

ZION'S CHURCH NEWZFLASH

Letter From Our Pastor

Greetings Zion's Church,

We are moving swiftly into the Christmas season, and everywhere we turn it's beginning to feel like Christmas. I'm always amazed that—ever since childhood—Christmas never loses its power to surprise us or its ability to draw our hearts back to Jesus. Year after year, it carries a spiritual beauty that keeps Christ at the center.

Christmas anchors us in the miracle of the incarnation: the moment when God stepped into our world as a human being. But it also teaches us profound truths about God and His heart for us. God loves us so deeply that He willingly embraced our humanness. He became one of us—fully human. He entered the world in the most vulnerable way possible: as a baby who had to trust the heavenly Father, and the earthly parents chosen for Him.

This fragile child—this tiny, dependent newborn—is the Son of God. And through Him we learn that true power is revealed in weakness. I love that Jesus shows us not only how to be human but how to let our weaknesses and vulnerabilities become places where God's glory can shine the brightest.

So let me ask you:

Where are you weak?

Where is Zion's Church weak?

Where are our leaders weak?

Where is our nation weak?

Where is the church weak?

Where are our families weak?

Praise be to God that we can surrender all these things to Him—lay them at His feet—and trust Him to be God. We celebrate a Savior who came as a fragile baby in a manger, proving once and for all that God cares deeply for the weakest and most vulnerable among us.

This Christmas, we have every reason to rejoice and every reason to lift high the name of Jesus. Today, talk to Him. Share your deepest questions, concerns, vulnerabilities, confusions—everything that weighs on you. Ask Him the hard questions:

Jesus, are You really the One to help me?

Are You really the One to save me?

Are You really the One to change me?

Are You really the One who can make all things new?

Are You really the One who can give me a fresh start?

Are You really the One who can bless my family?

And then make the most important confession of all:

Jesus, I give You my life. I surrender my tomorrows to You. Teach me to walk with You. Teach me to trust You. You are my life, and I seek You now.

Brothers and sisters, may you be blessed this Christmas season. Jesus loves you—and so do we.

Merry Christmas!

Pastor Roy and Family

DECEMBER 2025

NYC Trip

Are you in search of shining Christmas Lights? Perfectly snowy streets covered in...snow. A rat eating a slice of pizza next to the Live production of the Lion King?

Then come to the one and only New York City on Saturday, December 27th!

For only \$50 you and your family can be on a two-way bus trip to seeing the New York Christmas you've always dreamed of!

The bus will leave at 7:00 AM and leave New York at 5:30 PM, leaving plenty of time to sight see and spread Christmas cheer.

Please talk to Dan Smith to sign up or go on Realm today! Money must be in by December 15th!

Christmas Eve Services

CHRISTMAS BY THE SEA

Drama with band and carols

Dec. 23rd - 7:00 pm (ASL available)

Dec. 24th - 5:00 & 7:00 pm

You are cordially invited to Gull's Landing to see the 2025 Zion's Church Christmas Play. Our residents are working hard to make sure your visit is pleasant!

Be sure to invite as many friends and family as you would like. Cookies and hot chocolate will be available both nights in Ye Old Welcome Center. We can't wait to see you!

TRADITIONAL SERVICE

Sermon with organ and communion

Dec. 24th - 8:45 pm

Consistory Corner

There is a congregational meeting to be held on December 14, 2025 following the 11:05 service, to discuss the 2026 budget.

Bell Choir

It's Tuesday...Handbell Rehearsal Night! Last month, I shared how handbell ringing requires TEAMWORK! Let's delve into this teamwork thing a bit more!!!

I stop in during the day to set up the tables, pads, book risers, books, mallets; then return by 4:45 p.m. to finish setting up the choircimes and handbells in order to be ready for our ringers who arrive at 6p.m.

They come...sometimes tired from a busy day, sometimes frustrated, sometimes with lots more to do after rehearsal is over. But they come with a smile on their face and ready to get to work! They are sincere, talented and dedicated to their commitment of ringing bells. I appreciate and love them more than words can say!

And while churches in the area are searching for ringers, WE ARE BLESSED with 11 wonderful ringers and a fantastic sub who is ready to fill in whenever needed. (It's easy to take so much for granted, when there is so much to be grateful for!!!) I thank the Lord for this amazing, loving group!

Did you know that it takes HOURS to perfect a song that takes only minutes to play?!! It takes time to get those eighth-note runs coordinated between the ringers...time to get the martellatos syncopated correctly...time to "rearrange" the music...and the list goes on!

We work diligently to perfect a song. Why? We do it because God gave us the talent as a gift and we want to give our gifts back to Him...we want to GIVE GOD THE GLORY!!!

We are working on some beautiful Christmas music which we look forward to sharing with you during the prelude on December 21 at the 8:15 a.m. service. We hope you will join us as we present our Christmas gift to our precious Christ Child!

Wishing you the peace and joy of living in His love at Christmas and always,
Zion's Bells

Men's Ministry



Sunday School: Men, be inspired and encouraged as we learn from inspiring stories of Christian men living their faith and look to do the same in our own lives.

