



*May 2026*

Newsletter for the Congregation  
And Friends of  
**ZION EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH**

101 N. Greenwood Street, Tamaqua, PA 18252

(570) 668-2180 ~ FAX (570)668-2181

Pastor ~ Cindy White

Melody Gensure ~ Parish Administrator - Email~ [zionlcof@verizon.net](mailto:zionlcof@verizon.net)

Parish website ~ [www.ziontamaqua.com](http://www.ziontamaqua.com)

***Our Mission:*** Empowered and inspired by God to bring others to Christ.

***“Be devoted to one another in love. Honor one another above yourselves” Romans 12:10***

Dear friends and families of Zion,

May is Mental Health month. There are many things that are going on in the world that are adding to the normal stressors of everyday life. The March 2026 statistics are staggering. According to the National Institutes of Health 59.3 million adults are living with mental illness in the United States. “over one in five adults. These statistics do not include children and adolescents. This group has increased at an alarming rate.



I am not sharing these numbers with you to scare you. I want to point out that there are many more people than we might be aware of that are struggling terribly . Unfortunately there is still a stigma surrounding mental illness. We have come a long way as a country, however still have a long way to go to understanding and supporting an ever growing population of people in need.

My request for this month is that everyone become more intuitive without being intrusive. Our faith reminds us that this can be accomplished with prayer and intention. When I attended a Holy Week service at a Russian Orthodox church this year, the Priest began the Gospel readings with **“BE ATTENTIVE”**. At first I thought “wow that’s bossy”, but after consideration, considered how important that reminder was. It seemed so clear to me that this could be a motto as we continue to try to “be devoted to one another in love” as Saint Paul wrote.

Fear is our greatest enemy when it comes to recognizing and/or assisting someone that we see is emotionally or mentally struggling. I have witnessed some of the smallest gestures of interest and concern make an incredible difference for someone. There is no shame in asking someone how they are doing and spending some quality time to listen to their answer. If there is anyone that would have additional questions or might need a referral for someone, PLEASE do not hesitate to ask or call me.

As we continue to pray for peace.....let us do all that we can to reach out to people we see that might need assistance during these challenging times.

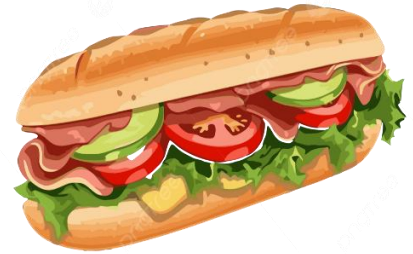
Yours in Christ,  
Pastor Cindy

**Morning Prayer on Facebook and Website:** Rev. Cindy White reads a selected Bible verse and offers a brief message or song Wednesdays at 9 a.m. Individuals with specific prayer requests can email those requests to Pastor White at [zionlutheranrev@gmail.com](mailto:zionlutheranrev@gmail.com).



Zion's Blessings Thrift Shop sale is on Friday, May 1<sup>st</sup> and June 5<sup>th</sup> from 9 am to 5 pm. The sale features gently used clothing for all ages, toys, books, and general household items. Come take a look! Limited Take-Out Menu. Thank you all for your continued support! **PLEASE DO NOT LEAVE DONATIONS OUTSIDE BY THE HANDICAP ENTRANCE.** Thank you, Outreach Committee

**Hoagie Sale - The Culinary Team is holding a hoagie sale;** Regular Hoagies are \$8 each. Pick up is on Thursday, May 14<sup>th</sup> from 11:00 am until 1:00 pm. Order by May 10<sup>th</sup>, at <https://www.ziontamaqua.com> or by calling 570-668-4451. Thank you for your support!!



Meals on Wheels is looking for volunteers to help deliver meals 5 days a week to 15 homes locally. If you are interested in helping, please contact Samantha at 570-449-8271 for more details.

