



# GRAPEVINE

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

ZION LUTHERAN CHURCH



140<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY

**MAY 2023**  
**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

## 140TH ANNIVERSARY PREACHERS

PASTOR LOREN NIELSEN

MAY 14, 2023

9:15AM WORSHIP

ZION LUTHERAN CHURCH



PASTOR CHRIS LEE

MAY 21, 2023

9:15AM WORSHIP

ZION LUTHERAN CHURCH



SEMINARIAN MADDY TYLER

MAY 28, 2023

9:15AM WORSHIP

ZION LUTHERAN CHURCH



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## Men's Dinner

*At The Midtown Faust  
with Brad Roos*

May 30, 2023  
5:00pm



# PASTOR'S CORNER

## **EASTER FEAR & JOY!**

Spring is finally here as plants, grass, trees and flowers are emerging. New life is all around us as we celebrated on Easter, hearing about these women were filled with “fear and joy” at the same time. Such a faith is filled with competing emotions, pushing against each other like tectonic tensions. This faith depends on the one who meets us on the journey to the garden, the Easter garden, that garden of beginnings where disobedience meets grace. The spirit calls us to live with these emotional tensions, gathering us in community to walk together. We walk together with such “fear and joy”.

## **CHURCH SURVEY!**

During the month of April, we were all invited to participate in an online survey coordinated by the ELCA. Pastor Josh Ebener provided the resource and was able to meet with the Church Council at our April 15th retreat and then the Congregation on April 30th during the forum time at 9:15am. We thank you for participating in the survey and those results will be shared in the June newsletter. This is a time for us to discern our strengths, understand our weaknesses and clarify our purpose based on the spirit guiding us forward.

## **STEWARDSHIP & FINANCES**

Ever since I started at Zion in 2010, the general fund income from envelope giving has been on a decline. In 2022, that decline changed for the first time. We are learning to manage our resources as we fulfill the mission of our community of faith.

Zion is called to be a “mosaic community, sharing the grace of Christ with all” in a new season of our life together. We trust that God will provide. We believe that we are called to serve here in this place. As we move forward in these next months, we will be challenged to manage our finances as we face a deficit in income.

Starting in April, Patriots Gateway Center will pay Zion \$1,000 a month for management fee for my time working at PGC about 3-5 hours a week. However, as we end April, we have reached a negative balance in the general fund checking account. Therefore, the church council has approved using our reserve funds over the next several months. We have also discussed with the Endowment Fund the possibility of liquidating some funds if necessary. The Council also approved seeking out members of the church who would consider lending to the church at a 0% interest and be paid back over a set period of time. The Council approved seeking out a line of credit from a local financial institution as well.

In the midst of these times, I continue to believe that God will provide. With that, we have recently been named in an estate that will see us through the financial challenges once those funds are dispersed.

We are called to “Be The Body: Today and Tomorrow...” The videos posted on our website remind us of the calling God has upon us here at Zion. We are centered in worship, we continue to gather to hear the word, be fed by God’s grace, grow in our fellowship with one another in order to serve at and beyond these walls.

God’s Peace, Pastor Thomas

# Rockford Summit on Racism

## "Imagine" Rockford without Racism



Learn what is happening currently in Rockford to eliminate racism.

**Questions:**

*Where do we go from here? How can we work together?*

Choose your priority focus of the day from the following areas:

- Criminal Justice**
- Economic Opportunities**
- Education**
- Health**
- Relationship Building**

### May 4, 2023 ALL DAY EVENT

**UW Sports Factory – 305 S. Madison**  
Registration and Vendors start at 8:15 – 9:00 am  
Sessions: 9:00 am – 4:15 pm

To Register go to Website: [EliminateRacism815.org](http://EliminateRacism815.org)

Cost: \$35 to help cover costs of continental breakfast, lunch and other expenses

If you want to attend but cannot afford \$35, email [EliminateRacism815@gmail.com](mailto:EliminateRacism815@gmail.com) to request assistance.



# PASTORAL INTERN

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Dear friends,

Peace to you this Easter season! As I look ahead to the coming weeks, I'm feeling so hopeful about this season of new life. It's wonderful to see flowers blooming, the sun shining, and nature slowly coming to life all around us. Also, since my birthday is coming up, I've been spending a lot of time reflecting on all the new life that has popped up around me in the past year – and what kinds of new life might be blossoming in the future.



