

Zion Lutheran Church
925 5th Avenue - Rockford, Illinois
February 22, 2026 at 9:15am
www.facebook.com/zionlutheranrockford



FIRST SUNDAY OF LENT

PRELUDE "Poor Wayfaring Stranger"

Arr. By Mark Hayes

WELCOME

ANNOUNCEMENTS

*The Holy Spirit calls and gathers us together
as the people of God*

CONFSSION AND FORGIVENESS

Blessed be the holy Trinity, **☩** one God, who forgives all our sin,
whose mercy endures forever.

Amen.

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- * Pattern of Worship—resource from ELW pages 91-93

WORSHIP SERVICES ONLINE

[https://www.facebook.com/
zionlutheranrockford](https://www.facebook.com/zionlutheranrockford)

www.youtube.com/zionrockford

Please subscribe to the Zion YouTube
channel

<https://twitter.com/ZionRockford>



Let us confess our sin before God, who removes our guilt and blots out all offenses. Gracious God,

have mercy on us according to your steadfast love.

For seeking worldly delights that deceive us and dishonor you: Gracious God,

have mercy on us according to your steadfast love.

For desiring self-reliance instead of hungering for your word: Gracious God,

have mercy on us according to your steadfast love.

For failing to recognize your coming reign, and for hindering the work of the Spirit: Gracious God,

have mercy on us according to your steadfast love.

For drawing from the well of self-serving ambition, and for disdaining the living water Christ offers: Gracious God,

have mercy on us according to your steadfast love.

For disregarding voices from the margin, and for distrusting signs of your healing and hope in the world: Gracious God,

have mercy on us according to your steadfast love.

For dwelling in tombs of self-pity and discontent, and for disregarding Christ's call to come forth to life: Gracious God,

have mercy on us according to your steadfast love.

God's steadfast love, grace, and forgiveness abound. Through faith, the free gift of God, you have been clothed in the righteousness of Christ. In the name of + Jesus Christ, your sins are forgiven. The Spirit of the One who raised Christ from the dead dwells in you, pours God's love into your hearts, and gives you life and peace.

Amen.

GATHERING SONG "Give To Our God Immortal Praise!" Red Hymnal #848

1 Give to our God immortal praise!

Mercy and truth are all his ways.

Wonders of grace to God belong;

repeat his mercies in your song.

2 God sent his Son with pow'r to save
from guilt and darkness and the grave.

Wonders of grace to God belong;

repeat his mercies in your song.

3 Give to the Lord of lords renown;
the King of kings with glory crown.

His mercies ever shall endure

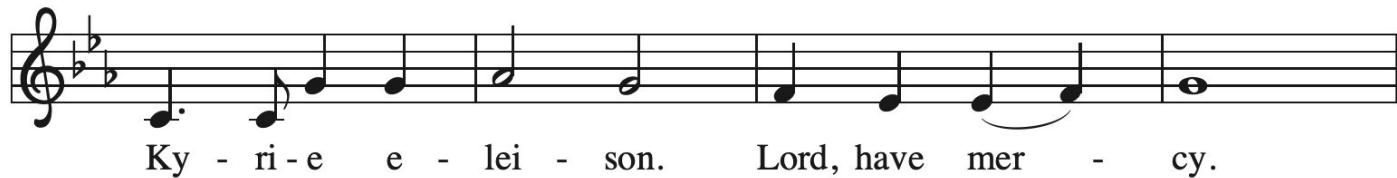
when lords and kings are known no more!

GREETING

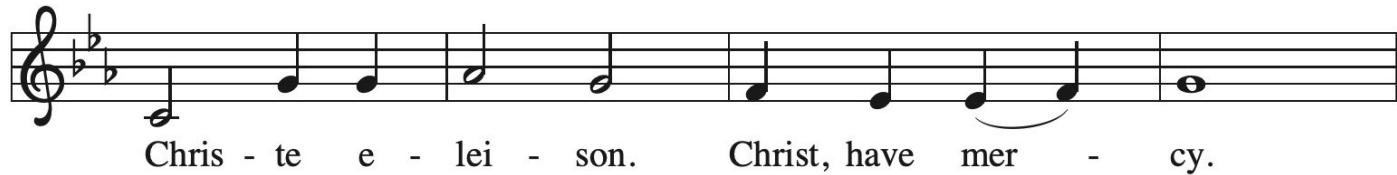
The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

And also with you.

KYRIE



Ky - ri - e e - lei - son. Lord, have mer - cy.



