

Zion Lutheran Church Board of Lay Ministry 2025 Annual Voters Report

The Board of Lay Ministry exists to serve the needs of the Congregation as a whole, the individual members of the Congregation, and the Pastors and other church workers. The Board is responsible for the church services at Zion and the well-being of the Pastors and other church workers. The Board also coordinates the activities of groups that function independently but serve an important part in the services here at Zion.

Lay Ministry Board members include: Brian Rosin, James Rath, Ken Paul, Chris Rooke, Joshua Albers, Arlan Henke, Corey Stewart, Josh Schuh, Steve Graf, Dan Johnson, Dr. John Witt, Gordon Fode, Oren Danielson, Gary Semmel, and Eric Rooke.

Worship Services provided this past year include:

- Saturday evening worship service
- Two Sunday morning worship services
- Sunday zoom worship service for Napoleon and a monthly in person communion service in Napoleon
- Touchmark chapel service 3rd Wednesday of the month and communion service the 4th Sunday of the month
- Lenten midweek worship services
- Advent midweek worship services
- Special Holiday services

Live streaming of services on YouTube and Facebook enables Zion to share God's love to those that are not able to attend in-person church service. There is a small, dedicated group that gives their time and knowledge to keep the live stream successful. This includes streaming both Sunday morning services, funerals, weddings, MLS chapel services, and special events as needed. If you are interested in becoming a member of this team, please let Pastor Marcis or Joshua Albers know.

2025 YouTube stats regarding our live stream channel

- 45 New subscribers
- 353 Total subscribers
- 84,374 minutes watched

We continue to offer a "gluten free" communion wafer alternative for communion for those who desire. We also offer an alternative option for those who deal with alcohol sensitivity. If there are other ways, we can provide accommodation for anyone with specific needs, please let a Lay Ministry member know so we can work to fulfill those needs.

Both Pastors work together to make as many shut-in visits as possible. If you are aware of anyone that is not on the shut-in list and should be, please let one of the Pastors or a member of the Lay Ministry know so they can be included as well.

Lay Ministry goals for 2025 included continuing to live stream all services along with being good stewards of Zion's finances while maintaining a high level of ministry. These goals challenged us in 2025, especially trying to live stream every service. We had our share of technical difficulties this past year along with the challenge of replacing a dedicated member that went off to college. We have been fortunate to have some new volunteers that we have been able to rely on. I cannot thank all the individuals that help with the live streaming of services enough for their dedication and commitment.

Some items in 2026 that will challenge us include

- Continuing to live stream all services
- Being good stewards of Zion's finances while maintaining a high level of ministry
- Working through the process of calling Zion's next senior pastor
- Striving to have greeters at each Sunday service

Live Nativity continued with its one-day format this past year. It was a very well received and attended outreach event that continues to exceed expectations. A large thank you to Dana and Kristin for helping promote and advertise the event. The Nativity had many volunteers that selflessly gave their time and talents to make the event a huge success. It also included a soup/chili cookoff as well as a dessert bakeoff. Although we did not get an official head count, we estimate 350-400 people attended the Live Nativity this past year. It is our hope that this event will continue to spread God's love and Gospel to the community for years to come.

We are so blessed here at Zion to have many members enhance our worship services. We greatly appreciate those who help with flowers, candles, special music, running computer screens, live streaming services, counting and recording offerings, ushers, acolytes, greeters and all other individuals that we don't see that make worship services run smoothly each week. I would like to personally thank all of you who contribute your time and talents to Zion. It is greatly appreciated.

Respectfully submitted
Joshua Albers

ZION LUTHERAN CHURCH

January 1 to December 31, 2025

BAPTISMS – 17 souls

Frank Albert Winder, son of Dewey Winder, Jr. & Brittany Roe	1/11/25
Clark Dale Kuntz, son of Lucas Kuntz & Brittany Roe	1/11/25
Makenna Jean Roe, daughter of James Roe & Summer Desjarlais	1/11/25
Lydea Moon Pudwill, daughter of Logan Pudwill & Charish Hoss	1/11/25
August Xavier Aranpatzis, son of Tony & Olivia (Brown) Aranpatzis	3/22/25
Gideon James Wolf, son of Dylan & Ashley (Hauf) Wolf	5/04/25
Anastasia Joy Otto, daughter of Pastor Vincent & Dana (Simpkin) Otto	5/25/25
Zelda Elizabeth Dorfschmidt, daughter of Christopher & Kathrin (Rosin) Dorfschmidt	5/28/25
Logan Zachary Herrmann, son of Christopher & Sandra (Zelko) Herrmann	6/12/25
Weston James Lueder, son of Danniele Lueder	6/14/25
Beaudon Stanley Grubb, son of Jason & Amanda (Thorpe) Grubb	6/26/25
Adam Aurelius Walker-Hull, son of Sarah Walker-Hull & Matthew Hull	7/05/25
Ethan Alexander Walker-Hull, son of Sarah Walker-Hull & Matthew Hull	7/05/25
Paizley Jean Sauer, daughter of Stetson Sauer & Kadence Steele	12/07/25
Cooper Lee Hovda, son of Brandon & Tara (Wilkins) Hovda	12/14/25
Aurora Katherine Nyla Ross, daughter of Robert & Karisa (Kemnitz) Ross	12/14/25
Bryxlee Rali Leingang, daughter of Dylan & Miranda (Billman) Leingang	12/20/25