Throughout my internship experience, I've seen so much growth in myself and in this community. I've enjoyed praying and singing with you in worship, leading alongside you at partner events, and learning from you in conversations about life and faith. I've been especially encouraged by the stories told in the video devotion series and in the memories of guest preachers who have returned to Zion. Thanks always for your commitment to being a teaching congregation; I appreciate the space to experiment with preaching, jump into new things, ask lots of questions, and learn from all that this mosaic community has to offer.

As we continue to grow in Christ and find life springing up around us this month, here are a few things that I'm hopeful to see blossoming:

**The Eliminate Racism Race Summit on May 4th.** I know that so much work has gone into preparing this event, and I look forward to seeing how Rockford will come together to eliminate racism in this community. My prayer is that new relationships and a sense of hope will grow as we learn and have conversations together.

**The first Cars & Coffee event of the season on May 6th.** Since April was canceled due to the weather, my anticipation has been growing! I'm excited to see the community gather together and have a great time in support of Katie's Cup.

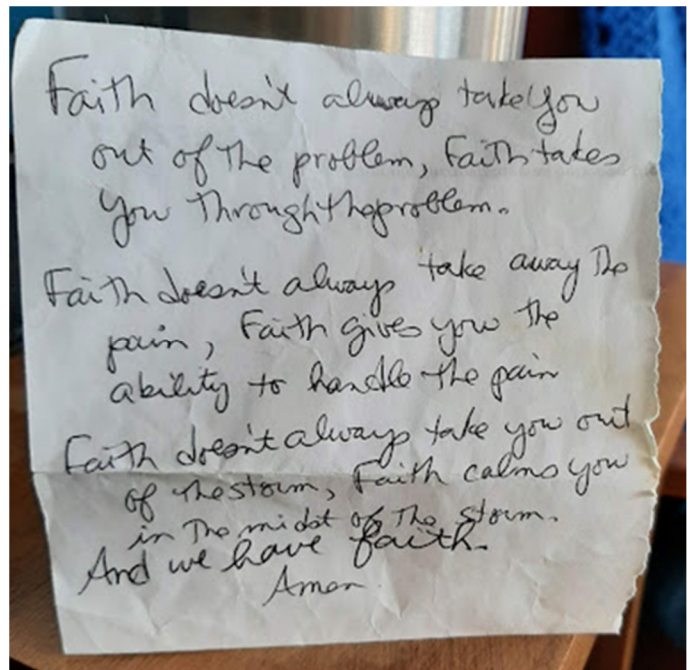
**WOW and other activities with the Patriots kids.** We've been talking about Holy Week and Easter at WOW, and they've been growing in curiosity about prayer, the cross, and other parts of faith life. It's been a hopeful thing for me to see God growing faith and love in them.

Where do you see new life popping up around you? Are there spaces in your life where you're still waiting for hope to grow? Wherever you find yourself this day, I'm glad you're a part of the garden of community at Zion!

Easter blessings,  
Intern Alana

*After posting Debbie and Donna's video devotion, I had a couple of people ask if they could get a copy of the Faith Prayer. Debbie graciously agreed to share this picture, so you can join them in praying it if you'd like!*

*"Faith doesn't always take you out of the problem, faith takes you through the problem. Faith doesn't always take away the pain, faith gives you the ability to handle the pain. Faith doesn't always take you out of the storm, faith calms you in the midst of the storm. And we have faith. Amen."*



# SHELTER CARE MINISTRY

Zion Multicultural Team is asking the Zion congregation to join them in participating in this towel drive in memory of Charmaine Logwood, a Zion member, former social worker at Jubilee Center who passed in October, 2022.



## Shelter Care Ministries Rockford

We're close to opening the shower at the Jubilee Center! This will primarily be for Jubilee members who are literally homeless without access to shower facilities.

If you didn't know, the Jubilee Center is located in a former school gymnasium and there was originally a locker room with a shower in the basement. With minor renovation funds from the State of IL, we've got the shower working again. But what we still need are **WHITE TOWELS!** Specifically large towels. Think of the size you'd bring to the beach. (At least 30X60). If they are white, we can bleach them.



# AROUND ZION

**BAG FLUFFING**— Now with the pandemic having slowed down, the need for bags has really increased, PLEASE drop your bags off and if you are able, join us monthly for lots of fun while we fluff, (Coffee & treats too) Thanks, Karen Kermgard.

