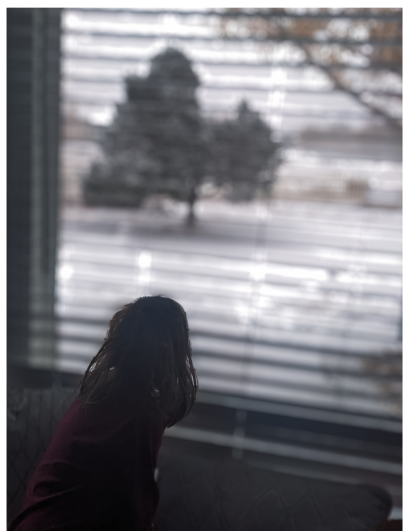


Connections

A Reconciling in Christ Community



When Things Goes Wrong

Holding on to Faith When It Feels Like It's Slipping Away

By Melanie Moss

There are seasons in life when it feels like everything is falling apart. A difficult diagnosis. The loss of someone we love. Financial burdens. Broken relationships. The stress of work responsibilities that seem to have no end. In those moments, it is natural to wonder, "God, where are You?"

Many of us quietly wrestle with something we are almost afraid to admit, that our faith is beginning to falter.

The encouraging truth is that God is not surprised by our questions. Throughout Scripture, some of God's most faithful servants cried out in confusion and despair. David asked, "How long, Lord? Will you forget me forever?"

Elijah wanted to give up. Even John the Baptist, while imprisoned, questioned whether Jesus was truly the One they had been waiting for.

Faith is not the absence of doubt.

Continued on Page 2

Zion's Worship

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



Blessing of the Animals

Zion's Blessing of the Animals will be at 1 p.m., Saturday, Oct. 3, with the Rev. Robert Hoenike officiating..

5-Loaves

Our food ministry delivers meals to the community the last Saturday of each month. That's Oct. 30 & 31 this month.



Church Council

Council meets now meets at 1 p.m. the second Tuesday of each month, upstairs in the Fellowship Hall .

Reconciling in Christ

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



Reformation Sunday

Wear **red** on Oct. 25, Reformation Sunday. Reformation Day (Oct. 31) commemorates Martin Luther's posting of the 95 Theses in 1517.

When Things Go Wrong...

Continued from Page 1

Faith is choosing to keep turning toward God even when our hearts are heavy and the answers don't come.

Sometimes we picture faith as standing strong on a mountaintop, but more often it looks like taking one trembling step after another through a valley. It is whispering a simple prayer when we don't have the strength for eloquent words. It is showing up to worship when our hearts feel empty. It is allowing our church family to carry us when we no longer have the strength to carry ourselves.

Jesus never promised a life free from hardship. He did promise His presence.

In Matthew 11:28, Jesus invites us, "Come to me, all who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest." Notice Jesus doesn't say, "Come when you've figured everything out." He simply says, "Come."

If you find yourself in a season where your faith feels fragile, know this: God is holding on to you

even when you feel like you can't hold on to God.

God's love is not measured by the strength of your faith but by the faithfulness of God.

As a church, may we also remember to look for those who are quietly struggling. A kind word, a handwritten note, a meal, or simply sitting beside someone in silence can become a powerful reminder that God has not forgotten them.

When everything seems to be going wrong, don't mistake God's silence for absence. Often, God is doing the deepest work in places we cannot yet see. May we continue to trust the One who has never failed us, remembering the promise found in Isaiah 41:10:

"Fear not, for I am with you; be not dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you; I will help you; I will uphold you with righteous right hand."



Blessing of the Animals is Oct. 3



The annual blessing of the animals will be at 1 p.m., Saturday, Oct. 3, on the lower lawn of the Fellowship Hall, with Pr. Robert Hoenike officiating. All socialized animals are welcome. Please bring animals on a leash or in a crate/cage for a blessing. If your pet cannot be with you or has crossed the Rainbow Bridge, bring a photo or even their "stuffy" for a special

blessing. Stay afterward for food & photos.

We will be accepting donations of pet foods, treats, and money for PALS.

These photos are from our 2025 pet blessing.

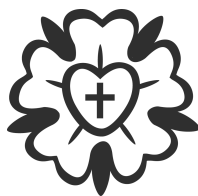


Church Council Meeting Update

The Zion's Church Council has a new meeting schedule. They now are meeting at 1 p.m. the second Tuesday of each month **upstairs** in the Fellowship Hall. This is a change from Sunday meetings.

Meeting upstairs benefits council members for whom navigating the stairs is difficult and improves accessibility for anyone who wants to attend meetings.

In addition, it allows council members to attend fellowship time each Sunday, rather than missing fellowship for meetings.