## Upcoming Events

May 1 & June 5 – Blessings Thrift Store

May 14 & June 11 – Hoagie Sale

June 22 - 26 - VBS



*We extend our Christian Love and Sympathy to the  
family and friends of:*

- ✠ The Rev. Fred Crawford, who passed away on April 5, 2026
- ✠ Dorothy “Dolly” Christ, who passed away on April 16, 2026

*We ask God to comfort the family at this time.*

*Please keep them in your prayers.*



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Friendly Reminder to Our Church Family and Guests,

To help ensure that everyone can safely access our church, we kindly ask that you do not park in the designated handicapped loading and unloading zone during church services or events. The ramp connecting the street to the sidewalk must remain clear at all times for those who rely on it. Keeping this area open allows all members and visitors—especially those with mobility needs—to enter and exit Zion with ease and dignity. Your consideration makes a meaningful difference in creating a welcoming and accessible environment for everyone.

Thank you for your understanding and cooperation.  
Zion Property Committee



**Attention parents:** The ELCA Youth Gathering will take place in **Minneapolis, MN, June 28-July 2, 2027!** The Gathering is open to all students who are entering grades 9-12 at the time of the Gathering. If your student is interested in attending, please text Brian Lawfer at (570)952-5966. We need to know how many are interested in attending, so we can begin to plan. We do not need a firm commitment yet, just an idea of who may be interested.

**Altar Flower and Bulletin Sponsors needed for 2026 - The Altar Flower and Bulletin Sponsor list for 2026 is on the bulletin board.** The costs of the flowers are \$42.60 and individuals will be billed from the florist. The cost of the bulletin sponsorship is \$16.00 and monies are due when you place your name on the list. You can also sponsor the Candles for the month at \$40. **Please remember to fill out a card with your honorarium or memorial, this information is needed for the bulletin. Please do not sign up without filling out a form.** These sponsorships are on a first come first serve basis; this is to ensure that everyone has equal opportunity to sponsor these memorials. Please contact the church office if you have questions. Thank you in advance for your sponsorship!



**Zion is on Instagram. Go to the website or Facebook for complete instructions or scan the QR code.**

A reminder that both a record of communion AND a record of contribution is necessary to maintain voting active member status. Please remember to complete a communion card and to use your offering envelopes. Thank you, Church Council



**ATTENTION GRADUATING CONFIRMED ZION MEMBERS: CLASS OF 2026**



Before you know it graduation will be here! Please submit a photo with information on high school graduating from, where you will be attending school or what your future plans may be, major, parents' names and how you were involved with Zion. You may submit a photo now with more information to follow later to the church office. Thank you.

The tree display that is hanging on the wall in the gathering room is for our capital campaign donations. If you have contributed or pledged \$1,000.00 or more to the capital campaign fund you can have a leaf placed on the tree, if you wish. Sandy Mehalko will need to know how you would like your leaf engraved. Please contact Sandy for more information. She would like to ask Chris Henritz to have the new ones inscribed in early June, so let her know by the end of May if you are interested in getting a leaf.

**Looking for a way you can help serve your church**, but don't have a lot of extra time? Are you able to commit to a half hour, on a day you will already be here? We are looking for greeters to welcome people to the church on Sunday mornings, hand out bulletins, and answer questions from visitors. We would like to have enough people to make up at least 6 teams, with 2 people per team. Please text or call Brian Lawfer at 570-952-5966 for more information.



In talking with the people John says in Luke 3:11 *“Whoever has two tunics should share with him who has none, and whoever has food should do the same.”* This is a reminder that the People Pantry is being used heavily and in need of donations. While grocery shopping pick up an extra item to share with our less fortunate community neighbors. *“Each one must give as he has decided in his heart, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.”* 2 Corinthians 9:7



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DID YOU KNOW ...Zion is now a Tamaqua Narcan distribution site? You may be wondering what is Narcan? Narcan is a life-saving medication used to reverse the effects of accidental opioid overdoses.

This medication is good to have on hand because:

1. You could end up saving a friend or neighbor in need. You never know when you'll encounter someone in need of this life-saving medication. Keep it in your purse or your car for when you might need it.
2. Parents with teenagers are encouraged to keep naloxone in their homes.
3. Senior citizens can mistakenly overdose on medications. Having more of this life-saving drug in the community is important.



