Zion News & Notes

January 2026

I am writing this in the space between Christmas and New Year's Day. A time when we tend to look back at what has been, and forward to what might be.

When I look back on 2025, I see Sass and Nala and a full Honda on a dark winding road that took us up into the Catskill Mountains on our way to our new home. I remember being horribly sick in a small cabin where the innkeeper was kind, and attentive, and brought nourishment to our door daily until we got better. I remember the joy and distinct ambiance of my installation services. I see Nala romping in the snow in her new fenced-in yard. And our open house when so many of you came by to grace the parsonage with connection and laughter and hope.

I'll remember protests and marches and rallies and hushed conversations with many of you who are deeply concerned about our country, friends, family, and what it means to be faithful at a time so fraught.

I'll remember how kind you were to us when Deb's mom died just a week before Christmas, and my sense of hope for what might be as I watched the candlelight multiply on Christmas Eve.

I cannot yet see what we will share in 2026. But I do know we will see it: in candlelight, between hymns, in the space between my words, the body of Christ, and your word, Amen.

I know we will find it in mutual epiphanies, punctuated by voices rising in enthusiasm.

I know we will anchor it in prayer and the desire to follow wherever Jesus leads us.

Thank you, for your generosity and grace all year and especially this Christmas.

I look forward to seeing with new eyes in 2026, and to walking into it...

With you,

Pastor Marie

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Announcements

Church Office
Please use **315-765-8035** when calling the church office.

YouTube
Subscribe to our channel at Zion Lutheran Church, New Hartford, NY. And don't forget to subscribe to Pastor Marie's channel at: www.YouTube.com/@MarieNDuquette

Annual Congregational Meeting/In Person and on Zoom
The Annual Meeting will be held in person on Sunday, February 1st, following the worship service. The meeting will also be available via Zoom, with Megan managing from the balcony. Those joining online may use the "Raise Hand" feature, and Megan will pass questions along so they can be addressed during the meeting. **2025 Annual Reports** should be available by January 18th.

Walking With Friends
We hope to start again in January. Please send your interest and preferred day of the week and time and also where you'd like to walk to Kim Marscher. You can call or text Kim at (315) 794-6233. Talking and walking together is our goal.

Annual Statements
If you need an annual statement of your giving to Zion Lutheran Church for 2025, please contact Joni Pulliam, financial secretary. You can also leave a message with the church office.

Winter Weather Announcement
Please remember that the church office may close when driving conditions are unsafe. If area schools close due to inclement weather, the church office will close as well. **For Sunday worship**, if driving conditions are unsafe, please look for our closing information on WKTV. We will also send out a mass email the night before whenever possible. We can also use your help! If worship is canceled, please reach out to anyone you know who may not have regular computer access/email.

Lutheran Campus Ministry "Chili" Challenge
Sunday, January 18, 2026

Calling all chili and soup cooks! On Sunday, January 18th, Zion will participate in Lutheran Campus Ministry's "Chili" Challenge. LCM Chaplain, the Rev. Julie Kelly, will preside at Zion's service that Sunday, and we'll have the opportunity to hear about the important work that Pastor Julie and LCM do in supporting students at Syracuse University and SUNY-ESF in their faith journey. Immediately following the service, we will have a chili and soup lunch. *(Please see the sign-up sheet in the Narthex to let us know that you plan to attend, as well as indicate if you can help by bringing chili, soup, sides, etc.)* There will be a goodwill offering at the luncheon to support Lutheran Campus Ministry, and members may also include gifts designated for LCM as part of the day's offering. Join us for a good cause, some fellowship, and some fun! (Pastor Julie will be awarding a prize for the best chili/soup!)
For questions or more information, contact Joni Pulliam, LCM board member.

Treasurer's Update & Giving

		Nov. 2025 Treasurer's Report		
	Nov-25	Year to Date	Budget	Over/Under Budget
Income				
Giving	$ 12,581.00	$ 128,896.85	$ 143,183.34	$ (14,286.49)
Other Income	$ 7,313.96	$ 81,714.91	$ 84,726.60	$ (3,011.69)
Total Income	$ 19,894.96	$ 210,611.76	$ 227,909.94	$ (17,298.18)
Total Expense	$ 19,848.79	$ 248,102.27	$ 238,402.22	$ 9,700.05
Net Income	$ 46.17	$ (37,490.51)	$ (10,492.28)	$ (26,998.23)

As we start the new year, may January bring peace, warmth, and simple joys to your days.

