



# Zion St. John

LUTHERAN CHURCH

*Being the Body of Christ*

May 2026

Vol. 32 No. 5

Easter/ Pentecost/ Holy Trinity



## 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.*



*So if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation; everything old has passed away; see everything has become new!*

2 Corinthians 5:17

“The times they are a changin’”, sang Bob Dylan.

And it’s just as true today as it was when he first sang those words close to 50 years ago. This past week I have spent time reading and listening about changes that will take place in the Roman Catholic Church beginning in July. Hampton and Rockwell will now be part of the Mason City pastorate and mass times and the languages of the services are changing. I know Father Earleywine is very well thought of, but he will be leaving Hampton and has been reassigned to the Waterloo area. These changes will be difficult for many of the members of those congregations. But the goal of these changes is to create new alliances and have more people at each service. My prayer is that good things will come out of this for them, even if adjusting to these new changes won’t be easy.



We too will be facing a transition on July 1. I will be transitioning to part-time until I fully retire on December 25. It may take a while until a new pastor is called to serve Zion St. John. Just as there was a significant time gap between when Pastor Mechler left, and I began serving our congregation on April 25, 2009. Change isn’t easy, but good things can come out of change. Your new pastor will have different gifts and interests from my own.

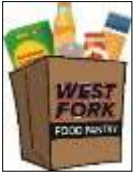
Our church council is working to form the call committee. Their hope is to vote on this at their May 10<sup>th</sup> meeting. Soon after they will begin developing a ministry site profile. Once this important work is completed, then the committee can begin interviewing candidates.

Diane and I pray that you extend to your call committee and your next pastor, the same grace that you have extended to us over the past 17 years. Be open to change and the growth that comes with it.

God’s blessings to you, Pastor Kim

**ZSJ CHURCH  
OFFICE CLOSED  
MON, MAY 25, 2026!**





**Thursdays, May 7, 14, 21 & 28, 2-5 pm**  
**Saturday, May 2, 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 cereal, cleaning 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 @ 106 Gilman.

### **PRAISE TEAM MINUTE**



Feel free to look up the Praise team music for May on your device using your favorite platform!

- O Come to the Altar*-Elevation Worship
- My Lighthouse* - Rend Collective
- Grace Medley* - Rock Springs Worship
- You Are Mine* – David Haas
- Turn Your Eyes* - Sovereign Grace
- Jesus Take All of Me (Just As I Am)* - Brenton Brown
- Sing Wherever I Go* - We the Kingdom

### **FINANACIAL STEWARDSHIP**

Here’s a look at our finances as of March 31, 2026:

Budgeted Income	\$64,514
Offerings Received	\$50,606
Current Deficit	\$13,908
Total Expenses	\$49,940
Checking Balance	\$26,849



Well, this is a good news, bad news kind of month. The bad news is that our budget deficit nearly doubled over last month. The good news is that for the first time this year our income for the year is greater than our expenses year-to-date. Our checking account balance also increased by just over \$3,400. Thanks for your faithful giving!

## NEIA SYNOD EVENT



**What:** Abiding, Belonging, Creative, Collaborative Congregations (A/B/C3)

**When:** 9:00 AM – 3:00 PM Saturday, June 6, 2026

**Where:** St. Paul Lutheran Church and School, 301 1st St NW, Waverly

**Cost:** \$50. (There are church funds available for this. See Pastor Kim.) Payment needed at the time of registration. Registration deadline is May 22, 2026. No late registrations or walk ins.



## CALL PROCESS NE IA SYNOD

**To many it feels like an uncertain time.**

**To others it is a source of anxiety.**

**Fear not! The synod staff is walking with you.**

Here is what you can expect in this transition

-The synod staff will work with church council(s) to find supply pastors to serve your ministry needs. When available, an interim pastor may be recommended to the council to help in the transition.

-A call committee will be established according to the guidelines of your constitution.

-The call committee will compile a Ministry Site Profile with the help of the congregation and submit it through the ELCA system.

-The call committee will meet with a member of the synod staff and receive coaching on how to conduct an effective interview.

-The call committee will receive the names of pastors interested in your call from synod staff.

-The call committee will choose who to interview, will check references, and try to view sermons and worship services of candidates.

-After the call committee has voted to recommend a candidate to the congregation council(s), it will meet with the council(s) to share information about the recommended pastor.

-The executive committee or full council(s) will meet and speak with the candidate and will discuss compensation and benefits with the nominee.

-If the council votes to recommend the candidate to the congregation, the council will call a congregational meeting for the purpose of issuing a call.