October
2026

	ASSISTANT	LECTOR	USHER	COMMUNION
4	Jo Moss	Coralie Lashbrook	John Rygiel & Mark Lara	Mark Moss & Kathy Humphrey
11		Carol Hanson	Steve Hanson & Mark Moss	Mary McKenna & Jo Moss
18	Julie Wersal	Cheryl Leef	Jody Alford & Cheryl Leef	John & Lisa Rygiel
25	Steve Hanson	Crystal Hulet	T. M. Garner & Terri Watson	Cherie Holder & Mary McKenna

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
27	28	29	30	1	2	3
				1 pm Cmnty Coalition Mtg. @ Trinidad Housing Authority		10 am-1 pm Doors Open Trinidad 1 pm Blessing of the Animals
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
10 am Worship & First Sunday Potluck 3 pm Youth Choir Practice	5:30 pm AA	9-10:30 am Office Hours 10:30 am Bible Book Club 5:30 pm Dem-entia Group				
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
10 am Worship & Fellowship 3 pm Youth Choir Practice	Noon PEO 5:30 pm AA	9-10:30 am Office Hours 1 pm Church Council Meets		11:30 am Thanksgiving Core Team		
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
10 am Worship & Fellowship 3 pm Youth Choir Practice	5:30 pm AA	9-10:30 am Office Hours 10:30 am Bible Book Club		Newsletter Deadline for November		
25	26	27	28	29	30	31
10 am Reformation Worship & Fellowship 3 pm Youth Choir Practice	5:30 pm AA	9-10:30 am Office Hours 10:30 am Bible Book Club			8:30 am 5-Loaves Prep	8:30 am 5-Loaves Deliveries

October Birthday Wishes

3 — Tea Compton	19 — Mark Nelson
3 — Lorna Hassard	19 — Lisa Rygiel
7 — Cheryl Leef	21 — Julie Wersal
9 — Tami Hix	22 — Erin Ogletree
17 — Tiffany Ellingham	27 — Jan Everhart

Belated September Birthday wishes to Mark Lara (9/17) & Debbie Spearman (9/28)

What's Happening in Zion's Lutheran Family?



Becki Shandrick & Susan Vowell

❖ On Sunday, Sept. 27, we welcomed two visitors with strong connections to Zion's past. **Becki Shandrick** and cousin **Susan Vowell** joined us for worship and fellowship. Becki is the daughter of **Pr. Albert Shandrick** who served Zion's from 1961 to 1985. Pr. Shandrick played a major role in documenting the congregation's history. He also officiated at Susan's wedding at Zion's.

❖ Zion's recycles. Two members of Zion's share responsibility for recycling bulletins, aluminum, glass, plastic, etc. They cover costs and deliver the recyclables each month to *Treasure Not Trash*. If you would like to recycle personal items, visit <https://treasurenottrashrecycling.com/about.html>, but please do not leave household recyclables at the church.



Mark Moss & Steve Hanson try giant Jenga at the Summer Supper.

❖ Our first Summer Suppers featured monthly food, fellowship, and fun and were well attended. When the September supper concluded, participants expressed interest in future fellowship opportunities. If you would like to coordinate a similar event, let a church council member or **Pr. Lisa** know.

❖ This year we had several God's Work Our Hands projects. We are grateful to everyone who participated in our two projects on Sept. 13 -- preparation of hygiene packets for Keep Trinidad Safe and singing at Legacy. Both were well received. The people at the Legacy were especially grateful for the music and fellowship, Pr. Lisa reports.

Prior to Sept. 13 projects, Zion's members completed outreach projects in August. This included using proceeds from the garage sale to help the soup kitchen and another project to help the Way feed the unhoused. Thank you to everyone who puts our faith into action in so many ways.



Members assemble hygiene packets for Keep Trinidad Safe during fellowship time on Sept. 13.

❖ **Pr. Lisa** has new office hours of 9 a.m. to 10:30 p.m. on Tuesday, just prior to our regular Tuesday Bible Book Clubs and other studies. Details about our current study can be found on Page 5.

Zion's Thanksgiving Dinner Preparations are Underway

For decades, Zion's has sponsored Trinidad's Community Thanksgiving, ensuring that anyone who wants one has an opportunity to enjoy a Thanksgiving dinner with all the trimmings. This year is no exception, though there will be some changes to our recent routine. The changes help better accommodate the growing number of meal requests we are receiving, improve efficiency, and enhance food safety.

