

THE BEACON

A MINISTRY OF ZION LUTHERAN CHURCH

LENT & EASTER 2025 EDITION

Sacred

Upcoming Events

First Sunday of the Month	Confirmation from 4-6 p.m.
First Sunday of the Month	Youth Group from 6-8 p.m.
First Thursdays of Month	Table Talk at the Main Cup at 6 p.m.
Second Sunday of the Month	Footprints Sunday
Second Monday of the Month	Council meets at 6:30 p.m.
Third Wednesday of the Month	JOY Luncheon from 12-2 p.m.
Last Monday of the Month	Hope to Faith at 2 p.m.
Tuesday, February 25	GriefShare every Tuesday from 6-8 p.m. through March 20 th
Wednesday, March 5	Ash Wednesday Worship at 7 p.m.
Every Wednesday in Lent	Dinner at 6 p.m., Children's Activities at 6:30 p.m. and Worship at 7 p.m.
Sunday, April 13	Palm Sunday Worship at 9 and 11 a.m.
Thursday, April 17	Dinner at 6 p.m. followed by Family Maundy Thursday Worship at 7 p.m.
Friday, April 18	Good Friday Worship at 7 p.m.
Saturday, April 19	Community Easter Egg Hunt at 10 a.m.
Saturday, April 19	Easter Vigil at 5 p.m.
Sunday, April 20	Easter Sunday with Contemporary Worship at 9 a.m. & Traditional Worship at 11 a.m.
Monday, May 5	Golf Tournament
Wednesday, May 7	Ladies' Spring Fling

Zion Lutheran Church Middletown, MD

Share Christ's Love, Grow in Faith, and Serve Others



A WORD FROM PASTOR DIANE

Since June of 2024, I have been receiving coaching with a cohort of female pastors. Our experiences as female pastors carry with them actions and thoughts that we choose to enact and ones that we do automatically because we have also been raised in certain ways to act and think as women. I have learned a great deal about myself and also about the things I do without thinking that are not always so helpful for myself or others just because I am taught to be that way.

One of the most helpful topics I have learned about is essentialism. Essentialism was coined by Greg McKeown who is a leader and business strategist. Essentialism is



discerning what is most important and investing your time and energy there to meet your goals verses trying to do it all and feeling like you are getting nowhere.

This makes me think a bit about Lent and how essentialism can be a helpful tool in receiving the gifts of Lent. Our daily lives pull us in so many directions. We learn many ways to preserve ourselves and to unwind from the demanding lives we live. In doing so, we sometimes find many good things that we embrace for our survival rather than embracing our relationship with God. The job of Lent, as explained by Pastor Matt and my worship professor, The Rev. Dr. Mark Oldenburg, is to relativize those things that we have brought too close, placing them in their proper place in our lives so that we can return to our relationship with God and be drawn with Jesus from the death of those gods into abundant life with God.

What is essential? For Christians, the most essential thing is our relationship with our Creator. How do we place our time and

energy there so that relationship might have the greatest contribution to our existence and those we encounter in our lives? What are those competing embraces, those things we are placing before our relationship with God? This is the invitation of Lent. I pray that you may discern and relativize those things to their proper places using spiritual disciplines that aid you. I hope you may find that you are not God yourself as Lent humbles me often to remember. Please know, I am more than happy to share in confidence and prayer as you relativize what you hold in your life if you need to talk. May this Lent help bring you closer to God and from death into life.

In Christ,

Pastor Riane Ray



A WORD FROM PASTOR MATT

Dear Beloved in Christ,

As we enter into the season of Lent, we are invited not only to reflect on our personal journeys but also to consider how we, as the body of Christ, are called to offer hospitality and welcome to those around us. Lent is traditionally seen as a time of fasting, prayer, and repentance, but it is also a time when we can open our hearts to one another, reaching out in love and compassion, just as Christ did during His earthly ministry.

During these forty days, we are called to walk with Jesus in His humility, His suffering, and His grace. Yet, it is important to remember that Jesus did not walk this path alone. He extended radical hospitality to those on the

margins—to the sinners, the outcasts, and the broken-hearted. This Lenten season, let us reflect on how we can mirror that same spirit of welcome and holy hospitality within our church family and the community.

Hospitality is not just about opening our doors; it's about opening our hearts. It's about recognizing that each person, no matter where they come from or where they've been, is a beloved child of God. Whether we are welcoming a newcomer, a neighbor in need, or a friend who has been away, we are called to extend the same grace and hospitality that Jesus modeled for us.

On Wednesday nights this Lent, we are going to explore the purpose of evangelism and hospitality as part of our mission. We are going to learn some skills and reflect on where we are showing hospitality and

where we can improve. By the end of the 5 weeks, you will become ambassadors, ushers, greeters, leaders in this holy work.

As we journey through Lent, may we be inspired to cultivate a deeper sense of hospitality and community, embracing the richness of our diversity and extending the hand of friendship to all who come our way. In doing so, we make room for God's love to overflow in our lives and in our church, bringing hope and healing to those who need it most.

In Christ's love and peace,

So, what's been happening?

Advent Craft and Game Night

One of our goals every Advent season is to create a space where people can take a break from all the busyness of the season. One of those ways is to offer a craft and game night where you can leave all the cares and worries outside. This year, we gathered around tacos and games. Whether it was playing a game of checkers with an 18-month old, Twister with 5 year olds, trying to convince your cousin that you are right or simply just drinking some hot chocolate while the world rushes by—it was a lot of fun and a great way to take a break from the busyness of December.



Christmas in the Valley

Special thanks goes out to our many volunteers who helped usher and create a welcoming space for our community to gather around music and festivities. The Sanctuary was packed on the first Saturday in December! After the performance, a lot of the audience made their way down to our Social Room to enjoy some punch and cookies. It takes a lot of people working in the background to make events like Christmas in the Valley happen. Thank you to all those who came and enjoyed the festival and especially to all those who helped!



Christmas Pageant

We have heard from many parents that adding one more thing to their schedules is hard to do. We decided to try to do the pageant a little bit differently this year. Instead of the pageant at night, we did it during worship. Instead of having weekly play practice, we found a pageant that required little to no practice. And the couple of quick run throughs we did happened at Sunday School. Instead of pre-determined parts, kids could dress up in whatever costume they wanted and if we didn't have enough kids, we grabbed a few adults to relive their childhood. It

was a risk but the risk turned out great! Special thanks to all our staff, volunteers, parents and especially to our kids.



Christmas Caroling

Santa might have a sleigh that can fly, but we had a Green Tractor and wagon all decked out with lights and hay. We drove through the streets and neighborhoods of Middletown spreading some Christmas cheer. Thank you to Welcome and Engagement for organizing and making sure we had lots of hot chocolate to keep us warm.



