



Zion Lutheran Church

The Tidings February 2026

Lent

B E G I N S

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

www.zionferguson.com

and clicking

LIVE STREAM

Ash Wednesday

Bible Study

February 18th

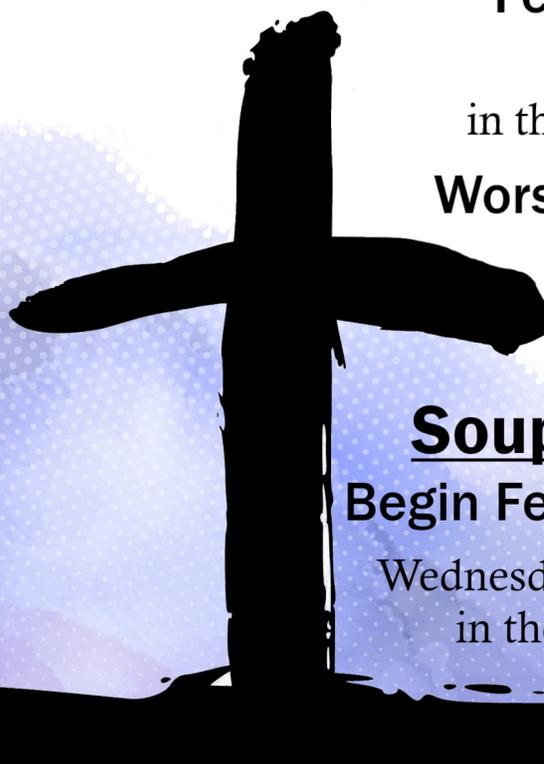
10:30 to Noon
in the Upper Room

Worship at Noon

Soup Suppers

Begin February 25th

Wednesdays at 6:15 PM
in the Upper Room



*In the midst of earthly life, fear and death beset us;
Who attends and hears our cry, who does not forget us?*

You only, God, you only.85

In you our forebears put their trust, hoped in you and were not crushed.

**Holy and righteous God! Holy and mighty God! Holy and all-merciful Savior! Everlasting
God!**

*Though death would torment us, let us not sink in the dust.
Lord, have mercy. – Susan Palo Cherwien, All Creation Sings #1026*

Christmas is normally the season where we think and talk about the incarnation. God in flesh appearing. As we begin our practice of Lent (beginning on Ash Wednesday, February 18th), I want to encourage you, dear church, to think and talk about the incarnation—the Body of Christ, the hurts and pains we know and the cries and pleas of our world—over the next 40+ days.

The text of a newer hymn, Susan Palo Cherwien's *In the Midst of Earthly Life*, provides a powerful framework for what Lent can offer us as people of faith.

1. In the midst of earthly life, we know and are witnesses to the pain and suffering of our neighbors. How true this has felt as we witness in solidarity with our siblings in Minnesota. In all aspects of our lives, the traditions of lament in the psalms and Hebrew Bible give us safe space to be honest with God and to confess and cry out. “God, earthly life—the suffering and pain—are just too much.” I hope this Lent offers us space to reflect and lament the ways fear, death, despair and hopelessness are real and present emotions to the bodily pains of our world and the emotional aches and sufferings of our neighbors.
2. In the midst of pain and suffering, we can look to our “forebears,” to the teachings and ministry of Jesus, to see that God’s love really does have skin on, and skin in the game. Our laments are important to God, and in the midst of deep suffering and pain, we are reminded of the resistance and hope that have sustained the weary: God alone can save! It’s not up to me to save the world or usher in God’s reign. “Right now, *and at all times*, God is at work redeeming the world and inviting us into a deeper relationship and ministry with God.” Jesus’ end-of-life story shows God present even in the places it seems like fear, death, and state-sponsored violence are winning. The stories we gather around each week in worship testify to the people to whom God has spoken grace and truth.
3. In the midst of our messy humanity, sometimes all we have to offer is the prayer, “Lord, have mercy.” I love the last couplet of this hymn: “Though death would torment us, let us not sink in the dust.” God’s forgiveness, sealed in baptism, baked into the body and blood of Communion each Sunday- is the tangible, fleshy, incarnational sign that even in death, we haven’t reached the end of the story. God won’t let us sink in the dust—though our foreheads are marked with that ashy cross to start Lent. God’s not through redeeming, restoring, and re-imagining creation. God’s not through with us. Lord, have mercy.

In the midst of earthly life, God is present and active. This promise accompanies us, so that our Lent is not woe, but also blessing; not parched places along, but a watered garden; not just death, but new life, rising, green.

Blessings to you this Lent!