JUNIOR CONFIRMATION (1st Communion – 10/27/24) – 9 Communicants 5/04/25

Korra Grace Albers – John 10:27	Evan Neis Granlie – Philippians 4:13	Isaiah Travis Rau – Isaiah 40:31
Aria Rose Bornemann – Psalm 119:105	Tate Edward Johnson – Ephesians 2:8-9	Avery Fae Reule – Hebrews 10:23
Benjamin Jacob Brandt – Jeremiah 29:11	Austin Jerome Miller – Matthew 28:18-20	Reese Morgan Spomer – Psalm 46:1

ADULT BAPTISM – 1 soul

Lucas James Kuntz	1/11/25
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ADULT CONFIRMATION – 2 communicants

Jake Younker	3/26/25
Steve Mayer	4/24/25

TRANSFER IN – 11 souls, 9 communicants

Elaine & Ryker Feland, Rosalie Erdmann from Bethel Lutheran Church, Bismarck, ND	3/18/25
Laura Lueder from Bethel Lutheran Church, Bismarck, ND	6/05/25
Danniele Lueder & Weston from Bethel Lutheran Church, Bismarck, ND	6/05/25
Adam Elletson from Bethel Lutheran Church, Bismarck, ND	6/05/25
Ashley Hauf Wolf from St. Matthew Lutheran Church, Max, ND	9/15/25
Dylan Elletson from St. John Lutheran Church, Fairview, MT	10/21/25
Barbara & Steve Reski from King of Kings Lutheran Church, Round Rock, TX	10/21/25

PROFESSION OF FAITH – 6 souls, 4 communicants

Francis & Linda Waldner from Lord of Life Lutheran Church, Bismarck, ND	3/18/25
Adam, Aspen, Alijah & Alora from Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, Bismarck, ND	9/15/25

TRANSFER OUT – 2 souls, 2 communicants

Zechariah Moon to Family of Christ, Colorado Springs, CO 2/17/25
Heidi Sabot to St. Martin Lutheran Church, Anamoose, ND 9/15/25

RELEASED – 9 souls, 7 communicants

Sara & David Tabor, Kyle & Ava to Glencoe Sloane, Hazelton, ND 2/17/25
Andrew Bargmann to Inspire Family Fellowship, Bismarck, ND 4/15/25
Allison Bargmann to Inspire Family Fellowship, Bismarck, ND 5/20/25
Dean & Karen Shilman to Trinity Lutheran Church, Bismarck, ND 5/20/25
Micah Schlittenhardt 5/20/25

FUNERALS – 10 souls, 10 communicants

Sherry Ell (1/05/25) No Funeral
Sheldon Loftsgard (1/26/25) 2/01/25
Gerald Schauer (2/9/25) *Prior Member* 2/25/25
Robert Babcock (4/18/25) 4/26/25
Othelia Schiermeister (6/1/25) 6/09/25
Mark Orth (6/8/25) 6/16/25
Jeanette Albers (6/28/25) 7/09/25
Michael Daffinrud (7/25/25) 8/01/25
LaVerne Stroh (10/3/25) 10/09/25
Dale Coleman (10/31/25) 11/07/25

WEDDINGS

Adam Elletson & JaeLyn Lardy 11/01/25
Daniel Mickelson & Han Gao 11/21/25

TOTAL MEMBERSHIP: 1103 Souls, 880 Communicants

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Zion's mission statement is "The mission of Zion Lutheran Church is to spread the Gospel of Jesus Christ to all people through Word and Sacrament; encouraging and supporting one another as a fellowship of believers.

In late 2023 the voters established the priorities of the three-year Ministry Expansion Campaign as 1) Pay off the loan, 2) Replace the HVAC, and 3) Replace the parking lot. The loan was paid off, the parking lot was replaced, and the HVAC project is nearly complete. Commitments are greater than originally pledged and nearly fulfilled. Even with the generous gifts from the campaign, general offerings are up. This is all totally amazing. Thanks be to God.

Revisions are proposed to the manual. Most of the revisions pertain to employee policies. The revisions will help provide clarity for staff. A new employee handbook would replace the employee policy section of the manual if the voters approve the proposed changes to the manual.

Looking forward, Zion has many opportunities to grow in faith and fervent love toward one another. Zion has a unique opportunity this coming year to consider moving toward policy-based governance. This type of governance could help Zion grow for the furtherment of God's Kingdom. Keep Zion's leadership, staff, and congregation in your prayers as we work together in God's Kingdom.

