

We have a message too good not to share! That phrase has been on my mind since Pastor Chartrand's sermon for our festival of the Reformation. He based his sermon on 1 Timothy 1:15 *Here is a trustworthy saying that deserves full acceptance: Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners—of whom I am the worst.* This is why Zion Lutheran Church and school exists – to share this good news that brings great joy.

God continues to bless us. We have two wonderful pastors that simply love sharing God's Word in their sermons, Bible studies, counseling and everything they do. Our teacher's also love sharing God's Word with the children of our school in all the classes, during church services they are part of, and being able to use it when discipline is necessary. We are very blessed!

The staff and leadership of Zion is also a blessing from God. The staff works hard at keeping things running, clean, updating information that is passed on to you, etc. The leadership you have voted on to council has been a great blessing to me personally as the president but also to the entire congregation. These men do a great job at everything that needs to be done to keep our congregation in good shape, whether that be our finances, properties, gatherings, in reach, outreach, helping run our school and keeping records of our activities. In 2024, God willing, you will help us have a full council for the first time in over a year and we can continue to serve you with our best efforts.

We have a big challenge for the future of our church and school and that is to build a new school and education center. This will be very important for us to continue to share this wonderful news of what God has done for us. May we all get behind this endeavor to see it through!

Let's make a concerted effort to attend worship every week, joining together with our church family to sing praise, pray and give thanks to our Lord and Savior and receive the wonderful blessings he has stored up for us, *Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us* (Ephesians 3:20)

May God continue to bless each and every one of you, our church, and our school as we go about sharing this news that is too good not to share.

I look forward to continuing to lead this congregation with the wonderful help of the council, our called workers and the entire staff as we all use the gifts God has given us to share His Word with every one we can.

God's Blessings to all of you,

Jeff Krakow

President

Pastors' Report

January, 2023

"My grace is sufficient for you..." (2Co 12:9) It has been noted by a number of Christians over the years that when the apostle Paul wrote these words, he did not specify the "thorn in the flesh" that drew these words out of him. He prayed God would take whatever the challenge was away and God did not. God's decision constantly confronted Paul with what he was not able to do, and drove him to depend on what God was able to do. This has been a year of wishing we could do more, but, by God's grace, watching much get accomplished by his grace.



Children and adults were brought into God's kingdom by the water and Word in baptism. Children and adults were strengthened in their faith through worship and study of the Word. Believers were strengthened in their faith through communion. Believers we knew and loved went to heaven and their loved ones were comforted. Believers showed their faith in this place by getting involved in ministry. Believers showed their faith as they left this place, helping others in their community. All by God's grace.

In particular, believers here rallied to support their pastors and the pastoral ministry when one of our shepherds was forced by health issues to take a medical leave for a significant amount of time. Your support for both of our pastors this past year is a gift of God's grace. Two people in particular, Brian Baney and Jeff Krakow continue to faithfully fulfill their calls as our communion visitors. Their help is invaluable.

Our capital campaign, "Building Tomorrow Together," by God's grace, has seen much in the way of member involvement and financial support for our ministry. As we work at ministry in the present as well as ministry with the future in mind, we are grateful for the grace of God that enables us to be part of his kingdom and to have to privilege to proclaim it to the people of Zion, Columbus, and beyond.

