

A Message from Pastor Mathew

Keeping with last month's theme, I want to continue to influence our invitation culture at Zion so as to be prepared and speak to those responses we get when we invite others to worship or when others speak about the church. For this month, I'll dissect one reason I hear often and share a bit of how we can answer in a graceful inviting way rather than in a judgmental or dismissive manner (even if we don't intend to be). This one reason requires that we approach it this way.

I hear people say, "I disagree with something the church does or stands for/against." Yes, I know people who may miss church because of this and I'm glad when they are honest about it. That struggle they feel tells me something important. It tells me they are thinking, they are paying attention, and that deep down their faith matters to them. But at the same time, let me gently ask... is worship something we only attend when everything lines up? Remember, worship is meant to be formative, not a gathering of people who agree on everything. Zion is a clear example of that, if you haven't noticed. It's a gathering of people who come, together, to the foot of the cross, asking Jesus to teach us, to teach us how to love, how to listen, and how to live. That said, I would speak to someone in this way: If something has been hard for you, if you've been wrestling with what the church stands for or how to reconcile that with your personal convictions, allow me to please invite you to stay in the room, to keep coming, even when it's messy. Because staying close to Jesus, even with questions, even with disagreement, is better than walking away. The church isn't perfect. But Jesus is. And he still shows up among imperfect people, even when we don't see everything the same. The book of Ephesians urges us to walk "with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace."

There are other reasons people stay away from church. Maybe you've heard them too. I'll list a few I've been thinking about. If there is one in particular that you'd like me to address or one that is not listed here, just let me know.

"Everyone seems to have it all together and I really don't."

"Sunday is my only day to sleep in."

"I've had bad experiences with church people."

"I believe in God, but I'm just not into organized religion."

"I just got out of the habit and don't really know how to jump back in."

"My kids or grandkids would be too disruptive."

"Church doesn't make a difference for me. It's kind of boring."

It's just not my thing. I can be a Christian without it."

We need to address these barriers, if we are to see worship attendance increase. These are what we need to band together and pray over if we are to disciple people on their journey and lead them to the risen Christ.

God's peace,
Pastor Mathew

*"So everyone who
acknowledges me
before men, I also
will acknowledge
before my Father
who is in heaven."*

Matthew 10:32

OUR MISSION: WHY WE EXIST

To bring people into a covenantal relationship with the Lord (Matthew 28:19-20), and to equip them for personal growth and impact.
Ephesians 4:11-26

President's Corner by Anita Reck, COE President

"For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plans for welfare and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope."
Jeremiah 29:11

I have recently been reminded that not everyone in our congregation is aware that Zion's COE has prayerfully planned and set goals for 2025, so I am highlighting the 2025 goals:

- ✦ Increase Worship attendance: personal invitation, reach out to lapsed members, online visibility
- ✦ Holistic Health and Wellness: listening sessions, faith and fitness classes, health awareness workshops
- ✦ ConnectFor: grow participation by 25%; bring a friend campaign, family-focused service projects
- ✦ Communication: Website, standard communications, staffing
- ✦ New Resident Ministry: What does/does not bring people to church, reaching new residents where they live, getting our name out to new residents
- ✦ Financial Communication: Benevolences and mission offerings, offerings for outreach, stewardship day, member financial statements
- ✦ High School Ministry: Retention, Sunday School class, reaching more students

To move forward, continue to grow Zion, reach out to our community, and be disciples for Christ, we need people power. For instance:

Our New Resident Ministry could use someone to get the real estate transfers from the South Hills Record and make a mailing list for new resident packets.

The Increase Worship Attendance group could use a "few good people" to step in as greeters at our services to welcome visitors and say hello to our members.

ConnectFor could use help with special programming.

Communication could use someone to "market" Zion to the community through different kinds of media.

These are some examples of how you can serve Zion and help achieve these goals. If you have an interest in one of the goal areas, please let Pastor or a member of the COE know. Most of the ideas are short-term projects and do not require a long-term commitment. But these goals and ideas need people. Please prayerfully consider picking a goal and idea and helping make that a reality for Zion.



Chrismon Ornaments

In honor of Zion's 225th Anniversary, we are seeking volunteers who enjoy sewing to help us make Chrismon Ornaments to adorn our Christmas trees. If you are interested in sewing some ornaments, please contact Sherry Galland at musicministry@zicbrentwood.org and she will supply you with a pattern and materials.

Financial Message—Jon Galland, Finance Chair

We are reminded in Proverbs 3:5-6—“Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not unto your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge Him and He will direct your paths”.

These verses are very applicable here at Zion Lutheran-Brentwood. In this anniversary year let's imagine Brownsville Road as a dusty path, maybe even a wagon wheel worn grassy trail. Across the way is the future home of Slater's funeral home but right now that site houses a well known stagecoach stop, having given rest to at least two US Presidents, other dignitaries and many other weary travelers. Over these busy 225 years, Zion's surroundings have certainly changed from rural, to suburbia and to present day urban. But the message we are here to proclaim has not changed! God's promises and His Word have not changed! They remain a constant as we stay faithful to our calling.

Zion Lutheran is not our ministry. Zion Lutheran is the Lord's work, and He will always guide and lead. Yes, God provides each day as we place our full trust in Him. Just in the prior week I was asked by your Council of Elders (COE) and the Finance committee to share a ministry moment around the present financial need. The Finance committee recommended and the COE approved placing a 'snapshot' of our month to date and year to date financial results in the weekly bulletin. Presently we average approximately \$25k in receipts and \$30k in expenditures on a monthly basis. Particularly in April we had two larger checks to write, a check for \$8200 for our semi annual insurance payment and \$4100 for the storm inlet repair in the parking lot. Zion also was able to receive \$5600 in cemetery lot revenue (please see the back inside cover of your weekend bulletin for additional information). All in all, this has led to a \$16k budget deficit through April 2025.

