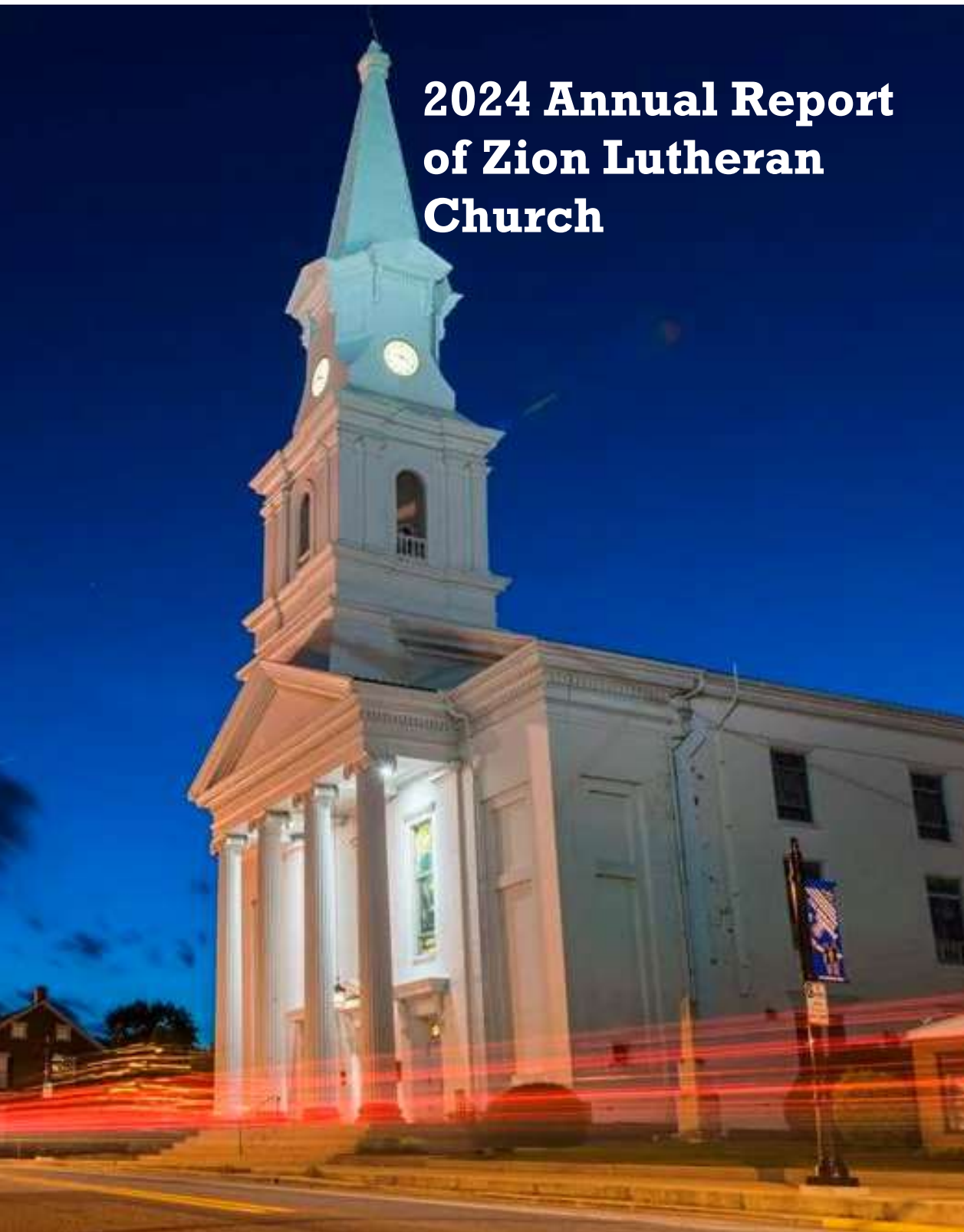


2024 Annual Report of Zion Lutheran Church



2024 Annual Report for Zion Lutheran Church

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Our Mission

As a people of God, we share Christ's love, grow in faith, and serve others

Our Vision

At Zion we strive to provide a sanctuary for prayerful and Joyous worship within a respectful and welcoming environment and to meet the spiritual needs of our intergenerational congregation and community, using Christian ideas and values.

2024 Zion's Leadership, Staff, and Council

Co-Pastors

The Rev. Diane Day—pastordiane@zionmiddletown.org

The Rev. Matthew Day—pastormatt@zionmiddletown.org

Directors of Music Ministry

Director of Contemporary Worship Team Matt Puziss—mattpuziss@gmail.com

Director of Traditional Music—Bobby Staples—rstaples93@gmail.com

Treasurer

Deborah Reichelt—treasurer@zionmiddletown.org

Financial Secretary

Kaye Derr—financialsecretary@zionmiddletown.org

2023 Council

President: Linda Kinna-Engel; Vice-President: Bob Hetrick; Secretary: Bruce McIntosh; Bob Rockwell, Carolyn Milauskas, Doug Davis, Jeff Derr, Donna Huffer, Darin Gordon, Clinton Appleby, Sheri Huckleberry, Cindy Unangst

2024 Council Motions

2024-1-1	Motion was made to accept the agenda with two items added to the agenda. The motion was seconded, and a voice vote was taken, and the vote was unanimous.
2024-1-2	A motion was made to accept the December Church Council meeting minutes. The motion was seconded, and a voice vote was taken, and the vote was unanimous.
2024 - 2 - 1	A motion was made and seconded to accept the agenda as presented with one amendment to move the executive officers under new business to the last item on the agenda. A voice vote was taken, vote was unanimous.
2024 - 2 - 2	A motion was made and seconded to accept the minutes as presented. A voice vote was taken, vote was unanimous.
2024 - 2 - 3	A motion was made and seconded to accept the Council Member SOP as presented with amendments. A voice vote was taken, vote was unanimous.
2024 - 2 - 4	A motion was made and seconded to renew the contract with Warner Service as recommended by the property committee. Voice vote was taken and was unanimous.
2024 - 2 - 5	A motion was made and seconded to appoint Dixie Eichelberger to the Cemetery Board. Voice vote was taken and was unanimous.
2024 - 2 - 6	A motion was made and seconded to not have an Easter Sunrise Service as recommended by the Worship and Music committee. Voice vote was taken and was unanimous. Municipal Lot Lease extension: Tabled until we have a lease.
2024- 2 -7	A motion was made and seconded to accept this slate for Executive Officer for church council. Voice vote was taken and was unanimous. Linda Kinna-Engel for President Bob Hetrick Vice President Bruce McIntosh for Secretary.
2024-3-1	To adopt the agenda and to permit the President to call for consideration of agenda items in the order the President deems most appropriate. (Mr. Bob Rockwell moved, Seconded by Ms. Donna Huffer)
2024-3-2	<i>Resolved, that</i> a consent calendar (agenda) may be established for Church Council meetings such that when the matters on the calendar are called up, they may be considered in the gross or without debate or amendment.
2024-3-3	To extend the agreement between Evangelical Lutheran Church Zion and the Burgess and Commissioners of Middletown to share the 7,100 square feet of property owned by Zion located east of Jefferson Street and north of the rear of the Middletown Municipal Center to increase the availability of vehicle parking.

2024-3-4	To adopt the job description proposed by the Co-Pastors for the full-time position of Business Manager effective immediately as amended by the Council. This position will be filled by the current Treasurer.
2024-3-5	To designate Committee and Ministry Teams as recommended by the Executive Committee to serve in their respective leadership positions until the end of the current administration (1 year).
2024-3-6	To appoint Mrs. Linda Kinna-Engel, Mrs. Bre Bybel and Mrs. Stacy Black to 2-year terms on the Mutual Ministry Committee.
2024-3-7	The Council reviewed and revised the top ministry priorities of Zion Lutheran Church for 2024. The Council approved the final document by unanimous consent.
2024-3-8	<p><i>Whereas</i>, our Lord has commissioned us to invite others into the fellowship of the Church; and <i>Whereas</i>, our Lord's resurrection which we joyously celebrate at Easter, is a fitting and appropriate occasion to extend such an invitation; and <i>Whereas</i>, our Lord commands us to feed the hungry and welcome the stranger, therefore, be it Resolved, That the Church Council asks the Welcome and Engagement Ministry Team to extend an invitation to attend Zion Lutheran Church on Easter Sunday, March 31, 2024, for worship and a continental breakfast. Such an invitation shall be provided to the patrons of the Middletown Valley Food Bank.</p>
2024-4-1	To adopt the agenda and to permit the President to call for consideration of agenda items in the order the President deems most appropriate. (moved and seconded)
2024-4-2	To adopt the consent agenda. (moved, seconded)
2024-4-3	<p><i>Whereas</i>, the Nominating Committee has experienced great difficulty in finding four willing members to serve in this past election cycle and; <i>Whereas</i>, upon the advice of Pastor Matt we have contacted the bishop and several "like churches" throughout the Del/Mar Synod for a description of their nomination process; now, therefore, be it Resolved, That the Church Council structure and the Council Member nomination process be changed (amended items are in bold font):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Reduce the number of members to no less than 8 and no more than 12. 2. Reduce the service term from 3 years to 2 years. Members may volunteer to serve one additional two-year consecutive term. 3. Reduce monthly meetings from 12 to 10 per year. 4. Reduce liaison responsibilities to the following standing committees and boards: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finance • Mutual Ministry

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personnel • Property • Cemetery Board • Food Bank <p>5. The Nominating Committee will generate a list of potential candidates in June.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Avoid spouses on the same candidate list. • Avoid considering family members of existing council members to serve. • Select candidates based on church attendance pattern, consensus building and teamwork skills. • The council approves and rank orders the list in September. <p>6. The Nominating Committee will contact candidates in person and allow the candidate one week (if needed) to consider serving.</p> <p>7. The Nominating Committee will prepare a brochure describing member responsibilities for candidates.</p> <p>8. The pastor(s) will be included as member(s) of the nominating committee.</p>
2024-4-4	To adopt SOP #18 The Emergency Response Plan and SOP #7 Committee Manual.
2024-5 -1	To adopt the agenda and to permit the President to call for consideration of agenda items in the order the President deems most appropriate. (moved and seconded)
2024-5 -2	A motion was made and seconded to accept the minutes as presented. A voice vote was taken, vote was unanimous.
2024-5-3	To adopt the consent agenda. (moved, seconded)
2024-5-4	<p><i>Whereas</i>, the MVFB Board of Advisors has indicated that they would like to give the title of “member at large” to each person. allowing for voting rights and;</p> <p>Whereas, Zion’s Bylaws: Article VII, Section 2 states that the “...initial Advisory Board consists of four members: a President, a Secretary, a Treasurer, and one Member-at-Large. All the members of the Advisory Board shall be members in good standing of Zion Lutheran Church. The initial Member-at-Large shall be a member of the Congregational Council of Zion Lutheran Church and shall be appointed by the Congregational Council at the first meeting of the newly elected Congregational Council each year. The Congregational Council may by resolution at a duly scheduled meeting expand the membership of the Advisory Board; the total number of members shall not exceed 8 individuals.” now, therefore, be it</p> <p>Resolved, Article VII, Section 2 and 3 of Zion’s Bylaws will be amended as follows:</p>

	<p>“The Advisory Board consists of a President, a Secretary, a Treasurer, one Church Council representative (Liaison) and no more than 4 Members at Large. All the members of the Advisory Board shall be members in good standing of Zion Lutheran Church. The Council representative shall be a member of the Zion Lutheran Church Congregational Council and shall be appointed by the Congregational Council at the first meeting of the newly elected Congregational Council each year. The Congregational Council may by resolution at a duly scheduled meeting expand the membership of the Advisory Board; the total number of members shall not exceed 8 individuals..”</p> <p>Section 3. The Advisory Board shall meet at least four times a year and may meet more often if it deems necessary. At the first meeting of the year after the appointment of the Church Council representative, the Advisory Board shall elect its President, Secretary and Treasurer. The Congregational Council shall then approve the election by resolution. The Congregational Council reserves the right to not approve an individual for election for good cause, or to remove an individual for good cause.</p>
2024-6 -1	To adopt the agenda and to permit the President to call for consideration of agenda items in the order the President deems most appropriate. (moved and seconded)
2024-6 -2	A motion was made and seconded to accept the minutes as presented. A voice vote was taken, the vote was unanimous.
2024-6-3	To adopt the consent agenda. (moved, seconded)
2024-6-4	to adopt SOP #8 The Financial and Accounting Manual.
2024-7-1	To adopt the agenda and to permit the President to call for consideration of agenda items in the order the President deems most appropriate. (moved and seconded)
2024-7-2	A motion was made and seconded to accept the minutes as presented. A voice vote was taken, the vote was unanimous.
2024-7-3	To adopt the consent agenda. (moved, seconded)
2024-7-4	To keep Church Mutual as Zion’s insurance provider for 2024/25
2024-7-5	To select the CPA firm of Hildebrand, Limparis & Associates, CPAs PC to conduct Zion’s 2024/25 financial review.
2024-7-6	To adopt SOP #14, The Key and Lock Control SOP.
2024-7-7	To approve the selection of Rosella Willson as the chair for the Nomination Committee for 2024
2024-7-8	To allow the Treasurer to approve and sign documents related to the new contract GloFiber contract.

2024-7-9	to approve a 1 year of absence without pay from Sept 1 st , 2024, to June 1 st , 2025, for Bobby Stable. If his services are needed during the leave period he will be compensated for his services. 3 months prior to his return he will provide us with a decision regarding his continued service to Zion.
2024-7-10	To allow the Food Bank to enter into a contract with Conestoga Builders for the Pre-Con Initial Fee Schedule and not to exceed \$50,000.
2024-9-1	To adopt the agenda and to permit the President to call for consideration of agenda items in the order the President deems most appropriate. (moved and seconded)
2024-9-2	A motion was made and seconded to accept the minutes as presented. A voice vote was taken, the vote was unanimous.
2024-9-3	To adopt the consent agenda. (moved, seconded)
2024-9-4	To authorize the Pastors to increase the Saturday Night Pianists' pay up to \$150.00.
2024-9-5	To approve the recommendations of the Constitution and Bylaws Committee as amended by the Council.
2024-9-6	To conduct a joint worship service on Dec. 8 th for the purpose of presenting the Christmas Pageant.
2024-10-1	To adopt the agenda and to permit the President to call for consideration of agenda items in the order the President deems most appropriate. (moved and seconded)
2024-10-2	A motion was made and seconded to accept the minutes as presented. A voice vote was taken, the vote was unanimous.
2024-10-3	To adopt the consent agenda. (moved, seconded)
2024-10-4	accepted a proposal from EmPower Maryland to replace nearly all the lighting with the church building and sanctuary with energy efficient LED Lighting.
2024-10-5	To approve the updated Wedding Policy.
2024-10-6	To accept the Finance Committee's recommendation to give Zion's Treasurer permission to contact doners that made contributions to designated funds that have lost their purpose giving them the opportunity to redesignate the money. Once a procedure has been developed it will be added to the Financial and Accounting Manual, SOP #8.
2024-11-1	To adopt the agenda and to permit the President to call for consideration of agenda items in the order the President deems most appropriate. (moved and seconded)

2024-11-2	To accept the minutes as presented
2024-11-3	To adopt the consent agenda.
2024-11-4	To approve the selection of Somerset Fire Alarm and Security to replace Zion's current fire alarm system.
2024-11-5	To accept the Finance Committee's recommendation that the 2025 annual budget proposal be submitted to the congregation for adoption.
2024-11-6	To close the church office on Friday's. The Office Manager will be available by appointment only while working at home.
2024-11-7	To approve the letter templates for redistribution of designated funds
2024-11-8	To allow the Middletown Lions to use Zion's Fellowship Hall for Community Breakfasts.
2024-12-1	To adopt the agenda and to permit the President to call for consideration of agenda items in the order the President deems most) appropriate. (Moved and seconded
2024-12-2	To accept the minutes as presented.
2024-12-3	To adopt the consent agenda
2024-12-4	To provide clarification for members regarding ELCA & Synod constitutional oversight and control at the January Town Hall meetings. Council Retreat leadership topics for discussion will include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How to expand and grow Zion's welcoming culture • Learning about and understanding our fellow worshipers as well as those we encounter outside of Zion every day.
2024-12-5	To approve the recommendations of the Nomination Committee for 2025 council membership.