A "Normal" Christmas

Two years ago, we had a burst pipe on Christmas Eve due a major power outage in Middletown. The next year, the hot water heater rusted out and flooded out the 1st floor Narthex. This year, our steam heat system was having all kinds of issues including burst pipes and faulty computer boards. The Property Committee spent months trying to get the system to at least fire up. After removing asbestos and putting on temporary clamps, we were able to get the heating system temporarily working. This meant, worship in the Social Room and Chapel for the month of December. It seems like every year, something has to go wrong around Christmas, but throughout all these issues, we find a way to stay true to preaching the good news.



Christmas 2024

Almost 500 people joined us on Christmas Eve this year as we told the old, familiar story of God coming into our world to live among us.



DayOff

Our last DayOff Program of the 2024-2025 school year happened on MLK Jr. Day. We spent the day hanging around church (the weather ruined our plans to spend the morning at Memorial Park playing and exploring outside). We played some board games, a game or two of Sardines, watched a movie, and drove Pastor Matt and our other chaperones a little batty! Don't worry, the chaperones all signed up for the batty behavior! After lunch, we took the kids over to Urban Air to burn off all that energy they normally would use while learning at school. We had about 20 kids registered for the day which made this January DayOff Program one of our largest ones. We hold a DayOff program 3-4 times a year. We are able to offer this event free of charge thanks to generous donations from people like you. If you would like to donate to help make sure this ministry remains free, you can do so today by sponsoring a child for \$50. So, thank you for your generosity and we look forward to the next day off from school!



Epiphany at MLR

For the past few years, Mar Lu Ridge has held an Epiphany service in their barn on or around January 6. This year, they invited Pastor Matt to come and preach. Since it was on the first Sunday, he took the Confirmation and Youth Group with him. Somehow it was colder in the barn than it was outside the barn but the Spirit of God warmed us. The cold was a really great motivator for Pastor Matt to keep his message short!



Worship Opportunities



Definition

Lent is the forty-day season (excluding Sundays) of penitence and preparation for the Three Days of Holy Week and Easter.

A Very Brief History

The term "Lent" originally comes from the Anglo-Saxon word "lencten" which means "spring." This is the time, in the Northern Hemisphere, when the days are lengthening. The season began as period of fasting leading up to the Vigil of Easter. Catechumens, those preparing for baptism at Easter, would fast and spend days in intense preparation. For those that were already baptized, Lent

was a period to be renewed in their faith by studying the Bible, the Creed and the Lord's Prayer.

Although it was originally only a two-day period of preparation, Lent became a three-week preparatory period in the middle of the fourth century and then this was further expanded into six-weeks, or forty days. By the end of the fifth century, there was a desire to exclude Sundays from Lent since Sundays are always celebrated as feasts of the Resurrection. Thus Lent begins not on Sunday, but on Ash Wednesday.

The current practice of forty days of Lent recalls Jesus' forty-day fast in the wilderness after his baptism (Matthew 4:2, Luke 4:1-2) as well as Moses' forty-day fast on Mount Sinai (Exodus 34:28).

A Few Notes on Current Practice

- The appointed liturgical color for Lent is purple because purple has long been associated with royalty. In this case, Christ reigns from a cross.
- Currently, the ancient understanding of Lent as both a time for baptismal preparation and baptismal renewal is being rediscovered in Lutheran rites and practice. Many congregations hold mid-week services during Lent and a baptismal renewal theme is particularly appropriate for these.
- Many congregations refrain from speaking or singing the word "alleluia" during Lent. "Burying" the alleluia occurs at the conclusion of worship on Transfiguration Sunday and it is restored at either the Vigil of Easter or Easter Sunday. A Lenten acclamation replaces the alleluia verse in preparation for hearing the Gospel

Lent at a Glance

Lent begins...

Ash Wednesday - March 5 at 7 p.m.

Wednesdays in Lent - Creating Sacred Space

Dinner at 6 p.m.

Children's Activity at 6:30 p.m., Evening Prayer at 7 p.m.

Every Wednesday in Lent starting March 12 - April 9

HOLY WEEK

Palm Sunday with the reading of the Passion from Luke - April 13

Maundy Thursday - April 17 at 7 p.m. Dinner at 6 p.m.

Good Friday - April 18 at 7 p.m.

Easter Vigil - April 19 at 5 p.m.

Easter Sunday: Contemporary at 9 a.m. and Traditional at 11 a.m.

When are we going to bury the Alleluias?

Weekend of March 1/2

at all worship services.



Remember that
 you are dust,
 and to dust
 you shall return.



Ash Wednesday

March 5 at 7 p.m.

Lent begins with a solemn service of reflection and prayer. We will ponder the meaning of life and death. We will be reminded of our fragility and mortality. We will also commit ourselves to a time of intentional prayer for these next six weeks leading up to Easter.

Be a part of this journey this Lent and come on Ash Wednesday and make a commitment to engage your faith throughout these 40 days.



Wear your Easter bonnet! Don't forget on **April 20th** to wear your favorite hat or fascinator to celebrate the glorious joy of spring and resurrection!

Worship Services

Saturday Night:

5 p.m. Casual Worship

Sunday Morning:

9 a.m. Contemporary

Worship

11 a.m. Traditional Worship

WEDNESDAYS IN LENT



CREATING SACRED SPACE

The need for welcome, hospitality,
 and love of neighbor

6 P.M. | Dinner

6:30 P.M. | Children's Program

7 P.M. | Evening Prayer

Why should we bother with Holy Week?

Holy Week began because the Church, after the Roman Empire converted all its citizens to Christianity, had to find a way to educate large groups of people about the Passion of our Lord. However, these times of worship are not us crucifying Jesus once again but rather, as a way for us to remember.

To help answer some of your questions about these three days, we have gathered a few resources for you to read and watch. They can be found by clicking on the Lent and Easter Celebration link on the front page of the website under worship times.

The Triduum are the three holy days that happen the week in between Palm Sunday and Easter. These days are called: Maundy Thursday, Good Friday and Easter Vigil. These are three days in the Church Year when we physically walk with Jesus from the table, to the cross, and to the tomb so that we might ponder the mystery of Easter. On Easter morning, we go with Mary Magdalene and witness with her Jesus rising from the dead; but the three days before Easter we explain why we even need to gather on Easter. These three days are important and go hand-in-hand. One does not make sense without the other. Though it might be hard to make it to church three times in a row, coming to these services is a great reminder of why we gather on Sunday mornings in the first place! Of course, the best way to learn more about these Three Days is to experience them firsthand!



Last year, over the course of a week, over 500 people encountered the story of Jesus saving the world by meeting him in the upper room, standing at the foot of the cross, and going with Mary and the other women to the tomb on Easter Sunday. Every year we tell this timeless story and we are all made active participants just like the disciples were active participants. You can be an active participant this year too!



The stations of the cross will return after Ash Wednesday. Enjoy the beauty of our garden as you remember the final last moments of our Lord's life.