Narcan kits are available free of charge. Feel free to grab one off the table. Our Parish Administrator will pass on Narcan requests to Michele Valentine who is heading this ministry.

**Zion's 2026 Church Council officers:** Brian Lawfer, President, Amanda Hascin, Vice President, Shelly Woodring, Secretary, Dave Gensure, Treasurer, and Ann Marie Hadesty, Financial Secretary. Other members of Council include Sheri Beltz, Brian Constenbader, Arlene Derr, Laura Fulmer, Thomas Graham (Youth Advocate), George Taylor, Michelle Valentine, and Brittany Voelpel; if you have suggestions or concerns, please seek out a member of Council so that we can promptly address the needs of the congregation.

**P**lease note if you have recently become a member or feel there are changes in your membership information please fill out a membership packet located in the Gathering Room. If you need them sent to you, please contact the church office. Thank you for keeping our records up to date.

Would you like to make a gift to our Capital Campaign today? Do you need an envelope for your gift? Blank envelopes can be found in the rear of the church on either side. Please just write your name and Capital Campaign on the envelope so we can give you credit; and place the envelope in the boxes found on the wall on either side at the back on the sanctuary. For information on our Capital Campaign, please visit our website at <http://www.ziontamaqua.com/capital-campaign/>



**Gebert Society** - If you know of someone who has remembered Zion in their will/estate with a gift (past and present), please contact the office with that information which will be used in the annual report. Names can be added to the Gebert Society at any time. Thank you.

**Please Join Us!**  
**Saturday Worship - 6:00 pm**  
**Sunday**  
**Worship - 9:00 am**  
**Christian Education - 10:15 am**  
**Confirmation - 11:00 am**

**DEADLINE:** All information for the **June/ July/ August 2026 issue of the “Herald”** is due at the church office no later than **Monday, May 18, 2026. Please note that this is a combined issue of the newsletter.** You may e-mail your information to [zionlcof@verizon.net](mailto:zionlcof@verizon.net) or stop in during regular office hours. Thank you for your co-operation!

**Hospitalizations** - If you or someone you know is hospitalized, please call the church office at 668-2180. Due to HIPAA Law names are no longer published in the newspaper and we are not contacted by the hospital unless the patient requests it, when admitted, let them know you are a member of Zion Lutheran church. Zion Lutheran Church Lehigh Valley System Hospital Code is 356; If you are admitted to a hospital in the Lehigh Valley Hospital system (not St. Luke’s/ Miner’s) and you want our church and Pastor to be notified, provide Zion’s Code # 356 when you provide admission information.



Synod E-News - E-News is a weekly e-newsletter for rostered leaders (pastors and deacons), congregational leaders and members, and anyone interested in keeping up to date with happenings across the Synod and around the ELCA. [nepasynod.org/e-news/](http://nepasynod.org/e-news/)

## Office Hours

Monday & Wednesday  
12:00 – 5:00 pm  
Tuesday & Thursday  
8:00 am – 1:00 pm

Please use door located on  
Mauch  
Chunk Street, ring bell



**Matthew 19:19**

**Honor your father  
and mother. Also,  
you shall love your  
neighbor as  
yourself.”**



Please continue to use your Boyer's key tag every time you shop in any Boyer's Markets. If you do not have a Boyer's tag, they are located in the Gathering room. Please use the swipe card, the receipt does not need to be turned in. Thank you for your participation in this program. Keep using those cards!

### When submitting Redner's receipts:

1. You must have a Redner's card & swipe the Redner's card upon checkout so the save a tape amount is on the receipt.
2. Please do not cut the information with the save a tape code off the receipt.
3. Please hand in the receipt to our container in the gathering room or mail them to the church office.

If you have any questions, please see Beth Marcavage. Thank you and keep saving!