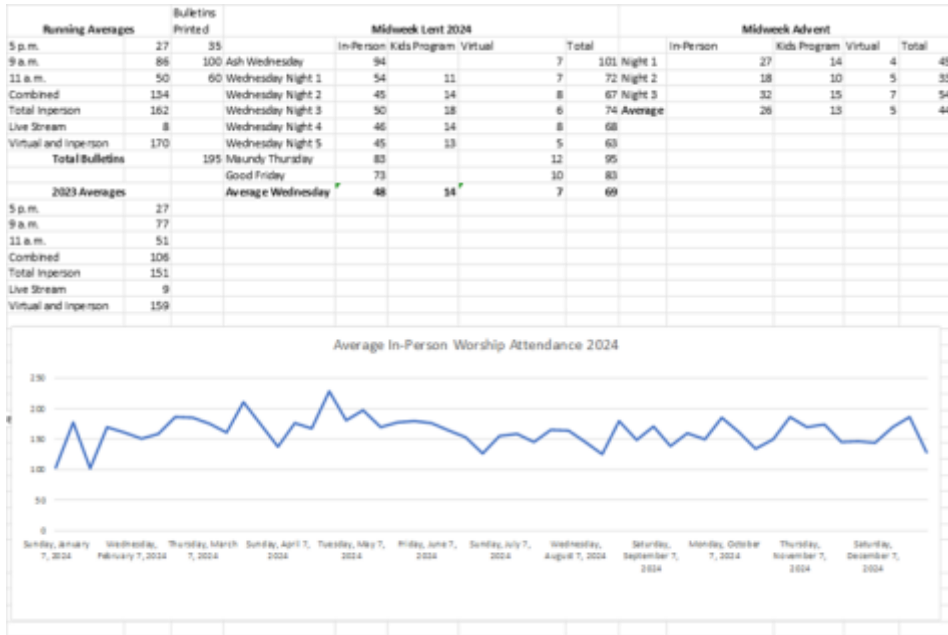
Pastoral Acts 2024

Received		Removed	
Baptism	Affirmation of Baptism or by transfer	Deaths	12
Children - 12	Transfers - 2		
Adults - 0	Affirmation of Baptism - 9	Transfers	2
<i>As of December 31, 2024...</i>			
Baptized Membership - 990		Confirmed Membership - 815	

Baptisms <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clark Cevallos • Cameron Greco • Elizabeth Savannah Haller • Wesley Hopson • Trinity Showalter • Corbin Sparks • Kielle Sparks • Esben Sparks • Maxwell Spessard • Murphy Spillman • Iona Triantos • Carson Triantos 	New Member (by affirmation of baptism) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Levi Derr • Christopher and Chelsea Greco • Maria and John Lain • Kaitlyn and Greg Leone • Addison Shupe • Danica Stup
New Members (by transfers) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gerald, Stefanie, Hadley, and Peyton Spessard 	Weddings <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lauren Pettigrew and Robert Staples • George Best and Emily Kirk
Members Who Have Died	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • John Calvin Gladhill • Ronald Trusty • Cathy Baker • Linda Crummitt • Richard Greenawalt • Anna Kepler • Marianna Bere 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paul Blickenstaff • Russell P. Main • Darlah Adams • Doris Taylor • Clarence Lantz • Georgeine Miller • Janice Wisner

Worship Attendance

	2024	2023	2022	2021
In-person	162	151	144	During this time, numbers were not kept due to the Pandemic
Virtual	8	9	9*	
Total	170	160	153	



Staff and Leadership Reports

Report from Pastor Diane Day

For this reason, I bow my knees before the Father, from whom every family in heaven and on earth takes its name. I pray that, according to the riches of his glory, he may grant that you may be strengthened in your inner being with power through his Spirit, and that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith, as you are being rooted and grounded in love. I pray that you may have the power to comprehend, with all the saints, what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, so that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.

Now to him who by the power at work within us is able to accomplish abundantly far more than all we can ask or imagine, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. Amen. (Ephesians 3:14-21)

It never ceases to amaze me how we continue to grow in our knowledge of scripture and how it pertains to our lives in every different season.

We began our next liturgical year on November 30th/December 1st. Pastor Matt and I always go back and forth in our Lent and Advent midweek focuses between theological/scholastic topics and a book of the Bible. We wrapped up 2024 with a quick jump into the book of Ephesians. My initial reaction is to be snobbish and to discredit it because it is a book of the Bible whose authorship is debated because it sounds so different from many of the other letters that we more confidently can attribute to Paul. However, just because it is debated, doesn't mean it doesn't have something to teach us.

This early text quoted above is the writer's second prayer in the book. It follows after the writer has spoken about his calling to the Gentiles which was God's addition to his first chosen people through the gift of Jesus and his life, death, and resurrection. God has entrusted to the church this work of sharing the story of God's abundant goodness and love in its great diversity. This isn't always easy and entails suffering at times when the world does not understand us but the writer encourages the readers not to lose heart because they are doing the work God calls them to do.

This prayer the writer shares makes me think of us at Zion. It makes me think about how we have been church together this year amongst adversity and through our diversity. It makes me think about how we have lived out our calling to share God's love because we weren't the original establishers of this community but those who continue it as the world grows and changes just like those reading this original letter. We are blessed with so many folks that not only make up what we would typically define as a congregation but also those who enter these walls to hear words of grace and love in some of the hardest moments of their lives through

support groups. As we enter this place, we are strengthened by the Spirit and rooted in love greatly beyond our comprehension and our ability to accept it at times.

And how can we respond to such a gift? With gratitude. To God be the glory for such love! To God be the praise for the amazing things God is doing through this place and its people. God has done more in this place than we can imagine and truthfully, so much more than sometimes our sinful hearts are open to see. God has made us a people called to share love through worship, through education, through healing, through fellowship, through visitation, through stewardship in ways we could never come to on our own. Thanks be to God for God's faithfulness and God's Spirit at work from those later 1700's to this past year. And we pray Holy Spirit, that this love might continue to work in us and do far more than we can imagine in this coming year. Prosper the work of our hands, O Lord! And let the church say, Amen!

In gratitude and encouragement,

Pastor Diane Day

Report from Pastor Matt Day

To help me reflect on this past year of ministry, I went back and read through old reports that I submitted to the council. It is amazing to read stuff from a year ago and say, "I did that?!?!!" It has been a busy year!

One of the greatest assets at Zion is our staff. I am blessed to serve with an incredible group of people who are skilled and dedicated to the mission and ministry of Zion. This past year, we promoted Deb to Office Business Manager and Treasurer. She has become someone we can rely on and trust that the Church Office is functioning at its best. Kaye continues to do the fine work of recording the offerings each week and ensuring that privacy is kept. A group of about 10-12 people from Zion continue to serve as volunteers in many different capacities from answering the phones, welcoming members and guests, folding and sorting various projects, to stuffing bags for kids on Sunday mornings. The office works today because of Deb, Kaye, and a group of volunteers. Matt Puziss and his team continue to lead us in our contemporary worship. Emily remains faithful to her work as our Children's Choir Director and we hope that in this upcoming budget, to make her position, which is currently temporary, a permanent position. This year, we bid a momentary goodbye to Bobby Staples as he and his wife moved to Norfolk so that she might pursue an opportunity with the Virginia Symphony Orchestra. Bobby requested a leave of absence in July which gave us only a few months to find a temporary replacement. I made dozens of phone calls and called in as many favors as I could. In the end, we found an organist, a choir director, and an orchestra director. The only position we could not fill was Handbell Choir director. Bobby has been doing the work of four people! We welcomed Kirk Denton, Katelyn McClinton, and Jim Moler to the Zion Staff this fall. Most congregations usually search for years before finding a musician. We found some incredible talent in less than two months mostly due to the Holy Spirit and some strong connections we have made over the years.

As part of my work this past year, my work as co-pastor had me involved in several parts of our Youth and Family Ministry. This past year, we had four DayOff Programs (we only budgeted for 3 but the school calendar worked out that we could have four so we took it. We have figured out the formula for success when it comes to holding a DayOff Program. The day off needs to be on a Tuesday, Wednesday, or Thursday; not be around a Federal Holiday, Washington County needs to have the day off from school, and they need to be free. This past year, we have spent time at Urban Air, Christ Lutheran and the Baltimore Zoo, Gettysburg to tour the battlefield, and finally to Hagerstown to explore Crystal Grotto Caverns and duck pin bowling. We are able to offer these DayOff programs free because of generous support from people like you and we are grateful for your support. We also continue to have Youth Group and Confirmation on the first Sunday of the month. We have seen some varying degrees of success when it comes to participation. I think we really need to understand that kids, families, and adults are very busy today. While sometimes our numbers are low, it is those low moments that we have the best relationship building times. This past year, we planned to take a trip to Spinners Arcade only to

find out (as we were driving there) that they were closed. So instead, we turned around, went to More Ice Cream and then went back to church to play board games. Some would call that a failure—everything we planned went wrong but after reflecting on that night, I was proud and felt like we really accomplished something. The kids had fun, we laughed, had ice cream for dinner, and they all came back the next month.

One area of potential I have seen is the large up and coming 3-5 grade group that we have at Zion. Because of the pandemic, we weren't able to really build a great relationship with some of our high schoolers so perhaps, we need to start earlier. In this coming year, I plan to work to create some events and connect our 3-5 graders together. Whether that be through some special retreat work (our synod has a few events that are designed to reach this group of kids) and simple boots-on-the-ground work with these kids and their families. Hopefully we can reverse this lack of connection with the upcoming generation as we continue to work at rebuilding lost connections.

As I reflect on this next year, I do admit that I would like love to hire someone who has a better skill set for Youth Ministry. It is a popular nomenclature that because I am young, I must be great with youth. While I like spending time with the kids, that is not where I necessarily have all the skills to be a great Youth Leader. I was not the popular kid in high school. On Friday nights, I stayed home and played on my computer (not games...like I took it apart and tried to rebuild it) or I went to Boy Scouts. I have never been good with teenagers even when I was a teenager. I stepped into this role because it was a role and ministry that I felt and the congregation felt was and is important. Someone with the skill set to meet our kids needs would really make our youth ministry grow and shine. So, I really hope we can find that special person to do this holy work.

While I have talked about how great our volunteers are, I would be remiss if I didn't mention the worship leadership. All churches have struggled with getting ushers, greeters, readers, etc. after the pandemic. I think this is largely due to the fact that we got really comfortable, during the pandemic, being consumers and forgot how to be disciples. And don't get me wrong—I am happy to see so many people both coming and returning to worship. In 2023, our average worship attendance was 151 and this year it was 164 people (if you factor in those worshipping online, our attendance average was actually 171 on Sunday). While we have seen a steady climb in attendance, we have not seen a steady climb in people willing to create a welcoming environment for worship. This is one of our growing areas at Zion but it is an area of ministry that matters so much. I think we can remain consumers, but we also need to see the value that we all bring to Saturday night and/or Sunday morning worship. I doubt that a small blurb in the pastors report will inspire others to serve but perhaps it might so I will say this: Zion's greatest asset is you. As the familiar children's rhyme goes: Here's the church and there's the steeple. Open the door and see all the people. The church is the people—you are the church. Let's be church together.

Finally, I want to reflect on one of our top ministry priorities: Relationship Building. There are two events that stand out in this area to which I had the privilege of leading and participating in. In June, we took a vanload (plus two additional cars) of church members and friends to Baltimore to watch an Orioles game. We had 21 people join us this night. It was a lot of fun. The game was competitive, exciting, and best of all, the O's won. Events like this really allow us to get to know each other. Sitting in the van, we tell stories, share jokes, laugh all the way to Camden Yards. While worship still remains the most important thing we do as a church, the second is building up the community of faith. Whether it be a trip to a monastery for a day of prayer and reflection or a trip to Camden Yards—building up the community is important because it makes worship all that more special because it forms us into a family.

I also had the privilege of taking 10 adults down to DC to tour the Museum of the Bible. The Museum was beautiful and is filled with so much that someone really needs to spend days walking through the exhibits. The van really did well transporting us down there. I even found a garage where the van fit. Our van is 7'1 and the clearance in the garage was 7'2. Needless to say, I am glad the tire pressure was a little low because that could have made for a uncomfortable Council meeting. Hopefully, we can do similar Adult focus trips like this one. Perhaps a group of adults would enjoy a trip to Gettysburg where we tour the battlefields, spend lunch at the seminary, tour their grounds, and then get ice cream at the best ice cream place in the world?

These are just a few snippets of the work that I was privilege to work on as one of the Co-Pastors of Zion. After 13 years of ordained ministry, I really feel like this might have been my most successful year as a pastor. I set goals and was able to accomplish many of them, due mostly to many resources God has blessed our congregation with over these years.. Zion is a sleeping giant and we have been working hard to wake this giant up because we are a congregation that can make impossible things happen. The Holy Spirit is working on us, Zion.

Pastor Matt Day

Report from the Council President

Dear Members of Zion church community,

Representing the entire Church Council, I present you with the 2024 Annual Report. I learned in February 2024 that, when you feel unqualified and overwhelmed and very hesitant to say yes, that is the very time God steps in and says yes for you. I agreed to serve as church council president and requested the support of all the council members. As president, I have been very fortunate to have had Bob Hetrick as vice president and Bruce McIntosh as secretary serve with me on the executive committee, along with Pastor Matt and Pastor Diane. We served with a group of dedicated and supportive council members: Doug Davis, Sheri Huckleberry, Jeff Derr, Bob Rockwell, Clinton Appleby, Carolyn Milauskas, Donna Huffer, Darin Gordan and Cindy Unangst.

At our February council retreat, the pastors, council members and chairpersons of our various committees, came together at Mar-Lu-Ridge to discuss goals and priorities for 2024. We have been reminded throughout the year of the three goals: Leadership, Communication and Relationship Building. I have felt and seen the results of the Holy Spirit at work within our congregational family. We have accomplished many things in regard to leadership, communication and relationship building. Are we done? Absolutely not. As it has been said, God's work is never done. It is up to each of us to pitch in and help. It's easy to see a problem and talk about the problem, but how wonderful it is when we work together, as the body of Christ, to bring the problem to resolution.

With communication being identified as a problem, at our February 2024 council meeting, we adopted and implemented the Take 5 council meeting highlights. This has proven to be a good way to keep the congregation informed of council discussion. Minutes of all meetings are made available after the next council meeting has approved the previous month's meeting minutes. The Take 5 has also been a good means of getting to know your council members, as they have been taking turns each month in making the announcements. Much has been accomplished in 2024 here at Zion Lutheran Church. I offer just a few of the highlights during this past year:

- Approval of the office position of Business Manager.

- Audits of our financial records that deemed our status as healthy.

- Spring Work day to clean up various areas of the church building. This project was supported by 35 church and council members and pastors. It was fun to work with fellow church members in our relationship building goal.

Three council members, along with the pastors and other church members attended the June ELCA Synod Assembly.

In June, there was a special congregational meeting to present, discuss and approve the Food Bank Memorandum of agreement. The congregation gave permission for 101 W. Green Street property to be considered to build a new Food Bank. The Food Bank Advisory Board, along with

town officials, have been at work with Conestoga Building/Construction to bring this project to fruition.

Presentation and approval was made on many SOPs-Standard Operating Procedures-which are beneficial to ensure that routine tasks within our congregation are performed consistently, accurately and efficiently, with the goal to achieve quality outcomes and clear guidelines to complete specific tasks.

Bobby Staples requested a leave of absence. This prompted the pastors to become creative in ways to assure that there will continue to be music at the 11:00 service and during special services. This was accomplished with the support of the Worship and Music committee and the church council.

The Property Committee was diligent all year long, working to stay on top and ahead of critical areas within our church community. From snow removal, to water issues, lighting upgrades, alarm system replacement (to be completed in January 2025), broiler and pipe issues to restore heat within the sanctuary. These are a few of the highlights of what our dedicated members of the property committee had to respond to throughout the year.

In November we had our second special congregational meeting of the year. The congregation gave approval for the updates of our Constitution and By-Laws. These changes will be ratified at the February 2025 Congregational Meeting.

It was also the pleasure of your Congregational Council members to participate in helping with a meal during the Lent and Advent Wednesday services.

