



December 2025

GRACELINES

Zion Lutheran Church

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

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 28th.

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

Psalms 72:1-7, 18-19

Romans 15:4-13

Matthew 3:1-12

December 14

Isaiah 35:1-10

Psalms 146:5-10

James 5:7-10

Matthew 11:2-11

December 21

Isaiah 7:10-16

Psalms 80:1-7, 17-19

Romans 1:1-7

Matthew 1:18-25

December 24

Isaiah 9:2-7

Psalms 96

Titus 2:11-14

Luke 2:1-14

December 28

Isaiah 63:7-9

Psalms 148

Hebrews 2:10-18

Matthew 2:13-23



The Zion Office will be Closed on
Thursday, December 25th
and Friday, December 26th.

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



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.



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.

Metropolitan
Chorale

with guest **HARPIST ABIGAIL BROWER**
and **UNI CHAMBER MUSIC**

PRESENTS

A Ceremony of Carols
by **BENJAMIN BRITTEN**

RYAN OCCENA
ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

FEATURING ADDITIONAL FESTIVE SELECTIONS
and A CAROL SING-ALONG

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 7, 2025
AT 3:00 PM

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH
608 W 4TH ST, WATERLOO, IA 50702

TICKETS AT THE DOOR
or at WWW.MET-CHORALE.ORG

ADULTS \$15 | FAMILIES \$25
STUDENTS FREE (with ID)

Reception to Follow

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.

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 (319) 291-8404,
Deb Grimson - hrgbear@mchsi.com (319) 233-2179,
Kathy Jones - kltjones@mchsi.com (319) 231-4278,
and Jen Wedeking (church office) - (319) 235-7045
office.zionluthwaterloo@gmail.com.

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.



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



Zion Book Club

Next meeting January 21st @ 9:30am.

All are welcome!

Upcoming Dates & Books:

December - NO Meeting

Jan. 21st - "The Inmate" by Freida McFadden

Feb. 18th - "The Bookclub for Troublesome

Women" by Marie Bostwick

Mar. 18th - "The Briar Club" by Kate Quinn



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.



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)

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

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	Criag 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