



### *A Message from Pastor Mathew*

We've gotten into our fall schedule at Zion. Classes are up and running. Worship attendance sees a little spike. Young families finish up summer vacations. It's a great time for ministry. But some people still don't see the benefit of worship and we don't know how to respond to this. So, in keeping of my theme for the year, my hope is to give you two more reasons why people may not come to worship and some ways that we can seek to listen, to answer, and to invite.

When asked about coming to worship I hear people say, "I just got out of the habit and don't know how to jump back in." How should we respond to this one? It's tough to make changes happen but they can happen. How about this? Tell them to start today. Life gets busy. Habits fade. But what if today could be a start to something new? Jesus is alive. He still shows up week after week. Not because we're perfect. But because He is. I've seen people one by one come back after COVID. For some it was right as we reopened. For others it was a few months later. For still others, I've seen them come back only a few weeks ago. And what I've heard pretty much each time this happens is the same thing, "Pastor, it was just time we got back." There is never a better time to start something than right now and we actually aim to hold each other accountable too. Some accountability is definitely a good thing.

I also hear people say, "Church doesn't make a difference for me. It's kind of boring." What would you say? I mean, we chase feelings all the time. Why be a part of something if it doesn't give us that feeling? And for some of us, maybe we do have good feelings about being in worship. But here's what you can say. What if church is bigger than a feeling? What if church is more than what we get, but about what we give and who we become? Church isn't a spiritual vending machine; it's a long-term place of formation. Sometimes we get something out of it, sometimes we don't. Sometimes the sermon is terrible. Trust me, I write them. I know. But church is bigger than chasing a feeling. It's about showing up for what's real. It's where the risen Jesus meets us, shapes us, and sends us. It's where we are reminded that we are loved, forgiven, and part of something bigger than a feeling.

*(Continued on page 2)*



*"Let every-  
thing that has  
breath praise  
the Lord! Praise  
the Lord!"  
Psalm 150:6*

#### **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

## *A Message from Pastor Mathew (continued from page 1)*

At the very least, for either of these reasons, consider exactly why church makes a difference for you. Talk about what excites you and what keeps you coming back. Sometimes people need to be pointed to where they might find purpose in worship. And you just might be the person to do it.

God's peace,

Pastor Mathew

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## *THE NEXT 25 by Pastor Bill (continued on page 3)*

### **Who are the Next 25 Members of Zion and Where Will They Come From?**

Sometimes, a congregation can become focused on its constitutional makeup, and internal governance issues to the near neglect of its mission, the welcoming of people to the heart of God through Jesus Christ.

This message seeks to provide a place to jump-start the action. Here are six clues about the Next 25.

1. They will come only because they are asked.
2. They will come back only if we learn what's next after hello.
3. They will join for five top reasons.
4. They will likely start coming in certain seasons.
5. They will need to hear our clear answers on their crucial questions.
6. They will tell you what their spiritual needs are, if you listen closely.



Pastor Bill &  
Bishop  
Dan Selbo  
at the NALC  
Mission  
Convocation

Let's explore these six clues:

1. **They come because they are asked.** General traffic to the building or general curiosity will not account for any first-timers. Conversely, those who make their first visit will do so because they were asked. Therefore, you already know the next 25. They are your friends, relatives, acquaintances, associates, or neighbors.
2. **What's next after hello?** Almost every church considers itself friendly. As insiders, we quickly forget how intimidating it is to attend a church for the first time and how much of a subculture each congregation creates with its traditions, local customs, and patterns of doing things. So after "hello", what do you say? Do we have a path charted that invites folks to walk with us from first time visitor to first anniversary of membership? .

## **THE NEXT 25** by Pastor Bill (Continued from page 2)

This path need not require elaborate strategizing or be highly formalized. Yet we can get much more intentional about offering pathways for folks to walk deeper into discipleship with Christ and fellowship with the body of Christ. We could think about a welcome class, spiritual gifts inventory, and small group connection. New folks need a sense of belonging born of authentic friendships.

### 3. **Five top reasons:**

- A. There's a piece missing in my life and I think its God, so that brought me to church.
- B. I have been thinking about religious matters for some time and now the time has come to follow through.
- C. My kids, and the needs of my family, are bringing me to your church door.
- D. I have a relationship with God that I know I need to nurture.
- E. The classic life passages of birth, marriage, and death bring me to reevaluate my relationships.

