

# ZION TIDINGS January 2026



*“Serving Christ through Serving Others”*

## Happy 200th Anniversary Zion!

I don't know if you are aware but 2026 is a special year in the life of Zion Lutheran Church. Our community will be celebrating 200 years of ministry— that's 200 years of proclaiming the Gospel, administering the sacraments, serving God and neighbor, and bearing witness to God's love, grace, mercy, and forgiveness.

Over the past year our 200th Anniversary Committee has been hard at work planning a variety of events to celebrate 200 years of Lutheran witness in this community— and if I may say so myself, these events sound absolutely incredible. They'll be fun for everyone, from the youngest among us to the oldest and wisest. A full calendar of events has been published in paper copy and on our website. Our first event will be a kickoff dinner on Sunday January 18, immediately following service. I encourage you to invite friends and family to join us in the joyful fellowship we will experience over the course of this year.

2026 will bring a variety of opportunities for us to share stories, to reflect on God's activity over the years, and to praise God for his continued presence even now. Above all, I thank God for each and every one of you. It is an honor and privilege to serve as your pastor throughout this milestone of a year. I praise God for being present in this community over these past 200 years and I look forward to seeing where God shows up this year and, in the years, to come. Let us revel in celebration and loving fellowship as we remember the One who has gathered us here, together.

“Come, let us sing for the joy to the Lord; let us shout aloud to the Rock of our salvation. Let us come before him with Thanksgiving and extol him with music and song.” (Psalm 95:1-2)

Yours in Christ,



Pastor Summers



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**Jessica Dorn, Christian Education director** - [christianed@ziontippcity.org](mailto:christianed@ziontippcity.org)

**DEADLINE TO SUBMIT ARTICLES FOR THE February “TIDINGS” is Friday, January 23, 2026**

## Mission of the Month

### *A Little Kindness*

We will be collecting items for **Little Kindness** during the month of January. Pam Hale (sister of Terri Darrah) heads up this non-profit which provides Chemotherapy Care Bags through *Pink Ribbon Girls* to local hospitals and churches. Pam's motto is "Never underestimate the power of a kind word or deed." Please take one or two snowmen from basket in the narthex. Purchase the item(s) and return them to the mission box by January 31<sup>st</sup>. If you would prefer to make a monetary donation, please write it out to Women of Zion.

Any questions contact Deb Keppel.



## January Birthdays

2	Melissa Garvic	11	Linda Shutt	19	Cole Coppock
4	Elyse Masin	12	Babs Wesbecher	24	Tim Rambeau
8	Gavin Schlater	17	Erin Brooks Mason Lopez	29	Susie Gray Matt Breen
9	Joe Delaplane				
10	Laurie Reedstrom Tom Wesbecher				



## Upcoming Events

### **Secret Sister Reveal Party** January 11<sup>th</sup>

It's almost time to find out who your Secret Sister is! There will be a "reveal party" on Sunday January 11 after service around 11:15-11:30. We will gather in the Adult Sunday School Room or Fellowship Hall. After light refreshments, we'll try to guess who has been our secret friend this year. If you can't attend, your secret sister's name will be placed in your mailbox or sent by mail. Hope you can make it! See Linda Holt for more information.



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**January 17th**  
**6:00 pm**  
**Fellowship Hall**

**Pizza will be provided**

A freewill offering will be taken to cover the cost

**Please BYO Beverages  
and a Snack to Share**

[Sign up in the Fellowship Hallway](#)



If you don't know how to play – no worries – we will teach you. It's easy & fun!

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**Sunday, January 18th**  
**11:00 am**  
**Anniversary Year Kick Off  
Dinner**

The gathering will include Pastor's thoughts and blessings, member's favorite memories, and Tidings Trivia.

Please bring a vegetable &/or fruit/dessert to share and your dinner ware.

The church will provide chicken, coffee, water, lemonade & tea.

A sign-up sheet is in the fellowship hallway



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Interesting and thought provoking best describe these gatherings. The next meeting is January 20th. Join us for diverse conversations and theological discussions in a relaxed setting.

