

The Glory of Zion

Christ's Light Shining Among Us

Newsletter of **Zion Lutheran Church, School & Preschool**

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August 2026

Sixty-Nine Years of God's Work

***"One generation shall commend Your works to another, and shall declare Your mighty acts."
—Psalm 145:4***

This fall, Zion Lutheran School begins its 69th academic year. Think for a moment about how much the world has changed since Zion's first students entered their classrooms.

In 1957, the Soviet Union launched Sputnik, the first artificial satellite, beginning the Space Age. The object was only about the size of a beach ball, but its trip around the earth captured the world's imagination—and stirred its fears. Just twelve years later, human beings walked on the moon. Since then, people have built space stations, sent robotic explorers to Mars, and placed telescopes in space that can peer deeper into the universe than earlier generations could have imagined.

During Zion's 69 academic years, the Berlin Wall was built and then torn down. Nations appeared, disappeared, divided, and reunited. Doctors learned to transplant hearts, eradicate smallpox, and treat illnesses that once seemed hopeless. Computers went from filling entire rooms to fitting into our pockets. The first students of Zion could scarcely have imagined video calls, digital textbooks, interactive whiteboards, or the ability to speak instantly with someone on the other side of the world.

Yet the most wonderful events of these 69 years cannot all be found in history books or measured by scientific instruments.

Around the world, the Gospel of Jesus Christ has continued to be proclaimed. The Scriptures have been translated into languages that had never before possessed the Bible. Churches have grown across Africa, Asia, and Latin America. Missionaries, pastors, teachers, parents, and grandparents have taught children to pray, confess the Creed, sing the hymns of the faith, and trust the promises of Christ. In nations troubled by war, persecution, poverty, and disaster, Christians have continued to gather around God's Word and Sacraments. Empires have changed, technologies have advanced, and cultures have shifted—but the Word of the Lord has endured forever.

God has also been at work right here at Zion.

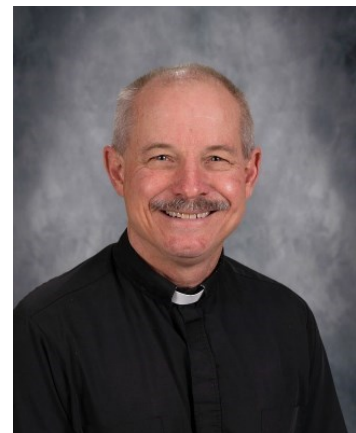
For 69 academic years, children have entered our classrooms carrying backpacks, lunch boxes, questions, worries, talents, and dreams. They have learned to read and write, add and subtract, investigate the created world, make music, create art, compete, cooperate, forgive, and begin again. Most importantly, they have heard that they are created by God, redeemed by Christ, and made His children through Holy Baptism.

We cannot count all the prayers that have been spoken at Zion during these years. We cannot know how many Bible passages have been memorized, hymns sung, chapel offerings gathered, friendships formed, or acts of quiet kindness performed. We cannot see every way that a lesson taught decades ago continues to bear fruit today. But God sees it all.

Some of Zion's former students are now parents and grandparents. Some serve in churches, schools, businesses, hospitals, military units, farms, homes, and communities across the country and around the world. They may not remember every assignment or every test, but many still carry with them words planted deeply in childhood: "Jesus loves me." "The Lord is my shepherd." "God is our refuge and strength." "Take and eat; this is My body, given for you." Those words matter because they are not merely memories. They are the living promises of God.

Now, as Zion enters its 69th academic year, we stand at the edge of another remarkable chapter.

Continued on page 2.



Sixty-nine Years of God’s Work continued from page 1.

After nearly thirty years of prayer, planning, saving, giving, and hoping, our construction plans have gone out for bids. Lord willing, work will begin in the coming months on a project that will approximately double the size of our school. For many members of Zion, this moment has been a very long time coming. Some who first dreamed about this expansion are no longer with us on earth. Others have faithfully contributed year after year without knowing when they would see construction begin. Their patience reminds us that much of God’s work is accomplished across generations.

A larger building will give us more classrooms, more room for ministry, and more opportunities to serve children and families. That is exciting. Yet the true strength of Zion will never be measured primarily in square footage. Beautiful rooms cannot forgive sins. New walls cannot create faith. Modern equipment cannot raise children in the knowledge of salvation.

Only God can do that—and He has promised to work through His Word.