Maundy Thursday Worship
Thursday, April 17
7 p.m. worship service
Worship either in-person or virtually

Confession | Foot Washing | Eucharist

Good Friday Worship
Friday, April 18
7 p.m. Worship Service
Worship either in-person or virtually

We adore you, O Christ, and bless you.
By your Holy Cross, you have redeemed the world.

Easter Vigil
Saturday, April 19
5 p.m. Worship Service

Rejoice now, all you heavenly choirs of angels; Rejoice now, all creation;
Sound forth, trumpet of salvation, And proclaim the triumph of our King.
This is the night!

Easter Sunday
Contemporary Worship 9 a.m.
Traditional Worship at 11 a.m.

The tomb is empty!

Being the Church...



Interview with Linda Kinna by Mary Ann Marcantonio

Linda grew up in a very humble setting with her seven siblings- five brothers and two sisters. Being the youngest child of Glenn W. and Lola Gladhill Kinna, she experienced a life much different than her older siblings. With the death of her father when she was just eleven years old it was necessary for the family to leave the farm she loved out on Bidle and Picnic Woods Road to a home on Main Street in Middletown. The five older children had already moved out of the house, leaving a widowed mother to become the sole breadwinner for the three youngest. After a few years, Linda's mother was able to move her family into an apartment across the street from Zion. What many might say the Kinnas lacked in material things of life, they never needed any more than what their parents were able to provide. What there was plenty of, "was Family love." But another emotional hole for Linda was the loss of her mother, just 15 years after the death of her father. Sadly, at a young age of 26, Linda was an adult orphan.

As a lifelong resident of the Middletown area, (minus 16 years) she walked the halls of Middletown schools. Her elementary years were frustrating years for both Linda and her mother but this all changed when Linda got to junior and senior high school. Even when she was sick, her mother couldn't keep her home. She loved school and had become a part of many school activities- five years of Glee Club, Future Nurses Club, Chess Club and even for one season was the manager of the Girls' Basketball Team. After graduation, her interest peaked in Sociology and Psychology at Frederick Community College and a course was plotted for social work. Upon completion of her education at FCC, Linda took a big move to Oklahoma where she lived with her sister Gladys while she furthered her education there. For many reasons Linda struggled and returned home with intentions to finish her fourth year of college. After three weeks, she left school for employment at Vindabona Nursing Home as an aide, eventually getting a job with the State of Maryland as a Public Welfare interviewer. After 29 years and several promotions she left her state job for work with Hospice of Frederick County in the Bereavement Department. As a side note: Linda did get her BA degree from Hood College in 1995. Her mother was so disappointed that she was so close to finishing when she decided to leave school. In her decision to finish, it was mainly to honor her mother.

As you may have already realized, Linda's mother was a huge influence in her life. A woman who was dealt a life of hardship as a widow raising three of her eight children alone, rested her hardships in God. She saw to it that good seeds were planted in her children at home; frequently gathering around the piano where favorite hymns were played and sung. The children would gather around her rocker and listen to Bible stories. Sunday School was a part of the weekly routine, as she led by example by attending her own class, Zion Daughters, and then attended worship after class. Always sitting on the east side of the Sanctuary,

Linda grew up staring at one particular stained glass window, the “Rock of Ages.” Little did she realize that this window would become more meaningful and a comfort in her later years, a memory of a loving mother and a faithful God.

Linda’s connection with Zion began at baptism by Pastor McCarney and confirmed by Pastor Burkhardt. Confirmation was two years long and she loved learning under his direction. Back then, only confirmed members were able to receive communion and she still recalls the emotions as she took the elements for the very first time as a 14 year old. She was gifted a gold cross from her mother which she still wears today. Linda was also involved in Luther League, the Youth Group of the day. Many of these gatherings Linda can recall with clarity, like Bible studies, game nights, food, combined dances with other churches, hayrides to barn dances and overnight youth gatherings at Hood College or Gettysburg College. She recalls the shuffle board patterns on the floor of the Social Room which seems to be a favorite pastime. Music was no stranger to Linda either as she sang in the Youth Choir, eventually to the Senior Choir and playing the piano for the combined Adult Sunday School department for several years. Her musical talent was another attribute learned from her mother.

Linda married late in life to Steven Mordechai Engel. They met in 1998 when they both were volunteers at Camp Jamie, a bereavement camp for children, sponsored by Hospice of Frederick County. Steven was a Christian Jew; while honoring his Jewish heritage, he developed a close relationship with Jesus. Linda credits him for teaching her about the character of a good Christian. But again, Linda was faced with another trial. Just two short years after they were married, Steven was diagnosed with thyroid cancer and given three to five years to live. The golden years of growing old together were cut short. Now in the dark valley again, Linda fell back on a lesson learned many times over, where is God’s blessing? Instead of focusing on what she lost, the focus was on what was given. After outliving the doctor’s prognosis of three to five, God blessed them with three additional years. Steven lost the battle to cancer just 4 months before their 10th anniversary and gained his heavenly home.

In 2015, Linda faced another major life choice. If she were to retire from Hospice what would she do? But the decision was made by a loveable 3 month old Goldendoodle named Steeler. Steeler was a working dog in training at Stauffer Funeral Homes as a comfort dog who also made visits to hospice patients. Linda, knowing she would be retiring soon, had made the decision to not allow an attachment to the bouncing and lively puppy on the days he worked at hospice. But Steeler had other ideas, he was determined that Linda was his “person” and the rest is history. In September of 2015, she retired from Hospice and took on learning the commands that Steeler had been taught. Although COVID slowed Steeler and Linda down for a while, it is age that slows them down now. Steeler continues the work he loves, bringing joy and comfort. The two partners have traveled nearly 30,000 miles in Frederick and Carroll counties and Waynesboro, PA, and have worked over 3,000 hours bringing his love and comfort to those he loves. This has been the greatest joy: her hospice volunteer work with her little sidekick Steeler.

In the center of many challenges over her life, she admits asking, “Where is God in the midst of hardships and trials?” But it is in the question where the answer is found. After another hard blow, Linda learned she had cancer. A treasured phrase of GriefShare saw her through this difficult time- “Our faith doesn’t protect us from difficulties in life; our faith sustains us through the difficulties.” In 2017, Linda was found to be free of cancer. She is confident that whatever comes next she will be okay because she trusts that God is with

her. At times, she has admitted being angry with God, but eventually sees God's love that softens the angry heart. His promise of being with her in the hardest of times has inspired her passion for GriefShare. After retirement and a short sabbatical from bereavement work, GriefShare had its début at Zion. Recruiting and training leaders took about a year and the first 13 week cycle began in February 2017. These groups come together as strangers and become family, reaching out and helping one another.

Linda has been President of the Church Council for nearly a year now and looks forward to stepping down. She challenges us all to honor the past but reminds us to live in the present. Our ancestors sought to leave us a better place so that should be our focus as well. Our concerns should be how Zion meets the needs of a strong and thriving faith community now and the future; and those in need outside our church fellowship. This challenge has not changed in 280+ years. What has changed is the way it gets done.

