

GRAPEVINE

ZION LUTHERAN CHURCH IS A MOSAIC COMMUNITY SHARING THE GRACE OF CHRIST WITH ALL...

NOVEMBER 2025

Sunday Worship

at 9:15am

In Person & Facebook live

Burmese Worship: 11:00am

New Life Church Worship: 1:00pm

Zion Lutheran Church
925 5th Avenue
Rockford, Illinois 61104

Phone: 815-964-4609
www.zionrockford.com
zionrockford@gmail.com

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Thank you Sunday! Student Pastor Rachel!

November 2, 2025
10:15am
Fellowship & Photos

Student Pastor Rachel Perkins-Gama has been called to
serve Alpine Lutheran Church in Rockford, IL.
Worship includes a "Godspeed & Farewell" service!



All Saints Day

November 2, 2025
9:15am Worship

"Light A Candle...and
Remember Your Loved Ones..."

Zion Lutheran Church



Christmas DECORATING Party!

10:30 am

Sunday
November 23rd!



Zion's Mosaic Meal!

November 22, 2025
1:00pm in Fellowship Hall

Join us for a community meal at Ruthie's Kitchen with the Burmese Church of Zion,
New Life Church, Freedom Baptist Church and Zion Lutheran Church as we
celebrate a diversity of people and food in this season of gratitude!

Zion Lutheran Church - 925 Fifth Avenue - Rockford, IL



“PRAISE AND THANKSGIVING”

CORNUCOPIA APPRECIATION LUNCHEON!

Please join us at St. James Catholic Church on Thursday, November 5th at 11:30am for a prayer service. Following the prayer service, join us for Pantry Appreciation Lunch at the Beauvais Center. We are grateful to all our volunteers at the Pantry.

“ZION’S MOSAIC MEAL”

Join us on Saturday, November 22nd at 1:00pm as we gather for a Thanksgiving meal at Zion. We will have various foods from the Burmese group at Zion, along with the New Life Church group as well as other diverse foods for a community meal! Janice Forrest is coordinating this meal. Starting in November, Janice Forrest will begin serving Field Work as a Student Deaconess, with expanded areas of responsibilities. This will include some visiting, committee support and monthly preaching. We will meet each week for mentoring and training. Please keep Janice in your prayers and welcome her in this new role as Deaconess Student.

“THANK YOU RACHEL”

I am so grateful for Student Pastor Rachel Perkins-Gama and her two years of ministry at Zion. Pastor Rachel begins her call in mid-November at Alpine Lutheran Church here in Rockford. She will be moving at the end of October and her last Sunday at Zion will be on November 2nd at 9:15am worship. A time of fellowship, memories and photos will take place at 10:30am in the Fellowship Hall. We will surely miss Rachel, Nathi and Thomas. We look forward to hosting her ordination at Zion on December 14th in the afternoon.

“THANK YOU JODI”

This past month, we celebrated with Jodi Beach her 20 years of Music Ministry at Zion. I am so grateful for her musical offering and leadership these past 15 years we have worked together.

Peace, Pastor Thomas

THANK YOU FROM JODI

My Dear Zion Family,

Sitting here tonight with tears in my eyes and joy in my heart, I’ve been reading all your precious notes, admiring the magnificent bouquet of white roses, and reflecting on the memories of this special day. It feels like it was not that long ago that I first walked through the doors of Zion—like so many of you—as a “walking wounded” person. The gentle persistence and love I felt from Pastor Denver brought me through the door, but the love I received from all of you made Zion my home. Pastor Michael, it has been an honor to serve under your leadership these last 15 years—and hopefully for many more to come! I am so thankful for every pastor, intern, and worship committee member with whom I’ve had the joy of serving through the years. So thankful for every singer and musician with whom I’ve had the joy of making music. And so very thankful for every member of Zion with whom I’ve had the joy of sharing worship for 20 years! Thank you to all who helped make the fellowship time after church so special. The cake was so beautiful, and such a surprise! Thank you to those who tirelessly serve in the kitchen, and to everyone who wrote cards filled with such tender, thoughtful messages. Thank you as well for all the hugs and love throughout the years! You have all made me feel deeply loved—today more than ever. Thank you also for loving my husband and caring for him during this time of healing. Twenty years ago, Zion was a place I *worked*. Through the years, you have made it a place I am honored and grateful to call my *church* and my *home*.