When I took over as president of the church council, some advice given to me was to attend the different services offered here at Zion. I took that advice. I worshiped at 5:00 Saturday evening services; 9:00 Contemporary services and the 11:00 Traditional services. While there are 3 different services offered during the weekend, we are not 3 individual congregations. We are all one congregational body in Christ. We are 285 years old. That's a lot of years! We need to make sure we continue celebrating Zion's future in Middletown Valley. Zion is coming alive again. If you doubt that, visit the Contemporary or the Traditional service. There is hope in Zion's future because young couples with children are attending these services. They are Zion's future, just as the families of our own generations were Zion's future. These young families fill our hearts with joy and offer us the spirit of hope. May God continue to bless us here at Zion and keep us in His care. Respectfully submitted, Linda Kinna-Engel

Financial Reports

Report from the Financial Reporting Secretary

Financial Secretary Annual Report - 2024			
Deposits 2024		Allocations 2024	
Janaury	34,973.73	Current Expense	495,769.10
February	40,745.83	Initial Offering	421.68
March	59,791.87	Loose Offering	8,395.60
April	43,415.25	Sunday School	364.00
May	39,488.79	Designated Benevolenc	4,653.52
June	47,782.90	Lenten	3,457.67
July	44,842.57	Garden	225.25
August	38,667.90	Easter	7,088.91
September	50,462.90	Good Friday	385.29
October	54,800.05	Building Fund	27,911.82
November	38,336.82	Christmas	4,482.44
December	79,184.77	Apple Butter/Heritage	1,180.26
		Designated **	12,485.17
	572,493.38	Memorial Income	1,705.83
		Historical Preservation	1,739.29
		New Years Eve	160.10
		Altar Guild	499.46
		Community Needs	100.00
		Credit- Contributor	467.99
		* Includes Middletown Food Bank, Backpacks, Adopt A Family, Lutheran World Relief and Noisy offering	
		** Includes Clothes Closet, Youth , Vacation Bible School	
Pledges 2024	358,535.00	Pledges 2025	318,988.00
I would like to thank the money counters who deligitly help with the weekly offerings . . .			
Barry Poffinberger, Linda Kinna - Engel, Pat McIntosh, and Faith Hoover.			
		Kaye B Derr	
		Financial Secretary	

Cemetery Report

Cemetery Board of Managers

Dixie L. Eichelberger, Chairperson; Terry E Poffenberger, Secretary/Treasurer; Kenneth M. Reeder; David B. Huffer, Gary R. Scott, E. Jim Hoover, Bob Hetrick, Council Rpresentative

Income:

Balance from Last Report.....	\$ 6,885.05
Interest.....	4,348.19
Bequest and Memorial Donations.....	30,975.00
Sale of Burial Lots.....	6,300.00
For Upkeep of Burial Lots Sold.....	6,300.00
Grave Openings and Cremation Burials.....	22,700.00
Donation for Field Use.....	350.00
Transferred Money from Savings to Checking Account.....	<u>13,000.00</u>
	TOTAL \$90,858.24

Expenditure:

Wages and Taxes.....	\$18,871.94
Grave Openings.....	12,150.00
Material, Supplies and Maintenance.....	15,289.00
Equipment, Parts and Gas.....	2,538.26
Buy Back of Burial Lots.....	5,000.00
Balance in Checking Account.....	6,009.02
Donation to Church (Historical Preservation)	1,000.00
Money Transferred from Checking Account to Savings Account.....	5,000.00
First United Bank Trust CD	<u>25,000.00</u>
	TOTAL \$90,858.24

Assets:

Various Investments.....	\$455,034.82
Middletown Valley Bank Savings Account.....	20,081.61
Balance in Checking Account.....	<u>6,009.02</u>
	TOTAL \$481,125.45

(\$435,963.12 in dedicated account, where interest only may be used) \$435,963.12
AVAILABLE OPERATING FUNDS \$ 45,162.33

Respectfully Submitted,

Terry E. Poffinberger
Secretary/Treasurer

Middletown Valley Food Bank

Ann Pond - President
Marcie Gordon - Secretary
Deborah Reichelt - Treasurer

2024 Beginning Checking Balance	\$	64,749.96
Income		
Donations	\$	95,311.05
Interest	\$	13.05
Total Donations	\$	<u>95,324.10</u>
Expenses		
Groceries	\$	17,694.87
Utilities (phone)	\$	810.76
Insurance	\$	410.00
Website	\$	240.00
Misc. Expenses (keys, bags, paper, flowers, checks thermometers)	\$	736.20
Gift Cards	\$	3,750.29
High School Blanket Program	\$	562.70
New Site Plan Expenses	\$	30,787.00
Total Expenses	\$	<u>54,991.82</u>
MVB Money Market Transfer	\$	52,000.00
2023 Ending Checking Balance	\$	<u><u>53,082.24</u></u>

Assets

MVB Money Market	\$	52,122.47
Edward Jones Investments	\$	444,257.94
		<hr/>

Total Operating Funds	\$	549,462.65
		<hr/> <hr/>

MIDDLETOWN FOOD BANK 2022 DATA

Month	# of Clients	# in Household		Month	# of Clients	# in Household
January	27	79		July	48	135
February	31	85		August	44	135
March	31	85		September	53	140
April	39	105		October	62	170
May	31	85		November	84	233
June	50	158		December	71	185
Avg # of Clients/Family in First Half of 2022	35	100		Avg # of Clients/Family in Second Half of 2022	53	166

MIDDLETOWN FOOD BANK 2023 DATA

Month	# of Clients	# in Household		Month	# of Clients	# in Household
January	61	176		July	75	212
February	61	175		August	94	269
March	72	197		September	61	182
April	69	203		October	60	152
May	73	208		November	90	253
June	68	203		December	78	239
Avg # of Clients/Family in First Half of 2023	67	193		Avg # of Clients/Family in Second Half of 2023	76	217

AVERAGE NUMBER of CLIENTS SERVED PER MONTH/ NUMBER OF FAMILY MEMBERS SERVED:

2022 48 families per month receiving food for 133 family members

2023 72 families per month receiving food for 206 family members

Zion Memorial Garden Report

Balance on Hand, December 20, 2023:

Savings Account: \$5,037.96
Checking Account: \$5,077.96

Expenses for 2024:

Annuals for spring planting: \$287.88 (from Cronise Markets, Boonsboro, MD)

(125+ bulbs were purchased for fall planting but were donated by a member.)

Income:

1. Interest on Savings for 2024: \$4.84
2. \$100 donation from the Myersville Historical Society for the June Garden Tour.

Balance on Hand, December 19, 2024:

Savings Account: \$5,542.80
Checking Account: \$4,890.08

The Memorial Garden continues to rely on the dedication of two "garden angels" (Kaye Derr and Kathy Staciewicz), along with other volunteers during "peak" planting, mulching, and weeding times. Any additional help is always appreciated.

Nancy Gordon
Secretary-Treasurer

2024 Annual Report for Zion Lutheran Church

Summary Statement of Income and Expense
(Summary of all church funds-checking & savings)
Year Ending December 31, 2024

<u>INCOME</u>	2022	2023	2024
<u>Current Ministry & Local Benevolence Income (Donations)*:</u>			
Current	524,328.33	509,098.98	495,769.10
Sunday School	257.00	363.00	364.00
Loose	4,551.50	7,680.05	8,395.60
Other (Initial, Lent, Advent etc.)	12,223.65	13,777.90	15,996.09
Misc. Income (Bequests, Thrivent, Tax Credit etc.)	22,921.87	16,848.03	9,598.67
Designated Benevolence	13,993.90	13,053.52	11,538.97
Checking Interest	12.49	14.36	19.61
Total Current Ministry Income	578,288.74	560,835.84	541,682.04
<u>Community Need - Pastor Discretionary</u>			
*Community Need	475.00	3,840.00	3,055.65
Total Community Need Income	475.00	3,840.00	3,055.65
<u>Operating Income - Fees</u>			
VBS	1,622.20	1,791.00	1,214.98
Day Off Program	535.00	190.00	140.00
Total Operating Fee Income	2,157.20	1,981.00	1,354.98
Total Current Ministry, Local Benevolence & Operating Income	580,920.94	566,656.84	546,092.67
<u>Designated Income (Designated donations)</u>			
<u>Building/Capital Expenditures Fund:</u>			
Building/Capital Expenditures Fund Donations	19,961.65	57,466.26	60,876.14
Building/Capital Expenditures- Poffinberger A/C Fund Donations	0.00	15,635.00	0.00
Historic Heritage Preservation	2,850.00	4,055.50	8,928.29
Total Building/Capital Expenditures Fund Income	22,811.65	77,156.76	69,804.43
Designated and Youth Account	23,928.53	13,155.64	4,355.02
Undesignated Savings	1,727.50	1,130.91	1,581.30
Youth Trust Memorial Donation	5,116.17	1,540.00	2,161.12
Total Designated Income (Donations)	53,583.85	92,983.31	77,901.87
<u>Passive Income (Interest, Dividends):</u>			
Interest from MVB Savings Accounts	22.17	101.86	71.04
Interest from Mission Plus Money Market Accounts	2379.18	6322.45	7002.62
Interest from Mission Term Select CD's	3700.87	409.13	1509.54
Interest from Edward Jones CD's	0	1524.95	3519.65
Interest from Mission Term Select CD - Bartgis	337.20	405.59	552.79
Interest from Flexible Payout Deposit Agreement	9006.84	9277.04	14426.54
AT&T/Warner Stock Dividends (A) (to Youth savings)	286.43	234.2	5048.28
Exelon/Constellation Stock dividends (B) (to Youth Trust money ma	1669.65	1373.47	79088.12
Insurance Policy Dividends	830.69	726.63	979.93
Total Passive Income (Interest and Dividends)	18,233.03	20,375.32	112,198.51
Total Income	\$652,737.82	\$680,015.47	\$736,193.05
* Community Need is included with Current Ministry			

2024 Annual Report for Zion Lutheran Church

0	<u>EXPENSE</u>	<u>2022</u>	<u>2023</u>	<u>2024</u>
<u>Current Ministry & Local Benevolence Expense*</u>				
	Staff Salaries	284,940.97	207,660.49	212,498.44
	Staff Benefits	83,856.55	64,978.90	64,522.81
	Support Staff Salaries	35,103.00	35,730.64	41,032.00
	Congregational Ministry	19,522.78	19,852.40	22,416.57
	Operating Expenses	118,526.32	117,836.79	120,916.23
	ELCA and Synod Benevolence	43,650.00	43,650.00	45,000.00
	Local Benevolence	9,831.42	10,000.00	10,000.00
	Designated Benevolence	13,993.90	13,053.51	11,538.97
	FICA	22,929.35	18,203.46	18,914.10
	Total Current Ministry Expense	632,354.29	530,966.19	546,839.12
	Community Need*	2,525.17	2,421.91	819.69
	Total Current Ministry and Local Benevolence Expense	634,879.46	533,388.10	547,658.81
<u>Designated Expense</u>				
<u>Building Fund/Capital Expenditures:</u>				
	Clothes Closet	0	144.95	
	Roofing and Heat/AC contract	0	36,270.28	8,552.26
	Air Conditioner & Repairs	151,026.84	33,159.45	1,067.16
	Steam pipe repair & Asbestos removal			46,084.86
	Plowing			3,684.00
	Fire/Smoke alarm			14,572.50
	Back parking lot repaving	34,586.00	0	0
	Garden Pathways	16,985.00	0	0
	Lower lot lighting	0	11,800.00	-
	Misc Repairs- Plumbing, carpet cleaning	7,437.50	11,669.44	5,338.05
<u>Heritage Preservation</u>				
	Memorial tree leaves & Steeple inspection/Bracing	7,330.00	950.75	9,600.00
	Total Building Fund/Capital Expenditures	217,365.34	93,994.87	88,898.83
	Youth Camperships	0	0	3,000.00
	Youth Trust	0	3,090.10	
	Future Needs -	0	30,000.00	9,000.00
	CD Close-out transferred to Future Needs	0	0	
	Designated & Youth	4,569.21	32,674.51	15,718.38
	Total Designated Expense	\$221,934.55	\$159,759.48	\$116,617.21
	Total Expense	856,814.01	693,147.58	664,276.02
	Income Less Expense	(\$204,076.19)	(\$13,132.11)	\$71,917.03
* Community Need is included with Current Ministry				

2024 Annual Report for Zion Lutheran Church

Statement of Actual Income and Expense for Current Ministry				
Year Ending December 31, 2024				
	Budget	Actual	Budget	Actual
	2023	2023	2024	2024
<u>INCOME:</u>				
Current Income Contributions	653,290	509,099	597,799	495,769
Sunday School Offering	0	363	0	364
Loose Offering	0	7,680	0	8,396
Initial Offering	0	530	0	422
Lenten Offering	0	3,532	0	3,458
Good Friday Offering	0	200	0	385
Easter Offering	0	2,917	0	7,089
Christmas Offering	0	4,589	0	4,482
Thanksgiving Offering	0	325	0	-
New Year's Eve Offering	0	1,685	0	160
NOW Checking Interest	0	14	0	20
Total Current Ministry Income - Offering	653,290	530,934	597,799	520,544
Misc Income - Faith Around the Table	0		0	
Misc Income - Christian Ed	0	15	0	-
Misc Income - Congregational Life	0	1,458	0	1,904
Misc Income - Caring Ministries	0	140	0	240
Misc Income - Outreach	0	0	0	0
Misc Income - Worship and Music	0	18	0	0
Misc Income - Children/Youth and Family	0	25	0	246
Misc Income - Operating	0	10,958	0	5,646
Misc Income - Thrivent Choice	0	1,064	0	1,082
Misc Income - Memorials/Bequests	0	3,171	0	481
Misc Income - Designated Benevolence	0	13,054	0	11,539
Total Current Ministry Income - Misc	-	29,902	-	21,138
Operating Income - Fees	4,500	1,981	2,000	1,355
Total Operating Fee Income	4,500	1,981	2,000	1,355
Total Current Ministry & Operating Fee Income	657,790	562,817	599,799	543,037
<u>EXPENSE:</u>				
Co-Pastor - Salary	82,000	82,000	86,746	86,746
Co-Pastor - Salary	82,000	82,000	86,746	86,746
Pastoral Resource Pool	3,000	1,217	3,000	1,907
Church Administrator - Salary	44,467	5,558	-	-
Administrative Assistant	27,983	3,498	-	0
Treasurer - Salary	28,640	28,640	31,827	35,299
CYF Youth Dir. - Salary	24,777	4,747	32,000	1,800
Total Staff Salary Expense	292,867	207,661	240,319	212,498
Co-Pastor - Pension & Benefits	27,639	27,639	28,037	28,442
Pastor - Continuing Education	1,500	1,015	1,500	1,519
Co-Pastor - Pension & Benefits	27,243	27,243	28,415	28,064
Administrator/CYF Youth Director - Pension & Benefits	22,225	2,503	-	-
Treasurer/ - Pension & Benefits	3,351	3,351	3,501	3,883
CYF - Youth Director's Continuing Education	1,000	-	1,000	-
Staff Transportation	5,000	2,228	5,000	1,616
Sabbatical Contingency	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000
Pastor Relocation	0	0	0	0
Total Staff Benefits Expense	88,958	64,979	68,453	64,523

2024 Annual Report for Zion Lutheran Church

Statement of Actual Income and Expense for Current Ministry				
Year Ending December 31, 2024	Budget	Actual	Budget	Actual
	2023	2023	2024	2024
Director of Worship & Music - Salary	14,683	14,683	17,035	17,035
Director Contemporary Worship - Salary	14,255	14,255	15,597	15,597
Financial Secretary - Salary	4,614	4,633	4,725	4,725
Substitute Music Support	3,500	2,160	3,500	3,675
Total Support Staff Salary Expense	37,051	35,731	40,857	41,032
Employer's Share - FICA	24,739	18,203	22,601	18,914
Total Personnel Expenses	443,615	326,574	372,230	336,967
Adult Bible Study & Forum	500	153	455	249
Seasonal Event Team	100	170	240	138
Milestone Ministry Team	500	1,049	500	201
High School Curriculum	200	0	65	0
Children/Youth Curriculum	500	65	700	333
Confirmation	325	352	325	113
Total Christian Education (CE) Expense	2,125	1,789	2,285	1,034
Christian Fellowship	2000	1,138	2000	1,831
Kitchen Supplies	2500	2,887	3200	3,080
Total Congregational Life Expense	4,500	4,026	5,200	4,911
Caring Ministries	500	213	300	393
Grief Share	150	323	200	200
Total Caring Ministries Expense	650	535	500	593
Outreach - Community Events	750	413	1,500	300
Outreach - Promotions	3,500	2,104	4,000	2,488
Outreach - Mobile App	4,200	3,659	4,200	3,691
Outreach - Sunday Coffee Hour	1,200	486	1,500	1,589
Outreach - Welcome/Hospitality	300	0	0	247
Outreach - New Member Hospitality	0	0	0	0
Total Outreach Expense	9,950	6,662	11,200	8,315
License & Operations	1,200	990	1,200	1,995
Choir/Orchestra Music	800	480	450	497
Choir/Acolyte Robes	0	0	0	0
Youth Music	200	0	0	0
Altar Guild	0	0	0	0
Contemporary Worship	700	378	500	-
Total Worship and Music Expense	2,900	1,848	2,150	2,492

2024 Annual Report for Zion Lutheran Church

Statement of Actual Income and Expense for Current Ministry				
Year Ending December 31, 2024	Budget	Actual	Budget	Actual
	2023	2023	2024	2024
CYF - Fellowship Events	1,800	1,137	500	439
CYF - Retreats Off-Site	1,500	0	1,250	0
CYF - Supplies/Materials	1,000	71	500	101
CYF - Books/Subscriptions	300	0	-	0
CYF - Mission Trips	0	0	1500	0
CYF - Youth Group	1,500	898	3,000	428
CYF - Day Off Program	1,000	541	4,500	2411
CYF - Summer Program	2000	0	0	0
CYF - Vacation Bible School	3,000	2,346	3,000	1,693
CYF - Puppet Ministry	200	0	0	0
Total Children, Youth and Family (CYF) Expense	12,300	4,993	14,250	5,072
Total Congregational Ministries Expense	32,425	19,852	35,585	22,417
Office Supplies	4,500	2,561	3,500	2,480
Telephone	6,000	4,728	5,000	4,812
Church Supplies	5,250	3,641	3,650	3,217
Postage	1,500	2,004	1,080	1,456
Paper Products(Cleaning)	750	788	850	704
Electricity	25,000	29,641	28,000	28,466
Fuel	11,500	8,272	10,500	3,393
Water and Sewer	2,000	2,370	2,500	2,669
Equipment Maintenance Contract and Repair	11,500	12,318	12,500	17,542
Insurance	17,000	17,237	18,800	19,429
Reserve for Contingency	500	77	500	57
Synod Convention	4,000	1,381	2,000	1,446
Cleaning Services	8,900	8,880	9,260	9,235
Technology Operations	11,000	6,405	7,775	7,575
Payroll Services	2,250	2,014	2,250	1,006
Piano and Organ Maintenance	3,000	3,090	7,502	2,217
Van Expense	500	430	1,500	738
Property	11,000	10,899	16,510	13,464
Stewardship	250	0	260	125
Historic Preservation	0	(359)	897	376
Leadership Development	500	0	500	0
First Response	500	772	750	21
Background Checks	200	268	300	165
Staff Development	500	421	600	322
Total Operating Expense	128,100	117,837	136,984	120,916
Benevolence - DE-MD Synod	31,950	31,950	30,300	30,300
Benevolence - Mar-Lu-Ridge	9,900	9,900	12,000	12,000
Benevolence - Lutheran World Relief	1,350	1,350	2,250	2,250
Benevolence - St Dymas Prison Ministry	450	450	450	450
Local Benevolence	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000
Designated Benevolence	0	13,054	0	11,539
Total Benevolence	53,650	66,704	55,000	66,539
Total Current Ministry Expenses	657,790	530,966	599,799	546,839
Total Current Ministry Income Less Expense	0	31,850	0	(3,802)

