

Zion's Messenger – August 2026

*To everything there is a season &
a time to every purpose under heaven.*
ECCLESIASTES 3:1

It hardly seems possible that the month of August is upon us. Summer has a way of slipping through our fingers. The long days, family gatherings, vacations, picnics, and moments of rest seem to come and go in the blink of an eye. Before we know it, stores are filled with backpacks and school supplies, teachers are preparing classrooms, and families are adjusting to the rhythms of another school year. The changing season reminds us that life is always moving forward, whether we are ready for it or not.

These days I find myself returning often to the familiar words from Ecclesiastes:

"For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven..." (Ecclesiastes 3:1)

The writer goes on to describe the many seasons of life—a time to be born and a time to die, a time to weep and a time to laugh, a time to mourn and a time to dance. While those words were written thousands of years ago, they still speak powerfully to our lives today. They remind us that every season has its purpose and that God is present in each one, even when we cannot fully understand what He is doing.

As your pastor, I have the privilege of walking beside many of you through life's changing seasons. Together we celebrate baptisms, graduations, and new beginnings. We also stand together through illness, uncertainty, grief, and loss. One of the greatest blessings of the Church is that we never have to walk these roads alone. We rejoice with those who rejoice, and we weep with those who weep, trusting that Christ is present in every circumstance.

For my family, this has become a season of tender and sacred moments. My mother's health has declined rapidly over the past two months, and we are facing the difficult reality that her earthly journey may be drawing to a close. There is a sadness that comes with watching someone you love become more fragile each day. Yet alongside that sadness is a profound sense of gratitude—for her life, for the love she has shared, for the faith she helped nurture, and for the countless memories that have shaped our family.

This experience has reminded me that while we often wish we could slow time down or hold on to a particular season just a little longer, life continues to unfold according to God's timing rather than our own. It also reminds me that our hope is not found in the changing circumstances of life but in the unchanging promises of God. The same Lord who has walked with us through seasons of joy also remains beside us in seasons of sorrow. His presence does not depend on our circumstances. His love does not diminish. His grace is sufficient, and His faithfulness endures from generation to generation.

As we enter a new season together, I encourage you to pause amid the busyness of life. Savor these last days of summer. Spend time with those you love. Reach out to someone who may be lonely or struggling. Encourage students, teachers, and school staff as they begin another year. Whatever season you find yourself in today—whether one of celebration or sorrow, anticipation or uncertainty—remember that God has not abandoned you. He is present in the season you are entering, just as He has been present in every season that has come before.

The changing of the calendar reminds us that nothing in this world remains the same. Seasons come and seasons go. Yet there is one constant that never changes: the love of God. Because of that, we can face whatever lies ahead with confidence, trusting that the God who has been faithful yesterday will be faithful tomorrow.

May God grant each of us the wisdom to recognize the blessings of our current season, the courage to trust Him through seasons we cannot control, and the peace that comes from knowing that we are always in His loving hands.

Peace and blessings,

Pastor Stephanie



Card Shower

This year our very own Irwin Levan will be turning 99 years young on August 11th.
Let's shower him in birthday cards.

Irwin Levan
1516 Pottsville Pike
Shoemakersville, PA 19555



Girl Scout Bronze Award Project

Please help support the Junior Girl Scouts in troop 1364 with their Bronze Award Project.
They are creating toiletry kits to give to the local women shelters.

They are looking for travel size items including:

*Shampoo	*Conditioner	*Body Wash
*Lotion	*Hand Sanitizer	*Deodorant

Other items include:

*Razors	*Combs/Brushes	*Hair Ties	*Small Packs of Wipes
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Please place items in the box in the narthex no later than August 30
Thank you for your donations. ~Ava Potts



SOCK IT TO 'EM

The most requested item by military personnel deployed overseas is "Socks", yes socks.
The 2026 Stockings for Soldiers "Sock It to Em" campaign is starting now!
Help us provide socks for every soldier this year.

Please place your sock donations in the drop box in the narthex.
All socks must be new, no used socks!

ALL TYPES OF SOCKS ARE BEING ACCEPTED.

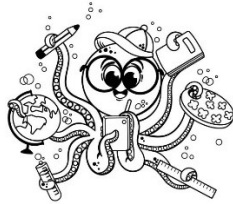
Men's & Women's Boot Socks
Black or White & Mostly Cotton

The Keystone Military Families thank you for your donation!