James Rath
President

Vice President's Report Darrin Anderson

Our Mission: The mission of Zion Lutheran Church is *to spread the Gospel of Jesus Christ to all people through Word and Sacrament, encouraging and supporting one another as a fellowship of believers.*

Our Values: Zion is committed to living out the values of the gospel of Jesus Christ: to love God, love others, and share the good news of Jesus Christ.

In alignment with Zion's mission and Values, Zion Lutheran Church has been actively supporting ministries both locally and beyond. Locally supported ministries include Martin Lutheran School, Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch, Zion's Little Free Pantry, Women's Care Center, Disaster Response, Orphan Grain Train, and others. Beyond Bismarck, Zion has supported mission opportunities to Mexico and Ukraine, along with disaster response trips to storm-damaged states.

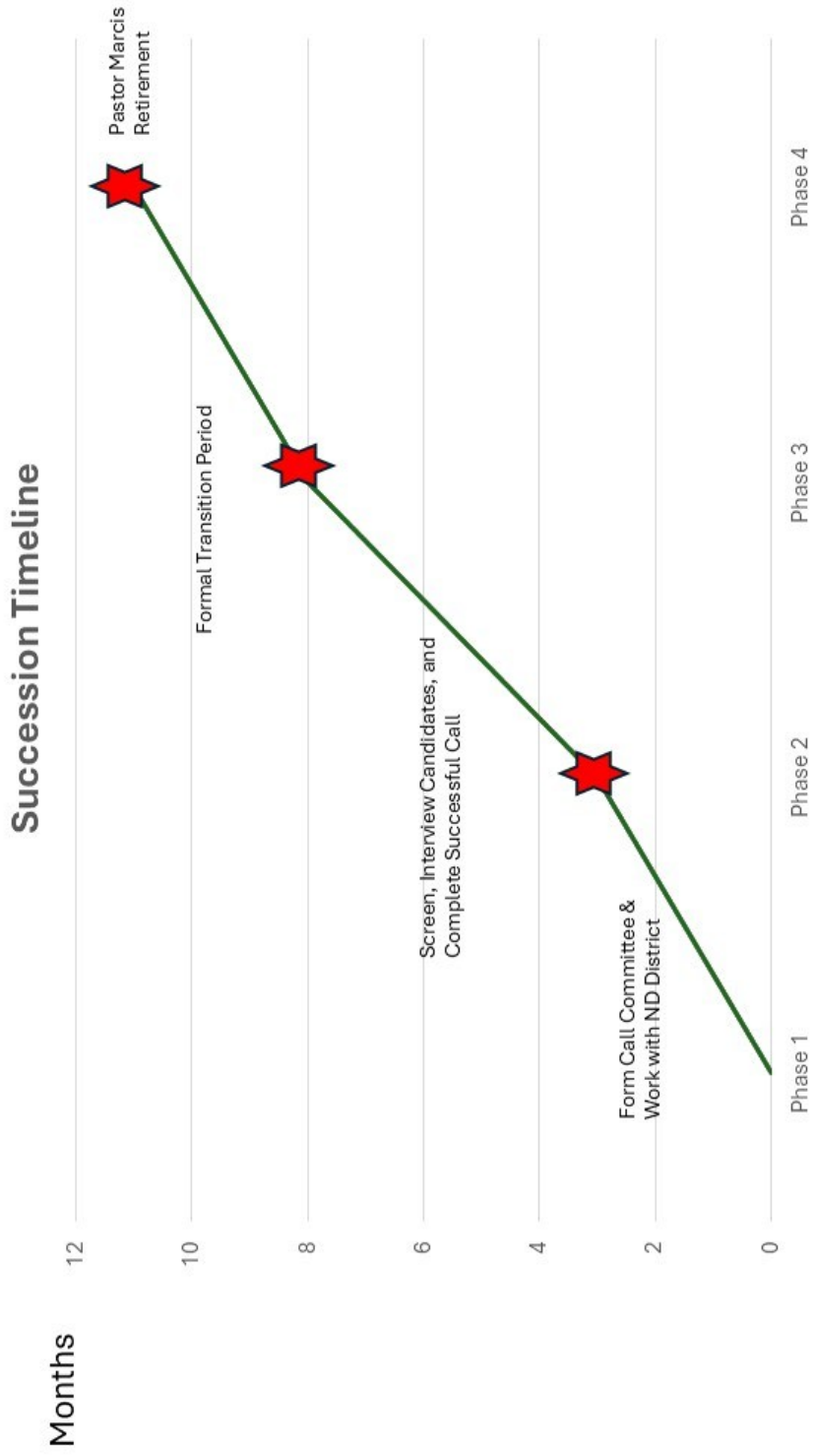
Members continue to show their support for Zion's Mission and Values through their ongoing strong support for the "Tell the Next Generation" campaign.

As Vice President, my responsibilities included assisting the President with enforcing Zion's constitution and bylaws and carrying out the will of Zion's voting members. Additionally, I chair Zion Council meetings, coordinating activities of the Boards, discussing issues that arise, and participating in recommendations to the voters. Zion's leadership (the Pastors, James, Joshua, and me) meets weekly to discuss various issues related to Zion's ministry.

