



Zion Lutheran Church

The Tidings August 2026

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Watch worship services live
on Sundays at 9:30 A.M. by visiting:

www.zionferguson.com

and clicking

LIVE STREAM

100 years of Blessings



DORIS MCCALL'S FAMILY INVITES YOU TO
AN OPEN HOUSE TO CELEBRATE

SEPT | SAT | 2026
19

1:30 P.M. – 4:30 P.M.

ZION LUTHERAN CHURCH (UPPER ROOM)
123 CARSON RD., FERGUSON, MO 63135

DORIS HAS REQUESTED NO GIFTS
WE LOOK FORWARD TO SEEING YOU THERE!

PLEASE RSVP BY **SEPTEMBER 12TH** TO CYNTHIA
CYNTHIA_MCCALL@YAHOO.COM

On the Edge

August's gospel readings are overflowing with favorites: the Feeding of the 5,000, Jesus walking on water—"Fear not!"—the Canaanite woman's bold insistence that even the dogs eat the crumbs, Peter the rock, "Who do you say that I am?", and finally, "Take up your cross and follow me."

These texts arrive at a perfect moment for us. Zion has entered a new stage of discernment—one focused on exploring partnerships as a faithful and practical way of imagining our future. I am grateful that August's readings root us in God's commandments and promises. They give us solid ground: reminders of our ancestors' faith and a firm foundation for recognizing God's presence here and now as we begin this shared exploration.

This next stage of our journey is what theologians call *liminal space*—the in-between. A time when one foot steps into the waters of Zion's future while the other remains planted in our past and present. Liminal space can feel unsettling. Yet I love the image from my colleague Mary Nilsen: "*Liminal space is creative space.*"

And dear church, creativity is not only our responsibility, it is also the work of God—the Holy Spirit. Being in an in-between place is like entering a school of sorts, an experimental and experiential space "where we learn God's unique way of working. Unlike humanity, which is preoccupied with 'honor, power, wealth, knowledge,' God looks into the depths—'where there is poverty, disgrace, squalor, misery, and anguish'" (Lois Malcolm). That is where God's creative energy takes root.

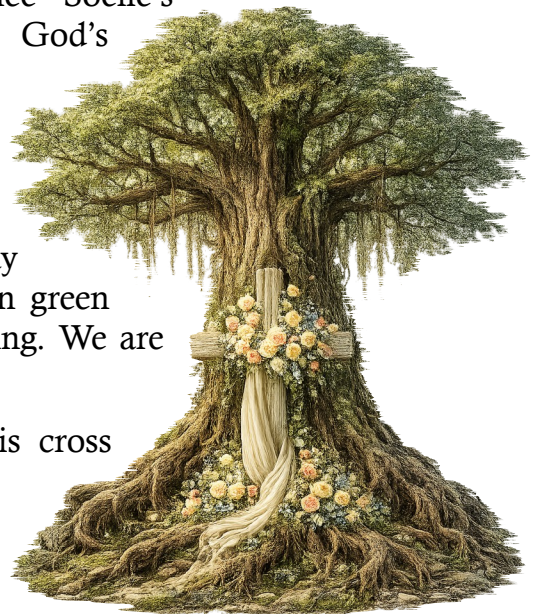
The creative work of the Holy Spirit, which is sanctification, is both personal and communal: **it aims at the formation of a new community centered in the Messiah's life.** My hope and prayer is that we hear, trust, and follow that creative Spirit throughout this year-long journey—both inwardly, as we reflect on ourselves, and outwardly, as we begin engaging with others.

I love that our final gospel passage this month is Matthew 16's "Take up your cross." Too often, this text is used to glorify suffering or justify punishment. But I believe the cross is where God reveals power made perfect in weakness. There are many creative ways to understand the cross, and I'm drawn to Dorothee Soelle's reflections, which connect Jesus' Jewish roots to God's creative, life-giving work:

"To choose life means to embrace the cross. It means to put up with the cross, the difficulties, the lack of success, the fear of standing alone. Tradition has never promised us a rose garden. To embrace the cross today means to grow into resistance. And the cross will turn green and blossom. We survive the cross. We grow in suffering. We are the tree of life."

