



*May 2025*

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

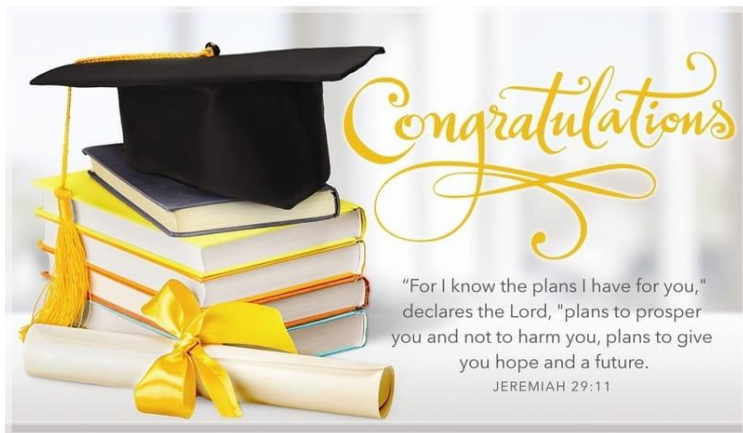
Melody Gensure ~ Parish Administrator - Email~ [zionlcof@verizon.net](mailto:zionlcof@verizon.net)

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

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

May Greetings family and friends of Zion,

This is a very exciting month for 5 of our seniors. Cooper Ansbach, Avery Dietrich, Julia Lawfer, Darian Moyer and Kimberly Rudy are graduating this year. I could not be more excited for them. Each one of them has assisted with many ministries here at church. They acolyte, assist with serving for meals, assisted with vacation Bible school, teach Sunday school and have been overall excellent role models for our



younger children. I am delighted to say that I have known them all since they were eight years old. Each one of them has significant gifts that God has given them to carry out into the world. They have blessed me in many meaningful ways. Nun the least of which is seeing their smiling faces early on a Sunday morning. This Jeramiah quote rings so true for all of them. I have no doubt that their hearts for Christ are full to overflowing. They are prepared to serve our Lord with gladness wherever God calls them to be. We can all give thanks to God for being a part of their precious lives. Please ensure that when you see any of them you let them know how proud we are of them. They are amazing representation of the light of Christ. Baccalaureate service is here at Zion May the 18<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 PM. I will be preaching. I consider it an honor and a privilege to share God's word with our children yet again. Our favored five are an especially honorable group. Let us keep them in our prayers now and for their upcoming journeys. May their faith continue to strengthen and inspire them all of their days. May they know that they will always be warmly welcomed back to their home church. We are indeed grateful for their service and their continued representation of Christ in the world.

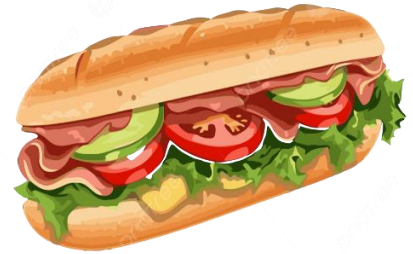
I pray that May brings you much joy sisters and brothers in Christ,  
With love,  
Pastor Cindy

**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 2<sup>nd</sup> & June 6<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 22<sup>nd</sup> from 11:00 am until 1:00 pm. Order by May 18<sup>th</sup>, at <https://www.ziontamaqua.com> or by calling 570-668-4451. Thank you for your support!!



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

## Upcoming Events

May 2 & June 6 – Blessings Thrift Store

May 22 & June 26 – Hoagie Sale

June 16 – 20 - VBS





Join us for another Cokesbury Kids VBS!

June 16–20th – 5:30 pm – 8:30 pm

Bible Exploration, Crafts, Music, & More! Open to children  
Nursery–5th Grade. A hot meal will be provided! Registrations will  
open soon!

## Celebration of Baptisms



✝ Wyatt Jasper Hadesty, son of Jonathan and Alissa (Hollenbach)  
Hadesty received the Sacrament of Holy Baptism during our  
Sunday morning worship service on March 2, 2025. Wyatt's  
Godparents are Matthew Hadesty and Jessica Hollenbach.

✝ Maverick David Hadesty, son of Matthew and Karina (Derr)  
Hadesty received the Sacrament of Holy Baptism during our  
Sunday morning worship service on April 6, 2025. Maverick's  
Godparents are Jonathan Hadesty and Kyrsten Derr.