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**Sharing your story** - As part of an ongoing emphasis on Zion's impact, we'd like to share ways in which Zion has made a difference in the lives of its members and its community. Please respond to any **ONE** of these questions and include **your name** at the end. Send your response to [zionlcof@verizon.net](mailto:zionlcof@verizon.net) (subject line "Impact story" or Zion Lutheran, 101 North Greenwood St., Tamaqua, PA 18252 Attention: Impact

1. How has Zion made a difference in your life? OR
  2. What impact has Zion had on your life the last 2 1/2 years? OR
  3. What is your vision for the future of Zion's ministry? OR
  4. How has serving in a Zion ministry made a difference in your life?
- 



**Do you like to clean?** Some people really like to clean--honest! If you do, why not join the Cleaning Angel team? We are looking for about 2 or 3 more members to add to the team. Cleaning Angels are members of the congregation who each week clean the Sanctuary, Gathering Room and Library. When two people do that cleaning, it can take 2-3 hours. Being a Cleaning Angel is not intended to be a lifelong commitment and so we thank those who have served and "retired." That means there are openings in the cleaning schedule for other members of the congregation to step up and help keep the church clean. This is a great

opportunity to serve your church. The hours are flexible and there's lots of great fellowship involved. Please contact any member of the Property Committee or Cleaning Sexton Kim Eckert or Parish Administrator Melody Gensure.

# *March/ April Memorials*

## **GIFTS GIVEN TO THE GLORY OF GOD**

**THE ALTAR CANDLES** are given to the *Glory of God and*

In loving memory of Matha and Dan Zeigler by daughter, Gerry

**THE ALTAR FLOWERS** are given to the *Glory of God and*

In loving memory of Gordon Beidleman by daughter, Karen Costenader

In loving memory of my Mom and Dad by Pastor Cindy

In loving memory of Roger Brode and Larry Brennan by Judy and Sonia

In honor of Katelyn Rudy's 24<sup>th</sup> birthday by Kris and Frank Rudy

**THE PALMS** are given to the *Glory of God and*

In loving memory of our son, Brian by Dave and Darlene Fetterman

**THE PALM CROSSES** for the *Sunday School Children* are given to the *Glory of God and*

In loving memory of her son, John Carl Casler Jr. by Dave & Melody Gensure, sisters, Ashly, Alesia, and Alyssa, nieces, Aubry, Adalynn, Ava, Amelia & Alaina & nephews, Bradlee & Camdyn

**THE CHRIST CANDLE** is given to the *Glory of Jesus Christ our Lord and Savior and*

In loving memory of loved ones by Sonia and Judy

**THE BULLETINS** are given to the *Glory of God and*

For the prosperity of our church in our hometown and community by Stacei Faust and Emily Stahler

In loving memory of my brother, Carl W. Ferris on his 100<sup>th</sup> birthday on March 6<sup>th</sup> by Sandy Scott

In honor of our recuperating music director, Sandy Mehalko, with heart-felt wishes for a very speedy recovery! By Gerry Zeigler

In loving memory of Jane Steigerwalt's April 4<sup>th</sup> birthday by Gail and Bob Jones

In loving memory of Robert Fritzingr III by Glenn and Lorie Fritzingr

In loving memory of Martha Zeigler on her April 19<sup>th</sup> birthday by daughter, Gerry

In loving memory of Pastor Crawford by Bob and Gail Jones

**CURRENT FUND DONATIONS** are given to the *Glory of God and*

In loving memory of Janet McRoberts by Gerald & Irene Acalin

In loving memory of Jan McRoberts by Linda Elm

In loving memory of my dad, Hub Becker by Beth

In loving memory of Pastor Crawford by Judy Brennan

In loving memory of Dolly Christ by Judy Brennan

In loving memory of my husband, John by Sharon Haldeman

In loving memory of Dolly Christ by Joe and Sandy Mehalko

In loving memory of Mr. and Mrs. Francis Epler by daughters Frances, Joan & Carol

**ENDOWMENT FUND DONATIONS** are given to the *Glory of God and*

In loving memory of family & friends by Bill & Lori Krell

In loving memory of John Leipold by Marilyn Leipold

In loving memory of Janet McRoberts by Kathy Turner

In loving memory of Pastor Crawford by the Hadesty family

In loving memory of my husband, John and family & friends at Easter by Sharon Haldeman

In loving memory of Pastor Fred Crawford by the Taylor family

In loving memory of The Rev. Fred Crawford by Joe and Sandy Mehalko

In loving memory of Rev. Fred Crawford by Sharon Haldeman. May God grant unto him eternal peace and his perpetual light shine upon him forever.

