

The Glory of Zion

Christ's Light Shining Among Us

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

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May 2026

The Tassels Will Turn!

May arrives with tassels turning, caps flying, and families gathering to celebrate milestones. Graduation season has a way of stirring something deep in all of us—not just pride in accomplishment, but a sense of movement. A chapter closes. Another begins. And whether you are 18 or 88, you know that feeling. Life is always, in some way, a series of graduations.

But here is the question beneath the celebrations: What are we actually moving toward?

Our culture tends to frame graduation as arrival—you made it. Diploma in hand, doors open, future ahead. And there is truth in that. Hard work matters. Growth matters. Milestones matter. These are good gifts from YAHWEH, worthy of thanksgiving.

But Scripture gently—and firmly—reorients us. Graduation is not an arrival. It is a sending.

When the Apostle Paul reflects on his own life near its end, he does not speak of degrees earned or status achieved. Instead, he says, “I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith” (2 Timothy 4:7). Notice the language: not arrival, but endurance; not accomplishment, but faithfulness.

That word is for all of us this May.

For our graduates, yes—those stepping into new schools, new jobs, new responsibilities. But also for parents releasing children into the next stage. For retirees entering a different rhythm of life. For those quietly carrying on in daily vocations that don’t come with ceremonies or applause. The Christian life is not measured by the world’s milestones, but by trust in Christ through every season.

In other words, the most important “graduation” has already happened for you.

In Holy Baptism, you were brought through death into life. You were joined to Christ. You were given a new identity—not as a student, employee, parent, or retiree—but as a child of YAHWEH. That is not a stage you move beyond. That is the foundation that carries you through every stage.

And the One who sends you into each new season does not stand at a distance, wishing you luck.

Jesus Christ does something far better. He goes with you.

The risen Lord’s promise—“I am with you always”—is not reserved for the extraordinary moments of life. It is for the ordinary days that follow the celebration. The early mornings. The uncertain decisions. The quiet doubts. The long stretches where progress feels slow or invisible.

Graduation ceremonies last a few hours. But Christ’s presence endures.

So as we celebrate this month, we give thanks for achievement. We honor hard work. We rejoice with those who are marking new beginnings. But we also remember that the true goal of the Christian life is not simply to move forward—it is to remain in Christ.

Because in Him, the race is already won.

He has completed the work we could not. He has passed through death and opened the way to life that does not end. And He now sends His people—young and old alike—not to earn their future, but to live in the freedom He has already secured.

So wherever May finds you—at a graduation ceremony, in the routines of daily work, or in a season of waiting—this is your calling:

Remain in Christ.

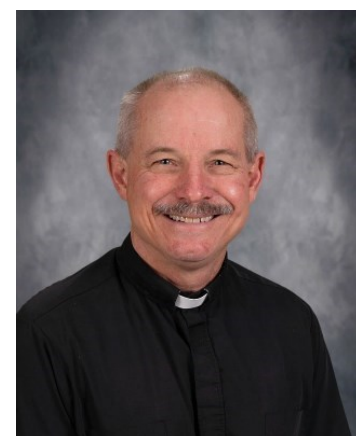
Trust His promises.

Walk in the life He has given.

The tassels will turn. The seasons will change. But the One who holds you will not.

Held by Him,

Pastor Schulte



MINISTRY FOCUS: Catechism Students Put Faith into Action

By Kate Meadows & Ann Solinsky

Service is more than a requirement for Zion’s catechism students—it’s a way to live out their faith in everyday life. Sixth and seventh graders are asked to complete at least 20 hours of service each year.

Many students have stepped up to serve within the church and school. At Vacation Bible School last summer, students like Adelynn Palmreuter, Eli Aker, Jensen Burke and Emma Koch helped lead groups, organize games, and guide younger children from station to station. Others, including Addi Retzlaff and Asher Pound, lent a hand in their classrooms—grading papers, tidying up, and helping teachers and classmates alike.

Several students found ways to serve in the wider community. Jordyn Martin packed food boxes for Feeding South Dakota, while Bridger Komnick spent hours cleaning and maintaining equipment at a local shooting range. Weston Rose and his family quietly cared for a neighbor’s yard while the father was deployed, a simple act that made a lasting difference.

