

Zion's Messenger – January 2026



Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new. (2 Corinthians 5:17)

Happy New Year! As we step into 2026, I am filled with gratitude for God's faithfulness and hope for all that lies ahead. As we journey into new year we are invited to pause, reflect, and recommit our lives to the Lord who "makes all things new" (Revelation 21:5).

January is often a season of fresh starts. We set goals, make plans, and look ahead with expectation. Yet as people of faith, we are reminded that our most profound renewal begins not with our resolutions, but with God's presence. When we seek Him first, He shapes our steps, strengthens our hearts, and guides us into His purposes.

This year, I encourage each of us to expand and deepen our walk with Christ—personally and together as a church family. Let us all strive to be intentional in prayer, faithful in worship, and generous in love. Remember, the small changes we make through a kind word, a helping hand, or a listening ear can make a huge impact. May we focus on insuring that our everyday actions reflect the light of Christ in a world that deeply needs hope.

As a congregation, we look forward to growing in ministry, serving our community, and welcoming new faces into our church family. God has placed us here for such a time as this, and I believe He has meaningful work for us to do in 2026. No matter what challenges or changes may come, we can move forward with confidence, knowing that God walks with us every step of the way.

My prayer for you in the new year is found in Numbers 6:24–26: *"The Lord bless you and keep you; the Lord make His face shine upon you and be gracious to you; the Lord turn His face toward you and give you peace."* May 2026 be a year marked by faith, growth, and the unmistakable presence of God in your life.

Thank you for being a part of Zion's church family. I look forward to partnering with you and rejoicing in all that God will do among us in the year ahead.

With gratitude for what we have shared and hope in what is to come,

Pastor Stephanie



Annual Meeting & Luncheon

Zion's Annual Congregational Meeting will be held

Sunday, February 1, 2026,

immediately following our worship service.

After the conclusion of the meeting, we will have a covered dish luncheon.

The snow date is February 8, 2026.

The Annual Report will be printed and available by Sunday, January 18th, 2026

At the annual meeting we will be voting on revising C10.04 in our constitution.

C10.04 Fifty voting members shall constitute a quorum.

Council is proposing that the number needed for a quorum be changed to forty voting members.

Each person or family attending is asked to bring a dish to share. Make your favorite casserole, vegetable, salad/side dish or dessert. We will supply the hamburger barbecue and beverages. There will be someone in the kitchen both before Sunday School and the Worship service to take your dish.

We look forward to seeing everyone at the annual meeting!



Winter Weather and Worship

We cannot predict, but we can prepare. Weekday bad weather cancellation of programs, rehearsals, and meetings will be tied to what the Hamburg Area School District is doing for the day. If HASD cancels or lets out early, then all church programming including meetings are suspended for the day. This eliminates the need for multiple phone calls, and hopefully everyone will understand.

Sunday morning cancellations will be a decision made between Pastor and some council members. Cancellations will be posted on WFMZ, church Facebook page and the church answering machine.



Council Corner

The monthly council meeting was held on Tuesday December 9, 2025.

Help children keep their hands & heads warm this winter, by placing new hats, scarves, mittens & gloves on the Christmas tree in the narthex. The tree will remain up until the end of December.

With the help of local churches and a local business, 2025 “Jesus, Jammies and Joy” outreach project collected 609 sets of pajamas that will be distributed to various local agencies in time for Christmas. Thank you to everyone who donated.

Bids were received to have 3 new cabinets built & installed in the gold room to provide much needed space for various outreach programs to store their supplies. Creation Cabinetry LLC. whose bid of \$8,641.00 was the lowest, will be doing the work.

On December 13th, the scouts placed 155 wreaths for “Wreaths Across America” at Zions cemetery. At Zions, we currently have 2 scout troops, one for boys & one for girls. It was decided by the scout leaders; it would be beneficial for Zions 2 scout troops to combine to form one family troop. This will be effective in December.

Respectfully Submitted by Elaine Stone

Do You Have Feedback?

If you have any concerns, comments or suggestions regarding newsletters, bulletins or worship, please feel free to contact Pastor Stephanie by email, phone or stop by her office to share your feedback.



Flower & Bulletin Sponsors

There are many opportunities available to sponsor flowers and bulletins for 2026.

Sign-up sheets are posted on the bulletin board in the narthex.

The cost of bulletins is \$13.00 and flowers are \$40.00.



Financial Report

| | |
|---------------------------------|-------------|
| Monthly – Income for November | \$11,397.89 |
| Monthly – Expenses for November | \$19,048.81 |
| The General Offering | \$ 8,240.00 |
| Online Giving | \$ 1,877.89 |
| Loose Change | \$ 239.00 |
| Other Income | \$ 1,041.00 |
| Subtotal | \$11,397.89 |

Thank you for your continued support!