In God's grace,

Pastors Benjamin Zuberbier and Tim Schwartz

Ministrations

<u>Baptisms:</u>	Birth	Baptism	Parents
• Preston Koch	12.11.1997	3.5.2023	Adult
• Ace Schultz	2.20.2023	3.5.2023	Kevin Schultz & Faith Zellmer
• Gracie Sue Tiedt	3.12.2023	4.16.2023	Scott & Ashley Tiedt
• Evie Rose Lueloff	2.13.2023	4.23.2023	Ted & Emily Lueloff
• Henry Gerald Bubolz	10.29.2022	5.7.2023	Nickolas & Sarah Bubolz
• Atlas James Branton	3.27.2023	5.28.2023	Kory & Erin Branton
• Violet Jo Zuberbier	6.19.23	7.2.23	Pastor Ben & Hannah Zuberbier
• Hudson Robert Wright	7.29.22	7.18.23	Logan Wright and Jora Hughes
• Amelia Rose Lapp	7.18.23	7.19.23	Lukas & Camille Lapp
• Dutton Lane Kovalaske	5.26.23	8.6.23	Tyler & Brooke Kovalaske
• Norma Rae Hildebrandt	5.4.23	9.2.23	Jeremy & Jennifer Hildebrandt
• Holden Russell Taylor	7.10.23	9.3.23	Dakota & Tiffany Taylor
• Jaxson James Organ	9.1.2021	10.1.23	Emily Kohlwey, caregiver
• James William Penterman	9.24.23	10.1.23	William & Abby Penterman
• Kyla Marie Schwartz	10.15.23	10.22.23	Cole & Megan Schwartz
• Amelia Sue Fleury	9.19.2017	1.12.24	Tyler & LaVonne Fleury

<u>Christian Funerals:</u>	Death	Birth	Funeral
• Darryl Berndt :	1.16.23	9.3.1959	1.21.2023
• Shirley Johnson:	1.23.23	3.15.1933	1.27.2023
• Sharon Salzwedel:	2.3.2023	11.23.1933	2.8.2023
• Dean Anderson:	2.6.2023	7.18.1932	2.13.2023
• Jenny Beitz	3.29.2023	6.14.1972	4.3.2023
• Allyn Kitzerow:	6.28.23	9.24.1934	7.3.23
• Harriette Moll	7.13.23	3.5.1930	7.19.23
• Elaine Vangen	7.22.23	5.5.1926	7.26.23
• Ruth Lienke:	8.26.23	1.11.1928	9.1.23
• Harold Beitz	9.19.23	10.23.36	9.25.23
• Norma Witthuhn	9.23.23	3.28.1931	9.29.23
• Wilma Lenz	10.23.23	8.17.1926	11.1.23
• David Wodill	10.24.23	2.24.1944	10.28.23
• Sharon Homman	11.4.23	1.7.1941	11.10.23
• Dorothy Anderson:	11.19.23	8.16.34	11.27.23
• Delores Hasenfuss:	11.29.23	3.4.1931	12.8.23
• Sylvia Stadler	7.3.1942	12.21.23	12.28.23

Marriages:

• Bryce Weiland & Mikayla Haag	4.15.2023
• Brittany Gonnering & Tong Yang	6.10.23
• Kelly Tramburg & Connor Johnson	7.8.23
• Hana Coughlin & Preston Koch	7.15.23
• Jesslynn Baker & Maxwell Tramburg	8.4.23
• Faith Zellmer & Kevin Schultz	8.18.23
• Andrew Yamriska & Angela Riederer	9.9.23
• Christopher Henning & Victoria Talg	9.23.23

Membership Changes

Transfer In:

• Faith Zellmer	2.15.23	From St. Matthew's, Iron Ridge
• Mikayla Weiland (Haag)	4.19.23	From St. Stephen's in Beaver Dam
• Jackson Stake	7.5.23	From Eastside, Madison
• Emily Kohlwey	8.11.23	From St. John's Pardeeville

Transfer Out:

• Dominic & Kellie Caminata; Elijah & Aurora	8.3.23	to Peace Lutheran Church in Sun Prairie
• Tom, Riley and Rowan Summars	8.16.23	to Cross of Christ, Portage WI
• Kelly Johnson	9.20.23	to St. John's, Wauwatosa
• Susan Knudson	10.30.23	to Eastside, Madison
• Stephanie Hayes	12.20.23	to St. Paul's, For Atkinson

Confirmation:

• Preston Koch	3.5.2023
• Whitney Ludeman	4.23.2023

- Confirmation class of 2023 4.30.2023
 - Josie Brey
 - Jordan Ebert
 - Hannah Johansson
 - Cora Lloyd
 - Braun Kosterman
 - Keaira Sommer
 - Drew Tratar
 - Lilly Vosberg
 - Joy Washburn
- Kevin Schultz 10.1.23
- LaVonne Fleury 12.17.23

Profession of Faith:

- Bret Ludeman 4.23.2023
- Lorna Schultz 7.1.23
- Scott and Anita Sharpee; Hudson and Alaric 9.10.23
- George & Erin Morschauser, Lincoln, Geonna 9.24.23
- Walter Parsons 10.18.23
- Matt & Nicole Starrs, Jack, John, James 11/16/23
- Steve & Kay Radke 11/16/23

Releases:

- Chelsie Hayes 12.20.23 Upon her request

2023 Annual Report - Principal's Message

Dear Zion family,

Zion Lutheran started the 2023-2024 school year with the theme: "Growing Together in Christ." It is based on 2 Peter 3:18, "But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and forever! Amen." Our students have many opportunities to grow spiritually and academically at Zion. Zion's Christ-centered education nurtures both soul and mind in the reassuring comfort of knowing that, as believers, we are saved by grace through Jesus. This encouragement helps us focus on our school's mission: to partner with parents of Zion and reach out to the community through Christ-centered education, empowering students to live lives of service for God's glory on earth and preparing them for eternity in heaven. We can rejoice knowing that God will be with us and give us the strength to continue this mission at Zion.

Our first-semester mission offering supported the Lutheran Women's Missionary Society Kids C.A.R.E. program. Each year, the program sponsors a mission project that benefits children. This year's project is Missionary Kids Retreats. At these retreats, attendees have opportunities to forge friendships with others who have had similar experiences.

The PATZ (Parents and Teachers of Zion) group meets monthly to organize fellowship and educational activities. The 4th of July float was a great way to celebrate America and get the word out about Zion. Two fall activities, Trunk or Treat and the Fall Festival, provided fun fellowship and outreach opportunities for our community to participate in.

Zion has been blessed to have many parents and volunteers involved in Zion programs. Volunteers regularly coach sports, tutor students, and supervise lunch and recess. Parents also are on our Board of Education, PATZ group, and run our SCRIP program. These programs are vital to the operation of a well-rounded educational program. I am always grateful for the time they dedicate to making our school better.

The school continues the accreditation process every year. The Board of Education and faculty work on accreditation standards recommended at our last visit. They give us an opportunity to look at best practices among schools and renew our efforts with existing programs. We continually review our curriculum and our faculty undergoes professional development each year. Another benefit from our last visit was the Mission, Vision, and Objectives document. This collaborative effort examines Zion's ministry and develops a plan for our future. There are over forty objectives spread out over five years that we are working on to accomplish.

Zion has been blessed with a dedicated faculty that teaches 83 students in 4K-8th grade. Our administrative assistants work tirelessly to ensure Zion's inner workings are carried out. Another large part of what makes Zion work is our congregation. I cannot thank our members enough for all the time and prayers given to help Zion prosper. The generous financial support members give to our school is essential in keeping Zion School operating.

Please continue praying for our school, students, and teachers. May God bless our efforts in continuing to carry out his all-important mission of spreading the Gospel.

In Christ,
Principal Chad Grambsch

Board of Elders-Annual Report-2023

Pastor Tim Schwartz, Radall Koehn, Jeff Henning, Joel Wiedmann, Jim Greiling, and Noah Litherland

The Goal of Zion's Board of Elders is to encourage its members to be nurtured in the Christian faith through worship and activity in congregational life.

Key Contributions:

1. Organize ushering schedule for all services throughout the calendar year and provide input on service times. Identifying new ushers in our church and onboarding them to feel confident and comfortable performing usher duties. Continuing to update usher duties as needed to accommodate all of Zion's members and make guests feel welcome.
2. Encouraging God's people in their faith. The Zion Lutheran Church's Elder board is tasked with connecting with church members to help encourage them in their faith. Our goal is to personally connect with all church members, but especially those who may be struggling with their faith. Elders board makes connections with members via phone calls, writing letters of encouragement, and making in-home visits. Records of efforts of encouragement are entered into Empower, an on-line database to increase the effectiveness and efficiency in both Pastors and Elders ability to better serve our congregation. Several members have committed to assisting the Elders board including Tanya Freter (record Keeping); Carrie Lindell (directory update) and Sherree Mattkee (Empower notes). Those interested in making contributions of time to the Elders board are encouraged to visit with Pastor Schwartz.
3. Updating the church directory to better serve as a congregational resource for making personal connections within our church. Keeping this resource up to date is especially for church visitors and new members. Updated directory picture day is scheduled for March 24 and 31 (Palm Sunday and Easter Sunday). In addition to updated pictures, name, address, phone number, and email addresses will be updated.
4. Represent Board of Elders at Monthly Church Council Meetings.
5. Provide support and encouragement to our Pastors and Church Council.

