



# G RACELINES

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## Zion Lutheran Church



December 2025

### SUNDAY WORSHIP SCHEDULE

**Worship 8:30am In-Person & Live-streamed on YouTube Posted to Facebook after Worship.**

**Church Office Hours:**  
**Mon - Fri 9:00am - 1:00pm**

**Contact Zion:**

**Church Office: 235-7045  
Pastor Erika: 319-504-2630**

**Please leave a message and we'll get back to you.**

**Email Addresses:**

**Church Office:  
office.zionluthwaterloo@gmail.com**

**Pastor Erika:  
pastor.zionluthwaterloo@gmail.com**

**Web Page:**

**[www.zionluthwaterloo.com](http://www.zionluthwaterloo.com)**

**Facebook Page:**

**<https://www.facebook.com/zionluthwaterloo>**

**YouTube:**

**<https://www.youtube.com/@zionlutheranchurchwaterloo5011>**

**Zion Lutheran Church  
810 Kimball Ave  
Waterloo, IA 50702**

Dear Friends,

It is with a great deal of sadness that I write to you. I am resigning as your pastor effective December 31, 2025. My last Sunday will be December 28<sup>th</sup>.

I have accepted an invitation to serve as the Contract Interim Senior Pastor at Our Savior's Lutheran Church in Sun Prairie, WI.

I want to let you know that this has been an extremely difficult decision to make. I have come to love y'all deeply. You are truly wonderful people. Over our time together we have all grown together and changed. We've become a welcome place of laughter and joy, deepened our spirituality and awareness of God in our daily lives, and put our faith into action. We have walked together with God through all the seasons of life.

While I am proud of our accomplishments and humbled to have been your pastor, I have sensed that God is calling me to the next step in my journey of ministry and faith for some time. Changes in laws in the last year have made it increasingly difficult to be a transwoman living in Iowa. As I mentioned, this has been an extremely difficult decision to make; since beginning circulating my paperwork a year ago, I have turned down two other calls because they were not worth the price of leaving you.

When I think about our time together, I am filled with profound gratitude for you and what God has done in our midst. Melissa and I are both deeply grateful for how you have embraced us, and our family. You have shown us the love of God in many ways through your kindness, compassion, and understanding.

I have been in contact with the Assistant to the Bishop Steve Brackett of the Northeast Iowa Synod of the ELCA. As we all move forward together, they stand ready to assist in any way they can. Soon, a meeting between the Church Council and the Synod will be scheduled.

Finally, thank you for the opportunity to have served as your pastor. I will always cherish you and our time in ministry together, both as individuals and as a congregation.

God bless you.

*Pastor Erika*

# Study

## December 7

Isaiah 11:1-10  
Psalm 72:1-7, 18-19  
Romans 15:4-13  
Matthew 3:1-12

## December 14

Isaiah 35:1-10  
Psalm 146:5-10  
James 5:7-10  
Matthew 11:2-11

## December 21

Isaiah 7:10-16  
Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19  
Romans 1:1-7  
Matthew 1:18-25

## December 24

Isaiah 9:2-7  
Psalm 96  
Titus 2:11-14  
Luke 2:1-14

## December 28

Isaiah 63:7-9  
Psalm 148  
Hebrews 2:10-18  
Matthew 2:13-23

# Pray

Almighty God, you made this holy night shine with the brightness of the true Light. Grant that here on earth we may walk in the light of Jesus' presence and in the last day wake to the brightness of his glory; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.



There will be NO Sunday School on  
Sunday, December 21st,  
Sunday, December 28th and  
Sunday, January 4th due to the holidays.



The Office will be Closed on  
Thursday, January 1, 2026 and  
Friday, December 2nd, 2026 due to the holiday.

# Celebrating our Church Community

## December Birthdays

1	Randee Camarata
2	Brianne DeMaris
5	Kenneth Pike
10	Hailey Boileau
	Diane Pike
11	Noah Barnett
12	Logan Odekirk
13	Dylan Cutsforth
14	Larry Jepsen
15	Jordan Kirchhoff
16	Glee Kidder
17	Timothy Davis
18	Jeff Ketels
20	Dante DeMaris
21	Patti Harken
	Deb Ketels
22	Mike Grimson
27	Kimberly Graves
28	Isaac Graham
29	Emily Guetzlaff
30	Norma Ottesen
	Connie Stroh
31	Anthony Camarata

## Wedding Anniversaries this Month

5	Dave and Teri Hook
17	Bob and Michele Peck
28	Bill & Debra Williamson
31	Brandon & Kayla Reyes

### Happy 92nd Birthday to Norma Ottesen!!

Your Zion family wishes you a Happy Birthday on December 30th. If you'd like to send Norma a birthday card and



wish her a Happy Birthday, her contact information is:

3720 Village Place,  
Apt. 6207,  
Waterloo, IA 50702-5843.

Here is the updated address for

Kris Engelmann:

5017 Millenium,  
Cedar Falls, IA 50613  
Phone: (319) 490-1404



### Pen Pal Volunteers Needed!

Irving Elementary School is looking for Pen Pals for their classrooms. If any of our Zion members are interested, please let Mary Nicholas, Kathy Jones, or Vickie Hamilton know, and we will send your information on.



# Being the Church

Our Mission Ministry this month is:

## The Mitten Tree & The Adopt-A-Family

The Mitten Tree is up in the Coffee Area and ready for children's mittens, gloves and hats. These will be distributed at Lowell School in Waterloo during the winter months.