In loving memory of Dolly Christ by Bob & Terri Livingston

In loving memory of Pastor Crawford by Bob & Terri Livingston

In honor of my children Shelley, Greg & Jennifer by Sandy Scott

In loving memory of Pastor Fred Crawford by Mark & Charlene Valentine

In loving memory of Pastor Fred Crawford by Dave & Darlene Fetterman

In loving memory of Pastor Crawford by Gerry Zeigler

**CAPITAL CAMPAIGN FUND DONATIONS** are given to the Glory of God and

In honor of Julia & Samuel Sneddon by Nana & Pop Pop

**ORGAN FUND DONATIONS** are given to the Glory of God and

In loving memory of the April 17<sup>th</sup> birthday of her father, Carl W. Koch Sr by John & Carol Dietrich & family

# Easter Memorials 2026

***The Easter Floral Cross is presented to the Glory of God in loving memory of...***

Alma Fisher by husband, Robert Fisher

***The Easter Lilies are presented to the Glory of God...***

In loving memory of McKayla Ann Wall by Lauren, Jesse, Nicholas & Kallia Wall

In loving memory of Richard Dreisbach by Bob & Terri Livingston

In loving memory of Carl and Mary Koch by Kelly, Jason, and Joel Smith

In loving memory of my husband, Karl C. Miller on Easter Day by wife, Katherine I. Miller

In loving memory of loved ones, Ann & Evan Thomas, Sierra Thomas & Donna T. Thomas by Pamela Marrs

In loving memory of granddaughter, Kendall McLaughlin by grandparents, Barry & Marlene McLaughlin & uncles, Eddie & Chris

In loving memory of my parents, Clair & Ella Gerber by Marlene McLaughlin & family

***Easter Memorial Gifts to the Current Fund are given to the Glory of God:***

In loving memory of granddaughter, McKayla Ann Wall by grandparents, Dave & Louise Schock

With thanksgiving for healing and for all the prayers and help from all my Zion friends by Sandy Mehalko

In loving memory of John Carl Casler Jr. by his mother, Melody & sisters, Ashly, Alesia, & Alyssa

In loving memory of Brian Fetterman love, Ashly Lux

In loving memory of loved ones by Paul Wolfe

In loving memory of my husband, Karl C. Miller on Easter Day by wife, Katherine I. Miller

In loving memory of my brother-in-law, Karl C. Miller on Easter Day by sister-in-law, Charlotte Scheidly

In loving memory of our son, Ells by Ells and Gail Davis

In loving memory of our parents and grandparents by Ells and Gail Davis

In loving memory of Francis & Dorothy (Rother) Epler by daughters, Frances, Joan, and Carol

In loving memory of Charles Linkhorst, Finn Montecalvo, Justin King, & Jessica Linkhorst by Wife & Grandmother.  
Jean Linkhorst

***Easter Memorial Gifts given to the Endowment Fund are presented to the Glory of God...***

In loving memory of Family and Friends by Mr.& Mrs. Joe Mehalko

In loving memory of her parents, Arlington and Yustina Hawk and all our loved ones by Dave and Darlene Fetterman

In loving memory of her parents, Mr. & Mrs. Carl Koch Sr. by Carol, John, Jeff, & Johnny

In loving memory of my parents, Oliver & Jane Steigerwalt by Gail & Bob Jones

In loving memory of my parents, Arthur & Ruth Jones by Bob & Gail Jones

In loving memory of loved ones by Paul Wolfe

In loving memory of his parents, James & Kathleen Valentine by Mark & Charlene Valentine

In loving memory of her parents, Mary & Joseph Dakes by Mark & Charlene Valentine