Family ministry 2023

The Board consists of Mike Hallberg, Craig Lathrop, Josh Volker and Megan Vertz along with Pastor Schwartz.

This year Mike completed his first year of his first two-year term as chair.

Under the family ministry board are the following committees that report to the board: Church Library, Decorating, Fellowship, Ladies Aid, Pantry, and Youth Ministry

The family ministry committee meets as needed to cover topics brought forward the committees under the board. The board also sets up and takes down the sanctuary Christmas trees.

The Church library has a wonderful assortment of religious materials for all ages to enjoy.

The decorating committee is the reason our church is always so beautifully decorated all year long. One of the changes this last year was a movement to silk flowers for decoration. We did not have consistent live flower donations on a weekly basis to decorate the altar with so the decision was made to move away from live flowers except for Easter and Christmas.

The fellowship committee meets monthly and plans events throughout the year. This past year they held a Re-Gift bingo event, planning of Lenten meals, planned a Seder Meal, Easter Breakfast between services, started planning for Pastor Schwartz 25 years of preaching, and the annual Church picnic in August.

Ladies Aid meets regularly and do so much for our congregation. They also donated money again this year and assembled the children's treat bags for Christmas services.

The Pantry committee members take turns making sure the pantry is stocked with items for bible studies and fellowship hall events. They also do a wonderful job making sure dishes are clean and the serving pantry is clean and organized.

Youth ministry had slow year with Mrs. Gretchen Asmus taking a call to St Paul's Lake Mills this past year. The teens have been attending bible studies and had a bowling outing.

Outreach at Zion

January, 2023



“God is a sending God, which is how he bridges the otherwise unbridgeable gap between himself and sinful humans. In sending his Son and his Spirit, he gives us himself and brings us into his family...To carry that word, he sends out his people.” *“Again Jesus said, ‘Peace be with you! As the Father has sent me, I am sending you.’ And with that he breathed on them and said, ‘Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive anyone’s sins, their sins are forgiven; if you do not forgive them, they are not forgiven’” (John 20:21–23).*¹

In other words, God sent his Son to save the world from sin. God sent his Holy Spirit to bring us to faith in his Son through his Word. The Holy Spirit sends his church to bring his Word to the world. It’s package deal – a church that hears the Word but doesn’t see itself as being sent is not carrying out its purpose.

Much of Zion’s outreach in the past year has been organic. People hear the good news, believe, and tell their friends what they believe. Outreach. They invite a friend to church or arrange a connection with one of our called workers who share the Word. Outreach. But there needs to be organized outreach as well.

While the position of chairman for our Outreach Board sat vacant this past year, a few people met to plan and carry out the work of raising awareness of Zion’s mission and ministry in our community. The goal is to make meaningful contacts with whom we may share the good news of Jesus. We are excited that Mr. Matthew Starrs has agreed to serve as chairman beginning in January, pending election. There are three main areas in which we are currently working.

- 1) **Marketing** (Sara Uttech): We are developing a more definitive social media presence, including a posting schedule and encouraging the congregation to be more active in their use of Zion media.
- 2) **Culver’s Night** (Becky Maas): We are conducting a Culver’s night (February 5) in order to gain visibility in our community as well as to raise some money for a project yet to be designated.
- 3) **Mission Trip**: (Nils Johannson): We are working with Shannon Bohme to select a home mission to which we can send a team of helpers.
- 4) **Fall River/Columbus Food Pantry** (Pastor Schwartz, Denise Schilling): We are taking a month’s worth of Thursdays this May to help at the food shelter. We will be asking for donations and volunteers leading up to our month of service.