-The congregation council will formally recommend that the congregation call the candidate to be your pastor.

-Members of the congregation will be given information about the nominee ahead of time, as appropriate.

-A congregational call vote takes place according to your constitution. Two secret ballot votes are held: one to approve the call of the pastor, and one to approve the compensation package.

-If the congregation approves the call and compensation by the necessary margins, a Letter of Call and Compensation Sheet are signed by the council president(s) and secretary(s) and forwarded to the bishop for signature. These forms are then sent on to the pastor.

-The candidate for call has 30 days to accept or decline the call.

-If the nominee accepts the call, an installation date is set. If the candidate declines the call, the call committee goes back to work with the synod staff to receive additional candidates.

-The call process officially ends after the pastor is installed.

## Through the whole process, your prayers are essential.

Pray that the Holy Spirit will guide you,  
your call committee, your council, and your synod  
in discerning who God is calling  
to serve as your next pastor.

## CONNIE CLAUSEN SCHOLARSHIP



Connie Clausen was a very faithful member of this congregation. To honor her memory, her husband, David, has established a scholarship fund. Two awards of \$250 each are given to graduating seniors who are members of ZSJ Lutheran Church. The applications for the Connie Clausen scholarship are due **May 3**. Question? Contact Pastor Kim.

- 1 Olivia R
- 2 Dean H, April S
- 3 Tim K
- 4 Grant P
- 5 Shelby T
- 6 Lane L, Kathy M, Tate S
- 7 Jameson O
- 8 Mark N
- 9 Julie G, Darwin M, Shelley VS
- 10 Barrett H
- 11 Bill N, Barb S
- 12 Stephen S
- 13 Marlene S
- 15 David S
- 19 Nate H, Bob K
- 22 Brett B, Nick N, Shannon O
- 24 Kimberly W
- 26 Dallas E, Lindsey S, Sammie W
- 27 Jerry R
- 28 Breeana P, Kiefer H
- 29 Val B, Kemlin H, Diane W, Emily A



## STAFF OFFICE HOURS & CONTACT INFORMATION

G Kim Wills, Pastor 641-425-9453 [pastor@zionstjohn.org](mailto:pastor@zionstjohn.org)  
9am-3pm, T-F

Church Office 641-892-4010 [mail@zionstjohn.org](mailto:mail@zionstjohn.org)  
9am-12pm, M-F



**SUNDAY**  
**May 24, 9 am**

**Head Usher:** Doug D

**Altar Guild:** Kim M, Deb H

**Lector:** Doreen D



**Greeters:**

**Fellowship:**

3  
10  
17  
24  
31

Diane and Barkley

**Acolyte:**

**Crucifer:**

3  
17  
24

Caleb T  
Lillian W  
Cooper W

Eli T  
Olivia R  
Renner H











### PRAYER LIST

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
Norman M	Crystal C	Jim M
Kay E	Lori M	Lindy M
Jon S	Steve H	Cheryl R
Marcy M	Keely S	Sue K
Crystal B	Wendy J	Jeri B
Patricia S	Karla C	Sheryl T



- The family of Eric V
- The family of Judy N
- The family of Merna S

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY
		
<p><b>3 Easter 5</b></p> <p>9:00 am Worship with Holy Communion 10:15 am Fellowship/ Sunday School</p>	<p><b>4</b></p> <p>6:00 pm Rebekah Circle Bible Study</p>	<p><b>5</b></p> <p>10:00 am Bible Study Video available</p> <div data-bbox="745 565 889 651" style="text-align: center;">  </div>
<p><b>10 Easter 6</b></p> <p>9:00 am Worship 10:15 am Fellowship/ Sunday School 10:30 am ZSJ Church Council Meeting</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Happy Birthday Barrett H!</b></p> <div data-bbox="341 656 451 773" style="text-align: center;">  </div>	<p><b>11</b></p>	<p><b>12</b></p>
<p><b>17 Easter 7/ Graduation</b></p> <p>9:00 am Worship with Holy Communion led by ZSJ Praise Team 10:30 am Graduation Reception</p> <div data-bbox="57 1105 208 1219" style="text-align: center;">  </div> <div data-bbox="341 1117 447 1211" style="text-align: center;">  </div>	<p><b>18</b></p> <p>1:00 pm</p> <div data-bbox="607 971 763 1084" style="text-align: center;">  </div> <div data-bbox="533 1097 668 1214" style="text-align: center;">  </div>	<p><b>19</b></p>
<p><b>24 Pentecost</b></p> <p>9:00 am Worship with Holy Communion 10:15 am Fellowship</p> <div data-bbox="312 1240 444 1305" style="text-align: center;">  </div>	<p><b>25</b></p> <div data-bbox="554 1268 710 1393" style="text-align: center;">  </div>	<p><b>26</b></p>
<p><b>31 Holy Trinity</b></p> <p>9:00 am Worship 10:15 am Fellowship</p> <div data-bbox="348 1393 447 1490" style="text-align: center;">  </div>	<p><b>Office Closed</b></p>	

WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
		<p>1</p> <p>Happy Birthday Olivia R!</p>	<p>2</p> <p>10:00 am</p> 
<p>6</p> <p>5:15 pm 7-8 Confirmation Celebration</p> <p>7:00 pm ZSJ Chancel Choir Rehearsal</p> <p>Happy Birthday Tate S!</p>	<p>7</p> <p>2:00 pm</p> <p>Happy Birthday Jameson O!</p> 	<p>8</p>	<p>9</p>
<p>13</p> <p>7:00 pm ZSJ Chancel Choir Rehearsal</p>	<p>14</p> <p>2:00 pm</p> 	<p>15</p>	<p>16</p> <p>8:30 am LWR In-Gathering Albert Lea</p>
<p>20</p>	<p>21</p> <p>2:00 pm</p> 	<p>22</p> <p>Happy Birthday Brett B!</p>	<p>23</p> <p>9:30 am Judy Nolte Visitation</p> <p>11:00 am Judy Nolte Funeral</p>
<p>27</p>	<p>28</p> <p>2:00 pm</p> <p>Happy Birthday Keifer H &amp; Breanna P!</p> 	<p>29</p> <p>Happy Birthday Kemlin H!</p>	<p>30</p>



**Rebekah Circle**  
Monday, May 4, 6 pm

**Video Upload Available**  
Tuesday, May 5, 10 am

**Monday, May 18, 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!!



**CALL TO ORDER:** The meeting was called to order by Daren M at 10:20 am on Sunday April 12, 2026. Members present: Alice G, Darwin M, Scott C, Daren M, Nancy R, Josh S, and Pastor Kim Wills. Members absent:

Scott S, Brad M, and Shannon L. Pastor Kim led the council in prayer.

**SECRETARY'S REPORT:** The March secretary's report was reviewed. Motion to approve the minutes as presented, Josh; second, Darwin; carried.

**TREASURER'S REPORT:** The treasurer's report was reviewed.

## **PASTOR'S REPORT:**

### **Funerals Scheduled**

- May 23, 2026 Judy N at Zion St John
- June 13, 2026 Merna S, Graveside Service

### **Things Pastor is Working On**

- Removal of bats and rodents from church property
- Finishing program year without a Director of Youth and Family Ministries- Pastor talked about what the rest of the school year looks like for youth programming now that Leah is done. Although there were enough adults for JAM, no kids showed up, so he is canceling JAM for the remainder of the year. Pastor, Darwin, and Doreen will complete the confirmation year.
- Working with Youth and Education Committee on plans for VBS- Kim W is willing to oversee VBS, along with assistance from the Youth & Family Committee and Parish Ed. VBS will be the same format as it has been for the past few years.

### **Items to Consider**

- A year ago, we discovered that the legal name of our church with the state of Iowa is not accurate. The council voted at that time that we hire an attorney to get this changed. Pastor is meeting with an attorney on April 28 to begin this process.
- Daren and Pastor need to meet with an investment firm in Mason City to obtain some funds left to the church by Pam Harvey.
- Microsoft is no longer supporting Publisher, which is what we have used for years to create, bulletins, newsletters, annual reports, etc. Diane has learned how to create these using Word which was very time consuming. She is currently working on trying to convert the old files, so we will still have access to the most important ones.
- Pastor may take a vacation day or two in the next month. Diane and Pastor leave on their trip to Germany on Friday, May 29 and will be back on June 10. Nancy R will lead worship on May 31 and June 7.

## **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

### **Property Management**

- Clean up day is moved to Saturday, April 18.
- The new dishwasher has been installed and is working properly now.

- Josh will set up an appointment with Murphy's to have them do a pre-season check on the air conditioner.
- The committee will follow up on the status of placing a cross on the bell tower.
- A motion to replace the spruce tree in the southwest corner of the property with a Norway Spruce, Nancy; second, Darwin; carried. The cost of this will be \$400, which includes installation by Dennis Carlson.
- Pastor asked that the Property Committee look at the ceiling in the sacristy and the carpet on the steps going up to the sanctuary and to the balcony.

### **Technology**

- Replaced the matrix switcher, which went out on Maundy Thursday.

