



Good News from Zion

Connecting People with God's Grace

August 2026

A Message from Pastor Kat

Inspired Investment

At the beginning of each calendar year, Zion's Council adopts a goal to advance and grow the ministry of our congregation. In 2026, Council's goal has been to encourage you, the members and friends of Zion, to consider investing in Zion's ministry in a new way – through your participation and offering of gifts. The hope is that this goal might encourage any of you who feel uncertain about how to offer your gifts to take just one step towards becoming more involved in our community of faith.

When we set our goal, we wanted to be clear of our approach. Below are three of our guiding principles:

A Warm Invitation: "You're Enough!"

Sometimes, we doubt that we have what it takes to be a leader in the church, but, as a council, we want to encourage you to take confidence that you are enough just as you are to take the next step towards deeper engagement in our community.

Engagement with Grace: "Imperfect is Okay."

When we try new things, our first attempt is seldom perfect! The council wants you to feel welcome to dip your toe into a new role or a new ministry, knowing it's okay to make mistakes and learn as you go. We're here to support you and cheer you on!

Inspired Investment: "Give back God's gift."

Why do we give? We give, because God first gave to us so generously – our lives, our salvation, and everything we have. We want your offerings to come from a place of gratitude and desire to give back what you first received from God.

Kick Off the Program Year with Us!

In August, many of us are already looking ahead to the fall. Here at Zion, this means the beginning of our program year and weekly faith formation on Sundays. Please save the date of **Sunday, September 13th** on your calendars when we will kick off our program year on Rally Day with a Ministry Fair for the whole congregation. The ministry fair will include fun activities, prizes, as well as opportunities to take your next step of inspired investment in Zion's ministry. Please join us!

I pray that this coming month you will take time to remember all of the ways that God has blessed you and consider how this might be calling you to give back to your community of faith and the wider world.

In Christ,
Pastor Kat

Church Council Highlights

The Church Council did not meet in July. The next meeting is scheduled for 7 p.m. on Thursday, August 20th. Meetings are open for all to attend.



Sunday School News

SAVE THE DATES! On August 23rd at 9:30 a.m. worship, we will have **Back-to-School Sunday** to bless backpacks, commission our Sunday School volunteers, and present bibles to Sunday School students. On September 13th, we will kick off the Sunday School year with **Rally Day**. Classes will be held during 9:30 a.m. worship at the CEB, with children being dismissed to their classrooms following the Children's Time.

Community 5K Fun Run/Walk — September 12th

The sixth annual 5K Fun Run/Walk benefitting the Good News Home for Women is just around the corner. Between now and Saturday September 12th, you have plenty of time to break in those new running shoes and get ready for this fun-filled family event.



The 5K course takes you through our beautiful Oldwick neighborhood and surrounding rolling farmlands. Pre-race snacks and a light lunch following the run will be provided for all participants. The event/race will start at 10:00 a.m. in the CEB parking lot. This is a wonderful way to show our support and have an opportunity for fellowship with our friends from the Good News Home.

More details will be coming as the day gets closer, but for now, please add the date to your calendar. A volunteer sign-up sheet will be coming in mid-August, as help will be needed with signing in participants, getting pre-race snacks prepped, and making sure post-race lunch is ready. Thank you for your support of this important ministry.

Getting to Know Zion's New Director of Music

We are excited to welcome BJ Kim and his family to Zion! BJ's first Sunday with us will be September 6th. Here are five fun facts he'd like to share with us as we get to know him.

1. K-Pop & Coding: He develops software applications that actually use musical rhythms and tunes to help people learn languages — combining his two big passions, music and coding.



2. Passionate Food Researcher: He is a huge foodie! From American and Korean to Italian and French, he loves exploring diverse cuisines. For him, cooking isn't just about eating; it's about experiencing different cultures. His wife EJ, along with their children Dana and Hajun, serve as his official (and free!) taste-testing committee.



3. Film Buff: BJ absolutely loves movies—especially the discussions that happen after watching them. A few of his all-time favorites are “Life of Pi”, “Roma”, and “Parasite”.

4. Coast-to-Coast Foodie Map: The Kim family's journey in life and music has taken them from Seoul to NYC, Illinois, and now to New Jersey. Thanks to this, he has built a very personal, curated list of the best food spots across multiple states.

5. The "Shake Shack" Origin & Nickname: EJ and BJ met for the first time at a Shake Shack Burger in NYC. That place holds such a special memory for them that Dana's nickname was actually "Shack Shack" for a while!