Gifts Given to the Glory of God

In Memory Of:	To:	Given By:
Randy Richards	Ambulance for Zimbabwe	Laurel McCurdy
Annabell Olson	Your Neighbors	Kerstin Soykan
Al, Edna, & Allen Youngkrans	Memorial Fund	Darlene & Mark Youngkrans
Pastor Mary Etta Skinner	Ambulance for Zimbabwe	Laurel McCurdy
Fran King	Food Bank	Claudia King
Al, Edna, and Alan Youngkrans	Operating Expenses	Darlene & Mark Youngkrans
In Honor Of:	**To**	**Given By:**
Linda Bennett	World Hunger	Laurel McCurdy
Laurel McCurdy	Ambulance for Zimbabwe	Jeanne Gymburch

Celebrations & Sign-Ups

January Birthdays			
Ryan Higgins	2	Emily Lambe	11
Miriam Grove	3	Pat Jeche	13
Claudia King	3	John Kelly	13
Daniel Gymburch	4	Jim Marscher	15
Robert Loomis	5	Linda Bennett	24
Lori Owens	5	Theresa Weir	24
David Weir	6	Beth Scarafile	31
Laura Campbell	7		

The worship team sign-up sheets are now posted on the bulletin board in the narthex for the winter months. Please help us stay organized and well-planned by signing up in advance if you are able.

Thank you for all you do to help serve our worship services!

Worship Team Schedule				
Date	**Pastor**	**Worship Asst.**	**Greeter**	**Ushers**
13	Rev. Marie Duquette	Nancy Thompson	Deb Murdock	Mark Thompson
Jan.11		Karen Toepp		Jeanne Gymburch & Doreen Nicholls
Jan.18	Pastor Julie Kelly		Karen Toepp & Janet Bagnall	
Jan. 25	Rev. Jennifer DeWeerth	Wendy Stevens		

Social Ministry

JOIN OUR PRAYER FELLOWSHIP CARD MINISTRY!

We are looking for someone to help us write and send cards to members of our church family. These include notes of encouragement, birthday wishes, and get-well cards.

We're looking for a member to begin in March (covering cards for March and April). If interested, please contact the church office.

Food Basket Changes

Social Ministry has shifted the holiday basket program to provide support year-round. With recent delays in SNAP benefits, Zion is ready to assist anyone in need. Please contact Pastor Marie or the church office if you or someone you know could use support. All requests are confidential.

Please don't hesitate to reach out to your church family during this challenging time.

FOOD PANTRIES SUPPORT

This quarter (January–March), we are supporting **St. Margaret's Food Pantry in Utica**.

More information about how you can help or get involved will be shared in future bulletins and the February newsletter.

As always, Zion welcomes your cans and bottles for our bottle return collection. Monies received go toward our food pantry mission.

Many thanks for your continued support!

THANK YOU

Zion's Social Ministry Committee extends heartfelt thanks to the Endowment Committee for their support of *Advent Is for Ambulances*. Your grants of $1,000 in both 2024 and 2025 have helped us contribute to the Upstate New York Synod's effort to provide urgently needed ambulances for the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Zimbabwe. Because of your generosity—and the generosity of many across our synod—$38,000 has already been sent for the first ambulance, and $14,000 has been raised toward a second. Together, we are helping save lives.

Notes From the Church Office

Dear Members of Zion Lutheran Church,
On behalf of The Center, we would like to thank you for your Mitten Tree donations, and your congregation's generous support! We truly value your commitment to the mission of The Center, and we hope for your continued participation in the future. From all of us here at The Center, thank you.
Sincerely,
Shelly Callahan/Executive Director

Dear Kind Members of Zion,
Thank you so much for your warm words of appreciation by voice and card and note, for the delicious spread after worship for visiting, and for a generous gift card to Barnes and Noble last Sunday. Please be assured I will keep you, Zion, and Pastor Marie in my prayers for God's blessing and for God's Spirit to live in Christ's way of love and forgiveness for all!
Keep shining with the promising light of Jesus!
Peace,
Pastor Rick Klafehn

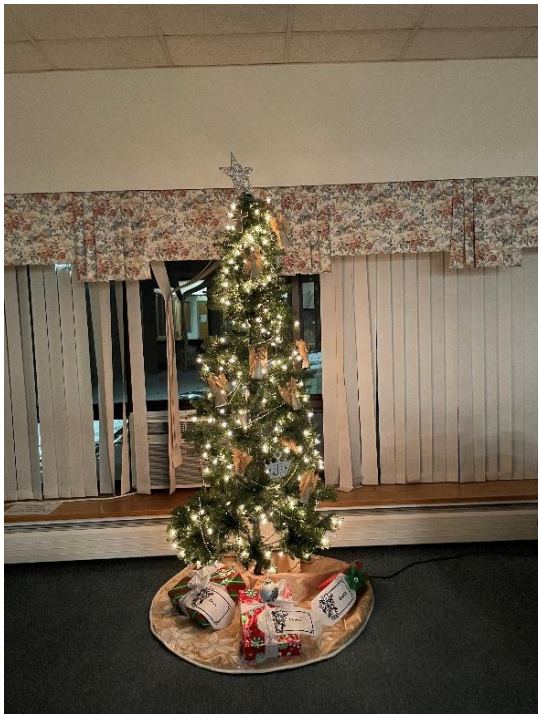
A huge THANK YOU to all the many wonderful hands, arms, and legs that brought this Advent season to life! Zion has been joyfully busy, and we are so grateful for the countless ways you showed up: serving, giving, organizing, and reaching out to our community. From arranging and preparing, to setting up, taking down, and even delivering, your dedication helped meet real needs and spread real hope. Thank you for the incredible energy, love, and care you pour into everything you do!
Sara Silva

Many thanks to Marilyn Preuss for making and donating 100 knit angels to Zion!

