

ZION LUTHERAN CHURCH

2023



ANNUAL REPORT

OFFICERS FOR THE CONGREGATION

Curtis Pulliam, Council President
Linda Lambe, Vice President
Nancy Thompson, Secretary
Wendy Stevens, Treasurer
Gloria Cifonelli, Financial Secretary

MEMBERS OF THE CHURCH COUNCIL

2021 – 2023

Laurel McCurdy
Dan Rodahan
Mark Thompson
Nancy Thompson
Barb Wilson

2022 – 2024

Evon Pinkos
Wendy Stevens

2023-2025

Gloria Cifonelli
Linda Lambe
Curtis Pulliam

CHURCH STAFF 2023

Sara Silva, Bookkeeper/Office Manager
Megan Free, Technologist
Isabel Silva, Technologist
Jennifer Pierce, Housekeeper
Benjamin Silva, Sexton

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ANNUAL MEETING AGENDA

January 28, 2024

- Opening Prayer
- Reviewing eligibility for voting and establishing a quorum
- Adoption of Agenda
- Approval of the 2023 Annual Congregational Meeting Minutes
- Nominating Committee Report

A. Nominations for open council member seats: Jeanne Gymburch, Jim Marscher,

Kim Marscher, Joni Pulliam, Dan Rodahan, Barb Wilson, Linda Lambe (one-year), Nancy

Thompson (one-year), and Mark Thompson (one-year)

- Committee Reports
- New Business

A. Election of Council Members

B. 2024 Budget

- State of the Church
- Adjournment
- The Lord's Prayer
- Benediction

ZION'S MISSION STATEMENT

We the members of Zion Lutheran Church are called and empowered by God's love and the Risen Christ to joyfully welcome all, grow in faith, serve our community, and live in hope of the truths that Jesus taught.



VALUES STATEMENT

Through the power of the Holy Spirit and Jesus, our Savior, our core values, principles, and tenets, that serve as a foundation to guide us as we strive to fulfill our mission, include:

Grace- through our acknowledgment of the Risen Christ.

We believe that we are saved by God's grace through our faith and that all gifts from God are given without condition. God loves and cares for us just as we are, offering forgiveness and reconciliation to all.

Acceptance- through the love and guidance of the Holy Spirit.

All are welcomed and treated with respect and dignity. As our congregation spreads God's love and healing into the world around us, we do our best to understand the experiences of others with sensitivity and respect, suspending judgment, and nurturing their well-being.

Faith- through the empowerment of the Holy Spirit.

We believe in a loving God who cares deeply for each of us and provides for our needs. We practice our faith with optimism, hope, and confidence, trusting that God will provide all we require to minister to His work in the world.

Service- following the example of Jesus, our Savior.

We put our beliefs into practice, bringing God's love and healing to everyone we encounter.

ZION LUTHERAN CHURCH ANNUAL MEETING MINUTES

January 29, 2023

Pastor Bill Preuss opened the meeting with prayer and a hymn at 11:11 am.

Quorum Established: Linda Bennett, Council President reviewed eligibility for voting and establishing quorum (10% of 107 active congregants).

Agenda Approval: Janet Bagnall moved to approve the agenda. Fran Holzberger seconded. Motion carried.

Approval of the 2022 Annual Congregation Meeting Minutes: Patsy Glista moved to approve minutes. Mark Thompson seconded. Agenda approved.

Nominating Committee Report: Curtis Pullium and Linda Lambe (one year term) were nominated to serve on Council.

Election: Curtis Pulliam and Linda Lambe were elected to Council.

Old Business: The Call process is on hold.

New Business:

ABIDE Working Groups: Three working groups have been established as part of the ABIDE process: Building Analysis, Internal Systems and Structure, and a group that will meet regularly with Trinity Herkimer representatives to formulate plans that may eventually lead to sharing a pastor. Groups will meet monthly with a specific agenda and action items to be completed.

2023 Budget: Questions about energy costs and professional services were raised and answered. Patsy Glista moved that the budget be approved. Jim Schieble seconded. The motion carried.

Interim Pastor: We have been blessed to have Pastor Bill Preuss with us from June 2022 through the end of February 2023. Pastor Bill strongly encouraged everyone to attend services on Sunday, February 5, 2023, when Bishop Lee Miller will be presiding. This will be an important opportunity for Zion members to ask questions of the Bishop. It will also be an opportunity for the Bishop to ask questions of Zion members. Patsy Glista, who is a Rostered Deacon, will be assisting with the service.

State of the Church (Linda Bennett, 2022 Council President):

“Our third year of the pandemic has been a more optimistic one. We are thankful for the congregants who have returned to in-person worship or have joined us via Zoom or YouTube. We were again blessed with gifted supply pastors, Pastor Rick Klafehn, Pastor Bill Preuss, our technologist, organist, staff, and Zion volunteers who all helped make our worship services possible. Although our proposed budget for 2023 is a balanced one, we must accept the fact that due to declining membership and income, Zion will not be able to support a full-time pastor.

As we look to a new year, there are several hopeful developments. We will continue the Abide process with Pastor Lori Kochanski and implement her suggestion of forming working groups that will meet monthly. These groups are Building Analysis, Internal Structure and Systems, and a group that will meet regularly with Trinity/Herkimer to formulate plans for working together that may eventually lead to sharing a pastor. Pastor

Lori came to Zion on Sunday, January 15, 2023, to help us get started with these groups. In addition, we have been blessed by the musical talent of Richard Bostick, our organist, who was hired in June of 2022. We look forward to enjoying our choir this year. Women of Faith will continue to plan in-person special events and Zoom Bible studies for the women of Our Saviour, Trinity/Herkimer, and Zion. Faith Alive, an intergenerational approach to growing in faith and learning about Jesus will continue in 2023. This program has been well received by our congregants. We also look forward to the visit of Bishop Miller to our congregation on Sunday, February 5, 2023.