**Bible and Brew**  
**Tuesday, January 20<sup>th</sup>**  
**5:30 – 6:30**  
**Chaffee's Brewhouse**  
**15 E. Second Street, Tipp**



These gatherings are **open to everyone!**

Chaffee's offers a selection of craft beers, coffees, and a variety of other alcoholic and non-alcoholic beverages.

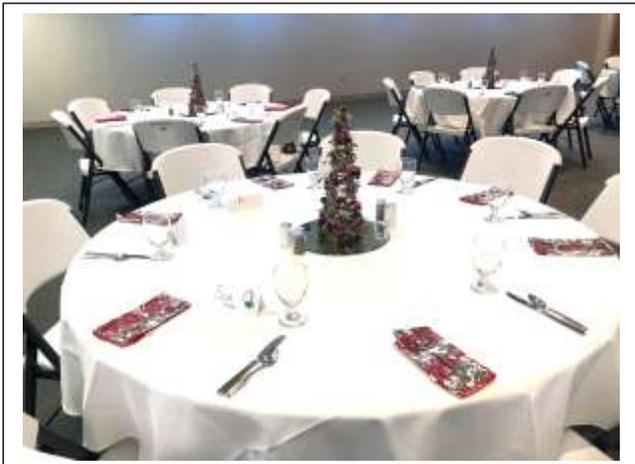
## Women's Daytime Fellowship January 28, 10:00 a.m.

All women are invited. Bring an idea for discussion that is important to you. This can be a social concern, a Bible verse or story that you've always wondered about, a spiritual question, etc. If we don't get to your issue, we will continue in the following month. Our purpose is to form friendships, support for each other, and to grow in our Christianity. We meet for an hour.



## Women of Zion Christmas Dinner

Forty-three women of Zion, family and friends enjoyed an evening of fellowship, good food and entertainment on December 4<sup>th</sup>. The meal was catered by Eloquence and the music provided by the Christian praise team "Micah". Thanks to the gentleman servers: Dale Schaefer, Tim Rambeau, John Greer, Jack Byrd and Bob Keppel and to Deb Keppel, Jill Greer and Sue Rambeau for putting the evening together. Thanks to Linda Holt who donated the lovely centerpieces.



## Sunday School Teacher Meeting

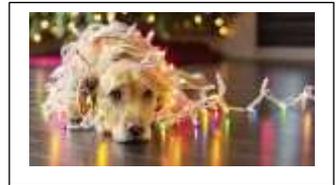
Monday, January 5<sup>th</sup>, 5:30 pm

Anyone interested is invited to attend to discuss the future of youth/kids Sunday School.

## Christmas Undecorating Party

January 8<sup>th</sup>, 4:00 pm

Assistance in taking down the beautiful Christmas decorations will be appreciated. We can go out to dinner following if anyone is interested.



## Living Our Mission Statement



Dear Zion Lutheran Church,

Thank you for your gift of \$3,200.00 to Lutheran Disaster Response.

*"From (Christ's) fullness we have all received, grace upon grace."*

John 1:16

As a church we are empowered to love and serve our neighbors as Christ first loved us. Your gifts to the ministries of the ELCA help people around the world feel the power and hope that flow from God's full, boundless love. Drawn together and guided by the Holy Spirit, we accomplish together what none of us could do alone, grace upon grace.

Your Spirit-filled generosity helps families and communities reeling from disasters, in the immediate aftermath and far into the future. No matter the disaster, no matter the need, your gifts to Lutheran Disaster Response enable people to rebuild their lives and livelihoods.

Thank you for your gracious gifts. You make God's love real.

With gratitude,

The Rev. Daniel Rift

Director, Congregational Generosity

## Christian One Liners

Don't let your worries get the best of you; remember, Moses started out as a basket case.

Some people are kind, polite, and sweet-spirited until you try to sit in their pews.

Many folks want to serve God, but only as advisors.

It is easier to preach ten sermons than it is to live one.

When you get to your wits' end, you'll find God lives there.

The good Lord didn't create anything without a purpose, but mosquitoes come close.