Tuesday nights: Men, join us Tuesdays 6:30 to 8:30 pm in the Fellowship Hall as we learn what it means and how to be godly men living for Christ in our homes, workplaces, and communities.

New Adventures

Coming in January!
New Adventures group - This group will provide space and time for discovering life's adventures after raising kids and grandkids. If intrigued by what this group has to offer, talk to Fonda Reppert and Tina Blatt!

Annual Report Deadline

All articles to be included in the 2025 Annual Report to the congregation must be submitted to Emily Adams, Secretary, by Sunday, January 4, 2026.
Team leaders are asked to prepare a report for their area of responsibility.

Thank You

I know the church had printed a thank you note in the bulletin for all your help during our fire, whether it was financial or food. However, this is a personal Thank You to all from my son Jake and I. I will tell you and let you know it was all appreciated and we are very grateful to all of you.

Thank you again and God Bless you all,
Florence Leiby

OCC Shoeboxes

I want to say a HUGE THANK YOU to everyone who packed an Operation Christmas Child Shoebox!!! As a church, we collected 214 shoeboxes!!! WOW!!!!!! We haven't reached this number since 2019. Not only did we exceed our goal but we exceeded Samaritan's Purse goal of an additional 10 boxes! God is using our church mightily...not just one child will be impacted but entire families. The power of one shoebox God is using to change lives for His glory. Please continue to pray for children and their families to come to know Jesus.

Safety Team

**PLEASE
KEEP DOOR
CLOSED**

To ensure the safety of all our worshipers, always close doors behind you, never prop doors open and don't let others in through locked doors.

Your attention to keeping all doors closed and secure will assist in the safety of all at Zion's Church.

Cookie Decorating/Swap

Deck Your Cookies Christmas Cookie Decorating & Cookie Swap!

Doors open at 6:30pm.

Each PRE-REGISTERED guest will receive your own batch of cookies, complete with 3 unopened bags of icing, and a disposable tray for transport.

There will also be a Cookie Swap (participation optional); you bring 2 dozen of your favorite Christmas-time cookies to trade in-kind with other fresh baked cookie faves. In other words, bring 2 take 2! And throughout this event, we'll be blessed by live jazz musicians playing Christmas music.

Cost of the event is \$10.00 (pay at the door), but we ASK THAT YOU PLEASE REGISTER at inspiredsisters.org or scan:

Inclement Weather

In the case of inclement weather, please check the church's Facebook page or Channel 69 Storm Center for cancellation information.

However, regardless of whether physical church is happening or not, there will always be a service broadcast on YouTube. The policy for *Wednesday night activities* follows the Hamburg School District dismissal schedule. If school is cancelled for the day or has an early dismissal, there will be NO Wednesday night activities. If school dismisses at the regular time and a decision is made to cancel that night's activities, a cancellation notice will be posted on Facebook and the Channel 69 Storm Center.

Thanksmas

Young Adults, Friendsgiving and the Christmas Party have merged!

Rather than two separate events, we will now have *Thanksmas* on Dec. 5 at 6:30 pm at the Journey Cafe!

There will also be a White Elephant gift exchange (\$10 max).

Go to The Walk Facebook page or Instagram ([thewalk320](https://www.instagram.com/thewalk320)) for more info and to sign up to bring a side dish.



Faith Night at the Movies

The Hamburg Strand Movie House and Zion's Church come together to bring you *Faith Night at the Movies!*

Join us on December 9 at 7 pm at the Hamburg Strand to watch "The Best Christmas Pageant Ever."

Nobody is ready for the mayhem and surprises that ensue when six of the worst youngsters disrupt the town's yearly Christmas performance! (IMDB) Tickets are 10\$ and include popcorn and a soda.

Invite a friend!



Letter From Our Youth Minister

YOUTH MINISTRY NEWS

Our current message series at Rock Us is entitled Church Music: God's Playlist for Life. This series is based on the praise songs that we sing at Rock Us along with applicable Bible verses and stories. The series is about what God is communicating about our true identity and purpose in Jesus Christ and in His Word through the praise music He inspires. The messages are serious and relevant, and we believe God is using this series to grow and sanctify the young people at Rock Us. For this series, our youth praise band has really stepped up by learning a lot of new songs and they're all doing a great job to lead worship at the Journey. I am very proud of all of them!

Here's a recent example from the Church Music series. During our worship time at Rock Us, we sang Graves Into Gardens. Then in the sermon, we focused on what the song's second verse says:

I'm not afraid to show You my weakness. My failures & flaws Lord, You've seen them all and You still call me friend. 'Cause the God of the mountain is the God of the valley. There's not a place Your mercy and grace won't find me again.

In the sermon, we talked about how we all put on 'masks' (or false fronts) to hide what's really going on inside us. We even try to do this with God sometimes. But God encourages us to be totally open, honest and vulnerable with Him. In Psalm 62:8, David said, "O my people, trust in Him at all times. Pour out your heart to Him, for God is our refuge."