This past year, we have worked on updating Zion's Manual, contracted with Pastor (retired) Mark Zehnder to assist our transition to a new Senior Pastor, completed a Church Narrative of Zion, drafted a transition timeline for the incoming Senior Pastor, and are looking into Policy-Based Governance. With regards to Policy-Based Governance, right now, individuals who are accountable do not always have authority. Policy-Based Governance shifts things so that individuals/staff who are accountable can more readily make decisions. This allows staff to be less restricted about making decision as issues/problems come up. Council would be more like a Board of Directors to set guidelines and plans. We continue to look at the pros and cons of Policy-Based Governance, and should it be determined that Policy-Based Governance would be beneficial for Zion, it would then be recommended that Zion implement this before we get a new pastor.

To be certain, Zion looks to have a very busy 2026. Upcoming events this year include forming a Call Committee, screening and interviewing candidates, and preparing for 2027 where we anticipate extending a call.

If you have suggestions for other ways we can encourage and support each other as a fellowship of believers, please talk to a board member, a board chair, James, Joshua, the Pastors, or me. We are all here to serve Zion.



Treasurer's Report

Financial status as of and for the year ended December 31, 2025

General Operating Funds:

As of December 31, 2025 Zion's checking account balance (General Operating Funds) was \$2,526 which is a decrease of \$33,900 for the year. When the checking account balance is below \$0 we use temporary loans from Non-restricted / Dedicated funds, to cover the negative balance. The non-dedicated Memorials fund and the Building Improvements fund have been used. You can see that on the next page.

Income:

2025 General offerings were \$679,379 which is \$29,379 over our budgeted amount and a \$39,050 increase from 2024. Miscellaneous income was \$76,704. Martin Luther School receipts for shared expenses was \$36,487. Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch receipts were \$31,542. Total income was \$756,134 about a \$40,714 increase over total income in 2024.

Expenses:

2025 expenses of \$789,636 were \$21,621 under our budgeted amount and about \$13,396 over 2024 expenditures. As can be expected our largest expense is Salaries and Benefits which amounted to about \$490,043. \$109,616 of our expenditures were Mission payments. We spend about \$38,000 on gas and electricity.

Dedicated Funds:

The savings account or Dedicated Funds balance increased by about \$770,000. The fund did have a lot of activity. The Ministry Expansion Campaign has received hundreds of thousands of dollars which paid down the mortgage and covered parking lot and HVAC expenditures. In 2025 we received two large estate gifts, Krien and Laub. The balance of \$650,000 will be held until all HVAC bills are paid.

Other:

In January 2025 we paid off the mortgage with funds from our campaign and the Krein Trust. Funds borrowed from the Krein Trust will be repaid with commitments that come in.

Acknowledgement:

Gayle and I would like to thank John Shell for his much needed assistance with the financial statements. He came to our rescue more than once when we could not balance the accounts. His knowledge and volunteering efforts can assure us these financial statements are accurate.

Fred Ehrhardt – Treasurer

FINANCIAL SUMMARY

12/31/2025

Checking Account Balance	2,526
Dedicated Funds Balance	1,092,302

Non-Restricted Funds Available	Current	
	SS Balance	Available
Less loan to checking - Memorials	\$ 7,880	\$ 7,880
Less loan to checking - Building Improvements	\$ 10,119	\$ 10,119
Dedicated Accounts Balance	\$ -	\$ 17,998

LCEF Line of Credit	Borrowed	Available	Monthly Interest Payment
\$80,000 Authorized	0	80,000.00	0
Effective 8/19/19			

YTD through December

	2025	2024	2023	2022	2021
General Offerings YTD	679,379	640,329	622,739	577,676	600,329
Misc Income	76,705	211,002	77,946	98,567	68,824
Debt Retirement & Bldg Off	50	275	26,060	9,150	7220
Total Income YTD	756,134	851,606	726,745	685,393	676,373
Total Expenses YTD	792,625	774,169	738,042	713,547	703,861
Income Less Expense	(36,491)	77,437	(11,297)	(28,154)	(27,488)

For the Month of December

	2025	2024	2023	2022	2021
General Offerings YTD	71,828	86,488	71,631	72,285	78,111
Misc Income	5129.2	4822.28	8098.66	32110.51	10593.44
Debt Retirement & Bldg Off	0	25	25	25	450
Total Income	76,958	91,335	79,754	104,420	89,154
Total Expenses	91,653	83,727	73,868	82,607	72,897
Net	(14,695)	7,608	5,886	21,813	16,257

*Minor (less than \$4) discrepancies on totals from original reports due to rounding.

2025 Zion Lutheran Church Annual Stewardship Committee Report

2 Corinthians 4:7-10

[7] But we have this treasure in jars of clay, to show that the surpassing power belongs to God and not to us. [8] We are afflicted in every way but not crushed; perplexed, but not driven to despair; [9] persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed; [10] always carrying in the body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our bodies. (ESV)

Greetings in the name of our Lord of Life- Jesus!

