

ZION LUTHERAN CHURCH & PRESCHOOL



JULY
2026

ECHO

**101 South Railway
Mascoutah, IL 62258**

PASTOR:

- Rev. Joel A. C. Dietrich
Email: revdietrich@aol.com or
Pastor@ZionMascoutah.org

MUSIC DIRECTORS:

- Josh & Nancy Peterson

PRESCHOOL DIRECTOR:

- Vikki Harms
Email: zionpreschool
director2020@gmail.com

CHURCH SECRETARY:

- Robin Phillips
Email: churchoffice@
zionmascoutah.org

Church: 618-566-7345

Fax: 618-566-9519

Website:

www.ZionMascoutah.org

Find us at @ZionMascoutah on
Facebook, X, and Instagram



**A Congregation
of The
Lutheran Church
Missouri Synod**

Mission Statement: "Zion is God's family of faith in Christ serving our communities, our country, and our world".

Humor

Freedom rings...
especially when the church bell volunteer oversleeps.

Who was the greatest comedian in the Bible?
Samson — he brought the house down.

Why did the tomato turn red at the church potluck?
Because it saw the salad dressing.

Why did the kids love VBS so much?
Because they got to sing loudly without being told to quiet down.

Why did Noah make a great VBS teacher?
He already had experience with crowd control.

From the Pastor

Remembering the Cost of Freedom

"For freedom Christ has set us free; stand firm therefore, and do not submit again to a yoke of slavery." (Galatians 5:1)

As July arrives, Americans once again celebrate the birth of our nation and give thanks for the many freedoms we enjoy. This year carries added significance as our nation celebrates its 250th anniversary. Such milestones provide an opportunity not only for celebration but also for reflection.

The freedoms we enjoy today did not come cheaply. Men and women sacrificed greatly so that future generations could live in a nation where citizens might speak freely, gather freely, and worship freely. Many left homes and families. Many endured hardship. Some gave their lives. The liberties we often take for granted were purchased at a tremendous cost by those who came before us.

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As Lutherans, we have another heritage worth remembering.

The pure Gospel that we hear proclaimed each Sunday was likewise preserved through sacrifice. During the Reformation, Martin Luther and countless faithful Christians risked their livelihoods, reputations, and even their lives so that God's people might hear the truth that sinners are justified by grace alone, through faith alone, in Christ alone. The Scriptures were translated, taught, preached, and defended despite fierce opposition. Many suffered greatly so that future generations could hear the saving message of Jesus Christ.

Closer to home, we remember the Saxon Lutherans who left Germany seeking the freedom to practice and confess the Christian faith according to God's Word and the Lutheran Confessions. Their journey was difficult and uncertain. They crossed an ocean, endured disease, hardship, and loss, and eventually settled in Perry County, Missouri. Through their faithfulness, sacrifice, and God's gracious providence, the foundation was laid for what would become the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod. Their goal was not comfort or convenience. Their desire was that future generations would continue to receive the pure preaching of the Gospel and the faithful administration of the Sacraments.

What a tremendous inheritance we have received!

Yet we must also confess that we do not always treasure these gifts as we should. We often neglect opportunities to gather around God's Word. We sometimes take worship for granted. We enjoy the blessings handed down to us while forgetting the sacrifices that made them possible. Most importantly, we fail to give thanks to the Lord from whom every good gift comes. This July, as flags wave and fireworks light the sky, let us remember those who have gone before us. Let us thank God for faithful citizens who secured the liberties we enjoy. Let us thank God for faithful Christians who preserved and passed down the saving Gospel of Jesus Christ. And let us not merely remember their sacrifices. Let us take up the mantle they have handed to us.

May we be faithful Americans who use our freedoms responsibly and gratefully. May we be faithful Lutherans who gladly hear God's Word, receive His gifts, confess His truth, and support the work of His Church. And may we share these blessings with our children, grandchildren, neighbors, and community so that future generations may also know both the freedoms of this nation and the eternal freedom won for us by Christ our Lord.