Benevolence - 2024

(This report details how 2024 benevolence was distributed)

For the Year Ending December 31, 2024

(1) Budgeted Local Benevolence:

	Budget 2024	End of Year 2024	Noisy Offering 2024	Total Offering 2024
2024 Budgeted Local Benevolence:				
Frederick Rescue Mission	1,000.00	1,000.00	378.07	1,378.07
Friends for Neighborhood Progress	1,000.00	1,000.00	368.76	1,368.76
Heartly House	1,000.00	1,000.00	344.1	1,344.10
Religious Coalition for Emergency Needs	1,000.00	1,000.00	241.35	1,241.35
SHIP	1,000.00	1,000.00	317.60	1,317.60
On Our Own - Frederick	500.00	500.00		500.00
Tanzania Task Force	600.00	600.00		600.00
Middleton Valley Fire Department	500.00	500.00	286.71	786.71
Total Maryland Organizations	6,600.00	6,600.00	1,936.59	8,536.59
Middleton Organizations:				
Community Needs (Zion)	2,000.00	2,000.00	0.00	2,000.00
MVPH -	1,400.00	1,400.00		1,400.00
Total Middleton Organizations	3,400.00	3,400.00	0.00	3,400.00
Total 2024 Budgeted Local Benevolence	10,000.00	10,000.00	1,936.59	11,936.59

(2)

	Expense 2024	Ending Balance
Community Need - Prior Year Funds:		
1/1/24 Mission Community Need Balance		4,672.49
2024 Interest and Donations		3,055.65
Community Needs - Pastor Discretionary	(819.69)	
12/31/24 Mission Community Need Balance	(819.69)	6,908.45

2024 Annual Report for Zion Lutheran Church

2024 Designated Benevolence	Income 2024	Expense 2024
Samaritan's Purse - Operation Christmas Child	450.00	450.00
Mexico Mission Trip	450.28	450.28
Total National Organizations	900.28	900.28
Religious Coalition	660.11	660.11
SHP	317.6	317.60
CareNet Pregnancy Ctr (Lent Baby Bottles)	446.6	446.60
Frederick Rescue Mission	378.07	378.07
Hearthly House	344.1	344.10
Total Maryland Organizations	2,146.48	2,146.48
Middletow n Valley Food Bank	400.00	400.00
MVPHF - Craft Fair Basket	300.00	300.00
MVPHF - School Supply	100.00	100.00
Middletow n Volunteer Fire Department	286.71	286.71
Weekend Backpack Program	100.00	100.00
Mar-Lu Ridge	540.00	540.00
Total Middletow n Organizations	1,726.71	1,726.71
Lutheran Disaster Relief	1232.78	1232.78
ELCA Malaria		
Seafarers Disaster Aid Fund	440.94	440.94
Lutheran World Relief - Animals (Poinsettia donations)	1623.00	1623.00
ELCA World Hunger Fund	371.60	371.60
Global Refugee	226.35	226.35
ELCA Good Gifts	667.52	667.52
Lutheran Campus Ministry	263.31	263.31
Tanzania Task Force	1940.00	1940.00
Total Lutheran Organizations	6,765.50	6,765.50
Total Designated Benevolence	11,538.97	11,538.97

Ministries of the Congregation

JOY +50 (Just Older Youth) Lunch

The Joy+50 Lunch group met monthly this past year. We were happy to say that we averaged approximately 45 people for lunch each month. Entertainment was provided at each luncheon which included bingo, travel slides and singing. Joy lunch distributed additional funds to the building fund. Lunches in the coming year will be held on the third Wednesday of the month. Our weather policy is that if FCPS schools are closed or delayed we will cancel the lunch that month. We are hoping that this ministry will continue to grow over the upcoming year.

Living History

As the new name of our ministry team implies, (previously Historical Preservation) are history is not just one that unfolds on paper to be stored behind a lock door, or not see the light of day for who knows how long. Our history is being lived out each day. As we enjoy reading and learning of what happened years ago, we must remember that future generations will want to read what life is like for today's generation. It is a balance of preserving the old and recording the current.

This year we tried something new. In the fall, a three-week adult Sunday school class was presented on the history of the church, not focusing on the building but the real church, the people. How their faith enabled them through trials, serving others in need, and sharing their faith witnessed the power of the real church and more importantly the faithfulness of a loving God. The same God equips us today to grow, love, and serve. The highlight of the three weeks was a "visitor" from September 1862 telling her story as the events leading up and after the Battle of South Mountain unfolded. This was so well received that another session is planned for next year.

This ministry team continues to work with the Pastors, council, church personnel, other committees and ministry team of the church as well as the Town Hall and Main Street Middletown. We assist those searching for ancestry records, give tours to private groups and participate in community events and continue interviews covered in our quarterly Beacon. In 2024, we remembered the 500th anniversary of the first Lutheran Hymnal published and in one shadow box we exhibited a number of hymnals used at our church. And so much of the work achieved this year has been due to the help of Shannon Baker who assists in cataloging documents now totaling over 13,000.



But the greatest achievement this year is gathering the names of Veterans buried in our cemetery and honoring their dedication of service to our country by placing flags on their graves. Working with Dixie of the Cemetery Board, Ron Moss, and Nancy and Cathy Gordon of our local 4H club, over 230 flags were placed on the graves on Memorial Day. A special thank you to the 4H club of Middletown and their amazing youth for distributing the flags. If you know of a veteran buried at Zion and a flag was not placed on their grave please let our ministry team know so that we may honor their sacrifice.

We are always looking for those who may be interested in what we do. One of the ways we are looking for help is in converting handwritten documents into a typed format on a computer. It isn't even necessary to come into the church to work. The documents can be emailed to you where you can work at your own convenience. If interested please contact Mary Ann Marcantonio at mamarcantonio@gmail.com or her cell 240-675-1140. Committee members; Lois Ahalt, Colleen Tabler, Terry Poffinberger, Bob Staples, Shannon Baker, and ministry team chair Mary Ann Marcantonio

Altar Guild 2024 Annual Report

The Altar Guild is entrusted with preparing the chancel and its furnishings for worship, baptisms, weddings, and funerals. The overall goal of the Altar Guild is to see that the worship space is always beautiful and in order, both to glorify God and to provide a setting that enables the congregation to worship in a meaningful way.

Altar Guild members made sure everything was in place for each church service. We changed paraments in the Sanctuary as required, set up for communion, arranged for altar flowers and filled candles with oil. Members also cleaned, laundered, and pressed vestments and linens. The Altar Guild purchased all communion supplies, candle oil, baptismal supplies, and other items needed to carry out its responsibilities. We also purchased a new Funeral Pall with the help of a couple members who donated money towards the purchase. Altar flowers were delivered to sick and homebound members and to nursing homes after Sunday services. We set up for all baptisms, weddings and funerals as required. Members also thoroughly cleaned the Sacristy and conducted an inventory of everything that is the responsibility of the Altar Guild.

Thirty-six Easter lilies and tulips and fifty-one poinsettias were purchased by the congregation and arranged by the Altar Guild to beautify the church. The congregation donated \$831 for Lutheran World Relief gifts at Christmas and \$792 at Easter. Altar Guild members, with the help of a few other Zion members, decorated the church at Easter and Christmas. We made sure all battery-operated candles were working, and we cleaned and placed all wax candles in holders

for Christmas Eve Services. We prepared palms and arranged for potted palms to be placed in the chancel and chapel for Palm Sunday.

The Altar Guild consists of three committees: The committees take a month at a time and are responsible for flowers, paraments, communion, candles and vestments and linens. The chairpersons for the three committees in 2024 were as follows: Marci Gordon, Jo Ann Poffinberger and Ruth Warnock.

We usually meet three times a year. Pastors Matt and Diane attended our meetings and Donna Huffer attended as Council Liaison. We welcomed Connie Kinna as our newest member this year. We lost one member, Janet Alfonso, this year due to relocation. We are thankful to all past and current members for their dedication and service to the Altar Guild and to Zion.

Additional members are needed to carry out the duties as mentioned above. Being a member of the Altar Guild does not require a lot of time. New members work with one of our three committees four months out of the year to set up communion, change paraments, etc. They would be trained by the chairperson of that group. Both men and women are welcome to join; if you think you might be interested in joining, please talk to any of the individuals listed below and they can provide details about our different committees and activities.

Members serving during 2024: Marcia Ahalt, Janet Alfonso, Sharon Boyer, Connie Kinna, Shirley Ferguson (Chairperson), Sharon Finley, Marci Gordon, Lola Haupt, Linda Huckleberry, Cathy Kehoe, Cindy Keller, Diane Kepler, Dorothy Moler, Jo Ann Poffinberger, Loretta Rapp, Kathy Shankle, Kathy Stasiewicz, Ruth Warnock, and Sue Whitter.

Christian Fellowship

The Christian Fellowship Committee plans events such as the Spring Fling, the Church Picnic, Reformation Sunday and other smaller events throughout the year. The Committee provides the opportunity for church members to gather for fellowship. The Committee members plan and prepare meals and clean up after the various events.

During 2024 Christian Fellowship hosted the Spring Fling Dinner (previously the Mother/Daughter Dinner) on May 8, 2024. We sold 93 tickets and 81 (including adults and children) were in attendance. The entertainment for the Spring Fling was Paint Night. It was well received by the ladies who attended. There was lots of fun and laughter.

We planned and coordinated the Church Picnic which was held on June 9, 2024. There were approximately 60-65 people in attendance. All committees were asked to participate in some way with the picnic. Our goal each year is to increase participation and fellowship among church members.

We prepared a Lenten Meal and coordinated and assisted with potluck lunches. We played a major role in planning and assisting with Heritage Day on September 28th. Christian Fellowship members also assisted fellow church members in making Apple Butter.

Christian Fellowship has a number of dedicated volunteers, but we are always looking for more members. Anyone who is interested in joining our committee can talk to one of the volunteers listed below.

Members serving during 2024:

Gene Appleby, Doug Davis, Shirley and Mike Ferguson, Bob and Kathy Hetrick, Jim Huckleberry, Cathy Kehoe, Jo Ann and Barry Poffinberger, Deb Reichelt, Blaine Shatzer, Ruth Warnock

Christian Formation Ministry Team

The initial meeting of this Ministry Team took place on January 21, 2024. The main topic was what a Christian Formation Ministry Team is and does.

Church Council authorized the creation of the Christian Formation Ministry Team via continuing resolution as follows:

‘There shall be a **Christian Formation Ministry Team**. This ministry team, in consultation with the church staff, shall have responsibility for the organization, promotion and supervision of the educational opportunities of the Congregation and work with all youth and family ministries. It shall promote the value of service- taking what we learn in education of our faith and turning it into action and evangelism.’

Christian Formation takes Christian Education a step farther. Not just growing in knowledge, we actively take our faith into the world to be the fulfillment of our congregation’s mission to share Christ’s love, grow in faith, and serve others.

Christian Formation at Zion takes place in many ways. In addition to leading worship, our pastors engage in Christian Formation in many ways, including Lectionary Bible Study, Table Talk, Confirmation, Youth Group, Vacation Bible School, Day Off Programs/Trips, First Communion Classes and more. Walk in the Park Bible Study and the Women’s Bible Study are organized and led by lay leaders, as is Footprints. Faithful teachers and lesson planners have offered Sunday School for Children, Youth and Adults. Coming together with our pastors, faithful teachers and leaders, the Christian Formation Ministry Team has sought to support and enhance our congregation’s Christian Formation offerings.

Children’s Sunday School: Zion offers a class for toddlers through 2nd Grade and another class for children in grades 3-5. Lessons are organized by a dedicated curriculum planner and distributed to the teachers who take turns teaching. The Team promoted the need to have at least 2 adults present in each classroom as both practical help for the teacher, and as good policy. The need for additional volunteers was made known and a sign-up sheet distributed. Together with our faithful returning teachers, many new volunteers have joined the teams as teachers and assistants! And it is a good thing because Zion is blessed with many children!

Adult Sunday School: The Adult Forum, led by several faithful teachers, met Sunday mornings at 10:00am. When it was discovered that several of our newer adult members did not realize

that this opportunity existed, a sub-group of the Ministry Team sprang into action! They advertised and promoted Adult Sunday School, planned exciting and interesting curriculum, and secured additional teachers. Attendance at Adult Sunday School has dramatically increased. And just wait 'til you see what they have planned for 2025!

Youth Christian Formation: A sub-group of the Ministry Team met to share ideas and brainstorm ways we could maintain a Godly influence in the lives of our youth in the midst of their hectic, exciting, way too busy, and sometimes difficult time of life. Many excellent ideas came forth, and it is anticipated that the group will continue their work in 2025.

Coming Up in 2025:

Cradle Roll: Many folks recall that at birth, baby and parents were automatically enrolled in the Cradle Roll Sunday School class! Infants, up to 3 years old, together with parents would sing, parade around the room with noise-making instruments, and just have a wonderful time of fellowship. Our current pre-school Sunday School class accommodates such a wide range of ages. Is this the time for a renewed Cradle Roll Class?

Intergenerational Sunday School Events: The wisdom of our mature members and the exuberance of children! How can we combine this to learn and grow together? One such event is scheduled for spring, 2025. Shall we make it a semi-annual event?

Thanks:

I have avoided recognizing by name those to whom I am indebted for all their efforts for the sake of this Ministry Team. These are those who attend meetings, make decisions, plan curriculum, make schedules, and get things done! I am deeply grateful to all for faithful service.

Additionally, there are so many who volunteer their time as teachers and helpers, chaperones for day-off trips, who help with Vacation Bible School, who give to support our programs. All who engage in building up one another in our community of faith are part of this ministry team!

My heartfelt thanks to all!

Invitation:

Come, be a part of making the Cradle Roll Class happen. Help us explore the uniqueness of intergenerational learning and experience. Support our children as they grow in faith. Help our youth navigate this tumultuous time in their lives. Make it so that adults never tire of growing their faith. The team especially needs folks to facilitate meetings, help manage the various work done by the team and communicate with others. We need you! Be a part of building one another up so that we grow our faith and truly share Christ's love and serve others.

Submitted by Jeff Derr, Council Liaison to the Christian Formation Ministry Team.

Clothing Closet

The Clothes Closet continued in its ministry to provide community families time to “shop” for clothing and shoes for those in need. Families and individuals shop on Saturday mornings from 9 a.m. to 11 a.m. On average, we have seven families visit each week.

Donations are accepted ANY TIME by placing the clothes in the large brown bin located on the deck of the Clothes Closet building at 118 W. Green Street, Middletown MD 21769. Volunteers who sort clothes access the building via a lock box with a code when they have free time to help.

Our congregation and community members continued their generosity with donations of clothing—with over 325 bags of clothing donated in 2024. Many thanks to all the dedicated Clothes Closet volunteers who kept the closet area neat and well stocked, who accepted donations and/or welcomed the families on Saturday mornings. Clothing that we do not use is picked up by Greg from the Frederick Rescue Mission to be offered for free at Rescued Treasures – their clothing donations on-site.

Our regular Store Front volunteers who volunteer typically one Saturday a month or every other month from 9 a.m. to 11 a.m. include Ike and Lois Ahalt, Dianna Berkey, Nancy Bybel, Sharon Crawford, Linda Cole, Diane Fuller, Cindy Geisbert, Shelly Gladhill, Mary Mason, Pat McIntosh, Sheila Meehan, Alyssa Michoff, Kathy Molander, Kathy Stasiewicz, Faye Wise, Kim Wise, Carol Wood and Sue Whittier. Store Front volunteers – open the doors to let our families in and answer any questions.

Information about our clothes closet can be found by visiting the “Middletown Community Clothes Closet” Facebook page - Don’t forget to LIKE and SHARE our page. If you have an hour or two to spare each month and would like to volunteer reach out to Patricia Staples at rstaples17@comcast.net or call/text at 301-606-0041 with any questions.

Submitted by Patricia Staples

Hands to God Crafting

Hands to God crafters meet at 7:00pm on Tuesday evenings in the Garden’s Edge to knit, crochet, cross stitch or just work on any type of craft. We make knitted, crocheted and sewn prayer shawls, pocket prayer crosses, baby blankets, and baby hats for the hospital, hats and scarves for the cold weather shelter. This year we have sent many hats, scarves and warm shawls to the cold weather shelter. We estimate that we have sent over 150 preemie baby hats to Lily’s Hope this year. We took prayer shawls to local nursing facilities. We are excited to announce that we hosted a Winter Woolly Retreat at Mar-lu-ridge in Feb and in Nov hosted a retreat in the social room. This is an event that you can either stay all day or come and go as you please. Tickets to cover the cost of the facility and food are \$10 each. We thank all who have contributed with yarn and fabric and time to help others. We encourage anyone who is a crafter to join us for fellowship on Tuesday evenings. We are always looking for more members. POC: Alexa Masser, 301-514-4479 amasser202@comcast.net

Visitation Ministry

In the fall of 2022, I began overseeing the coordination of visitors to our shut in families. While the pastors continue to make their visits, there is a need for others to visit as well. We have an average of 27 shut-ins each month. Our regular visitors are Ike and Lois Ahalt, Jim and Nancy Allen, Joann and Barry Poffinberger, Shirley and Mike Ferguson, Sarah Holter, Sharon Finley, Jill Lizzi, Mary Ann Marcantonio, Bruce McIntosh, Judith Smith, Judy Turley, and Rosella Wilson.

One of our most faithful visitors is Rosella Wilson. She makes birthday cards, Easter, Thanksgiving, thinking of you cards for our shut-ins throughout the year and sympathy cards to someone who has lost a loved one. In December she creates cards and ornaments to the shut-ins. One by one a member of our Zion family chose a shut in and stopped by for a personal visit. I believe we can all agree a personal visit is always welcome and one of the best ways to build relationships and maintain our connection with our most important VIP's, our shut ins.

Our regular Visitation Ministry volunteers typically visit 1-2 people per month. I coordinate with them to find someone who is local. Once they are connected with a shut in, they call and schedule a time for a visit that works for both of their schedules. It is truly a ministry that YOU can do on your schedule. If you have an hour or two to spare each month and would like to volunteer, I can be reached at rstaples17@comcast.net or call/text at 301-606-0041 with any questions. I've learned through this Ministry that my "gift" is connecting people. You may find that your gift is the enjoyment you give and receive when you visit someone who so needs to still feel connected to their Zion family. Feel free to stop one of our regular visitors shown above and ask them about their experience. For this my village is how we all make a difference. One smile/visit at a time:)

Submitted by Patricia Staples

Caregiver Ministry

I make birthdays, Easter, Thanksgiving, Christmas, thinking of you cards throughout the year and sympathy cards to send to someone who has lost a loved one.

Another project that I do is to send grief books from Stephen Ministry which is a series of 4 books over a year's time. These are sent to those who have lost a spouse or loved one.

In connection with our Zion Knitters, I deliver shawls that our knitters have made to our homebound or to someone who has lost a loved one.

Respectfully submitted,
Rosella Wilson

Worship and Music

The heart of the congregation is its worship of God. It is the primary reason for our existence. It is in worship where "the gospel is taught purely and the sacraments are administered rightly" (Augsburg Confession, Article VII). To that end, its traditions and rites may change but its foci

must remain of sharing the gospel and receiving the sacraments. So, what did that look like in 2024?

Saturday/Sunday Worship: Regular weekend worship is the continuous heart and soul of Zion. Thanks to our musicians who accompany this time. We also are aware of our need to find more Saturday night musicians and asked the Council to approve a greater compensation for that weekly accompaniment position.

Combined Worship: As a congregation blessed to be able to worship three times over the weekend, we also gathered together throughout the year in combined worship to prepare for our Annual Meeting, to confirm our young adult members, to rejoice in the Reformation, and to celebrate the Christmas story told by our children. We give thanks for our Music Staff who share responsibility for these services and works together as needed to lead.

Servant in God's House (SIGH): We have immeasurable gratitude for Bre Bybel, our SIGH scheduler, and ALL our worship assistants who make worship possible. Please know you are always welcome to become a worship assistant whether it's greeting people as they come in the door, lighting the candles, reading scripture or another role. Please talk to a pastor and we will make sure you receive training!

Live-streaming: We see a decreased but steady number of folks tuning in to live-streamed worship weekly. We are so thankful for our volunteers who help make this happen. It is such a blessing to have when folks are sick or traveling to be able to tune in to watch their home congregation. However, if this ministry is to continue, we need more help. Please consider this important worship assistant position.

Organ and Piano Census: We have been taking stock of all the pianos we have and determining which ones we can get rid of and where to put those remaining. Two older pianos beyond repair were disposed of. The old Chapel organ which no longer worked was looked at for parts and then disposed of. We also are discerning about new instruments for the future especially a few years down the road for the Sanctuary.

Transition of Music Staff: With the blessing and opportunity for Bobby and Avery to pursue a position for Avery in Norfolk, our various ensembles took a shift in the latter half of the year. We greatly thank our interim staff, Kirk Denton (organist) and Katelyn McClinton (Director of Traditional Music), for their presence and leadership. We also thank our members, Chris Derr and Jim Moler for stepping in to share their musical talents and leadership to make sure we had worship support and orchestral accompaniment for special services. We will know better by March and then into April a plan for what lies ahead in the coming year for our Music Program.

Ensembles: With the staffing transitions, Pastor Matt put in many hours to find folks with the talent and time to staff our ensembles we so dearly love. With only a year contract, that becomes even harder. Our Handbell Choir is a bit of a challenge to find folks to lead in general

so we are aware of that missing piece as we think into next year. We also are aware our Choir had to try a new thing and learned how to not always be accompanied by a piano.

Children's Choir: What started with a private gift to get the children back together and learning music, has come back into our budget. Thanks to Emily Hopson for her beautiful patience and love of children while teaching them faith through song. We look forward to our Children's Choir as part of worship at Palm Sunday and Pentecost in the first half of the year.

Lent 2024: In Lent, we returned to our Lutheran roots and revisited the Small Catechism each week. Our children also looked at each part with Mar-Lu-Ridge Associate Director Diana Edelblute during Children's Activities.

Holy Week/Easter 2024: Palm/Passion Sunday was a little cold outside - we will remember to prepare everyone for next year just in case! We used stations again during Maundy Thursday which seemed to really help our younger attendees understand the meaning of the day better. Good Friday was solemn and beautiful. Easter was festive as always. This was the first year we did not have a Sunrise service. We give thanks and continue to encourage folks to attend Mar Lu Ridge for their service.

Pentecost 2024: Pentecost was illustrative of that first one! We had three confirmations and three baptisms. It was a bit chaotic but also a joy to be able to celebrate the work of the Spirit in so many lives.

Fall 2024: We had our usual early fall events of Blessing the Backpacks and Bible Presentation. We celebrated Reformation, All Saints, and Christ the King emphasizing how God keeps working in the Church through God's people always remembering the gift of Christ and God's power over all things.

Advent 2024: We used the book of Ephesians this Advent to help us consider how Jesus' coming to be with us changes how we are to respond to this world God so loves as we await his coming again. Our children utilized the new Grinch movie to learn these same things.

Christmas 2024: Despite concerns around our heating situation, we had a beautiful Christmas Eve. We fine-tuned with the Altar Guild our communion distribution with the increased volume of folks we see at worship. Our music staff and members enriched our worship greatly with beautiful music. We had three lovely service to celebrate God coming among us.

Submitted by Pastor Diane Day

Contemporary Music Team

2024 brought some changes to the Worship Team and at the same time, some things remained comfortably the same.

Long-time members and talented musicians Chris Derr, Joe Harsch and Jim Moler are still the backbone of the team.

Aaron Moler is away at Penn State, but he continues to serve on the Worship Team when he can, and his participation is much appreciated!

I continue to search for new songs for congregational singing. We try to introduce one new song per month. After I choose a song, we rehearse it and introduce it during the offering. Then we sing it the next week and another time or two that month to acclimate the congregation to the song.

As I write this, we are closing in on Christmas. The Worship Team will be leading the congregation and visitors in singing familiar Christmas carols at the 4pm service. Although we play them in a contemporary style, we don't stray too far from the familiar versions.

It's been a great and satisfying year for me as the team leader and I thank all past and present members for their service. I thank the Pastors, council and members of Zion for trusting and supporting me in this position.

Matt Puziss

Musical Ensembles

Choir: As noted by the Council President, Bobby Stables leave of absence prompted the pastors to become creative in ways to assure that there will continue to be music at the 11:00 service and during special services. This was accomplished with the support of the Worship and Music committee and the church council.

Bells: Unfortunately the handbell choir performances had to discontinue their usual performance schedule with the exception of a solo performance by our very talented Chris Derr during the Christmas Eve service. We hope to continue the hand bell choir once again in the coming year. We are still looking for someone to lead the bell choir in their rehearsals.

Orchestra/Instrumentalists: This year continued business as usual, thanks to the efforts of Jim Molar who stepped in to organize the orchestra for our Christmas Eve performance. Thank our musicians in our ensembles, the choir, bells, and orchestra, and those who help in planning and conducting these ensembles. It's a major team effort and the congregation continues to be impressed by their dedication and the excitement that they bring to every performance!

Children's Choir: Children's Choir is going well! Attendance is spotty since it's only once a month. The new format of socializing, singing, and then more socializing is maximizing rehearsal time while building relationships. The kids who are consistently there are enjoying it and hopefully as it continues, will invite their friends to stay for choir as well. It would be nice to have more of the footprints kids in choir. Overall, it's going well and there hopefully more growth coming in size and ability during 2025.

Emily

Sunday School Report

	2023	2024
Total Attendance	679	895
Total Offering	\$363.00	\$348.00

Sunday School Children classes held - 30 weeks

Adult Classes held - 39 weeks

Submitted by M. Lee Ropp

GriefShare

The GriefShare ministry, which is a faith-based grief support group, completed its 8th year with the Fall 2024 Cycle. GriefShare is offered twice a year, and each cycle is 13 weeks long. Participants may attend GriefShare cycles as often as they need.

This year, we used the newest edition of GriefShare, Edition 4, that was donated to Zion for this ministry. The new material, including the videos, has added to the education and understanding of the emotions of grief. During our weekly sessions, we take time to share grief stories, process the emotions of grief and support one another in the grief journey. The participant's workbook provides homework each week that encourages each individual to spend the days, between meetings, to work on their grief in a more private way.

Once again at the end of the Fall GriefShare cycle, the Blue Christmas service was offered during the Advent season. Participants and leaders from the group are invited to assist with the Blue Christmas service. The Blue Christmas service is offered with validation that not everyone is able to joyfully celebrate the Christmas season because of their grief. The service provides a safe place to worship and to feel emotionally supported. That is why it is so important for their families and the community of Zion to support the Blue Christmas service.

The GriefShare Ministry leaders are: Chris Perry, Jennifer Perry, Janet Venneri and Linda Kinna-Engel

I pray for God's continued blessings on this ministry.

Respectfully, Linda Kinna-Engel

Stewardship Annual Report

The Stewardship committee met on Tuesday, September 17th. In attendance were Pastor Matt, JoAnn and Barry Poffinberger, Doug Davis, Diane Keplar and Carolyn Milauskas, committee chair.

We discussed our fall campaign for Stewardship and the pledge cards. In addition, we discussed the videos we had created the previous year and felt they were a success and decided to record

videos again this year to play at each service and to focus on our outreach programs like the clothes closet, the apple butter project and the noisy offerings. We also discussed the pledge cards and what they should look like. A letter was mailed out to members along with pledge cards for each family member to make pledges. The pledge cards were blessed at the Joint Worship service on October 27th. Pastor Matt reported at the December Church Council meeting that 48% of the pledge cards had been returned with our goal being 60%. It was decided at the Council meeting to add a reminder with the Take 5 report to return pledge cards. This would be included with the announcements at each service.

Pastor Matt also told us about an online Stewardship conference that he felt would be very educational. He asked if anyone would be interested in attending. He said he could attend and get recordings of the conference. Diane suggested we each watch them, and then get together to discuss what we learned to prepare for next year.

Respectfully submitted,
Carolyn Milauskas
Committee Chair

Safety and Security

In 2024, the ministry team completed updates to the Emergency Response Plan, which had been developed several years ago before COVID. Much of this plan was out of date and did not reflect how we are currently using our campus. The plan was adopted by the Council and we have spent the past year finding and addressing those areas our ERP calls us to do.

Part of our mission as a committee includes education and preparation for emergencies. In this coming year, we plan to hold training sessions around first aid and emergency response. We will continue to hold additional training sessions around the different safety and security needs of Zion for our leaders and staff.

Our other plans for 2024 include writing additional grants to improve our safety and security practices. One grant that we are exploring is to cover the cost of replacing our aging, exterior doors. We hope to investigate these grants to help defray the cost of additional improvements. There are a number of other grants out there that would make implementing safety and security procedures doable here at Zion, but we currently lack having someone who is gifted in searching and writing these grants. If this is a skill you have, we would love to have you on our team.

While the safety and security of our campus remains a high priority, we are also intent on making sure people feel welcome at Zion. As we continue in this work, we will endeavor to create policies and procedures that are not intrusive or prohibit people from worshipping at Zion.

Welcome and Engagement

The Welcome and Engagement team is committed to making sure everyone who enters Zion feels welcome as well as supported whether its first time visitors or lifelong members. We look for ways to do outreach into our community, make sure our building is a welcoming place and engage members in staying active.

In 2024 we worked together on many fun events. We enjoy preparing and serving a meal during lent and advent. Our committee hosted the Community Easter Egg hunt and had over 70 in attendance. We helped with Vacation Bible School and Heritage Days. We spread Christmas Cheer to our neighbors with the annual caroling event where we took a wagon pulled by a tractor through Middletown Neighborhoods caroling.

In order to help the building to feel more welcoming we completed a Nursery makeover. The space was cleaned, painted and got new furniture. All of the toys were sorted, and extras were donated to charity. We are hanging a TV which will allow for livestream from the sanctuary so the service can be watched while using the room. We also updated the signage outside the church. Now there are matching signs that all clearly tell visitors how to enter our building. A new welcome bifold was designed by Maryann Marcantonio to be handed out to new visitors. These will be handed out personally by members to anyone new each Sunday. We have so much fun serving God through this team. If anyone would like to join us, please reach out to Chair Jamie Derr at 301-305-9796. God Bless!

Youth and Family Ministry

This past year has been a time of learning and developing the Youth and Family Ministry. Since the pandemic, we have been trying to find ways to help the youth of our congregation and our families deepen their faith. Many of the programs we started before the pandemic no longer are feasible for multiple reasons which requires us to adapt and pivot. Looking back over the past few months, we would like to reflect on some of the most memorable and positive moments.

Midweek Lent

This past Lent, we contracted with Diana Edelblute to lead our program with the children. Diana works full-time at Mar-Lu-Ridge and she brought a wealth of knowledge and skill to the program. The kids learned about the importance of the catechism right along with the adults.

DayOff Program

This past year, we had four DayOff Programs (we only budgeted for 3 but the school calendar worked out that we could have four so we took it. This past year, we have spent time at Urban Air, Christ Lutheran and the Baltimore Zoo, Gettysburg to tour the battlefield, and finally to Hagerstown to explore Crystal Grotto Caverns and duck pin bowling. We are able to offer these

DayOff programs free because of generous support from people like you and we are grateful for your support.

VBS

We learned a lot by doing VBS the year before and we put that knowledge to work to make this past year the best year we could make it. We went into VBS last year with no written notes from previous years and a lot going on both personally and professionally (James had been in the hospital twice and we had two people in the congregation die around VBS time). Much of what happened in 2023 was learned by trial and error. The valuable lessons we learned 2023 along with the notes we kept helped us plan much better for this year. This year, we held a training session for all volunteers to make sure everyone was on the same page and knew the expectations we had for the week. We also set up a mentor program for Middle and High School kids. What I found to be the most successful was involving others in VBS that typically did not get involved. It was really a win-win because our church members are really a major blessing., We had a final total of around 60 kids participate and over 20 volunteers. No child went away hungry each night and we shared the good news of God's love with the up and coming generation of kids. It was a lot of work but I am proud of what we did.

Youth Group

Our Youth Group continues to meet once a month on the first Sunday of the month after Confirmation Class. We try to do a mixture of trips and staying in. The Christian Formation Ministry Team has formed a subgroup to develop some new ways to reach middle and high school members of Zion and beyond. In this ever changing world, we are having to adopt and pivot quickly to meet our kids where they are at. We will continue to work on building relationships and fostering good faith practices for our middle and high school students.

Summer Camp

We sent an astounding 15 kids to Mar-Lu-Ridge this summer. Because of the generous support of many donors over the years, we are able to offer a \$200 scholarship to anyone from our congregation to attend summer camp. Last year, we sent six kids and we thought that was a large group. We give thanks to God for the experience all six kids had this summer.

Midweek Advent

We learned some things from our Midweek Lenten program and found that many of our kids are overstimulated on Wednesdays nights and need a place to come and decompress. Pastor Diane provided a space where they ran off some energy and did some yoga and then finished out the night by watching a movie and enjoying a snack.

Advent Craft and Game night

Our goal for this event is to offer a space for everyone, not just our youth and families to come and take a break from the busyness of December. We brought out a bunch of board games, a

Nintendo Switch, and some simple Advent crafts. Pastor Diane made tacos and we all just gathered in the Social Room for a fun, relaxing night of Christian fellowship.

Christmas Pageant

Understandably, there was some concern on whether it would be possible without a ton of practices to actually have a pageant. However, the Christmas Pageant came to fruition beautifully and met its goals of adding even a few more members to the company beautifully that morning at worship. This may be what we continue to do each year but with a different script.