One thing is evident and that is God is in control, and He will provide. We celebrate that God's Word is changeless and we are very blessed to share Jesus with the surrounding community. We prayerfully share this information with you and place this at the feet of Jesus. We also ask that you remember Zion while you plan your summer travels. Church work and ministry can often see some drop in financial support while congregants are away. Please remember Zion as God's work continues on in the warmer months of June, July and August!

We look to the future and anticipate how the Spirit will provide! Our God is the same as the God of Jacob! Our God is the same as the God of the Hebrew spies! Our God is the same God as who was represented as the fourth "Man" walking around the fiery furnace! Let's never tire from sharing the Great News at home and abroad! Thanks be to God!

In Our Prayers

Joshua Alukonis
David Detwiler
Mary Ann Dunlap
Corey Fischer
Zack Glenn
Casey Hirsh
George Langford
Karen Matalavage
John Reed
Glenn Ribblett
Suzanne Roberts
Sara Smerkar
July Workman

SUMMER
Worship Times
Saturday 5 PM
Sunday 9 AM

A Walk in The(ology) Park

Pastor Mathew is looking to start up a small group this summer (with a better name) every Wednesday or Thursday evening in his home. This study will take a very casual walk through some deeper Lutheran and Christian theological works. If you've wanted to take this step but were not sure how to start, this is it. Topics could include the Book of Concord as well as works by C.S. Lewis, Dietrich Bonhoeffer, and St. Augustine to name a few. If this is something that interests you, contact Pastor Mathew.

SUMMER SERMON SERIES



Beginning in June, Pastor Mathew will lead a sermon series on some of the events depicted in the stained glass windows above the sanctuary entrance. Each story can be a window through which we can look at our past, examine our present, and prepare for the future as Christ's Church here at Zion.

Cemetery Plots

One plot in Jefferson Memorial Park is still available for sale at the cost of \$800. If you are interested, contact the church office.

See Zion's Website for small group Bible Study.

JUNE BAPTISMAL BIRTHDAYS

Ryder George	June 3, 2023
Waylon Matus	June 18, 2017
Evan Schubert	June 18, 2011
Leif Galland	June 30, 2012

*If we are missing your child's baptism date, please advise the church office.

NORTH AMERICAN LUTHERAN CHURCH (NALC) CONVOCAATION

August 3-8, 2025

Omni William Penn Hotel, downtown Pittsburgh

Every 2 years, NALC gathers in convocation to worship, collaborate, and conduct its business. As this years convocation is in Pittsburgh, our Mission District is the local host.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED for NALC CONVOCAATION

As the host Mission District, we have been asked to help staff this event with volunteers. Orientation and training is provided for each role. Below are the general descriptions of volunteer positions.

Hosts: Serve as greeters and provide information to attendees; are stationed at places throughout the hotel facility to help attendees find meeting rooms, restrooms, meal area(s) and the display area.

Registration: Serve to welcome and check in attendees; includes distributing materials, nametags, voting equipment.

Display Assistants: Assist various ministries with getting materials to the display area, setting up displays and finding their way around the hotel.

Ushers: Check credentials at doors and provide information and assistance at all general sessions; serve as ushers during worship services.

First Aid/Medical Response: Individuals trained in First Aid and/or Medical Response who can provide minor first aid and/or assistance or direction in case of a medical emergency.

Camera Operators Audio/Video: Work closely with the Technology Director to operate cameras during worship or plenary sessions. Zooming, panning, focusing, and framing video shots per the director's request. A short amount of training provided. Mostly standing.

If you are available and willing to volunteer, please contact Lane Magera (lsmagera@yahoo.com) to be added to the list of volunteers.

THRIVENT DAY AT PNC PARK - JULY 27TH

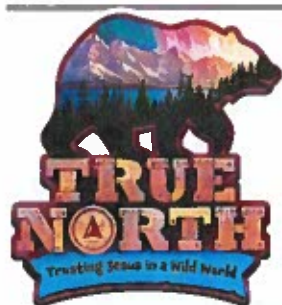
Thrivent, a Lutheran-based financial services company, is putting on a thank you event at PNC Park on Sunday July 27th. Tickets include a lunch buffet put on by Thrivent and seats to the Pirates game that afternoon. Adults are \$30. Youth 3-15yrs are \$20. Children 2 and under are free. Contact Pastor Mathew if you would like to attend.





2025 Summer Saturday Cookouts June 14 & July 12 Following worship

Sign up to help on Mealtrain:
June 14
[Mealtrain.com/83r2w2](https://mealtrain.com/83r2w2)
July 12
[Mealtrain.com/63zr8z](https://mealtrain.com/63zr8z)



VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL 2025

6/23 - 27/2025 9 AM - 12 Noon

Special Program Friday Evening

Trusting Jesus in a Wild World



Join us as we travel north to Alaska on an exciting adventure with Jesus!

Cool and fun events are planned as we build on our faith foundation and learn about this wonderful planet that God created for us. We also have a special guest visiting us this year.

Children from pre-school through 5th grade are welcome to join us. You can register by scanning the QR Code below or by calling the church office. There is no registration fee.

Adult and child (6th grade and higher) volunteers are needed. Volunteers can register using the QR Code to right.