The biggest change is that Zion's will use an outside vendor to cook both the turkeys and hams. For years, Bill Winter took on the responsibility of frying the majority of turkeys. With Bill's passing last year, we lost a dear friend and we knew we now needed more cooking assistance. By outsourcing the ham and turkey cooking, we are able to focus upon preparation of side dishes and other logistics including meal service and deliveries.

Like our 5-Loaves meal ministry, Zion's Thanksgiving Dinner is about a spirit of welcome, involvement, inclusion, and giving at a time when the need is great. It is no small undertaking. Planning begins months in advance and involves the support of both the Zion's congregation and the community at large. This year, a Thanksgiving core team will meet at 11:30 a.m. on Thursday, Oct. 15, in the Fellowship Hall to coordinate tasks. Anyone who would like to help with this year's meal planning is encouraged to attend. We will provide pizza for lunch.

The core team, headed by Norine Hazen, plans the menu, shops, identifies volunteers, and seeks monetary donations, grants, and in-kind donations, to make it all possible. Prior to Thanksgiving Day, volunteers help with preparation and organization and then Thanksgiving Day, serve meals in the Fellowship Hall, provide curbside pick-up, and deliver food to those who are unable to come in person.

If you can help or would like more information, talk to Norine. Also, watch the bulletins, E-formation, and the November newsletter for updates. Already we are building delivery lists, so if you know someone who needs to have a meal delivered (Thanksgiving or 5-Loaves) let Norine or Jo Moss know.

Editor's Note: Monetary donations can be given electronically through Zion's donation portal at <https://www.zionsluth.org/give>. Checks can be made out to Zion's Lutheran Church with a note in the memo line "Thanksgiving" and mailed or delivered to the church or placed in the offering plate.



About Us:

Church Council:

- ♦ Kathy Broman, financial secretary
- ♦ Steve Hanson
- ♦ Norine Hazen
- ♦ 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](https://www.ZionsLuth.org)
Phone: (719) 846-7786
Email: zionsluth@gmail.com



Tami Talks About Covering Heads & Healing Hearts

Editor's Note: When Tami Hix came to church sporting a fashionable new haircut, she shared an inspirational story about the reason for her new look. Now she shares it with all of us.

By Tami Hix

My son's dear friend is battling the evil cancer and was losing his hair. My son Patrick said he was going to shave his head to match his friend. However, Patrick's friend had another suggestion, telling Patrick rather than shave it, grow it and donate it for cancer wigs. Patrick told me what he was doing, so I said I would join him (photos at right) in this endeavor.

We started in January 2026; in the beginning it wasn't too bad as I had just had a haircut in late December. I must say it became a bit of a battle trying to figure out ways as my hair

grew out to keep it from bugging the heck out of me. I managed. And, Patrick went from a nice looking short-haired man, to looking like a European soccer player.

Fast forward to a few weeks ago (mid-September) and we finally had hair long enough to cut. There are several ways to donate hair to cancer. My daughter-in-law Khiara found where you can donate the hair and donate funds too (\$121 per wig), and you get to see the wig once it is made. We both donated our hair and the money, but we said we didn't need to see the wigs.

Patrick's friend still is fighting a great fight and is responding to some of the cancer treatments.

For more information about one of the options for donating hair or supporting creation of wigs, visit <https://childrenwithhairloss.org>, and learn more about the amazing programs and ways to become involved.



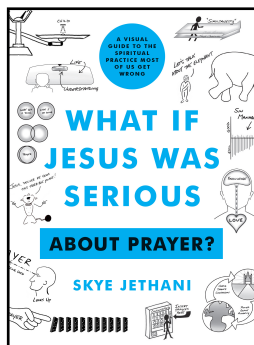
Current Book Club and Study Focus on Prayer

The current Zion's Bible Book Club and Study: *What if Jesus was Serious...About Prayer*, by Pr. Sky Jethani is led by Pr. Lisa.

As part of this study participants read and discuss excerpts from the book guided by its text and illustrations.

The nice thing about this study, Pr. Lisa says, is that people can join at any time, even if they missed earlier sessions.

According to the study synopsis, "People like to say, 'Prayer works.' But what does that mean?"



Prayer works for what? Getting the answers from God that we want so much?

"While God certainly cares for your deepest needs, Skye Jethani wants you to know that prayer is so much more than a two-way transaction with a heavenly vending machine. Jesus didn't pray like that."

As the author notes, "Prayer isn't about getting answers, but getting God."

The study begins at 10:30 a.m. each Tuesday in the Fellowship Hall.

The book is available in print and as an e-book, both online and from area bookstores.

Sharing Our Recipes: Baked Frittata

From Keilley O'Hara

Recipe Note...Just Saying

Some recipes require careful measurements and detailed directions. Others allow a great deal of latitude depending upon the cook's preferences and tastes. Keilley O'Hara, a trained chef, shares just such a recipe.