In loving memory of his parents, Marvin & Agnes & her father, Stanley Karnish by Mr. & Mrs. Steve Ristila

In loving memory of John Lattanzi by his wife, Beth & daughter, Olivia

In loving memory of Martha & Dan Zeigler by daughter, Gerry

In loving memory of her parents, Jasper & Dorothy Collura by Ann Marie & David Hadesty & family

In loving memory of his parents, David & Gayle Hadesty by Ann Marie & David Hadesty & family

In loving memory of family and friends by John & Carol Dietrich

In loving memory of McKayla Wall by Lauren & Jesse Wall



# ZION FINANCIAL AS OF MARCH 31, 2026

Here is our report to the Zion congregation for the 1st quarter of 2026. If you have any questions, please address a member of the Finance Committee.

## CHURCH BUDGET INCOME

OFFERING AND GIFTS	\$37,337.15	
CULINARY EVENTS	\$6,950.00	
BLESSING THRIFT SALES	\$1,484.40	Total Thrift sales \$2,968.80
ENDOWMENT	\$20,812.00	
<b>TOTAL BUDGET INCOME</b>	<b>\$66,583.55</b>	

## CHURCH BUDGET EXPENSES

SALARIES/REMUNERATION	\$19,831.22
OIL	\$17,900.61
POSTAGE	\$0.00
TAXES	\$884.18
MAINT & REPAIR	\$921.11
WATER, SEWER	\$738.00
PHONE/INTERNET	\$634.15
ELECTRIC	\$1876.62
INSURANCE	\$14,339.00
OTHER MISC EXPENSES	\$8,486.17
<b>TOTAL BUDGET EXPENSES</b>	<b>\$65,611.06</b>

Yours in Christ,

Zion Finance Committee: Bob Jones, Chair; Ann Marie Hadesty, Financial Secretary; Dave Gensure, Treasurer; Walter Weston, Sandy Mehalko Endowment Coordinator; Matt Warden; Rochelle Evanousky; Sam Caley; George Taylor.

## Vacation Bible School is Coming!

Join us for an exciting week of faith, fun, and friendship at VBS!

**June 22–26 from 5:30–8:30 PM**



Meal Provided 5:30–6:00 PM, For PreK–5th Grade. Enjoy a fun-filled week with Bible Explorations, Games, Crafts, Missions, Music & More. Each evening is packed with energy, creativity, and meaningful moments as kids grow in faith and build lasting friendships. All are welcome! Bring a friend and come ready for fun! Register Your Child Online at: [ziontamaqua.mycokesburyvbs.com](http://ziontamaqua.mycokesburyvbs.com)

Looking to Volunteer at VBS? There's a registration for you too! Simply click the Volunteer Registration on the website!

While many items are sold during sale days, Blessings operates as more than a monthly thrift sale. It also serves as a distribution hub, sharing additional donated goods with local organizations and service groups, and often providing items free of charge to individuals and families facing hardship.

**You Are Awesome!**

**You Are Appreciated!**

**October 27, 2025**

**Dear Friends of EFCMI.org**

**Your donation of clothing has truly impacted what we are able to do in ministry.**

**You may never see the gratitude on the faces of the people we serve but they are truly grateful. Warm hands, heads, feet, coats and blankets mean a lot to those living on the street. And we are grateful for your support.**

**If you would like to learn more about the impact that you can make, please feel free to contact us at: [www.efcml.org](http://www.efcml.org)**

**We would love to hear from you!**

**Two small words with so much meaning!**

**Thank You!**

*Elder Audrey Taylor*  
**Elder Audrey Taylor**



# NORTHEASTERN PENNSYLVANIA SYNOD MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

## How a Desire to Grow in Faith Became a Journey into Unexpected Ministry

*Written by Licensed Lay Minister (LLM) Tanya Kantner*

If you had told me a few years ago that I would be serving as a Licensed Lay Minister, I'm not sure I would have believed you. For most of my life, Scripture felt beautiful but distant—something I respected but didn't always understand. Then, slowly and quietly, it began to take root in my heart. I signed up for an online Faith+Lead course through Luther Seminary—training usually taken by laypeople preparing for ministry—simply because I wanted to grow in my faith. I wasn't seeking a role or a title; at that point, there wasn't even a pathway to consider. I just felt a tug I couldn't ignore.

