



Zion St. John

LUTHERAN CHURCH

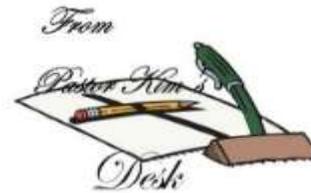
Being the Body of Christ

February 2026 Vol. 32 No. 2
Epiphany/ Transfiguration/ Lent



OUR VISION STATEMENT

At Zion St. John Lutheran Church, we are committed to being the body of Christ until He returns. Led by the Holy Spirit and gathered around God's Word and Sacraments, we join in worship, fellowship, learning, spiritual nurture, outreach, and service, as we grow in faith and invite others to experience Christ's presence.



But Jesus answered her, "Martha, Martha, you are worried and distracted by many things; there is need of only one thing."

Luke 10:41

The month of the year when more people suffer from mental health issues than any other is the month of February. This is particularly true for those of us who live in northern climates. There are many reasons for this. The sparkle of the holiday season has been replaced with the arrival of the Visa bill. The snow that we longed for on Christmas Eve has now arrived. I write this on a Friday morning when the overnight low was -19 and the current windchill is 40 below zero. Diane and I spent 40 minutes out in that weather this morning snow blowing the driveway so we could get to church. The next big holiday is Valentine's Day and maybe we don't have anyone to celebrate it with, perhaps the one we loved has died in the past year. One of the things that can get us down during the winter is that we suffer from a lack of human interaction. It's cold outside so we spend our days watching TV or on our computers or phones.



So how do we boost our mental health? One of the things I do is have a countdown on my daily calendar until I do something fun. I have something down for the end of May (126 days from now) but I need to find something I can look forward to soon, say the next two weeks. One of the best ways to help our mental health is to come to worship at church on a Sunday morning. Hear the Gospel, receive the Sacrament, stay for fellowship and have a snack and some conversation. Here is something else you can do, even if you can't get to church. Find someone you know who is on the prayer list and give that person a call. Let them know that you are praying for them.

March is only a few days away now and spring not far behind!

God's blessings to you, Pastor Kim



Valentine's day draws our attention to love, but it also invites us to rest in the love God has already given us. God's love is steady and sure, not earned by our actions or dependent on our feelings. In Christ

Jesus, God meets us with His grace, forgiving our sins and calling us His own. At the cross, we see the deepest expression of love, a love that holds nothing back.

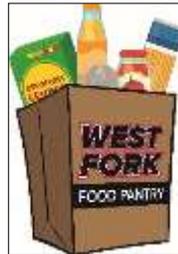
As we remember God's great love for us, our hearts are shaped to love others. We are free to show kindness, patience, and compassion, not out of obligation, but in grateful response to God's mercy. Rooted in Christ's love, we live with hope, knowing that nothing can separate us from the love of God.



This Valentine's day show love to all of those around you. A kind smile, a warm hug, helping your neighbor in any way possible. Little acts of love are what bring us closer to each other and to God. Love like Christ.

Thanks be to God, Leah

**Thursdays,
Feb 5, 12, 19, 26
2-5 pm
Saturday, Feb 7
10 am-noon**



If you want to help, we are very appreciative for all donations of money, personal hygiene items, perishable and non-perishable food items. We are especially in need of condiments, pasta and sauce and personal care items. You can place items in the cart in the Narthex or in the drop box on the front of the pantry building @ 106 Gilman.

FINANCIAL STEWARDSHIP

Here is a look at our finances as of December 31, 2025.

Budgeted Income	\$224,480
Offerings Received	\$214,581
Ending Deficit	\$ 9,899
Total Expenses	\$216,824
Checking Balance	\$ 30,425



December was a very good month for us in many ways, including financially. We cut our budget deficit by well over \$11,000 and our checking account balance increased by over \$13,000. Thank you so much for your faithful giving!!

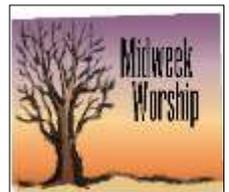
ASH WEDNESDAY



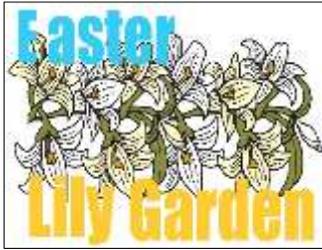
The beginning of the 40 days of the Lenten season is Ash Wednesday, Feb 18. Worship that evening will begin @ 7 pm and include imposition of ashes and Holy Communion. In person and on-line worship will be offered. At home communion and packets of ashes are available on the narthex table. Also available are free Lent devotional booklets, found on the Narthex table.