Chris - te e - lei - son. Christ, have mer - cy.



Ky - ri - e e - lei - son. Lord, have mer - cy.

SONG OF PRAISE "Sometimes Our Only Song Is Weeping"

1 Some-times our on - ly song is weep - ing; our on - ly
 2 Some-times we catch - the faint-est hum - ming, a far - off

sound is gasp - ing breath. Some-times it seems that God is
 tune our hearts know well. Some-times we sense the Spir - it

sleep-ing while our brief lives are bound in death.
 com - ing. Our song re - turns; our voic - es swell.

Who hears the song our sor - rows swal - low and of - fers
 The Spir - it sings though we are shak - en, and Christ has

hope to calm our fears? When all our words seem frail and
 shared our heart - felt cries. Re - stored, our wea - ry souls a -

hol - low, God heeds the prayers with - in our tears.
 wak - en to join God's song that nev - er dies.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Let us pray. Lord God, our strength, the struggle between good and evil rages within and around us, and the devil and all the forces that defy you tempt us with empty promises. Keep us steadfast in your word, and when we fall, raise us again and restore us through your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

THE WORD

God speaks to us in scripture reading, preaching and song.

FIRST READING Genesis 2:15-17; 3:1-7

¹⁵ The LORD God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to till it and keep it. ¹⁶ And the LORD God commanded the man, “You may freely eat of every tree of the garden, ¹⁷ but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall die.” ^{3:1} Now the serpent was more crafty than any other wild animal that the LORD God had made. He said to the woman, “Did God say, ‘You shall not eat from any tree in the garden’?” ² The woman said to the serpent, “We may eat of the fruit of the trees in the garden, ³ but God said, ‘You shall not eat of the fruit of the tree that is in the middle of the garden, nor shall you touch it, or you shall die.’ ” ⁴ But the serpent said to the woman, “You will not die, ⁵ for God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.” ⁶ So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food and that it was a delight to the eyes and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate, and she also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate. ⁷ Then the eyes of both were opened, and they knew that they were naked, and they sewed fig leaves together and made loincloths for themselves.

Word of love. Word of trust. **Guide us as we journey.**

PSALM 32

- ¹ Happy are they whose transgressions are forgiven,
and whose sin is put away!
- ² **Happy are they to whom the LORD imputes no guilt,
and in whose spirit there is no guile!**
- ³ While I held my tongue, my bones withered away,
because of my groaning all day long.
- ⁴ **For your hand was heavy upon me day and night;
my moisture was dried up as in the heat of summer.**
- ⁵ Then I acknowledged my sin to you, and did not conceal my guilt.
I said, “I will confess my transgressions to the LORD.”
Then you forgave me the guilt of my sin.
- ⁶ **Therefore all the faithful will make their prayers to you
in time of trouble;
when the great waters overflow, they shall not reach them.**
- ⁷ You are my hiding-place; you preserve me from trouble;
you surround me with shouts of deliverance.
- ⁸ **“I will instruct you and teach you in the way that you should go;
I will guide you with my eye.**
- ⁹ Do not be like horse or mule, which have no understanding;
who must be fitted with bit and bridle,
or else they will not stay near you.”
- ¹⁰ **Great are the tribulations of the wicked;
but mercy embraces those who trust in the LORD.**
- ¹¹ Be glad, you righteous, and rejoice in the LORD;
shout for joy, all who are true of heart.

SECOND READING: Romans 5:12-19

- ¹² Just as sin came into the world through one man, and death came through sin, and so death spread to all because all have sinned ¹³ for sin was indeed in the world before the law, but sin is not reckoned when there is no law. ¹⁴ Yet death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over

those who did not sin in the likeness of Adam, who is a pattern of the one who was to come.¹⁵ But the free gift is not like the trespass. For if the many died through the one man's trespass, much more surely have the grace of God and the gift in the grace of the one man, Jesus Christ, abounded for the many.¹⁶ And the gift is not like the effect of the one man's sin. For the judgment following one trespass brought condemnation, but the gift following many trespasses brings justification.¹⁷ If, because of the one man's trespass, death reigned through that one, much more surely will those who receive the abundance of grace and the gift of righteousness reign in life through the one man, Jesus Christ.¹⁸ Therefore just as one man's trespass led to condemnation for all, so one man's act of righteousness leads to justification and life for all.¹⁹ For just as through the one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, so through the one man's obedience the many will be made righteous.