Then the synod announced the new Licensed Lay Minister initiative. I didn't feel ready or qualified. But I recognized that same tug—that gentle, persistent nudge of the Spirit—and I said yes. Not because I felt prepared, but because I trusted that God could take my imperfect offering and turn it into something meaningful.

Since then, my ministry has unfolded in ways that have surprised me again and again. I've learned that the heart of this role isn't about doing more—it's about being present. It's about showing up where people carry joy, grief, questions, and hope, trusting that Christ is already there ahead of us. My role in those moments is simple but sacred: to listen, to hold space, to pray with people, and to reflect back the light and love of Christ that is already moving in their lives. Sometimes that looks like sitting quietly with someone who is grieving; sometimes it's celebrating a moment of joy; sometimes it's offering a word of encouragement or a prayer when someone feels lost. In all of it, I try to be a gentle reminder that they are not alone—that God is with them in whatever they're carrying.



Serving within the Pretzel City Parish has been one of the greatest gifts of this journey. Shared ministry has allowed me to connect with people across several congregations, each with their own stories. It has also opened doors into the wider community—places where the church's presence matters deeply, even for those who may never sit in a pew.

Some of the most meaningful moments have come through simple, hands-on ministry: harvesting potatoes in the fall for local food programs, partnering with community food pantries, planning trips to places like the Museum of the Bible and the Ark Encounter, or gathering people for Bible study who have been

unchurched for years but are still hungry for connection and meaning. These ministries remind me that the Gospel is not confined to a sanctuary. It lives in fields, fellowship halls, parking lots, and conversations with people who are searching for belonging.



Looking ahead, I'm excited to continue deepening relationships within the Pretzel City Parish. I've come to cherish the everyday moments—the conversations, the intergenerational gatherings, the unexpected holy interruptions—where God quietly draws us closer to one another. My hope is that through these moments, people feel more seen, more connected, and more aware of God's love at work in their lives.

If someone were considering the Licensed Lay Minister pathway, I would tell them this: you don't need to have everything figured out. You don't need to feel certain or strong. The most surprising part of my journey has been discovering how God works through my vulnerability far more than through my confidence. Again and again, I've learned that ministry is not about our strength, but about God's.

I am deeply grateful for the synod's support and their commitment to developing lay leadership. Their encouragement, guidance, and investment in creating pathways for people like me have made this journey possible. It has reminded me that God calls people from all walks of life into meaningful ministry—and that the church is stronger when we answer those calls together.

I began this journey quietly, almost reluctantly. But each step has revealed a little more of what God is doing—not just in me, but also through me, and in the congregations and communities I'm blessed to serve. My prayer is simply to keep saying yes, one invitation at a time, trusting that the Spirit will continue to lead the way.

**DID YOU KNOW** that your Mission Support helps fund areas of the synod and ELCA like this one and many other important initiatives? Your contributions are making a significant impact and helping others grow in faith, supporting the synod's lanes of Growing Young, Gaining Strength, and Going Beyond Death to Life, along with the directions of loving like Jesus, healing like Jesus, and engaging like Jesus. To learn more, visit [godslove.org/missionsupport](https://godslove.org/missionsupport).



[godslove.org/we-are-listening](https://godslove.org/we-are-listening)

## “We Are Listening”

Ministry Discernment Retreat  
June 13–14, 2026

Cross Roads Camp & Retreat Center | Port Murray, NJ

Join us for a weekend of reflection, conversation, and discovery as we listen for God's call in our lives and ministries.

\$55 per person (includes lodging + 4 meals)

**Register by June 1: Limited to 25 participants**

ZION EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

101 N. Greenwood Street

Tamaqua, PA 18252

Return Service Requested

This Newsletter was prepared  
Especially for:

