall and will include... waffles!

The worship will blend a typical Sunday service with the sharing of a delicious breakfast all in one. On the menu will be waffles, sausage, orange juice, and REAL maple syrup (Pastor Jason has a story behind the syrup choice). There is nothing you need to bring but yourself. Come and enjoy a different style of worship that is a service and a shared meal all in one.

Zion Lutheran Church Council Meeting Minutes

July 20, 2026 Meeting began at 6:30pm

Opening Devotion: Ray Pittman

Present: Sue Bunkert, Molly Kuba, Tom Meltz, Kandie Wilz, Amanda Kuba, Ray Pittman, Linda Van Bommel, Mary Mueller, Pastor Jason

Absent: Kyle Moseng

Guest: Wendy Sachs

Approval of Agenda: motion was made and approved.

Approval of Minutes: motion was made and approved.

Pastor's Report: A handout was given. Pastor Jason gave an oral update; He is volunteering for Point in time - will be out of the office July 23 and 24. Sunday September 6 (Labor day weekend) will be waffle church. Service will be located in the fellowship hall while having waffles, sausage, fruit, and orange juice.

Financial Secretary Report: Wendy gave an oral report. Total expenses at the end of June \$29,416.43; Total expenses for June revenue \$72,564.07. Met with Tithe.ly to learn about church management software offerings. A motion was made and approved to switch to Tithe.ly starting October 1.

Committee Reports:

Zion Mutual Homes - handout was given. Found a management company. Jeremy resigned as manager of ZMH. Jeremy will be staying at Zion as a maintenance person. A motion was made to approve using the line of credit to turn over the apartments up to \$25,000. Approved.

Staff - handout was given. Meeting minutes were taken.

Real Estate Committee - handout was given. Meeting minutes were taken.

Old Business:

Synod Pivot Program - The Pivot Program starts at the next council meeting in August. Pastor Dara will be in attendance. Pastor Ben Williams will be our coach. October's council meeting date has been changed to Monday October 26. December's council meeting has been switched to Monday December 14. Council retreat is scheduled for Saturday February 20.

New Business:

Communication Audit - We looked through the communication audit as a council.

Next Meeting: Monday, August 17, 2026 at 6:30pm

Devotion will be led by: Pivot Program

Motion to dismiss at 7:50pm.

Closed meeting with The Lord's Prayer

Submitted by Amanda Kuba



To everyone who helped with Thankful Thursdays!

Thrivent Choice Dollars received from:

Darlene Roehl

EDISON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL SUPPLY DRIVE

Thank you to all who donated school supplies. The staff at Edison deeply appreciate the generosity of the people of Zion.

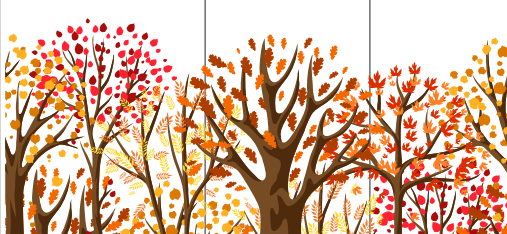
September



Zion Lutheran Church



2026

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
		1	2 Handbells Practice 4:15 PM Balcony Sunday School & Confirmation Parent Meeting 7:00 PM Conference Room	3	4	5
6 Worship - Waffle Church 9:00 AM Fellowship Hall Flower Waterer: Diana Staedt	7 LABOR DAY ★ Church office closed	8 ZMH Committee Meeting 10:00 AM Real Estate Committee Mtg 5:30 PM Conference Rm	9 Handbells Practice 4:15 PM Balcony	10 Staff Meeting 12:30 PM Conference Room	11	12
13 RALLY DAY Choir Practice 8:00 AM Worship 9:00 AM Sunday School/Confirmation Adult Faith Formation Fellowship Flower Waterer: Gwen Schwandt	14 Finance Meeting 5:00 PM	15	16 Handbells Practice 4:15 PM Balcony	17 Zion Lunch Social 11:30am October Newsletter Deadline	18	19
20 Choir Practice 8:00 AM Worship 9:00 AM Sunday School/Confirmation Fellowship	21 Zion Council Meeting 6:30 PM	22	23 Handbells Practice 4:15 PM Balcony	24	25	26
27 Choir Practice 8:00 AM Worship 9:00 AM Sunday School/Confirmation Adult Faith Formation Fellowship	28	29	30 Handbells Practice 4:15 PM Balcony			

