



GRAPEVINE

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

APRIL 2025

Sunday Worship at 9:15am

In Person & Facebook live

Burmese Worship at 10:30am

Zion Lutheran Church
925 5th Avenue
Rockford, Illinois 61104



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

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PALM SUNDAY BREAKFAST

\$10 Adults \$8 Children (under 12)

Sunday, April 13 at 10:30AM-1:00pm

Sponsored by the Multicultural Team of Zion Lutheran Church

Held at Zion Lutheran Church

925 Fifth Avenue – Rockford, IL 61104

Proceeds benefit the Bahai Temple Trip Scholarships



Good Friday Swedish Service

Friday, April 18, 2025 at Noon

Zion Lutheran Church

925 Fifth Avenue – Rockford, IL



DEACONESS UPDATE

I finished the class, "Preaching Among Friends" on 3/27/2025. I passed I will receiving a certificate for that class. What an amazing program it was learning how to preach and how to get ready for a sermon. In the program I learned to pay attention to avoid misunderstanding words in preparing a sermon. The words you write or say can create a mixed message to the congregation. For example: The word *grace* is staying in relationship with another not because they (or we) deserve it, but because they are. The only sincere response to grace is "Thank you".

In giving a sermon, I want to offer a message from the heart and make the message clear for the listeners to understand. Sharing the Good News to the listeners so that they can take a piece or the whole message with them, when they leave church. I want to be an authentic preacher not trying to be someone else. I must find my style, or I just must find me and my voice. When I am preaching the Good News, I want to hold the listeners' attention and then end the good news with a message that the listeners can say, "I got it. Thank you, Jesus, for the Good News today." I was able to preach a sermon on Ash Wednesday. What a joy it was for me to share the Good News to the listeners on Ash Wednesday. Jesus let me know that once I share the first word, he had me covered, I was not nervous. Now, I am looking for another college or university to attend to finish my last 4 courses. This has been an extraordinary journey for me with my faith in God. I do know. This is where I should be. I want to thank you for all of your support.

It's this time of the year looking for Easter candy to fill the plastic eggs for the Easter Egg Hunt April 19, 2025, at 1pm. Please no chocolate please. Donations of candy or money are welcome!

Peace, Student Deaconess, Janice Forrest



2025 Midtown Midweek Lenten at Noon

EXERCISE CLASS BEFORE AT 11:00AM

LED BY FAITH COMMUNITY NURSES

SIMPLE LUNCH AFTER WORSHIP

April 2 at First Lutheran Church at Noon

Preacher: Student Pastor Rachel Perkins-Gama

April 9 at Emmanuel Lutheran Church at Noon

Preacher: Pastor Bill Dahlberg

(No exercise class today)



PASTOR'S CORNER

HOLY WEEK 2025

Join us for our Holy Week services this month. We will start with Palm Sunday Passion worship and passion Reading on April 13th at 9:15am.

Palm Sunday Breakfast is on April 13 at 10:15am with a fundraiser meal to raise funds for our Bahai Trip at the end of May.

Maundy Thursday at noon will be a quiet service with music and communion in the Atrium. Some of the songs will be from the Taizé tradition and we will have candles and prayer

Swedish Good Friday Service will be at noon with communion and most of the service in Swedish. We will have a choir that you can join in.

Good Friday Music Tenebrae will be 7:00pm and led by Jodi Beach. Singers are welcome!

Easter Egg Hunt at 1:00pm in Gateway Park in partnership with Patriots Gateway Center.

Easter Sunday worship is at 9:15am.

SUNDAY MORNING FORUMS

In the month of April and May, we will have the chance to gather during the 10:30am hour for fellowship and conversation. A few of these were set up with Nurse Jori so thank you! There will be different speakers each week.

- ⇒ April 6—National Alliance on Mental Illness, Jeannette Towns will be our speaker
- ⇒ April 27 - "Wabongo Leadership Council" will talk about their spring break trip to HBCU school. The speaker will be Joshua Patterson.
- ⇒ May 4 - "Good Shepherd Sunday" as we support Lutheran Social Services
- ⇒ May 18 - Alzheimer's Speaker to talk about Nutrition and Healthy Living.

FLOOD RECONSTRUCTION

I am grateful that we have started to move along with our reconstruction of the church after the August 2024 flood. The buildings and grounds committee has helped coordinate the plastering company, the flooring company and managing other projects. We have created another office in the Youth Center in the space across from the old Youth Director office. We sold the video game in the youth center and used those funds for a scholarship for a teenager of Zion to attend the Wagongo Leadership Council spring break trip to colleges in the south.