With much love and gratitude, Jodi



THANK YOU FROM PASTOR RACHEL

Grace and Peace to you all from God our Creator and Jesus Christ our Savior and Lord. Amen.

Zion community, THANK YOU!

My time serving alongside you has come to an end. I have been called to serve as Pastor of Alpine Lutheran Church here in Rockford. I am energized and excited to go where God has called me. I feel well equipped to journey alongside the community of Alpine and I give thanks for your role in my readiness. Leaving Zion is going to be hard, and that is only because the love and support here has been in abundance.



I started at Zion in the fall of 2023 as your intern. I was eager to learn and grow with you. Nathi and I felt welcomed and included right away. We came into the internship year while balancing a lot of 'new'. Nathi had just arrived in the United States and we were weeks away from getting married. Your joy and celebration with us was a gift! You embraced me as a ministerial leader and helped me grow in my pastoral care skills. I am thankful for you all! You have all played a role in my growth and readiness to be a Pastor. I am thankful to every committee member I have served with, the council, my internship committee, the WOW volunteers, Jolyn, and, of course, Pastor Mike.

I hold many memories of my time with this community close to my heart. I loved dressing up as Mickey and Minnie for Trunk or Treat, serving as your Lucia for Lucia Fest, the WOW kids, the Easter season and the egg hunt, the Civil Rights trip, decorating for Christmas, and being a part of your everyday lives. Some of my memories are in the times of trouble and loss and being grateful for the community that surrounds us in the name of the Most High. As we have grieved the loss of members and celebrated in the welcome of new members, this community has stood strong and bold in love and grace. You have taught me how to handle life with grace and flexibility. You have taught me that sometimes things do not go as planned, and that is okay. You have taught me how to find the Holy Spirit working in and around us all, no matter the situation.

Serving here as your Intern and then Student Pastor has been an incredible gift. I am a better person because of it. I am a more aware and sensitive child of God because of it. I am ready to begin my own ministry because of it. Thank you all and Thanks Be To God!

Pastor-Elect Rachel Perkins-Gama



NURSE JORI

Hello everyone, November is Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD) Awareness month. COPD is a lung disease that develops over time and makes it difficult to breathe. Some risk factors that contribute to someone developing COPD are: smoking, long-term exposure to things that irritate the lungs like air pollution, chemicals, dust from the environment or workplace or if the person has a rare genetic condition called alpha-1 antitrypsin deficiency (ATT deficiency). Here is information from the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute on how to maintain your lung health at any age:



COPD: Portraits of Lung Health at Any Age

Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, or COPD, is a serious condition that makes breathing difficult. Follow these tips to bring your lung health into focus—at any age.

I'm in my 20s or 30s.

I look after my lungs by:

- **Not smoking**, because **75%** of people with COPD have a history of cigarette smoking
- **Avoiding exposure** to lung irritants like:
 - ▶ Air pollution
 - ▶ Chemical fumes
 - ▶ Dust from the environment or workplace
- **Talking to my doctor** about changes in my breathing

About 1 in 33 younger adults has COPD.

I'm in my 40s or 50s.

I maintain my lung health by:

- **Talking with my doctor** about:
 - ▶ My COPD symptoms
 - ▶ Coughing
 - ▶ Wheezing
 - ▶ Chest tightness
 - ▶ Fatigue
 - ▶ Shortness of breath
- My family history of COPD
- Exposure to things like cigarette smoke and air pollution
- **Learning** how to manage COPD if I'm diagnosed
- **Asking for help** with quitting smoking

About 1 in 12 middle-aged adults has COPD.

I'm over 60.

I manage my COPD by:

- **Sticking with my treatment plan**
- **Knowing the benefits of:**
 - ▶ Pulmonary rehabilitation
 - ▶ Good nutrition
 - ▶ Physical activity
- **Staying current** with flu, pneumococcal, and COVID-19 vaccines
- **Seeking help** to quit smoking to slow down my COPD

About 1 in 7 older adults has COPD.