For while earthly freedoms are precious, the greatest freedom of all is the one secured by Jesus through His death and resurrection—the freedom from sin, death, and the devil. This freedom can never be taken away, for it is ours through faith in Him.

To God alone be the glory alone.

-Pastor Dietrich



This past May, the Youth Group made homeless bags for their service project. These are made for the people in our community who need just a bit of basic help. We had some chips and a devotion lead by Pastor.



**Youth
Group**



To celebrate the 250th birthday of the USA, the choir will be singing "The Battle Hymn of the Republic" on Sunday, July 5th. Warm-up will be at 9:45 AM in the basement fellowship hall. Come join us!



Membership Changes

Baptisms:

Transfer In:

July is a popular month for vacations, family trips, and time away from our regular routines. While we enjoy rest and recreation, it is important to remember that our relationship with God does not take a vacation. Take God with you as you travel!

Whether traveling across the country or spending quiet days at home, we can continue to seek God's presence each day. Even when being away from home, this can be as simple as remembering to say grace before eating, Bible readings, having reminder conversations that God has created a wonderful world to experience, and saying bedtime prayers.

We have traveled with a group that each morning uses the intercom on the bus to read from the Portals of Prayer booklet. What a neat way to start the day as a group of Christians traveling together. Vacations provide a wonderful opportunity to appreciate God's creation, spend meaningful time with loved ones, and reflect on these blessings.

As you travel this summer, may God grant you safety, refreshment, and joy. May your time away renew not only your body and mind but also your spirit, drawing you closer to the Lord who is with us wherever we go.

Psalm 121:8 (NIV) *"The Lord will watch over your coming and going both now and forevermore."*

Your Elder, Dale Wehmeyer

ELDER'S CORNER

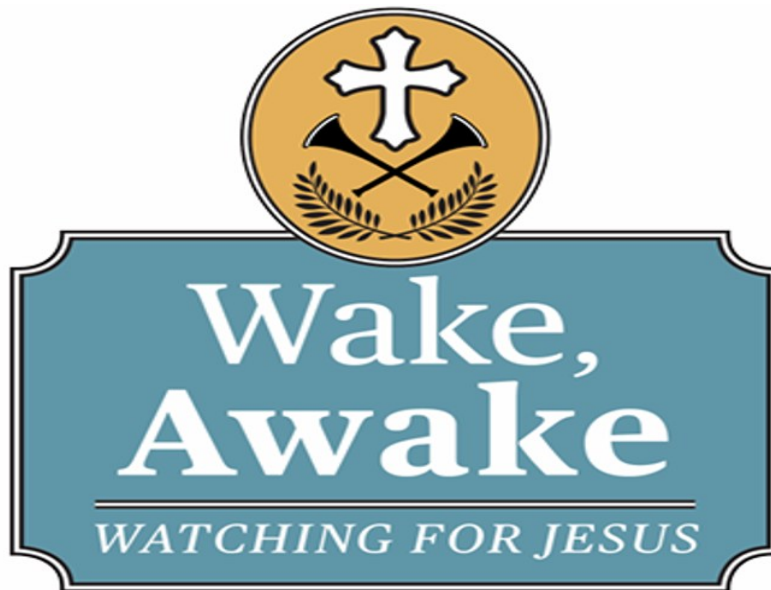
PRESCHOOL

Happy Summer everyone! I hope everyone is having a fun summer and staying cool in the heat. We are having a wonderful summer here at Zion Preschool with our first annual Preschool Summer Camp! It is wonderful to hear the little voices as I work in my office. It reminds me of all the sounds I am blessed to hear throughout the school year. I cannot wait to see all our returning Zion Preschool families and meet the many new families that will be joining us this year.

We do still have a few spots available in our 3-year-old preschool class for the upcoming school year. In addition to our preschool classes, we have our PMO program which is open to all children ages 2 to 5 years old. This is a great play with a purpose program as it is a gentle introduction to preschool. PMO meets twice a month on Fridays. If you or someone you know is interested in more information you can contact me at zionpreschoolmascoutah@gmail.com.