I was asked to prayerfully consider taking over as Stewardship Chair at Zion in May 2025. Due to other commitments, I was unable to fully take over the committee until September.

Here are some Highlights from last year...

Due to the success of the Capital Campaign-“Go Tell the Next Generation”, our congregation was able to “burn” the Mortgage to the church this fall.

We had two small groups participate in the Red-Letter Giving Challenge by Pastor Zach Zehnder and had up to 20 individuals participate in a small group setting and another 30 individuals and families participate in their homes by purchasing the book.

We have started the Process of updating the Church Directory ensuring that we have correct information of Zion Members and frequent guests. We are in the process of partnering with Adult Ministries to get a Zion Congregation Picture Directory going in advance of a new Senior Pastor arriving later in 2026.

We also partnered with Adult Ministries as well to promote a Financial Peace University Class for families, couples, and individuals to learn biblical principles of budgeting, saving, handling of debt, as well as giving principals. Sadly, due to promoting during the “Holiday Season” late November through early January we were unable to move forward due to lack of commitments. We plan to work with the staff and committees to come up with new dates/times in 2026.

Our 1% Stewardship Benevolence was equally divided in 2025 between The Dream Center of Bismarck, Sheperd’s Hills at the Crossroads ND Bible Camp, and Spiritual Life at Dakota Boys & Girls Ranch.

2026 Goals for Stewardship are:

Partnering with Adult ministries on the Congregation Picture Directory

Partnering with Adult ministries on offering and implementing a Financial Peace University class for our congregation and other LCMS congregations in our community.

Partnering with Adult ministries and church staff to provide some opportunities for members to get involved with service opportunities in our community to share time, talents, and treasure with others to make Christ known!

Expand small group opportunities for Red-Letter Challenges.

Our committee has chosen to do a Quarterly Emphasis for the 1% Stewardship Benevolence. Quarter One- The Dream Center of Bismarck, Quarter Two- Shepherd's Hills at the Crossroads Bible Camp, Quarter Three- Spiritual Life at Dakota Boys & Girls Ranch, and Quarter Four- The Dream Center of Bismarck.

Our Current Committee Members Are:

Brad Christensen

Renae Daffenrud

Paula Peters

Kerry Horton

Pat Sebastian

And You?? We are looking to add at least one more person- Please prayerfully consider!

Respectfully Submitted,

Brad Christensen, Zion Stewardship Board Chair

Tell the Next Generation UPDATE -- 12/31/25

Original Goal	\$	1,275,000	
Original Commitments	\$	986,824	
Non Commitment Funds	\$	47,306	
Additional 2025 Commitments	\$	<u>134,120</u>	
	\$	1,168,250	
Original Commitment Funds Received	\$	897,495	
Non Commitment Funds Received	\$	47,306	
Additional Commitments Received	\$	<u>125,620</u>	
Total Funds Received	\$	1,070,421	91.63%
Commitments in Process	\$	82,617	7.07%
Est. Unfulfilled Commitments	\$	36,175	3.10%

Accomplishments of the **Properties Board in 2025:**

- The HVAC system for Sanctuary was replaced.
- Updated phone system. New system is now leased from MIDCO and is voice over IP.
- Two additional security cameras were installed. One overlooking the north entrance from inside and the other viewing the north-south hallway by school office.
- Replaced lighting in the schools kindergarten room. Removed fluorescent type fixtures and replaced with LED type.
- Replaced fluorescent lamps with LED type in the 5th and 7th grade classrooms. The fixture remained; fixture was rewired to accommodate LED type bulbs.
- Removed the large elm tree from school playground. It had a disease called European slime.
- Replace rotted landscape timbers in school playground.
- Snow removal.
- Lawn mowing and weed spraying.
- Elevator was inspected by Otis Elevator company.
- Had Church and School sanitary sewer lines cleaned by Roto Rooter.
- Updated Martin Luther School MOU – memorandum of understanding. This is for the schools use of building and spells out what Martin Luther pays Zion.
- Rerouted downspout on east side of Church to eliminate water getting into youth room.

Goals of the Properties Board for 2026:

- Stay within budgets when maintaining/repairing Church and School properties.
- Add two security cameras. One inside at the south entrance and second down hallway by school office.
- Oversee replacement of shingles on sanctuary roof.
- Change out fluorescent lamps to LED in at two school classrooms.
- Have school roof inspected and leaks repaired. Roof currently leaks into school's boy's bathroom and adjacent utility room.
- Kitchen faucet replacement.
- School bathrooms, replace sink countertops.
- Boys school bathroom, replace toilet surround and urinal dividers.

Ken Paul – Properties Chairman

January Voters Meeting 2026
Board of Youth Family Ministry
Current Board Members:

Sarah Zainhofsky-Co-Chair, Jennifer Zacher – Co-Chair
Lindsay LaMontagne, Fae Glass, Donna Davidson, Kirstin Johnson
Russ Weixel -Advisory Member, Kristin Nistler – Advisory Member

Goals consistently met in 2025:

1. To continue providing fundraising opportunities for our youth and chaperones for events and activities.
2. To continue to support growth in the middle and high school youth group by assisting with fellowship & relationship building.
3. To physically, financially, and spiritually support the educational programs at Zion and Martin Luther School including Sunday School, Confirmation, Bible Studies, Youth Group, King's Kids and more.