Searching for a Youth Director

As we reflect on this next year, one goal we have is to find someone who has the skill set for Youth Ministry and bring them onto the staff. Someone with the skill set to meet our kids needs would really make our youth ministry grow and shine. After 2 years of searching, we have not had much luck but the Holy Spirit is not done with us yet. So we will continue to pray and search.

Thank you

Finally, we wish to say thank you to all the chaperones and volunteers who have stepped up over the past 12 months to help with our Youth and Family Ministry program. We are grateful for your support and especially of your time.

MIDDLETOWN VALLEY FOOD BANK

The Middletown Valley Food Bank continues our mission to serve our neighbors in need. A strong community of dedicated volunteers is committed to assisting those who come to us for support in feeding themselves and their families. We receive many resources from the greater Middletown community. We are very grateful for the multitude of connections that help us to provide a substantial amount of food to those who are seeking assistance.

Community Connections:

- Several churches and organizations donate food and monetary resources on a regular basis
- Monetary and food donations from local families
- Knights of Columbus sponsor, monitor, and deliver food from donation bin at Safeway
- John Coffey supplies MVFB with Pepperidge Farms bread products monthly
- Wegman's donates a large variety of fresh commodities on a weekly basis
- 5 local couples pick up and deliver Wegman's donations to the food bank
- MVPHP works with MVFB to provide emergency assistance, holiday assistance to our clients and other community members in need

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- Safeway provides gift cards from November – March
- Boy Scouts annual community food drive
- Girl Scouts annual pumpkin pie donation
- Monthly donations from “I Support the Girls” feminine hygiene products
- Frederick Food Council – “apples galore” initiative
- St. Thomas More Academy annual food drive
- “Blessings in a Basket” collaboration between Joanna Brown Realty, Main Cup, and MVFB
- MHS and MMS students serve as assistants with the “Blessing Baskets”
- Middletown High School LEO Club makes blankets for MVFB to give to clients
- Laura and Glen “Golf Ball Round Up” and sales benefits MVFB
- \$9000 grant funding from “Friends for Neighborhood Progress” purchased 2 commercial refrigerators, a commercial freezer, and \$3000 in groceries
- United Methodist Church Ministry provided 50-pound bags of potatoes
- Empty Bowls Banquet presented MVFB with \$2875

Throughout this past year the MVFB leadership team, Middletown town officials, and Conestoga Builders have met regularly in hopes of fulfilling the goal of completing the food bank building project. We are currently in the preliminary planning and design stage. The completion of the building will result in major improvements in our ability to store, organize, and distribute food for the community members in need.

AVERAGE NUMBER OF CLIENTS SERVED PER MONTH	
2022	48 families per month receiving food for 133 family members
2023	72 families per month receiving food for 206 family members
2024	75 families per month receiving food for 211 family members

Communication and Technology Ministry Team Report 2024

As stated in the continuing Resolution, the mission and vision of the Communication and Technology Ministry team is the following:

There shall be a Communication and Tech Ministry team. Their function includes developing better communication strategies, maintaining our computer and network infrastructure, and ensuring the that our means for communication (Live stream, print, website) are updated and properly maintained.

This past fall, we began meeting to discuss our communication strategies, evaluate each of those means, and then figure out where we are lacking. After completing our audit, we were delighted to really see that we are doing exceptionally well when it comes to the database, the Beacon, the bulletin, and the weekly announcement insert. Where we need to improve is really in our social media presence, mass email (like Constant Contact) and the structure of our website.

The way we use social media today is very different. With all the new algorithms, our voice and the information/message we are trying to share is sometimes lost amid the sea of all the other voices. However, there are tools built into things like Facebook and Instagram to help us in this work. Part of our work these past few months was trying to develop some strategies to use these tools more, and to also be aware of what we are posting and when we are posting it. One strategy we are looking to use is a social media calendar to schedule our messaging. Another strategy is using the stories feature.

We are also exploring a better mass email service to share about upcoming events and ministry opportunities. Right now, we are using Constant Contact but have not been happy with their inability to link to our website. There are many different options when it comes to mass email and we are currently trying to figure out what is the best option for Zion.

The team is also evaluating the site map of our current website. We are trying to make sure that our website is understandable by non-church people. The target audience for our website are newcomers and non-members so making sure we avoid “insider language” is key to making sure our website is usable for those who use it.

Our team has been blessed by a number of talented individuals. We have graphic designers, video editors, and social media experts that have given their time to evaluate and help us improve our communication here at Zion. We have a lot more work to do but we hope this year to really implement a number of changes and begin focusing on the second part of our name: Technology.

Quilters

The Zion Quilters group has been busy with all kinds of projects at the church. Pillowcases were made and distributed to the local hospitals. Quilt tops were quilted for individuals providing us with the pieced tops.

In September, the Quilters hosted a successful quilt show with two days of showings at the church. Quilts both modern and antique were hung throughout the church. Quilters showcased double wedding ring quilts and bridal gowns from church members.

The Quilters sponsored soctoberfest in Oct which saw us donate over 650 pairs of socks to the Rescue Mission. The Quilters served several funeral and church luncheons during the year. We donated to the building fund and Rescue Mission and other monies were happily given to the church. Total monies distributed were \$10,000.

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Quilters meet every Tuesday through Thursday in the social room at 8:00am – 1:30 pm with a potluck lunch enjoyed by all. We make and work on sewing projects on Tuesday and hand quilt on Wednesday and Thursday. If interested, contact the Church office. Respectfully submitted:
Zion Quilters: Alexa Masser, Dianne Shafer, Jeanne Mauro, Liz Kurtz, Kathy Shankle, Elsie Warnock, Denise O’Rear, Sharon Thomas, Judy Zeck, Linda Sanders, Sherry Miller.

Committees of the Congregation

Personnel Committee

The Personnel Committee's activities this year centered around action on several ongoing housekeeping tasks to include completing the annual review of the Personnel Manual, coordinating annual evaluations of church staff, determining proposals for salaries for 2025 reviewing the pastor's proposed office staffing for fiscal year 2025, review of the Treasurer's new job description for (Office Business Manager), review the new staff position (Children's Choir Director).

Bruce McIntosh
Chair, Personnel Committee

Property Committee

This is a summary of the activities of this committee for the year and covers notable events of a non-routine (Budgeted) manner.

Repairs and Maintenance

January

- Property Committee (PC) voted to approve and forward to Council proposal from Steeples Plus to perform repairs to steeple bracing. Repairs were completed in March and April 2024.
- PC members decided to take a tour of the church to look at needed repair and maintenance items. The tour occurred on Monday, January 29, 2024.
- Deb presented a spreadsheet of Monthly Maintenance Items for use by the PC going forward to track items reported, status and date completed.
- Indoor storage of van was discussed, no location was identified. It was decided to investigate the cost of waxing the van. Ultimately, PC selected Maryland Auto Detailing who performed the procedure using a ceramic coating which they did in our parking lot
- Clothes Closet porch needs a second coat of paint, this was completed in July.
- Matthew Adams, the snow removal contractor, contacted Dixie with a question regarding salting and snow removal protocols. After discussion, the PC approved having Dixie Eichelberger (Dixie) be the official contact for Matthew as she has the most experience in this area.

February

- Bruce McIntosh presented the latest PC SOP to the committee for review.
- As a follow up from PC tour of church, PC discussed the need for a total documentation of treasures and spaces within church. Looking into photographic or video documentation options.
- Automatic water faucets discussed due to faucets being left on, no action due to cost.
- Motion sensors for lights were discussed due to lights being left on, no action at this time.

- Fire alarm pull station on Sanctuary level that is blocked by open door when services are held was discussed, motion was made to get a quote to move it around the corner. Ultimately no action was taken, this relocation will be done when the new alarm system is installed in 2025.
- The water heater was replaced in the lower-level front men's bathroom.
- Pressure reducing valve was installed on main water line at service entrance, the water pressure in our system was too high and brought the risk of leaks.
- Several burned-out ballasts on ceiling light fixtures were replaced in February.
- Eddie Main (Eddie) and Dixie worked with Ascend Elevator Inspections & Oracle Elevator for the annual elevator inspection on February 5, 2024.
- The emergency shut off switch for the boiler is located behind a locked door to the boiler room, making it inaccessible in an emergency. Alan Coblenz added a switch outside the boiler room door, placing it higher on the wall so children would not be tempted to turn it off.
- Larry Schaffert agreed to serve as Property Committee chairman for the coming year, starting in March 2024.

March

- Congregational procedure for reporting needed property repairs or maintenance discussed. An email for the property committee was established for this purpose, property@zionmiddletown.org. Deb put a notice in the church bulletin to let the congregation know about this new procedure and email.
- Double doors at Garden's Edge entrance need weatherstripping to stop water leaks which have damage the flooring inside, weatherstripping was installed at the bottoms of the doors.
- PC discussed lighting upgrades, ongoing issues with light bulbs out, bad ballasts, lights left on after hours. Ultimately, Zion contracted with a company to have all our light fixtures (excepting fixtures with screw in bulbs) replaced with LED light fixtures with most having motion sensors. The cost was mostly covered by grants. This was completed in December 2024.
- The property committee budget was discussed, PC will need to submit to Finance Committee by September. Ultimately, Larry worked with Pastor Matt to reorganize budget to reflect annual recurring expenses (service contracts, inspections, etc.) that were being paid out of the Building Fund and put them into the PC Annual Budget, which is where they belong. The money in the building fund will be limited to unexpected expenses (Fire Alarm system replacement, boiler and heating system repairs) that are not budgeted.
- To prepare for the upcoming Fire Marshall inspection, Eddie and Larry did a pre-inspection of emergency lights, several defective lights were identified which Eddie replaced. The inspection was done on May 31, 2024, we passed with the understanding that we could no longer store chairs in the hallway outside the Archive room. Chairs and rack were moved into the Archive room.
- Church Mutual, our insurance company, provided us with information regarding how to document our property. PC decided to ask Bruce Albright about making photographic

documentation of the building and contents, this was done and in August 2024 Bruce provided a flash drive with photos to the PC. This is a good start; the actual inventory of contents has started but needs further action by congregation. We have inventories from the Music department, but pretty much all other areas are incomplete.

- The Simplex Fire Alarm system was discussed, we are having false alarms and failing sensors. The system is obsolete, it is over 30 years old and parts are no longer available. We failed our annual alarm system test on August 27 and obtained several quotes for a new system. The PC moved to recommend to the Council that we contract with Somerset Fire Alarm and Security to install a new system; they will begin installation of the new system in January 2025.
- There is an ongoing leak in a heating system condensate line, the line goes under the concrete at the top of the boiler room stairs. We will investigate this further after the heating system is over. In September 2024, Zion contracted with Warner to cap the steam lines to the zone in the kitchen area. Once this was done, the leak at the stairs stopped.

April

- We are getting frequent false alarms on the fire alarm system, mainly bad sensors.
- May 19 will be a Church Workday to do some spring cleaning and get ready for the carpet cleaning and floor waxing. Kathy Staseiwicz is taking the lead in this, she will also dust and *Pledge* the sanctuary pews.

May

- There was a problem with one of the Town clock faces, the town will inspect it on May 17.
- Eddie purchased and donated 3 Simplex fire alarm sensors to replace failing units.
- The boiler room metal sidewalk access doors are not locked or secured from entry. Eddie added a bolt on the underside to prevent unauthorized access from the outside.
- A shelf has been purchased for the Quilters; it will be assembled in the Vault room for storage use by the Quilters.
- Warner noted that the edging on the Garden's Edge at the sidewalk access doors presents a trip hazard. The bricks right at the door were removed.
- Larry met with John Minchoff to review and discuss earlier Potomac Edison proposals to replace lighting with LEDs, as noted earlier this has been resolved.
- Status of the Safety and Security committee was discussed, there is overlap of the duties of this committee and the PC, no action on this item.
- Larry and John Minchoff met to do a review of some items of concern from an earlier email from John. The exterior windowsills and headers on the older addition section of the church are cracking and splitting in a number of areas, and will only get worse if not addressed.
- John also noted the poor condition of the social room ceiling fans and offered to purchase and replace the fans. The PC requested that he use ceiling hugger style fans and approved his offer. The fans have been replaced.

June

- Estimates for carpet cleaning and social room floor waxing were reviewed. Stanley Steamer was approved for both projects. The work was done in July 2024.
- The service tag on the Elevator was updated and an exit sign was replaced by Eddie.
- Sanctuary AC was out, Warner performed repair and identified a problem with original wiring of units. Work to correct mis-wiring was done at no cost to Zion.

July

- Items from May 17 cleanup and extra chairs for sale were moved to Sunday School classroom for sale to benefit church.
- Base molding replaced where falling off at base of damp walls in Archive room.
- Floors vacuumed and tape removed from carpet in preparation for floor cleaning.
- Tables and chairs removed by Congregation for social room floor waxing, replaced after floor waxing completed.
- Several lights are out in the Sanctuary high ceiling, had Alan Coblentz checked out and he ordered new bulbs. He installed in August when they came in.
- Dehumidifier in Clothes Closet basement not working. Larry took an unused dehumidifier from the church mechanical room and installed it in place of the old unit.

August

- Purchase and set up new chair rack for chairs moved to Archive room.
- Replace some more ballasts.
- AC unit in Library is dead, Larry to get pricing for replacing system.
- Pastor Matt set up a login for Larry for the security system so we have a second person who can log into the system.

September

- Replaced ballasts on two lights in Vault outer room.
- Replaced the photocell in the lower and upper parking lot lights.
- Boiler was started for season on September 16 and a leaking pipe was discovered. Since the pipe had asbestos on it, PC got several prices and contracted with Colt Insulation to remove insulation. Warner will return after removal is completed.
- While pricing a new AC/Heat Pump for library, we determined that units serving vault are over 20 years old. While checking unit in vault, we noticed that the ambient moisture level was 70%. Fortunately, hot weather broke shortly thereafter and between the dehumidifier and AC the moisture levels dropped to below 50%. However, these heat pumps are due for replacement.
- There is a serious moisture problem in the vault and along the back wall in the social room and Garden's Edge areas. See PC meeting minutes for September for details.
- Caulking needs to be redone around the perimeter of the church building where the walls meet the sidewalk. Larry obtained pricing, but this was put on hold for now due to other issues.

October

- Fire extinguisher inspections completed.
- Elevator lights out, transformer board blown and needs to be replaced.
- PC voted to renew Matthew Adams snow removal contract, same price as last year.

- Kitchen door is sticking, appears to be moisture related.
- Mark Fulbright with kW EFFICIENCY contacted us to discuss replacing our florescent lighting with LED through a Potomac Edison grant which would cover most of the cost.
- Warner repaired the leaking steam pipe and started boiler.

November

- The main water inspection by the Town of Middletown on November 4 found a steam leak under the Narthex in the crawl space. The boiler was shut down. There was no asbestos insulation on any pipes. Warner came out on November 4 and repaired pipes. When they started the boiler again, two more leaks were discovered in crawl space in pipes that were insulated with Asbestos. Boiler shut down again.
- I met with Matt Weddle on November 5 to discuss long-term solutions to the constant problems we are having. The short-term goal is to get the leaks repaired and the system running again. The long-term goal will be a solution to correct the problem with the constant leaks.
- Daryl with Colt Insulation met Larry to measure the asbestos covered piping to give us a price to remove the asbestos from the piping in the crawl space. Their proposal dated November 22, 2024, was approved by the Council. Work was scheduled to start on December 2, 2024, and was completed by December 6.

December

- After asbestos removal was complete Warner came out on December 10, 2024, to repair the two leaks in the crawl space. When they tried to start up the system, the boiler would not stay running. They determined that the autofill valve had gone bad.
- On December 16, 2024, Warner replaced the autofill valve. As luck would have it, the part was bad, and it was the end of the day.
- When Warner returned on December 18, replaced the valve and started the boiler, another leak appeared on a pipe with asbestos insulation. We left the boiler off.
- Colt Insulation was able to come out later that day and gave us a quote to remove more asbestos tomorrow, December 19. Their quote was approved, and they came out and removed the asbestos in the area around the leaking pipe. They gave us a discount off their quoted price as they had originally thought it might take time on a second day, but they got it done in one day.
- Due to the configuration of the leaking fitting, Warner was unable to obtain parts to do a repair, so they capped the steam line and left the two branch lines that the steam line fed open. The boiler fired up, and started heating the sanctuary, however once it got hot condensate water started leaking out of the two open pipes. After several trips to obtain parts, both lines are capped, and the boiler runs. However, it is running out of water and the low water sensor is shutting the boiler off.
- There is an undetermined fault causing the condensate water to not return to the boiler. I suspect there is a blockage in the condensate return line. The boiler will not stay running without someone monitoring it and resetting the autofill valve. Condensate water is either building up somewhere in the system or leaking out in a location where the lines run underground or under concrete.
- Warner is scheduled to be there on December 31, 2024, to further diagnose the system.

- I have a call in to Warner to talk to Matt Weddle about the situation. He is on vacation, and I expect to hear from him on January 2, 2025.