My takeaway as Linda and I visited was this: The greatest gift we can give our children is our example of living a faith-full life; not just a faithful life, but a life where faith encompasses every corner of your life. Her mother's example of facing adversity showed her that trusting in God is the best way, even if you get lost along the way and buried in the pain, God will see you through it; He walks with you and there to welcome you back into His mercy and grace. Linda with courage and strength faced her own adversity and is an example of living out our mission statement, "share Christ's love, grow in faith and serve others." She is a Champion of the Faith!

A WORD FROM THE VALLEY

A PODCAST FROM ZION LUTHERAN CHURCH
MIDDLETOWN, MD

A Word from the Valley is a our podcast that features Pastor Diane and Pastor Matt's sermons as well as some other special content that we will produce throughout the year. You can learn more by visiting our website, or search for "Word from the Valley" wherever you download your podcasts.



Community Events

31st Annual MIDDLETOWN EMPTY BOWLS BANQUET



Thursday, March 20, 2025

Entrance: Middletown High School Cafeteria

5:00 PM Doors and Silent Auction open

6:00 PM Dinner

Raising money to fight hunger in our community by supporting Middletown Valley
People Helping People

Tickets include:

Meal provided by Fratelli's Italian Seafood and South Mountain Creamery
Entertainment

Ceramic bowls crafted by Middletown Ceramic and Art Classes.

Silent Auction and Art Show

\$15.00 Adults, \$13.00 Students (13 thru 17) and \$8.00 children (12 and under)

Tickets available now

Contact Alisa Gibson gibsonmom@comcast.net



Fratelli's
ITALIAN & SEAFOOD

Middletown  Lions Club

Pancake Breakfast

in Middletown

Delicious pancakes, french toast, eggs, sausage, tater tots, biscuits,
sausage & chipped beef gravy, fruit, orange juice & coffee!

SATURDAY, APRIL 12 • 7:30 - 10:30 AM

\$13 Adult
\$12 Senior
\$9 Child (5-10)
Free < 5 yrs.

ALL YOU CAN EAT!

Proceeds benefit the
Middletown Community

Event Location

Zion Lutheran Church
107 E Main Street
Middletown, MD



4th Annual
Middletown's Memorial Day Ceremony
Honoring Our Fallen Heroes

Monday, May 26, 2025

Flag Court at Memorial Park

South Church & Franklin Streets
Middletown, Maryland

11:00 AM

Hope to see you there

Bring a chair



★ Master of Ceremonies, Ed Moser, ★

Invocation & Benediction, Rev. Michael Rubeling from Holy Family

★ ROHRERSVILLE CORNET BAND CONCERT ★

★ Clopper-Michael Post #10 American Legion Honor Guard/Boonsboro ★

★ Presenting the Colors with a Three-Volley Rifle Salute ★

★ Burgess Miller & Commissioners Honor Our Fallen Heroes ★

★ Commentary on Sacrifices of Those Who Served ★

★ Laying of Wreaths at Memorials ★

★ TAPS ★



Special thanks to the Sons of AMVETS Squadron 9 for being our Tent Sponsor

Middletown's Memorial Ceremony is not an official component of the Department of Defense or any Military Service.



Country Roads & Gardens Tour

June 1 & 2, Saturday & Sunday, 10 am – 5 pm

(Tickets Available On-line at Eventbrite

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/country-roads-gardens-tour-tickets-864353593867?aff=oddttdtcreator>)

Enjoy a delightful day exploring charming country roads and beautiful gardens throughout the picturesque Maryland mountains and valleys of Middletown, Myersville, Wolfsville, and Smithsburg! This self-guided driving tour will take you to eight or more lovely garden spots to take in the natural beauty of history rich farmlands, memorial gardens, extensive landscapes, woodlands, private outdoor residences, and school educational gardens. In addition to the inspiring gardens, various locations will also feature "en plein air" artists, musicians, food trucks, specific garden activities and other garden and craft products from local vendors available for purchase. So get your tickets that are good for either day, mark your calendars and get ready for a scenic day of natural creativity and beauty at the following gardens:

- Valley Ho Farm on Picnic Woods Rd, Middletown
- Zion's Memorial Garden on W. Main St, Middletown
- Surreybrooke Gardens on Balt Nat Pike, Middletown
- Fishers Hollow Fairy Gardens near Myersville
- Stoney Gardens near Myersville and Wolfsville
- Wolfsville Elementary School in Wolfsville
- Edgewood Gardens on Balt Nat Pike, Myersville
- Painted Pastures on Little Antietam Rd, Smithsburg

Country Roads & Gardens Tour tickets are valid for both Saturday, June 1 and Sunday, June 2 and the tour will be a rain or shine event. You can start the tour at any of the garden locations by showing your online Eventbrite purchase confirmation to receive a tour brochure with a map and garden ticket list (each garden can only be visited once over the course of the tour weekend). Advance Eventbrite On-line tickets can be ordered at \$25 (plus processing fee) and Tour Day Tickets will be \$30 (only available at Myersville Town Hall). You can plan to visit the gardens all in one day or spread them out to cover each during the two days. Food trucks will be located at specific gardens or you can pick-up a lunch along the tour to enjoy a garden picnic. Tour proceeds will benefit local non-profit organizations like the Myersville-Wolfsville Area Historical Society (MWAHS), community programs and further beautification enhancements of participating gardens. The MWAHS will provide a local display at the Myersville Town Hall on Main Street, Myersville and will be the exclusive location to purchase tour tickets during the tour weekend in-person.



Christian Education



Unless otherwise noted, Sunday Morning Christian Education is always available! Grab a cup of coffee, a doughnut and join in the conversation no matter your age!

SUNDAY SCHOOL EDUCATION

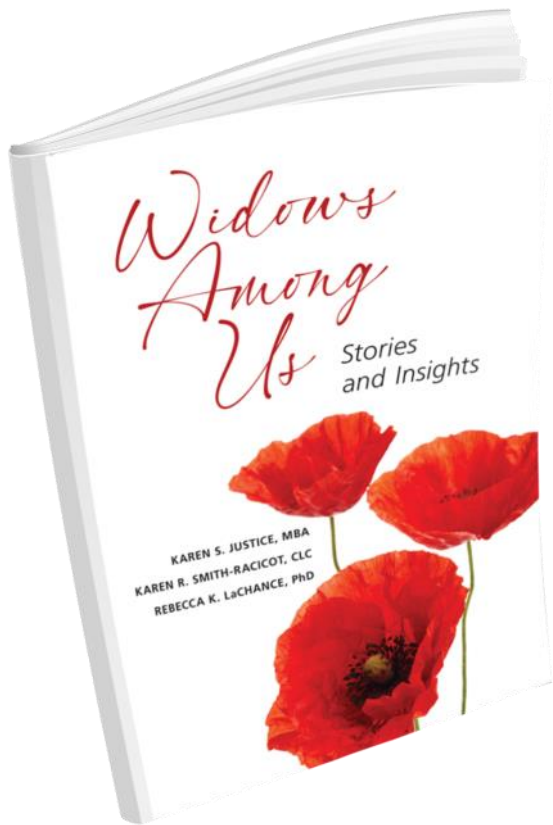
SUNDAYS AT 10 A.M.