Consider online giving

Visit <http://zionslutheran.org/donate/>.

Qualified Charitable Distributions

A qualified distribution (QCD) is a simple and tax-smart way to give to the church.

- If you are 70 ½ or older, you can make a Qualified Charitable Distribution of \$100,000 or less of your required minimum distribution (RMD) annually.
- Giving directly from your IRA can reduce your annual gross income and lower your taxes. You are not taxed by the IRS on this type of distribution.
- Distributions must be made directly from a traditional IRA account by your plan administrator to Zion’s.
- Discuss with your investment advisor to arrange for the QCD distribution to be made. Distributions can be transmitted to the church quarterly, semi-annually, or annually.



Have you moved? Are you planning to move?

Has your phone number changed?

Please notify the church office.

(610-562-3112 or churchoffice@zionslutheran.org)

We want to make sure that we have up-to-date contact information for everyone.



WELCA

Thanks to everyone who donated and helped pack pajamas for the "Jesus, Jammies, and Joy" project. The generous donation of 609 set of pajamas, warmed our hearts and will warm children in need in our area.

A special Thank-You to the following organizations who participated in this event:

Faith Lutheran Church, Mt. Penn;
St. John's Lutheran, Hamburg;
Friedens Church, Shartlesville;
St John's Gernants, Leesport;
St. Luke's Union Church, Shoemakersville;
Trinity Lutheran, Pottsville; and
Steve's Quackin' Deals, Shoemakersville.

Pajamas were donated to the following agencies for distribution to those in need:

Lighthouse Woman & Children's Center,
Mary's Shelter, Opportunity House,
Safe Berks and Schuylkill Hope Center.



Wreaths Across America

Thank you to all who donated and participated in Wreaths Across America this holiday season.

Wreaths were provided for Veterans' Graves in Zion's Cemetery and the service was very well attended.

BULLETIN ITEMS

Bulletin items should be submitted to the church office no later than close of business the Tuesday of the week of desired publishing.

NEWSLETTER ITEMS

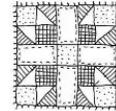
Newsletter items should be submitted to the church office no later than the Monday following the council meeting in the month that publishing is desired.

There will be a deadline reminder posted in the bulletin on the Sunday before the deadline.



Crochet Group

Get your hooks and yarn ready as we start our next project. Invite your friends and bring your ideas. Thursday, January 8th & 22nd at 10 am



Knotters Group

Please consider joining us in the Gold Room at 9am Tuesday, Jan. 13th & 27th

We always need helpers to sew quilt patches together for our knotted quilts.

Patches are available in the church office.

We are also in need of clean sheet sets & blankets.

Thanks to everyone for your assistance with our projects!

For any questions or concerns contact Eleanor Dietrich at 484-824-4388.



Senior Group

Our next Senior Group will meet Thursday, January 15th, 2026 in the Fellowship Hall, 11 am – 2 pm.

For a dinner, please bring a side dish to share and a friend to play board games and cards.

Hope to see you there!



Fellowship

Our January Fellowship Time is Sunday, January 18th, 2026.

Please plan to join us after worship.

Sign up on the bulletin board to bring snacks or to set-up.



Stamp Ministry

"If you can lick it or stick it, they can use it"

The income from the sale of stamps goes to support preparation, publishing and distribution of a Spanish language curriculum for Sunday Schools. Forty different denominations benefit in 19 different countries including South America, Central America, Spain and USA.

So, keep saving those stamps. Place them in a basket in the narthex.

Thanks, you and have a blessed day,
Barb Dietrich



Redner's Save-A-Tape Reminder

Please remember to scan your Redner's Rewards card at every checkout OR you can enter your phone number if you don't have the card with you. Your continued support of this program benefits the ministries here at Zion's, as well as building needs. Thank you, The Women of WELCA

Opportunity House 2026

We are always looking for additional volunteers to assist with the food service at Opportunity House.

Please let me know if you are willing to either captain a team or assist with the food service. My email address is whoherchak@gmail.com or my phone number is 570-778-8403.

Thank you, Wanda Hoherchak.

2026 Schedule:

January 16

March 20

May 15

July 17

September 18

November 20



Angel Gowns

Are you good at sewing?

We are looking to get a group together to make Angel Gowns

for those who God just wasn't ready to let go.

Please reach out to Pastor Stephanie or the administrative assistant Stephanie if you are interested in joining our new mission.



Zion's Library

Measure wealth not by the things you have, but by the things you have for which you would not take money.

~Anonymous

Happiness is a perfume you cannot pour on others without getting a few drops on yourself

~George Bernard Shaw

Church Resource:

33 Days to Eucharistic Glory

Reference:

Growing young

~Kara Powell, Jake Mullen & Brad Griffin



Zion's Cemetery Co., Inc.