Goals that pushed us in 2025:

1. To foster and encourage whole-family participation in the "Living the Faith" podcasts and studies, and other church-wide initiatives.
2. To emphasize programs provided for younger children, for example Vacation Bible School, Sunday School and Bible camps.
3. The board members strived to contact and connect with each Zion family (with kids in programs) with a weekly email to remind them of upcoming activities and ask for prayer requests.

Goals to consistently meet in 2026:

1. To continue providing fundraising opportunities for our youth and chaperones for events and activities.
2. To continue to support growth in the middle and high school youth group by assisting with fellowship & relationship building.
3. To physically, financially, and spiritually support the educational programs at Zion and Martin Luther School including Sunday School, Confirmation, Bible Studies, Youth Group, King's Kids and more.

Goals that will push us in 2026:

1. Find ways to engage a "plugged in" generation of youth and past young adults (in college and careers) in faith activities. Find creative ways to build relationships with our youth by looking at online ways to engage in participation (Apps, Podcast, Zoom calls, etc.)
2. To foster and encourage whole-family participation in spiritual studies, and other church-wide initiatives such as "Tell the Next Generation" Campaign.
3. To emphasize programs provided for younger children, for example Vacation Bible School, Sunday School, and Bible camps.
4. The board members strived to contact and connect with each Zion family (with kids in programs) with weekly emails to remind them of upcoming activities and ask for prayer requests.

Annual Report from Director of Family Ministry

Goals met consistently in 2025

- To continue delegating responsibilities for educational programming & activities so more leaders are involved and willing to be a part of the activities at Zion.
- To continue to support the BYFM & BAFM with fellowship and learning activities, such as: Bible Camps, King's Kids, Sunday School, VBS, confirmation, youth group, servant and fellowship events, overnight trips, marriage retreats, parent studies, adult fellowship & relationship building.
- To intentionally build relationships with Zion families by reaching out to them personally at least once per quarter.
- To assist youth & families to spend time in God's Word together.
- To continue to provide relevant, appropriate topics and Bible studies for the youth and adults at Zion.

Goals that pushed me in 2025

- To attend a national family ministry conference, or leadership conference in order to strengthen and build our family ministry programs and church family.
- To increase Sunday School attendance.
- Taking students to the LCMS Youth Gathering in New Orleans, LA, as well as being the ND district coordinator.
- To involve families together at Zion in worship, Word, and service.

Goals to meet consistently in 2026

- To continue delegating responsibilities for educational programming & activities so more leaders are involved and willing to be a part of the activities at Zion.
- To continue to support the BYFM & BAFM with fellowship and learning activities, such as: Bible Camps, King's Kids, Sunday School, VBS, confirmation, youth group, servant and fellowship events, overnight trips, marriage retreats, parent studies, adult fellowship & relationship building.
- To intentionally build relationships with Zion families by reaching out to them personally at least once per quarter.
- To continue to provide relevant, appropriate topics and Bible studies for the youth and adults at Zion.

Goals that will push me in 2026

- **Increase and stabilize Sunday School attendance and family involvement on Sunday mornings and throughout the week.**
- **To encourage relationship building within the congregation, specifically connecting youth and children to older generations through programs like Confirmation mentorship.**
- **To increase focus on Biblical literacy for all ages at Zion. This includes looking up Bible passages and increasing familiarity of Bible accounts.**
- **I'd like to attend a youth or family ministry conference and bring back ideas to try at Zion.**

Kristin Nistler - Director of Family Ministry

ANNUAL REPORT – 2025
DIRECTOR OF JUNIOR YOUTH MINISTRY

Yearly events of 2025

- Interacted with 4th-8th graders by phone, text or post cards.
- Attended as many youth events and extra-curricular activities as possible.
- Assisted with Vacation Bible School where needed.
- Chaperoned summer camp at Shepherd's Hill at the Crossroads.
- Assisted with the potato fundraiser.
- Planned 2 lock-ins, one in the spring and one in the fall.
- Assisted with Mercy Meals.

Challenges/Accomplishments in 2025

- Traveled on a mission trip in North Carolina (camp) and in Florida(families).
- Attended youth events at various times throughout the week.
- Worked with contractors to facilitate some needed improvements in the church.
 - Contacted Bauer plumbing when needed.
 - Worked with Rafter Electric on a few electrical needs.
 - Assisted with updates/remodel to youth room.
 - Helped tear out lights in kindergarten classroom to have new LED lights installed.
 - Emptied the boiler room and shed into the POD for HVAC replacement.
 - Assisted with fans to keep church cool over summer.
 - Assisted Barbee Carpet Cleaning in getting the carpets cleaned.
 - Maintained equipment and stocked cleaning supplies.
 - Continued to set up and tear down tables for funerals/events.
 - Assisted with clean-up of youth room after heavy rain caused minor issues.
 - Supervised and maintained inspections on safety equipment in the church.
 - Assisted with Live Nativity-soup/dessert day!!
 - Became LERT certified. (Lutheran Early Response Team)

Goals of 2026

- Continue to build relationships with youth and their families, both personal and spiritual.
- Continue to show God's love and support through events and activities.
- Assist with the Board of Youth Family Ministry.
- Continue to maintain building and help to make improvements throughout the church.

