



ZION
LUTHERAN CHURCH
CLARENCE CENTER NY

WINTER 2025

THE SOUNDS OF ZION

WHAT'S INSIDE

- 2 #LifeofZion
- 3 Christmas Pageant
- 3 Faith Formation in Action
- 4 Youth Events
- 4 Confirmation Class Info
- 5 Ministries & Fellowship
- 6 Church Council
- 7 Calendar

From The Pastor's Desk

*O little town of Bethlehem, How still we see thee lie!
Above thy deep and dreamless sleep, The silent stars go by;
Yet in thy dark streets shineth, The everlasting Light;
The hopes and fears of all the years, Are met in thee tonight.*

Beloved People of Zion,

Advent begins by reminding us that Christ was born “in the time of Herod”—into a world marked by fear, uncertainty, and injustice. Yet into that fearful world, angels kept bringing the same message: Do not be afraid. Mary, Joseph, the shepherds, and the magi didn’t pretend they were fearless; they moved through their fears with courage, trust, and openness to God’s call.

Each Advent, we light candles and sing carols because we believe God still enters fearful places with good news. Our hope is not fragile. It is resilient, steady, and able to endure whatever we face. This season, may we name our fears honestly, listen for the angels’ voices, and insist on hope—trusting that Christ’s coming brings light and joy greater than any fear.

Blessings to you this Advent, Merry Christmas, and a very, very Happy New Year, Zion!!

Pastor Roger

THE LONGEST NIGHT

An Evening of
Music, Healing,
Hope, and Light
Sunday, December 21, 5 pm



CHRISTMAS EVE at ZION

Family Service
11am
Nativity of Our Lord
5pm
8pm
10:30 pm

*To serve God's world with love as we
follow the forgiving & inclusive teachings of Jesus Christ.*

Magic: The Gathering Night



#theLifeofZion
Our lives as disciples of Christ.



Labor Day Parade
First Prize Float

Congregation Shir Shalom:



Our Zion family experienced the Shabbat Family Service, "toured" the Torah, and learned more about Judaism.



Congratulations Deacon Rachel Sosebee!

Rachel became an Ordained Minister of Word and Service in the Church of Christ. We are so proud! What an accomplishment. Thanks be to God for Rachel!

Our confirmands enjoyed 24 hours at LCLC, including campfire stories, challenge course, meals over an open fire, building memories and growing in their faith.



LCLC: Confirmation Retreat



Rally Day
Brisket Fundraiser

God's Work, Our Hands
This fall included clean-up on the Clarence Center Bike Path and writing cards to shut ins.



THE CHRISTMAS PAGEANT IS ON DECEMBER 21st!



A narration of the Christmas story will be told in a "Pop-Up Pageant" on December 21st at the 9:00 am service. The "Son"shine Ringers (Zion's Jr. Bell Choir) will be ringing.

We are calling on all ages to participate. There are all types of parts for the usual cast of characters. No parts will be pre-assigned this year.

No outside rehearsals required.

Remember: All are invited to participate - young and wise. Don't miss out!

FAITH FORMATION IN ACTION...

MONDAY MORNING BIBLE STUDY



Pastor Roger's Weekly Bible Study explores the scriptures and stories that shape our faith.

Every Monday at 10am.

Sunday Morning Adult Study

The book of Proverbs: Wisdom for life. All are welcome to hear and discuss this study on the book of Proverbs.

Please join us on Sunday mornings in Room 3.

For Moms of the Youngest Disciples



MomCo meets 1st & 3rd Wed. monthly. Childcare & food are provided.

Come hang out with moms of all sorts with kids of all ages as we find support, strength and hope for the most important work.

(Dec 3 & 17; Jan 7 & 21; Feb 4)

For Adults: Coffee House Conversations



Zion's Coffee House Ministry meets every 3rd Wednesday 7 pm.

Just for kids

Godly Play: Making meaning through story, wonder, and play.

"Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these."

Matthew 19:14

The Godly Play curriculum provides an "opportunity for all to explore the mystery of God's presence in our lives, to hear God's invitation for spiritual experience, to listen to what God is saying, and to make authentic and creative responses to God's call in our lives."

godlyplayfoundation.org/the-foundation/mission-vision

A big "Thank You" to LeAnn Grimm who has worked diligently this Fall to organize, prepare and lead our Faith Formation teachers in Godly Play.

