



Zion Lutheran Church



The Messenger

November 2026

Pursuant to C10.02 and C10.03 of our Constitution, the Church Council is calling a special **Congregation Meeting for Sunday, December 6, 2026**, following worship (~10:10 a.m.) for the sole purpose of considering the 2027 Spending Plan (Budget). The draft of the proposed budget to be considered will be available by two (2) weeks prior to the meeting (November 22, 2026).

MESSAGE FROM THE COUNCIL PRESIDENT & PASTOR:

Jon Meyer will be filling in for us this month with a beautiful letter concerning our Stewardship.

Stewardship Message

God of the fertile fields, shaper of earth that yields our daily bread:
Forth from your bounteous hand come gifts your love has planned,
That all in every land be clothed and fed.

We would be stewards true, holding in trust from you
All that you give; help us in love to share, teach us like you to care
For people everywhere, that all may live.

As grows the hidden seed to fruit that serves out need, so your reign grows.
Let all our toil be used, no gift of yours abused,
No humble task refused your love bestows.

God of the countryside, dear to the Christ who died to make us one:
We pledge our lives anew in faithful love to you.
Guide all we say and do. Your will be done.

Text: Georgia Harkness, 1891-1974, alt.

Hymn of the Day – ACS 1063 “God of the Fertile Fields”

We sang “God of the Fertile Fields” in our church service a few weeks ago, and its words are worth returning to as we enter the season of thanksgiving. The poem’s author, Georgia Harkness, begins not with our needs but with God’s generosity: God shapes the earth that yields our daily bread. Every time we pray the Lord’s Prayer, “give us our daily bread,” we are reminded that we are not in control. God is. And God answers that prayer in abundance.

The second verse turns the hymn from praise to purpose. The gifts that come from God’s “bounteous hand” are given in love so that people in every land may be clothed and fed. Then we reflect in the next line: we would be stewards true, “holding in trust” all that God gives. Nothing we have is truly ours to hoard. We are caretakers of what has been entrusted to us, and the hymn asks God to teach us to care for people everywhere, as God cares, so that all may live.

The third verse offers an image that fits Zion. A hidden seed grows into fruit that serves our need, and so God's reign grows. It grows quietly, through ordinary faithfulness: a gift placed in the offering plate, an hour given to a task no one notices, a meal shared. All our offerings matter, large or small, seen or unseen.

The final verse joyfully proclaims: "we pledge our lives anew." Stewardship is not a budget line. It is a way of answering God's love with our whole lives, in what we say and do, until God's will is done.

That is our stewardship message this season: God gives us far more than we need. As faithful stewards, we return our gifts to the One who bestows them, in honor of God's holy name and in sharing with our neighbors.

We also need to be honest about where we stand. Our congregation finds it a challenge to meet our expenses, now and in the future. This is not a reason for worry or guilt. It is an invitation. Just as a small seed becomes much more than its size would suggest, our shared gifts can sustain our ministry and its welcome to others. While we share at Zion every day, take time to consider the gifts you have in abundance and prayerfully consider how you might return a portion in thanks. Let us make these the gifts that welcome all.

As a reminder, we encourage you to consider using our online giving program. It is easy to set up and allows you to determine how and when you wish your gifts to arrive at the church. But no matter how you choose to give, whether it is online (www.zionappleton.org/give) via our Tithe.ly Giving portal, using church offering envelopes, or mailing a check to the church, it is truly appreciated!

Help us celebrate the abundance we can share!

Jon Meyer/Stewardship Committee

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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 5 - NOVEMBER 8

Constructive Relationships Between Religious Organizations
and Political Authority

SESSION 6 - NOVEMBER 22

Selected Contemporary Concerns in Civic Life

SUNDAYS AFTER WORSHIP

YOU'RE INVITED



JOIN US

this Advent

We live in a weary world,
fractured by division and despair.
Yet, the **thrill of hope** persists.

Week 1 - "Keep Awake"

Sunday, November 29 - 1st Sunday in Advent @ 9:00 a.m.
Wednesday, December 2 - Midweek Worship @ 5:30 p.m.
- Community Soup Supper @ 6:00 p.m.