May God's creative Spirit empower us to follow this cross faithfully in these liminal times of Zion's life.

- Pastor Matt



August Birthdays

29th Carol Tillman

Learning About Sacraments & Communion

This month, our youngest members will have three weeks of intentional education about the Sacrament of Holy Communion! On August 2nd, 9th, and 16th, Miss Norma and Pastor Matt will share the stories of the Passover, the Last Supper, and why Communion is a regular part of our life and faith together.

It is exciting to deepen the understanding of them, and all of us, as we taste and see the promises of God's love and forgiveness!

Things to Know About August

- **Journey Through Revelation** Bible Study begins 8/3 from 10:30 to noon
- **Backpack Blessing** on 8/16
- **Tidings Deadline** is 8/24
- **Laundry Love** is 8/24 from 6 to 8 PM
- **Pokeno** is 8/27 at Delmar North
- **Joint Worship at Atonement** on 8/30; a celebration of Pr. Larry's official retirement to follow
- **Food Pantry Goal** = Saltine Crackers

A Message from the President

Dear Zion Friends,

Thank you so much for all of your engagement these past ten months or so as we processed where we are as a congregation and discerned what best to focus on for the next year. It was very clear that we value each other and our history and share a hope for the future.

Please prayerfully consider joining one of the three ministry teams we talked about at the Voters' meeting on July 19th, if you haven't already. Look for details on these teams in this newsletter. All of us coming together, with the help of the Holy Spirit's guidance, will lead us through this liminal space that Pastor Matt describes in his article. Together, we've got this!

Blessings,

Pam



Summer Thanks!

A few special thanks are in order as we look back over a busy few months in our church life together:

Special Thanks to Pam Statler and Larry Wolk for their extra time and coordination working to ensure our HVAC and electrical systems are back to normal after our summer PowerSurge. Thanks also abound to Norma Wolz for the outstanding spread of fruit and treats for the Congregational Voters' Meeting on July 19th. Thanks to everyone for your flexibility as we've navigated the power outage, AC breakdown, and "going with the flow" of life together!

- Pastor Matt



Partnerships: Exploring God's Future Together

We have now committed to spend the next 9-12 months focusing on partnerships. Our first step as a congregation is to get organized! I invite you to participate in one of three Ministry Teams that will help us carry out our Next Steps work together.

PARTNERSHIP TEAM: This group will gather regularly to discern and learn what partnership means for Zion and what values and practices are most important for us, and for potential ministry partners. Self-study, conversations with others, and learning about area ministries will be a part of this group.

RIC WELCOME TEAM: This group will organize and facilitate the learning process and begin the formal steps necessary for Zion to become an Open & Affirming congregation to LGBTQIA+ folks. Education planning and reading will be a part of this group's work, culminating in the drafting of our Welcome Statement.

HOUSE IN ORDER TEAM: This group will focus on the many moving parts of our life as a church to help ensure we're ready to act and decide when we reach a place to make a big decision. This group will focus on our building, stuff, administration and finances, relationships with the Bridge, and getting our church "house" in order.

Confirmation for All

The Central States Synod is putting together synod-wide confirmation. Details are in the works, but here are the basics:

- Classes will run from September 3 through April 15. We will meet via Zoom from 6:30 – 7:45 pm on the 1st & 3rd Thursdays.
- We will be on a two-year cycle. One year will be a Catechism year, and one will be a Bible year. We will be starting this fall with the Catechism year.
- **Anyone of any age can participate.** (It's not just for students)
- Each student will receive a Confirmation Kit containing items that will be used throughout the year.
- There will be a weekly homework assignment.
- There will be some in-person retreats and/or camps offered along the way to connect in person with the other students.