## A Fun Time – December 7<sup>th</sup> Party

Approximately 55 people joined us for the Christmas Celebration on December 7. We enjoyed fellowship, pizza, crafts, an educational break out room, selfie station, cookie decorating, crafts, and a Gingerbread House contest. Fun was had by all in attendance.



## Children & Youth Sunday School

If you have a preschool aged child who would like to be included in Sunday School, we are happy to include them accompanied by a parent. Kindergartners and older may be dropped off to a teacher at 9am.

All Sunday School students will be learning about the same topics, which coincide with our lectionary.

	Season	Sunday	Date	Lesson Title	Focus Text
🔄	Christmas	Christmas 2	1/4/2026	<b>No Sunday School</b>	
🔄	Epiphany	Baptism of the Lord	1/11/2026	A Light to the Nations	Isaiah 42:1-9
🔄	Epiphany	Epiphany 2	1/18/2026	The Lamb of God	John 1:29-42
🔄	Epiphany	Epiphany 3	1/25/2026	United in Christ	1 Corinthians 1:10-18

**Family and Youth Sunday School Teacher Meeting:** [Monday, January 5<sup>th</sup> at 5:30pm](#)

**Confirmation for 6<sup>th</sup> graders and older who have already spoken to Pastor Summers:** [January 27<sup>th</sup> at 5:30pm.](#)

## Children's Bulletins



Children's Bulletins are available for children during worship. If you would like some for your children or grandchildren, please let Jessica Dorn know beforehand and she will put that week's (or month's) bulletin(s) in your mailbox along with a pencil and some crayons. Please leave the crayons in your mailbox.

## Zion's Tree in the Park

Due to bad weather, the kids and youth were unable to decorate the tree this year. Charlotte and I decorated the tree minimally so that other families could add to the tree if they wished. Thank you to Annette for making a sign inviting all those who visit the park to Christmas Eve Worship  
~ Jessica Dorn.





## How Can I Get Involved?

We are so happy to welcome new people to our congregation. We've been asked about ways to plug in to activities. To provide information about the multitude of opportunities, this is the third of a new ongoing section in Tidings, which describes a specific ministry area and ways to become involved. This month we are highlighting **Storypoint (Randall) Outreach**.

Zion's Hymn Sing & Communion Ministry at StoryPoint (formerly Randall Residence) in Tipp City is truly a loving and fun gathering every month. We sing, talk, giggle, pass out song books, assist residents as needed, have a short devotional, share communion, sing some more, chat some more and plan for the next month. The **hardest** thing we do is setting up seating for 20-25 residents plus a table and seating for the team! Set up must be completed before 12:45. This ministry takes place after church on the fourth Sunday of the month.

If you have a passion for working with people in assisted living, enjoy singing, sharing devotionals, serving communion or simply fellowshiping and sharing the love of Christ, this is a great ministry opportunity for you.

We invite you to visit any time. If you would be interested in joining the team and/or filling-in during the absence of a team member, please contact Carol Phillips at 937-308-0387.

## Heaps of Gratitude

Dear AMAZING Women of Zion!

WOW! You really made our Quarter Auction a night to remember! Thank you for cooking the delicious food and for your generous donation to Child Care Choices! We truly appreciate your support and kindness! You helped us raise over \$5,000! Wishing you all the happiest of holidays and a very Merry Christmas! With a heart full of gratitude, Renee Matsunami, Child Care Choices

Women of Zion Lutheran Church

Thank you so much for your gift of \$801.85 to Lutheran World Relief's Quilt and Kit Shipping Fund. Your generosity today will ensure that these lovingly handmade blessings reach the people who need them most.

I hope you know that you are part of something amazing and historic. As our year of celebrating LWR's 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary comes to an end, I find great joy in the fact that the Quilt & Kit Ministry has been part of our work since the LWR's earliest days in 1945...and that you are helping us carry this legacy of love into the next generation.

Across 80 years, more than 28 million quilts have comforted people in their time of need. In 2025 alone, more than 800,000 of these handmade blessings were distributed around the world. Thank you for sharing gifts of comfort, dignity and hope with our neighbors near and far.

I am so grateful for your dedication to blanketing the world with the peace of Christ...until your love reaches every neighbor.