**WELCA/WOZ**— WOZ (Women of Zion) would like to thank everyone for their food donations to Cornucopia. We have delivered approximately 130 pounds of food to the pantry this year. During May Peggy King, Cornucopia Director, requested we collect boxed cereal. You can put your donations in the grocery cart which is in the Narthex or you can bring them to the church office. Thanks again for your support. Karen Kermgard

**WELCA/WOZ—SAVE THE DATE!** We are planning three wonderful, fun activities this Spring. Contact Karen Kermgard, 815.398.4460, to register for events.

WELCA/ WOZ Retro Spring Luncheon May 18 Noon Fellowship Hall

I remember my mother, hat on head, gloves in purse, off to a ladies luncheon at our church carrying her fanciest plate holding a quivering green jello salad. I am sure we all have similar memories or memories of our moms, aunts, grandmas in the kitchen preparing their special dish for a family or church event.

To honor those memories and recipes, the Women of Zion invite all ladies of Zion to prepare that special salad of your mom to bring to our May 18 retro salad luncheon. And if while searching those old cookbooks and recipe files you come across a recipe, cookbook, utensil, or apron special to your mom or grandma, please bring that along to share with the others. Drinks and dessert will be provided.

Please respond to Karen Kermgard at 815-494-3864 by May 15.

Oh, yeah, hats and gloves are optional. Girdles and nylons should stay at home.

June 15—All (men and women) are invited to Zion's WELCA meeting June 15th at 1:00 in the Fellowship Hall. Laura Furman, Curator of Collections and Education at Midway Village Museum, will be presenting a program about Rockford's Camp Grant. Details will follow in the Grapevine and bulletins for Save the Date updates! Hope you can join us!

**HOME VISITS**— If you would like to be a part of visiting and keeping in touch with the homebound of Zion, or have any questions regarding visits, contact Pastoral Intern Alana Harms and she will talk with you about it and help answer any questions you may have.

**HOMELESS MINISTRY**—Are you interested in the homelessness in our Zion neighborhood? There is a free one hour introductory course through [www.homelesstraining.com](http://www.homelesstraining.com) We need someone who would like to do the training and report to the congregation. Questions please call Betty Morgan, 815.282.0717. Thank you. Missions Team

**BIBLE STUDY**—Wednesday Morning Bible Study at Stockholm Inn, 8:00AM, feel free to join the group



### ZION'S 140TH ANNIVERSARY IN 2023

How wonderful it is to celebrate the legacy of Zion. We are in the process of inviting various Pastors and former Interns back to Zion. We are looking for ideas and volunteers to lead in areas of celebration. We are off to a great start, so please continue to help us plan events and activities. The Chairs are Ron Simmons and Jane Lightcap. Contact them, or Pastor Mike with ideas, questions or to volunteer. Thank you.

#### ANNIVERSARY SCHEDULE

June 11	Pastor Perrie Dralle Preacher
June 18	Juneteenth at PGCC
August 13	Pastor Chrissy Salser Preacher
August 20	Pastor Julane Nease Preacher
September 10	Pastor Kendal Koenig Preacher Anniversary Banquet 11-2pm at Mau-nah-Tee-See Country Club
October 15	Pastor Denver Bitner Preaching—Homecoming Sunday
November 19	Pastor Katrina Steingraeber
December 10	St. Lucia Fest at Zion after worship

# COMMUNITY GARDEN



Gardens are located  
around 5<sup>th</sup> St and 5<sup>th</sup>  
Ave

Free garden beds available! Water  
and hoses provided. If interested,  
please call:

**ZION LUTHERAN  
CHURCH**

**815-964-4609**

# NURSE MARY'S CORNER

## Nurse Mary's Corner

"That is why I tell you not to worry about everyday life-  
whether you have enough food and drink, or enough clothes to wear...  
...And if God cares so wonderfully for wildflowers that are here today and thrown into the  
fire tomorrow,  
He will certainly care for you."  
Matt. 6:25, 30



Let's take a break from our Mental Health topics and talk about Spring after this long winter.  
(or are we really taking a break?)

### Three Benefits of Growing a Garden:

Whether you're a seasoned gardener or just getting started, May promises warm enough weather and sunshine to get a garden established. And what fun picking the fruits, vegetables, and pest retardants you want to grow! A garden helps us save money, be healthier, and become even more appreciative of God's care and creative design.