ELEMENTARY, MIDDLE, & HIGH SCHOOL CLASSES

We are looking at the Small Catechism over the next few months. Come and bring your questions that you never got to ask in Confirmation Class.

Adult Sunday School Calendar

Date	Topic	Teacher
February 9 February 16	Grief Awareness	Linda Kinna-Engel
February 23 March 2 March 9 March 16	Book of Galatians Series Lesson 1: What Happens to People Pleasers? Lesson 2: Is There One, and Only One Gospel? Lesson 3: So...What About God's Rules Now? Lesson 4: How Do We Live by the Spirit?	Bruce McIntosh
March 23	Widows Among Us: Stories and Insights By Karen Justice/Karen Smith-Racicot/Rebecca LaChance	Karen Smith-Racicot
March 30 April 6 April 13	Mysteries of Worship Rituals Series: Why pastors rinse the wine chalice, Parament colors explained Where the unused wine, wafers, baptism water goes after the service	Pastor Matt Altar Guild
April 20	Easter/Breakfast (No Adult Sunday School)	////////////////////
April 27 May 4	1st Intergenerational Sunday School (All ages together in one class!) Tanzania Project	David Baker Lois Ahalt
May 11 May 18 May 25 June 1	Redirection: Discovering Hope in the Unexpected Book by Susan Vitalis	Sheri Huckleberry
June 8	Pentecost: Combined Service (No Adult Sunday School)	////////////////////



Join us for an engaging and enlightening seminar with Karen Smith Racicot, author of the new book, *Widows Among Us: Stories and Insights*. She and two other authors have recently released the book, which shares the stories of the three authors' individual journeys through widowhood. Those stories provide perceptive assurances, comfort, and understanding, not just for a widow, but for all women. The book includes comprehensive and practical information for *all* women to be prepared before widowhood occurs. The fourth part of the book is full of suggestions and insights on how family and friends can support a widowed loved one.

While the subject can be a difficult one, Karen's presentation style gives practical advice for all women in an engaging and informative way that you won't want to miss!

Karen can be reached via email at karensmithracicot@threewidows.com. Their website has practical checklists for preparation and other valuable information www.threewidows.com

VBS

SAVE THE DATE

Vacation Bible School
at Zion Lutheran Church

JULY 6-10 AGES 2-11

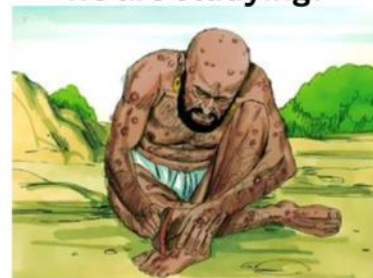
5:30 p.m. - 7:30 p.m. Dinner Included

Walk in Othello Park Bible Study



1901 Jefferson Pike, Knoxville, MD
Wednesday's @ 6:30 – 7:15 pm
April 23-May28

Guess what book of the Bible
we are studying?



And you thought you had problems...



YOUTH AND FAMILY MINISTRY

Across the board in churches in America today, youth ministry has seen a sharp drop in participation since the start of the pandemic. The only way to change that trend is by building, and in some cases rebuilding, relationships with youth, their parents, and their mentors. From the DayOff Programs, to FootPrints, Youth Group, Confirmation, and those Wednesday Night activities in Advent and Lent for children, we are committed to doing this work and we thank you for your support!



Know someone who is interested in joining our Ministry Team? Council recently approved the idea of working with Good Shepherd Lutheran Church in Frederick to find a Youth Director to serve both of our congregations. This means we are able to offer more hours and a better salary package. We still have to work out many of the details for this joint position, but it feels like the Holy Spirit is really moving us in this direction. If you know someone who would be perfect for this job or might be interested yourself, please reach out to Bruce McIntosh at macbru@comcast.net, chair of the Personnel Committee.

IGNITE YOUR FAITH

YOUTH NIGHT

YOUTH GROUP WILL MEET ON FIRST SUNDAY OF MONTH FROM 6-8 P.M.

YOUTH GROUP IS OPEN TO 5TH GRADERS, ALL MIDDLE AND HIGH SCHOOL AGE KIDS!

An opportunity for the youth to grow in spirit through worship, prayer, good food, fun games, and amazing company!

Confirmation

THE FIRST SUNDAY OF EACH MONTH
FROM 4-6PM
AVAILABLE BOTH IN-PERSON AND ON ZOOM

Midweek Lenten Children’s Program!
On Wednesdays in Lent, youth of all ages are invited to come at 6:30 p.m. for an interactive lesson while parents worship in the church!
And dinner is provided at 6 p.m.!

Maundy Thursday
One way we can teach the faith is through acting it out. Maundy Thursday worship is a perfect way to teach kids about Jesus’ final hours before his death. Worship this night will be interactive for everyone, especially kids! Dinner will be served at 6 p.m. and worship is at 7 p.m.

 **Summer Camp Registration is now open!**
Special Early-Bird pricing runs through February 17th.
The theme for 2025 is “God’s Word Comes Near.” **Register Today at www.mar-lu-ridge.org**
Scholarships from Zion are available!

2025 Footprints Upcoming Dates



March 9th

April 13th

May 11th

Join us on the second Sunday of each month at the 9:00 a.m. service for Footprints! Youth of all ages will gather together after the Prayer of the Day for a lesson and activity.

We will return to worship in time for communion.

If we have a 10 a.m. Joint Worship, then we will also have Footprints at that service.

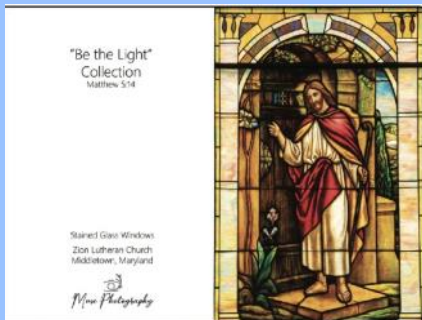
Community Easter Egg Hunt

Hop on over and join us!

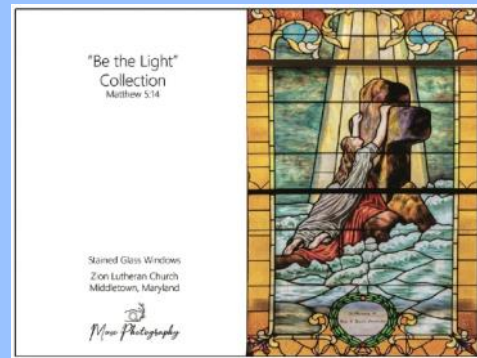
SATURDAY, APRIL 19
10 AM - NOON
ZION LUTHERAN CHURCH
107 WEST MAIN STREET
MIDDLETOWN, MD

Join us for a very special Easter celebration! There will be crafts, activities, a service project and an egg hunt! And don't forget to bring your baskets!