That is why this construction project is not simply about making Zion bigger. It is about making room: room for more children to hear about Jesus, room for teachers to serve faithfully, room for families to find a church and school home, and room for one generation to commend God’s works to the next.

We do not know what the world will look like when Zion celebrates its 75th or 100th academic year. The children entering preschool today may live to see inventions and events we cannot begin to imagine. But we do know what they will need. They will need the same Savior needed by Zion’s first students in 1957. They will need Jesus Christ, crucified for their sins and risen for their salvation. They will need God’s unchanging Word in a rapidly changing world.

For 69 academic years, God has graciously sustained this ministry. He has worked through imperfect pastors, teachers, staff members, parents, volunteers, and supporters. He has provided in times of abundance and in times of uncertainty. He has forgiven our failures, strengthened our faith, and opened doors we could not open ourselves.

So we enter this new school year with gratitude for the past, excitement for the future, and confidence in Christ. Buildings may change. Classrooms may expand. Generations may come and go. But Jesus Christ remains “the same yesterday and today and forever” (Hebrews 13:8).

To God alone be the glory for 69 years of His gracious work—and for every year still to come.

In Christ,
Pastor Schulte

DISCIPLESHIP FOCUS: Zion Youth Trip to Nashville

By: Lorien Petersen

In July, Zion sent six youth and three adult leaders to Nashville, Tennessee for an urban mission trip. They served with Center for Student Missions (CSM) and spent four days being the hands and feet of Jesus to the Nashville community. One of their favorite sites of the week was The Giving Garden. This is a ministry of Franklin First United Methodist Church. Since 2010, The Giving Garden has regularly distributed more than 40,000 pounds (that’s over 20 tons) of produce each year as well as hundreds of cut flower arrangements from the flower and herb gardens. All produce is donated and delivered to partner organizations. Through these partnerships, The Giving Garden is able to feed hundreds of people in the local community who may not otherwise have access to healthy produce. Our group helped harvest vegetables and did lots of weeding alongside the amazing volunteers that keep this ministry going.

Another favorite site was Room in the Inn, a day center for people experiencing poverty and homelessness. Their mission is to provide programs that emphasize human development and recovery through education, self-help and work, centered in community and long term support for those who call the streets of Nashville home. Our group got to help serve breakfast in their café. Guests can earn the opportunity to eat breakfast in the café by taking classes. There was live music to enjoy while guests got to sit down for breakfast and fellowship. Our group really enjoyed talking with the folks there and hearing their stories.

Zion Youth Ministry is so thankful for all the prayers and support of our Zion Family that allows us to take youth on mission trips and give them opportunities to put their faith into action!



Youth and youth leaders at The Giving Garden from left to right: Will Meadows, Nathaniel Warnke, Brody Aker, Brynley Graumann, Quinten Glass, Ethan Roark, Lorien Petersen, Eli Meadows, and Jessica Ulmer.

SCHOOL FOCUS: Meet Mrs. Kate Deitz, Zion’s 2nd Grade Teacher

By: Kate Deitz

Hello, I am Mrs. Deitz, and I am so excited to be joining the Zion family as the new second-grade teacher! This school year is especially exciting because it combines so many things I love—teaching, sharing God's love with children, and becoming part of a community that values both faith and learning.

Although I am new to Zion, teaching has been part of God's plan for my life for a very long time. When I was just 12 years old, the preschool teacher at my church noticed how much I loved working with children and gave me the opportunity to lead my own classroom of four- and five-year-olds every Sunday and Wednesday. It didn't take long for me to realize that teaching was exactly what God was calling me to do.

I grew up in Rapid City and attended private schools throughout my childhood. After graduating from Black Hills State University in just three years, I couldn't wait to begin my teaching career. I completed my student teaching in a third-grade classroom before spending the next four years teaching first grade between Colorado Springs and here in Rapid. When this position at Zion became available, I prayed that God would open the doors He wanted me to walk through and close the ones He didn't. Looking back, I can clearly see His hand guiding me here, and I couldn't be more thankful.

My husband, Coleton, and I recently celebrated our fifth wedding anniversary in July. Over the past 5 years, we have been blessed to purchase our first home and are enjoying making it our own. We also share our home with our two Great Pyrenees mixed rescue dogs, Milo and Daisy, whose playful personalities keep life full of laughter and adventure.