We are hosting orientation meetings for parents, pastoral leaders, and students. We will talk about expectations, logistics, and answer your questions. RSVP is not required, but appreciated for the orientation sessions. Participation in the orientations does not create any obligation to participate in they confirmation. This is simply your opportunity to learn about the program and ask questions. Visit css-elca.org/workshops#confirmation for more information.

Backpack Blessing

Sunday, August 16th



BIBLE *Study*

Beginning August 3rd, join Pr. Matt in the Upper Room for an in-depth look at the Book of Revelation. Using Barbara Rossing's *Journey Through Revelation*, we'll unpack what these crazy images mean and how they offer courage and hope to people in every generation.

Treats, coffee, and a Bible study book will be provided. Bring your favorite translation of the Bible.

Every Monday 10:30 AM - Noon

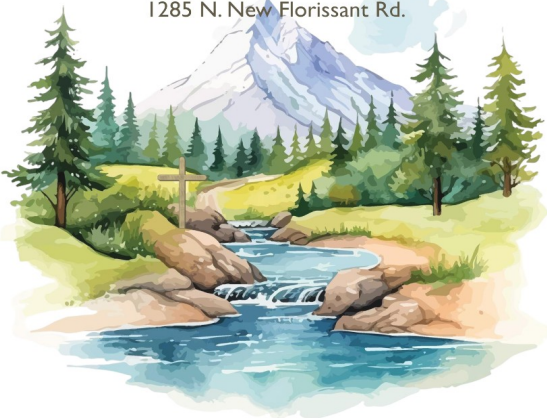
JOIN US

Sunday, August 30th at 9:30 A.M.

FOR WORSHIP & TO CELEBRATE
THE RETIREMENT OF

REV. LARRY LEMKE

LUTHERAN CHURCH
of the ATONEMENT
1285 N. New Florissant Rd.



THE GREAT RIVERS COLLABORATIVE TRIVIA NIGHT
Benefiting The Child Advocacy Center of Northeast Missouri

Friday September 25th
Atonement Lutheran Church Gym
1285 N. New Florissant Rd, Florissant MO 63031
Doors open at: 06:30pm
Game starts at: 07:00pm

\$200 table of 8
Soda Provided
Bring your own Snacks

For registration & sponsorship opportunities
Scan Me!! kkinney@cacnemo.org

THE CHILD ADVOCACY CENTER OF NORTHEAST MISSOURI
The Great Rivers Collaborative

Ice Cream Social

Bridging Ministries
(UCC Churches of North County)
invite you to an
Ice Cream Social
at Church of the Master
on Sun,
Aug 15th
at 3:00
P.M.

Zion Council Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, June 9, 2026 – 6:30PM (Zoom Meeting)

In attendance: Pam Statler, Stacey Miller, Kristen Kinney, Pastor Matt Schlake-Kruse, Jay Martin, Pat Martin, Johnnie Tucker, Erma Miller

Absent: Richard Schademann, Jan Roevekamp

OPENING AND PRAYER: Pam

PASTOR'S REPORT AND DISCUSSION: Pastor Matt

- Synod Assembly was nice and went well
- Upper Room Worship is also going well
- June 14th, congregational conversation - straw poll
 - Pastor Matt introduced the Council making a vote to proceed with moving towards education in the RIC path – the discussion during congregational conversations showed that the congregation is ready and willing to begin the process.
 - Kristen made a motion for the council to vote to formally begin the RIC Discernment process - seconded by Jay Martin - discussion included going over the survey that the congregation can take and some other more logistical questions - Motion passed
 - Straw poll will consist of these items (to be refined by Next Steps Task Force):
 - Maintain the Current Path
 - Collaborate with The Bridge North County
 - Explore & Develop Models for Multi-Congregation Outreach/Partnerships
- Pastor Matt's Parental Leave
 - Will take 2 weeks starting October 19th
 - Will take 6 weeks in January/February/March time frame