Week 2 - "Prepare the Way"

Sunday, December 6 - 2nd Sunday in Advent @ 9:00 a.m.
Wednesday, December 9 - Midweek Worship @ 5:30 p.m.
- Community Soup Supper @ 6:00 p.m.

Week 3 - "Among You Stands One"

Sunday, December 13 - 3rd Sunday in Advent @ 9:00 a.m.
Wednesday, December 16 - Midweek Worship @ 5:30 p.m.
- Community Soup Supper @ 6:00 p.m.

Week 4 - "Let It Be With Me"

Sunday, December 20 - 4th Sunday in Advent @ 9:00 a.m.
Blue Christmas Dinner Church Worship @ 5:30 p.m.
(No Wednesday Midweek Worship on December 23)



Zion will receive new members on Sunday, December 13 in worship. If you are interested in learning more about Zion, the Lutheran faith, or becoming a formal "member" of Zion, please reach out to Pastor Jason by the end of November to set-up a conversation.



Turn everyday shopping
into fundraising dollars

 **RaiseRight.**
Simply the right way to fundraise

Struggling to decide what to get everyone on your Christmas list? Don't stress! Here are the reasons Raise Right Gift Cards purchased through Zion make great Christmas presents (or for any occasion):

- They're practical and personalized
- They can be made festive & memorable
- They encourage experiences
- They're easy to customize

See Lynn Walter to place an order.

Paint & Sip Fellowship Event



SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 15
Pinot's Palette,
226 E. College Ave., Appleton

6:30 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.

Doors Open @ 6:00 p.m. to Gather

Cost: \$50 per person — includes all painting supplies and light appetizers. Cash bar featuring wine, cocktails, and mocktails.
All ages welcome. Painting announced in November Newsletter.
Sign up in the Narthex beginning October 4 or call the office.



Zion Lutheran Church Council Meeting Minutes
September 21, 2026 Meeting began at 6:30pm

Opening Prayer: Pastor Jason

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

Absent: Kandie Wilz

Guest: Wendy Sachs

Approval of Agenda: motion was made and approved.

Approval of Minutes: motion was made and approved after 2 corrections were made; 1st correction - from the Financial Secretary Report - The 3rd sentence should read as follows; Total revenue through July \$217,192.83. 2nd correction - under Staff/Personal - The last sentence should read as follows: His title would be Principal Organist and would play several Sundays a month.

Pastor's Report: A handout was given.

Financial Secretary Report: Wendy gave an oral report. YTD Actual Member Giving \$131,643.96; Total Income at the end of August \$236,808.76; YTD Actual Expenses \$247,197.57.

Committee Reports:

Zion Mutual Homes - handout was given. Meridian has taken over and things are going well.

Worship and Music - Christmas Eve and Christmas Day times were set for worship. Midweek advent services were set up with soup supper to follow.

Staff/Personal - handout was given. Meeting minutes were taken from staff meeting.

New Business:

Select Insurance - A motion was made to select a high-deductible plan from the Portico Health Insurance. Approved with 1 abstention.

Congregational Meeting - A motion was made to Call a Congregational Meeting on Sunday December 6 to discuss the 2027 budget. Approved.

Information: Zion as sponsoring congregation for ELCA World Hunger Grant for Multicultural Coalition, Inc. - Partner with the garden and NEW Hmong; applying for a new grant.