Larry Schaffert
Property Committee Chairman

Finance Committee

Members: Ken Basler (Chairman), Bob Hettrick, Deborah Reichelt, Rev. Matt and Diane Day, Chris Derr, David Gordon, Shelly Gladhill, Linda Kinna Engel, Brian Lizzi, Jack Newkirk, Kim Marcantonio

The committee address six issues in 2024. Three of the issues are standing responsibilities the committee addresses on an annual and as need basis. The first issue is managing investments of various funds determining what will yield best rates of return. The second issue is preparing for recommendation the annual budget for presentation to the Church Council for their approval. Our third major responsibility is for the committee to conduct an audit of the financial records of the church for the preceding year.

This year the committee also made three other recommendations to Church Council. Every 5 years according to the church constitution there is to be a financial audit by an outside accounting firm. This review was conducted by Hildebrand, Limparis and Associates, CPA during the summer months and as recommended by the finance committee was a review not a full audit. This recommendation was based on the fact the church's finances are recorded on a cash basis not an accrual basis.

The committee also reviewed two estimates for insurance coverage covering everything from property to liability. The committee recommended continuing with the current firm because of the value they were willing to cover the property for.

The third recommendation was concerning a recommendation made by the accounting firm during the review. There is approximately \$96,000 in restricted funds (money designated for specific projects or purposes) which can't be spent due to the project being complete or not coming to fruition. The recommendation is to try to disburse these funds back to the donors or their heirs and create a form for future use to designate what the church may do with these types of funds if a project is completed with funding leftover or not being started.
Respectfully submitted,

Kenneth Basler

Mutual Ministry

Members of team: Pastor Matt Day, Pastor Diane Day, Jonathan Minchof (Chair), Branan (Bre) Bybel (Secretary), Linda Kinna-Engel (Chaplain), Vince Bello, Terry Poffinberger, Stacy Black

Mutual Ministry is a **call to a wider vision of the church** as the interconnected Body of Christ. All the baptized are linked together as God's people **in a shared purpose and a common adventure in the service of Jesus Christ** in the world.

The marks of mutual ministry:

- mutual communication
- mutual growth
- mutual accountability
- mutual affirmation
- mutual vision

Over the last year (2023-2024) the Mutual Ministry team followed the Mutual Ministry Handbook to support our discerning and decision making.

At the close of 2023 the mutual ministry team determined a consolidated annual review of pastors would benefit both pastors and the committee members and we created the Pastor's Evaluation Form Continual Service Improvement (CSI).

In April, the team met, with the combined CSI in mind, and evaluated the pastoral job description. After review, edits and acceptance, the revised job description was applied to create the new questions for CSI. During the April meeting it was also decided to cast a wide review and response range from the congregation when completing the evaluation forms.

In June and July, the committee met to review the final CSI template and assign portions of the CSI to conduct outreach amongst the congregation. The consolidation of the congregational response, the mutual ministry members and the pastors was then used to formulate the final CSI output delivered to the pastors for their signature and then to Council.

In September, the focus of the meeting was goal setting and a review of recent improvements: Stewardship kaleidoscope, pledge cards, and videos for "We are..." for stewardship, providing announcement at the close of the 9am service, and the reduction of paper waste by eliminating bulletins.

In November, the committee met and began their time with shared "Friendsgiving". We then discussed plans for 2025, including pew leave behinds with a prayer, like The Lord's Prayer, or a one pager on Best Ways for Kids to Participate (example included), pew tablets, or verse of the month. We closed the November meeting with a review of what's to come in 2025:

- Review Annual Congregational Meeting and Retreat
- Begin planning Membership for Mutual Ministry in 2025

Example of Pew Pamphlet:



Nominating Committee for Council

Committee – Linda Kinna-Engel, Doug Davis, Donna Huffer, Bob Hetrick & Pastor Matt.

We met on September 16th and October 24th. All other communications were by email or text.

The committee was formed to find 4 people to serve on council for 2025. We had 15 names and from those we came up with 2 people willing to serve. We then came up with more names and were able to find our last two people. We are grateful for the members that have agreed to serve.

Rosella Wilson
Nominating Chairman

Appendix

Agenda for the Annual Congregational Meeting

February 2, 2025

CALL TO ORDER AND ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

PRAYER

DETERMINATION OF THE AGENDA

READING AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES [of the 2024 Annual Congregational Meeting Minutes]

CONSENT AGENDA

- STAFF AND LEADERSHIP REPORTS
- FINANCIAL REPORTS
- MINISTRY REPORTS
- STANDING COMMITTEE REPORTS

RECOGNITION OF RETIRING COUNCIL MEMBERS

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

- Ratify the updated Constitution

Resolution: Resolved, That the constitutional amendments proposed by the Church Council and approved at a Special meeting of the Zion Church Congregation on Sunday, November 10th, 2024, at 10:00 AM. be ratified without change. The amendments shall go into effect upon notification that the synod has approved them.

NEW BUSINESS

- Adoption of Proposed 2025 Budget
- Council Elections

(see page _ for a short biography of each nominee)

OPEN FORUM

JOYS AND CONCERNS OF THE CONGREGATION

ADJOURNMENT WITH THE LORD'S PRAYER

BENEDICTION

Zion Lutheran Church Congregational Meeting Minutes

Annual Zion Lutheran Church Congregational Meeting

The annual meeting the church congregation of Zion Lutheran Church was held January 28, 2024 at 11:00 in the sanctuary of the church, the President being in the chair and the Secretary being present. A determination of Quorum was met as 5% of the congregation was present.

Prayer was led by Pastor Diane

2024-1-1 **Motion was made to Adopt the 2023 Annual Congregational Meeting Minutes.** The motion was seconded, and a voice vote was taken, and the vote was unanimous.

A list of 2023 Accomplishments were listed.

- 10% attendance has increased. Worship
- Youth Group continues to meet regularly.
- Completed a refurb of the van.
- Completed the refurb Mom Garden.
- Utilized the Poffinberger Estate to make a number of capitals improvements.
- Vacation Bible Scheel participation increased 80% from 2022.
- Volunteers in Church office.
- Return of apple butter making.
- We have seen a increase in pledging both in amount and percentage from 2022.
- We upgraded our cameras and updated livestreaming technology to continue to connect and reach out to more people.
- We have documented a lot of important information for emergencies and posterity.

Staff Reports: There were no questions

Recognizing Retiring Chairpersons:

- Jim Hoover – property: Need new Chairperson.

Recognition of Retiring Council Members

- Shelly Gladhill
- Meghan Gunsallus
- Alexa Masser
- Leslie Santora

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Financial Reports

Deb Reichelt treasurer provided a recap of the finances for 2023.

New Business:

Adoption of Proposed 2024 Budget

- There were discussions and questions about the new proposed budget.

2024-1-2 **Motion was made to adopt the proposed 2024 budget.** The motion was seconded, and a voice vote was taken. There were a few nays the Aye's won the vote.

Council Elections

Nominees for 3-year term:

- Clinton Appleby
- Darin Gordon
- Sheri Huckleberry

Nominee to serve 1-year of a 3-year term:

- Donna Huffer

Appointment to 2-year term

- Cindy Unangst

Floor was opened for nominations from the floor. No nominations from the floor. There were no objections to the nominations presented, Nominees were approved.

Middletown Valley Food Bank Lease and Building Request Proposal was presented.

2024-1-3 A motion was made for council to give permission to the Middletown Valley Food Bank to give a presentation about the food bank facility to be built on the 101 Green St. property at the next congregation meeting and to make presentations at the town hall meetings prior to the congregation meeting regarding the food bank facility. A motion was made to amend motion to request the Middletown Valley food bank make a presentation at the Town Hall Meetings and Annual Meeting to educate the congregation on the mission of the Food Bank and then have the congregation vote at the annual Meeting to allow the Middletown Valley Food Bank to build a facility on the 101 Green St property in the form of a lease.

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Floor was opened for questions: After much debate.

2024-1-4 The motion was amended to Vote on the intent to support the food bank but would like to see the terms of the lease. To come back when we have an Actual legal document. For approval by the congregation. Voice vote was taken, and the aye won.

The meeting was Adjourned with the Lord's Prayer.

Minutes
Special Congregational Meeting Minutes

A Special meeting of the Zion Church Congregation was held on Sunday, June 23rd, 2024, at 10:00 AM in Zion's Sanctuary the President being in the chair and the Secretary being present. A quorum was met with 68 voting members present at the meeting.

Agenda items were displayed on a screen above the altar. A motion was made and seconded to adopt the agenda. There being no discussion, the chair called for the vote. The motion was adopted.

Prayer: Mrs. Linda Kinna-Engel

This special congregational meeting was convened only to consider one item of business, i.e. a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA), and to vote to accept the agreement as written. A report from Zion's legal counsel (Mr. Bob Rockwell) was present explaining the reason the legal document was presented as an MOA rather than a lease.

The President summarized the procedures incident to debate explaining that every member of Zion has a right to speak to the motion before it is finally acted upon and subject only to general limitations on debate established by parliamentary law or the rules of the congregation. The rules were adopted without objection.

The only item of business considered during the meeting was the motion by the Church Council to accept the Memorandum of Agreement proposed by the Town of Middletown and Zion's Church Council. The president opened the floor for debate. Following debate, the president called for a voice vote after first offering the members the option of a ballot vote. There was no motion for a ballot vote. The adoption of the MOA was accepted with unanimous approval.

VOTED:

SCM2024-6 -1 To accept the Memorandum of Agreement proposed by the Town of Middletown and Zion's Church Council (enclosed)

The June 2024 Special Congregational meeting adjourned at 10:30 AM on June 23rd, 2024.

Bruce Mcintosh

Minutes
Special Congregational Meeting Minutes

A Special meeting of the Zion Church Congregation was held on Sunday, November 10th, 2024, at 10:00 AM in Zion's Sanctuary the President being in the chair and the Secretary being present. A quorum was met with 56 voting members present at the meeting.

The agenda item was displayed on a screen above the altar. A motion was made and seconded to adopt the agenda. There being no discussion, the chair called for the vote. The motion was adopted.

Prayer: Pastor Diane

This special congregational meeting was convened only to consider one item of business, i.e. amendment of Zion's constitution and bylaws, and to vote to accept the amended documents as written. A report from the chair of the Constitution Committee (Mr. Bryon Black) was present explaining the actions of the committee.

The President summarized the procedures incident to debate explaining that every member of Zion has a right to speak to the motion before it is finally acted upon and subject only to general limitations on debate established by parliamentary law or the rules of the congregation. The rules were adopted without objection.

The only item of business considered during the meeting was the motion by the Church Council to accept the amended constitution proposed by the Constitution Committee and endorsed by Zion's Church Council. The president opened the floor for debate. Following debate, the president called for a voice vote. The adoption of the amended constitution was accepted.

VOTED:

SCM2024-6 -2 To accept the amended constitution proposed by the Constitution Committee and endorsed by Zion's Church Council (enclosed)

Following the vote on the amendment of Zion's constitution, Mrs. Judy Turley asked to speak regarding a concern she has with paragraph C15.11 of Zion's constitution unrelated to the above amendment. Although there was no motion pending the President, Mrs. Linda Kenna-Engel granted Mrs. Turley the normal 3 minutes to speak. The time limit was then extended by the unanimous consent of the assembly.

The November 2024 Special Congregational meeting adjourned at 10:30 AM on November 10th, 2024.

Bruce Mcintosh, Secretary

2024 Annual Report for Zion Lutheran Church

Evangelical Lutheran Church Zion					
Current Ministry					
2025 Proposed Budget					
(Will be voted on at the annual congregational Meeting)					
	Budget 2024	Budget 2025	24 to 25 Variance	24 to 25 Var %	
STAFF SALARIES					
Pastor	86,746	90,216	3,470	3.8%	
Pastor	86,746	90,216	3,470	3.8%	
Pastoral Salary Resource Pool	3,000	4,000	1,000	25.0%	
Church Administrator	-	-	0	N/A	
Youth Co-Director	32,000	32,000	0	0.0%	
Financial Treasurer	31,827	37,564	5,737	15.3%	
Asst Administrator	-	-	0	N/A	
Total Staff Salaries	240,319	253,996	13,677	5.4%	
STAFF BENEFITS					
Pastor's Pension and Benefits	28,037	29,102	1,065.00	3.7%	
Pastoral Continuing Education	1,500	1,500	0.00	0.0%	
Co Pastor's Pension & Benefits	28,415	29,498	1,083.00	3.7%	
Administrator & Youth & Family Director Pension & Benefits	-	-	0.00	N/A	
Financial Treasurer Pension & Benefits	3,501	3,944	443.00	11.2%	
CYF Director Continuing Education	1,000	500	(500.00)	-100.0%	
Sabbatical Contingency	1,000	1,000	0.00	0.0%	
Staff Transportation	5,000	4,000	(1,000.00)	-25.0%	
Reserve for Contingency	500	300	(200.00)	-66.7%	
Total Staff Benefits	68,953	69,844	891.00	1.3%	
SUPPORT STAFF SALARIES					
Director of Music/Organist	17,035	17,376	341.00	2.0%	
Contemporary Worship Leader	15,597	15,909	312.00	2.0%	
Financial Secretary	4,725	4,820	95.00	2.0%	
Jr Choir Director		1,530		N/A	
Music Support	3,500	6,500	3,000.00	46.2%	
Total Support Staff Salaries	40,857	46,135	5,278.00	11.4%	
Employer's Share-FICA	22,601	22,205	(396.00)	-9.5%	
Total Personnel Expenses	372,730	392,180	19,450.00	5.0%	
CONGREGATIONAL MINISTRY					
Christian Education	2,285	2,295	10.00	0.4%	
Congregational Life	5,200	6,000	800.00	13.3%	
Caring Ministries	500	550	50.00	9.1%	
Outreach	11,200	10,100	(1,100.00)	-10.9%	
Worship and Music	2,150	2,150	0.00	0.0%	
Children, Youth and Family	14,250	14,250	0.00	0.0%	
Total Congregational Ministry	35,585	35,345	(240.00)	-0.7%	

2024 Annual Report for Zion Lutheran Church

Evangelical Lutheran Church Zion				
Current Ministry				
2025 Proposed Budget				
	Budget 2024	Budget 2025	24 to 25 Variance	24 to 25 Var %
OPERATING EXPENSES				
Office Supplies	3,500	3,200	(300.00)	-9.4%
Telephone	5,000	4,400	(600.00)	-13.6%
Church Supplies	3,650	3,870	220.00	5.7%
Postage	1,080	1,200	120.00	10.0%
Paper Products (cleaning)	850	750	(100.00)	-13.3%
Electricity	28,000	31,800	3,800.00	11.9%
Fuel	10,500	7,500	(3,000.00)	-40.0%
Water and Sewer	2,500	2,900	400.00	13.8%
Equipment Maintenance Contracts/ & Repairs	12,500	15,058	2,558.00	17.0%
Insurance	18,800	20,850	2,050.00	9.8%
Synod Convention	2,000	2,000	0.00	0.0%
Cleaning Services	9,260	9,650	390.00	4.0%
Technology Operations	7,775	9,350	1,575.00	16.8%
Payroll Processing	2,250	1,400	(850.00)	-60.7%
Piano and Organ Maintenance	7,502	6,450	(1,052.00)	-16.3%
Van Misc. Expenses	1,500	1,500	0.00	0.0%
Property	16,510	36,620	20,110.00	54.9%
Stewardship	260	260	0.00	0.0%
Archive	897	622	(275.00)	-44.2%
Leadership Development	500	500	0.00	0.0%
First Response	750	815	65.00	8.0%
Background Checks	300	300	0.00	0.0%
Staff Development	600	600	0.00	0.0%
Total Operating Expense	136,484	161,595	25,111.00	15.5%
Total Personnel, Congreg Ministry & Operating	544,799	589,120	44,321.00	7.5%
BENEVOLENCE				
Synod Benevolence (DE/MD ELCA)	30,300	30,300	0.00	0.0%
Benevolence - Mar-Lu-Ridge	12,000	12,000	0.00	0.0%
Benevolence - Lutheran World Relief	2,250	2,250	0.00	0.0%
Benevolence - St. Dymas Prison Ministries	450	450	0.00	0.0%
Total ELCA/Synod Benevolence	45,000	45,000	0.00	0.0%
Local Benevolence*	10,000	10,000	0.00	0.0%
Total Benevolence	55,000	55,000	0.00	0.0%
Total Current Ministry Proposed Budget	599,799	644,120	44,321.00	6.9%
* Local Benevolence: Distributed to entities as decided by council.				
Agencies that have received funds include, but are not limited to: Hearthly House, SHIP M/FD, Religious Coalition and Frederick Rescue Mission.				

Council Nominees' Bios

Lori Odell



- Jacksonville, FL born and raised
- 4 Children - Ansley 35, Kylee, 32, Slayden 21, Jacson 12
- 4 Grandchildren
- Married to Jason Odell for 21 years
- Hobbies: Gardening, cleaning, decorating, spending time with loved ones
- Moved to Middletown in 2019 due to my husband's work

Regional Support Specialist: HIAB USA - Hagerstown, MD
Associate's degree in insurance - 2009 to 2011
Florida State College at Jacksonville

Skills

- Reconciliation
- Fleet Management
- Billing, Accounts Payable & Receivable
- Vendor Management
- Salesforce and SAP
- Microsoft Office and Google Docs

Sharon Finley



I was born and raised in suburban Philadelphia attending the Methodist church through college in Ohio. I graduated with a degree in Elementary Education. After marriage we joined the Presbyterian church. Several moves from Jacksonville, Florida to suburban Chicago brought our family of four daughters to Plano, Texas. As a member of West Plano Presbyterian church I sang in choir, chaired congregational life, and served on music and worship committees. I was ordained as an elder in 1992 serving on session for three different terms.