Youth & Family Ministry at Zion

by Jaime VanNostrand

Wash Your Worries Away — Adapted from “Family Faith Every Day “

Adults often look at the life of a child and think how nice it must be to be so care free. We often remind children, “Wait until you are in the real world!” The truth is, though, children do live in the real world—their world. And a child is faced with any number of anxieties on a daily basis. This ceremony allows children to express their worries in the presence and safety of a caring adult and then have a moment to ceremonially “wash them away” and call on the Holy Spirit to carry them away.

Designed for Ages 4+

Materials

Chalk, bucket with sponges (or a garden hose), sidewalk or driveway. (See variations for options if you don’t have access to these kinds of spaces.)

Time Investment: 10–30 minutes

How To

- When your child or teen comes to you with concern or worry, ask if he or she would like to do an exercise with you to “wash your worries away.” If the child says yes, grab your chalk and head outside!
- Tell your child that you’ll take some time to write (or draw) your worries out on the driveway together. It’s important that the adult do this activity with the child so that the child doesn’t feel singled out.
- When you are both finished writing or drawing, make some time to share your concerns with each other. Make it clear to your child that they only have to share if they want to! It’s okay to simply write or draw your worry without explaining it further.
- Together, fill a bucket with water and find sponges, or get out the garden hose.
- Wash away your chalk drawings with the sponges or the garden hose. As you do, say, “Holy Spirit, we give you our worries and fears. Please carry them away and give us peace.”
- Conclude with a hug and a prayer: “Holy Spirit, we have a lot of worry and anxiety. Help us to have peace and calm in our hearts. Amen.”



Notes

Adults should remember to share only concerns that your child can handle. We don’t want this exercise to create additional worries! Instead, we want to serve as a model of what it looks like to give our concerns to God.

A strong temptation can arise in this exercise for parents to either suggest solutions or minimize the problems. Both of these instincts are born out of the desire to be helpful to the child. But try to resist this urge! Allow your child to practice trusting that all of our worries, big and small, matter to God. If it feels important to work on solutions to this problem with your child, gently return to that process after some time has passed so as not to confuse that process with this prayerful practice.

Variations

Try this activity with personal chalkboards, a dry erase board, or even a pencil and eraser.

Write down the worries and paint over them.

Invitations from the Parish Life Committee

The Parish Life committee invites everyone to a **line dancing** event at Sunken Silo Brew Works in Lebanon on Saturday, August 1st. We'll meet there at 5:30 to snack and chat before the event begins at 6 p.m. We can bring our own food or pick up something from Metropolitan Seafood (conveniently next door!).



Next up, let's meet at Melick's Town Farm (at the Cider Mill) on August 14th for their **"Fridays at the Farm"** event to sample their hard ciders. Bring your friends!



Needles & Hooks Club

All are invited to join us on the third Tuesday of every month at the CEB, 4:00 to 5:30. We gather to work on our individual projects and share a time of fellowship. Bring along your crocheting, knitting, needlepoint, or whatever else you enjoy or want to work on. We are also happy to teach crocheting to anyone who would like to learn, and we have plenty of yarn and hooks. Pack up your project and join us! The next two meetings are August 18th and September 15th.

Open Cupboard Food Pantry

The Washington Basket location of the Open Cupboard Food Pantry is in need of the following items:

Canned vegetables & beans (all varieties), coffee & tea, cereal, pasta (all boxed varieties), baby diapers & wipes, toothpaste & toothbrushes, toilet paper & paper towels.

Please place items in the large bin located in the CEB entryway.



Faith Kitchen Update

On a VERY hot Thursday, July 2nd, the team of John McAleer, John & Wendy Minerowicz, Christine Clark, Audrey Ruland, and Tom & Rita Groendyke braved the heat to serve 58 folks with 31 sit down meals and 50 takeaways. Clients enjoyed the summer day menu of meatball sub, tropical fruit salad, chips, and the perfect hot day dessert - Italian ice. Takeaway meals got a banana for dessert instead!



July 18th's Faith Kitchen volunteers of Cindy Rupprecht, Tom & Rita Groendyke, Kathryn Koch, and Helen Livingston served up a delicious meal of BBQ pulled pork sandwiches, pasta salad, zucchini bread, and watermelon on a stormy morning. We were blessed to provide 18 sit down meals and 54 takeout meals. Those who ventured out in the bad weather came up to thank us for a great meal. And as always, thank you to Zion for supporting this mission and feeding the hungry!



Inspired Investment: Mid-Year Giving Summary

From the Stewardship Committee — Issue 6 of an ongoing series



This month we are going to look at our 2026 giving, through June.

Second Quarter Summary

For the year 2026, we were blessed to have 53 families who made a pledge last fall. Of these, 39 have met or exceeded their pledge to date. This group includes 16 who have completed their total pledge amount for the year. Thank you!

The 53 pledging families have given \$233,800 through June, which is over 73% of the total amount pledged for the year. From those who did not submit a pledge for 2026, we have received an additional \$40,400. Our total General Fund income thus far is \$274,200. This is over 66% of the projected income for the year. Thank you!

This is good news. We're exceeding expectations! We are sustaining a healthy start for the year that began in the first quarter. We do need to be mindful that the total projected income does not fully cover our approved budget expenditures. We have also discussed that our facilities are likely to need attention and will require resources that are not within our 2026 budget.

What Can You Do?

If you have not already begun, you can work out your Stewardship path of proportionate giving and determine what your step for 2027 will be. Please refer to the table below.

Monthly Income	Entry Level Giving			Growth Giving			Discipleship Giving			Challenge Giving		
	1%	2%	3%	4%	5%	6%	7%	8%	9%	10%	12%	15%
\$ 3,000	\$ 30	\$ 60	\$ 90	\$ 120	\$ 150	\$ 180	\$ 210	\$ 240	\$ 270	\$ 300	\$ 360	\$ 450
\$ 4,000	\$ 40	\$ 80	\$ 120	\$ 160	\$ 200	\$ 240	\$ 280	\$ 320	\$ 360	\$ 400	\$ 480	\$ 600
\$ 5,000	\$ 50	\$ 100	\$ 150	\$ 200	\$ 250	\$ 300	\$ 350	\$ 400	\$ 450	\$ 500	\$ 600	\$ 750
\$ 6,000	\$ 60	\$ 120	\$ 180	\$ 240	\$ 300	\$ 360	\$ 420	\$ 480	\$ 540	\$ 600	\$ 720	\$ 900
\$ 7,000	\$ 70	\$ 140	\$ 210	\$ 280	\$ 350	\$ 420	\$ 490	\$ 560	\$ 630	\$ 700	\$ 840	\$ 1,050
\$ 8,000	\$ 80	\$ 160	\$ 240	\$ 320	\$ 400	\$ 480	\$ 560	\$ 640	\$ 720	\$ 800	\$ 960	\$ 1,200
\$ 9,000	\$ 90	\$ 180	\$ 270	\$ 360	\$ 450	\$ 540	\$ 630	\$ 720	\$ 810	\$ 900	\$ 1,080	\$ 1,350
\$ 10,000	\$ 100	\$ 200	\$ 300	\$ 400	\$ 500	\$ 600	\$ 700	\$ 800	\$ 900	\$ 1,000	\$ 1,200	\$ 1,500
\$ 11,000	\$ 110	\$ 220	\$ 330	\$ 440	\$ 550	\$ 660	\$ 770	\$ 880	\$ 990	\$ 1,100	\$ 1,320	\$ 1,650
\$ 12,000	\$ 120	\$ 240	\$ 360	\$ 480	\$ 600	\$ 720	\$ 840	\$ 960	\$ 1,080	\$ 1,200	\$ 1,440	\$ 1,800
\$ 13,000	\$ 130	\$ 260	\$ 390	\$ 520	\$ 650	\$ 780	\$ 910	\$ 1,040	\$ 1,170	\$ 1,300	\$ 1,560	\$ 1,950
\$ 14,000	\$ 140	\$ 280	\$ 420	\$ 560	\$ 700	\$ 840	\$ 980	\$ 1,120	\$ 1,260	\$ 1,400	\$ 1,680	\$ 2,100
\$ 15,000	\$ 150	\$ 300	\$ 450	\$ 600	\$ 750	\$ 900	\$ 1,050	\$ 1,200	\$ 1,350	\$ 1,500	\$ 1,800	\$ 2,250

Are you unsure about where you are in meeting your 2026 pledge or in your annual giving? You can check your second quarter statement recently distributed from the Parish Office. You can also send an email to our Financial Secretary, John Rustwick, at jrustwick@gmail.com. If you did not submit a pledge for 2026, please consider doing so.

Rainbow Cake Coffee Hour

Following 9:30 a.m. worship on June 28th, Zion's Social Ministry committee hosted a Rainbow Cake Coffee Hour in recognition of Pride month. This time of fellowship was enjoyed by all!