Due to your abundant generosity, we were able to continue with several aspects of Zion's mission to feed the hungry and reach out to the needy in our community (Thrivent Food Challenge, Veteran's Outreach Center, Angel Tree, Mitten Tree, and Souper Bowl).

Through the Abide process with Pastor Lori Kochanski, we have re-examined our mission and reason for existing. At a well-attended Abide meeting in September, it was discerned that Zion Lutheran Church should continue in its ministry and mission. In order to succeed in this, there is a need to make changes to the current systems in order for the congregation to continue into the future. I look forward to discovering how God's love and faithfulness will lead us in our future."

Adjournment: Carole Grove moved to adjourn. Janet Bagnall seconded. The meeting was adjourned at 12:17pm.

Linda Bennett led the Lord's Prayer.

Pastor Bill gave the Benediction.

Respectfully Submitted,
Nancy Thompson, Congregation Secretary

Outside Groups

The following is a list of outside groups or others, which are coordinated through a point of contact.

Al-Anon	Sara Silva
Boy & Girl Scouts	Sara Silva
Gates Cole Insurance	Sara Silva
Railroad Group	Sara Silva
Red Cross	Sara Silva
Violin Lessons/Tina Ponce	Sara Silva
Your Neighbors	Barb Wilson & Kim Marscher

2023 Committees

Committee	Chair	Council Liaison
Christian Education		Laurel McCurdy
Communications	Sara Silva	Laurel McCurdy
Disabilities Ministry	Dan Rodahan	Dan Rodahan
Endowment/Knobloch	John Blackburn	Curtis Pulliam & Wendy Stevens
Finance	Wendy Stevens	Mark Thompson
Hospitality	Kim Marscher	Evon Pinkos
Nominating	Mark Thompson	Dan Rodahan, Nancy Thompson, & Barb Wilson
Personnel	Mark Thompson	Nancy Thompson
Property	Jim Schieble	Mark Thompson
Social Ministry	Jeanne Gymburch	Laurel McCurdy
Stewardship	Jim Marscher	Barb Wilson
Technology	Mark Thompson	Mark Thompson
Think Tank	Patsy Glista/Linda Bennett	Barb Wilson
Transportation Ministry	Dan Rodahan	Dan Rodahan
Worship & Music	Jim Marscher	Laurel McCurdy

OFFICE MANAGER'S REPORT

It has been quite a year here in the office, busy would be an understatement. Thank you to Laurel McCurdy and Wendy Stevens for keeping our publications 99.9% blunder-free! Thank you to Jennifer Pierce for filling in for me in the office so I could take some much-needed vacation time. It is so good to have our Monday crew, Gloria Cifonelli, and Kim Manino, back in the office! Please remember to send all work request orders to our Sexton, Ben Silva, rather than go through the church office. It is often difficult to keep up with the task of a third party. Thank you!

I am approaching my sixth year here in Zion's church office in March. We have gone through many changes, pastors, supply pastors, transition pastors, council members, etc., and I think I have easily transitioned through all of them thanks to your love and support through some delicate situations.

As always, thank you for your support towards my family. Zion's council is always there for me when matters come up at home and I need to be there for one of my kids, events, school functions, sicknesses, appointments, and anything else that comes up at the last minute. It is appreciated more than you know. It is a joy to be here!

Sara Silva

COUNCIL PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. *Philippians 4:6-7*

Zion continues to be in transition post-COVID without a full-time pastor. Much of our efforts this year have been looking toward the future and determining what that future might look like. Although it has been a difficult decision, it has been realized that a shared pastor is our best path to move forward.

Many words of thanks are in order ...

I want to thank the Congregational Council members for this past year: Gloria Cifonelli, Linda Lambe, Laurel McCurdy, Evon Pinkos, Dan Rodahan, Wendy Stevens, Nancy Thompson, Mark Thompson, and Barb Wilson. Their patience and support of me as I've returned to Council has been greatly appreciated.

Thanks go to Pastor Bill Preuss, our interim pastor until March 2023, and Pastor Janet Griffiths, our transitional pastor, for the remainder of the year. Their care and support of Zion members has been much appreciated. Thanks also to all of the individuals who have led our worship services this year. This list includes Bishop Lee Miller, Pr. Bill Preuss, Deacon Patsy Glista, Tom Henry, Pr. Gail Riina, Rev. Jennifer DeWeerth, Pr. Carol Jubenville, David Grindle, Pr. Rick Klafehn, Rev. John Ferrie, Pr. Jeff McArn, and Pr. Janet Griffiths. We have been blessed with excellent messages each and every Sunday. Special thanks to Pr. Janet Griffiths for her work in providing us with excellent weekly worship leadership.

In addition to our supply pastors, thank you to all the individuals who work to make our service happen each week: supply organists, worship assistants, ushers, greeters, technologists, our office manager, our sexton, housekeepers, the altar care team, the hospitality team, musicians, and our Worship and Music committee. Thanks also go to the Faith Alive and Women of Faith Bible Study groups for their efforts in our continued faith development.

Thank you to the work group (the "think tank") for their efforts in exploring a possible partnership with Herkimer Trinity. Their on-going committee meetings, drafting of the congregational survey, and communicating the survey result were all much appreciated. Their considerable work has been foundational as we move forward in realizing Zion's future.

Thank you to our treasurer, financial secretary, bookkeeper, and the Stewardship and Finance committees for their work in maintaining the financial health of Zion. They have presented a balanced budget for 2024 which supports a shared pastor for the second half of the budget year.

And, a special thank you to Jack Henke for his work in updating the Ministry Site Profile ("MSP") as we prepare to seek a shared pastor.

It has been and continues to be my privilege to serve Zion as Council member and president, as the Council works towards a future that represents the best interests of Zion. Our two congregational meetings this year to discuss possible paths for Zion's future were imperative in gathering information. A sincere thank you goes to our congregation who were willing to speak openly, frankly, and from the heart. I continue to rejoice and give thanks to the people of Zion for their resiliency and passion as we forge ahead towards Zion's new future.