- 4. **Seasons of life.** In addition to the perennial Christmas and Easter times when folks are most likely to consider church attendance, and family moments of funerals and baptisms, occasions of serious life transitions, seasons of change, upheavals, and trauma may contribute to a church visit. We will soon gather to celebrate Advent and Christmas, a time of hope for the entire world. For those yet to believe, it is a time of promise. Its central theme is: "A Savior is born, who is Christ the Lord." He makes His promise of salvation real by coming in His humanity. For those who do not yet believe, we become the image of Christ for them.
- 5. **Crucial questions.** While these inquiries may seem elementary to regular church goers, new folks bring their own elemental questions. What about sins forgiven? What's the meaning and purpose of my life? Is a real relationship with God possible? Can I really have eternal life? The clarity and charity of our responses need to resonate with them. People may come the first time on the strength of our invitation. They come back on the authentic warmth of the welcome and some sense of connection with the personality and preaching/teaching of the pastoral leader. Then, a relational bridge must be built to a ministry that meets their needs as they begin to identify them.
- 6. **The gift of listening.** When a visitor gets his or her initial questions answered with some measure of satisfaction, it opens the door for their larger and deeper questions. Respectful active listening is the gift that opens this door and invites deeper spiritual connection. We honor people by listening.

Where do we begin work on a goal of the next 25 members of our church? On a personal level, it often begins with a simple daily affirmation: *"I want to live my life with such radiance and resilience that people ask the reason for such joy."* Remember Acts 4:12 and 1 Peter 3:15. Practicing this affirmation may open us to a prayer that begins a process of simply noticing people who surround our daily life. We then ask, "Lord, who in my life needs a touch of your grace? Is there a conversation I need to offer and an invitation I need to make?" It may well be that this prayer opens the door for an invitation, which is how 95% of church guests get there!

## In Our Prayers

Joshua Alukonis  
Kevin Barrett  
Matt Bracken  
Lynn Broman  
David Detwiler  
Mary Ann Dunlap  
Corey Fischer  
Zack Glenn  
Marshawna Hill  
Casey Hirsh  
George Langford  
Glenn Ribblett  
Suzanne Roberts  
Shannon Schubert  
Jim Schumacher  
Family of Joy Hepner

## OCTOBER BAPTISMAL BIRTHDAYS

Abigail Pierce	October 9, 2016
Emma Mainarich	October 11, 2009
Jayden Cleaver	October 11, 2015
Charles Eperthener	October 11, 2015
Reed Sopko	October 11, 2015
Dylan Bedont	October 18, 2015
Molly Hoffman	October 27, 2019
Kara Luy	October 28, 2012
Alex Mainarich	October 28, 2012
James Mainarich	October 28, 2012
Noah Pierce	October 28, 2018
Brandon Strycula	October 30, 2011

## Worship Times

**Saturday 5 PM**

**Sunday 9 AM**

See Zion's Website for small group Bible Study and Christian education.

## **Zion Quilters Request for School Kit Supplies**

In many parts of the world children cannot go to school unless they bring their own school supplies. The Zion Quilters have completed 100 backpacks and are in need of your help to fill these bags with the required school supplies. They are asking for monetary donations that will be used to purchase school supplies in bulk. If you are able and willing to make a donation, please indicate "SCHOOL KITS" on your envelope or check. If you prefer to purchase supplies to donate, on your own, check the list in the narthex. In October, the assembled school kits will be delivered to the LWR ingathering place. 100 students will be blessed by your donations.

# SERVANTS NEEDED

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## ALTAR GUILD

The Altar Guild serves the Lord and Zion by preparing the altar for communion each week. We are praying that the Holy Spirit will stir 3 persons' hearts to join the Altar Guild this fall to allow for training new members prior to January 1, 2026.

The Altar Guild works in teams of 2. The team decides if they want to work together for each task or divide the tasks. The rotation depends upon the number of teams. At this time, the rotation is 2 weeks out of every 8 weeks. It takes on average 1 hour to set up communion at a time/day chosen by your team, 5 minutes between services to replenish as needed and 10-15 minutes after Sunday service. On occasion the teams may be asked to set up during the week for a funeral or wedding.