May the blessing of our Lord be upon the parents and godparents  
in nurturing these children in the light of faith.

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

Paul Pecha Jr., who passed away on March 1, 2025

Ralph Derr, who passed away on April 19, 2025



*We ask God to comfort the family at this time. Please keep them in your prayers.*



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

**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.



Please welcome our new members Nikolas, Sabrina, & Abigail Smith. They were taken into membership on April 27, 2025, during the morning worship service. May they be blessed by their commitment to God and their participation in this faith family.

**WELCOME**  
*to Our Newest Members!*

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



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.

## ATTENTION GRADUATING CONFIRMED ZION MEMBERS: CLASS OF 2025

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. ***This information is needed ASAP.*** Thank you.



*Altar Flower and Bulletin Sponsors needed for 2025 - The Altar Flower and Bulletin Sponsor list for 2025 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. 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's 2025 Church Council officers:** Michael Haspe, President, Brian Lawfer, Vice-President, Amanda Hascin, Secretary, Dave Gensure, Treasurer, and Ann Marie Hadesty, Financial Secretary. Other members of Council include Arlene Derr, Glenn Fritzing, Thomas Graham, Carol Hartung, Brittany Scalfani Mary Ruth Taylor, Michelle Valentine; and Shelly Woodring; 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 2025 issue of the "Herald"** is due at the church office no later than **Monday, May 19, 2025. 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.



**NEPA SYNOD**  
NORTHEASTERN PENNSYLVANIA SYNOD

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/)

Synod E-News -  
E-News is a weekly e-newsletter for rostered leaders (pastors and deacons), congregational leaders and members, and

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



Proverbs 1:8  
Hear, my child,  
your father's  
instruction,  
and do not reject  
your mother's  
teaching;





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 honor of Sandy Mehalko for blessing Zion with her gift of music by Michael Haspe

In honor of all the dedicated volunteers who donate their time and talent whenever called upon throughout the year doing God's work here at Zion, love in Christ Jesus, by Sharon Haldeman

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

In loving memory of Grammy Alberta and Grammy Jean by Michael Haspe

In loving memory of Gordon Beidleman by the family

In honor of the 36<sup>th</sup> birthday of our dad, Ryan Matalavage by Thad, Axel and Charlotte Matalavage

In honor of the birthday of Pastor's brother Jimmy

In loving memory of Joseph Coleman by Patti Sue Coleman

In honor of all the members of Zion by Pastor Cindy

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

In loving memory of our son, Brian and all our family and friends no longer here with us, by Dave and Darlene Fetterman

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

In honor of the baptism of our grandson, Wyatt Jasper Hadesty by David and Ann Marie Hadesty

In loving memory of Shayne T. Livingston and Calvin Titus by the family

In loving memory of her father, Augustus Rizzardi by Mary Ruth & George Taylor

In honor of the 36<sup>th</sup> birthday of our dad, Ryan Matalavage by Thad, Axel and Charlotte Matalavage

In loving memory of my dad, Charles Wagner on his birthday April 1<sup>st</sup> by Roxanne Harvilla, Tiffany, Matthew and Kinsley Warden

In loving memory of my husband, John and family and friends who are with our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ in eternal peace, by Sharon Haldeman

In loving memory of family and friends by Bob and Terri Livingston

In loving memory of my loving husband, Joseph Harvilla's birthday April 17<sup>th</sup> and my brother, Michael Bright on April 22<sup>nd</sup> by Roxanne Harvilla, Tiffany, Matthew and Kinsley Warden

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

In loving memory of Sandra Ciccozzi, Sheri Beltz's Mom, by Bob & Terri Livingston

In loving memory of my brother, Carl Gerber on his birthday by his sister, Marlene McLaughlin & family

In loving memory of loved ones by Irene & Paul Pecha

In honor of Zion's Volunteers by Irene & Paul Pecha

In loving memory of Sandra Ciccozzi by Laura Fulmer

In loving memory of Paul Pecha by Isabel Houser

In honor of Sue Cunningham's birthday love, Beth Marcavage

In loving memory of my husband John at Easter by Sharon Haldeman

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

In honor of Zion's Volunteers by Irene & Paul Pecha

In loving memory of Allen Pecha by Dad & Irene Pecha

In loving memory of Paul Pecha by Bob & Gail Jones

In loving memory of Paul Pecha by Mike & Kathy Miller

In loving memory of my husband, Paul by Irene Pecha

In loving memory of Paul Pecha by George J. Gernavage, Debra A. Dakos, Harry E. Feinauer, Jr. & PGIM Investments