1. **Save money:** Once you buy all the supplies and the garden is established, we can look forward to a supply of fresh, sustainable food throughout the growing season. Even a modestly sized garden can provide produce for you and our extended family and friends even through the winter.

2. **Healthy food:** Each gardener decides whether to be organic or not, supporting each family's preferences. Using and developing nutrient-rich soil results in food items packed nutrients and minerals you need. Working in a garden is good for burning calories and strengthening muscles. Playing in the dirt is good for the soul (and our inner child.)

3. **Spiritual wellness:** Gardens allow us to see the miracles & wonder of life up close...and help us to be even more grateful for all that is provided. And then to consider all the factors: healthy soil, healthy seeds and plants placed in the soil at the right time, the right amount of sun and water. The Creator provides everything. How Gracious God provides for us as well. excerpts *Heartfelt Magazine, March 2023*, [chministries.org/blog](https://chministries.org/blog)

### Growing a garden can also reduce stress:

Nearly all forms of exercise can reduce stress including gardening. It's been shown to lighten mood and lower levels of stress and anxiety. It's very gratifying to plant, tend, harvest, and share your own food.

Routines provide structure to our day and are linked to improved mental health. Gardening routines, like watering and weeding, can create a soothing rhythm to ease stress. <https://www.mayoclinichealthsystem.org/hometown-health/speaking-of-health/dig-into-the-benefits-of-gardening>

If you would like a free blood pressure check to get started on your healthy lifestyle stop in my office at the church any Wednesday 10-1 and I will be happy to visit with you. If you have any clinical questions give me a call at 815-291-8407 Mary





**2023 Cars & Coffee Season Starts April 1<sup>st</sup>!**



*Midtown Community Health Team*

# MIDTOWN FUN & HEALTH FAIR



*Saturday-June 10, 2023*

*from 1pm-3pm*

*Patriots Gateway Community Center*

# MAY 2023 CALENDAR

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<b>30</b> 9:15am Worship 10:30am Congregational Forum	<b>1</b> 9:00am RVC Literacy ESL Class - Marander Room 9:30am Bible Study - Library 4:30pm Intern Cluster	<b>2</b> 9:00am RVC Literacy ESL Class - Marander Room	<b>3</b> 8:00am Bible Study - Stockholm Inn 9:00am RVC Literacy ESL Class - Marander Room 5:00pm Music Lessons - Choir Room 5:00pm WOW -Fellowship Hall	<b>4</b> 9:00am Rockford Race Summit 9:00am RVC Literacy ESL Class - Marander Room 4:00pm Katie's Cup Board	<b>5</b> Office Closed 9:00am Private Music Lesson - Youth Center	<b>6</b> 9:00am Cars & Coffee - RPS Parking Lot 1:00pm Ruthie's Kitchen
<b>7</b> 9:15am Worship	<b>8</b> 9:30am Bible Study - Library	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b> 8:00am Bible Study - Stockholm Inn <b>9:00am Grapevine Articles Due</b> 11:00am Missions Team - Zion 11:00am Missions Team - Zion 5:00pm Music Lessons - Choir Room 5:00pm WOW -Fellowship Hall	<b>11</b> 4:00pm Zion Development Board	<b>12</b> Office Closed 9:00am Private Music Lesson - Youth Center	<b>13</b> Postal Food Drive 1:00pm Ruthie's Kitchen
<b>14</b> 9:15am Worship 10:15am Around the Tables - Youth Center	<b>15</b> 9:30am Bible Study - Library	<b>16</b> 3:30pm Building and Grounds	<b>17</b> 8:00am Bible Study - Stockholm Inn 5:00pm Music Lessons - Choir Room 5:00pm WOW -Fellowship Hall	<b>18</b> <b>Grapevine Mailing</b> 11:00am Finance Committee - Library 12:00pm WELCA Retro Luncheon	<b>19</b> Office Closed 9:00am Private Music Lesson - Youth Center	<b>20</b> 11:00am Dave Kremmel Funeral - Zion 1:00pm Ruthie's Kitchen
<b>21</b> 9:15am Worship	<b>22</b> 1:00pm Bag Fluffing - Youth Center	<b>23</b> 5:00pm HR Committee 6:00pm Church Council	<b>24</b> 8:00am Bible Study - Stockholm Inn 5:00pm Music Lessons - Choir Room 5:00pm WOW -Fellowship Hall	<b>25</b> 4:30pm Patriots Board	<b>26</b> Office Closed 9:00am Private Music Lesson - Youth Center	<b>27</b> 1:00pm Ruthie's Kitchen
<b>28</b> <b>Pentecost</b> 9:15am Worship	<b>29</b> <b>Memorial Day</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>31</b> 8:00am Bible Study - Stockholm Inn 5:00pm Music Lessons - Choir Room 5:00pm WOW -Fellowship Hall	<b>1</b> 4:00pm Katie's Cup Board	<b>2</b> Office Closed 9:00am Private Music Lesson - Youth Center	<b>3</b> 9:00am Cars & Coffee - RPS Parking Lot 1:00pm Ruthie's Kitchen