If you are interested in serving on the Altar Guild or you have questions, contact Cheryl Squier @ clsquier@comcast.net or 412-913-8085 or the church office.

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## KITCHEN COORDINATOR

Starting November 1, Zion will need someone to serve as the coordinator for the Kitchen Ministry. Responsibilities include making sure there are enough helpers for any church-sponsored event, checking food inventory for expiration dates, helping, and setting up for Lenten Meals, Saturday Night Cookouts, and various other events on the church calendar. The coordinator does not need to be at all these events, but makes sure there are volunteers willing to facilitate set up and clean up activities. Responsibilities also include making sure the kitchen is neat, and all materials are in their correct places. The kitchen is currently well organized, and the coordinator is someone who can continue this particularly important task. We currently have someone who has accepted the responsibility of ordering supplies for the kitchen through the church office, but is not available many months to coordinate the overall Kitchen Ministry.

If interested, or need other questions answered, please contact Karen Stoddart or the church office.

The Ministry of Disciple Life.

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## COUNTER

One of Zion's Counters has retired after many years of dedicated service. This team counts on Sundays after worship and they are scheduled to count during the month of November. If you are interested in serving as a counter, please contact the church office.

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*"I long for nothing more earnestly than to serve  
God with all my might." ----Charles Spurgeon*



## *Amen* to **ACTION**

**November 15th 8:30 AM - 12N**

Zion has reserved 25 spots at Christ Church (UMC),  
44 Highland Road, Bethel Park, PA 15102.

If you are interested in helping pack food for your neighbors who are food insecure, please call Zion's church office. No need to register for the event personally. Please dress comfortably and plan to arrive by 8:15 AM for a brief volunteer gathering.

If you would like more information about *Amen* to **ACTION**,  
see website: <https://plf.org/a2a/>

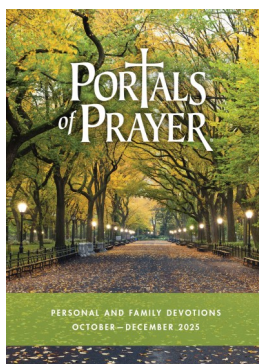
## **NALC Mid Northeast Mission District Convocation**

**October 18th 9:00 AM - 3:00 PM**

Emmanuel Lutheran Church, Export, PA  
Registration and "stuff the truck" will begin at 8:15 AM.

**Keynote Speaker: Bishop Dan Selbo**

If you are interested in attending, please contact the church office so that Zion can register as a congregation. Lunch included. Costs will be covered by Zion.



### **Portals of Prayer 4th Quarter Devotional**

Start your day, end your day or take a break in the middle of the day for personal or family devotions.

Please pick up a copy in the narthex or parking lot entryway.

*"And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near."*

*Hebrews 10:24-25 ESV*

## Photo Directory



It's time for a new photo directory and we need your help. The directory will be done in-house; no sales, no gimmicks, no pressures. Photos will be taken by a few willing photographers with digital or phone cameras in the fellowship hall after worship on Saturdays and Sundays.

During October, the photos will be taken in order of last name as listed below:

October 4 & 5	Last Names A-F
October 11 & 12	Last Names G-L
October 18 & 19	Last Names M-R
October 25 & 26	Last Names S-Z

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## Homecoming Sunday - October 26, 2025

Do you know someone who used to call Zion home but has since moved away or transitioned to a new church home? Do you know someone who you used to see but now you don't? Do you know someone you would like to invite to Zion but aren't sure how?

On Reformation Sunday (10/26/25), Zion will be hosting a Homecoming Sunday. Grab one or more invitations in the narthex or at the bottom of the stairs, write a note, and give or mail it to someone you would like to welcome to this celebration. Let's use this opportunity to show others what they mean to the Zion community and share once again in those memories of ministry that have made Zion what it is today.

### Worship 9a

**Followed by Potluck Brunch in Fellowship Hall**



### Blessing of the Beasts - October 4, 2025 - 6:30 PM

Pastor Jim Neal will be Blessing your pets in the Zion Parking Lot. In the event of rain, families will be invited to walk or drive up to the covered portico for a blessing.