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

In loving memory of Paul Pecha by Ann Marie & David Hadesty

In thanksgiving for healing and the blessing of family and friends by Sandy Mehalko

In loving memory of Paul Pecha by Dave & Darlene Fetterman

In loving memory of Paul Pecha by Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Mehalko

In loving memory of Paul Pecha by David & Melody Gensure

In loving memory of Paul Pecha by John & Cindy Baranovich

In loving memory of Paul Pecha by John & Carol Dietrich

In loving memory of Paul Pecha by Sharon Haldeman

In loving memory of Paul Pecha by Marilyn Leipold

In loving memory of Paul Pecha by Bob & Terri Livingston

In honor of Glory to God by Michelle Rex

In loving memory of Paul Pecha by Mrs. & Mr. Walter Weston

In loving memory of Paul Pecha by Judy Brennan

In loving memory of Paul Pecha by Rochelle & Joe Evanousky

In loving memory of Paul Pecha by Bonnie Painter

In loving memory of Paul Pecha by Mark & Charlene Valentine

In loving memory of Paul Pecha by Sharon Herring & family

In loving memory of Phil Wolfe by Mark & Danell Wolfe

In loving memory of Paul Pecha by Tim & Heather Koziarski

In loving memory of Paul Pecha by Richard and Sandra Clemson

In loving memory of Paul Pecha by Judy Coleman

In loving memory of Paul Pecha by Susan Paul

In loving memory of Paul Pecha by Louise Jewells

In honor of the baptism of their grandson, Maverick David by Ann Marie and David Hadesty

In loving memory of Paul Pecha by Gerry Zeigler

In loving memory of Paul Pecha by Pencor Services Inc.

In loving memory of Paul Pecha by Sandra Scott

In loving memory of Ralph Derr by Mr. & Mrs. Joe Mehalko

In loving memory of my parents & grandparents at Easter by Gerry Zeigler

In loving memory of Ralph Derr by Gerry Zeigler

***HELPING HAND FUND DONATIONS*** are given to the Glory of God and

In loving memory of the April 26<sup>th</sup> birthday of Mrs. Pauline Schissler by Barry & Marlene McLaughlin & sons



# Palm Sunday Potluck & Sunday School Egg Hunt!





# Pathways to Recovery Conference



***Are you or a loved one concerned about substance use?  
Do you have questions but you are not sure where to get help?***

***Join Us*** to hear from professionals, community organizations and advocates.

- Learn about efforts in Schuylkill and Carbon County to address Prevention/Treatment/Recovery.
- Listen to our panel of local experts and people with lived experience.
- Speak to community organizations that provide supportive services and get valuable resources.
- Interact with the Mock Teen Bedroom – *Parents, are your kids hiding things in plain sight?*
- Childcare activities will be available.

**Monday, May 5, 2025**

**6 – 7:30 pm**

*(Doors will open at 5:30 pm)*

**TAMAQUA AREA**

**SCHOOL DISTRICT AUDITORIUM**

500 Penn Street

Tamaqua, PA 18252

*Coffee and light refreshments will be provided by Hope & Coffee.*

**St Luke's**  
UNIVERSITY HEALTH NETWORK

sluhn.org • 1-866-STLUKES (785-8537)

*The event is FREE.*

Please register here.



The Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA), Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) provided financial support for this program. The award provided \$500,000 with more than 50% financing from nongovernmental sources. The contents are those of the author. They may not reflect the policies of HRSA, HHS, or the U.S. Government.

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# NORTHEASTERN PENNSYLVANIA SYNOD MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

## Saying Yes to God: A Personal Witness to Licensed Lay Ministry

*Written by: Michael Haspe, Licensed Lay Ministry Candidate*

I am a lifelong member of Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church of Tamaqua, PA, where I currently serve as the Christian Education Director. I felt my strongest pull to ministry during the pandemic. It was during the shutdown that God began to utilize me in new ways. I was one of four people—including the Pastor, camera operator, and organist—tasked to broadcast our services live. During this time, I learned to serve as a Cantor, Lector, and Communion Assistant, and I found I really enjoyed being a part of worship leadership. When the congregation came back, the anxiety I had previously experienced that kept me from serving (even though I really wanted to) was gone. I finally felt free to step into the roles God had been preparing me for all along.