CONGREGATIONAL CONVOS & NEXT STEPS TASK FORCE

- Discussed during Pastor's report
- Next meeting June 29th

VOTERS' MEETING ON JULY 19TH

- Straw Poll and RIC
- Budget discussion as well

TREASURER'S REPORTS

- Financial reports were submitted for council review - Check Register, balance sheet, income statement, and monthly report
- Paid 2 months of property insurance – the property insurance is paid on the 31st of the month but might not come out until the 1st

UPDATES:

- **Great Rivers Collaborative (GRC)**
 - Meeting in May
 - Discussing working together to do God's Work Our Hands
 - Presentation from a member of Living Lord in Lake Saint Louis – is on Synod Council and has offered to talk to congregations in the GRC to figure out what their vision for the future is – meeting with some churches to try to get ideas and move forward
- **Member Care Team**
 - Shorter meeting
 - All in all – things are okay – has been a year of hard things happening to our members
 - Judy Stoverink is having knee replacement in July
- **Community in Unity**
 - Baby Shower was a success – 13 mothers and guests, 40 people total
 - Meg Martin from CrossRoads Counseling was there and talked to the mothers to discuss the services they offer as well
 - Feed my Starving Children is coming up – 14 people were signed up from Zion
 - God's Work Our Hands – Discussing more at GRC meeting in July – planned for September 13th
- **Space Sharing - Room One and fish fryers**
 - Conversations continue
 - Working on clearing Room One because items needed in there could be stored in a closet
 - Agreed to share folding chairs so we can get rid of our folding chairs which have been unused for a long time. Chairs were sold on Facebook Marketplace
- **Property concerns**
 - Working on getting bids for concrete repairs to the front stairwell off the parking lot with the iron railing
 - Will be looking at the main sanctuary doors as well – they stick

CONFIRM APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES FROM MAY 2026 MEETING

- Motion made to accept meeting minutes that were approved by Pat, Pastor Matt Seconded, approved

NO MEETING IN JULY

CLOSING PRAYER & MEETING ADJOURNED 7:41PM

NEXT MEETING DATE – AUGUST 11TH

Zion Lutheran – Voters’ Meeting Minutes

Sunday, July 19, 2026 – After Worship/Zoom

OPENING PRAYER AND WELCOME: Pam Statler

RECOMMENDATION FROM NEXT STEPS TASK FORCE: Pastor Matt

- The straw poll showed that the general agreement amongst the congregation was Path 3- Focus on Partnership: Exploring God’s Future Together
- Focusing on Service/Outreach came in Second
- Partnering with the Bridge came in third
- Doing nothing came in last
- Because of these results, the Next Steps Task Force recommends that the congregation vote that Zion select Path 3- Partnerships: Exploring God’s Future Together as our focus for the next 9-12 months
 - Motion made by Stacey Miller, seconded by Bill, discussion from Bill regarding a collaboration meeting and the positive information that came out of that, Linn asked clarifying questions regarding where worship might happen if we find a partner (everything is on the table as an option and will be discerned), approved by congregation. Motioned carried

WHAT’S NEXT?

- Next step as a congregation is to get organized
- Congregation is invited to participate in one of three Ministry Teams that will help us carry out our Next Steps work together
 - Partnership team – Deb Murrish
 - Gather to discuss regularly to discern and learn what partnership means for Zion – keeping with our Full Communion Partnerships and think beyond the GRC in regard to ELCA Lutheran Church’s
 - RIC Welcome Team – Kristen Kinney
 - Organize and facilitate the learning process and begin the formal steps necessary for Zion to become an Open & Affirming congregation to LGBTQIA+ folks. This will culminate in the drafting of our Welcome Statement
 - Council voted to move forward with becoming a RIC church based off the understanding that the church survey showed that Zion was ready to move forward with becoming Reconciling in Christ
 - House in Order Team – Pam Statler
 - This group will focus on the many moving parts of our life as a church to help ensure we’re ready to act and decide when we reach a place to make a big decision – focus will be on building, stuff, administration and finances, relationship with the Bridge, and getting our church “house” in order