RUTHIE'S KITCHEN

We continue to create a table of belonging on Saturday's from 1:00-3:00pm around a meal, a Bible Study and giving away clothes. We have several groups that help serve. The groups include: Zion, Christ Community Church (Milton, WI); Shepherd of the Valley; United Church of Byron, St. Bernadette's Catholic, Community Warriors (former Miss Carly volunteers), and the Midtown Health Team. If you know any churches or service groups that want to help, let me or Janice Forrest know.



HABITAT FOR HUMANITY

With the passing of President Jimmy Carter, we remember how he valued affordable housing. If you would like to serve or coordinate a meal for those who serve with Habitat, contact Habitat at homes@rockfordhabitat.org or call 815-636-4573.

Peace, Pastor Thomas

INTERN'S PAGE

Zion community: Grace and peace to you from God our Creator and Jesus Christ our Savior and Lord! It is such a joy to spend another month working and serving alongside you all! This month I will meet with my Bishop and discuss my first call paperwork and first call possibilities! I am unsure how long this next step will take and how much longer I will be serving here at Zion, but I will continue to be transparent about this process and what happens next. I am so excited to be stepping into this next part of the call process. I am beyond grateful for your continued support and love as I move forward in my call to serve God's children.

My Thomas is 6 months old this month! It brings me so much joy and appreciation to see how loved and cared for he is here at Zion. I always want to be intentional about giving thanks for making space for my family as well as me. Nathi and Thomas are just and loved and cared for as I am, thanks to you all!

This month is going to be exciting and busy. We have a lot happening at church: Palm Sunday breakfast, Holy Week services, Easter egg hunt at Patriots, Easter, around the table discussions, and Cars and Coffee! There are many opportunities for us to gather together as a community.

If you have any prayer requests, please reach out to me and I can pass them along to our prayer team. I have been calling and checking in with some of you but I would love to chat or visit more of you! Please email me if you would be interested in a phone call or a visit!

Peace to you all, always, Student Pastor Rachel Perkins-Gama

MONDAY BIBLE STUDY
AT 9:30AM AT ZION

WEDNESDAY BIBLE STUDY
AT 8:00AM AT STOCKHOLM INN



EASTER EGG HUNT

Easter Bunny & Candy

Saturday
April 19 - 1:00pm
(UP TO AGE 12)

Meet Outside Patriots Gateway Center
615 South Fifth Street



Sponsored by Patriots Gateway Center and Zion Lutheran Church



KATIE'S CUP CONVERSATIONS
Tuesday at Noon - April 22, 2025
"You Don't Have To Be Wrong for Me To Be Right"
Speaker: Rev. Dr. Denver Bitner
Based on the book by Rabbi Brad Hirschfield
JOIN US FOR LUNCH STARTING AT 11:30AM
KATIE'S CUP - 502 SEVENTH STREET - ROCKFORD, IL 61104 - WWW.KATIESCUP.COM

KATIE'S CUP CONVERSATIONS
Tuesday at Noon - May 20, 2025
"Christian Nationalism"
Speaker: Rev. Dr. Michael Thomas
Pastor at Zion Lutheran Church
JOIN US FOR LUNCH STARTING AT 11:30AM
KATIE'S CUP - 502 SEVENTH STREET - ROCKFORD, IL 61104 - WWW.KATIESCUP.COM

BAHAI TEMPLE TRIP

INTERFAITH EXPERIENCE TO WILMETTE, IL



MAY 31, 2025
8:00AM-5:00PM

TICKETS: \$50
(PAYS FOR BUS & LUNCH)

SPONSORED BY ZION LUTHERAN CHURCH MULTICULTURAL COMMITTEE
925 FIFTH AVENUE - ROCKFORD, IL 61104 - WWW.ZIONROCKFORD.COM

ZION FORUM
Joshua Patterson
Wabongo Leadership Council



WABONGO LEADERSHIP COUNCIL



April 27, 2025 at 10:30am

WOMEN OF ZION

WOZ Events: After taking January and February off the WOZ board is starting to plan events for 2025. Spring will be here before we know it! Everyone seems to enjoy playing BUNCO so our first event will be BUNCO on March 20th 1:00 in the Zion Fellowship Hall. On April 17th Quilters and Crafters please join us. Come see some of Phyllis Campbell's beautiful quilts, bring one of your own or a craft you enjoy making to share. Or, if you're like me, completely untalented, just come and enjoy. Same time, same place. May 15th will be our annual salad luncheon. Bring whatever you enjoy whipping up. We always have a wonderful variety of delectable, delightful food! We'll change the time to 12:00 for this. On June 19th 1:00 in the Fellowship Hall Jeff Dahlberg will present a program about local dairies. Men are invited to join us for this program. If anyone has an idea for a program, please let any board member know. Lastly, we are asking you to bring a donation of nonperishable food items for Cornucopia Food Pantry to each meeting. The grocery cart in the Narthex has been looking really empty. Thanks, WOZ Board-Sue Drilling, Maggi Hallin, Karen Kermgard, Kathy Rasch and Linda Reinhardt.