Our Annual Audit meeting will be held on

Thursday, January 8th at 9:00 am.

Meeting will be held at Zion's Lutheran Church.

Our Monthly Board Meeting and Annual Lot Owners Meeting will be held on

Thursday, Jan. 15th at 9 am.

Meetings are held at Zion's Church (formerly Zion's UCC Church) in Meeting Room 201.

Single or multiple grave lots are available for sale.

Please contact David Geschwindt,
Cemetery Manager, 610-562-7421

thank you

Thank you everyone who sent cards during the year. It always gave me an uplifting day when I received them. Thank you again for thinking of me.

~Grace Ketner

Danny and I want to thank everyone for their cards and prayers during these difficult challenges we encountered. As Danny was recovering from an auto accident on November 19th, my mom was called home to be with her savior on Wednesday, November 26th before Thanksgiving. God has given us the greatest blessing during this difficult time and that is our beautiful daughter, Carielle. She took the time to help us to stay strong and to just be there when we needed help with errands and Dr. appts. So again, we would like to thank everyone from our church family, Pastor Stephanie, and also our beautiful daughter, Carielle, for being there for us.

Many blessings,
Dan & Carolyn Geist

As this year comes to a close, Safe Berks offers our deepest and most heartfelt gratitude to our friends, families, Board members, volunteers, community partners, donors, sponsors, and supporters. Your unwavering commitment to survivors means more than words can express. Because of you, countless individuals and families in Berks County have found safety, healing, and the courage to rebuild.

The holiday season can be a challenging time for many survivors. Your compassion and support remind them that they are not alone. You help light the path forward.

We hope this season brings you moments of peace, connection, and warmth. Thank you for walking beside us, for believing in this mission, and for helping create a community where every person has the chance to feel safe and supported.

Wishing you a Safe, peaceful, and healthy holiday season.

~Safe Berks

Thank you for the prayers and concerns offered for me during this difficult time. It has truly been an overwhelming experience and all of your support has been what's seen us through.

Thank you for your thoughtful donation. Your generosity and care are truly appreciated, and your donation has been significant in the rebuilding process. Knowing we have friends and family like you supporting us means so much.

With sincere gratitude,
Jacob Leiby



Holiday Coffee

1 cup reg. or decaf coffee

Baileys Irish Crème

Whipped Cream

Chocolate syrup

Prepare coffee in a one cup serving, add Baileys Irish Crème to taste. Top with whipped cream and drizzle chocolate syrup on top.



Broccoli Salad

2 bunches of broccoli (flowers only)

1 cup cheese

1 med. onion

1lb. bacon, crisp

Dressing ~

1 cup mayo

¼ cup sugar

2Tbbs. Vinegar

Put dressing on 2-3 hours before serving

Submitted by ~ Susan Heckman



Food Pantry

Our local food pantry is always in need of donations. Some items that are needed:

Cereal & Oatmeal

And of course, any shelf stable item would be appreciated.

****If you have tote bags to donate, they are also needed by Northern Berks Food Pantry (Hamburg). Please put them in the shopping cart in the Narthex. You can even put your food donations in a tote bag!**

For monetary donations, checks can be made out to **Northern Berks Food Pantry** and mailed to:

Hamburg Area Middle School

711 Windsor St.

Hamburg, PA 19526

Thank you for helping members of our community to make ends meet!

Food Pantry Distribution:

On the 3rd Saturday, at 9:00 am at the Lutheran Church of Holy Trinity, Leesport

The next Northern Berks Food Pantry distribution is currently scheduled for

Tues., January 27th, from 6 pm to 7 pm.

*For monthly and weather-related updates, the Northern Berks Food Pantry line is 610-562-8250



Danielle Cares for Chairs

Hamburg Area School District is collecting

BREAD TAGS

What is Danielle Cares for Chairs?

*Non-Profit

*Run by kids

*Collect bread tags + bring them to recycling plant =get proceeds for mobility products.

How to help?

*Collect bread tags bring them to school.

Where are bread tags found?

*Loaves of bread

*Fruits

*Vegetables

*Hamburger/Hotdog Buns

*Paper towels

3 million collected thus far 6 products given.

Teaches about sustainability and to give back to others.

Collection bin on table in Narthex.