When I'm not in the classroom, you'll often find me playing the flute with the South Dakota School of Mines community band, working on a craft project, painting, sewing, creating DIY projects, or making custom T-shirts. I also love sharing great read-aloud books with my students. There's something special about watching a classroom become completely captivated by a story, and those moments often become some of our favorite memories together.

Second grade is such an exciting year because students grow so much—not only academically, but also in confidence and independence. I love challenging my students to do their very best while helping them recognize just how much they have learned along the way. Above all, I hope every child who enters my classroom knows they are deeply loved, wonderfully unique, and created exactly the way God intended. I am looking forward to a year filled with learning, laughter, growing together, and celebrating all the wonderful things God has in store.



LET'S GO

HIKING

Pack a sack lunch and join us after late service.

August 9: Little Elk Creek Trail (Black Hawk) - 4.6 mi. - moderate

August 16: Prayer Walk at Zion

August 23: Coon Hollow Loop (Rockerville) - 3.3 mi. - easy

FROM THE PRINCIPAL’S OFFICE

Welcome Back!

This year marks Zion Lutheran School’s 69th year in operation as a mission of Zion Lutheran Church! We are so grateful for God’s blessings and to be a witness and service to the Rapid City community!

We are blessed to have many of our staff members returning this year. They include Hope Genzlinger, preschool director; Danielle Leyden, afternoon preschool teacher; Jenny Lee, enrichment aide; Hannah Ambrose, enrichment aide; Regan Scott, enrichment aide; Lindsay Reule, school/church administrative assistant; Megan Kettering, kindergarten; Kayla Leininger, kindergarten; Krystol Frerking, first grade; LeAnn Vogel, third grade; Amber Birkmire, fourth grade; Grace Rhyswyk, fifth grade; Becki Aker, general educator; Natalie Graumann, K-2 literacy aide; Hanne Burke, Spanish; Larisa Mangione, music; Danica Odle, PE/health teacher & preschool aide; Riley Perry, preschool aide, substitute teacher, and summer daycare director; and Ann Solinsky, principal.

Zion Lutheran School and Preschool is welcoming Kate Deitz to the Zion staff as the 2nd grade teacher this year.

Our teaching staff will be dedicated on Sunday, August 23rd at the 10 AM service. Please keep the entire staff in your prayers as we begin a new school year!!!

Open Positions

Substitute Teacher

Zion Lutheran School is looking for interested caring adults to be on our school substitute list for the 2026-2027 school year. If you are interested or know of someone who might be interested, please contact Principal Ann Solinsky at 605-342-5749.

Meet the Teacher Day

This year Zion School and Preschool will begin with “Meet the Teacher Day” and “Parent Partnership” meetings on **Monday, August 24th**. School families will be scheduled for a “Parent Partnership” time. After the brief meeting in the multi-purpose room, families will be able to go back to the classrooms to meet the teachers. During this time students and parents will be able to receive class information from their teacher, bring in school supplies, and fill out the forms for the school year.

We are looking forward to seeing all of our parents and children on August 24th.

- Parent Partnership Meeting
- Meet the teacher
- Bring in school supplies
- Fill out all necessary forms for the 2026-2027 school year
- Information on the SCRIP Program will be available in the school office
- Tuition payments, lunch payments and book fees can be paid for in the school office.

Please look for “Back to School” letters for a time schedule.

Adopt a Student

As Zion Lutheran School begins, we have several families and single parent families who are in need of financial assistance as they strive to give their children a Christian Education. The Board of Christian Education approves assistance with parents paying at least half of the cost and volunteering time for the church or school. If you would be willing to assist these parents on a monthly basis or a one-time contribution, please contact Ann Solinsky at school 342-5749 or at home 390-3092. Thank you for your prayerful consideration as we continue with Zion’s mission to “*Share the Gospel.*”

Back to School Picnic

Zion’s PTL (Parent Teacher League) will be hosting a “Back to School Picnic” at Zion on Friday, August 28th from 5:30-7pm. Bring lawn chairs and plan to share a fun evening of food and fellowship as we begin the new school year! Look for more information in bulletins and in pre-worship announcement slides!