Closer to home, students also served family, friends, and neighbors. Eden Stecher painted a fence and pulled weeds for a family friend, while Piper Muck cared for a neighbor’s cat. Sarah Malone, already beyond her required hours, is looking for even more ways to serve—considering making gift bags for nursing home residents to brighten their day.

Others used their unique gifts. Carter Sawatzky helped coach a Destination Imagination (DI) team and helped build a chair rack at school.

“It’s very handy,” he noted.

Brynley Graumann organized books in Zion’s library and served pizza at Jesus And Me (J.A.M.) events, while Avaya Miller helped assemble care packages and sang Christmas carols for residents in assisted living.

Whether packing meals, cleaning ditches, babysitting, or lending a hand behind the scenes, these students are learning an important truth: service doesn’t have to be big to matter. In faithful, everyday ways, they are caring for their neighbors and their church families, as Jesus calls us to do.

Zion’s Catechism students will be sharing their projects during the Sunday School hour on May 17th in the narthex. We encourage all Zion members to come, visit with the students, and learn more about the ways they are using the talents God has given them to serve our community. It is always a joy to see our young people growing in faith and putting that faith into action through their gifts and efforts.



Avaya Miller helping Maycie Graumann tie-dye her VBS shirt.

STEWARDSHIP MINUTE: Trust in the Maker

By Kevin & Becki Aker

One Sunday morning during bible study, the pastor called on one of his oldest, wisest members to lead the group in prayer. The man stood up, bowed his head and said, “Lord, I hate buttermilk.”

The pastor opened one eye and wondered where this was going. The man continued, “Lord, I hate lard.” Now the pastor was totally perplexed and a bit worried he picked the wrong person to lead them in prayer.

The man continued, “Lord, I ain’t too crazy about plain flour either. But after you mix ‘em all together and bake ‘em in a hot oven, man, I just love biscuits.”

Finally getting around to his point he ended his prayer by saying; “Lord help us to realize that when life gets hard, when things come up that we don’t like, when the plan we had in mind hits a bump in the road, when we don’t understand what You are doing, that is when we need to wait and see what You are making. After you get through mixing and baking, it’ll probably be something even better than biscuits. Amen.

I don’t know where the origins of this particular story came from, but the point it is trying to make is profound. Our building committee continues to work diligently. And like every major building project, it will hit obstacles, roadblocks, and unexpected complications. At times we don’t understand the process, and certain pieces by themselves are hard to swallow, yet if we place our trust in the Maker, the end project is going to be AMAZING! Please continue to pray for our building committee as they continue the hard work of trying to find the right ingredients for God’s next steps here at Zion.

Proverbs 3:5-6 emphasize relying on His divine guidance over our human intellect, it advocates for our complete surrender to God in every aspect of life to receive His direction. Whether that is ingredients for biscuits, or the ingredients for our expansion, God wants us always to rely on Him.



DISCIPLESHIP FOCUS: Baby Bottles

By Laure Anderson

Since 2018, the Black Hills Pregnancy Center has been using the Baby Bottle Fundraiser to raise funds for the Earn While You Learn program.

Earn While You Learn is a program where by clients and significant other can take classes and earn Baby Bucks. There are close to 200 classes that are offered; anywhere from conception to a child aged 3.

A client watches a video, does the homework and visits with an advocate. For participating in the classes the client earns Baby Bucks. She can then spend these bucks in the Baby Boutique, where the items are all new, donated items! There are diapers, formula, clothes, etc. Clients can also accumulate their baby bucks and purchase a bigger item such as a crib or stroller.

There are 3 times a year that the Baby Bottle Fundraiser is in progress.

- Sanctity of Human Life is from mid-January to mid-February
- Respect Life month is in October
- Mother's Day-Fathers Day

Zion holds the baby Bottle Fundraiser from Mother's Day to Father's Day. Everything that is given is so greatly appreciated!!



**DESTINATION IMAGINATION
FUNDRAISER**

Join our Destination Imagination teams for a delicious spaghetti lunch and see them in action as they present their challenges for you!

MAY 3RD AT ZION FOLLOWING LATE CHURCH SERVICE. AROUND NOON.