The Grimms are set to move to Pretoria, South Africa in mid-January, and will be missed very much. They look forward to seeing you all when they return in 2029!



YOUTH GROUP EVENTS



CONFIRMATION CLASS SCHEDULE

Classes meet after evening worship

Calendar

December 7

December 21

Youth Sunday/ Pageant

January 11

January 25

February 1

February 22

Zion Youth Calendar January

1/6 Burrito Project

Arrive at Zion at 4:30pm, help make burritos. Around 6:30pm travel downtown to hand them out. All are welcome!

1/9-1/11 Senior High Winter Retreat at LCLC 501 NY-430, Bemus Point

1/11 Seneca Street Mission

1/16-1/18 4th-8th Grade Winter Retreat at LCLC

Register at www.lclcenter.org/winter-retreats

1/23 Family Night: Ice Skating

1/24 St. Luke's Mission

1/30 Youth Night: Great Zion Bake Off

Zion Youth Calendar February

2/6 Family Night: Indoor Rock Climbing

2/8 Youth Sunday/ SuperBowl Bake Sale

2/8 Seneca Street Mission

2/13-2/14 Zion Youth Overnight

2/28 St. Luke's Mission

LCLC WINTER RETREATS

Senior High: Jan. 9-11

4th-8th Grade: Jan. 16-18

Fun in the snow at LCLC. Get reacquainted with your camp friends from summer and make new friends for next year. Come and see what LCLC is all about.

Register at

www.lclcenter.org



Zion Youth Calendar December

12/12-13 Youth Overnight: Games/Campfire/S'mores

12/14 Seneca Street Mission

St. John's White Elephant Party
St. John's, Lancaster

12/19 Faith Family Fun Night/Caroling Ugly Sweater Party

Holy Trinity, Buffalo

12/20 Magic: The Gathering

12/21 Youth Sunday/ Christmas Pageant

12/24 Christmas Eve Services

12/27 St. Luke's Mission

12/28 Lesson and Carols



For more information or to be added to monthly youth email chain, email: halley@zionclarencelcenter.com.

Getting Involved and caring for the needs of our community is easy!

WORSHIP HELPERS NEEDED:

ALTAR CARE prepares the altar and sanctuary for worship and helps clean up after

A/V TEAM keeps our liturgy and music sounding and looking good

USHERS/GREETERS inviting people into worship, creating a sense of comfort and welcome, and helping with offering and communion.

Contact office@zionclarencelcenter.com

SENECA STREET MISSION

Every Second Sunday Zion meets and serves at Seneca Street Methodist Mission Church from 1:30-4:30pm. We prepare & serve a hot meal to people in the Seneca Babcock neighborhood. Sign up at Information Area. This is a great family event!

EUCCHARISTIC MINISTRY UPDATE

Are you, or someone you know hospitalized, home bound or otherwise unable to physically be present during worship to receive the Sacrament of Holy Communion? Zion has a team of people trained to provide you with communion that has been blessed at the Lord's Table. If you are in need of assistance or interested in learning how to serve, contact Camille at camillewilkinson@gmail.com.

THE SCHOOL #80 WINTER COAT DRIVE

is under way and runs **through January!** Accepted donations include new or gently used (and clean) winter coats.

Sizes **pre-K (sizes 4/5)-8th grade (sizes 18/20)**.

Drop off location is in the entrance hallway.

Help provide necessary winter gear to Buffalo kids!

ZION is NOW Partnering with:
CLARENCE COMMUNITY PANTRY, Inc.
(located in the lower level at Clarence Presbyterian Church)

HOUSEHOLD ITEMS:

Baby Powder, Band-aids, Cotton Balls, Deodorant-Men/Women

Dish Soap, Laundry Detergent, Bar & Pump Soap

Saran Wrap/Foil/Quart bags/Waxed Paper

Paper Goods-Paper Towels, T.P., Kleenex

PANTRY STAPLES:

Baking Powder/ Soda, Flour, Honey, Oil, Salt, Sugar, Vinegar

Canned Fruits, Meats & Vegetables, Cereal/Crackers/Snacks

Coffee-Regular/Decaf, Ketchup/Mustard/Pickles/Mayo

Instant Soup Mixes (Onion, etc.), Juice/Drink boxes

Pasta,/Sauce, Peanut Butter & Jelly, Pie Filling, Tuna &

Hamburger Helpers, Ramen, Rice

PLEASE check expiration dates & no opened items.