Respectfully submitted,
Curtis R. Pulliam
Council President

REPORT OF THE TRANSITION PASTOR

Listen! Listen God is calling, through the Word inviting, offering forgiveness, comfort, and joy! (ELW 513)

Dear Friends in Christ,

I doubt anyone would have imagined four years ago when Pastor David announced his resignation that Zion would continue to be served by transition pastors and no closer to calling a settled pastor. Four years is a long time to live in a state of flux, and yet circumstances heavily impacted by Covid-19 continue to change and Zion continues to discern to where and what God is calling.

I joined Zion as a member in 2018 along with my daughters Julianna and Elizabeth. Due to my Sunday duties as LutheranCare Chaplain, in many ways it was a membership in name only for me, with only occasional attendance at Christmas and the contemporary evening service or in a pulpit exchange with Pastor David while my daughters were regulars in worship, Sunday School, and confirmation class prior to Covid.

Zion was ably served by transition pastors Anita Mohr, Rick Klafehn, and Bill Preuss before Pastor Bill passed the baton on to me in April, 2023. The role of the transition pastor is to assist in the administration of the basic operations of the congregation, meet monthly with the congregational council, and provide for basic pastoral care and services, including arranging for guest pastors each week, sick visitations, and pastoral acts of weddings and funerals.

I am grateful for Sara Silva serving as office administrator. She has been the anchor in the church office, always ready to answer questions, perform tasks, and generally help in whatever way she can. I have found her kindness and common sense to be invaluable and we are all blessed by her ministry.

I am grateful for the council and the leadership of Zion, who take their commission to heart in moving Zion into the future, continuing to explore how that best will be done and how much neighboring congregations will be a part of that.

I walk with you on this journey as both fellow member in the body of Christ and as transition pastor as we seek to live out our mission to share the Good News of Jesus Christ in this community and throughout the world.

Pastor Janet Griffiths

2023 PASTORAL ACTS AND NOTES FROM THE PARISH REGISTER

Received into the Church by the Sacrament of Holy Baptism

0

Buried and commended to God's keeping were:

10

New Members Received into the Church

0

Members Received by Transfer

0

Members Confirmed

0

Weddings

0

These official pastoral acts have been entered into the parish record and updated in the office records.

STATISTICAL REPORT

Membership	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Baptized	1383	-	-	-	-
Confirmed	921	-	-	-	-
Active Participants***	238	191	143	107	107
Average Weekly Worship Attendance****	83	65	86	69	57
10:00 AM Service Weekly Attendance *****	75	65	50	35	37
Church School Enrollment	16	-	-	-	-
Baptisms*	0	-	1	-	-
Weddings	2	-	-	1	-
Funerals**	2	2	3	2	3

**** Indicates members**

***** Indicates church
service, church office
communication**

******For 2023 indicates
attendance in-person,
Zoom, YouTube, and
bulletins via snail mail**

******* Indicates in-person
Sunday worship service**

COMMITTEE & GROUP REPORTS

Call Committee

No report is needed this year.

Christian Education- Faith Alive

Faith Alive began in the fall of 2022 as an intergenerational approach to Faith Formation, modeled after Trinity Herkimer's Faith Alive Program. The events were held at 9 AM in the Fireside Room and after a short summer break, the events resumed at a more convenient time of 11 AM. Patsy Glista was so gracious to bring Faith Alive to Zion. Patsy Glista, Fran Holzberger, Linda Bennett, Jeanne Gymburch, Laurel McCurdy, and Sara Silva planned and prepared the 2023 Faith Alive events. After careful consideration, it was realized that Faith Alive and the intergenerational approach was not a good fit for Zion at this time. Patsy Glista was so gracious to lead Faith Alive at Zion.

Respectfully submitted,
Sara Silva

Communication Committee

The committee planned another car wash in August 2023 hosted by the Hamilton College Students. We think that this should be an annual event, as it has been well received in the community. We planned the God's Work Our Hands event for September 2023 which was a combination of Faith Alive. We took the opportunity to meet and plan for September-December Faith Alive events after Patsy Glista moved away. We would like to keep an active group at Zion, as it is very important for fellowship and the church community in general.

Respectfully submitted,
Sara Silva

Finance Committee

Zion congregants are encouraged to view the Treasurer's Report for a full accounting of Zion's financial position at the close of 2023. Representatives of the Finance and Stewardship Committees worked together this year to generate the proposed 2024 budget and the accompanying Stewardship campaign, which encouraged members of our Zion family to share their time, talents, and financial resources to support our mission. Zion congregants were, yet again, very generous in sharing their resources, enabling us to continue living out our mission. Many thanks to Gloria Cifonelli, Jim and Kim Marscher, Wendy Stevens, Sara Silva, Suzie Rowland, and Curtis Pulliam for their efforts around Zion's finances and/or Stewardship Campaign.

Mark Thompson

Hospitality

Now that Zion has fully opened again after the pandemic, we will have seasonal social and celebratory gatherings throughout the church and community year, to be held as safely as possible. We have also resumed regular Sunday coffee hours. Thanks to all who plan, prepare for, and close events, and all who attend.

Respectfully submitted,
Kim Marscher

Personnel

We were blessed to have Pastor Bill Preuss serving as Zion's transition pastor from May of 2022 through February 2023 and were thrilled for his continuing service as a monthly supply pastor until health issues intervened. We hope his health will soon be restored and that there will be opportunities for him to return to our pulpit.

Pastor Janet Griffiths has since stepped into the transition pastor role, and we are fortunate to have her support and guidance at this time.

Richard Bostick, who joined the Zion community as Music Director/Keyboard Specialist in July of 2022, had to step away from the position in July 2023. Thankfully, Kelli Watson and Bob Peters have provided musical support for services since then.

In July of this year, Megan Free, who had served skillfully as our technologist and resident Zoom expert, resigned from the role, but not before training her equally skilled successor, Isabel Silva.