Zion Lutheran Preschool and Aftercare



WE ARE HIRING

AFTER CARE STAFF

16 years of age or older

- No Weekends or Holidays!
- Part-Time Hours (3-5:30pm)
- Work with kids ages 3-11



Contact Hope Genzlinger for more information at
hope.genzlinger@zionrc.org or
605-342-5749



PRE-KINDERGARTEN ENROLLMENT

"Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it." -Proverbs 22:6

ZION LUTHERAN PRE-K PROGRAM FEATURES:

- ✓ M-F Classes 12-3pm
- ✓ Play-Based Learning
- ✓ Early Education Program

FOR MORE INFORMATION

605-342-5749 hope.genzlinger@zionrc.org





Annual Zion Lutheran School Banquet

Dust off your boots and join us for an evening of good food, great company, and generous giving at Boots & Blessings, Zion's Annual School Banquet!

Round up your friends and family for this adults-only night out. Enjoy a delicious meal, browse our silent auction for unique finds, and save room for the crowd-favorite dessert auction.

Every bid and every bite helps support Zion School, making this a fun evening with a meaningful purpose. We hope you'll saddle up and join us for a night of fellowship, laughter, and blessings!

SAVE THE DATE for our Annual
Zion Lutheran School Banquet

BOOTS & BLESSINGS

13 NOVEMBER | 6:00PM





RANDOM QUESTION:

Ken Anderson, Lay Minister



What memory always makes you smile when you think of it?

When I was young, my family lived in Spink, South Dakota, a town of twelve people—six of them from my family. My older brother and sister attended a country school a mile away, and I wanted to go too. Though it had no kindergarten, five-year-olds could attend for two weeks before first grade. I went and loved it!

Before first grade, we moved to Beresford, S.D., where I joined about 25 classmates. On the first day, they all knew the uppercase and lowercase letters on the alphabet border. I thought, I'm in big trouble. I don't know any of these.

A few months into first grade, I missed a week of school and fell behind, especially in spelling. My teacher, Mrs. Nebelsieck, stayed after school to work with me one-on-one. I don't remember how long I stayed, only that it was dark when I left each day.

Mrs. Nebelsieck taught in Beresford for many years and recently passed away at 101. I didn't appreciate her help so much then, but now my heart is full of gratitude for her love and sacrifice. She helped me catch up to my classmates.

We have teachers at Zion with hearts like Mrs. Nebelsieck's—teachers who give students like me extra support. Praise God for them! We are truly blessed!

STEWARDSHIP MINUTE

By Kevin & Becki Aker

"Freedom Isn't Free... Neither Are Hot Dogs!"

Every Fourth of July, Americans spend billions of dollars on fireworks. We literally buy things... just to watch them explode! And somehow we're perfectly happy about it.

We stand there saying, "Wow! That one was worth 50 bucks!"

Imagine using that logic at the grocery store: "I just spent \$50 on groceries, and now they're all gone!"

Actually... that's called feeding teenagers.

As we celebrate the freedoms we enjoy as Americans, we're reminded that freedom always comes with responsibility. The freedoms we have today were purchased through sacrifice.

The same is true—on an even greater scale—of our Christian freedom.

Jesus has set us free from sin, guilt, and death through His cross and resurrection. That freedom wasn't free. It cost Him everything.

Now notice what Paul says. He doesn't say, "You're free, so do whatever you want." He says, "You're free... so serve one another in love."

That's the heart of Christian stewardship.

We don't give because God needs our money. We don't serve because we're trying to earn God's favor. We already have His favor through Christ.

Instead, our giving, serving, and caring for others become joyful responses to the freedom we've already received.

Christian stewardship isn't about paying God back—because we never could. It's about paying God's love forward.

Like the pastors always say during opening announcements, there is ALWAYS something going on around here. So today Lord, we ask you to fill our hearts with gratitude that overflows into generous giving, joyful serving, and faithful stewardship.

We ask you to use us to serve others with the love You have first shown us. Amen.



Want to Join Our Zion Family?

We offer new member classes yearly starting in October. We welcome you to worship with us Saturdays at 5:30pm or Sundays at 8am or 10:45am. If you have any questions about joining our family or about Zion in general, please contact one of our pastors or the front office at info@zionrc.org.

Pastor Meadows: bryan.meadows@zionrc.org Pastor Schulte: gary.schulte@zionrc.org

MINISTRY FOCUS: Biker Breakfast at Blessed Emmanuel

By Dennis Lively

Feeding bikers attending the Sturgis Rally has been a long tradition. I would guess, back in the early days of the Rally, the local communities recognized that the bikers didn't have a lot of money, so as a token of appreciation local service groups and churches provided meals, be it breakfast, lunch, or dinner. The tradition continues with meals provided throughout the Black Hills. Many of the locations provide the meals free or for donations if the bikers are so inclined. Blessed Emmanuel Lutheran Church is one of the venues who, for many years, has served bikers meals, breakfast and dinner. It is one of their outreach ministries.