HUGE NEED: REUSABLE GROCERY BAGS

Zion's Community Pantry **drop box** is located in the front entrance hall. Stop by and pick up a shopping list as we serve those in our community.

Thank you for your continued generous support!

Zion's "Angel Food Ministry"

The Angel Food Ministry has a small group of dedicated volunteers who **cook meals for those in need**. If you have a short term need for meals (recovering from surgery, illness, death in family, birth of new baby, etc.) we'll ask you what you need and then get the team of volunteers organized to develop a meal schedule that will work for all.

To volunteer or request a meal, contact Karen Forster 716-829-9565 for more information.

Monthly Fellowship Opportunities



Women on Wednesday

Our women's discussion group led by April Folckemer meets on the second Wednesday of the month in The Grove Coffee House at 6:30pm. All women and their friends are welcome to share in a potluck dinner, devotions, and fellowship.

Winter Schedule: 12/10 - Soup Supper & Gift Exchange

1/14 See the Mission Minutes for more

2/11 information as the dates get near.

Zion Men's Breakfast includes Good food, fellowship, and thoughtful discussion topics led by Pastor Roger. Join Zion guys of all ages.

Each 1st Saturday of the month at 8 am!

Contact the office to be added to the reminder list.





**Congratulations
2025 Confirmands!**

On November 9th, these confirmands completed their Affirmation of Faith:

- | | |
|------------|-----------|
| Sky B. | Tyler M. |
| Roger G. | Carson M. |
| Addison J. | Toni P. |

Keep shining your light!

Council NOTES

Your council continues to make decisions about the financial health of the congregation. If you have any questions or concerns about the congregation or its ministries, please reach out to a member of council. Our next congregational meeting is scheduled for **January 11, 2026** right after the 9 am worship service.

2025 Church Council Members

- President** – Scott Williams
- Vice President** – Anneke Ieda
- Secretary** – Karen Brandau
- Treasurer** – Mary Kelley

- Jan Vesper-Diver
- Terry Elberson
- Jen Kennedy
- John Kinney
- Paul Parisi
- Pam Pizarro
- Camille Wilkinson



Thank you to all who have generously donated time or resources to the Burrito Project this year. We gather at Zion every other month to make burritos and deliver them to the hungry.

2026 Burrito Project Dates are:
January 6, March 3, May 5,
July 7, September 1, and
November 3



**Faith Family
Fun Night**

Zion families gather monthly to enjoy a meal together, go ice skating, bowling, playing mini-golf or rock climbing!

Join us in the coming months for caroling and more exciting faith family-friendly fun nights.

See the Mission Minutes as the dates get near.

- December 19
- January 23
- February 6



December 3
9:30 am MomCo

December 6
8 am Men's Breakfast

December 7
9 am Worship
5 pm Worship/Confirmation

December 8
10 am Adult Bible Study
11 am Pastor Office Hours

December 10
6:30 pm WOW (Women's Ministry)

December 12-13
7 pm Youth Overnight: Games/Campfire/S'mores

December 14
9 am Worship
1:30 pm Seneca Street Mission
4 pm St. John's White Elephant Party
5 pm Worship

December 15
10 am Adult Bible Study
11 am Pastor Office Hours

December 17
9:30 am MomCo
7 pm Coffee House Ministry

December 19
5:30 pm Holy Trinity Ugly Sweater Party
6 pm Faith Family Fun Night: Caroling

December 20
12 pm Magic: The Gathering

December 21
7 pm The Longest Night (Music, Healing, and Hope)

December 21
9 am Worship/Christmas Pageant
5 pm Worship

December 22
10 am Adult Bible Study
11 am Pastor Office Hours

December 24
11 am Christmas Eve Worship
5 pm Christmas Eve Worship
8 pm Christmas Eve Worship
10:30 pm Christmas Eve Worship