COUNCIL MEETING UPDATES

- ⇒ Deb Gortowski shared an opening devotional.
- ⇒ Motion was made and seconded to approve the proceeds of the youth center video game of \$400.00 to be used for scholarship program; discussion – passed.
- ⇒ Motion was made and seconded to accept the resignation from council of Deb Raymond with appreciation of her service, brief discussion, the motion passed.
- ⇒ The Building and Ground Committee gave an update on the floor replacement (began 3-26-25).
- ⇒ Motion was made and seconded to replace two outside concrete pads (one by back door and one outside by Youth Center) for up to \$3,500.00 from B&G budget; discussion – passed.
- ⇒ Motion made and seconded to cover the tile floor in the Marander Room (not including the Ruthie Closet space), funds will be used from the flood mitigation budget, and the laminate will match that being installed in the Fellowship Hall, discussion – passed.
- ⇒ Michael Beert shared the Finance & Stewardship Report, including the Finance Committee notes and the year to date Management Report.
- ⇒ Motion was made and seconded to affirm the Audit Team to consist of Deb Raymond, Karen Kermgard and Michael Beert, as Richard Reinhardt is unable to participate – passed. Audit will be on April 1, 2025 at 1:00pm at Zion.
- ⇒ Motion was made and seconded for Zion to sign up for Zeffy, a nonprofit credit card service software, discussion – passed
- ⇒ Zion received on the day of the Council meeting, a \$100,000 gift from the Marsha Wurtlin trust. A motion was made and seconded for the allocation as follows – motion passed.
 - ◆ ELCA World Hunger Appeal \$ 1,000
 - ◆ Cars & Coffee Rockford \$ 1,000
 - ◆ Rockford Midtown Market \$ 4,000
 - ◆ Mission Partner: Senegal \$ 500
 - ◆ Mission Partner: Sepuka/Tanzania \$ 500
 - ◆ Mission Partner: Arcot/India \$ 500
 - ◆ New Life Church (Conrad room new wall/door) \$ 2,500
 - ◆ Bequest Line Item in Budget \$38,000
 - ◆ Building Fund Line Item in Budget \$52,000
- ⇒ The Northern Illinois Synod Assembly Delegates so far are Kris Sommer and Karen Kermgard. We are looking for two males to attend.
- ⇒ Zion is a sponsor for the May 8th “Summit on Racism” and we get 15 registrations. Let Pastor know if you wish to attend and get the code.

ACTIVITIES AT ZION!!

ALABAMA STORY

THEATRE AT ROCKFORD UNIVERSITY

BASED ON A TRUED STORY OF A 1959 CENSORSHIP OF A CHILDREN'S BOOK IN THE JIM CROW SOUTH



APRIL 6, 2025

2:00PM

TICKETS: \$28 FOR ADULTS &
\$10 FOR STUDENTS

SPONSORED BY ZION LUTHERAN CHURCH MULTICULTURAL COMMITTEE
925 FIFTH AVENUE – ROCKFORD, IL 61104 – 815.964.4609 - WWW.ZIONROCKFORD.COM