Sept. 6th: Rev. Jason Poole Xiong
Assisting Minister:
Musician: Heather Watney
Greeters: Diana Staedt
Reader: Stephanie Draheim
Opens/Closes: Gwen Schwandt

Sept. 13th: Rev. Jason Poole Xiong
Assisting Minister: Grace Van Eyck
Musician:
Greeters: Diane Moseng
Reader: Pennie Reis
Opens/Closes: Jim Schley

Sept. 20th: Rev. Jason Poole Xiong
Assisting Minister: Tommy Meltz
Musician:
Greeters: Gary Busch
Reader: Kyle Moseng
Opens: Greg Pettigrew Closes: Jodi Hoesli

Sept. 27th: Rev. Jason Poole Xiong
Assisting Minister: Wendy Sachs
Musician:
Greeters: Linda Wirtz
Reader: Cheryl Meyer
Opens: Gene Wiese Closes: Tammy Mossholder

Save the Date!

“Sip & Paint”
Fellowship Event
Sunday, November 15 –
6:30 p.m.
Pinot’s Palette –
Appleton
Look for more info in the
October newsletter and
bulletins!



RaiseRight

Raise Right. What is that?

It is a program where gift cards are sold & the group selling them gets to keep some of the money collected for the gift cards.

There is a long list of gift cards to choose from. Please keep this in mind when you are doing any of your projects, a special occasion or just your normal grocery and/or other shopping. An order is usually placed about every month and if you order something you usually get the gift card within 1 week. Lynn Walter is in charge of this program, so if you have any questions, please talk to her. She also has a limited amount of gift cards available for sale each week so you can purchase them right away.



A Ministry of Fox Valley Lutheran Homes

You are welcome to join us as we learn more about God's Word and grow together in faith and friendship.

Worship Opportunity: Sept. 10 at 11:00 AM

Bible Study Groups:

Friday Mornings 9 AM (weekly)

Sunday Evenings 6 PM (twice monthly)

Wednesday Mornings 9 AM (twice monthly).

Zion Lunch Social Group

Please plan to join Zion Lunch Social Group on the 3rd Thursday of each month at 11:30am. Check the sign-up sheet in the narthex to see where they are heading. Everyone is welcome. Please come and learn something new about someone at Zion.



COLORS OF MEMORY WALK

Thursday, September 17, 2026

4:30 PM - 6:00 PM

Starting and Ending at Bethany Home
1226 Berlin Street, Waupaca



SCAN ME

Join us as we come together to:

- * Raise awareness of dementia
- * Educate our community
- * Support local caregivers
- * Connect & walk together for a meaningful cause
- * Share stories of those affected by dementia

Register today at:

<https://www.zeffy.com/en-US/donation-form/donate-to-change-lives-20974>

Event t-shirts available for purchase at registration.

We will not accept t-shirt orders after September 3rd.

Make a difference close to home.

Every dollar supports local dementia caregivers and families in Waupaca County.

Walk sponsored by: Bethany, Heartland Hospice, Park Vista, ThedaCare At Home, St. Croix Hospice & Synergy HomeCare



Zion Lutheran Church

912 N. Oneida Street
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(920) 739-3104 - www.zionappleton.org
Office Hours: Monday-Thursday 9:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m.

Rev. Jason Poole-Xiong

Pastor

jason@zionappleton.org
Pastoral Emergencies: (920) 268-4809

Staff

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Paula Staedt
Handbell Director

Cheryl Meyer
Choir Director

Stephanie Draheim
Confirmation Coordinator
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Pennie Reis
Faith Formation Coordinator
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Gwen Schwandt
Visitation Ministers

Tommy Meltz
Blessing Box

Colleen Malchow
Sunday Fellowship