December 27
9 am St. Luke's Mission of Mercy

December 28
9 am Worship Lessons & Carols
NO 5 pm Worship

January 3
8 am Men's Breakfast

January 4
9 am Worship
5 pm Worship

January 5
10 am Adult Bible Study
11 am Pastor Office Hours

January 6
4:30 pm Burrito Project

January 7
9:30 am MomCo

January 9-11
Senior High Winter Retreat at LCLC

January 11
9 am Worship (Congregation Meeting to follow)
1:30 pm Seneca Street Mission
5 pm Worship/Confirmation

January 12
10 am Adult Bible Study
11 am Pastor Office Hours

January 14
6:30 WOW (Women's Ministry)

January 16-18
4th-8th Grade Winter Retreat at LCLC

January 18
9 am Worship
5 pm Worship

January 19
10 am Adult Bible Study

January 21
9:30 am MomCo
7 pm Coffee House Ministry

January 23
6 pm Faith Family Fun Night: Ice Skating

January 24
9 am St. Luke's Mission of Mercy

January 25
9 am Worship
5 pm Worship/Confirmation

January 27
10 am Adult Bible Study
11 am Pastor Office Hours

January 30
6:30 pm Youth Night: Great Zion Bake Off

February 1
9 am Worship
5 pm Worship/Confirmation

February 2
10 am Adult Bible Study
11 am Pastor Office Hours

February 4
9:30 am MomCo

February 6
6 pm Family Fun Night: Indoor Rock Climbing

February 7
8 am Men's Breakfast

February 8
9 am Worship/ Youth Sunday/
10 am Youth Super Bowl Bake Sale
1:30 Seneca Street Mission

February 9
10 am Adult Bible Study
11 am Pastor Office Hours

February 11
6:30 WOW (Women's Ministry)

February 13-4
7pm Zion Youth Overnight

February 15
9 am Worship
5 pm Worship/Confirmation

February 16
10 am Adult Bible Study
11 am Pastor Office Hours

February 18
7 pm Ash Wednesday Service

February 22
9 am Worship
5 pm Worship/Confirmation

February 23
10 am Adult Bible Study
11 am Pastor Office Hours

February 28
9 am St. Luke's Mission of Mercy



Zion's Angel Tree Outreach

All donations are due to Zion by December 7, as delivery is December 8.

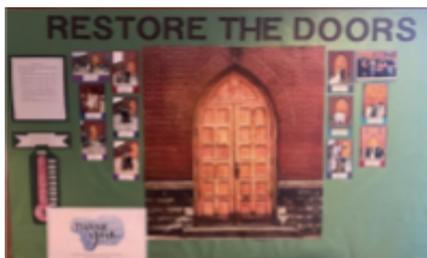
There will be tags to take from the tree, a detailed list of partner organizations and their specific needs, including...

BPS School #80
Creative Restorations
Family Promise
NAMI

A special nod of appreciation to **Karen Forster**, who along with her many "angels", successfully coordinated this year's ministry.



Apples for St. Luke's Mission
Thank you to all who brought an apple to worship! Fresh fruit is always in need at St. Luke's Mission of Mercy.



Thank you for generously giving to our **Restore the Doors** campaign. We have met our goal to restore our historic wooden front doors. Thank you to past and present members and friends of Zion. Work is planned to begin in early 2026.



Return Service Requested
Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church
9535 Clarence Center Rd.
P.O. Box 235
Clarence Center, NY 14032-0235

Non-Profit Organization
U.S. Postage
PAID
Clarence, NY
Permit No. 3

Place Address
Label Here



Get in touch with us!

Pastor Roger Griffiths:
Email: PastorRoger@zionclarececenter.com
Phone: (716) 913-9365
Elaine Baker: Elaine@zionclarececenter.com
Halley Telaak: Halley@zionclarececenter.com
Katie Cuthbertson, Office Manager:
Office@zionclarececenter.com
Office Hours: Monday-Friday; 9am-2pm
Office Phone: (716) 741-2656

*"To serve God's world with love
as we follow the forgiving and
inclusive teachings of Jesus Christ."*