### **Parish Ed/Youth & Family**

- Had a joint meeting to discuss VBS. Kim W is willing to oversee VBS this year, with Ingram Okoboji staff providing the programming.
- Discussed the additional support that will be required now that the DYFM position is vacant.
- Good Friday, Easter Breakfast set up and Easter Breakfast went well. 21 youth participated in the Good Friday service.

### **Memorial/Legacy Committee**

- Working through the transitions of officers in the committee.

### **Old Business**

- Call Committee – Daren reviewed what the ZSJ Constitution states regarding the formation of a call committee. An email will be sent out to the congregation requesting volunteers to be considered for the committee. A temple talk will be held on Sunday, April 19. A bulletin insert from the NEIA Synod will be placed in the bulletins. The committee will be selected at the May 10<sup>th</sup> council meeting.

### **New Business**

- Part-time salary and benefits package was discussed. Motion to approve the package as presented, Darwin; second, Alice; carried.
- Offering – the amounts on the deposit slip are not always correct. Pastor will talk to Kari to see if she can come to the next council meeting to review the correct process.

- Money counters for May – Darwin and Daren
- Next Meeting – Sunday, 5/10
- Motion to adjourn the meeting, Scott C; second, Darwin; carried.  
Nancy R, Secretary

## LENTEN OFFERINGS

Thank you to all who contributed to the Lenten offering recipients for 2026. The totals for this year are:

Bridge of Hope	\$260
Church of Dam Rd	\$259
LSI	\$240
Riverside	\$280
Sharing Shoppe	\$295



## NATIONAL DAY OF PRAYER



The National Day of Prayer is a day of religious observance in the US when people are called upon to pray for their country. The first official day of prayer was in 1775, when the Continental Congress called for the public to fast and pray for the leadership of the Colonies. After that time, Presidents have called the nation to pray during times of war or other hardships.

In 1952, Conrad Hilton (founder of Hilton Hotels) and Senator Frank Carlson of Kansas, encouraged by Billy Graham, initiated a bill calling for the President to designate one day a year as a National Day of Prayer. In 1952, President Harry Truman signed a joint resolution into law.

In 1988, Congress chose the first Thursday of each May as the National Day of Prayer, and the bill was signed into law by President Ronald Reagan. It is biblical and we are blessed to publicly pray for healing, forgiveness, and guidance for our nation and its leaders, now more than ever. This year the National Day of Prayer is Thursday, May 7.

### ZSJ YOUTH PAGE

#### 2026 Graduates

Congratulations to our 2026 senior class for completing a huge milestone in your life! Please keep



Graduation Worship is  
Sunday, May 17<sup>th</sup>, 9 am  
Reception @ 10:30 am.

May 3      Connie Clausen scholarship due  
May 10     Pictures and information due to Diane  
              for graduation slide show.



## Sunday School

May 10<sup>th</sup> kids sing for 9 am  
worship & last day of SS  
fun! Please take time to  
thank all our amazing,  
caring, patient and loving  
SS and Confirmation  
teachers!  
You are the best!!



May 6<sup>th</sup> is our end of  
year celebration with  
Jeopardy, kids  
against parents and  
mentors!

5:15-7 pm,  
supper  
provided!



## VBS Dates

Camp counselors from Lutheran Bible Camp Ingham-Okoboji will be joining us on safari, "To Know His Name," Psalm 135:13. Registration included in this newsletter, @ the church and on line @ [https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSeadQP7o6K3iL\\_QcICmFF1KSJKSlDpIvNGzk\\_buIcibP5M6A/viewform?usp=sharing&ouid=112577283549591558358!](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSeadQP7o6K3iL_QcICmFF1KSJKSlDpIvNGzk_buIcibP5M6A/viewform?usp=sharing&ouid=112577283549591558358!)



**DATE:** July 6-9, 2026

**LOCATION:** Zion St. John  
Lutheran Church,  
Sheffield, IA

**TIME:** 5-8pm

**OTHER DETAILS:**

Join us on the Safari for a faithful experience! FREE for all ages! Campers age preschool-6<sup>th</sup> grade, 7<sup>th</sup> grade-adults camp helpers. Supper will be provided.

Zion St. John Lutheran Church  
422 Sherman St.  
PO Box 269  
Sheffield Iowa 50475

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED



Sue Levitt  
510 Gilman St.  
P.O. Box 34  
Sheffield, IA 50475  
MB

**SUNDAY WORSHIP SCHEDULE**

9:00 am Worship

*(Livestream @ [www.zionstjohn.org](http://www.zionstjohn.org))*

10:15 am Fellowship/ Sunday School