Currently enrolled families will receive information in August regarding the beginning of school. May God bless everyone with a fun and safe summer!

God Bless, Vikki Harms, Preschool Director



◆ HYMN VBS ◆

ZION VBS 2026 JULY 20-24

Registration is now LIVE!

**Follow the link below to register each child to attend Zion's VBS,
July 20-24, 5:30-8pm. For More information, contact the BOE.**
Registration forms are available by request for those without access.

**[HTTPS://VBSMATE.COM/EVENTS/
ZIONMASCOUTAHVBS2026/32394#LOCATION](https://vbsmate.com/events/zionmascoutahvbs2026/32394#LOCATION)**

~Offering Ushers~

Please review the schedule below. If you're unable to serve on your assigned date, kindly let one of the Elders know as soon as possible. Thank you for your faithful service!

July 5	Tom, Lee, Tyler, & Ryan Hinton
July 12	Jean Kemezys, Debbie Heck, Bob & Karen Eldridge
July 19	Frank & Jenn Jeffries, Ken & Laurie Knutson
July 26	Mark, Mary Kay, Matt & Mackenzie Krausz



stewardship

Go ... Sell All You Have?

Originally published July 2023

“What must I do to inherit eternal life?” asked the rich young ruler. Jesus said, “You know the commandments.” And he replied, “All these I have kept from my youth.” And Jesus said to him, “One thing you still lack. Sell all that you have and distribute to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow me” (Luke 18:18–22).

When we hear this story, this question comes to mind: is Jesus speaking to us also, or only to the rich young ruler? In other words, is Jesus telling us to sell all that we have and give it to the poor?

As good Lutherans, we answer, “No!” But why? Why should we not sell all that we have and distribute it to the poor? The simplest explanation is this: if we sold everything we have, our wife and our children would be neglected. In other words, to sell everything we have and give it to the poor would ignore, even abandon, those whom God has placed in our care. Our money, everything we have, is not to be used solely for the church. But that doesn’t excuse us from using our money for the purpose God intends.

Everyone has three stations in life, three spheres in which we live and are to be of service to our neighbors. These stations are the church, the family and society. We are members of all three of these by birth. We are born into the church by water and the Word of God, and our duties to others in the church arise from our Baptism into the church. We are born into a family, and our duties to others stem from our birth into that family. Finally, we are born into society, which is simply a further extension of our birth into our family. The duties we have toward other members of society come from either our own birth or the birth of others into the same society.

All that we have and all that we are ought to be pressed into service for the church, the family and society. If we were to sell all we have and give only to one, the other two would be neglected, and we would falter in fulfilling our duties.

So, consider your life and all that you have in light of these three stations. You pay taxes to support and help those in society. You save for college for your children, and provide food, clothing and shelter for the members of your family.

But the station that is usually thought of last is the church. Since the needs of the family and society are more immediate, the church is often given what is left over. This is not how it should be. Rather, we are to give of our first fruits, from off the top, the best, even as Abel gave the best of his flock.

This requires forethought. It means that you sit down and make a plan of what you will give from the beginning. It means sticking to it even when it seems that there are other more immediate and pressing things.

And this is all the more necessary now as we enter into periods of time where giving is low due to high unemployment or where restrictions on meeting in church limit opportunities to give. If we love God and His gifts of forgiveness given through the Means of Grace, which we receive at church and only at church, then we will support it, just as we love our country and our family. For all that we have and all that we are is given to us by our gracious God. He spared no expense for us and our salvation. He gave up His Son to death so that our sins are forgiven, and we will live. What’s more, He provides for all that we need for this body and life. And our lives in this world, among these three spheres of church, family and society are to mirror the generosity of the one who gave us life in all three at birth.

Don’t let the church, your divine family, be an afterthought or even ignored. It is nurturing you, bringing you up in salvation through Word and Sacrament.

??? Who Do I Contact ???

ADULT NEW MEMBER/INSTRUCTION

Pastor Dietrich

ALTAR GUILD

Lita Timmerman

BOARD OF EDUCATION

Cary Robinson

Alicia Dietrich

Jenn Jeffries

BOARD OF FINANCE

Cheryl Sax

Ken Frey

Karen Eldridge

CHURCH BUSINESS

President — Randy Thomsen

V. President — Jeff Fick

CONFIRMATION CLASSES

Pastor Dietrich

EVANGELISM QUESTIONS

Bessie Fick

Tom Sax, Elder

LADIES AID/LWML

Pinky Ahner

MEN'S CLUB

Ray Kemezys

Joe Crismon

MUSIC

Choir/Organ- Josh & Nancy Peterson

PRAYER CHAIN

Prayer requests - Contact Church Office

To be added to prayer chain please

contact Pastor Dietrich at

Pastor @ZionMascoutah.org

PRESCHOOL

Director - Vikki Harms

SOCIAL MEDIA

Kayla Hollenkamp

kayla_hollenkamp@hotmail.com

SOCIAL MINISTRY QUESTIONS

Pastor Dietrich

Tony Lara, Elder

SPIRITUAL CONCERNS/QUESTIONS

Pastor Dietrich

Board of Elders:

A-G: Ray Kemezys

H-L: Tony Lara

M-R: Tom Sax

S-Z: Dale Wehmeyer

STEWARDSHIP QUESTIONS

Ray Kemezys, Elder

SUNDAY SCHOOL

Superintendent— Mark Krausz

Assistant Superintendent—

Marianne McDaniel

THRIVENT

Lionel Timmerman

Glenda Pike

TRUSTEES/BLDG. MAINTENANCE

Trustees@ZionMascoutah.com

Andy Sax

Gail Frey

Frank Jeffries

WORSHIP QUESTIONS

Pastor Dietrich

Dale Wehmeyer, Elder

YOUTH GROUP

Kris Huth

Jen Lara

Marianne McDaniel

Rhea Sax



LUTHERAN HOUR MINISTRIES

www.lhm.org

July 5, 2026

"Bloom Where You're Planted"

Lutheran Hour Speaker:

Rev. Dr. Michael Zeigler

Blessing, in a Biblical sense, means God's favor in any circumstance, no exceptions, because there is no place or circumstance in which God does not belong.

Genesis 39:21

July 12, 2026

"Knight, Death, and the Devil"

Lutheran Hour Speaker:

Rev. Dr. Michael Zeigler

Jesus has triumphed over all the powers of death and hell and He has pledged Himself to be your protector and the armor that you wear. Ephesians 6:12

July 19, 2026

"From Groans to Glory"

Guest Speaker: Rev. Dr. Glenn Nielsen

A day will come when the grief will end, the groans will be silenced. Jesus will return and the dead in Christ will arise with bodies glorified. Romans 8: 21-27

July 26, 2026

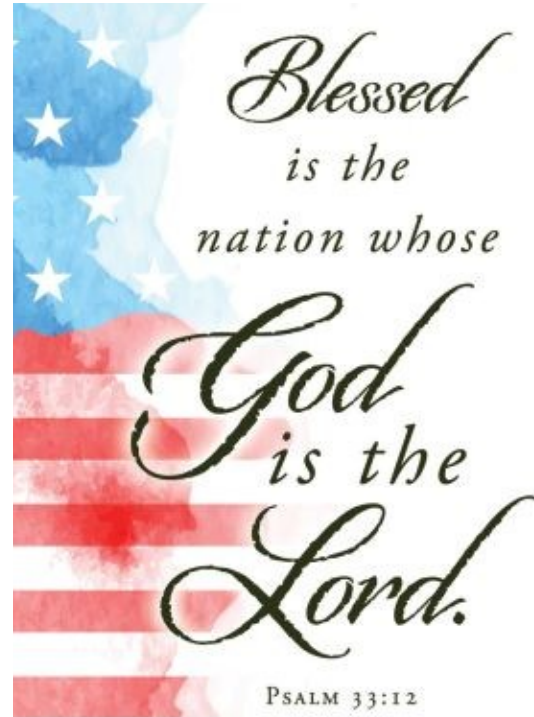
"Worth the Wait"