Our prayer is that with greater visibility in our community the more comfortable our people will be in inviting people to worship and other activities and the more apt people will be to accept the invitation.

In His service and yours,

Pastor Tim Schwartz

Pastor Tim Schwartz

¹ Samuel C. Degner, *Missio Dei and Imago Dei* Wisconsin Lutheran Quarterly. Volume 119 / Number 4 / Fall 2022

STEWARDSHIP ANNUAL REPORT 2023

Respectfully Submitted by Otto Mattke

Our major initiatives in 2023 were as follows:

Fiscal Budget 2023-2024

- Total budget came in at \$906,413.
- Called workers paid at synod recommendations.
- Spouses of called workers who have been provided with a house who are themselves called workers were given a housing allowance as part of their salary. This is being phased in over a four-year period. This year it was at 75% of the full amount. Every called worker regardless of marital status should be paid according to synod recommendations.
- Housing equity payment was approved at 2.0% up from 1.75% last year. This will remain at 2% (synod recommendation) going forward. This is for called workers to offset lack of building equity in a house they could purchase if they were given a housing allowance instead of being provided housing.

Contributions

- Contributions were down slightly in 2023 compared to 2022 although giving online was up significantly.
- Zion Board of Education paid in December one half of the utilities reimbursement payment normally paid in its entirety in June. This allowed us to pay off the \$11,500 FMUB loan.

Zion mortgage

- The mortgage balance at the beginning of the year was \$774,436.53.
- Balance at the end of year was \$662,140.95.
- Payments are \$5,425 every two weeks.

Financial Audit

- Financial audit was postponed until February of 2024 due to Capital Campaign.

Building Tomorrow Together

- The new capital campaign kicked off in August under the guidance of Walsh & Associates
- The object of the campaign is to raise money to build a new school facility.
- The minimum goal is \$3,000,000.
- Many volunteers reached out to members to inform them about the campaign and to solicit pledges.
- As of this report, the amount raised is \$1,137,177 with the final wrap up to be at the end of January.

New cleaning service hired.

- Received a quote from Coverall Cleaning Inc.
- Quoted \$695/mo. \$161.63/wk (we paid \$192.50/wk before)
- Can eliminate renting mops and purchasing cleaning chemicals.
- They supply everything except paper towels, toilet paper and garbage bags which can also be purchased through them.
- They will also clean the Fellowship Hall which was not done before.

Compensation of non-ordained substitutes

- Determined that payment should be 70% of the amount WELS suggests for ordained workers. Recommended the following to council.
- The figures below are at the 70% level.
 - Sermon & Liturgy \$106.00
 - Sermon Repeated \$ 18.00
 - Bible study \$ 65.00
- Motion was passed by council.

Creation of Benevolent Fund

- WELS Christian Aid and Relief recommended this be created.
- Contributions directly given by the members of the congregation to a family or individual are taxable to them, for example, giving into a basket at the end of a service.
- It should be given to a benevolent fund and then bequests made from that fund for dispersal to help those in need. (non-taxable this way)

- A permanent fund will be established.
- A committee with at least three lay members will be established to consider requests and determine the amount of the dispersal.
- Eric Turnquest has volunteered to head the committee and report to the Stewardship chairman.
- The council approved it in the December meeting.

School choice

- Had a joint meeting with the Board of Education.
- Decided that we are not ready for this at this time.

Projection problem

- No one was happy with the \$17,000 proposal that was quoted to put digital screens on the front wall.
- It was suggested that buying two 85" smart TVs could work for much less.
- As an experiment, the smart board which is believed to be 75" was rolled to the front of the nave and hymns and the WELS Connection was played on it.
- Members of the board sat in the back pew and were able to read and see the video.
- The committee studying it decided to replace the bulbs in the projectors for now and consider digital screens in the future.

New Board Member

- Joy Huber joined our board.

The Lord has given us many blessings. May we continue to return our best offerings back to the Lord to advance his work within our congregation and within our community.