Ingredients

6 Eggs

A "Handful of Cheese"

A "Splash of Milk"

Vegetables, Pizza Spices, Salt, Pepper, and anything else you want to throw together.

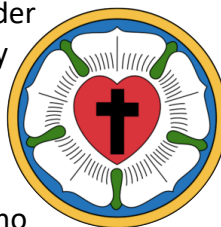
Directions

1. Preheat oven to 400-degrees.
2. Line a 9-inch Springform Pan or Baking Dish with Parchment Paper.
3. In a separate bowl, whisk together eggs, cheese, milk, vegetables, and seasonings.
4. Pour the mixture into the Springform Pan or Baking Dish.
5. Bake until the Frittata is golden and puffy and the center feels firm and springy, about 25 minutes (or more).

Reformation Sunday is October 25

The last Sunday in October is Reformation Sunday, a reminder that as Martin Luther taught, we are all imperfect, saved by God's grace and God's grace alone, through Jesus Christ.

"Reformation Sunday is a profound act of religious freedom that allows us to be in one accord and know that we are loved, not because of our actions but because of who we are," writes Ralen M. Robinson in *Living Lutheran*. He explains that not only on Reformation Sunday but every day we are called to embody the fire of the Reformation promise, which tells us that God's radical grace is still accessible. Wearing red on Reformation Sunday lets us acknowledge the Holy Spirit in our lives.



Robinson says, "(Reformation) is lived out whenever we proclaim faith alone, scripture alone and grace alone. It is lived out as we grapple, welcome, and question reform...to reflect Jesus' teachings.

"When we, as a community, stand up and speak boldly to advocate for change, we become the voice for those silenced by systems. This is the Reformation in everyday life, the reformed church that accepts everyone and allows all of us to have accessible faith. It's in the way we treat our neighbors, advocate for justice, and show compassion to those in need."

Updates Help Simplify the Zion's Website

The Zion's website has updates with cleaner URLs. This includes easier access to online giving (also noted in Sunday bulletins).

The updated address, still goes to the Tithe-ly online giving site. It is:

<https://www.zionsluth.org/give>.

A new event calendar can be found at:

<https://www.zionsluth.org/events/calendar>.

October 3 Community Event

Zion's Sanctuary is Part of *Doors Open Trinidad* Tour

The Trinidad Chamber of Commerce is presenting *Doors Open Trinidad* on Saturday, Oct. 3, which is an opportunity for people to explore historic sites in Trinidad, including Zion's Lutheran sanctuary.

Doors Open Trinidad offers access to landmark locations in Trinidad, from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. This free, family-friendly event invites residents and visitors to step behind the scenes of historic landmarks, many of which are rarely open for self-guided public exploration.

This is part of celebrations for the *Sesquicentennial* — the 250th birthday of the United States and the 150th birthday of both the State of Colorado and the City of Trinidad. It is made possible through a collaborative community partnership including local preservationists, building stewards, volunteers, and the Trinidad & Las Animas County Chamber of Commerce.

Tour day begins at the central hub at Fort Wooten where attendees must check in and sign a liability waiver in order to receive an event wristband, which grants entry to participating buildings and access to the free city trolley looping among stops throughout the day.

Those stops include:

- * Fort Wooten (event hub)
- * Temple Aaron
- * Zion's Lutheran Church
- * Water Works
- * Duran Church
- * Old City Hall
- * The Columbian Hotel
- * The Fox Theatre
- * Most Holy Trinity Catholic Church
- * Masonic Lodge
- * A.R. Mitchell Museum of Western Art
- * The Well Hotel & Taproom



Zion's needs volunteers that day who are willing to welcome people to Zion's and to share our history and message. If you can help, please contact Steve Hanson or Jo Moss. We will have brochures to share and a list of talking points for our docents to use.

For questions regarding the entire event, email: doorsopentrinidad@gmail.com.

Acknowledgements: Contributors — Pr. Lisa Rygiel, Melanie Moss, Tami Hix, Keilley O'Hara, Mary McKenna, John Rygiel, Trinidad Chamber of Commerce, Doors Open Trinidad, ELCA.

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Editorial Team — Jo Moss, Mark Moss, Julie Morris, Erin Ogletree

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Volunteers are a Vital Part of Worship at Zion's

An important part of Zion's worship services are the volunteers support important roles such as usher, lector, and communion preparation. The worship assistance lists are updated in 2-month increments. If you can help, please let Pr. Lisa or Jo Moss know.