Challenges of 2026

- To offer events or Bible Studies that youth want to attend in their busy lives.
- To Balance all the responsibilities or job duties I have between youth and church properties.
- How to grow in job duties.

Submitted: RUSS WEIXEL Director Junior Youth Ministry

Junior Youth Ministry Annual Events



2 lock-ins



**Mission Trip—
North Carolina**



Mission Trip— Florida

Choir con-



**Musical
Wizard of Oz**



B-MLSA Annual Report to Zion 2026

The Bismarck-Mandan Lutheran School Association, B-MLSA and known as Martin Luther School, celebrated its 30th anniversary as an elementary school this past year, under the leadership of Principal Denise Wolfgram. We are serving 98 students at Zion, including 76 in grades K-8 and 22 full-time PK students. Ten students are enrolled in the PT PK class held at SOTV. Student numbers are down by a total of 16 students compared to last year, with the greatest number noted in the PK and Kindergarten classes. Similarly, this same population had a lower student count in the public school system. One 9th grade student who is remotely attending Wittenberg College attends from the Zion location, however, is not a MLS student. The Board has begun looking at long-term plans to grow the school. The school continues to offer before and after school care for students who attend here at Zion.

The B-MLSA continues to invite Holy Cross into our association's membership. Although we've not yet been successful, we again have a Holy Cross member on the Board as an At-Large member.

Two teachers were out on medical leave at the school beginning of the school term. Substitute teachers with teaching experience at MLS graciously helped meet the need during these vacancies.

Tuition and fees for the 26-27 academic year will have a slight increase to help accommodate for increased costs, as have also been seen elsewhere. MLS continues to maintain fees below other private schools in the state. Our association's churches provide tuition assistance to students from their respective congregations who wish to attend MLS.

Tuition and fees only cover a portion of the school's teaching and operating costs. Member congregations are our largest contributors. Mayfest has been the greatest annual fundraising school event and has helped sustain the school expenses over the summer when no tuition or regular income is received. The Board has tried to keep the number of fundraising events to a minimum. Donations are always welcomed.

The school has hired a full-time custodian, who provides for the janitorial needs for both the school and Zion. In the past, MLS had two part-time custodians and Zion had one. Expenses for this position are shared with Zion. Principal Denise Wolfgram and leadership from MLS and Zion met to update our annual MOU which delineates responsibilities for each organization and determines shared expenses for the upcoming year.

Board members assist with operations of the school by serving on a committee(s). Committees include administrative, financial, and marketing/planning. We also volunteer to help meet other school needs.

Martin Luther School Board officers and members:

President: Chris Kleven – Bethel

Vice President: Wendy Buck – Bethel

Secretary: Kaelee Rhoden – Messiah

Treasurer: Evelyn Orth – Zion

Pastoral Advisor: Rev Woodside- Bethel & SOTV

Roxanne Rosin – Zion

Lisa Bjergaard - SOTV

Thomas Wyatt – Messiah

Lee Roath - SOTV

At-Large member: Noelyn Meckle – Holy Cross

Respectfully submitted,

Evelyn Orth and Roxanne Rosin

**Zion Lutheran Foundation
Annual Voters' Meeting Report for 2025**

The purpose of the foundation is to hold gifts in perpetuity or to work as a conduit for members, former members, prospective members, corporations, organizations or from any other source to accept charitable contributions of assets of all types. The assets shall be managed, sold or utilized for the benefit of the church's religious, charitable or educational activities. Gifts may be given for specific purposes or may be made without specific designation.

The foundation board meets the wishes of the donors specifically. Whether they are to place the assets in an endowment for the earnings to be given to and shared by students studying for professional church work or clergy scholarships; or church needs; or to direct the principal to fund scholarships and other church needs or activities.

The foundation didn't have any requests for assistance in 2025.

The majority of our funds are invested in certificate of deposits with various terms. All of our current funds are designated to use the earning from the investments towards education assistance.

The foundation does plan to continue to provide assistance to new and approved obligations. Look at all options available to get the maximum secure return on the money entrusted to the foundation. We will work to promote contributions by Zion members and pursue contributions of sister churches in Bismarck-Mandan and surrounding area.

Gerry Pfau
Chair

Zion Lutheran Church Endowment Fund Council Annual Report – 2025

The Endowment Fund Council (EF Council) was established in 2025 by the Zion Lutheran Church Voters in accordance with our church manual. The purpose of the EF Council is to act as faithful stewards of monetary or other gifts donated to Zion. The committee members were elected to staggering terms in accordance with the Zion Manual.