Take Zion's treasured windows home with you!



- Perfect gift for friends, family or yourself
- Keepsake box includes 12 blank note cards (2 of each window)
- Photographed by a local artist, Reanna Muse
- \$25.00 per box



• All proceeds go to "With Open Arms" Mar-Lu-Ridge Renovation Project and Zion's Tanzania Support Project

You can purchase the Cards in the Church office

Ministry Updates



Your Heart. Your Hands.

You have a heart for service, and the work of your hands is a blessing.

GHM's hands-on projects are a meaningful way to make a difference in the world. Our partners have asked for these specific items - they will be joyfully received overseas. Once delivered to GHM's warehouse in Minnesota, these projects are shipped by container along with vital medical supplies and equipment also requested by our partners.



Rolled Bandages Project

Mission hospitals and rural clinics are the frontline for healthcare for millions of people across the globe. Most lack even the most basic supplies, including bandages, and many have little or no access to clean water. Sterilization is difficult and it can be a challenge to have enough clean bandages for daily patient care. GHM rolled bandages help meet that need. Although most often used for wound care, the bandages can be useful in other ways at hospitals and clinics where resources are scarce. GHM rolled bandages have been spotted holding an IV in place, and tying up broken surgical lights. By the end of 2023 GHM had sent almost 2,800,000 bandages to international partners - that's more than 3,100 miles of bandages!

How can you get involved?

Please donate any used laundered **white** sheets to Zion and place them in the labeled bin located in the Quilters area. The sheets will be cut into long strips and then rolled using a handmade crank rolling machine. Various groups at Zion will be participating in this mission project.

For Questions see Lois Ahalt 301-514-5735

Ladies Spring Fling Dinner – May 7th



Ladies, you are cordially invited to join in Zion's annual Ladies' Spring Fling Dinner. Tickets will go on sale starting April 6. The cost is \$12 per person, kids ages 6 to 16 are \$6 and 5 and under are free. The menu will be fried chicken, scalloped potatoes, mac n cheese, green beans, fruit cup, dinner rolls and drinks! Dessert will be cake and ice cream. There will be a Paint Night to follow. You can paint inspiration rocks for yourself and for the community. Zion's youth will distribute rocks throughout neighborhoods.

Dinner is at 6 p.m. with the painting starting around 7 p.m.

Please RSVP to Church Office by May 2nd to purchase your tickets!

Questions? Contact the Church Office – 301-371-6500

The Golf Tournament is coming up on May 5!

You can help make this tournament a success by becoming a sponsor today! Your sponsorship goes towards the goal of raising \$10,000 towards the restoration and repair of the "Beacon in the Valley" steeple.

Do you play golf? Talk to your friends and form a foursome to play in the tournament.



Call the Office at 301-371-6500 or see one of our committee members and they will gladly answer any questions, sign you up to play or sign you up to be a sponsor today. All the forms for the Golf Tournament are on the bookcase outside the Office.

Vince Bello
Jenn Caulk
Darin Gordon
Megan Gunsallus
Deb Reichelt
Bruce Taylor

Jackie Bello
Doug Davis
David Gordon
Terry Poffinberger
Eric Reichelt



ZION GOLF TOURNAMENT ENTRY FORM



DATE: May 5th, 2025
TIME: Registration at 11:30 A.M. Shot Gun Start at 12:30 P.M.

PLACE: Richland Golf Club
50 Glenbrook Dr.
Middletown, MD 21769

ENTRY FEE: \$380 per foursome \$95 per single (includes: green fees, cart & catered Awards Banquet)
Payment due with Registration form before April 11, 2025.

****Dinner Banquet is Provided at 5:00**

\$400 per foursome \$100 per single after April 11, 2025

Format: Tournament will be played in Scramble with 4-person teams.

Procedure: Best Ball – Captain’s Choice

ENTRY FORM:

Golf Outing Sponsorships available:

- Gold— \$1500
- Silver—\$1000
- Bronze—\$500
- Hole sponsorships—\$100

**Tournament Director
Deb Reichelt**

**240-490-1961 Cell
301-371-6500 Office**

office@ Zionmiddletown.org

TEAM CAPTAIN NAME
(or single entry): _____

ADDRESS: _____

TELEPHONE: _____

EMAIL: _____

Team Members:

Player 2 Name: _____

cell phone # _____

Player 3 Name: _____

Cell phone # _____

Player 4 Name: _____

Cell phone # _____

Mailing Address*

*** Send Entry Forms & payment
to the address below**

**** Credit Card Payment is available
through Vanco**

**Zion Lutheran Church
Zion Golf Tournament
107 West Main Street
Middletown, MD 21769
301-371-6500**

Benefiting Zion’s Heritage Preservation Fund for the restoration of church steeple originally built in 1859.

Prayer Team Ministry Update

Zion's Prayer Team meets every Sunday evening at 6 p.m. via Zoom . All prayer requests are confidential.

You may submit a request at the Prayer Wall in the Sanctuary. There are slips of paper to write your request on and then place your request in one of the openings on the wall. A Prayer Team member will retrieve the paper and then pass the request on to the other team members.

You also may call the Church Office at 301-371-6500 and they will contact a team participant or you can contact a team participant directly. Our contact information is in the Church Directory. When we receive a request, each Prayer Team Member is contacted immediately and the prayers begin.



The Hearty House's mission is to end domestic violence, sexual assault, human trafficking and child abuse to provide victims with safety, shelter and support services. **At this time, Hearty House is in dire need of personal care items for their clients.**

Your generosity helps provide comfort, care, and dignity to survivors in need. We are collecting essential items to support those rebuilding their lives. Items that are needed include: **Personal Care items (deodorant, body wash, lotion, toothpaste, shampoo & conditioner, natural hair products, children's shampoo, bottled hand soaps), Health & Wellness items (cold/flu medicine, pain relievers, allergy relief, cough drops, Neosporin), Hygiene & Grooming (Loofahs, razors, tissues, tweezers, nail clippers, Q-tips), Grocery gift cards, journals, 2025 planners & calendars.** Every donation makes a difference. The collection box will be found by the mailbox area outside of the Office. A small donation today can make a major difference in someone else's life. The Quilters thank you in advance!



Church Picnic

Mark your calendars for the Church Picnic on June 22nd!

Zion will be having our annual Church Picnic on Sunday, June 22nd at 3:00 p.m. at Memorial Park. Family fun activities will begin at 3:30. Dinner will be served at 4:15 p.m. We will have hot dogs with all the trimmings. If you are able, please bring a side dish or dessert. Christian Fellowship will provide the hot dogs, steamers and drinks. **An RSVP for this event is helpful. Please let us know by June 13th if you are able to attend by calling 301-371-6500 or office@zionmiddletown.org** However, if your plans change and you are able to come, don't worry! We always have plenty of food to share. Anyone wishing to help with the picnic can also contact the Church Office.