Pr. Matt

February Birthdays

- 5th Ruth Krueger
- 11th Bill B.
- 18th Wanda Devenport
Paul Herrmann



Warming Center

The Community in Unity Team is asking for donations of warm socks for the warming center. The Warming Center [hosted by St. Peter's UCC] is a place homeless people can take shelter overnight when the temps drop below freezing. In addition to socks...pants, hoodies, sweaters, and hand warmers would also be greatly appreciated.

Things to Know About February

- Congregational Conversation #4 will take place after church on Sunday, February 8th
- The "In the Midst of the Passion" Bible Study begins on Wednesday, February 18th (Ash Wednesday) at 10:30 AM in the Upper Room
- Ash Wednesday Worship is at noon following the Bible Study
- Soup Suppers will be every Wednesday in Lent beginning February 25th
- We'll continue collecting cans of soup through the month of February for St. Stephen's Food Pantry
- Fellowship will be on February 22nd
- Pokeno is February 26th at 11:30 AM

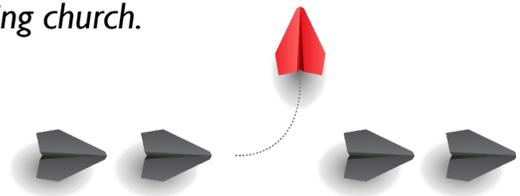
Wednesday Bible Study In the Midst of the Passion

Each Wednesday in Lent, starting Ash Wednesday (February 18th), join Pastor Matt from 10:30-12 Noon in the Upper Room as we dive into the story of Christ's Passion from Matthew. Coffee and treats will be provided. Zoom links for participants will also be available. Bring your favorite biblical translation

Wednesday Nights In the Midst of Change

We continue the Zion tradition of Soup and Salad beginning on February 25th. A sign-up sheet will be available for those who would be willing to provide each evenings' dinner. Our evening devotion will focus on the theme "Making Change."

Change is a constant in our lives. Some changes mark gradual transitions, as when daytime shifts toward twilight or winter turns to spring. Others happen in the blink of an eye, separating time into "before" and "after". We choose to undergo some changes after carefully considering our options, while others are forced upon us. In the weeks, days, and hours before Jesus' crucifixion, the disciples also experienced change: a change of venue as the gates of Jerusalem approached; a change of plans as their long-awaited. Messiah was arrested and tried; a change of circumstance as the crowds shouted "Crucify!" Change is hard. We long for the expected and familiar, but all too often find ourselves in the midst of uncertainty and the unknown. Come explore what scripture, song, and our Christian tradition have to say to us as Zion continues to adapt to the changing ways of being church.



A Message from the President

Dear Zion Family,

I want to thank everyone who has participated in our Congregational Conversations so far. I believe we have shared our experiences, strength, and hope with each other each time. When we met in January to think about our "assets" in five different categories, I was impressed with how many we shared and how they painted a picture of Zion and who we are.

Please come on February 8th to connect the dots of our assets and help envision a future of using our gifts to serve God and our neighbors. A Zoom link will be available for those who want to participate remotely.

Blessings,

Pam 

What is Lent Again?

A brief reflection from Bishop Deon Johnson,
Diocese of Missouri (Episcopal Church)



The season of Lent is a time of repentance, renewal, and return. Rooted in the ancient practices of the Church, Lent invites us into forty days of intentional self-examination and prayer as we prepare to walk with Christ toward the cross and the promise of resurrection. Lent is marked not by despair but by honesty; a season that tells the truth about our lives, our world, and our deep need for God's mercy and grace.

Throughout Lent, the Gospel readings trace Jesus' journey toward Jerusalem, confronting temptation, injustice, suffering, and the cost of faithful love. These stories invite us to look inward and outward, to notice where we have turned away from God and neighbor, and to open ourselves again to the transforming power of grace.

Lent is also a season of hope and reorientation. Through confession and forgiveness, we are not weighed down but set free; freed to be reconciled, restored, and renewed in Christ. As we practice repentance, we are reshaped for mission, learning once more how to live as Easter people even as we walk the road of the cross. In this holy season, the Church invites us to return to the Lord with our whole hearts, trusting that God's mercy is steadfast, and that beyond the wilderness lies new life.

Black History Month: What It Means to Me

by ELCA Seminarian Clair Minson

What began as “Negro History Week” in 1926 — created by historian Dr. Carter G. Woodson out of his concern that young African Americans lacked an education about their own heritage and ancestors — has since expanded to what we now know and observe as “Black History Month.” Woodson, a life-long educator, understood the power of knowing one’s history and one’s ancestral heritage. Knowing that you are part of a long legacy of people who have the capacity to create whole societies can ground you in the belief that you too can do anything. Not knowing this history can become a seeding ground for internalized oppression.