In Christ, Ambassador Daniel V. Speckhard, President and CEO



## Adult Sunday School

On **January 11, 2026** we will resume our study on **Luke: The Savior of the World** by John MacArthur. We'll continue with chapter 4 (part 2), **Christ's Message, Ministry, and Miracles** in Luke 7:50-9:50.

The class will be held in the Adult Sunday School room beginning at **9:00**.

If you have not joined us and would like the book, please contact Linda Holt. The cost is \$5.00. See you in January!



## Choir Notes

Our high-energy anthem, "Rise Up, "Shepherds," on December 21st was a hit, with everyone singing in perfect sync! The wind, snow, and cold December 13<sup>th</sup>, so church was canceled, but we didn't want to let our hard work with the anthem go to waste. So, we moved it to Christmas Eve, and we sang two anthems! Deb suggested, "If we're going to wear robes, we should make it worth the effort!"

January's winter weather is always unpredictable, so the choir will be off for the entire month. We'll be back on **Wednesday, February 11, 2026**, for our first rehearsal in the new year to get ready for Ash Wednesday (February 18th) and the Lenten season.

Now, for all you choir hopefuls out there, just a heads-up that we do skip a few rehearsals and Sunday performances each year. But don't worry, you can always check the bulletin for the latest rehearsal schedules.

Bill Jones

## Many Thanks

*The following were all thank you notes from Cheer Plate recipients:*

Thank you for the Cheer Plate container I received. So nice to be remembered 😊 I wish all of you a very Merry Christmas and a very Happy New Year 2026. Love to all, Betty Jackson

Kim and I so enjoyed the cheer plate. Everything was delicious. We appreciate you thinking of us. Thank you, Bill Jones

Thank you for the wonderful "plate" of goodies, cheer plate crew with Debbie leading. It was uplifting (and yummy) to feel the "Zion love" it carried. In Christian love, Ruth White

Thank you for the container of goodies. Zion has some good bakers in the congregation. God bless all of you. Ted & Freda Schmidt

THANK YOU!



## Council Meeting Report

December 9, 2025

### *Sanctuary Refresh Committee*

The Sanctuary Refresh Committee has begun its important work with a mission to create a more welcoming, functional, and spiritually uplifting space for worship. Plans include updating aesthetics (paint, lighting, seating), improving accessibility (ramps, seating), and ensuring the sanctuary reflects our evolving mission and ministries—all while honoring its sacred purpose as a place of encounter with God.

To support this vision, the committee will partner with a design company specializing in sanctuary analysis and design. Their consultation will be provided at no cost to the church.

### *Property Updates*

- Celina Insurance recently inspected the church property and offered suggested updates. These have been passed along to the appropriate committees for follow-up.
- Vantage Signs are underway, including new sign boards for the front marquee and a new sign for the cemetery on Hyatt.
- Sorah Carpet Cleaning has completed the cleaning of the Fellowship Hall, hallway carpet, and kitchen floor. The Property Committee's next project will be scheduling the cleaning of the Sanctuary carpeting.

### *Upcoming Advent Service*

Pastor reminded us of the upcoming Advent Service, scheduled for Wednesday, December 10th at 6 PM. This special evening will provide a sacred space for prayer and healing, inviting the congregation into a season of reflection and renewal.

### *Women of Zion Christmas Dinner*

On Thursday, December 4th at 6 PM, the Women of Zion gathered for their annual Christmas Dinner. This cherished evening was filled with connection, celebration, and joy as the group shared fellowship during the Advent season.

### *Safety and Security*

Council briefly discussed the importance of developing policies and procedures related to safety and security. This topic will be addressed in greater depth during our February Council Meeting.

Next Meeting: Tuesday, **January 13, 2026 at 7:00 p.m.**

## Thank You

Thank you so much for the many, many adorable Christmas ornaments to be used on our patients' trees. The ornaments will certainly add something extra special!

Thank you for thinking of our patients at Hospice of Miami County.

Vicky McKinley





Plans and work for our 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary are in full swing. There are surveys on the table in the narthex asking for your thoughts on the anniversary. Please take some time to fill one in and return it to the box on the table.