Lutheran Hour Speaker:

Rev. Dr. Michael Zeigler

The certainty that Jesus offers is not theological or experimental. It's the certainty of a promise, of a secure relationship.

Matthew 13:44



BIRTHDAYS

07/04 Aidan Bloomquist
 07/04 Mollie Wagner
 07/06 Alex Tubbs
 07/09 Jennifer Biebel
 07/09 Mike Twenhafel
 07/10 Eliza Timmerman
 07/11 Hadley Sax
 07/12 Ava Sax
 07/11 Lita Timmerman
 07/12 Alan Kneschke
 07/13 Laura Duffie
 07/14 Amanda Taylor
 07/14 Brianna Clark
 07/14 Connor Hatcher
 07/15 Jenny Lorton
 07/15 Joyce Linn
 07/16 Parker Roehrig
 07/19 Ryan Hinton
 07/19 Helen Sauerhage
 07/21 Austin Murphy
 07/21 Temple Linnertz
 07/21 Kennedy Underwood
 07/22 Cheryl Sax
 07/22 Joyce Hendrix
 07/23 Edward Linn
 07/23 Gabriel Lockwood
 07/24 Angie Twenhafel
 07/25 Nathaniel Clayton
 07/25 James Rehfeldt
 07/28 Earl Linnertz
 07/29 Sherrie Knutson
 07/31 Beth Twenhafel

July

WEDDING ANNIVERSARIES

07/03 Rev. Joel & Alicia Dietrich
 07/07 Brad & Melissa Kohnen
 07/07 Joe & Katie Crismon
 07/11 Tommy & Marsha Baro
 07/16 Dale & Lisa Wehmeyer
 07/17 Torri & Alicia Suedmeyer

Flowers

- 5 LaVonne Evers, in celebration of Dan's Birthday and in celebration of Independence Day.
- 12 Kemezys, in celebration of Amanda's birthday and the Timmermans, in celebration of Eliza's birthday.

19

26

BAPTISMAL ANNIVERSARIES

07/01 Michael Ganey
 07/01 Rylan Ganey
 07/01 Chris Hatcher
 07/02 Madelyn Krausz
 07/06 Alex Tubbs
 07/07 Courtney Pike
 07/11 Miles Krausz
 07/11 Lita Timmerman
 07/14 Mollie Wagner
 07/15 Hope Biebel
 07/16 Jerry Phillips
 07/17 Alana Fanous
 07/20 Zachary Hinrichs
 07/25 Shea Suedmeyer
 07/25 Payton Barnard
 07/25 Adrianna Biebel
 07/25 Nathaniel Clayton
 07/26 Joyce Hendrix
 07/27 Mike Twenhafel

Altar Guild Schedule

- 12 Dawn & Phoebe Corey
- 26 Gail Frey



LWML LUNCHEON
JULY 16TH, 11:30 AM

Lunch at Bandana's BBQ
 Fairview Heights



**Council Meeting Minutes
Zion Lutheran Church
June 4, 2026**

Meeting called to order at 6:01 pm (Randy Thomsen)

Opening devotion and prayer (Pastor Dietrich)

Roll Call: Pastor Dietrich, Jeff Fick, Laurie Fournie, Lee Hinton, Cary Robinson, Cheryl Sax, Randy Thomsen.

Pastor's Report: (Pastor Dietrich)

●**Word and Sacrament Ministry and Pastoral Care and Member Visitation**

- Since our Voter's Meeting Word and Sacrament ministry has continued in our Worship setting. I led our worship service at Brightly yesterday, June 3. We had 5 wonderful ladies in attendance. They have expressed a desire to worship in person at Zion if possible. We discussed the van that Brightly has (and has previously told us no without further explanation) as well as the S. Clair Flyer. We have had no members hospitalized (to my knowledge) in the past month. I have had multiple phone calls with members for various needs as well.

●**Teaching and Christian Education**

- Confirmation instruction for our 7th and 8th grade students has finished until we resume in fall.
- Adult Bible Study has been handed over to Joe Bloomquist as I lead the Senior Youth study on Sunday mornings. We are studying Worship: why we worship the way we do. Attendance unfortunately has been up and down during this time. We have families going on vacation, summer sports leagues, and children that want extra sleep in the morning.
- The College Zoom Bible Study has ended with the school year. We are trying to plan some in person activities with our college students once they are all home from finals.
- Preschool has finished for the year.
- VBS is coming up in July.
- Summer Sunday School will begin the 14th of June. We need to encourage our families to bring their children to Sunday School and Worship.
- Higher Things is the week of June 23-26.

●**Outreach and Evangelism**

- Outreach efforts have focused on welcoming visitors, encouraging faithful participation in worship, and maintaining connections with members who have been absent.
- We continue to seek opportunities to strengthen both congregational engagement and community outreach. We are looking forward to our "Christ for the Nations" meal this Sunday June 7 following the worship service. We will host Rev. German Novelli from the Lutheran Hour who will preach as well as Alice Decker, a member of the Dominican Task Force, who will update us on the work at the Lutheran Seminary in the Dominican. We will have a door offering the next two Sundays in support of Mission work.

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●**Community and School Ministry**

- I have suggested our Men's Group host a Men's Steak Night in the future. We would invite a speaker to lead on a manly topic and use this as an opportunity to invite men from within the congregation that haven't participated with our Men's Group as well as Preschool fathers and grandfathers. I would also like to start a Muffins for Moms with devotion for our preschool moms/grandmas next school year.

●**Ministry Planning**

- Friendship Sunday and Rally Day will be a combined effort taking place the Sunday before Labor Day Weekend. This year the date is Sunday, August 30.

●**Thanksgiving**

- I give thanks to God for the faithful service of our council members, officers, teachers, volunteers, and staff, and for the continued work of the Gospel among us at Zion Lutheran Church.

Board of Finance Report: (Cheryl Sax)

- Budget YTD: \$138,160.00
- Actual YTD: \$116,750.13

Treasurer's Report: (Laurie Fournie)

- First Federal Savings Bank: \$39,925.48
- First Federal Savings Bank-Money Market: \$90,853.86
- Edward Jones: \$78,086.22
- General Fund: \$68,891.89
- Several accounts with small balances were consolidated into larger existing accounts to simplify financial management.
- Discussion was held regarding the Preschool Rehab account and options for clearing it, including the possible use of Memorial fund monies.
- Request to conduct an audit before the end of Laurie's term.

MMSP to approve Treasurer's Report.

Board of Education Report: (Cary Robinson)

- The Board of Christian Education did not meet in the month of May. Our next meeting is on June 25th at 6:30pm.

●**Preschool**

- No Report Submitted; Preschool ended May 14th with an End of Year Program. Enrollment for new year continues. Preschool summer camp registration continues; Camp begins soon if enough participants register.

●**Sunday School, Youth Group & Adult Bible Study**

- Superintendent – Mark Krausz:
 - In May 2026, Sunday School collected \$236, 200 for the monthly, 25% of May was \$59 allotted for the Mission Project.
- Youth – No report.
 - Preparation for Higher Things continues.
- Adult Bible Study – Randy Thomsen:
 - The Monday evening adult Bible study group concluded the Convention Bible study on May 18th. They will be on hiatus through the summer.

Continued from previous page.