Free will donation appreciated to help with Global Competition in Kansas City!

Our Destination Imagination teams are traveling to the global competition in Kansas City,KS.

Come enjoy lunch following the late church service, and then prepare to have your imagination expanded as our DI teams will perform just for you!

This will be a great way to see what D.I. is all about, come see our Elementary teams and our alumni Middle school team in action.

Free will donations appreciated to offset registration costs for teams. We hope to see you there!

SCHOOL FOCUS: Mrs. Frerking's First Grade Class

What is something new you can do now that you couldn't do before?

Ainhoa: I can snap my fingers now.

Kaylee: I can say animal names in Spanish.

Amariana: I can write stories, notes, and cards.

Saylor: I can ride my bike without training wheels.

Charlotte E.: I can color in my coloring books.

Kyler: I spell the words "are" and "one" now.

Donovin: I can spell hard words like "people" now.

Hunter: I can count to twenty in Spanish.

Kenadie: I can do word math problems by myself now.

Camilla: I can read by myself.

Charlotte L.: I can read books by myself now.



Ava: I can ride my bike without training wheels now.

Quinn: I can do a handstand.

Britain: I can tie my shoes now.

Rozie: I can kind of whistle now.

Krew: I can make a pout pout fish now.

James: I get to go in a camper during the summer.

Caspian: I learned how to use the Chromebooks.

William: I can write a story a little neater now.



Get to Know Mrs. Solinsky, Zion's School Principal

By Ann Solinsky

Hello! I'm Ann Solinsky, and this is my 26th year at Zion. I grew up on a dairy farm near Lennox, South Dakota, where I was actively involved in 4-H (showing cattle, sheep, and horses, as well as participating in rodeo), FFA, cheerleading, and band.

I began my college journey at SDSU with the goal of becoming a large animal veterinarian. After my first year—and a few challenging classes—my grandmother encouraged me to consider elementary education because of my love for working with children. I decided to give it a try and later graduated from Mount Marty with a degree in elementary education.

My first teaching position was a combined 5th and 6th grade classroom at Watertown Christian School. When my parents moved to the Black Hills, I felt called to follow. I relocated to Rapid City and applied for several teaching positions, including 5th grade at Zion. In July of 2000, Mrs. Sayles offered me the 5th grade position. It quickly became clear that God's hand was in that decision—other schools began reaching out with offers only after I had signed my contract. I knew I was exactly where God wanted me to be.

Over the years at Zion, I have taught 5th grade, 6th grade, and Music. In 2015, I was called to serve as principal. I truly enjoy working with both students and staff, helping them grow academically and in their relationship with God.

My husband, Dean, and I have three children. Our oldest, Drew, will graduate from SDSMT in May; Shay is finishing her first year at Southeast Tech; and our youngest, Dane, attends East Middle School. We live on a small hobby farm south of Rapid City, where we have dogs, cats, sheep, goats, pigs, ducks, and horses—some of which occasionally make a visit to school!

In my free time, I enjoy playing bells in Zion's bell choir, reading, camping, volunteering as a 4-H pistol coach, and watching movies with my family.

I am excited about the continued growth and expansion of our school and the opportunities it brings. I am confident that God has great plans for Zion, and I look forward to sharing His love with the many new families and students He sends our way.



From the Principal's Office...

Card Shower for Mr. Dobbs

After 10 years of dedicated service, care, and hard work to Zion Lutheran School, our wonderful second and third grade teacher, Mr. Scot Dobbs, is resigning his call as a teacher as of June 15, 2026. Please join us in celebrating his time at Zion!

We are organizing a card shower to show Mr. Dobbs how much he has meant to our church and school community all of these years. There is a basket in the narthex for you to leave a card. Cards must be in the basket before Monday, May 18. Let's flood Mr. Dobbs with appreciation, memories, and well-wishes to celebrate a job well done!

Kindergarten Circus

One again it is time for Zion's Kindergarten Circus! There will be lions and lion tamers, balloon sellers, clowns, tight rope walkers, strong men, and ring masters. Come and see the fun on Friday, May 8th at 2PM!