For more information, please visit:

<https://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health-topics/education-and-awareness/copd-learn-more-breathe-better/copd-awareness-month>. If any of you are hospitalized or need any assistance or medical advice please contact me at 630-465-2135 or Jori.L.Roysdon@osfhealthcare.org

WOMEN OF ZION CHRISTMAS LUNCH

December 9th Tuesday 12:30 "WOZ CHRISTMAS LUNCHEON" Stockholm Inn.

Everyone buys their own lunch. We will have an optional white elephant gift exchange.

Mark your calendars and watch the weekly bulletins and Grapevine for further details.

If you have any questions, please ask one of the WOZ board members.

Thank you, Sue Drilling, Margaret Hallin, Karen Kermgard, Kathy Rasch, Mary Franzen

HOLIDAY MISSION FOCUS

Joy Fund

DONATIONS FOR

**Cornucopia
Food Pantry**

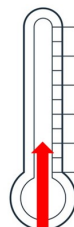
Checks made out to Zion Lutheran Church

TURKEY BASKET

ORDERING 150

\$25.00 Each Basket!
\$3,750.00 Needed

Checks made out to
Zion Lutheran Church



150 Turkeys	\$3,750.00
25 Turkeys	\$625.00
25 Turkeys	\$625.00
25 Turkeys	\$625.00
10 Turkeys	\$250.00
65 Turkeys	\$1,625.00
65 Sponsored - 85 to go	

Call Zion Lutheran Church
For A FREE Basket!

PICK-UP TBD

Looking for donations!

\$25.00 each basket!

Checks made out to
Zion Lutheran Church

HAPPENING'S AT AND AROUND ZION

VOLUNTEER APPRECIATION DAY

NOVEMBER 5, 2025

Cornucopia

11:30 Prayer Service
Noon – Meal



Food Pantry

St. James Catholic Church
Beauvais Center, behind the church

ZION FORUM

November 9, 2025

10:30am in Fellowship Hall



TOPIC: MEDICARE UPDATES!

LED BY MICHELLE HOFFMAN,

INDEPENDENT AGENT & SPONSOR @CARS & COFFEE ROCKFORD

Sponsored and Held at Zion Lutheran Church - 925 Fifth Avenue - Rockford, IL 61104

ZION FORUM

November 16, 2025

10:30am in Fellowship Hall



TOPIC: FUNERAL PLANNING

LED BY OLSON FUNERAL HOME

ZION FORUM

November 30, 2025

10:30am in Fellowship Hall

TOPIC: NATIVE AMERICANS
& THANKSGIVING!

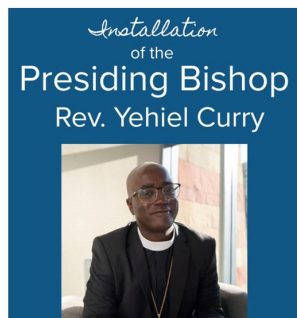
RICHARD RUNDALL



ELCA PRESIDING
BISHOP CURREY
WAS INSTALLED ON
OCTOBER 4, 2025!

Join us as we watch parts of
Bishop Yehiel Curry Installation!

December 14, 2025
10:15am in Fellowship Hall



BAG FLUFFING

FOR CORNUCOPIA FOOD PANTRY

Fourth Monday at 1:00pm

Zion Lutheran Church – Youth Center!

Cornucopia



Food Pantry



"Christmas Flika"

December 7, 2025
10:15am



Blue Christmas Worship

December 14, 2025 - 9:15am Worship
Candles and Prayers

Christmas Cantata Worship

9:15 am
December 21, 2025



Christmas Eve Worship

December 24th at 10:00 pm

9:30pm String Quartet Concert



NOVEMBER 2025 CALENDAR

Sunday		Monday		Tuesday		Wednesday		Thursday		Friday		Saturday	
26 Reformation Sunday 9:15am Worship	27 9:30am Book Study 1:00pm Bag Fluffing - Fellowship Hall 5:30pm Rockford Interfaith Women's Group	28 8:30am RVC ESL Class 5:00pm HR Committee 6:00pm Church Council	29 8:00am Bible Study - Stockholm Inn 8:30am RVC ESL Class 11:30am Mayor's Hunger Lunch 4:00pm Rooftop Reflections	30 8:30am RVC ESL Class 6:00pm Rockford Police Trunk or Treat	31 Office Closed	1 All Saints Day 1:00pm Ruthie's Kitchen							
2 Daylight-Saving Time Ends 9:15am All Saints Day Worship 10:15am Fellowship – Pastor Elect Rachel Reception and Farewell 11:00am Burmese Worship —Chapel 1:00pm New Life Worship — Conrad Room	3 8:30am RVC ESL Class 9:30am Book Study	4 8:30am RVC ESL Class 2:30pm Zion Outreach Board	5 8:00am Bible Study - Stockholm Inn 8:30am RVC ESL Class	6 8:30am RVC ESL Class 6:00pm Simmons Scholarship Fund Team	7 Office Closed	8 1:00pm Ruthie's							
9 9:15am Worship 10:15am Fellowship 10:30am Forum: Medicare Updates! 11:00am Burmese Worship —Chapel 1:00pm New Life Worship — Conrad Room	10 9:30am Book Study	11 Veterans Day 8:30am RVC ESL Class 12:00pm KC Conversation-Veterans 1:30pm Multicultural Team	12 8:00am Bible Study - Stockholm Inn 8:30am RVC ESL Class 11:00am Missions Team	13 8:30am RVC ESL Class 4:00pm Katie's Cup Board 5:30pm Zion Development Board	14 Office Closed	15							
16 9:15am Worship 10:15am Fellowship 10:30am Forum: Olson's Peace of Mind 11:00am Burmese Worship —Chapel 1:00pm New Life Worship — Conrad Room	17 8:30am RVC ESL Class 9:30am Book Study	18 8:30am RVC ESL Class 2:30pm Long Range Planning Team 3:30pm Building & Grounds	19 8:00am Bible Study - Stockholm Inn 8:30am RVC ESL Class 11:30am Worship Team 4:00pm WOW	20 Grapevine Mailing 8:30am RVC ESL Class 11:00am Finance Committee	21 Office Closed	22 Zion's Mosaic Meal 1:00pm Ruthie's							
23 9:15am Christ the King Worship -Fellowship Hall 10:15am Fellowship 10:30am Decorating the Church for Christmas 11:00am Burmese Worship —Chapel 1:00pm New Life Worship — Conrad Room	24 8:30am RVC ESL Class 9:30am Book Study 1:00pm Bag Fluffing - Fellowship Hall	25 8:30am RVC ESL Class 5:00pm HR Committee 6:00pm Church Council	26 8:00am Bible Study - Stockholm Inn 8:30am RVC ESL Class	27 Thanksgiving Day	28 Office Closed	29							
30 Advent 9:15am Worship 10:15am Fellowship 10:30am Forum: Thanksgiving & Native American People ("No Thanks-No Giving") 11:00am Burmese Worship —Chapel 1:00pm New Life Worship — Conrad Room	1 8:30am RVC ESL Class 9:30am Book Study	2 8:30am RVC ESL Class	3 8:00am Bible Study - Stockholm Inn 8:30am RVC ESL Class	4 8:30am RVC ESL Class 9:00am Annual Report Articles Due	5 Office Closed	6 1:00pm Ruthie's							

LEADERSHIP TEAM

Our Ministers - All the People of Zion

Senior Pastor Michael Thomas
Student Pastor Rachel Perkins-Gama
Pastor Emeritus Denver Bitner
Office Manager & Finance Secretary: Jolyn Hess
Outreach Coordinator & Deaconess Student:
Janice Forrest
Faith Community Nurse: Jori Roysden
Music Ministry Coordinator: Jodi Beach
Custodian: Shanita Baker
Worship Media: Kurt Brown

COUNCIL MEMBERS

Michael Beert, Pam Bitner, Bonnie Dahlberg,
Gary Fulkerson, Debbie Gortowski, Thomas Habing,
Karen Kermgard, Angeles Polcher,
Ron Simmons, Kris Sommer,
Pastor Michael Thomas, and Neal Tolodxi