Ushers



For this multi-faceted task, individuals greet worshipers, answer questions, invite visitors to sign the guest book, and hand out bulletins. They also assist with offering and communion and light/extinguish the altar candles.

Guidance for lighting candles is posted in the robing room of the sanctuary. John Rygiel is willing to help volunteers learn more about ushering.

Lectors

These people read the first two lessons and Psalm or responsive reading. Copies of the readings are placed in the green notebook at the lectern and are sent via email in advance of the lector's assigned Sunday readings.

Lector Note: If you don't receive an advance copy, please reach out to Pr. Lisa or Jo Moss for one.

Communion Assistance

Communion volunteers arrive at the church at least 40 minutes prior to the start of the worship. They prepare the individual communion trays (both wine and white grape juice), the chalice (cup), and the platen (using our gluten-free bread) and place all items on the altar, covered with the communion cloths. After worship, the assistants remove all elements from the altar and return them to the Fellowship Hall for cleaning

and storage. If the communion paraments are dirty or stained, volunteers are asked to notify Julie Wersal or Jo Moss.

Communion Notes: If needed, ask for assistance carrying the elements between the Fellowship Hall and Sanctuary. Also, once blessed, the communion eucharist must not be thrown into the trash or sink. Instead, scatter the bread outside for birds and pour wine and juice into a glass or on the ground outside.



Worship Assistants

Five people currently serve each Sunday to assist Pr. Lisa with worship. Duties include turning on/off the sanctuary chimes before worship, noting prayer requests, leading prayers, and assisting with communion.

People interested in being a worship assistant should talk to Pr. Lisa to receive the training.

Music

Zion's is blessed with many talented musicians, who share their gifts at worship and other events by leading hymns, songs, and liturgical music. Anyone interested in assisting with the music ministry should talk to Pr. Lisa or to any of the musicians who support this ministry.



Prayerfully consider whether there is a role at Zion's for you, then let Pr. Lisa or Jo Moss know, where you would like to help. Job descriptions for each task are available upon request.

Council Updates: September

Zion's Lutheran Church Council

Members present



The regular meeting of the Zion's church council was brought to order at 10 a.m. Saturday, Sept. 12 by Mike McNeil. All members, were present. Julie Wersal joined online (meeting was Saturday

instead of Sunday, Sept. 13, to accommodate God's Work Our Hands Sunday).

Opening prayer was offered by Mike McNeil.

The agenda was modified to provide additional time to review the pastor contract, with old business reviewed first.

Old Business

- A. Reviewed Pastor's contract — definition of compensation, benefits, and responsibilities, then reviewed related document entitled Special Emphases of the Pastor and Special Encouragement by the Congregation. Scheduled yearly review for clarity of direction, future plans and to increase coordination. Reviewed office hours and availability of Pastoral care. A motion of agreement was approved unanimously. The council reviewed and clarified remaining 13 points as well as ways the congregation and council can support and encourage the pastor.
- B. Review of council committees and operational effectiveness tabled due to time constraints. Mary McKenna and Julie Morris will offer a draft for review in October.

Reports

Secretary, Treasurer, Financial Secretary, Trust Fund — All reports were reviewed and approved.

Food Ministry — Zion's received a Rotary grant for the Thanksgiving event and is awaiting news of the Safeway grant request. 5-Loaves delivered 280

meals in August. The Council also reviewed September 5-Loaves menu.

Pastor —

- A. Worship & Music Committee has planned through Sept. 27.
- B. The Coalition of the Unhoused is discussing volunteers, training, and costs for a warming shelter. Fort Wooten has not committed to serving as that shelter. Costs are significant. Operational assessments are ongoing.
- C. The Trinidad Ministerial Alliance met on Sept. 11. Discussion regarding is future is ongoing.
- D. Pastor Lisa will be attending a First Call retreat Oct. 1-3 in Park City, Utah.
- E. Pastor Lisa will attend her sister-in-law's memorial service in Pennsylvania on Oct. 10. John & Charlotte Strecker-Baseler will serve as supply pastors on Oct. 11.

Other Business

- A. The council voted to use Thanksgiving fund towards having ham and turkeys cooked and sliced by Safeway or another vendor.
- B. Alternate council meeting dates were discussed as members seek more interaction with the congregation instead of abruptly leaving for meetings. A new meeting schedule of 1 p.m. the second Tuesday of each month was approved unanimously.
- C. Mike McNeil will be traveling in October. Mark Moss will lead the next meeting.
- D. We will research best practices for storage of candle oils and order appropriate containers.
- E. Mark Moss and Stephen Hanson will continue to research insurance options. Church Mutual is the current provider.

The Meeting adjourned at 1 p.m.

-Submitted by Council Secretary Mary McKenna