Thankfully, Jennifer Pierce continues as Zion's housekeeper, and Ben Silva as sexton, maintaining our facilities in and out.

I also want to extend a special thanks to Zion's Office manager, Sara Silva. Sara is the always friendly voice on the phone, the keeper of important details and information, and the person without whom it would be impossible to keep our Zion ship afloat. Many thanks to Sara and all of the staff who serve our congregation and mission. We are truly blessed.

Respectfully submitted,
Nancy Thompson

Property

I would like to start by thanking Property members Bob Lambe, Ben Silva, and Mark Thompson, our property committee liaison. Thank you for all your input and hard work. Thank you, Jennifer Pierce, for keeping Zion clean and looking great. And a special thank you to Chuck Carlson for all your leadership and help on the Property Committee over the years.

One of the big projects accomplished this year was painting the Church Sanctuary. The new coat of paint makes everything look clean, warm, and inviting.

We cleaned up the outside of the Church a little bit by taking down the old outside storage shed. For security reasons, we had the locks changed.

We took the shrubs down in front of the Church to give the building a little cleaner and neater look. These are a few of the things that the Property Committee worked on to keep the Church properly maintained and clean. Thank you again to everyone who helped this year.

Jim Schieble

Stewardship

Zion could not operate without the assistance of its members and contributors. The plea for helpful, committed people has never been greater.

Volunteer help is needed. Please see the sign-up sheets in the Narthex or contact Sara (in the office) or any Council member.

Contributors to Zion are to be commended for their generosity on all levels of stewardship during 2023.

People have been volunteering for council and committee positions, worship assistance, special music, planning, projects, and presentations. THANK YOU SO MUCH!!!

Total Giving exceeded the budgeted amount by more than \$4,000.

The Total Giving for 2023 was \$154,098, above what was budgeted for 2023 (\$150,000).

It should be noted the generous level of giving served to compensate for the anticipated lack of rental income. It also continued to provide monies to perform some much-needed property improvements and repairs without taking from Zion's Savings Account or Mission Investment Fund. In fact, **the 2023 net income was \$15,380**, providing Zion with **\$12,092 over what was budgeted**. That surplus has been added to the church savings account for future use.

Zion's proposed total budget for 2024 is \$170,208. It is a balanced budget for the second consecutive year. **Thank you to all involved (staff and volunteers) for keeping expenses to a minimum**, which lessens the burden on each financial contributor. And **thanks to the Budget Committee** for its thoughtful and realistic planning.

Stewardship's goal is to raise at least \$153,500 through Total Giving, with \$150,000 coming from Envelope Giving. As always, donations must keep pace. Other revenues are expected to cover the rest of the expenses.

Your continued generous pledging is much appreciated! Without timely pledging, Zion's leadership can't confidently budget for the upcoming year.

If you haven't pledged and wish to do so, please contact Gloria Cifonelli, Financial Secretary, through the church office.

Yours in Christ's service,

Zion's Stewardship Committee:

Gloria Cifonelli, Kim Marscher (Secretary), Jim Marscher (Chair), Suzee Rowland, and Wendy Stevens

Technology Committee

Isabel Silva, who replaced Megan Free as Zion's technology person midway through the year, has been doing a terrific job. Zion averaged about ten persons attending the Sunday service via Zoom and an average of four persons viewing the service on YouTube each week. Thanks to Isabel and her back-up, Matt LaFave, for handling all the technology needs to make Sunday service available to those unable to attend services in-person.

Mark Thompson

Think Tank

We have been meeting monthly via Zoom for the purpose of determining how our congregations align with each other and for forming mutual friendships. We hope our work will eventually result in sharing a pastor. Trinity members include Amy Manning, Ann Maher, Justina Kane, and Judy Sadlon. Zion members included Patsy Glista, Fran Holzberger, Russ Holzberger, and Linda Bennett. Since Patsy has moved, Barb Wilson has agreed to take Patsy's place on this task force. I appreciate all the effort and dedication shown by all task force members. We especially miss Patsy's expertise and leadership.

Our first task was comparing Mission Statements. We discovered that our missions were very compatible. Both Mission Statements covered the same basic ideas and affirmations. We also responded to questions on *Purpose, Giftedness, and Mission* from page six of our Ministry Site Profile. Again, we found many similarities. We emphasized that our purpose is to share hope for the future, and that our churches are to be places of sanctuary and refuge.

Our greatest accomplishment was recreating our Characteristics Survey in a user-friendly format. Justina Kane created pie charts from the survey results. Patsy Glista did a thorough job of summarizing these results. We spent a significant amount of time discussing these results and again found many similarities. Linda Bennett shared the pie chart results with the Council.

Fran Holzberger did a wonderful job updating our congregation on the work of our Task Force.

For now, the Think Tank is on hold. I greatly appreciate the effort and dedication of all Think Tank members. Thank you for your service to Zion.

Respectfully submitted,
Linda Bennett

Worship and Music

Zion's Worship and Music Committee thanks Pastor Janet Griffiths, our Transition Pastor, for guiding us in finding supply worship leaders, supplying on occasion, and helping Zion plan for the future. W&M also thanks our supply organists, Kelli Watson, and Bob Peters, for providing music in alternating months. We very much appreciate them all and hope they will continue to help Zion in the future.

The Lenten and Easter season begins early this year with Ash Wednesday on February 14th, 2024. Pastor Janet has offered to lead an evening Ash Wednesday service on the 14th, and the committee is planning the Sunday Lenten services, beginning February 18 through March 24th (Palm Sunday), and Easter on March 31st. We are looking into options for Maundy Thursday and Good Friday, March 28th and 29th.

W&M appreciates very much the work done by our Office Manager, Sara Silva, especially since she has been working without support during office hours and has had to manage newsletters, bulletins, service planning, volunteer coordination, and many other tasks on her own. We also appreciate the work Ben Silva has done in providing a safe, comfortable worship and fellowship environment, and Jennifer Pierce in keeping Zion clean and sanitary. Isabel Silva is doing very well providing technology for Zion's worship services and some special programs, such as the one Joe Schmidt did on December 17, 2023, about the Christmas Eve truce, with pictures on the big screen TV.