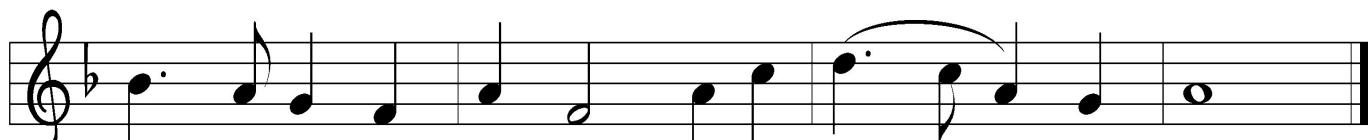
Word of love. Word of trust. **Guide us as we journey.**

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

“Let Your Steadfast Love”



Let your steadfast love come to us, O Lord.



Save us as you promised; we will trust your word.

The Holy Gospel according to Matthew, the 4th Chapter.

Glory to you, O Lord.

GOSPEL: Matthew 4:1-11

¹ Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tested by the devil. ² He fasted forty days and forty nights, and afterward he was famished. ³ The tempter came and said to him, “If you are the Son of God, command these stones to become loaves of bread.” ⁴ But he answered, “It is written, ‘One does not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.’” ⁵ Then the devil took him to the holy city and placed him on the pinnacle of the temple, ⁶ saying to him, “If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down, for it is written, ‘He will command his angels concerning you,’ and ‘On their hands they will bear you up, so that you will not dash your foot against a stone.’” ⁷ Jesus said to him, “Again it is written, ‘Do not put the Lord your God to the test.’” ⁸ Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory, ⁹ and he said to him, “All these I will give you, if you will fall down and worship me.” ¹⁰ Then Jesus said to him, “Away with you, Satan! for it is written, ‘Worship the Lord your God, and serve only him.’” ¹¹ Then the devil left him, and suddenly angels came and waited on him.

The gospel of our Lord. **Praise to you, O Christ.**

SERMON

Student Deaconess Janice Forrest

SERMON SONG

“I Want Jesus To Walk With Me”

Red Hymnal #325

1 I want Jesus to walk with me;
I want Jesus to walk with me;
all along my pilgrim journey,
Lord, I want Jesus to walk with me.

2 In my trials, Lord, walk with me;
in my trials, Lord, walk with me;
when my heart is almost breaking,
Lord, I want Jesus to walk with me.

3 When I'm in trouble, Lord, walk with me;
when I'm in trouble, Lord, walk with me;
when my head is bowed in sorrow,
Lord, I want Jesus to walk with me.

APOSTLES' CREED

I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth. I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried; he descended to the dead. On the third day he rose again; he ascended into heaven, he is seated at the right hand of the Father, and he will come to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Let us pray for the whole people of God in Christ Jesus, and for all people according to their needs.

Lord, in your mercy **Hear our prayer.**

Into your hands, O Lord, we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in your mercy; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

SHARING OF THE PEACE

The peace of the Lord be with you.
And also with you.

MUSIC OFFEREING & OFFERING "His Eye Is On the Sparrow"