•Board News/Activities

- VBS planning continues. Our first “Team VBS” organizational meeting/lunch was held on May 17th; 17 volunteers attended. “Wake, Awake” VBS will be held July 20-24, 5:30-8pm. Registration for VBS will begin on-line starting this weekend. VBS will be advertised at the Mascoutah July 4th Celebration at the Zion food booth. We still need more helpers/volunteers for success; please encourage more to volunteer to help. Please also pray for God to work through Zion in ministry to children. The next “Team VBS” meeting is on June 10th at 6:30pm.
- Planning for other BOE activities is being put on hold while we plan/lead VBS since we didn’t get a volunteer leader. We have some ideas for outreach and in-reach as our short-range (2-3 year) goals; however, we are not finished with these. We still plan to hold the Annual “Fall Fest” in mid-October and help with the Annual Children’s Christmas Program. Plans for “new” Bible Studies in the fall are also in the works.

Board of Elders Report: (Tom Sax)

- Some additional names have been added to the delete list.
- Still working on the contract for the Petersons.

Board of Trustee’s Report: (Cheryl Sax)

•Completed work:

- More limbs removed from parsonage.
- Parsonage fence repaired.
- Several church lights have been replaced (trustees will discuss the current light bulb usage at next meeting).
- Light switches in cry room and bathroom replaced.
- Toilet off of cry room in process of being repaired.
- Met with preschool custodian and explained that we are allowing preschool staff to hire custodian for coming school year.
- Continue to purchase supplies through Robin in church office.
- Basement tile floor waxed.
- Educational building gutters cleaned out.

•Unfinished Work:

- Waiting for third bid for parsonage roof (goal for 2026).
- New concrete pad at east entrance of educational building.
- Tile on staircase to choir loft missing/loose tiles.
- Still have east light out on educational building.
- Pastor’s shower door.
- Sidewalk on north side of parsonage to be replaced by city.

President’s Report: (Randy Thomsen)

- Arranged meeting with Pastor for June 8th.
- Contact Synod regarding Presidential voting materials.
 - Due to a registration error, Zion will not be voting in the Presidential election of the Synod. However, both of the nominees the congregation submitted for Synod President are on the final slate of five candidates.
- Reminder to all boards: 3-year goals are to be submitted at the July Council Meeting.

Continued from previous page.

Old Business:

- Property update: A temporary orange fence will be put up around existing foundation once the house is moved.
- A new stand for the Christ Candle is currently being constructed using wood that matches the altar and will provide improved stability.
- Zion Congregational Constitution and Bylaws submitted to Southern Illinois District for review and approval. Continue to monitor.
- Voters' Assembly Membership/Participation: Secretary will go through sign-in sheets for the last 3-4 Voter's meeting to see who have participated in a means to clean up the Voter's list.

New Business:

- None

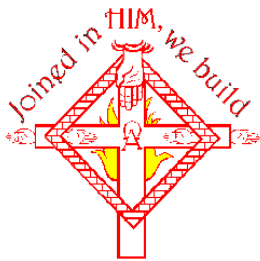
Next Council Meeting July 9, 2026, 6:00 pm.

MMSP to adjourn at 7:04 pm.

Closed with the Lord's Prayer

Lee Hinton
Council Secretary





Zion Lutheran Church
101 S. Railway
Mascoutah, IL 62258

BIBLE STUDY

Sunday 8:45 AM

**SUNDAY SCHOOL &
YOUTH BIBLE CLASS**

Sunday 8:45 AM

WORSHIP SERVICES

Sunday 10:00 AM

CONFIRMATION CLASSES

Sunday 8:30 AM

Wednesday 6:00 PM

Address Service Requested

Worship Topics This Month

July 5 — Sixth Sunday after Pentecost—Matthew 11:25-30

July 12 — Seventh Sunday after Pentecost—Matthew 13:1-9, 18-23

July 19 — Eighth Sunday after Pentecost—Matthew 13:24-30, 36-43

July 26 — Ninth Sunday after Pentecost—Matthew 13:44-52

Please join us in worship to hear more about the Good News!