January Birthdays

| | |
|------|---|
| 1st | Ellen Hartline Brenda Hartman |
| 3rd | Kevin Gough |
| 4th | Alyssa Blandford |
| 5th | Prent Steffy Mary Barto |
| 6th | Doris Hoffman |
| 7th | Luke Mengel |
| 8th | Christine Miller |
| 9th | Dennis Hoffert David Ketner |
| 11th | Avaleigh Potts Joan Seidel Robert Seidel |
| 12th | Ruth Hoppes Shawn Seidel |
| 13th | Brian Heffner David Mengle Barbara Seidel Barbara Shafer Alicia Pursell |
| 14th | Timothy Eyer Justin Dusko |
| 16th | Paul Gruber |
| 17th | Raegan Kerr |
| 18th | Beckie Reinhart Drew Koller |
| 19th | Diane Geschwindt |
| 20th | David Geschwindt |
| 21st | Mark Dreibelbis |
| 23rd | Lester Wessner |
| 25th | Karyna Blandford Shirlene Epting Tyler Heffner |
| 27th | Dominic Leone |
| 28th | Gary Rothermel |
| 29th | Carol Rothermel |
| 30th | Joyce Sechler |

Would you like your birthday listed
in the newsletter?

Please contact the Church Office
at 610-562-3112 or

churchoffice@zionslutheran.org



Shut-in Mailing List

Mabel Fry
65 Fry Lane
Auburn, Pa 17922

Helen James
668 North 5th Street
Hamburg PA 19526

Grace Ketner
1801 Tulpehocken Rd, Apt. 1
Wyomissing, PA 19610

Christine Ryan
Laurel Center
125 Holly Rd.
Hamburg, PA 19526

Carl Sechler
Laurel Center
125 Holly Rd.
Hamburg, PA 19526

David Seidel
Grand View Manor
129 Houck Rd
Fleetwood, PA 19522

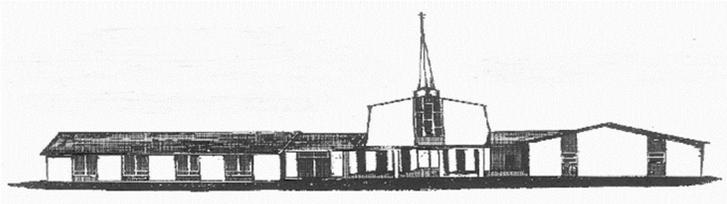
Barbara Shafer
21 East Noble
Shoemakersville, PA 19555

Lester Wessner
350 Witchcraft Rd
Hamburg, PA 19526

If there is anyone you know who is unable to get
out and would like to be added to our list, please
contact the church office.

Zion's Messenger

Sunday Worship: 10:30 am, Holy Communion,
Indoor recorded service



January 2026

Church Phone: 610-562-3112

Church Email: churchoffice@zionslutheran.org

Church Website: www.zionslutheran.org

Pastor: Pastor Stephanie Roth

Pastor's Office Phone: 610-562-6731

Pastor's Email:

pastorstephanie@zionslutheran.org

*Zion's Evangelical Lutheran Church **Purpose Statement:***

God's Purpose for Zion's is to welcome and empower people to grow in faithfulness and service to His mission through the Gospel. † Jesus is Lord & Savior † † Honest & open communication † † Create and sustain healthy relationships † † Share your faith through our daily life † † Recognize and encourage people's spiritual gifts † Perseverance † † A congregation united in Christ making Zion's a destination, not an obligation †

Zion's Evangelical Lutheran Church
354 Zion's Church Road
Shoemakersville, PA 19555

Zion's Monthly Calendar – January 2026

| Sun | Mon | Tue | Wed | Thu | Fri | Sat |
|---|---|--|------------------------------|--|---------------------------------------|---------------------|
| ** Services will be recorded and posted on the church's website and Facebook page every Sunday | ** Watch for service info in bulletins, calendars & online | | | 1 New Years Day Office Closed | 2 7am – 1pm | 3 |
| 4 9:15am Sunday School 10:30am Worship | 5 Office Closed 6:30pm Cub Scouts & Boy Scouts | 6 7pm A.A. Meeting | 7 6pm Girl Scouts | 8 9am Zions Cemetery Annual Audit 10am Crochet Group 6pm Take down Christmas | 9 10am Children of the King | 10 |
| 11 FH Rental 9:15am Sunday School 10:30am Worship | 12 Office Closed 6:30pm Cub Scouts & Boy Scouts | 13 9am Knotters Group 7pm Council Meeting 7pm A.A. Meeting | 14 6pm Girl Scouts | 15 9am Zions Cemetery Meeting 11am Senior Group 7pm Property Meeting | 16 | 17 FH Rental |
| 18 9:15am Sunday School 10:30am Worship Fellowship Time | 19 February Newsletter Deadline Office Closed 6:30pm Cub Scouts & Boy Scouts | 20 7pm A.A. Meeting | 21 | 22 10am Crochet Group | 23 | 24 |
| 25 9:15am Sunday School 10:30am Worship | 26 Office Closed 6:30pm Cub Scouts & Boy Scouts | 27 9am Knotters Group 7pm A.A. Meeting | 28 6pm Girl Scouts | 29 | 30 | 31 |