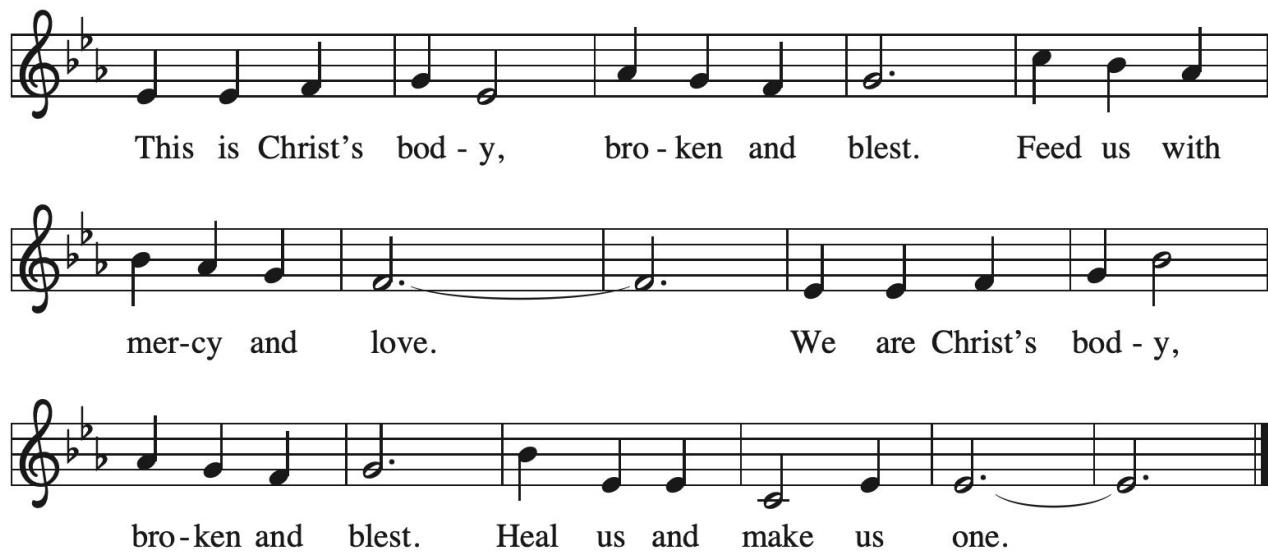
Jodi Beach

Offering envelopes are available in the pews at your seat to designate gifts toward the ministries of Zion. The Offering Box is by the prayer table. You can also go online at www.zionrockford.com or you can click on the QR code.



TABLE BLESSING

“This Is Christ’s Body”



This is Christ's bod - y, bro - ken and blest. Feed us with
mer-cy and love. We are Christ's bod - y,
bro - ken and blest. Heal us and make us one.

THE MEAL - God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ.

PRAYER

Holy God, gracious and merciful, you bring forth food from the earth and nourish your whole creation. Turn our hearts toward those who hunger in any way, that all may know your care; and prepare us now to feast on the bread of life, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

Amen.

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give God thanks and praise.

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

In the night in which he was betrayed, Jesus took bread, and gave thanks; broke it and gave it to his disciples, saying: Take and eat; this is my body, given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me. Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it for all to drink, saying: This cup is the new covenant in my blood, shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin. Do this for the remembrance of me.

LORD'S PRAYER

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.

Please come to the front for communion today.

Receive the wafer with an open hand.

The cups of wine are red and juice is in the center and the juice is clear.

There are individual communion cups at the prayer table by the piano.

Dispose of them in the lobby.

COMMUNION "When Our World Is Rent by Violence"

1 When our world is rent by violence
 and our lives are marred by grief,
 when our songs of calm assurance
 turn to cries of unbelief:
 God, we raise our lamentation
 seeking refuge and relief.

2 When our cities stand forsaken
 and the poor must beg for bread,
 when the pris'ner sits forgotten
 and the homeless find no bed,
 God, we raise our lamentation:
 waken justice from the dead!

3 When our lives are burnt to ashes
 and our hopes fade like a dream,
 when our stories lose their meaning
 and despair becomes their theme,
 God, we raise our lamentation:
 Come, Lord Jesus, to redeem!

4 Raise up beauty from the ashes;
end our violence; tend our peace.

 Give us visions of a future
 where all captives find release,
 where oppression is evicted,
 and all works of hatred cease.

“Jesus, Keep Me Near the Cross” Red Hymnal #335

1 Jesus, keep me near the cross,
 there's a precious fountain;
 free to all, a healing stream
 flows from Calv'ry's mountain.

Refrain: In the cross, in the cross; be my glory ever;
till my ransomed soul shall find; rest beyond the river.

2 Near the cross, a trembling soul,
 love and mercy found me;
 there the bright and morning star
 sheds its beams around me. *Refrain*

3 Near the cross! O Lamb of God,
 bring its scenes before me;
 help me walk from day to day
 with its shadow o'er me. *Refrain*

4 Near the cross I'll watch and wait,
 hoping, trusting ever,
 till I reach the golden strand
 just beyond the river. *Refrain*

Under His Wings

Text: William O. Cushing
Music: Ira D. Sankey

1. Under His wings I am safe - ly a - bid - ing.
2. Under His wings what a ref - uge in sor - row!
3. Under His wings O what pre - cious en - joy - ment!

Tho' the night
How the heart
There will I

6. deep - ens and temp - ests are wild,
yearn - ing ly turns to His rest!
hide till life's tri - als are o'er;
Shel - teres, pro - tect - ed,

Still I can trust Him; I
Of - ten when earth has no
no

II. know He will keep me. He has re - deemed me, and I am His child.
balm for my heal - ing, There I find com - fort, and there I am blessed.
c - vil can harm me. Rest - ing in Je - sus, I'm safe ev - er more.

17. Refrain
Under His wings; un - der His wings; Who from His love can sev - er? _____ Un - der His

26. wings my soul shall a - bide, Safe - ly a - bide for - ev - er.

May the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in his grace.

Amen.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Let us pray: God of our salvation, we give you thanks for this meal that restores our souls, reconciles us to you, and strengthens us for the journey. Through the body and blood of your Son, may we become Christ's body in the world, bearing witness to your love for all creation, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

Amen.

BLESSING

Receive the blessing of the holy Trinity: God, who calls all things into existence, Jesus Christ, who redeems us, and the Holy Spirit, whose breath sustains creation,  bless you now and always.

Amen.

THE SENDING

God blesses us and sends us in mission to the world.

SENDING SONG “Amazing Grace, My Chains Are Gone”

by John Newton, John P. Reese, Edwin Othello Excell, Chris Tomlin and Louie Giglio

1. Amazing grace, how sweet the sound, that saved a wretch like me.
I once was lost, but now am found, was blind but now I see.
2. ‘Twas grace that taught my heart to fear,
And grace my fears relieved.
How precious did that grace appear,
The hour I first believed.

Chorus: My chains are gone. I've been set free,
My God my Savior has ransomed me.
And like a flood His mercy reigns,
Unending love, amazing grace.

3. The Lord has promised good to me, His word my hope secures.
He will my shield and portion be,
As long as life endures. (Chorus)

4. The earth shall soon dissolve like snow, The sun forbear to shine.
But God, who called me here below,
Will be forever mine, will be forever mine.
You are forever mine.

SENDING

Go in peace. Believe the good news.

Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE

“Just As I Am”

Arr. By Lari Goss

Good Friday Swedish Service

Friday, April 3, 2026 at Noon

Zion Lutheran Church

925 Fifth Avenue – Rockford, IL



- Good Friday/Långfredagen Service at noon
 - Liturgy bulletin all spoken in Swedish
 - Swedish Community Choir
 - Jodi Beach, Special Music
 - Loose offering: Ruthie's Kitchen
 - Sermon in English
 - Holy Communion liturgy in Swedish



Zion Lutheran Church
925 Fifth Avenue - Rockford, IL 61104
Office: 815.964.4609
www.zionrockford.com



Swedish Historical Society
404 South 3rd Street
Rockford, IL 61104
Office: 815.963.5559
www.swedishhistorical.org

2026 Midtown Midweek Lenten at Noon

Conversations With Jesus

EXERCISE CLASS BEFORE WORSHIP & SIMPLE LUNCH AFTER WORSHIP

February 25 at Calvary Lutheran Church at Noon
(held at Emmanuel Lutheran Church)
Preacher: Pastor Mike Thomas

March 4 at Salem Lutheran Church at Noon
Preacher: Pastor Chuck Olson

March 11 at Zion Lutheran Church at Noon
Preacher: Pastor Frank Langhoff

March 18 at Emmanuel Lutheran Church at Noon
Preacher: Pastor Leslie Aska

March 25 at First Lutheran Church at Noon
Preacher: Pastor Bill Dahlberg



CONVERSATIONS
WITH JESUS
LENT 2026

BAG FLUFFING

FOR CORNUCOPIA FOOD PANTRY

Fourth Monday at 1:00pm

Held at Zion Lutheran Church!



Cornucopia



Food Pantry

PRAYER CORNER! WE ASK YOU TO PRAY FOR:



- ◊ The ELCA, Presiding Bishop Yehiel Curry, Bishop Stacie Fidlar, Pastor Thomas, Pastor Emeritus Denver Bitner, the Zion Church Council, Pastor Caleb Uk of the Burmese congregation; the Zion Staff, Zion Outreach Board, Staff and Programs of Patriots Gateway Center, Katie's Cup and Zion Development Corporation.
- ◊ Senior Pastor Ndeshifose Akyoo, Assisting Pastor Evan Kiula, and Assisting Pastor Yohanna Samson Ntui of Sepuka Parish (Tanzania)
- ◊ Bishop Peter Paul Thomas and Pastor Selvakumar of Arcot Lutheran Church in India and Pastor Mytch Dorvilier.
- ◊ For the Northern Illinois Synod; North Conference churches; Midtown Lutheran Parish, faculty and students of Rockford Lutheran Schools.
- ◊ For those who grieve the loss of loved ones: Mary Norman.
- ◊ For healing: Colette Buchert, Norm Buchert, Linda Callahan, Marjorie Carlson, Yolanda Churchill, Charlie Dahlberg, Jeff Dahlberg, Norma Daugherty, Karen Eiseman, John Hoyt, Gary Johnson, Greg Johnson, Leola LeGault, Jim McDowell, Les Morgan, Terry Morgan, Betty Jo Rodey, Wayne Spitzer, Carrie Steder, Kamara Thomas, Deb Tolodxi, Brian Veitch, Nancy Warden, Danielle Wegner, Gary Wegner, Jr., and Gary Zeien.