School Kits for Lutheran World Relief

Knotters are again making backpacks to be delivered to Lutheran World Relief in the fall. Backpacks will be assembled on Sunday, September 13th after lunch as part of the ELCA God's Work, Our Hands Day.



Blessing of the Backpacks

We invite all students and teachers to bring their school bags for the Blessing of Backpacks and Teacher's Provisions on Sunday August 30th during 9:00 am worship service.



Sunday School will resume on Sunday, September 13, 2025 at 9:15 AM.
We are looking forward to a new year.

Our teaching staff for this year will be:
Nursery/Preschool – Samantha Gruber
Kindergarten – 2nd grade – Heather Gring
3rd & 4th grade – Tiffany Gruber
5th & 6th grade – Faye Heckman
7th – young adult – Mark Dreibelbis
Adult class – Janine Dreibelbis

Substitute Teachers are needed! If you would be interested in serving as a substitute teacher, please contact Tiffany Gruber at 610-823-2880.

***Adult* Sunday School**

Adult Sunday School will resume on September 20th at 9:15.
We will begin a 5-week study on the Holy Spirit.
The study includes video, Bible readings, and discussion.
All ages welcome! Please join us.



Council Corner

The Council took the month of July to recharge for the remainder of the year.



Financial Report

There will be two months of reports in September's newsletter.

Thank you for your continued support!

Consider online giving

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



Prayer Corner for Our Community of Faith

Immediate Concerns:

Dan Adams, Darren Barto, Izzy Crespo,
Robin Henry, Hazel Gough, Bill Gundrum,
Jim Jones, Dean Lawrence, Caralyn Mummert,
Pat Potts, Ruland Family, Reid Schrack,
Roy Sousley

Ongoing Concerns:

Colson and Courtney Dougherty, John Persons,
Tracy Schaeffer, Don Roth

Shut-Ins and Nursing Home/Personal

Care Residents:

Ruth Bensinger, Jean Daub, Mabel Fry,
Helen James, Grace Ketner, Kathrine Reinhart,
Christine Ryan, Carl Sechler, David Seidel,
Barbara Shafer, Shirley Sohon, Lester Wessner

Family and Friends Grieving

Recent Losses:

Cathy Gatto & Family, Robert Scholl & Family,
John Wesley & Family



We rejoice with the Hoherchak family
on the birth of

Maya Lea Hoherchak,
born on **July 5 at 11:16 a.m.,**
weighing **4 lbs. 14.7 oz.**

She was 5 weeks early and is spending some
time in the Nicu at Reading Hospital until
she is strong enough to come home.

Please keep them in your prayers.

Congratulations to her family,
especially proud grandmother

Wanda Hoherchak.

We give thanks to God for the gift of new life
and pray that Maya may grow surrounded by love,
good health, and God's abundant blessings.



Pondering & Prayer with Pastor

Join us in the outdoor chapel area for morning
devotions and sharing prayer concerns.

August 13th & 20th at 9:30 am.

Feel free to bring your morning beverage.

You may use the benches or bring your own chair.

In case of inclement weather, we will meet inside



WELCA Meeting

Our next WELCA meeting will be held on Tuesday
evening, August 11th, at 6pm in the Gold Room.

All women of Zion's are welcome, as we plan for
the October Food Sale and upcoming opportunities
to support our church ministries and our
community. Hope you can join us!

We extend a warm "Thank You" to the
congregation for your generosity in supporting our
"Christmas in July" collection for From the Heart
Consignment Shop! Through Zion's donations, they
will be able to provide filled purses of essential self-
care items to multiple nonprofits in the greater
Berks County area.



Crochet Group

We will be taking the summer off to enjoy the great outdoors. Please join us again in September.



Fellowship Time

A big thank you for the kitchen help and food donations for our Fellowship Time this year. We will resume our monthly gatherings in September.

The Fellowship Committee



Bike Rides

On Saturday, August 15th we will head to D&L Trail, Slatington.

We will meet at Zion's at 9am and carpool/caravan to the Trail.

Bring your bike, water, and also a snack to share for some fellowship time at the end of the ride.

Questions? More info? Contact John Smith or Eileen Puglia.



Knotters Group

Please consider joining us in the Gold Room at 9:00 am Tuesday, August 11th & 25th.