Mark your calendars for these celebratory events next year:

**Sunday, January 18<sup>th</sup> – 11:00 am – Anniversary Year Kick-off Dinner**

Pastor's thoughts and blessings

Member's favorite memories

Tidings Trivia

Members to bring a dish &/or dessert to share. The church will provide meat

**THERE IS A SIGN-UP SHEET IN THE FELLOWSHIP HALLWAY**

**Sunday, May 17<sup>th</sup> – 2:00 – 3:00 pm – Rededication of Zion's Cemetery on South Hyatt**

Some history of those members buried there

Honoring Zion's founding fathers and members

Pastor's thoughts and blessings

Laying of flowers

**Saturday, June 20<sup>th</sup> – 2:30 – 4:30 pm – Community Ice Cream Social**

Ice Cream Truck, Bouncy Houses, Games, Crafts and Balloon Man etc.

5:00 pm Saturday Service – Special music TBD

6:00 – 8:00 pm Pizza and Bunco in the Fellowship Hall.

**Sunday, September 13<sup>th</sup> – 10:00 am – Anniversary Celebration Service and Dinner**

Bishop Susan Dillahunt (sermon) & special music by Adena Brass

Congregational Dinner following the service at Tipp Center

**November TBD – Annual Congregational Meeting & Anniversary Finale Dinner**

*Rooted in Christ, Growing in Faith*

## January Musician's Corner - *Hark the Herald Angels Sing*



January's hymn of the month is *Hark the Herald Angels Sing* / *Jesus, the Light of the World* (All Creation Sings - 914). This hymn is in the form of a "call" and "response". The familiar words of the hymn (*Hark the Herald Angels Sing*) are written by Charles Wesley (1707-1787). If the name Wesley sounds familiar, that's because Samuel Wesley (Charles' brother) is considered the founder of the Methodist Church. Further, Charles Wesley and George Whitefield also were significant in how the Methodist church developed. Charles wrote over 6,500 hymns, several of which are in our red Evangelical Lutheran Worship (ELW) hymnal. Some of the most common hymns include: *Come Thou Long Expected Jesus* (Advent), *Hark the Herald Angels Sing* (Christmas), *Christ the Lord is Risen Today* (Easter), *Love Divine, All Loves Excelling*, *O for a Thousand Tongues to Sing*, and *Rejoice the Lord is King* (General), and *Lo! He Comes with Clouds Descending* (End Times). Just to emphasize the quantity of hymns Wesley wrote, Martin Luther wrote in the range of 20-40 hymns (depending on the source one cites). The only other person who is credited with writing more hymns than Wesley would be Fanny Crosby, who wrote over 8,000 hymns.

*Jesus the Light of the World* text was incorporated by George Elderkin. The hymn appeared in a Sunday School hymnal in 1917. There is not much biographical information known about George Elderkin. This hymn is often found in African-American congregational hymnals.

The remainder of my column will be spent with words of gratitude. 2025 seemed to fly by quickly. In February, we thanked Joyce Zimmann for her 25 years of service for Zion's Saturday evening pianist and an over 70+ year career of playing in churches! We also had several individuals step up to fill the Saturday evening musician duties: Brittany Fouts, Susie Gray, Grant Johnson, Bill Jones, Deb Keppel, and Kristin Zimmann. Thank you for the time and energy you gave on Saturday evenings.

Sunday services were enriched by our vocal choir (currently 14 members strong): Brittany Fouts, Carla Frame, Susie Gray, Doug Jacobs, Bill and Kim Jones, Bob and Deb Keppel, Joyce Luther, Lil Nichols, Dale and Ginger Schaefer, Erma Swanson, and Mitch Tayse. Also, thanks to retiring members Gary and Kathy Groth and Felicia Young. Special thanks to our talented choir directors: Bill Jones and Susie Gray.

Thanks to those who rang in our bell choir this past year: Linda Holt, Deb Keppel, and Mitch and Cindy Tayse. And thanks to Susie Gray for accompanying. We also appreciate all those who provided special music this past year (and I'm not going to list so I don't miss someone!) We had youth and retirees providing music on piano, flute, guitar, trumpet, and with voices. Thank you for your time and dedication. You all enhanced our worship services with your talents.