April 6, 2025 Jeanette Towns
at 10:30am Speaker
at Zion

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

APRIL 2025 CALENDAR

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
30 9:15am Worship	31 9:30am Book Study - Multipurpose Room 1:00pm Bag Fluffing - Fellowship Hall	1 8:30am RVC ESL Class - Marander Room	2 8:00am Bible Study - Stockholm Inn 8:30am RVC ESL Class 12:00pm Midtown Lenten Service - First Lutheran 4:00pm WOW	3 8:00am Katie's Cup 8:30am RVC ESL Class - Marander Room	4 Office Closed	5 9:00am Cars & Coffee Rockford—Katie's Cup 10:00am Burmese Children's Group - Conrad Room 1:00pm Ruthie's Kitchen
6 9:15am Worship 10:15am Forum: NAMI, Jeanette Towns 1:00pm "Alabama Story" play by Artist Ensemble Theatre at RU	7 9:30am Book Study - Multipurpose Room	8 8:30am RVC ESL Class - Marander Room	9 8:00am Bible Study - Stockholm Inn 8:30am RVC ESL Class 11:00am Missions Team 12:00pm Midtown Lenten Service - Emmanuel 4:00pm WOW	10 8:30am RVC ESL Class 4:00pm Katie's Cup Board 5:30pm Zion Development Board	11 Office Closed	12 10:00am Burmese Children's Group - Conrad Room 1:00pm Ruthie's Kitchen
13 Palm Sunday 9:15am Worship 10:30am Palm Sunday Breakfast Fundraiser in Fellowship Hall	14 9:30am Book Study - Multipurpose Room	15 8:30am RVC ESL Class - Marander Room 3:30pm Building and Grounds 4:00pm Eliminate Racism Health Team Meeting	16 8:00am Bible Study - Stockholm Inn 8:30am RVC ESL Class 4:00pm WOW	17 Noon Maundy Thursday Worship 8:30am RVC ESL Class 1:30pm WOZ Quilt Presentation 2:00pm Finance Committee	18 Noon: Swedish Good Friday Office Closed 7:00pm Good Friday Tenebrae Worship	19 10:00am Burmese Children's Group - Conrad Room 1:00pm Easter Egg Hunt - Gateway Park
20 Easter Sunday 9:15am Worship	21 OFFICE CLOSED 9:30am Book Study - Multipurpose Room	22 8:30am RVC ESL Class - Marander Room 5:00pm HR Committee 6:00pm Church Council	23 Administrative Professionals Day 8:00am Bible Study - Stockholm Inn 8:30am RVC ESL Class 4:00pm WOW	24 8:30am RVC ESL Class 4:30pm Patriots Board	25 Office Closed	26 10:00am Burmese Children's Group - Conrad Room 1:00pm Ruthie's Kitchen
27 9:15am Worship 10:15am Forum: Wabongo Leadership Council	28 9:30am Book Study - Multipurpose Room 1:00pm Bag Fluffing	29 8:30am RVC ESL Class - Marander Room	30 8:00am Bible Study - Stockholm Inn 8:30am RVC ESL Class 4:00pm WOW	1 National Day of Prayer 8:30am RVC ESL Class	2 Office Closed	3 10:00am Burmese Children's Group - Conrad Room 1:00pm Ruthie's Kitchen

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 Roysdon
Music Ministry Coordinator: Jodi Beach
Custodians: Shanita Baker and
Denzel Banks
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

GRAPEVINE DEADLINE FOR THE MAY 2025 GRAPEVINE, EMAIL BY APRIL 15, 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.

PRAYER CORNER

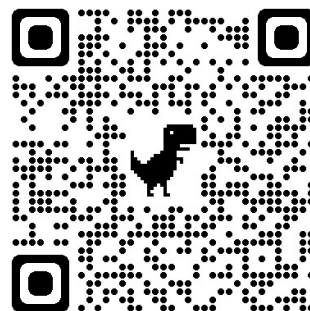
WE ASK YOU TO PRAY FOR:

- ◇ 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.
- ◇ Pastor Cosmas Mujungu of Sepuka/Msisi Church in Tanzania.
- ◇ Pastor Selvakumar and Arcot Lutheran Church in India.
- ◇ Mission Partner in Senegal with 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: Darlene Handlin, and Bob Campbell.
- ◇ For healing: Eloise Anderson, Phyllis Brynteson, Colette Buchert, Linda Callahan, Yolanda Churchill, Charlie Dahlberg, Norma Daugherty, Jim Duhigg, Deanna Hartenberg, Jolyn Hess, Linda Reinhardt, Betty Jo Rodey, Wayne Spitzer, Carrie Steder, Jeanne Thomas, Neal Tolodxi, Brian Veitch, and Megan Zaphel.

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.

VANCO

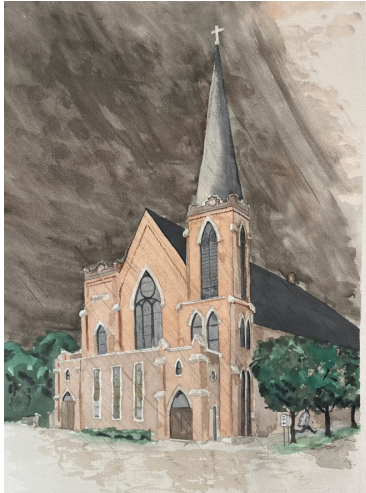
FAITH



Zion Lutheran Church
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the Grace of Christ with All"*

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GRAPEVINE

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