Honor the LORD with your wealth, with the first fruits of all your crops. Proverbs 3:9

Zion Lutheran Church & School

Board of Education - Annual Report for Calendar year 2023

December 31st, 2023

Current Board of Education Members

Andrew Tratar - Chairperson
Jordan Crave - Vice Chairperson
Dan Schultz - Treasurer
Josh Meyer - Secretary
Guili Alvarez - Voting member
Chad Grambsch - School Principal
Pastor Benjamin Zuberbier - Spiritual advisor of the board

Zion School Staff Updates

- Mrs. Rebecca Prell took a call to serve as the 1st and 2nd grade teacher as Mrs. Gretchen Asmus took a call at St. Pauls Lake Mills.
- Mrs. Megan Schwartz had an extended leave for maternity at the end of 2023, and plans to return as students return to school in 2024.

Enrollment and Budget

- Current enrollment at the end of 2022 calendar year at Zion School is 73 K5-8 students and 10 K4 students.
- Due to the number of students in the K4 classroom, a teacher's aid was hired to support Mrs. Schwartz, Mrs. Anita Sharpee.
- **See attached proposed 24-25 budget summary at end of report.**
- ½ of utilities payments normally paid in June was transferred to Zion Church general fund.

Notable information at ZLS for 2022

- Helen Peitrich Scholarship awarded in May 2023 to Johansson Family (Hannah) for students attending LLHS in the fall of 2023.
- New floor cleaning machine purchased to be used at school and at church.
- New security cameras installed within the school and more security was added to the front doors that allow them to be remotely unlocked from multiple locations. This need was identified as part of the school safety audit that was completed in 2023 as well.
- Mr. Grambsch started a Master in Education Administration. Majority of tuition is able to be covered by Title II grant funds.

- New art and music curriculum purchased. New social emotional learning curriculum approved for K4 through 2nd grade, and will address grade 3rd-8th grade in 2024.
- CWLS Curriculum Director Program participation APPROVED to alleviate some burden from Mr. Grambsch for curriculum development, \$75 per student to come from special projects budget
- Storm caused significant damage to the roof on 7/28/23. The required extensive repairs of the roof itself, electrical, and HVAC systems after prolonged discussions and work with insurance. This did cause occasional displacement of students in the first semester, and work was finally completed in December of 2023.
- New interactive instruction panels were purchased and installed at school and now there is an interactive panel in each room at school.
- Annual BoE observation day completed in November 2023

2024-2025 Zion School Budget Summary	2024-2025	Change from	Notes
	Proposed Budget	previous year	
EXPENSES			

Expense Totals	\$ 101,542.50	+9%
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INCOME			
Tuition	\$ 116,036.64		2023-24 School year tuition received
Tuition Total:	\$116,036.64	+21%	Excess utilized throughout school year for unexpected expenses

Feedback

As a reminder, the beginning of each BOE meeting is set up with time to receive any feedback or suggestions from our school families or congregation members. We encourage you to discuss any ideas or general concerns that you have pertaining to school operation or governance. This is done most efficiently by informing the board in advance if you plan to attend a meeting to discuss a topic, as meeting times and location can vary, so that you may be given an appropriate time to do so. Please feel free to contact any BoE members with questions should they arise. We are here to serve the whole Zion family.

Zion Lutheran Church - Estate Funds Report

Year 2023

Summary of all Estate Funds

Previous Year Assets	\$147,716.87
Total Transactions	-\$26,001.43
Total Current Assets	\$121,715.44
Portion for NEW	\$116,104.74

Accounts	Undesignated Checking	Undesignated Savings	NEW Church/School Fund Savings	NEW Church/School Checking
Previous Balance	\$446.99	\$6,917.94	\$137,760.20	\$2,591.74
Total Transactions*	-\$198.50	-\$1,555.73	-\$32,010.90	\$7,763.70
Current Balance	\$248.49	\$5,362.21	\$105,749.30	\$10,355.44
*Transactions by type				
Credits	\$1,601.50	\$44.27	\$242,632.04	\$128,617.94
Debits	-\$1,800.00	-\$1,600.00	-\$274,642.94	-\$120,854.24