Thank you to all those who handle the administrative issues. Thanks to those who serve on the Worship and Music Committee: Brittany Fouts, Carla Frame, Susie Gray, Bill Jones, Deb Keppel, Lil Nichols, and Pastor Jaren Summers. We also say a big thank you to Annette Calicoat who handles all the clerical work with the bulletins. Especially during Holy Week and Christmas time, thank you for your patience dealing with all the changes. And for the person who theologically ties everything together with the music – thanks to Pastor Jaren Summers. This is been our first full calendar year working together, and I look forward to many decades of great teamwork (although I make no promises about playing until 90!).

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!     Lori Sebastian



## By the Numbers

Instead of printing attendance and giving weekly in the bulletins, we are putting offerings and average monthly attendance for the previous month in Tidings. This is the month of December through the 20<sup>th</sup>. Church was canceled due to the weather on 12/13-14 so it's only 2 weeks.

Average Attendance – Saturday: 41                      Sunday: 78

Average Sunday School Attendance – Adult: 35                      Youth & Kids didn't meet

Total Giving: \$19,769.00

## Prayer Requests

**May the peace of Christ dwell in you every day in this new year.**

**Prayer requests:** Pray for Logan Phillips (Carol Phillips' daughter) who is hospitalized with a kidney infection Pray for Christine Schlater who recovering at home from neck surgery. Pray for Mark Mills who is in the memory unit at Brethren's Retirement Community in Greenville. Emily Clenney's (daughter of Kim and Bill Jones) is waiting to see if her procedure is successful. Danielle Mobley, granddaughter of Wayne Fronczak, is home after surgery and is facing a difficult recovery. Keep in your prayers Williams' neighbor Regina, Jayson Williams, Sean and Doug Lowe, Jaxson Williams, Steven Williams, Brandon and Aubrey Lowe, Julia Paizshal (sister of Jeff Johnson) is suffering effects after a motorcycle accident in Washington state.

**Continue to pray for:** Betty Jackson, Chalmer Mader, Debbie Turner, Ruth White, Greg Watkins, Peggy McCoy, Christine Copeland, James Oaks, Brian Watkins, Sam and Diane Miller, Colonel Troy Cramer, Rick Matson, Fred Staie, the Weprin family, Cindy Moore, and Carol Phillips.

Zion's Prayer Chain is sent out weekly through email. It lists prayers needed for those in our community and world. If you have signed up to receive the prayer chain and have not received it recently, please let the office or Linda Holt know. If you have never been a part of the prayer chain and would like to receive it, let us know that, as well.

To request prayers, or take an individual off the prayer chain, email them to [prayers@ziontippcity.org](mailto:prayers@ziontippcity.org). You can also access this through Zion's website [www.ziontippcity.org](http://www.ziontippcity.org) or call the church office at (937) 667-3110.

# January 2026

## Calendar of Events at Zion

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1  Office Closed	2	3 Communion Saturday
4 NO Sunday School	5 Quilts 10:30 TOPS 3:30 - 5 Property Mtg. 6 Pastor Relat. 7 SS Teacher Mtg. 5:30	6 Mens Bkfst 9:30 Quilts 10 AA 8-9 pm	7	8 4:00 Christmas Undecorating Party	9	10
11 11:15 Secret Sis Reveal Party WoZ 5:00	12 Quilts 10:30 TOPS 3:30 - 5	13 Mens Bkfst 9:30 Quilts 10 Comm Mtg 5p Council 7p AA 8-9 pm	14 Blood Drive	15	16	17 Bunco 6:00 Communion Saturday
18 11:00 Anniversary Kick Off Dinner	19  Office Closed	20 Mens Bkfst 9:30 Quilts 10 AA 8-9 pm Bible & Brew 5:30 -Chafee's	21	22 Compassion. Friends 7:00	23	24
25 11 - Back Bay Mission Mtg. Randall Outreach	26 Quilts 10:30 TOPS 3:30 - 5	27 Mens Bkfst 9:30 Quilts 10 AA 8-9 pm	28 10-Women's Fellowship	29	30	31