During our small group discussion time that followed the sermon, we continued to talk about the 'masks' we put on. Then towards the end of our discussion time, students and adult leaders were asked to anonymously write down a burden, weakness, failure, pain or secret sin that they were hiding behind 'masks' and give them to God. We then prayed over these issues and released the burdens to Jesus. Some students wanted to talk openly about their issues. One young person said they experienced the death of a very close loved-one recently and they were hiding how they really felt behind a 'mask'. Other youths shared personal struggles with each other that they had been concealing. That night at Rock Us was a time of liberation and freedom in Christ! I believe that God accomplished some serious life-change in many of our youths during this sincere time.

These are the kind of heart-searching topics that are covered at Rock Us. Parents, it goes without saying that raising teens is hard. But we at Zion's Church and the Journey Café are for you and want to support you. Building and strengthening faith in Jesus Christ during the teen years is so vitally important. Recently, a parent of several young-adult-aged children candidly told me, "I wish I would have sent my kids to Rock Us when they were teens instead of letting them do so much sports." Parents of teens, this doesn't have to be your lament someday too. If you have a middle- or high school student in your family, please consider having them come to Rock Us, which occurs Wednesdays from 5:45 to 8:30pm. If you make it a priority for them, you won't regret the decision. Your kids will get a great experience at Rock Us and also they will have an awesome support from our staff of committed volunteers to help them in their faith journey. Most importantly, they will have the opportunity to encounter Jesus and experience His transformational and eternal love.

Letter From Our Youth Minister cont...

YOUNG ADULT MINISTRY UPDATE

The young adults in Zion's Church have really stepped it up in the past few years. They make up the majority of the Journey Church praise band. They are faithfully serving as small group leaders at Rock Us. And they are increasingly developing and running various church-wide events. In September, our young adults were instrumental in orchestrating and running our Car Show, the third one we've done at Zion's. In October, they organized and ran the church hayride, which I believe was the third one since we revived this event several years ago. Now, young adults are producing this year's Christmas Eve contemporary play: Christmas By The Sea. They have written the script, and the cast is currently rehearsing the play. The play, which is set in an old-time seaside town, revolves around an inspiring and hopeful message about God's Christmas gift to everyone. Please invite your family and friends to come out and share in this unique and joyous event on Dec 23rd and 24th.

JOURNEY CHURCH NEWS

The Journey Church experienced a unique thing on Sunday Nov. 11. After we listened to Pastor Pavel's video sermon, Journey Church attendee, Andrew Phillips, gave his Christian testimony to our congregation. He credited his amazing life-change to Jesus Christ and basically said that without Christ intervening in his life, he'd most likely be dead. At the end of his testimony, Andrew thanked God for bringing him and his girlfriend (Livvian Betz) together at the Journey Church. (They met at the Journey Church around the time we started services there in Jan 2024). Then, in front of the whole congregation, Andrew got down on his knee and proposed to Livvian. She accepted and the whole congregation cheered and applauded. We praise God for this relationship that God brought to fruition at the Journey Church, and we pray that Andrew and Livvian's future marriage is totally blessed as they walk as one flesh with Jesus!

Journey Church held another video game-based outreach on Friday, Nov 7. The outreach was run by Dan Graham, who was assisted by Alex Blatt, Matt Mauro and Andrew Phillips. The event featured a testimony from Dave Matcho, who talked about his recent mission trip to Mexico and the spiritual impact that this trip had on his life. Several new people came out to this event (including several youths) and a great time was had by all.

The Journey Church hosted their third Soup-and-Share outreach on Sunday, Nov 16. We had several new people attend. Besides sharing various homemade soups and breads, we also shared testimonies about how God is working in our lives. A total of twelve Journey Church attendees shared a testimony, with about three-quarters of our testimonies coming from our young adult attendees. It was a truly inspiring time and we praise God for the amazing testimonies and work He has accomplished in our lives!

May God richly bless you all!

Dan Bailey, youth minister

Children & Families

December 2025

B.L.A.S.T. Kids Sunday School

Our collection for our Christmas gift for Jesus continues through December 21st. This year the children chose to collect money to purchase chickens and fruit trees for impoverished families through Compassion. Thank you for your help to teach the kids how to be generous and give beyond themselves.

A free gift for you - Right Now Media - an online resource with over 25,000 Biblical videos for all ages. Start a devotion with your family or learn practical helps in areas of marriage, parenting, finances, and more. Find wholesome programs for kids. Create your free account at <https://www.rightnowmedia.org/Account/Invite/zionschurch>



Planet Shakers

Family meal: Dec. 10th at 5:45 pm

Christmas party for kids: Dec. 10th

Winter Break: Dec. 17th - 31st

Upcoming Events

Charlie's Christmas Celebration December 6th from 1:00-4:00 pm

Discover with Charlie Brown what Christmas is really all about

Snow Games

February 22nd from 9:30-1:00 pm

sign up at zionschurch.org/hub

Moms of the Vine

Snowflake Craft

Dec. 11th from 10:00 am-12:00 pm

Winter crafts for kids & meaningful fellowship for moms

Find monthly devotions & more info at Facebook: [MomsOfTheVine](#)

More Info

Email: Jennifer.Scott@zionschurch.org

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