Zion's Altar Guild has been very active this past year, not only setting up and putting away Communion elements but changing altar linens, banners, and other decorations in the sanctuary and other places in the church.

Volunteers are always needed to make services possible. Sign-up sheets are posted in the Narthex for people to act as Worship Assistant, Ushers, Greeters, prepare and clean-up for Zion's Coffee Hour after worship or other occasions, and other special readings and activities. Since Zion has supply pastors who might not be familiar with our building or practices, these volunteer positions are especially important and valued.

Zion again appreciates the special music provided by Kelli and Bob on the organ and piano, and also the volunteer music by Mary Margaret Krukonis, Joe Schmidt, John Blackburn and Ryan Kulawy for special occasions. They add so much to our worship time, and we are thankful for their time and talent.

Syd Chase's organ repair company and Center Stage Piano Repair have maintained Zion's organ and pianos, thanks to Sara Silva and Jim Marscher setting up their appointments. In addition, Ben Silva keeps the sanctuary climate controlled, and the piano humidifier filled. It's great to have professional work done on Zion's beautiful musical instruments.

W&M looks forward to coordinating more with other area ELCA churches and potential new plans for Zion's future in the spring. Please let members of the committee know if you have suggestions and ideas for the future.

Yours in Christ's service,
Kim Marscher, Secretary

SMALL GROUP REPORTS

Walking With Friends

The Walking Group usually meets on Wednesdays at the Target entrance of Sangertown. We can adjust our speed according to how much we would like to talk! Call Kim (315) 794-6233 if you have questions.

Women of the ELCA at Zion

No report is needed this year.

Women of Faith

The Women of Faith was established in January 2022 by the women of Zion, Trinity, and Our Saviour. The Women of Faith Committee is made up of three women from each church. They facilitate the year's activities and meet once a month on Zoom. Our goal was to discuss and share our experiences with all aspects of the Bible and how these studies relate to our everyday life as a Christian community. We have had some serious discussions and, at other times, discussions that brought on lots of laughter.

We schedule person-to-person Bible studies each quarter. Each of the three churches take turns hosting, leading the Bible study for the quarter. The host provides the location along with finger food and beverage. We try to schedule these for a Saturday 10am-12pm. We have also experimented with having these after church services on Sundays.

We have monthly Bible studies on a variety of topics. We have had discussions about *Prayer, Holy Places, Women of the Bible, Crafted in Christ - Quilting Cutting and Piecing*, and several others. All the topics relate to Bible verses and how these affect our everyday activities. There is a lot of interesting sharing. You would be quite surprised at some of the conversations that develop. These are held via Zoom from 7-8pm in the evening, usually on the second Monday of the month. All are welcome and friends are invited. Each congregation is notified of these meetings in their individual newsletters, emails, and/or weekly service programs.

Respectfully submitted,
Fran Holzberger & Kim Marscher

SOCIAL MINISTRY REPORTS

Social Ministry is a very active committee and is always looking for new members! Social Ministry encompasses: Angel Tree and Mitten Tree, Fair Trade, Missionary In Zambia, Outreach to Those Who Cannot Come to Church, Prayer Fellowship, World Hunger, Your Neighbors, and Zion Food Ministry. Please read on for the individual reports by the committee members who spearhead each outreach and consider joining us.

Angel Tree Project and Mitten Tree

In 2023, the Social Ministry Team was able to continue the tradition of providing gift donations to local agencies in need during the Christmas 2023 season. Two local agencies, The Center (Resource Center of Refugees) and Thea Bowman House were the recipients of the Angel and Mitten Tree donations in 2023. The Angel Tree financial contributions went to Thea Bowman. The generous contributions of \$1,400.00 enabled Social Ministry to purchase 35 \$40 Walmart gift cards that were delivered to Thea Bowman for needy families.

A total of 126 items (gloves/mittens, hats, scarves, and yes even socks/slippers) were collected for the Mitten Tree. Children's sizes were delivered to Thea Bowman, and the teen and adult sizes were given to The Center to assist new arrivals in providing them with warm winter items as their supplies were exhausted. Both agencies were extremely grateful, thankful, and most appreciative of the gifts and outpouring of generosity from Zion Lutheran Church. Thank you to all who donated winter wear and financial contributions to one of Social Ministry's annual Christmas outreach programs.

Respectfully submitted,
Debra Murdock

Fair Trade Ministry

Zion Lutheran Church began partnering with Equal Exchange to help small-scale farmers receive a fair wage on October 26, 2006. Fortunately, Zion resumed holding coffee hours after church in the Fireside Room in 2023 and this allowed people better access to the Fair Trade Hutch. The top favorite items this year were: Organic Mind, Body and Soul Coffee, Organic Roasted/Salted Cashews and Organic Chocolate Bars.

On November 12th, the topic for Faith Alive was: Fair Trade Ministry at Zion. Attendees were encouraged to “give the gift of Fair Trade” for Christmas. Total purchases in 2023 came to \$1,823.20. We charge a little more than the cost of each item so the extra can be donated to World Hunger. This year, \$134.76 was contributed to WH.

Climate change is wreaking havoc on our farmer partners, and it is even more important than ever that we continue our efforts to assist this important economic justice movement. Zion's Social Ministry Committee is grateful to all who participated in this ministry in 2023.

Respectfully submitted,
Laurel McCurdy

Missionary In Zambia

It is with gladness that we are able to lift up Christ's global church with our gifts of financial support that was promised when we initiated our covenant relationship with The Reverend Kristin Engstrom, our missionary in Zambia. In 2023, Zion sent \$3000 to Pastor Kristin. The Social Ministry Committee would like to thank the Endowment Committee for granting us \$1,250, both in 2022 and 2023. The October Faith Alive session was all about Pastor Engstrom's work with Lutherans in Zambia.