We are so grateful for your creativity, time, and generosity. The angels are beautiful and were lovingly made to be handed out.

In addition to this gift, Marilyn also handmade a batch of angels for Trinity–Herkimer.

Notes From the Church Office



Between 10 AM and 7 PM, about 15 new and old members participated in decorating our church for Christmas.

Great job everyone!

Women of Faith

Join us for the Women of Faith Bible Study, Tuesday, January 20th at 7:00 PM on Zoom as we walk with Mary, Mother of Jesus, an ordinary woman called by God for an extraordinary purpose.

Consider - what ordinary things make you special?

'Norm and Norma' "Ordinary folks, ordinary place. But a conduit of extraordinary grace. And in God's story, ordinary matters."
(Quote from They Walked with God by Max Lucado, p.165.)

Please read Luke 1:2-37 and Luke 2:1-12 in preparation for our time together.

Look for the Zoom link in your email ahead of the study. Please let Sara know if you'd like to be on our WOF emailing list.

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CONTACT INFO:

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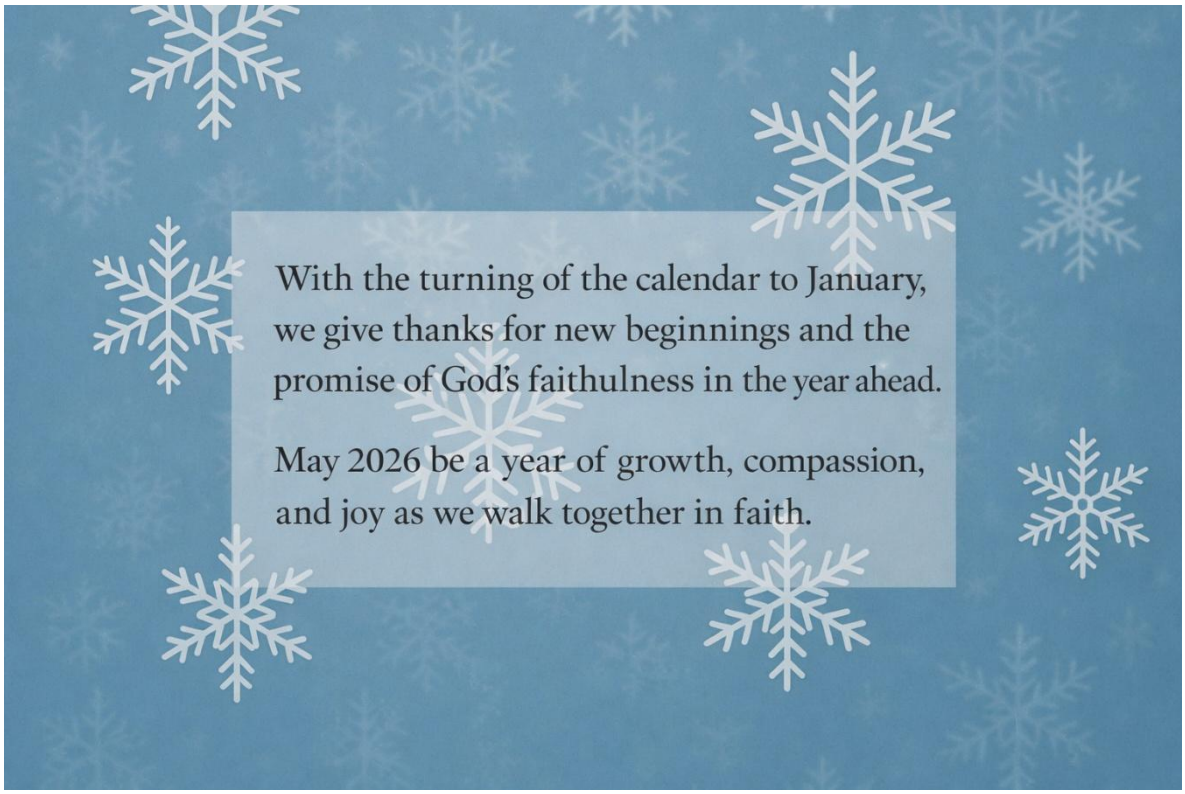
Like us on Facebook at:
Zion Lutheran Church, New Hartford, NY

The mission of Zion Lutheran Church is to prayerfully discern God's call to help people to become more fully devoted followers of Christ.

God's Work Our Hands