If you have a prayer request or a prayer of thanksgiving to share, please notify Pastor Mike. The prayer room is upstairs to the left of the sanctuary and is available during office hours and on Sunday before and after worship services.

SEASONED SAINTS GROUP

Join Pastor Mike for Food, Fellowship & Faith
Topic: "Conversations With Jesus"

Tuesday, March 3, 2026

5:00-7:00pm

Aunt Mary's (room reserved)
East State Street
Rockford, IL



Women's Group!

March 9, 2026

Monday at 3:00-5:00pm
At Stockholm Inn

Join us for a new small group for women!

Any woman interested can attend or
email us of your interest at zionrockford@gmail.com!
Call Zion at 815-964-4609 for the address!



“WE THE PEOPLE”

A Civil Rights Conference

Speaker: Mark Charles
Common Memory Tour



Saturday, April 18, 2026 - from 9:00am-3:00pm
Held at Patriots Gateway Community Center
615 S. Fifth Street – Rockford, IL
Cost: \$25.00 (includes lunch)

Sponsored by Zion Lutheran Church



Easter Spring Garden

Remember or honor your loved ones and help us beautify Zion's Sanctuary by sponsoring flowers for the Spring Garden. Or, you may prefer to make a donation in lieu of flowers.

If you would like to contribute to our Spring Garden, please fill out the bottom portion of this insert, enclose your check made payable to Zion Lutheran Church and mail to the Church office, 925 5th Avenue, Rockford, IL, 61104, no later than Monday, March 23rd (*firm deadline*).

EASTER SPRING GARDEN

Name: _____

In Memory of: _____

In Honor of: _____

Happy Easter to: _____

Number of Plants: Tulip: _____ Daffodil: _____

Hyacinth: _____ (\$15.00 each plant)

Amount Paid: \$ _____

In lieu of flowers, I would like to donate monies to:

Cornucopia Food Pantry \$ _____

World Hunger Relief Appeal or ELCA \$ _____

Other (please specify) \$ _____

Total Enclosed \$ _____

PROGRAMS AND MINISTRIES THIS WEEK

- Sunday 9:15am Worship
10:30am Forum: Fire Alarm System Capital Appeal
11:00am Burmese Worship Service—Chapel
1:00pm New Life Worship Service-Conrad Room
- Monday 9:30am Book Study—Multipurpose Room
1:00pm Bag Fluffing—Fellowship Hall
- Tuesday 8am-Noon RVC ESL Class—Marander Room
(Tuesday-Thursday, 2-10 to 4-30-26)
- Wednesday 8:00am Bible Study—Stockholm Inn
Noon Lenten Worship—Calvary (Emmanuel)
- Saturday 1:00pm Ruthie's Kitchen
- Sunday 9:15am Worship
10:30am Fellowship
11:00am Burmese Worship Service—Chapel
1:00pm New Life Worship Service-Conrad Room

UPCOMING

- March 3 5:00pm Seasoned Saints—Aunt Mary's
March 7 8:00am CRE—Sauk Valley Community College
March 8 10:30am Forum with Rabbi Binah Wing: "What is Purim?"
March 9 3:00pm Women's Circle at Stockholm Inn
April 2 Noon Maundy Thursday Worship
April 3 Noon Swedish Good Friday Worship Service
7:00pm Good Friday Music Tenebrae Service
April 18 9am-3pm Civil Rights Conference
"We The People" - Patriots Gateway Center
June 12-13 8:00am Synod Assembly—Augustana College

WORSHIP LEADER'S TODAY

- | | | |
|--------------------|--|---|
| Presiding Minister | Pastor Michael Thomas | WOZ—We are taking a winter program break, but are still collecting food for Cornucopia Food Pantry. The February items are chili, flip top cans preferred, and Ramen noodles. The grocery cart in the Narthex has been really empty. Please help fill it! |
| Altar Guild | Kris Sommer | Thanks Karen Kermgard |
| Assisting Minister | | |
| Communion Asst: | Diane Wegner and
Student Deaconess Janice Forrest | |
| Fellowship: | Bonnie Dahlberg | |
| Musician: | Jodi Beach | |
| Reader: | | |
| Usher: | Charlie Dahlberg | |