School Dance

Zion School's PTL will be hosting a "Decades Dance" on Friday, May 8th, from 6-8pm. All of our Zion church and school families are invited to come. Wear your favorite decade clothing, dance and have some fun!

** Students must come with a family member or an adult!

Outlaw Ranch

Zion's fifth grade class will be attending an Environmental Education Camp at Outlaw Ranch May 13-15. While they are at Outlaw Ranch, the students will be doing team-building activities, taking an ecology hike, riding horses, possibly canoeing, having a campfire, and experiencing KP duty.

Teacher Wanted

The Board of Christian Education is now gathering names for the position of a certified 2nd Grade Teacher. This is a full-time position beginning August 2026. If you are interested or know of someone who might be interested, please contact Casey Raby, President of the Board of Christian Education or Principal Ann Solinsky at 605-342-5749.

Zion's 2026 Graduation Classes

Our Fifth Grade Graduation and Reception will be held on the evening of Monday, May 18th, at 7PM.

Preschool Graduation and Reception will be held at our final Chapel service for this school year, on Wednesday, May 20th, at 8:30AM. Please keep our graduates in your prayers as they prepare for their next steps in their education.

Fifth Grade Graduates

Lexi Anderson, Alyssa Battaglia, Blaire Bury, Jace Cornella, Everly Dunn, Angelo D'urso, Meyanna Fode, Beckett Harris, Elliot Majeske, Mya Makoutz, Penelope Mason, Ethan Meruga, Lila Newell, Penny Poppen, Emmett Roark, Lizzie Schiley, Capri Schmalz, and Sullivan Stulken

Preschool Graduates

Morning Class-Lucas Aanenson, Mara Aanenson, Solanalynn Alegria, Julian Clemenger, Mayla Doeden, Addison Fossen, Palmer Johnson, Rawling Reule, Andrew Shaffer, Skyla Snellgrove, Adam Thomas, and Samuel Webster

Afternoon Class- Ariela Aker, Brody Anderson, Chase Arsaga, Daniela Battaglia, Maddox Bolin, Kolton Bolton, Noa Buntrock, Robert Cole, Lucas Dickey, Owen Goodrich, Daxton Hall, Brielle Redden, Kasen Robbins, Willow Schmalz, and Robert Wallace

God's richest blessings to the fifth grade and preschool graduating students from all of the teachers and staff of Zion Lutheran School and Preschool. Our prayers will be with you as you continue your education...and as you continue to grow in your faith!



Come with me... and you'll see...
a world of PURE APPRECIATION!
Zion Lutheran Church School & Preschool
Teacher Appreciation Week 2026

Dear Zion Families,
We will celebrate Teacher Appreciation Week May 4-8, 2026. Below is an itinerary of weekly events along with suggestions of easy ways you can contribute to the fun of showering our teachers with the appreciation they deserve!

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Mouthwatering Monday: Bring your teacher their favorite sweet treat or something fun to drink!	Tasty Tuesday: Bring your child's teacher a copy of the recipe for your family's favorite food!	Wonderful Wednesday: Write a note or draw a picture to show your appreciation for all they do and deliver it today!	Thoughtful Thursday: Stock the room with things teachers can use! Use your IMAGINATION to think of things your teacher might need!	Fleashy Friday: Wear your teacher's favorite color to brighten their day!

Make it something SCUMDIDDLUMPTIOUS!
(And make sure the Snozzberries taste like Snozzberries!)

"If you want to see paradise, simply look around and view it!"

The ideas above are all optional suggestions to participate in the daily themes or activities. If you have other ideas or would like to show your appreciation to teachers and staff in different ways- please feel free.

We can't wait for all the fun to begin! If you have any questions, please contact Megan Weishaar or Hanne Burke.

Sincerely,
The Zion PTL

WILLY WONKA
May 4-8, 2026

NEW MEMBER SPOTLIGHT: Kjerengtroen Family

By Jan Meadows

Thomas and Jeri Lynn Kjerengtroen and their children, Romana (8), Elsie (6), Bjorn (4) and Lidvin (7 months), are new members of our Zion family. They explained that their name is pronounced like SHARE-ing-trone.

Thomas was originally from here in Rapid City and is glad to be back. Half of his family lives here in the Black Hills, while the rest live in the Salt Lake area. He works as a Senior Data Scientist for Pete Lien & Sons. That means he helps them analyze various data to make informed decisions.

Jeri Lynn is from Melba, Idaho. Jeri Lynn has a degree in Graphic Design. She and Thomas met in college and knew almost immediately that this was their best friend and life-mate. They met in July 2015 and were married in December 2015. They lived in Laramie, WY while Thomas completed his degree at the University of Wyoming.

Thomas's father was born and raised in Tynset, Norway, and Thomas has visited the ancestral homeland to work with his Norwegian family in the summer when he was younger.

Jeri Lynn is enjoying the time raising their family and being a stay-at-home mom. She enjoys baking bread, taking the kids outdoors in the hills, and watercolor painting.

Ramona is a 2nd grader at Zion. She loves swimming, drawing, reading, and bike riding next to her dad while he runs. Elsie is a Kindergartener who loves swimming, math, reading books on her own, and making art. Bjorn always enthusiastically participates with Pastor at the Children's Message. He loves riding his bike on the bike path and at the Stevens trails. All the kids love reading and hearing others read books to them. These children are so engaging and upbeat, they are a joy.

The family enjoys hiking, swimming, and fishing together. Their favorite hikes in the hills include Boulder Hill, Little Devil's Tower, and the Spring Creek Trail.

They want to tell the Zion family that they are so happy to be here! The school and church have given them a wonderfully warm welcome! They are not historically from a Lutheran background, but they have loved finding a community here, and they look forward to continuing to worship with God's family here at Zion.



Spring Discipleship Fair

May 30-31, 2026

Would your committee or board like to feature anything for our members be a part of during the months of May-August? Please submit your information to Azure Summers, 360-480-0023 or design@azuresgd.com, by May 15.



Summer Schedule

<p>WORSHIP TIMES Beginning May 24 8:00am & 10:00am</p>	<p>SUMMER DAYCARE Beginning May 26 Monday-Friday 7:00am-5:30pm</p>
<p>OFFICE HOURS Beginning May 26 Monday-Thursday 8:00am-4:00pm Closed Fridays</p>	

CONGREGATIONAL MEMBER SPOTLIGHT: Quinten Glass

By Patrick Fitzgerald

Quinten Glass has been a Zion member for about 26 years. His journey with Zion began when his father was looking for a school for his children to attend and met with then Zion principal Priscilla Sayles. This led to Quinten and his siblings attending school at Zion and the family joining as members of Zion.

Quinten's family led a family Bible study, and he said he feels this played a significant role in his growth in the Christian faith. Family is important to Quinten; he said he feels fortunate to be a son, brother and uncle to two nephews. He also feels blessed to have lived in Rapid City for most of his life.

Quinten is a pharmacist. Two of his hobbies are playing piano and reading. His reading spans diverse interests, from science fiction to CS Lewis. He also participates in the young adult Bible Study group at Zion.

Quinten has actively served at Zion in many ways over the years. He has been a member of Praise Team at Zion since he was in high school. He serves as one of Zion's several church organists. Recently he joined the Board of Lay Ministry. He also occasionally helps teach Catechism classes for confirmands.

Quinten has been very active in the youth group over the years, from youth group member to now a youth group volunteer leader. In June, he will travel with youth group kids to Nashville for the urban mission trip with the Center for Student Missions (CSM).

Some of his favorite memories related to his own youth group participation include the mission trip to Denver and traveling to both New Orleans and San Antonio for LCMS National Youth Gatherings.

Quinten gives God thanks for his family and for being a part of Zion Church and School for so long and having faithful pastors. We are thankful for how the Lord works through Quinten's active involvement in the life of our Zion family.



JOIN US FOR ZION LUTHERAN'S...

VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL

JUNE 8-JUNE 12
9AM-12PM
AGE 3- ENTERING GRADE 5

REGISTRATION NOW OPEN!

VISIT: [HTTPS://VBIPRO.EVENTS/P/097974](https://vbipro.events/p/097974)

CHECK OUT OUR WISH TREE AND SNACK SIGN UP IN THE NARTHEX!

STUDENTS AND VOLUNTEERS REGISTER ON THE SAME SITE!