It is also an outreach ministry for Zion. Over the past number of years the Board of Lay Ministry has solicited volunteers to help with serving, busing tables, washing dishes, and most importantly, providing fellowship with the bikers from all over the globe. Blessed Emmanuel will serve more than 2,000 meals during the week, which provides 2,000 opportunities to witness the love of Christ. There are also prayer request cards on all the tables for anyone to leave a prayer request for themselves or other bikers.

If you are interested in volunteering please fee free to contact me, Dennis Lively, at 605-484-2215.



Adult Camping Retreat

Join us for a weekend retreat at Custer State Park August 28-30. The theme for this year's event is Freedom and Faith: Country, Community, Personal. We have tent and RV sites included in our reservation. The cost will be split among attendees; estimated at \$50 per person. The fun will begin on Friday, August 28, at 6:30 PM with campfire nachos, games, introductions, and fun!

On Saturday, we will have breakfast bagels at 7:30 AM. The first session (country) will be from 9:00-10:00 AM with Pastor Gary Schulte. Lunch will be from 11:00 AM-12:00 PM. After lunch, we will walk the Creekside Trail. Then we will have our second session (community) with Pastor Bryan Meadows. Following the second session, we will have a craft and rest/reflection time. Supper will be Hobo dinners with peach and cherry Dutch oven cobblers at 6:00 PM. We will close the evening with a campfire/devotion/music.

Sunday we will begin our day with pancakes, eggs, and bacon for breakfast at 7:30 AM. We will have our final session (personal) at 9:00 AM with Dr. Trisha Miller. After the final session, we will have some reflection/testimony time then pack up. Check out is at noon.

If you would rather reserve a cabin, call Custer State Park at 800-710-2267.

Not interested in spending the whole weekend or camping? We'd still love for you to attend any part of the weekend you are interested in. Come for a day or come for a session! Come for the weekend but go home to sleep! Simply note your intentions on the sign-up sheet in the narthex, so we can plan accordingly.

Questions? Ask one of the planning committee members: Azure Summers, Ken and Laure Anderson, and Karen Zepp.



VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!

BEAUTIFICATION & FIX-IT DAY AT ZION!

We will be doing various repairs, line painting, grounds maintenance, and more.

We will start at 8:00 AM and plan to finish around 12:00 PM.

**SATURDAY
AUGUST 15**

If you have any questions, please contact Austin Kaul 605-464-0710.

**LUNCH WILL BE
PROVIDED**

The logo for Zion Lutheran Church, featuring the word 'Zion' in a stylized font with a cross above it, and the words 'LUTHERAN CHURCH' and 'SERVING THE COMMUNITY' below it.

Women’s Ministry

WICKS (Widows In Christ Know Salvation)

Join us for our next fellowship on Sunday, August 16. We will meet at Copper Ridge Apartments 2038 Promise Road. Join us at 11:30am. Bring a salad, main dish or dessert to share, and your own drink.



Men’s Ministry



Upcoming Important Dates

- August 2: Voters’ Meeting after late service.
- August 3-7: Multi-Purpose Room is being waxed.
- August 5: Youth Group will meet at Flags & Wheels.
- August 9: Young Adult Sunday & Fellowship Hike & Picnic at Little Elk Creek.
- August 12: Youth Group will meet at Zion for a hike.
- August 14: Last Day of Summer Daycare. Men’s BBQ at Canyon Lake Park.
- August 15: Clean up day at Zion (8:00 AM-12:00 PM) Young Adult Game Night at 5:30 PM.
- August 16: Prayer Walk at Zion after late service.e
- August 17-19: Beartooth Hwy motorcycle ride.
- August 17-21: Teacher workdays and professional development training.
- August 23: Teacher Re-Dedication during the 10am worship service.
- August 23: Fellowship Hike and Picnic at Coon Hollow Loop after late service.
- August 24: Meet the Teacher 8am-6pm. We will be reaching out to families to schedule a time.
- August 25: Teacher workday
- August 26: First Day of School! Morning PK and K-5 begin at 8:15am. Afternoon PK begins at 12pm. First day of school chapel will be at 9am.
- August 28: PTL Back to School Picnic @ Zion from 5:30-7:00 PM.
- August 28-30: Adult Camping Retreat