As Nikole Hannah-Jones writes in her book *The 1619 Project: A New Origin Story*, “The vision of the past I absorbed from school textbooks, television, and the local history museum depicted a world, perhaps a wishful one, where Black people did not really exist. This history rendered Black Americans, Black people on all the earth, inconsequential at best, invisible at worst.” I suspect that this erasure of Black his- and her-story is what Woodson was confronting through the development of Negro History Week.

As people of faith, steeped in the tradition of remembering and honoring our ancestors, we know the power of hearing, repeating and internalizing the miraculous stories of Moses, Joshua, Mary and Paul. Despite thousands of years of separation, we rely on these stories to help us cling to our faith and to a God who can at times feel very distant, despite always being with us. Understanding this, we perhaps also understand that recalling the stories of our Black ancestors is equally as powerful and necessary.

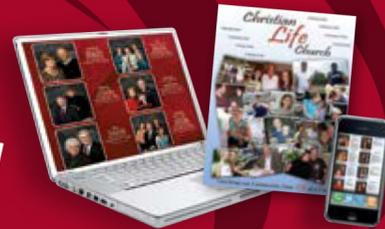
In preparation for this blog, I sat with the question “What does Black History Month mean to me?” and after some time an answer surfaced. To me, Black History Month is not just an obligatory nod to African American people; it’s a reminder of the strength and resilience of a people who, despite being erased from history and relegated to the margins of society, continue to contribute to the flourishing of our society. It’s a reminder of who we are and whose we are. It’s a reminder from “whence we came” and a vision for where we can go. It’s a clarion call to those who feel lost and need a reminder that their stories and their lives matter.

Black History Month is an opportunity for us as Christians to live into our call to be countercultural and share histories that many in society want to censure. It is an opportunity to live into the commitments we have made as a denomination to honor, protect and value the lives of people of African descent. I ask you, as people of faith, steeped in the tradition of remembering and honoring our ancestors, the same question: What does Black History Month mean to you?



**BLACK
HISTORY
MONTH**

Dear Church *family,*
It's time for a New Directory!



*Celebrating faith.
Connecting families.
Sharing hope.*

When people enter the doors of our church they are looking for a place to belong. Our directory brings us together to develop new relationships, connect with our own families and reconnect with those we haven't seen in a while. Join us for this "Connections Event" and be part of what God is doing right here at our church!

Directory Committee

Connections Event

Our church directory will not be complete without you. Join us to celebrate faith and family with our new church family album.

- **Schedule your professional photography session when you stop by the sign-up table at church or simply go online and follow the instructions below.** If we don't see your name on our list of appointments, you will receive a phone call inviting you to participate.
- **Everyone who is photographed by Universal will receive a complimentary 8 x 10 portrait and a directory!**
- **Universal provides a complete professional portrait studio right here at our church!** You'll enjoy a variety of poses, backgrounds, portrait sizes, finish and framing options AND have the opportunity to purchase portraits to give to family and friends.

Set your appointment with Universal today!



*Gathering families,
Connecting generations.*



Where: Zion Lutheran Church
When: Wednesday, March 11, 2026

Time slots are between 2:00 PM and 8:48 PM (12 min intervals)
Sign up on the Cry Room Window in the Sanctuary OR online by going to ucdir.com and entering church code: mo446 and password: zionpics to schedule your appointment.

Zion Council Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, January 13, 2026 – 6:30PM (Zoom)

In Attendance: Pastor Matt Schlake-Kruse, Kristen Kinney, Pam Statler, Jan Roevekamp, Ron and Wanda Devenport, Stacey Miller, Johnnie Tucker, Erma Miller
Absent: Richard Schademann, Jay/Pat Martin (e-mail communication error by Pam Statler)

OPENING AND PRAYER: Pam

PASTOR'S REPORT AND DISCUSSION

- Question to get us started: What individual assets do you bring to the Zion Church Council?
- Focus of first quarter is to look at every layer of Zion's communications to help come up with a strategy for communication and who does what regarding communication
- Plan to focus on improving our personal and collective conflict management skills
- Increase in health concerns in the congregation; hospitalizations and health issues
- Very positive worship on the January 11th with five other congregations. St. Stephens and the Vine was very excited to participate.