Laurel McCurdy

Outreach to Those who Cannot Come to Church

The Social Ministry Committee continues to send copies of Hope-Full Living: Daily Devotions for Living Life to the Fullest and Christ In Our Home to nine of our members who are no longer able to come to church regularly. Our goal is to inspire God's seniors with the assurance that "This very day, I have a body, a mind, a spirit and a message—God's rejuvenating Gospel message to and through me—to share with my world, my friends and my Lord." We also continue to mail weekly Bulletins. Every three months, we send a care package including the bulletin, newsletter, and both devotionals. In December, Christmas cards and greetings from our Zion family were sent out.

Respectfully submitted,
Laurel McCurdy

Prayer Fellowship

We are part of Zion's in-reach ministry. We send all occasion cards (birthday cards to those who cannot come to church, get well, and sympathy cards) to members. As we write our cards, we pray for the recipients. Respectfully, Loretta Berie, Carolyn Dzwonkas, Sharon Jeche, Darlene Hill, and Debra Murdock

Respectfully submitted,
Loretta Berie

World Hunger

The ELCA works with and through our congregation and is uniquely positioned to reach communities in need. Our gifts to ELCA World Hunger make it possible for them to respond, supporting sustainable solutions that get to the root causes of hunger and poverty.

Zion members and friends raised \$1,565.30 towards the World Hunger Campaign, Bee Generous. The check was delivered by Curtis and Joni Pulliam at Synod Assembly. In total, \$2,304.21 was raised toward World Hunger this year. We truly believe that Zion members are doing their part in feeding the hungry.

Sara Silva

Your Neighbors

Your Neighbors has transitioned from a joint venture with Community Wellness Partners (CWP - the Lutheran / Presbyterian Homes) to being an independent entity at the end of December 2023. The freezers remain here at Zion, and we maintain them weekly. YN receives vital contributions of meals, soups, and desserts from several community churches and a couple of restaurants occasionally. These include St. Anthony's, Chadwick's; Three Steeples United, Paris; First Presbyterian, Utica; Stone Presbyterian, Clinton; Clinton United Methodist; Waterbury Presbyterian; Our Saviour Lutheran, Utica; First Presbyterian, New Hartford; Living Faith Bible, Sauquoit; Orchard Hall, Sauquoit; Harts Hill Inn, Whitesboro.

We are very thankful for our faithful volunteers who make it possible to keep our freezers full, keep our clients fed and who bring in assorted snacks, cookies, and crackers to add to the meals for added eating pleasure! Without them, we couldn't function.

Respectfully Submitted,
Kim Marscher & Barb Wilson

Zion Food Ministry

Zion continues to collect canned goods, non-perishables, and other household products for local food pantries. We also continue to accept your cans and bottles which are returned, and the money is brought directly to a local food pantry. We keep a steady rotation of where the food and money from the bottles go. Many thanks to Ted McCarthy for doing all the footwork collecting, returning cans/bottles, and delivering everything to the food pantries. Food pantries we have supported this year include, The Veterans Outreach Center, Feed Our Vets, The Morrow Warming Center, St. Margaret's Food Pantry, and the Seeds of Hope Food Pantry.

At Thanksgiving & at Christmas, Ted applied to the Thrivent Cares in Community program Funding & was granted \$250 at both holidays. At Thanksgiving, one Zion family received a food basket with the balance of the Thrivent funding used to purchase needed foods for the Utica Rescue Mission. At Christmas, one Zion family in need received a food basket from the Thrivent funding, & the remainder of the Christmas Thrivent funding was again used for foods needed by the Utica Rescue Mission. A second Christmas food basket was delivered related to a request received closer to the holiday to another Zion family in need. This second basket was funded from the Zion Food Ministry budget. Additionally, this year, Utica Veterans Outreach received \$1000 at Easter from the Zion Food Ministry budget, and at Thanksgiving/Christmas, Utica Veterans Outreach received \$2000 from Zion in memory of Ed Grove.

Respectfully submitted,
Ted McCarthy, Sara Silva, & Jeanne Gymburch

Zion Endowment Fund

Zion's Endowment Fund was established in 1985 for the purpose of enhancing the mission outreach of Zion in the community and the world. Through Fund earnings, monetary gifts and bequests, our hopes are to grow the Fund to enable Zion to expand our mission in the community and the world.

The Zion Endowment Fund assets are fully invested in the Vanguard Wellington Fund-Admiral Shares. This is a low cost, balanced mutual fund consisting of investments of approximately two-third stocks and one-third bonds.

The Fund balance as of December 30, 2022, was \$302,156.90. Per the Fund bylaws, \$15,108 was available for distribution to community organizations, missions of the ELCA, Zion ministries and Zion capital projects. At the November 8, 2023, Endowment Committee meeting, the requests for grants were reviewed and passed along to Zion's Council for approval, per the Fund bylaws. The council approved the Committee's recommendations at their November 27, 2023 meeting.

On November 28, 2023, shares worth \$13,150, were sold to fund the 2023 Endowment Fund distribution. A check in that amount was sent to Zion for the annual distributions. All distributions were sent out in December 2023. The amount of \$1958, which is the remainder of the total amount available for distribution in 2023, has been held in reserve in the Fund for use for capital projects of Zion in 2024.

The Fund balance at the close of business on December 29, 2023, was \$332,033.35. There were no donations to the Fund in 2023. A short-term capital gain dividend of \$31.14, a long-term capital gain payment of \$11,886.68 and a normal dividend payment of \$2,182.83 were paid to the Fund on December 15, 2023. The distribution amount for 2024 will be \$16,602 (5% of the Fund value at the end of 2023 per the Fund's bylaws).