MIDWEEK WORSHIP

Midweek Lenten worship will be on Wednesday, Feb 25, Mar 4, 11, 18 & 25 @ 7 pm. This service includes the "Return to the Lord" liturgy that Pastor Kim wrote.



EASTER LILY GARDEN



An Easter lily garden will again decorate the sanctuary during the Easter season. A lily may be purchased for the garden through the church office or directly from *Forever Yours* in Sheffield for \$25.00. Make your check payable to *Forever Yours*. All orders must be made by Palm Sunday, March 29. If you are

giving a lily in memory of someone or plan to bring a lily on your own, please let the church office know so that it can be noted in the Easter morning bulletin.

LENTEN OFFERINGS

Our midweek offerings are designated for:

Sharing Shoppe	Feb 25
Riverside BC	Mar 4
Bridge of Hope	Mar 11
Ch of Damascus Rd	Mar 18
LSI	Mar 25



When giving, please make your checks payable to ZSJ and then indicate the ministry in the memo line, if you wish it to be credited to your giving statement. All checks payable to the recipients will be sent directly to them. The donation tab on the church website also includes these ministries as a choice in the drop down screen. Although we have specific date designations, you are free to give any time during the Lenten season.

LENTEN SUPPERS



There are four Lenten suppers scheduled for this Lenten season. All suppers are @ 5:15-6:15 pm. There will be eat in or drive thru options. If you would like drive thru, please pull up to the east alley door and your food will be

brought to you. Free will offerings will be gratefully accepted!

Date	Host	Menu
Feb 25	WELCA	3 Soups, bread, crackers, relishes & dessert
Mar 4	Youth	Breakfast, cinnamon rolls
Apr 2	Choirs	Stuffed baked potatoes, relishes, bars
Apr 9	Council	TBD



Holy Communion will be served on Sunday Feb 1 & 22, so Pastor Kim and Diane can attend grandson Liam's confirmation!

PRAISE TEAM MINUTE

Here is a list of the songs that will be sung on January 25. Have a listen on your favorite platform!

King of Kings - Hillsong
Today is the Day - Lincoln Brewster
Lord I Need You - Matt Maher
This is My Father's World - Keith and Kristyn Getty
You Will Never Run Away - Rend Collective



Women of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

CALL TO ORDER: President Kim M called the board meeting to order on Sunday, January 11, at 10:35 a.m. Those present, Kim M, Lorna M, Diane W, and Pam M.

CORRESPONDENCE: Thank you notes were received from Keifer H, Judy N, Wings of Refuge, Lutheran World Relief, YSS of North Iowa, KCMR Radio, LAMP Ministry, and Lutheran Services in Iowa.

TREASURER'S REPORT: As of January 6, there is a checking balance of \$1,335.80 and a savings balance of \$6,312.88 of which \$3950.72 are designated funds. The funeral cash donations balance as of December 31 is \$923.97. The report was placed on file. The audit committee will review the books before the annual meeting.

OLD BUSINESS:

- ❖ Holiday Food Fair income after expenses was \$1,065.00. Half will be used for the kitchen countertop replacement fund, with the other half given to Wings of Refuge.
- ❖ The council has approved matching funds up to \$6,000 toward kitchen countertops once we have reached the \$6,000 amount. We currently have \$3,764.
- ❖ Triennial will be held in Des Moines, July 16-19th. Registration can be done online at womenoftheelca.org. Registration can be for just one day, or more as your schedule permits.

NEW BUSINESS:

- ❖ World Day of Prayer – This year the Zion Reformed Women will be hosting World Day of Prayer on March 7 at 9:30 a.m.
- ❖ For 2026, we will be hosting birthdays at the Care Center on April 20th and October 19th.
- ❖ The NE IA Women's Synodical Gathering will be held in Mason City at Our Savior's Lutheran on June 20th.

- ❖ We will be hosting the graduation reception for six high school graduates on May 17.
- ❖ Pie Sale – The pie sale will be held on Sun, Feb 8th.
 1. We will ask for pies to be delivered to the church by 10 a.m. Sat, Feb 7.
 2. Diane will include pre-order forms in the bulletin and the February newsletter.
 3. We will meet to do preorders on Sat, Feb 7th at 10 am
- ❖ Lenten Supper – Ash Wednesday is February 18 this year. WELCA will host the Lenten supper on February 25, serving soups, bread, relish tray and bars.
- ❖ Next WELCA board meeting on February 1.
- ❖ Kim adjourned the meeting at 11:15 am.