SCAN ME

Random Question with... Becki Aker, Zion School's Interventionist

What is something you did that you never thought you would?

I never expected to be charged by a rhinoceros, but it was an experience I will never forget! In 2019 my brother-in-law, Tyler, married his wife, Nadia, in her home country of South Africa. We were blessed to travel with family to South Africa for the wedding celebrations. While in South Africa we got to go on a safari! An African Safari had never been on my bucket list, but it should have been! The animals and scenery were amazing! We got to pet and feed elephants. We got to see lions, zebras, hippos, crocodiles, cheetahs, elephants, rhinos, giraffes, birds and lots of others too! The giraffes were my personal favorite. It was so cool. While on safari one day in an open-air jeep, all of a sudden a rhino started charging our vehicle at full speed! Our guide handled it well and narrowly avoided the charge! The reason for the charge? Right behind an angry mama rhino came her brand-new baby! We were the first humans to get to lay eyes on him! The African wilderness and the creatures it contained proved beyond a doubt how AMAZING God's creation is! If you ever have the opportunity to see it for yourself, I highly recommend it!



Becki in South Africa with a giraffe.

KNOWING GROWING SERVING
Christ's Way
 All funds raised support our capital campaign!

ZION BASKETBALL CAMP 2026

REGISTER NOW!
Register by May 30th for the Early Bird Registration Discount!

Join Mrs. Ryswyk and friends to develop shooting, ball handling, passing, footwork, defense, rebounding, athleticism, and other essential skills to become a great basketball player...
AND HAVE A LOT OF FUN AT THE SAME TIME!

July 6
July 7-9

Zion Lutheran Church & School

GRACE RYSWYK

Mrs. Ryswyk (formerly Ms. Weeks) played NCAA Division II basketball, competing in the Elite 8 national tournament. She has coached a variety of different age levels and Special Olympics too! This camp is a great opportunity for her to share some of her experience with our Zion students!

GRADES 3-5 <small>Only 40 Spots Available!</small> (Grade entering in the fall) July 7,8,9 9:30-11:30am	GRADES 1-2 <small>Only 40 Spots Available!</small> (Grade entering in the fall) July 7,8,9 12:30-2:00 pm	GRADES 6-8 MIDDLE SCHOOL CAMP <small>Limited to 10 participants</small> This special camp for older athletes will help our middle school athletes hone their skills! July 6 9:00am-2:00 pm (lunch included)
<div style="background-color: orange; color: white; border-radius: 50%; width: 40px; height: 40px; display: flex; align-items: center; justify-content: center; margin: 0 auto;"> \$ 100 </div>	<div style="background-color: orange; color: white; border-radius: 50%; width: 40px; height: 40px; display: flex; align-items: center; justify-content: center; margin: 0 auto;"> \$ 75 </div>	<div style="background-color: orange; color: white; border-radius: 50%; width: 40px; height: 40px; display: flex; align-items: center; justify-content: center; margin: 0 auto;"> \$ 85 </div>

All participants will receive a camp t-shirt!

Registration Form on back of the flyer!	More Information 605-342-5749	Zion Lutheran Church, School & Preschool 4550 Mt. Rushmore Rd. RC, SD 57701
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Women's Ministry

WICKS (Widows In Christ Know Salvation)

Join us for our next fellowship on Sunday, May 17, at 12:30 PM. We will meet at 1200 Range View Circle in the (Sharon Hilgemeier's community building). Bring a salad, main dish or dessert to share and your own drink.

LWML Meeting

Zion's Lutheran Women in Mission (LWML) will meet on Saturday, May 9, at 10:00 a.m. There will be devotions, Bible Study with Pastor Schulte, and a brief meeting. After that we will go the Minerva's for lunch. Reminder: we will collect Mites and the Local offerings. All women of Zion are invited to join us.

Thank you, Lorien!

National DCE (Director of Christian Education) Appreciation Day is in June, but we are going to honor Lorien Petersen on May 16/17 with a card shower!

Lorien has been with Zion for 15 years, and we would like to celebrate all the dedication and hard work she has put in with our Zion Youth and Christian Education over the years.

There will be a basket in the narthex to put cards in the first two weeks of May. Please be sure to get your card in the basket by May 16.