Lutheran Services of Iowa has referred 3 families to us this year.

Our Adopt-a-Families are here!

Pick a tag(s) on the Christmas Tree in the Coffee Area.



Please print your name on the correct family page so we know who took that tag. Please return your wrapped gift and place in the Fireside Room in the correct Family box.

Volunteer to host Coffee or bring Snacks/Treats for Fellowship following Worship on Sundays. You can find the sign-up sheets in the Fellowship Area on the bulletin board.

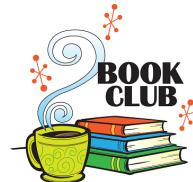


Please call the office, if you have any questions.

## Zion Book Club

Next meeting January 21st @ 9:30am.

All are welcome!



### Upcoming Dates & Books:

#### **December - NO Meeting**

Jan. 21<sup>st</sup> - "The Inmate" by Freida McFadden  
Feb. 18<sup>th</sup> - "The Bookclub for Troublesome Women" by Marie Bostwick  
Mar. 18<sup>th</sup> - "The Briar Club" by Kate Quinn

## **You are important to our church family!**

If you need prayer, or have suffered a family loss, please contact the church office at (319) 235-7045. All requests will be treated with confidentiality, and information will be forwarded appropriately.



The PRAYER TREE contacts are:

Sheila Gardiner - [gardinergarry28@gmail.com](mailto:gardinergarry28@gmail.com) (319) 291-8404,

Deb Grimson - [hrgbear@mchsi.com](mailto:hrgbear@mchsi.com) (319) 233-2179,

Kathy Jones - [kljones@mchsi.com](mailto:kljones@mchsi.com) (319) 231-4278,

and Jen Wedeking (church office) - (319) 235-7045

[office.zionluthwaterloo@gmail.com](mailto:office.zionluthwaterloo@gmail.com).



Please place items in the SHOPPING CART by the Mission Cross in the sanctuary.

We will be collecting for the NEIA Food Bank for the month of:

### **December Your Choice**



## Brown Baggers - Wednesdays at Noon

Bring your own lunch or snack (if you want) and join us for an hour or so of conversation and study of the scripture readings for the coming Sunday. Discussions are held in the Fireside Room.



## Caffeinated Conversations

Every Thursday morning from 9-11am  
Fat Cup Coffee (37 Fletcher Ave.).  
This is a time of open discussion about the church, faith, life, whatever you want.



# Being the Church

\* \* \* Notice of Zion Constitution Review \* \* \*

The ELCA has amended the Model Constitution for Congregations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and has given notice for us to make required and recommended changes to our Constitution. A requirement within the Constitution is to give at least 60 days' notice to the congregation that the Constitution will be undergoing review and edits to comply with the ELCA Model. An Ad Hoc committee will be meeting to review, contrast, and compare our current Constitution to the required changes that have been sent. The final edit of the Zion Constitution will be first sent to the Synod for approval and then brought to the Annual Congregational Meeting in February for a vote to approve.

2026  
Offering Envelopes  
coming soon!



Deadline for newsletter items  
will be **December 8th**.

Zion will be a voting poll  
for the Election on  
Tuesday, December 2nd  
from 7:00am-8:00pm.



Zion's Christmas Eve  
Candlelight  
Worship Service  
will be held on  
**Wednesday, December 24 at 5:00pm.**

If you need a ride for the Christmas Eve Service at **Zion**, the van will be available.  
Please call the office at  
(319) 235-7045 to let us know.



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St. Ansgar will have Christmas Eve  
Candlelight Worship Service at **7:00pm**.  
All are welcome!

# Supporting the Church

## FINANCIAL UPDATE (as of December 1, 2025)

<b>TOTAL OFFERING TO GENERAL FUND</b>	<b>MISSION PLAN YEAR-TO-DATE</b>	<b>ACTUAL YEAR-TO-DATE</b>
	<b>\$118,420.00</b>	<b>\$119,969.00</b>
Total General Fund Expenses	Mission Plan Year-to-Date <b>\$144,735.00</b>	Actual Year-to-Date <b>\$142,127.00</b>

### Support the Church

You may provide financial support to Zion:

- **In-person Giving**
- **By Mail**
- **Online: - Tithe.ly OR - VANCO**

### Offering Contributions

#### for November

##### November 2

Total General Fund: \$1,680.38

##### November 9

Total General Fund: \$1,810.00

##### November 16

Total General Fund: \$1,966.59

##### November 23

Total General Fund: \$1,711.97

**TOTAL OF ALL GIVING: \$7,168.94**

Council Minutes and complete Treasurer reports

are available on the bulletin board in the Coffee Area  
and in the Church Office upon request.

Serving in  
December

Sundays	7	14	21	24-Christmas Eve	28
<u>ALTAR GUILD</u>	Jackie Shatzer and Kathy Jones				
<u>VAN DRIVERS</u>	Dave Hamilton	Mike Simbric	Mike Grimson	Craig Hawker	Tim Davis
<u>LECTORS</u>	Gloria Clough	Joann Mackin	Brad Shatzer	TBD	Eleanor Meyerhoff
<u>ADVENT LECTORS</u>	Kathy Tarr, Anna & Harrison Michelson	TBD	TBD	The Jones/ Tieskoetter Families	TBD