## LEADERSHIP TEAM

Congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in  
America

### ***Our Ministers - All the People of Zion***

*Senior Pastor:* Michael Thomas;  
zionrockfordpastor@gmail.com

*Pastoral Intern:* Alana Harms;  
internalanah@gmail.com

*Financial Secretary:* zionrockfordfinances@gmail.com

*Office Manager:* Jolyn Hess: zionrockford@gmail.com

*Faith Community Nurse:* Mary Wedel;  
Mary.V.Wedel@osfhealthcare.org

*Music Ministry Coordinator:* Jodi Beach;  
jodibeach3@gmail.com

*Custodian:* Shanita Baker;  
zion.custodian1883@gmail.com

*Outreach Coordinator:* Janice Forrest;  
juju051959@gmail.com

*Worship Media:* Kurt Brown; zionrockford@gmail.com

## COUNCIL MEMBERS

Michael Beert, Bonnie Dahlberg, Gary Fulkerson,  
Debbie Gortowski, Kathy Hand, Ruth Larson, Angeles  
Polcher, James Rasch, Kris Sommer, Pastor Michael  
Thomas, Neal Tolodxi.

### **2023 Church Council Officers**

President: Kris Sommer  
Vice-President: Michael Beert  
Treasurer: James Rasch  
Secretary: Ruth Larson  
Pastor: Michael E. Thomas

## SOCIAL MEDIA

[www.zionrockford.com](http://www.zionrockford.com)

Like us on [www.facebook.com](http://www.facebook.com)

Follow us on [www.youtube.com/zionrockford](http://www.youtube.com/zionrockford)

**Offerings:** We are grateful for your generosity in supporting our ministries at and beyond Zion. There are envelopes at the place you are sitting and in the lobby. Donations can be 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 or need assistance with our new mobile app, please email [zionrockfordfinances@gmail.com](mailto:zionrockfordfinances@gmail.com) for more information.

## PRAYER CORNER

### **WE ASK YOU TO PRAY FOR:**

- ◇ The ELCA, Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton, Bishop Stacie Fidler, Pastor Thomas, Pastoral Intern Alana Harms, 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 Shadrack Langu of Sepuka Parish
- ◇ Pastor Selvakumar and Arcot Lutheran Church in India and Sepuka/Msisi Church in Tanzania.
- ◇ 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.
- ◇ For healing: Eloise Anderson, Kurt Brown, Colette Buchert, Yolanda Churchill, Jim Duhigg, Deanna Hartenberg, Jolyn Hess, Vanda Nielsen, Debbie Raymond, Linda Reinhardt, Becky Sharpe, and Wayne Spitzer.

If you have a prayer request or a prayer of thanksgiving to share, please notify Pastor Mike or Pastoral Intern Alana. 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 June 2023 GRAPEVINE,  
EMAIL BY MAY 10, 2023

To submit an article, please send a hardcopy to the church office or email to [zionrockford@gmail.com](mailto:zionrockford@gmail.com).

(If you call Kris Sommer and she is unable to answer please leave a message so she knows who to call back, thank you)

**VANCO**  
FAITH

Zion Lutheran Church  
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Rockford, Illinois 61104

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*“A Mosaic Community Sharing  
the Grace of Christ with All”*



# 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.*

**May 2023**

Zion Lutheran Church  
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Rockford, Illinois 61104  
Phone: (815) 964-4609  
[www.zionrockford.com](http://www.zionrockford.com)  
[zionrockford@gmail.com](mailto:zionrockford@gmail.com)

PARTNERSHIPS



**Sunday Worship,  
In the Sanctuary at  
9:15am**

Facebook Live/Online Worship

(Also posted at [www.youtube.com/zionrockford](http://www.youtube.com/zionrockford)  
afterwards)