After our picnic, Music and Worship will lead Vespers. Please bring a lawn chair to join in Vespers.



JOY +50 (Just Older Youth) Lunch

J.O.Y. 50+ seniors have been enjoying lunch and programs/bingo for the past few months. The J.O.Y 50+ usually meets on the third Wednesday at noon for lunch and a fun program. Cost is \$10 per person. Advance reservation is a must for planning purposes. Please call the Zion's Office at 301-371-6500 or Alexa at 301-514-4479 or email Alexa at alexamasser@gmail.com. Everyone welcome!



2025 JOY 50+ lunch dates

	Feb 19	Mar 19	Apr 16
May 21	Jun 18	Jul 16	Aug 20
	Sep 17	Oct 15	Nov 19

Snow policy: Joy +50 will follow the FPCS snow closings

GriefShare

Begins February 25th

The Spring cycle of GriefShare will begin on Tuesday, February 25th. GriefShare is a support group designed to help and provide encouragement after the death of a spouse, child, family member, or friend. The program is nondenominational and features biblical concepts for healing your grief. The group meets weekly for 13 sessions and there are three key parts to each session:

- ✝ Video Seminar
- ✝ Support Group discussion
- ✝ Workbook for personal study

Meetings will be held in the Living Library at Zion Lutheran Church from 6:00 p.m. until 8:00 p.m. If you have questions about GriefShare and want to talk with one of the leaders, please call Zion Church at 301-371-6500

Hope to Faith

If you have experienced a loss recently or at any time in your life, please know that you are welcome to attend for a time of fellowship and food!

Contact Dixie Eichelberger at 301-667-7586
for more information.

We meet on the last Monday of the month at 1 p.m. in the parking lot.

Hope

To

Faith



Noisy Offering Updates

November—ELCA World Hunger	\$371.60
December—Religious Coalition	\$241.35
January—Student Homelessness Initiative Partnership (SHIP)	\$358.32
Thank you to all who donated!	

Upcoming Noisy Offerings

February 15th and 16th	Allen P. Linton Emergency Shelter
March 15th & 16th	Lantern Hill
April 19th & 20th	On Our Own
May 17th & 18th	Heartly House

Food donations are needed now more than ever!

Food items in demand include:, Canned tomatoes diced or crushed, Rice-a Roni, Canned peas, Canned fruit, Sugar, Tea bags, Small cans of coffee, Crackers, jam or jelly, Jell-O or pudding mix, Salad dressing, & Instant potatoes

Donations can be dropped off in the shopping cart on the ramp or taken directly to the Food Bank on Wednesdays from 1-3 p.m.



WEEKEND BACKPACKS

Hunger doesn't take the weekend off

Our Backpack Ministry will be meeting the needs of students on the weekends when they do not receive food at school.

The critical need item for February is juice boxes and for March is individual cereal boxes including oatmeal.

Please consider donating one of those or writing a check to Zion and make sure you write "Weekend Backpack" on the memo line to help children throughout the school year.

Making an Impact

From an email from Pat Staples who is the lead coordinator of the clothing closet:

Today is a day of high emotions for many different reasons for so many people, so today I need to share as I sort through donations at the Clothes Closet. I realized there were 11, yes ELEVEN families. I know at least one was a new family who "shopped" with us this past week.

Our average a year ago was around 7 families each week. Our average has increased to around 10 families. This tells me there's a lot more people in need than we realize.

So, today I'm grateful for a community that supports our Clothes Closet. I'm humbled by the volunteers who freely give of their time. Thank you isn't enough, but know your efforts are noticed every day.

Clothes Closet Update

We are open for donations on Saturday mornings from 9 - 11 a.m. If you need to drop off after hours, there is a drop location below the front porch. Thank you!



Order Easter Flowers



The Altar Guild will be selling lilies and tulips and collecting for LWR Monetary Gifts through March 23, 2025. Easter flowers and LWR gifts are \$13.00 each. **All Easter flower orders and LWR gifts must be in by March 23.** No orders after that date please! Order

forms for Easter flowers and LWR gifts are on pages 33-34. Please complete the appropriate form and mail it with your check to Zion Lutheran Church, 107 W. Main Street, Middletown, MD 21769, or drop it off at the Church Office during office hours or after any service.

Homemade Apple Butter

We have pints still available for purchase in the Church Office.

**\$6 for a
Pint**



CARENET
Pregnancy Center of Frederick

Please help collect

Zion will be helping the Frederick Carenet Pregnancy Center again this year during Lent by taking an empty baby bottle and filling it with loose change or a check made payable to **THEM.**

They need to be returned to the **PURPLE** box in the church office by Easter.

Many thanks for always being a great supporter. May God continue to bless you and your families. Any questions, please email me at djb6025139@gmail.com. Thank you
Donna Jean

Donuts and coffee



Every Sunday

at 10 a.m.



SAVE A LIFE

BLEEDING IS THE #1 CAUSE OF PREVENTABLE DEATH

**FREE TRAINING BY BRUNSWICK
VOLUNTEER AMBULANCE & RESCUE**

Thursday, April 10th, 6 p.m. in the Social Room.

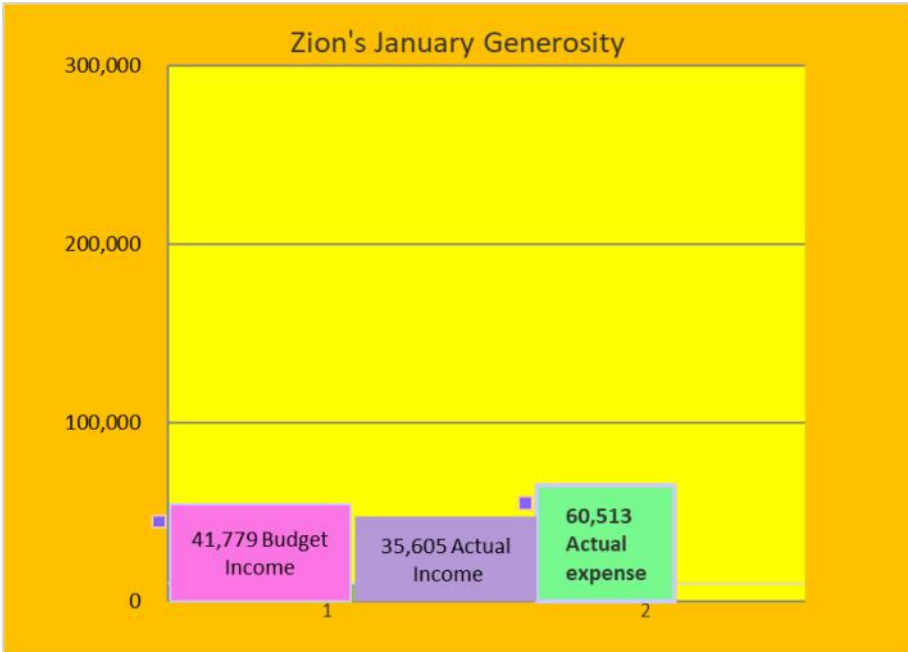
This event is being sponsored by the Safety and Security Ministry Team and is open to everyone in our congregation especially to our ushers, greeters, and worship leaders.