The following organizations/ministries received distributions from the Endowment Fund in 2023:

Lutheran Care - Chaplaincy Fund
KEYS Program – Children's Music Therapy Program
Zion Social Ministry Committee – Support for ELCA Missionary in Zambia
Lutheran Campus Ministry at Syracuse University – Tutoring and service learning programs
Thea Bowman House – Support of their hospitality and outreach center in West Utica
Your Neighbors – General Support

The Committee is pleased to share that all submitted grant requests were fully funded in 2023, along with an additional 25% over and above the requested amounts. The grants sent to Thea Bowman House and Your Neighbors were in addition to the submitted requests and were possible due to the amount available in the Fund for distribution.

Knobloch Fund

The purpose of the Zion Knobloch Fund is to directly support Zion's annual budget, focusing on maintaining our electronic carrilon system, supporting the music program and helping pay for the general maintenance of the church. The Fund, created in 1982, originated as an individual bequest and continues to further the mission of Zion.

The Zion Knobloch Fund assets are fully invested in the Vanguard Wellesley Income Fund-Admiral Shares. This is a five star rated, low cost, balanced mutual fund consisting of approximately one-third dividend paying stocks and two-thirds bonds.

The Knobloch Fund balance on January 1, 2022 was \$263,768.47. The Fund provided a distribution to Zion in 2023 of \$10,548, paid in monthly and quarterly payments. That amount is based on 4% of the market value of the Fund at the beginning of 2022 per the Fund bylaws.

Following the recommendation of the Knobloch Committee and approval from Zion's Council, \$9,184 worth of shares were sold on October 26, 2023 and placed in Zion's Vanguard money market fund for distribution to Zion. The monthly installment amount of the distribution will be \$765.33 in 2024. This is in accordance with the Fund bylaws and is based on 4% of the Fund balance of at the beginning of the previous year (\$229,589.60 on January 1, 2023).

The Fund balance on January 1, 2024 was \$235,735.01. This includes a regular dividend of \$2,297.74 and a long-term capital gain of \$3,043.25 paid on December 18, 2023.

Many thanks to all who served as members of Zion's Endowment Fund and Knobloch Fund Committee in 2023; Doreen Nicholls, Bob Lambe, Michele Lasher, Dave Meneses (Recording Secretary), Council representative Wendy Stevens, Council representative and Fund Financial Secretary Curtis Pulliam and "Chairman Emeritus" Fran LaGase.

Respectfully submitted,
John Blackburn- Committee Chairperson

Website

The Church web site (www.zionlutheranNy.org) contains an article describing the Zion Endowment Fund, its purpose, and its history. This article also provides information regarding total gifts given to the Fund since its origination in 1985, and total distributions made from the Fund over this same time period. Instructions for requesting a charitable distribution from the Fund are also contained in the article.

You can find our monthly newsletters filed in order under the "Newsletter" tab. Calendar events, online giving, committee info, and prayer requests are also available. Please submit any new information or updates to your committees and ministries to the church office for any necessary updates.

Proposed 2024 Operating Budget

	1/1/23 - 12/31/23	2023	Proposed 2024
	Actual	Budget	Budget
Ordinary Income/Expense			
Income			
Miscellaneous			
Knobloch Fund Distribution	10,548.00	10,548.00	9,184.00
Thrivent Financial	295.00	400.00	400.00
Miscellaneous Income	2,236.75	300.00	2,324.00
Building Rental / Use	1,920.00	3,500.00	2,000.00
Parsonage Rental			
Residential	0.00	0.00	0.00
Business	0.00	0.00	0.00
Interest Income	464.51	500.00	500.00
Total Miscellaneous	15,464.26	15,248.00	14,408.00
Giving			
Loose Offering	1,383.00	1,500.00	1,500.00
Seasonal	1,887.00	2,500.00	2,000.00
Envelopes	150,828.77	168,000.00	150,000.00
Total Giving	154,098.77	172,000.00	153,500.00
Program Income			
Transportation	0.00	100.00	0.00
Amazon Smile	73.62	100.00	0.00
Hospitality & Fellowship Income	0.00	100.00	100.00
Evangelism, Marketing, Advertise	0.00	0.00	0.00
Christian Ed / Sunday School	0.00	0.00	0.00
Flower Income	534.41	500.00	500.00
Fair Trade Income	1,626.39	1,500.00	1,700.00
Worship Supply Income	0.00	0.00	0.00
Total Program Income	2,234.42	2,300.00	2,300.00
Total Income	171,797.45	189,548.00	170,208.00

Proposed 2024 Operating Budget

Expense	1/1/23 - 12/31/23	2023	Proposed 2024
	Actual	Budget	Budget
Wage Compensation			
Pastoral Care			
Interim Stipend	0.00	0.00	0.00
Health, Pension & Disability	0.00	0.00	0.00
Housing Allowance	0.00	0.00	0.00
Travel	1,140.26	5,000.00	1,250.00
FICA Reimbursement	0.00	0.00	0.00
Continuing Education	0.00	0.00	0.00
Supply Pastor	20,734.50	26,500.00	33,750.00
Total Pastoral Care	21,874.76	31,500.00	35,000.00
Staff			
Transportation	0.00	200.00	0.00
Technologist	1,718.37	3,150.00	2,400.00
Office Manager/Bookkeeper	28,147.14	30,000.00	32,000.00
Nursery Attendant	0.00	0.00	0.00
Sexton	16,591.83	21,000.00	13,500.00
Housekeeper			6,200.00
Subtotal Staff	46,457.34	54,350.00	54,100.00
Supply Organists (Organist)	10,442.25	15,500.00	7,800.00
Supply Musicians	2,250.00	900.00	300.00
Staff including Supply	59,149.59	70,750.00	62,200.00
Staff Taxes & Benefits			
Disability/PFI Insurance	481.22	754.00	584.00
FICA/Medicare	4,340.31	4,331.00	3,354.00
Workers' Compensation	804.39	1,500.00	1,000.00
Unemployment	0.00	0.00	0.00
Total Staff Taxes & Benefits	5,625.92	7,598.00	4,938.00
Total Staff	64,775.51	78,348.00	67,138.00
Total Wage Compensation	86,650.27	109,848.00	102,138.00