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

Patches are available in the church office.

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



Senior Group

Our next Senior Group will meet

Thursday, August 20th, 2026

in the Fellowship Hall,

11:00 am – 2:00 pm.

Please bring a side dish to share for lunch and a friend to play board games and cards.

All ages welcome to join.

Hope to see you there!



Garden News

"Planting seeds of Faith, brings peas of mind."

It is August, and we are harvesting all of our vegetables: beans, cabbage, tomatoes, peppers, and cucumbers.

Volunteers continue to be needed to tend to the growing harvest. You are invited to help out with this ministry – once a week, once a month, or even just once!

Please listen for Sunday announcements or check Zion's Facebook page for news of our workdays. If you want to be put on the Garden volunteer contact list, please email us at communitygarden@zionslutheran.org or contact Lori at 610-401-1186.



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:

September 18 & November 20



Zion's Library

*Alone we can do so little,
together we can do so much.*

~ Helen Keller

*I used to ask God to help me.
Then I asked if I might help him.*
~ James Hudson Taylor, Missionary

New Additions
Proverbs, Ecclesiastes & Songs of Songs
~ *Guidepost*
Bible Study

A time to mourn, A time to Dance
~ *Margaret Metzgar*
Grief

The Missing
~ *Beverly Lewis*
Fiction



2026 Flower & Bulletin Sponsors

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

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



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 publishing is desired.



**** SUMMER SCHEDULE ****

Sunday School will return in the fall.

**Our summer hours will be in effect from
Sunday, June 7th through Labor Day weekend.
During this time, worship will begin at 9:00 am.**



Emergency Contact Form

To help ensure the safety and well-being of all
members, we are updating our membership
records to include an emergency contact.

Having accurate emergency contact information
on file helps us respond in a timely manner
if we need to reach someone on your behalf.

This information will only be used if an
emergency or unexpected situation occurs.
Please complete a form and place it in the box in
the narthex or email your emergency contact
information to the church office.



Faith Night at the Movies

Hamburg Strand Theatre

Aug. 11, 2026 When the Game Stands Tall

Sept. 8, 2026 Unsung Hero

Oct. 13, 2026 Beautiful Mind

All movies start at 7:00 pm. Tickets are \$10.00 at
the door and include a popcorn & medium soda.

Zion's Cemetery Co., Inc.

**Our Monthly Board Meeting will be held on
Thursday, August 4th 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



Youth Room Update

We are creating a welcoming space where youth feel comfortable, connected, and at home.

We are still in need of the following items:

- ❖ Table Lamps ~ looking for small black lamps
- ❖ Sofa Table ~ looking for black and wood
- ❖ Fake Tree with lights ~ looking for a few of these
- ❖ A few odds and ends ~ stop in the office and talk with Stephanie

If you have any of the listed items that you would be willing to donate or if you have other ideas to improve the Youth Room, please contact the church office.

We are in the middle of the youth room transformation.

If you are willing to help: hanging posters, installing led rope lights, sorting things from youth room, staging the updated youth room or anything related to the youth room update, *please sign-up on the bulletin board or contact Pastor Stephanie.*

We kindly ask that everyone wait to see it until it's completely finished.

To keep the big reveal special, please don't enter the room unless you're helping with the renovation.

Thank you for respecting the surprise!

We can't wait to unveil the new youth room and share it with everyone soon!



As we continue to give thanks for God's blessings and the many ways He provides for our community and congregation, we invite everyone to take part in our special August offering opportunities. Your generous gifts help sustain our ministry, care for those in need, and keep our church a warm and welcoming place for all.

Capital Improvement Envelope

The Capital Improvement Envelope offering helps to care for and strengthen the church's buildings and property beyond the regular operating budget. These funds enable needed improvements and long-term projects so that our facilities remain a safe, welcoming, and faithful place for worship and ministry for years to come.

World Hunger Envelope

Through the World Hunger Envelope, we join together with the ELCA World Hunger program to reach out beyond our walls, supporting efforts to feed the hungry and combat poverty both locally and around the world.

Every gift—big or small—helps bring hope and nourishment to those in need.

Every envelope, every gift, and every offering helps us share God's love in word and deed. Together, we can continue to build a vibrant, caring church community—rooted in faith and reaching out with compassion.



Fill the Truck Event

**On Saturday, October 10 from 11am ~ 1pm
In the Church Parking Lot**

Donate gently used furniture, clothing, and household items
to help families get back on their feet after experiencing homelessness.

Please donate only items in good, usable condition.

Items accepted: Furniture, Clothing, Household items

Items not accepted: Electronics, Baby furniture

Your generosity can make a meaningful difference in helping families create a fresh start.
Tell your friends and neighbors. Everyone is welcome to participate!
Thank you for your support!



Grab-A-Tab Outreach

We are excited to announce that we will continue to collect
soda can tabs
to go to Hamburg Area School District for the
“Grab-A-Tab” program.



The “Grab-a-Tab” program is a community friendly fund-raising program
that allows people of all ages to join the effort to provide a “Home-Away-from-Home”
to children with cancer and other serious illnesses and their families.



BEAR CREEK CAMP

Explore, celebrate & grow in God's creation!

Women's Fall Retreat

The Fall Women's Retreat is designed to provide women with an opportunity to enjoy time both
individually and collectively, participate in creative activities, explore outdoors, having time for rest
and renewal, and be in the beauty of God's creation in a peaceful setting.

October 2-4, 2026 Bear Creek is holding a women's retreat.

Retreat Center Cabins: \$215/Person

Program Site Cabins: \$200/Person

Included in this price is a 2-night stay,
6 meals (Friday dinner thru Sunday lunch), and programming.

If you have any questions please reach out to Tiffany Gruber, Faye Heckman, or Pastor Stephanie Roth.



Food Pantry

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

Canned Vegetables

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., August 25th, 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

We are 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.



August Birthdays

2nd Ava Zimmerman
3rd Matthew Gring
4th Darren Daub
5th Ronald Miller
9th Trevor Fegley
11th William Gundrum
Layla Heckman
Irwin Levan
Stephanie Seidel
12th Virginia Werley
14th Dante LaVentura
15th Caleb Neuin
Cole Wilhelm
16th Lori Palubinski
17th Elsa Gundrum
Richard Long
18th Brandi Mazaika
20th Debbie Heckman
21st Roy Sousley
23rd Allen Billig
Charles Stewart
24th Alicia Gough
29th Dylan Brown
Robin Daub
31st Jusin Schaeffer

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

Jean Daub
1020 Railroad Rd.
Dauberville, PA 19533

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

Kathrine Reinhart
Grandview Manor
129 Houck Road
Fleetwood, PA 19522

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

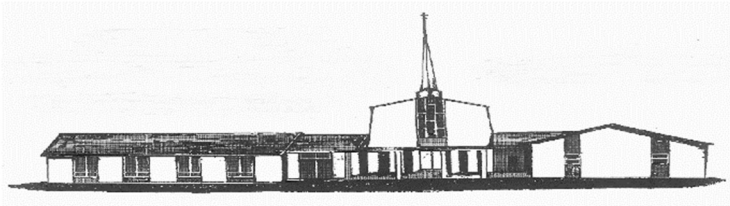
Barbara Shafer
21 East Noble
Shoemakersville, PA 19555

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: 9:00 am, Holy Communion,
Indoor recorded service



August 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 Zions Church Road
Shoemakersville, PA 19555

August

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
** 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 F.H. Rental
2 9 am Worship 6:30pm Cub Scouts & Boy Scouts	3 Office Closed 5 pm Gold Room Rental	4 7 pm A.A. Meeting	5	6	7	8
9 9 am Worship 6:30 pm Cub Scouts & Boy Scouts	10 Office Closed	11 9 am Knotters 6 pm WELCA Meeting 7 pm Council Meeting 7 pm A.A. Meeting	12	13 9:30 am Ponder & Prayer w/Pastor	14	15
16 9 am Worship 6:30 pm Cub Scouts & Boy Scouts	17 Office Closed September 2026 Newsletter Deadline	18 7 pm A.A. Meeting	19	20 9:30 am Ponder & Prayer w/Pastor 11 am Senior Group 7 pm Property Meeting	21	22
23 9 am Worship 6:30 pm Cub Scouts & Boy Scouts	24 Office Closed	25 9 am Knotters 7 pm A.A. Meeting	26	27	28	29
30 Blessing of the Teachers & Backpacks 9 am Worship 6:30 pm Cub Scouts & Boy Scouts	31 Office Closed					