PLEASE LET BRYON BLACK
(BRYONBLACK@GMAIL.COM)

OR THE CHURCH OFFICE
(OFFICE@ZIONMIDDLETOWN.ORG)

**KNOW YOU ARE COMING SO WE CAN
HAVE ENOUGH EQUIPMENT AND
INSTRUCTORS**



Budget/Income Information

YTD as of January 31, 2025

YTD Proposed Budget income \$41,779.

vs YTD Actual Income \$35,605.

YTD Proposed Budget Expense \$61,347. vs

YTD Actual Expenses \$60,513.

Actual YTD Income is less expenses in January 2025 by \$24,908.

Aero Energy HOUSE OF WORSHIP PROGRAM

We'll Donate To Your Church When You Choose Aero Energy For Propane, Heating Oil or HVAC Services!

Aero Energy will donate \$0.04/Gallon of propane and heating oil used annually to your church. In addition to the donation for fuel we also now offer a HVAC/plumbing component to our program. Customers enrolled in our House of Worship program will receive a 10% (up to \$250 /year) donation to their church for heating and cooling/plumbing system sales and service.

Following the 2023-2024 heating season, Aero Energy was able to donate over \$35,000 to churches, and with your help we can top that number this year! If your church is able to round up 20 participating members, they could receive on average a donation of \$600 a year. Call 717-624-6721 for more information.



The ladies are back and funnier than ever. *A Second Helping* picks up the story in 1969 with a changing world. As Vietnam War protests swell and women everywhere demand equal pay for equal work, the ladies in the church basement kitchen face changes of their own. From the matriarch to the mom-to-be, the women find strength in each other as they deal with the changes from below the House of God! Playing at Way Off Broadway, Frederick MD. When: Sunday May 4, 2025. Doors open at 12:30 – Show starts at 2:15. Tickets are \$61 per person (includes dinner and gratuity). Contact Shelly Gladhill at 301-788-7585 or shellygladhill@gmail.com for tickets.

Hip, Hip Hooray! Hip, Hip Hooray!
Thanks to members from Zion, community members and Dempsey's Restaurant, we have recycled 250,246 aluminum cans. All the proceeds from the cans goes to fund our Youth Activities. Lee says, "Keep them coming!"



Time to Order Easter Flowers

Easter flower orders will be accepted through March 23, 2025. The cost for lilies and tulips is \$13.00 each.

All orders must be received by March 23, 2025. No orders after that date, please! Our supplier needs to know our total number early to meet our request.

Orders will be accepted by completing the form below and mailing it with a check to Zion Lutheran Church, 107 West Main Street, Middletown, MD 21769. You may also drop the form and check off at the church office during office hours or after any church service. Please mark your envelope "Easter Flowers".

2025 Order Form for Easter Flowers

Total Amount Enclosed \$ _____

____ Lily (\$13.00)

____ Tulips (\$13.00)

In Memory of:

Given by:

In Honor of:

Given by:

____ I will pick up ____ tulip ____ lily (Put in number you are picking up)



**Monetary Gift in Memory or Honor of
Loved One
(Alternative to Lily or Tulip)**

Zion is providing an opportunity to remember or honor a loved one with a monetary gift to Lutheran World Relief (LWR)—an alternative to purchasing a lily or tulip. All gifts will be combined to make a purchase from the LWR gift catalog to help a family and/or a community in need.

Monetary gifts will be accepted through March 23, 2025, by mailing the completed form below with a check to Zion Lutheran Church, 107 W. Main Street, Middletown, MD 21769. You may also drop off the form and check at the church office during office hours or after any service. Please mark your envelope “LWR”.

2025 Monetary Gift for LWR

Each gift is \$13.00

Total Amount enclosed
\$ _____

In Memory of:

Given by:

In Honor of:

Given by:

Thank You Notes

John Burrier would like to express his sincere appreciation for the birthday cards received for his recent 95th birthday.

Dear Zion,
 Today I came across my pink bag of my 99th birthday cards (all 50 of them) of July 11, 2024. I sat down and read each of them and realized that I had never thanked all those wonderful people because on that day I was visiting my daughter in North Carolina. Even though it is quite late, I want to thank all those who remembered me on that day.
 Adriene Rhoderick

We are deeply grateful for our whole church family for the love, prayers, food, generosity, cards, phone calls and visits as we grieve over the recent loss of our little Marc. There are no words to express how you all have touched our hearts during our darkest days. As our grief is far from over, we ask for your continued prayers and to keep Marc's memory alive by sharing your memories of him.

Thank you in Christ's love,
 The Long Crow,
 Gunsallus, and
 Marcantonio
 families



With Sympathy



With our deepest sympathy we keep in our thoughts and prayers the families of:

**Marc Antonio Ruger Long Crow Gunsallus
 James Alan Palmer**



**James Richard Staples
 Tucker Michael Engstrom**

Rowan Shay Edelblute



News to share?

Please let us know of important events, births, deaths, etc. that have happened over the past few months. Email or call the Church Office.



Leslie Lent-Santora, Dianne Shafer, Mary Beachley, Brenda Ward, Gwen Bowlus, Mike Main, The Gunsallus Family, Christa Grunwald, Kathi Hayter, Junior Wiles, J. Richard Staples, Samn Huffer, Ruth Ann Derr, Barry B., Katana Lewis, Debby Knipple, Larry DiGiulio, Ken Young, Carol O'Brien, Mike Fath, John Lettiere, Jr., Ursula Powell, Pat Hansen, Jane Nalborczyk, Eric Kinna, Ronnie Kinna, Linda Stottlemeyer, Anita, Gary, Kay Wachter, Michael Easton, Tristan Vail, Beth Smith, Lorene Huffer, Bruce Albright, Marty Appleby, Judith Smith, Jackie Bello, Trish Tollefson, Skippy Zimmerman, Sarah Gladhill, Ruby Pyles, Addison Hopson, Kevin Kinna, Deb Kahihikolo

Please be sure the church is notified if you are hospitalized and if you wish to be placed on the prayer list or would like visitation. For the most up-to-date prayer list, visit our website and look under the member's tab.

Evangelical Lutheran Church Zion

107 W Main Street

Middletown MD 21769

www.zionmiddletown.org



The work and mission at Zion can only happen through your gifts of time, talent and treasure. We cannot do our work without your support. To give financially, please give either online or drop your Offering in the offering plate as the ushers come up and down the pews. You can also scan the QR code to be taken to our online giving portal.

AND THANK YOU!