Next Meeting: Monday, October 26, 2026 at 6:30pm

Pivot! Session 1 with Pastor Ben

Motion to dismiss at 8:30pm

Devotion will be led by Ray Pittman

Submitted by Amanda Kuba

November



Zion Lutheran Church



2026

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
1 All Saints Day Choir Practice - 8:00AM Worship - 9:00AM Faith Formation Fellowship	2	3 Open Gym/Ark 3:30PM-4:30PM	4 Handbells Practice 4:15PM Balcony	5 Pastor Jason at Annual Synod Training Real Estate Committee Mtg 5:30PM	6 Deep Stretch Yoga 10:15AM-11AM Senior Strength & Mobility 11:15AM-12PM	7
8 Choir Practice - 8:00AM Worship - 9:00AM Faith Formation Adult Faith Formation Fellowship	9	10 ZMH Committee Meeting - 10:00AM Endowment Meeting 1:30PM Open Gym/Ark 3:30PM-4:30PM	11 Staff Meeting 10:00AM Handbells Practice 4:15PM Balcony	12 Monthly Worship at Linwood 11:00AM	13 Deep Stretch Yoga 10:15AM-11AM Senior Strength & Mobility 11:15AM-12PM	14 Chapel & Fellowship Hall Reserved
15 No Choir Practice Worship - 9:00AM Bells play Faith Formation Fellowship Paint & Sip @ Pinot's Palette - 6:30PM	16 Council Meeting 6:30PM Pastor Jason Vacation	17 Open Gym/Ark 3:30PM-4:30PM December Newsletter Deadline Pastor Jason Vacation	18 Handbells Practice 4:15PM Balcony Pastor Jason Vacation	19 Zion Lunch Social 11:30AM Pastor Jason Vacation	20 Deep Stretch Yoga 10:15AM-11AM Senior Strength & Mobility 11:15AM-12PM Pastor Jason Vacation	21 Pastor Jason Vacation
22 Choir Practice - 8:00AM Worship - 9:00AM Faith Formation Adult Faith Formation Fellowship Decorate for Christmas Pastor Jason Vacation	23	24 Open Gym/Ark 3:30PM-4:30PM	25 Church office closed	26 Church office closed	27 Church office closed	28
29 Choir Practice - 8:00AM Worship - 9:00AM Faith Formation Fellowship	30	Dec 1 Open Gym/Ark 3:30PM-4:30PM	Dec 2 Advent Service 5:30PM Soup Supper 6:00PM	Dec 3	Dec 4 Deep Stretch Yoga 10:15AM-11AM Senior Strength & Mobility 11:15AM-12PM	Dec 5 Kitchen, Gym, Ark, Fellowship Hall Reserved



Nov. 1st: Rev. Jason Poole Xiong
Assisting Minister: Grace Van Eyck
Musician: Heather Watney
Reader: JoAnn Salm
Greeters: Elmer & Karen Luedtke
Opens: Gene Wiese Closes: Jodi Hoesli

Nov. 8th: Rev. Jason Poole Xiong
Assisting Minister: Tricia Staedt
Reader: Deb Reis
Musician: Heather Watney
Greeters: Diana Staedt
Opens: Gwen Schwandt Closes: Tammy Mossholder

Nov. 15th: Rev. Jason Poole Xiong
Assisting Minister: Gwen Schwandt
Musician: William Surtees
Reader: Jon Meyer
Greeters: Jo Schiedermayer
Opens: Greg Pettigrew Closes: Jodi Hoesli

Nov. 22nd: Rev. Colleen Nieman
Assisting Minister: Wendy Sachs
Musician: William Surtees
Reader: Jo Schiedermayer
Greeters: Judy Wiese
Opens: Gene Wiese Closes: Jim Schley

Nov. 29th: Rev. Jason Poole Xiong
Assisting Minister: Tommy Meltz
Musician: Heather Watney
Reader: Loran Leech
Greeters: Linda Wirtz
Opens: Greg Pettigrew
Closes: Jim Schley



IN HONOR OF REFORMATION SUNDAY • OCTOBER 25

Pilgrimage to Luther-land

A congregational journey through Reformation Germany

ZION LUTHERAN CHURCH • APPLETON, WISCONSIN



DATES
Aug 30 – Sept 9, 2027

ROUTE
Frankfurt → Berlin, Germany

LED BY
Pastor Jason

STOPS ALONG THE WAY

Lutherstadt Wittenberg • Eisleben • Leipzig • Erfurt • Eisenach • and more

A journey through the landscape of the Reformation — from Luther's birthplace and grave in Eisleben to his defiant stand at the Diet of Worms, his translation of the Bible at Wartburg Castle in Eisenach, and the Wittenberg door where it all began. Led by Pastor Jason, with a full itinerary available beginning in October.