Secretary, Pam M



Rebekah Circle

Mon, Feb 2

@ 1:30 pm

Recording

Available by 10 am

Tues, Feb 3

**Monday,
Feb 16
1 pm,
fellowship hall**





2026 TRIENNIAL

Come to the Gathering in Des Moines, Iowa
July 16-19, 2026!

- * Experience uplifting worship
- * Connect and build relationships with women of all ages from your church and beyond
 - * Be inspired by messages reminding you that you are a miracle
 - * Learn about and live out the ministry & mission of WELCA
- * Run, Walk and Roll with our 5K Fun Run to raise money for women and girls.
 - * Enter a quilt in the Quilt competition.
- * Learn more & Register at [New Triennial Event Page - Women of the ELCA](#) .
- * Don't miss this once in a lifetime chance!!

PIE SALE



The Annual WELCA Pie Sale will be on February 8, starting @ 10 am. The Women of ZSJ are sponsoring this yummy event as a fundraiser for the kitchen countertops. You can order by the slice or a whole pie. Preorders can be made in advance, to be picked up on the 8th. Order ahead to insure your favorites! There will be a limited number of pies for sale that day. Order forms are available on the narthex table or in this newsletter!

MARY & MARTHA RETREAT



The NE IA Women of the ELCA will be gathering @ the EWALU Stone Center near Strawberry Point to enjoy some fellowship, learning, worship and good food on Friday and Saturday, Feb 20-1. This retreat starts on Friday @

4 pm and ends by 3 on Saturday. Cost is \$45, which includes all meals, room with a bath and linens and a restful night! Along with bandage rolling, we will hear from the Family Resource Center in Guttenburg. Registration information can be found on the narthex bulletin board.

BOLD WOMEN SUNDAY

During worship on Sunday, March 1, we will celebrate the amazing Bold Women in our congregation. The ministries of the Women of ZSJ are as varied as they are and reach those in our congregation, community and around the world. Please join us in thanking these wonderful, caring women who do so much for all of us!



WORLD DAY OF PRAYER



This year's World Day of Prayer Celebration will be held @ Zion Reformed on Saturday, March 7, 9:30 am. There will be a program based on the Women of Nigeria, singing by the Sheffield Philharmonic and light refreshments. World Day of Prayer is a worldwide, ecumenical movement of

Christian women who come together to observe a common day of prayer each year. It includes women from 170 countries using prayer as a powerful tool given to us by Jesus.

STAFF OFFICE HOURS & CONTACT INFORMATION

G Kim Wills, Pastor	641-425-9453	pastor@zionstjohn.org 9am-3pm, T-F
Leah Cruz, DYFM	641-373-7015	youth@zionstjohn.org 8am-12 pm, T; 8am-8pm, W
Church Office	641-892-4010	mail@zionstjohn.org 9am-12pm, M-F



ANNUAL MEETING JAN 25, 2026

Call to Order: President Daren M called the annual meeting of Zion St. John Lutheran Church to order at 9:50 am on January 25, 2026. A quorum was declared. Pastor Kim Wills led the congregation in devotions.

Review of 2025 Reports

- ⇒ **Membership/Attendance Statistics** (p 6): 484 baptized members, 390 confirmed members.
- ⇒ **Secretary's Report** (p 7-8): Motion to approve the secretary's report, John L; second, Dave S; carried.
- ⇒ **Treasurer/Financial Secretary** (p 8): Treasurer and Financial Secretary Reports were reviewed. Total giving for 2025 was \$217,050.74. Year end checking account balance was \$30,425.14. Year end savings account balance was \$144,721.69.
- ⇒ **Pastor's Report** (p.9-10): Pastor commented that 2025 was a joyous year. He thanked the many people that continue to have a positive impact on the church.
- ⇒ **President' Report** (p 10)
- ⇒ **Director of Youth and Family Ministry** (p 10)
- ⇒ **Audit Review** – Daren M, Doreen D, and John L reviewed the financial reports and found all to be in order.

Committees

- ⇒ **Property Management** (p.11)
- ⇒ **Stewardship** (p 11)
- ⇒ **Technology** (p 11)
- ⇒ **Worship and Evangelism** (p 12): A request was made for members to sign up to serve as lector, greeter, and to serve fellowship.
- ⇒ **150th Anniversary** (p 12-13): Nancy R thanked everyone for their prayers, support, and participation in making the 150th Anniversary year so successful. She also thanked Diane W for all her extra help in the past year.

- ⇒ **Legacy/Memorial Fund** (p.14): The committee asked that a motion be made to use the interest dispersement (\$581.94) to buy a new camera for live streaming, Alice G; second, Dacia S; carried.
- ⇒ **Parish Education** (p 15)
- ⇒ **Youth and Family** (p 16)

Organizations

- ⇒ **Lutheran Cemetery Association** (p 17): The council will be discussing allowing non-members to be buried in the church cemetery.
- ⇒ **Riverside Bible Camp** (p 17-18)
- ⇒ **WELCA** (p 18-20)
- ⇒ **West Fork Food Pantry** (p 21-22): The food pantry has been investing to allow the food pantry to continue it's work in the future. They are also looking at buying a van to reach people in communities without transportation and to help transport food when necessary.

Elections

- Church Council** – Three positions for three-year terms are open. Nominations are Brad M, Scott C, and Shannon L. Motion to ⇒ approve these nominees, Al N; second, Don G; carried. Thank you to John L, Al N, and Judy S for their dedication and service for the past three years.
- ⇒ **Cemetery Financial Officer**-Motion to approve Dave S to continue in this role, Jill C; second, Don G; carried.
- ⇒ **Nominating Committee** – Motion made by Pastor and seconded by John L to approve Nancy R, Scott S, Daren M and Don G to serve as the Nominating Committee. Motion carried.
- ⇒ **Memorial/Legacy Committee**-Motion to approve Dacia S for appointment to this committee, Al N; second, Don G; carried. Council will appoint a second member.
- ⇒ **Audit Committee**-Motion to appoint Al N to this committee, Dacia S; second, Doreen D; carried.
- ⇒ **Voting Members –Riverside Lutheran Bible Camp** – Motion to approve Darwin M continuing in this role, Jill C; second, Marcia E; carried.

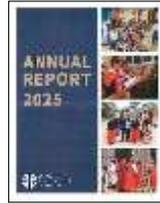
New Business

- ⇒ **Presentation and Adoption of 2026 Budget** (p 25-27): Motion to accept the budget as presented, Fred R; second, John L; carried.
- ⇒ **Approval of Constitutional Changes:** Diane W and Alice G presented the proposed constitutional changes. Motion to accept the changes as presented, Darwin M; second, Dave S; carried.
- ⇒ **Adjourn:** Motion to adjourn the meeting, Dave S; second, Brad M; meeting adjourned at 10:42 am.



Respectfully submitted,
Nancy R, Council Secretary

Special thank you to John L, Judy S & Al N for their last three years of service on the council!



**2025 Annual reports are available at the usher's table.

Zion St. John Lutheran Church Council Meeting Sunday, January 25, 2026

The meeting was called to order by President Daren M at 10:44 am. Members present: Daren M, Scott S, Scott C, Darwin M, Shannon L, Brad M, Alice G, Nancy R, Josh S, and Pastor Wills.

- ⇒ Officers were elected and committees assigned. (please see box below).
- ⇒ A motion to appoint one-half of Pastor Kim's salary as his housing allowance, Darwin; second, Josh; carried.
- ⇒ Josh Sh and Darwin M will be money counters for February.
- ⇒ Council meetings will be on the 2nd Sunday of each month at 10:30 am. The next scheduled meeting will be Sun, Feb 8th at 10:30 am
- ⇒ The meeting was adjourned at 10:52 am