CONGREGATIONAL CONVERSATIONS AND NEXT STEPS TASK FORCE

- Will talk about Asset Mapping on January 18th Congregational Conversations
 - An exercise that will have us try to look at our reality with a "glass half full" and creatively notice what gifts we have and what is working and how we're reaching our neighbors
- January 21st – Next Steps Task Force Meeting

TREASURER'S REPORTS

- All documents were presented to the council that have been presented in the past (income statement, balance sheet, and check register by fund)
- Fellowship Committee funds donated to Good Samaritan Fund with Sue Dunham agreement
- Housing Allowance
 - Pastor Matt is requesting \$5,000 housing allowance for 2026
 - Motion made by Jan Roevekamp to approve \$5000 for 2026 housing allowance, seconded by Stacey Miller, approved by Council
- Update Bank Records
 - Motion made to update bank records to document new treasurer and financial secretary made by Pastor Matt, seconded by Ron, approved by Council

FINANCIAL SECRETARY APPOINTMENT

- Motion to confirm appointment of Sue Dunham as Financial Secretary made by Pastor Matt, seconded by Stacey and approved by Council

UPDATES

Great Rivers Collaborative (GRC)

- Agreed to gather a smaller group of people to help the churches focus on a common mission theme. This will help the congregations share their ministry efforts and help engage their members in supporting the community. Meeting set for Feb. 12th at Zion
- Next GRC meeting March 15th at Unity
- Becoming more ecumenical with UCC Churches and Episcopal Churches

Member Care Team

- Number of members have been hospitalized or had health issues
- Ruth Krueger is turning 100 and we will encourage members to send her birthday cards

Community in Unity

- Caroling was fun and went well at the Holiday Hangout in December
- Laundry Love gave out blankets, candy canes, and cups at December ministry night; received a gift of detergent and fabric softener dryer sheets from someone that comes to Laundry Love each month
- Have made 3 meals for the warming center
- Collecting socks for the warming center
 - Looking for possible pants, hoodies, sweaters, and hand warmers

Space Sharing

- Very productive conversation with The Bridge about possibly finding ways to include one another in the outreach each of us is doing

Property Concerns

- No major concerns

CONFIRM APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES FROM DECEMBER 2025 MEETING

- Motion made to confirm meeting minutes from December made by Pastor Matt, seconded by Jan, approved

CLOSING PRAYER: Pastor Matt

NEXT MEETING DATE: FEBRUARY 10TH

Zion Lutheran Church

February Calendar

| Sun | Mon | Tue | Wed | Thu | Fri | Sat |
|--|--|-----------------------------|---|---|-----------|-----------|
| Feb 1 9:30am-Worship | 2 1pm-Worship Team 6:30pm-Member Care | 3 | 4 | 5  R Krueger | 6 | 7 |
| 8 9:30am-Worship 10:45am-Cong. Convo. #4 | 9 | 10 6:30pm-Council | 11 4pm-Next Steps Task Force  B Budenholzer | 12 6:30pm-CIU | 13 | 14 |
| 15 9:30am-Worship | 16 | 17 | 18 Ash Wed. 10:30am-Bible Study 12:00pm-Worship  W Devenport  P Herrmann | 19 | 20 | 21 |
| 22 9:30am-Worship & Noisy Change 10:45am-Fellowship | 23 Tidings Deadline 6pm-Laundry Love | 24 | 25 10:30am-Bible Study 6:15pm-Soup Supper | 26 11:30am-Pokeno | 27 | 28 |
| Mar 1 9:30am-Worship | 2 1pm-Worship Team 6:30pm-Member Care | 3 | 4 10:30am-Bible Study 6:15pm-Soup Supper | 5 | 6 | 7 |

Zion Lutheran Church

Serving on Sundays in February

| | Feb 1 | Feb 8 | Feb 15 | Feb 22 | Mar 1 |
|---------------------------|--------------|-----------------|---------------|-----------------|---------------|
| Presiding | R Schademann | M Schlake-Kruse | P Schaefer | M Schlake-Kruse | R Schademann |
| Music Accompanist | J Martin | J Martin | J Martin | J Martin | J Martin |
| Assisting Minister | K Kinney | P Statler | R Schademann | N Wolz | J Roevekamp |
| Lector | K Malin | S Miller | K Kinney | L Moore | D Balestier |
| Children's Message | N Wolz | M Schlake-Kruse | K Kinney | M Schlake-Kruse | N Wolz |
| Ushers | J Roevekamp | S Dunham | K Malin | J Roevekamp | S Dunham |
| Altar Guild | K Malin | K Malin | K Malin | K Malin | D Balestier |
| Video Streaming | P Statler | K Kinney | B Budenholzer | P Statler | 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
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Ferguson, MO 63135
314.522.0100 Office
office@zionferguson.com
www.zionferguson.com



**Celebrating
God's Grace**

February 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*
Kristina Oswald
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