Proposed 2024 Operating Budget

	1/1/23 - 12/31/23	2023	Proposed 2024
	Actual	Budget	Budget
Synod & Conference Contribution	15,000.00	15,000.00	14,400.00
Additional Synod Contribution	350.00	0.00	600.00
Total Synod	15,350.00	15,000.00	15,000.00
Programs			
Transportation	0.00	200.00	0.00
Decorating Expense	382.82	0.00	0.00
Special Events Expenses	123.97	100.00	150.00
Fair Trade Expenses	1,618.73	1,200.00	1,150.00
Synod Assembly Fees & Hotel	0.00	200.00	200.00
Flowers Expenses	783.46	1,000.00	800.00
Music Supplies	867.00	1,000.00	1,000.00
Worship Supplies	1,828.66	3,300.00	1,500.00
Christian Education	145.69	150.00	200.00
Stewardship	296.10	200.00	250.00
Social Ministry / Outreach	743.24	1,000.00	700.00
Evangelism-Marketing-Advertise	0.00	500.00	0.00
Hospitality and Fellowship	154.56	200.00	200.00
Total Programs	6,944.23	9,050.00	6,150.00

Facilities

Plumbing Repair	650.00	1,000.00	800.00
Building Repairs & Maintenance	1,481.51	1,000.00	1,400.00
Grounds & Parking Lot Maint.	2,374.17	1,340.00	1,000.00
Cleaning & Repair Supplies	281.64	345.00	300.00
Heating & Cooling Repair	2,189.47	5,000.00	2,100.00
Parsonage Expenses	1,431.51	1,967.00	1,500.00
Elevator Repair & Maintenance	4,397.18	4,120.00	4,200.00
Organ/Piano Repair & Maint	0.00	500.00	400.00

Proposed 2024 Operating Budget

	1/1/23 - 12/31/23	2023	Proposed 2024
	Actual	Budget	Budget
Sewer, Water & Trash	2,397.41	1,955.00	2,100.00
Security & Fire Alarms	505.25	524.00	470.00
Gas & Electric	9,802.93	11,850.00	11,500.00
Snow Removal	2,550.00	3,450.00	3,450.00
Total Facilities	28,061.07	33,051.00	29,220.00
Administration			
Office Equip Lease & Maint	1,879.09	5,000.00	2,000.00
Computer Software Subscriptions	923.69	1,000.00	1,000.00
Computer/Office Equip/Tech Hardware	111.11	1,500.00	200.00
Professional Services	1,212.00	2,249.00	1,200.00
Insurance	8,615.00	8,000.00	9,000.00
Postage	842.79	1,000.00	700.00
Office Supplies	763.28	1,000.00	800.00
Telephone, Internet & Network	2,237.75	2,250.00	2,200.00
Miscellaneous	746.64	600.00	600.00
Total Administration	17,331.35	22,599.00	17,700.00
Total Expense	154,336.92	189,548.00	170,208.00
Net Ordinary Income	17,460.53	0.00	0.00

	1/1/23 - 12/31/23	2023	Proposed 2024
	Actual	Budget	Budget
Capital Projects			
Capital Projects Income			
Building Fund	6,145.00		
Total Capital Projects Income	6,145.00		
Capital Projects Expenses			
Tree Removal	1,600.00		
Sanctuary Painting	4,200.00		
Total Capital Projects Expenses	5,800.00		

Designated Donations
2023 Total

2023 Total

Zion Related

Zion Food Ministry	\$ 414.00
Memorial Fund	\$ 1,035.00

Total Zion Related \$ 1,449.00

ELCA

World Hunger Missionaries Support	\$ 2,304.00
	\$ 300.00

Total ELCA \$ 2,604.00

Outside Organizations

Your Neighbors	\$ 825.00
St. Margaret's Food Pantry	\$ 143.50
Seeds of Hope Food Pantry	\$ 143.50
Johnson Park	\$ 335.00

Total Outside Organizations \$ 1,447.00

Total Designated Donations \$ 5,500.00

Assets and Liabilities	31-Dec-22	31-Dec-23
Assets		
Cash Accounts		
Checking & Petty Cash	\$ 93,745.26	\$ 109,526.48
Mission Investment Fund	\$ 100,573.84	\$ 100,975.86
Total Cash Accounts	\$ 194,319.10	\$ 210,502.34
Designated Funds in Savings Accounts		
Protocol-COVID	\$ 2,500.00	\$ 2,500.00
Transportation	\$ 254.00	\$ 254.00
Zion Decorating Committee	\$ 880.47	\$ 880.47
Music Donation	\$ 862.00	\$ 862.00
Building Fund	\$ 11,655.00	\$ 12,000.00
Building Fund - Playground	\$ 5,000.00	\$ 5,000.00
Randy Richards Fund	\$ 7,568.64	\$ 7,568.64
Zion Food Ministry	\$ 4,023.21	\$ 1,437.21
Youth Group	\$ 1,476.00	\$ 1,476.00
Christian Education Fund	\$ 729.16	\$ 729.16
Memorial Fund	\$ 6,117.20	\$ 7,152.20
Canstruction/Can Food Drive	\$ 70.00	\$ 70.00
Social Ministry	\$ 1,150.00	\$ -
Total Designated Funds in Savings Account	\$ 42,285.68	\$ 39,929.68
Other Assets		
ELCA SCU	\$ 2,750.00	\$ 2,750.00
Vanguard Money Market Fund	\$ 10,694.13	\$ 9,672.75
Knobloch Fund - Wellesley	\$ 230,209.69	\$ 235,188.88
Endowment Fund - Wellington	\$ 302,156.90	\$ 328,917.63
Total Other Assets	\$ 545,810.72	\$ 576,529.26
Liabilities		
Accounts Payable Other	\$ -	\$ 77.04
Accrued Payroll & Related Taxes	\$ 2,445.51	\$ 771.56
Total Liabilities	\$ 2,445.41	\$ 848.60