INCLUDED

- ✓ Most meals
- ✓ Hotel accommodations
- ✓ Guided tours
- ✓ Ground transportation

NOT INCLUDED

- ✗ Airfare
- ✗ ETIAS visa fees
- ✗ Personal costs

INVESTMENT

\$2,050–\$2,650 per person

Final cost depends on the number of participants.

\$150 non-refundable deposit	holds your spot
\$1,000 payment	due April 11, 2027
Final balance	due June 13, 2027

Full itinerary available from Pastor Jason beginning in October.
This pilgrimage carries no cost to the congregation.

jason@zionappleton.org
(920) 739-3104

Mary Beth Nienhaus
ACTIVITY CENTER



Mary Beth Nienhaus Activity Center has many activities that are either free or a nominal fee, including bus trips! They are located at 3000 E. College Ave. Suite B, Appleton. You can get all the information on their website at: <https://mbnactivitycenter.org>.

Thrivent Choice Dollars: If you are a Thrivent member you may be eligible for Thrivent Choice Dollars. You need to contact Thrivent at 800-847-4836. When they ask what department you want state Choice Dollars. They will tell you how many Choice Dollars you are eligible for, when they are due to expire and ask you where you want those Choice Dollars to go. Hopefully Zion. The monies for 2026 are gone after December 31 so make your call today.

Blessing Box: You can apply for a Thrivent Action Team grant of \$250 to help pay for items for the blessing box. You would call Thrivent at 800-847-4836. You can also apply online. You can give the card to Judy Wiese or Tommy Meltz, and they will do the shopping.

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.



MEDICAL EQUIPMENT

**MJ Tassoul
Loan Locker**

Medical Equipment: Fox Valley Lions provides access to medical equipment without charge to the residents of the Fox Valley communities. They are always in need of new or used medical equipment. If you have any unused or unwanted medical equipment that is in good condition, please consider donating it to them. Hearing aid batteries can be donated at the locker, and people can come in when the locker is open and request free hearing aid batteries. They are located at 312 W. Northland Ave., Appleton. Their hours are Wednesdays 4:30pm-6:30pm and Saturdays 9am-11am. For more info visit: facebook.com/foxvalleyequipmentlocker/.



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.

Linwood Community Worship Opportunities:

Regular worship is held at Linwood once per month on the 2nd Thursday at 11 AM.

Linwood Community Bible Study Groups:

Friday Mornings 9 AM (weekly)

Wednesday Afternoons 1:30 PM (weekly)

Sunday Evenings 6 PM (twice monthly)

Wednesday Mornings 9 AM (twice monthly).

LINWOOD COMMUNITY EVENTS:

Friday, November 6 at 10:30

Living with Parkinson's Disease. Missy from "Right At Home" will share the signs and symptoms of Parkinson's.

Friday, November 13 at 10:30

Join us for "Life with Liana" What can YOU do to improve your Lung Function? Come learn about your lungs and breathe with us!

Musical Entertainment:

Join us for fantastic musical programs presented by the Greenville Middle School students.

Friday, November 20 at 10:30 Treble Choir

Monday, November 23 at 10:30 Bass Choir



HARVEST AUCTION

JOIN US AND SUPPORT OUR MINISTRY

www.32auctions.com/HarvestAuction2026

November 6-16, 2026

Linwood Community is a non-profit organization, serving individuals aged 62+ through a Christian mission focusing on physical, mental, social, and spiritual needs while ensuring independence and safety.



Fox Valley Lutheran Homes is supported with grants, corporate donations and personal contributions.

*Linwood
Community*

A Ministry of Fox Valley Lutheran Homes



Zion Lutheran Church

912 N. Oneida Street
Appleton, WI 54911

(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) 666-8594

Staff

Jodi Hoesli
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jodi@zionappleton.org

Brianne Connelly
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William Surtees
Principal Organist

Lynn Walter
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Heather Watney
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Jeremy Stanton
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Paula Staedt
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Cheryl Meyer
Choir Director

Stephanie Draheim
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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