Dan Johnson, 5-year term
Pastor Mark Christensen, 4-year term
Dr. John Witt, 3-year term
Melody Hintz-Rau, 2-year term
Joshua Albers, 1-year term

In 2025, the EF Council was successful in transferring the monetary portion of the estate donated to Zion by George and Doris Krein into an investment account administered by LCMS Foundation. The Krein Estate also included a quarter of land which was sold to John and Bryce Melhoff – the current renter and his son.

In 2026, our goals include overseeing continued growth of the endowment fund through investment gains, dividends, and interest income. The EF Council will continue to make recommendations to the congregation for fund uses related to missions, building projects, and other needs of the church.

Dan Johnson
Chair

**Zion Lutheran Church
Endowment Fund
Financial Activity for 2025**

Original Deposit	\$ 2,000,000
Dividend & Interest Income	\$ 39,165
Administrative Fees	<u>\$ (2,253)</u>
Balance December 31, 2025	\$ 2,036,912

SUMMARY OF PROPOSED CHANGES To ZION's MANUAL - January 2026

1. Policy for church employees.
 - a. Ministry staff and support staff defined.
 - b. Ministry staff follow District Guidelines.
 - c. Full time and part time definition.
 - d. Further defined information relating to exempt and nonexempt employees.
 - e. When benefits apply.
 - f. Staff allowed to carry over 10 days of unused vacation time each year.
 - g. Vacation time for support staff defined to match ministry staff.
 - h. 10% of accrued sick leave payable upon separation from Zion.
 - i. Further definition when sick leave and funeral leave can be taken.
 - j. Flexibility for ministry staff to take time off when working on certain holidays.
 - k. Travel – Defines compensation when in travel. Includes explanation of travel required by Zion and travel requested by an employee.

2. Removed position descriptions.
 - a. Attorney said position descriptions should not be in the manual. He said they should be in the Staff's personnel file.
 - b. Senior pastor to meet annually with staff to review position descriptions.

3. Reporting
 - a. All staff are supervised by the Senior Pastor.
 - b. The Senior Pastor reports to the Chair of the Board of Lay Ministry.

4. Review period updated for pastors.

5. Attorney creating an employee manual. He said the employee policies should not be in the manual. Using St. Matthew as a template.

6. Other manual changes
 - Moved inactive groups such as LLL and LWML to the appendix.
 - President to appoint committee's as needed to update/review the constitution, bylaws, manual, and employee handbook. President to provide recommendations to church council regarding constitution, bylaws, and manual. President to make recommendations to the Board of Lay Ministry regarding the employee handbook.
 - Updated mission and values to match website.

Evaluation form created. Evaluations to be conducted annually by the Senior Pastor for all staff. Chair of Board of Lay Ministry to conduct evaluation for Senior Pastor.

Zion Lutheran Church
2026 Proposed Operating Budget

	2025 Budget	12/31/2025 Actual	2026 Budget
Income			
<i>General Offerings</i>	\$ 650,000	\$ 679,379	\$ 705,000
<i>Other Income</i>			
MLS	36,960	36,488	39,780
Dakota Boys Ranch Reimbursement	34,410	31,543	34,410
Other	2,700	8,724	2,100
<i>Total Other Income</i>	<u>74,070</u>	<u>76,755</u>	<u>76,290</u>
Total Income	\$ 724,070	\$ 756,134	\$ 781,290
Expenditures			
<i>Church Properties</i>			
Utilities	44,500	37,869	43,800
Mortgage	-	3,223	-
Property Insurance	15,500	18,053	17,100
Property Tax (specials)	10,500	10,279	10,300
Classroom Light conversion to LED	1,000	-	1,000
Other	34,163	31,408	36,700
<i>Total Church Properties</i>	<u>105,663</u>	<u>100,832</u>	<u>108,900</u>
<i>Personnel Expenses</i>			
Staff Salaries, Housing	341,035	333,254	368,419
Health Care	95,779	94,575	99,203
Pension & Disability	35,608	34,165	29,679
Other related	31,726	31,048	35,331
<i>Total Personnel</i>	<u>504,148</u>	<u>493,042</u>	<u>532,632</u>
<i>Stewardship</i>			
10% District	65,000	68,510	70,500
5% Martin Luther School	32,500	34,255	35,250
1% Other Local Mission	6,500	6,851	7,050
Other Stewardship Expenses	3,000	2,710	3,500
<i>Total Stewardship Expenses</i>	<u>107,000</u>	<u>112,326</u>	<u>116,300</u>
<i>Spiritual Growth</i>	20,700	17,569	21,550
<i>Office Expenses</i>	37,250	39,252	43,450
<i>Youth Family Ministry</i>	29,900	20,710	29,900
<i>Adult Family Ministry</i>	7,650	8,894	10,600
<i>Total Ministry/Office Expenses</i>	<u>95,500</u>	<u>86,425</u>	<u>105,500</u>
Total Expenses	\$ 812,311	\$ 792,625	\$ 863,332
Net Operating Income/Expense	\$ (88,241)	\$ (36,491)	\$ (82,042)