In February of 2015 I moved to Middletown to live with my daughter Bre Bybel and care for Fiona. Arlo's birth three years ago made me a grandma of ten. I joined Zion in 2016 and enjoy choir and altar guild. Her sister Danielle Coleman and family moved here three years ago and also attend Zion. We have enjoyed being a part of this energetic and supportive faith community. I hope to serve you well as we are to grow together in faith.



Addison Shupe

I have attended church my entire life. As a baby, I went to St. John's Lutheran Church in Hagerstown, Maryland, with my mom. I was baptized at Redeemer Lutheran Church in Damascus, Maryland, the same church my mom attended as a child. When I was 3 or 4 years old, we began attending Zion Lutheran Church in Middletown because it was more family friendly.

I've lived with my mom in Hagerstown since I was born. My mom has played a big role in growing my faith. She read the Bible to me, and I memorized the story of Jonah, which became my favorite. I surprised people with my "reading" ability at a young age. By the time I was five, I had also memorized the names of all the disciples, the books of the Bible, and the Lord's Prayer. My grandparents have also been an important part of my life and faith journey.

I took my first communion at Zion Lutheran Church when I was 6 years old. When I first joined Zion, I participated in liturgical dance, sang in the children's choir, played the bells, and served as an acolyte. Later, I worked as a teacher's aide in the elementary Sunday school class. I attended confirmation classes and was confirmed in 2024. Currently, I serve as the piano accompanist for some Saturday night services and occasionally play the prelude or offering piece for the Sunday traditional service. Over the past couple years, I've been learning to play the organ with Bobby Stapes, and I've had the opportunity to play a few organ pieces at both the Sunday service and Easter Vigil. Most recently, I attended the 37th annual assembly of the Delaware-Maryland Synod as a voting delegate.

2024 Annual Report for Zion Lutheran Church

I am currently a junior in high school and attend the Barbara Ingram School for the Arts, majoring in piano and vocal music. I'm also a member of the National Honor Society, Tri-M Music Honor Society, and Youth for Christ.

I am truly honored to have been asked to serve on the church council, and I look forward to contributing my youthful energy and ideas and working with my pastors and fellow council members.



Biography for Jack Newkirk II

Jack has been attending Zion since 1972 when he and his parents (Jack & Nancy) moved to Middletown. Jack and his wife Amy were married at Zion in 1993. They have lived in Middletown since 1998. They have two children, AJ (27) and Michele (24). Jack taught Business Education for seven years in Pennsylvania and Baltimore County, MD. He has been a high school administrator for the past 27 years in Frederick County. Amy taught for 22 years as a special education teacher at Middletown Middle and has been a middle school administrator for the past 5 years. Jack previously served two terms on the church council, was a member of the call committee, and currently is a worship assistant for the 9:00 a.m. service as well as a member of the finance committee. Jack looks forward to the opportunity to serve God and the members of Zion if elected to the church council.

Required/Proposed Changes to the Constitution

Approved by the congregation on November 10th, 2024

Constitution

Required Revisions from the ELCA:

The following are amendments to the *Model Constitution for Congregations* that were approved by the 2022 Churchwide Assembly and are required to be updated by the congregation when changes to the constitution are made. Additions are underlined; deletions are ~~struck through~~.

Those provisions marked with an asterisk are required when a congregation amends its governing documents. They must be used without alteration or amendment of the text in any manner (i.e., neither additions nor deletions are permissible). Such provisions go into effect immediately upon approval by a majority vote of those voting members present and voting at any legally called meeting of the congregation, provided that they have been presented to the congregation at least 30 days prior to the meeting.

Chapter 4: STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

- *C4.02. To participate in God's mission, this congregation as a part of the Church shall:
[...]
- d. Serve in response to God's love to meet human needs, caring for the sick and the aged, advocating dignity, ~~and~~, justice, and equity for all people, working for peace and reconciliation among the nations, caring for the marginalized, embracing and welcoming racially and ethnically diverse populations, and standing in solidarity with the poor and ~~powerless~~ oppressed and committing itself to their needs.

Chapter 6: CHURCH AFFILIATION

- *C6.05. This congregation may terminate its relationship with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America by the following procedure:
- a. A resolution indicating the intent to terminate its relationship must be adopted at two legally called and conducted special meetings of this congregation by a two-thirds vote of the voting members present at each meeting. The first such meeting may be held no sooner than 30 days after written notice of the meeting is received by the bishop of the synod, during which time this congregation shall consult with the bishop and the bishop's designees, if any. The times and manner of the consultation shall be determined by the bishop in consultation with the Congregation Council. ~~Unless he or she is~~ the bishop and/or the bishop's designees are a voting members of this congregation, ~~the bishop and the bishop's designees, if any,~~ they shall have voice but not vote at the first meeting.
[...]
- d. If this congregation, after such consultation, is still considering termination of its relationship with this church, such action may be taken at a legally called and

conducted special meeting by a two-thirds vote of the voting members present. Notice of the second meeting shall be sent to all voting members and to the bishop at least 10 days in advance of the meeting. Unless ~~he or she is the bishop and/or the bishop's designees are a~~ voting member of this congregation, the bishop and the bishop's designees, if any, they shall have voice but not vote at the second meeting.

Chapter 9: ROSTERED MINISTER

***C9.03.** Consistent with the faith and practice of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America,

a. Every minister of Word and Sacrament shall:

[...]

8) speak publicly to the world in solidarity with the poor and oppressed, calling for justice and proclaiming God's love for the world ~~calling for justice and proclaiming God's love for the world~~ advocating dignity, justice, and equity for all people, working for peace and reconciliation among the nations, caring for the marginalized, and embracing and welcoming racially and ethnically diverse populations.

***C9.05.** The provisions for termination of the mutual relationship between a minister of Word and Sacrament and this congregation shall be as follows:

a. The call of this congregation, when accepted by a pastor, shall constitute a continuing mutual relationship and commitment, which shall be terminated only by the pastor's death or, following consultation with the synod bishop, for any of the following reasons:

[...]

4) inability to conduct the pastoral office effectively in view of physical disability or mental incapacity of the pastor;

[...]

b. When allegations of ~~physical disability or mental~~ incapacity of the pastor under paragraph a.4) above, or ineffective conduct of the pastoral office under paragraph a.3) above, have come to the attention of the bishop of this synod,

1) the bishop, ~~in his or her~~ who has sole discretion, may investigate such conditions personally together with a committee of two rostered ministers and one layperson, or

[...]

c. In case of alleged ~~physical disability or mental~~ incapacity under paragraph a.4) above, the bishop's committee shall obtain and document competent medical opinion concerning the pastor's condition. When a disability or incapacity is evident to the committee, the bishop of this synod may declare the pastorate vacant. When the pastorate is declared vacant, the Synod Council shall list the pastor on the roster of

Ministers of Word and Sacrament with disability status. Upon ~~removal~~ resumption of the ~~disability and the restoration of the pastor to health,~~ ability to conduct the office effectively the bishop shall take steps to enable the pastor to resume the ministry, either in the congregation last served or in another appropriate call.

- *C9.12. The pastor of this congregation:
 - a. shall keep accurate ~~parochial~~ records of all baptisms, confirmations, marriages, burials, communicants, members received, members dismissed, or members excluded from this congregation;
- *C9.13. The pastor(s) shall submit a report of ~~his or her~~ ministry to the bishop of the synod at least 90 days prior to each regular meeting of the Synod Assembly.
- *C9.14. The ~~parochial~~ records of this congregation shall be maintained by the pastor and shall remain the property of this congregation. The secretary of this congregation shall attest in writing to the bishop of this synod that such records have been placed in ~~his or her~~ the secretary's hands in good order by a departing pastor before the installation of that pastor in another call or approval of a request for change in roster status.
- *C9.23. Consistent with the faith and practice of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, every minister of Word and Service shall:
 - [...]
 - c. Speak publicly to the world in solidarity with the poor and oppressed, ~~calling for justice and proclaiming God's love for the world, witnessing to the realm of God in the community, the nation, and abroad~~ advocating dignity, justice, and equity for all people, working for peace and reconciliation among the nations, caring for the marginalized, and embracing and welcoming racially and ethnically diverse populations;
- *C9.25. The provisions for termination of the mutual relationship between a minister of Word and Service and this congregation shall be as follows:
 - a. The call of this congregation, when accepted by a deacon, shall constitute a continuing mutual relationship and commitment, which shall be terminated only by the deacon's death or, following consultation with the synod bishop, for any of the following reasons:
 - [...]
 - 4) inability to conduct the office effectively in view of ~~physical~~ disability or ~~mental~~ incapacity of the deacon;
 - [...]
 - b. When allegations of ~~physical~~ disability or ~~mental~~ incapacity of the deacon under paragraph a.4) above, or ineffective conduct of the office of minister of Word and

Service under paragraph a.3) above, have come to the attention of the bishop of this synod,

- 1) the bishop, ~~in his or her~~ who has sole discretion, may investigate such conditions personally together with a committee of two rostered ministers and one layperson, or

[...]

- c. In case of alleged ~~physical~~ disability or ~~mental~~ incapacity under paragraph a.4) above, the bishop's committee shall obtain and document competent medical opinion concerning the deacon's condition. When a disability or incapacity is evident to the committee, the bishop of this synod may declare the position vacant. When the position is declared vacant, the Synod Council shall list the deacon on the roster of Ministers of Word and Service with disability status. Upon ~~removal~~ resumption of the ~~disability and the restoration of the deacon to health~~ ability to conduct the office effectively, the bishop shall take steps to enable the deacon to resume the ministry, either in the congregation last served or in another appropriate call.

- *C9.31.** The deacon(s) shall submit a report of ~~his or her~~ ministry to the bishop of the synod at least 90 days prior to each regular meeting of the Synod Assembly.

Chapter 15: DISCIPLINE OF MEMBERS AND ADJUDICATION

- *C15.02.** The process for discipline of a member of this congregation shall be governed as prescribed by the chapter on discipline in the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*. If the counseling, censure, and admonitions pursuant to *C15.01. do not result in repentance and amendment of life, charges against the accused member(s) that are specific and in writing may be prepared by the Congregation Council, signed, and submitted to the vice president of the synod. The vice president shall select from the synod's Consultation Committee a panel of five members (three laypersons and two rostered ministers ~~of Word and Sacrament~~). A copy of the written charges shall be provided to the consultation panel and the accused member(s). The consultation panel, after requesting a written reply to the charges from the accused member(s), shall consider the matter and seek a resolution by means of investigation, consultation, mediation, or whatever other means may seem appropriate. The panel's efforts to reach a mutually agreeable resolution shall continue for no more than 45 days after the matter is submitted to it.
- *C15.11.** When there is disagreement between or among factions within this congregation on a substantive issue which cannot be resolved by the parties, members of this congregation may petition the synod bishop for consultation after informing the president [vice president] of this congregation of their intent to do so. The synod

bishop shall seek a timely resolution of the dispute. If the issue relates directly to the pastor, the bishop may begin the process in †S14.18.d. In all other matters, if the bishop's consultation fails to resolve the issue, the bishop shall refer the matter to the Consultation Committee of the synod, which shall undertake efforts to find an appropriate solution. If the Consultation Committee's efforts fail to resolve the dispute, the entire matter shall be referred to the Synod Council for adjudication by whatever process the Council deems necessary. The Synod Council's decision shall be final.

Chapter 16: AMENDMENTS

- *C16.02.** An amendment to this constitution, proposed under *C16.01., shall:
- a. be approved at any legally called meeting of this congregation by a majority vote of those voting members present and voting; and
 - b. be ratified without change at the next regular meeting of this congregation ~~held pursuant to C10.01.~~ by a two-thirds vote of those voting members present and voting. ~~and.~~
 - c. ~~have the effective date included in the resolution² and noted in the constitution.~~

[Footnote also deleted]

~~²Such an effective date must be stated in relation to the requirements of *C16.03. to allow time for the synod's review of the amendment.~~

- *C16.04.** This constitution may be amended to bring any section into conformity with a section or sections, either required or not required, of the *Model Constitution for Congregations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America* as most recently amended by the Churchwide Assembly. Such amendments may be approved by a majority vote of those voting members present and voting at any legally called meeting of this congregation without presentation at a prior meeting of this congregation, provided that the Congregation Council has submitted by mail or electronic means, as permitted by state law, notice to this congregation of such an amendment or amendments, together with the council's recommendations, at least 30 days prior to the meeting. Upon the request of at least two (2) voting members of this congregation, the Congregation Council shall submit such notice. Following the adoption of an amendment, the secretary of this congregation shall submit a copy thereof to the synod. Such provisions shall become effective immediately following the congregation's a vote of approval.

Chapter 20: PARISH AUTHORIZATION

- *C20.02.** One congregation of a parish shall issue a call on behalf of the member congregations to a minister of Word and Sacrament or a candidate for the roster of Ministers of Word and Sacrament who has been recommended by the synod bishop to serve the congregations of the parish. Such a call shall be approved prior to issuance by a two-thirds vote at a

congregational meeting of each congregation forming the parish. If any congregation of the parish should fail to approve the call, the other congregations of the parish shall have the right to terminate the parish agreement.

- *C20.03. One congregation of a parish may issue a call on behalf of the member congregations to a minister of Word and Service or a candidate for the roster of Ministers of Word and Service who has been recommended by the synod bishop to serve the congregations of the parish. Such a call shall be approved prior to issuance by a two-thirds vote at a congregational meeting of each congregation forming the parish. If any congregation of the parish should fail to approve the call, the other congregations of the parish shall have the right to terminate the parish agreement.

Suggested Revision by the ELCA (not required)

C10.09. "Ex officio" as used herein means membership with full rights of voice and vote unless otherwise expressly limited.

Chapter 12: CONGREGATION COUNCIL

C12.05. The Congregation Council shall be responsible for the financial and property matters of this congregation.

[...]

- e. The Congregation Council shall ascertain that the financial affairs of this congregation are being conducted efficiently, giving particular attention to the prompt payment of all obligations and to the regular forwarding of mission support monies to the synod. ~~treasurer~~

C12.13. The Congregation Council and its committees may hold meetings by remote communication, including electronically and by telephone conference, as long as there is an opportunity for simultaneous aural communication or its equivalent. ~~and, to the extent permitted by state law, notice of all meetings may be provided electronically.~~

Proposed Revisions from Zion's Church Council:

In reviewing these suggested revisions, the Constitution and Bylaws committee as well as the council felt that these revisions were necessary. 'Additions' are underlined, 'deletions' are ~~struck through~~.

Provisions not marked with an asterisk are non-required provisions. These provisions represent wording recommended by the Churchwide Assembly. If the congregation chooses to incorporate them into the congregation's constitution exactly as presented here, these provisions require a majority vote of those voting members present and voting at any legally called meeting of the congregation, provided that they have been presented to the congregation at least 30 days prior to the meeting. If the wording of non-required provisions is altered or amended from the text

presented here, the provisions must be approved at one congregation meeting by a majority vote and then must be ratified *without change* by a two-thirds vote at the next regular meeting of the congregation. (See *Model Constitution for Congregations*, *C16.04. for more details.)

Proposed Revision 1 - C12.01.

C12.01. ~~The voting membership of the Congregation Council shall consist of the pastor(s) and the twelve members of the Congregation Council.~~ The council shall consist of the pastors, eligible members of congregation duly elected by the Congregation. The number of members of the council shall be determined by the bylaws. ~~The Council MAY have either a youth and/or young adult member(s) who are non-voting members. The youth member shall be a high school student and the young adult shall be 18-30 years of age.~~ Any voting member of this congregation may be elected, subject only to the limitation on the length of continuous service permitted in that office. A member's place on the Congregation Council shall be declared vacant if the member a) ceases to be a voting member of this congregation or b) is absent from four successive regular meetings of the Congregation Council without cause. Consistent with the laws of the state in which this congregation is incorporated, this congregation may adopt procedures for the removal of a member of the Congregation Council in other circumstances.

Note: In addition, the following will also be added to the bylaws (Article III Congregation Council Election, Section 4): The voting membership of the Congregation Council shall consist of the pastor(s) and NO LESS THAN EIGHT (8) NOR MORE THAN [the] twelve (12) members of the Congregation Council.

Proposed Revision 2: - C12.02

C12.02. The members of the Congregation Council except the pastor(s) and the deacon(s) if any, shall be elected ~~by written ballot~~ to as set forth in the bylaw or until their successors are elected. Such members shall be eligible to serve no more than two full terms consecutively. Their terms shall begin at the close of the annual meeting at which they are elected.

In addition, the following will also be added to the bylaws (Article III Congregation Council Election, Section 5): The members of the Congregation Council except the pastor(s) and the deacon(s) if any, shall be elected to serve for two (2) years or until their successors are elected.

Proposed Revision 3 - C12.11

C12.11. ~~The Congregation Council shall normally meet once a month.~~ The Congregation Council shall meet on a periodic basis as set forth in the bylaws. Special meetings may be called by the pastor or the president and shall be called by the president at the request of at least one-half of its members of the Congregation Council. Notice of each special meeting shall be given to all who are entitled to be present.

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