Church Council Officers

President: Kris Sommer
Vice-President: Thomas Habing
Treasurer: Michael Beert
Secretary: Bonnie Dahlberg
Pastor: Michael E. Thomas

www.zionrockford.com

www.facebook.com/zionlutheranrockford

www.youtube.com/zionrockford

PRAYER CORNER

WE ASK YOU TO PRAY FOR:

- ◇ The ELCA, Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton, Bishop Stacie Fidler, Pastor Michael Thomas, Student Pastor Rachel Perkins-Gama, 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 of St. Thomas Lutheran Church in the Arcot Lutheran Church of India.
- ◇ Mission Partner, Pastor Mytch Dorvilier
- ◇ For the Northern Illinois Synod; North Conference churches; Midtown Lutheran Parish, faculty and students of Rockford Lutheran Schools, Rockford Area Lutheran Ministries.
- ◇ For those who grieve loss of loved ones: Harriett Basel, Linda Reinhardt, Jerry Stalcup, and Scott Swan.
- ◇ For healing: Eloise Anderson, Colette Buchert, Linda Callahan, Yolanda Churchill, Charlie Dahlberg, Danielle, Norma Daugherty, Karen Eisman, Deanna Hartenberg, John Hoyt, Jim McDowell, Les, Morgan, Betty Jo Rodey, Wayne Spitzer, Jerry Stalcup, Carl Stoutenberg, Carrie Steder, Sandy Swenson, Neal Tolodxi, Brian Veitch, and Gary Wegner, Jr.

If you have a prayer request or a prayer of gratitude to share, please notify Pastor Mike or Student Pastor Rachel.

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.

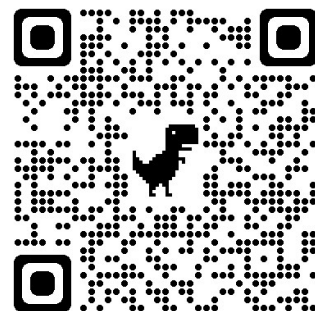
GRAPEVINE DEADLINE FOR THE DECEMBER 2025 GRAPEVINE, EMAIL BY NOVEMBER 12, 2025 to submit an article: zionrockford@gmail.com, or please send a hardcopy to the church office.

OFFERINGS & DONATIONS WELCOMED!

Mailed...In-Person...Online

We are grateful for your generosity in supporting our ministries at and beyond Zion. There are envelopes in the place you are sitting at in worship and in the lobby of the church. Donations can be mailed to the church office or placed in the Offering Box in the back at the pole on the pulpit side before, during and after worship. You can also donate through the mobile app called, **Vanco Mobile**. You can download the Vanco Mobile app for free from the App Store or Google Play. From there, you can make a one-time donation or set up recurring giving right through the app to our various ministries. If you have questions with online or the mobile app, please email zionrockfordfinances@gmail.com for more information.

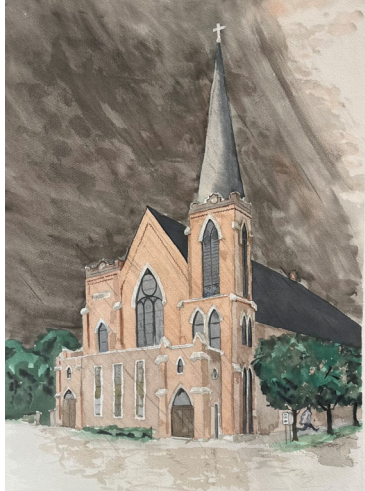
VANCO
FAITH



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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



*"A Mosaic Community Sharing
the Grace of Christ with All"*

Place mailing label here.



ZION LUTHERAN CHURCH IS A MOSAIC COMMUNITY SHARING THE GRACE OF CHRIST WITH ALL...

Zion is a congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

PARTNERSHIPS



**Sunday Worship at 9:15am
In the Worship Space**

Also Facebook Live/Online Worship

(Also posted at www.youtube.com/zionrockford afterwards)

**Burmese Worship at 10:30am
In the Chapel**