FINANCIAL UPDATE

- Pam Statler presented the budget showing where we are currently
- Still on track for the deficit we predicted in 2026 budget
- We take money out of the investments when we need cash. Investments still increasing in value

APPROVAL OF PRIOR MEETING MINUTES (DECEMBER 14, 2025)

- Motion made to approve the meeting minutes from the prior voters meeting in December by Bill Budenholzer, seconded by Ralph Taylor, approved by council

CLOSING PRAYER: Pastor Matt

MEETING ADJOURNED AT 11:36AM

18 VOTING MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE, 1 ASSOCIATE MEMBER

Zion Lutheran Church

August Calendar

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
Aug 2 9:30am-Worship	3 10am-Bible Study 1:00pm-Worship Team 6:30pm-Member Care	4	5 6:30pm-Partnership Meeting	6	7	8
9 9:30am-Worship	10 10am-Bible Study	11 7:00pm-Council	12	13 6:30pm-CIU	14	15
16 9:30am-Worship & Backpack Blessing	17 10am-Bible Study	18	19	20	21	22
23 9:30am-Worship & Noisy Change	24 TIDINGS DEADLINE 10am-Bible Study 6pm-Laundry Love	25	26	27 11:30am-Pokeno @ Delmar North	28	29  C Tillman
30 9:30am-Worship @ Atonement 10:45am- Pr. Larry Retirement Party	31 10am-Bible Study	Sep 1	2	3	4	5

Zion Lutheran Church

Serving on Sundays in August

	Aug 2	Aug 9	Aug 16	Aug 23	Aug 30
Presiding	M Schlake-Kruse	R Schademann	M Schlake-Kruse	P Schaefer	9:30 AM @ Atonement
Music Accompanist	-	J Martin	TBD	J Martin	-
Assisting Minister	-	N Wolz	P Statler	J Roevekamp	-
Lector	-	D Balestier	K Malin	K Kinney	-
Children's Message	-	N Wolz	M Schlake-Kruse	K Kinney	-
Ushers	-	J Roevekamp	S Dunham	K Malin	-
Altar Guild	-	K Malin	K Malin	K Malin	-
Video Streaming	B Budenholzer	P Statler	K Kinney	B Budenholzer	-

* Scheduled servers are subject to change at the discretion of organization leaders.
If you have a schedule conflict, please inform the Church office of any changes or schedule swaps.

Zion Lutheran Church
123 Carson Road
Ferguson, MO 63135
314.522.0100 Office
office@zionferguson.com
www.zionferguson.com



**Celebrating
God's Grace**

August 2026

Zion Leaders

Congregation Council

Pastor: Matt Schlake-Kruse
PMA: Richard Schademann
President: Pam Statler
Vice President: Stacey Miller
Secretary: Kristen Kinney
Treasurer: Jan Roevekamp
Member At-Large: Jay & Pat Martin
Member At-Large: Erma Miller
Member At-Large: Rich Schademann
Member At-Large: Johnnie Tucker

Member Care Ministry

Ron Devenport
Wanda Devenport
Sue Dunham
Linn Moore
Richard Schademann*

Committee Chairs

Finance: Pam Statler
Property: Johnnie Tucker
Stewardship: Pam Statler

Organizations

Hospitality: Annis Tucker
Norma Wolz
Altar Guild: Deb Balestier

Team Leaders

Worship: Norma Wolz
Community in Unity: Stacey Miller
Education: Richard Schademann
Financial Sustainability: Pam Statler
Alt. Worship: Deb Murrish

Team Members:

Worship Team

Norma Wolz*
Bill Budenholzer

Community in Unity Team

Stacey Miller*
Pam Statler
Bill Budenholzer
Linn Moore
Deb Murrish
Kristen Kinney
Justin Kinney
Richard Schademann

Education Team

Norma Wolz
Richard Schademann

Financial Sustainability Team

Pam Statler
Justin Kinney
Jan Roevekamp

Alternative Worship Team

Deb Murrish*
Kristen Kinney
Christine Walters
Bill Budenholzer
Pam Statler