Respectfully submitted,
Nancy R, Council Secretary

2026 ZSJ COUNCIL

Council Officers for 2026

President – Daren M
Vice Pres. – Darwin M
Secretary – Nancy R
Treasurer – Kari M

Property Management

Don G, Gary N
Lance L, Brad M
Josh S

2026 Committee Members

Worship and Evangelism

Alice G
Daren M, Diane W
Shannon L
Pastor Kim Wills
Cindy H

Stewardship

Daren M, Darwin M
Nancy R, Pastor Kim Wills

Youth & Family

Leah C, Sarah R
Josh S, Daren M
Jessica R, Megan E
Kimberly W

Technology

Scott C, Fred R
Nancy R, Scott S

Nominating Committee

Daren M, Scott S
Nancy R, Don G

Parish Education

Julie G, Leah C
Darwin M, Nancy R
Scott S

Memorial/Legacy Committee

Jill C, Dacia S
Alice G, Kathy M
Kari M, Julie G
Pastor Kim Wills

Audit Committee

Doreen D
John L, Al N



Feb 15	9:00 am	Transfiguration Sunday Worship
Feb 18	7:00 pm	Ash Wednesday Worship with Holy Communion, Imposition of Ashes
Feb 22	9:00 am	Sunday Lenten Worship with Holy Communion led by ZSJ Praise Team
Feb 25	5:15 pm	Lenten Supper hosted by Women of ZSJ
	7:00 pm	Midweek Lenten Worship "Return to the Lord"
Mar 1	9:00 am	Sunday Lenten Worship with Holy Communion
Mar 4	5:15 pm	Lenten Supper hosted by ZSJ Youth
	7:00 pm	Midweek Lenten Worship "Return to the Lord"
Mar 8	9:00 am	Sunday Lenten Worship
Mar 11	7:00 pm	Midweek Lenten Worship "Return to the Lord"
Mar 15	9:00 am	Sunday Lenten Worship with Holy Communion
Mar 18	5:15 pm	Lenten Supper hosted by ZSJ Music Ministries
	7:00 pm	Midweek Lenten Worship "Return to the Lord"
Mar 22	9:00 am	Sunday Lenten Worship led by ZSJ Praise Team
Mar 25	5:15 pm	Lenten Supper hosted by ZSJ Church Council
	7:00 pm	Midweek Lenten Worship "Return to the Lord"
Mar 29	9:00 am	Palm Sunday Worship with Holy Communion & SS & Adult Choirs
Apr 2	7:00 pm	Maundy Thursday Worship with Holy Comm.
Apr 3	7:30 pm	Good Friday Worship led by ZSJ Youth
Apr 5	6:30 am	Sunrise Easter Worship with Holy Communion, HB & Chancel Choirs
	7:30 am	Easter Breakfast by ZSJ Youth
	9:00 am	Easter Festival Worship with Holy Communion

WHY ALL THE COLORS?

Are you curious about the different liturgical colors on the altar and banners? Here's what they mean:

Green: symbolizes **life, hope, and anticipation.** (ordinary times, between church seasons)

Red: signifies **God's love, fire, and the Holy Spirit.** (Pentecost, Reformation)

White: symbolizes **purity, light, glory, and joy.** (Christmas, Epiphany)

Purple: symbolizes **penance, sacrifice, and preparation.** (Lent, Passion Week)

Blue: symbolizes **waiting and preparation.** (Advent)

WINTER WEATHER



If West Fork Schools cancel classes due to weather, all church activities will also be cancelled. For Sunday worship, the Council President and Pastor Kim make a decision whether Sunday services and SS will be held. If services are cancelled it will be **posted on the homepage of the website and the Facebook pages for the church and Youth and Family** and we will notify the

following TV and radio stations:

TV: **KIMT, WHO, KCCI**

Hampton: **104.9 FM – KLMJ, 98.9 FM - KQCR**

Mason City: **1300 AM-KGLO, 1490 AM-KRIB, 97.9 FM-KCMR**



SUNDAY WORSHIP SCHEDULE

9:00 am Worship

Livestream @ www.zionstjohn.org, Livestream)

10:15 am Fellowship & Sunday School

PRAYER LIST



In order to keep Pastor Kim informed and our prayer list accurate, please let the church office or Pastor know if you are in the hospital or are anticipating hospitalization. You call him directly @ 641-425-9453. Family members are also welcome to call.

Ray R	Zayne F	Kay R
Judy N	Dusty M	Jim M
Christy M	Kay E	Lori M
Jon S	Steve H	Cheryl R
Marcy M	Keely S	Sue K
Crystal B	Wendy J	Jeri B
Lavonne C	Patricia S	Sharon S
Karla C	Crystal C	Norman M
❖	The family of Pat M	
❖	The family of Bob C	

2 Jake S, Marvin H
4 Steve L
5 Zach G, Jason G
7 Chris H, Sara W
10 Jackson B, Trekker W
Xavier B
12 Jordan H, Courtney L
13 Taylor C
14 Abby S, Emily T
15 Cassidy E, Diane R, Cheri K
16 Todd H
17 Jordan L, Charles S
18 Macy D, Nancy R
19 Samantha M, Holly W
20 Marcia K
21 Breanna L, Hudson G
22 Amber H, Samantha H
24 Tyler G, Preston L, Judy N
25 Jen S
26 Elle L, Jennifer L
27 Jim M