Yet how did I get here? Near the end of 2020, I witnessed an unexplainable life-saving miracle. It was then I felt the urge to share my testimony and to preach. At the time, there was no Synodically Authorized Lay Minister (SALM) or Licensed Lay Minister (LLM) program in place, and I didn't feel called to rostered ministry. I wasn't sure what path was right for me, but the desire to be in deeper service was undeniable.

Then, in 2023, my partner of 19 years was diagnosed with Stage 4 colon cancer. My world collapsed. I had a good cry with my Pastor and told her that even though I trusted God, I was afraid. She encouraged me to go home and rest and assured me we would talk more the next day. The very next morning, she called me with news: the synod had approved the LLM program. I knew in that instant it was God commanding my attention.

It felt as though God was saying, "Michael, during this time of uncertainty and fear, YOU WILL FOCUS ON ME." I shared this with my Pastor, and no sooner did it come out of my mouth than my fear turned to calm. There aren't words to describe the sense of peace and clarity that followed.

So that's what I did. I enrolled in the LLM program and kept my eyes LASER focused on God. The anxiety didn't return. Late last year, my partner underwent major surgery to remove the cancer. The pathology report stunned the medical team—what had looked and behaved like Stage 4 cancer was downgraded to Stage 2. Today, my partner is cancer free. While doctors still can't explain it, I can. I had just witnessed a second miracle.







So that is why I am here, and that is why I am so passionate about the Licensed Lay Ministry program. It has given me a pathway to serve others and to share the good news of Jesus Christ, while I continue to discern whether rostered ministry might be the next step. For years, people in my church and community have said to me, “Michael, you are a Pastor.” And whether that becomes a career goal for me or not, this program enables me to explore ministry in meaningful ways. Through it, I can share the Gospel and lead others to Christ.

It's no secret there is a shortage of Pastors. Being a Licensed Lay Minister allows me to serve in ways that are within my current gifts while also challenging me to grow in areas I may have once feared. LLMs can help address the pastoral shortage across our synod. No congregation is too large or too small to benefit from the presence of a lay minister. I believe the LLM program can be a catalyst to grow our churches, open new doors, and revitalize ministries.

The LLM retreats have been one of my favorite parts of this journey. The preaching retreat especially stands out. It provided me with practical tools to write and deliver sermons with confidence. I now feel my preaching is more focused and effective because of what I learned there. Pastor Peggy Wurtele has been a huge inspiration to me. Her motto—“Proclamation, Proclamation, Proclamation!”—encourages us to seize every opportunity to proclaim the Gospel and remind people that grace is FREE and abundant through the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. As a perfectionist, I hold onto her other phrase too: “...and Jesus loves us anyway.” It helps me focus less on small details and more on the heart of the message. That reminder has been freeing and empowering.

I want to leave you with a few questions. Ask yourself honestly: “Do you love Jesus Christ? Do you believe in the free gift and promise of grace and eternal salvation? Do you love telling others about Jesus? Do you love people?” If you answered yes to any—or all—of these questions, then the LLM journey might be right for you. Talk to your Pastor or the LLM Coordinator. Take time to pray and discern if this is your next faithful step.

One excuse I frequently hear is, “I would love to do this, but I’m too old.” Let me tell you—you are NEVER too old to proclaim the Good News! Your ministry could change someone’s life. If you’re even a little bit curious about LLM, talk about it. Ask questions. You might be surprised where God is leading you. The most surprising thing I’ve learned is the impact one message can have. I’ve preached dozens of sermons, and the most humbling moments come when someone quietly tells me that something I said encouraged them, gave them hope, or inspired them to try something new. That’s the greatest reward of all.

*Discover how Licensed Lay Ministry is equipping lay leaders for faithful service. Learn more at [godslove.org/LLM](https://godslove.org/LLM), or email Licensed Lay Ministers Coordinator, Pastor Jira Albers at [llm@nepsynod.org](mailto:llm@nepsynod.org)*

**DID YOU KNOW** that your Mission Support helps fund areas of the synod 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)

ZION EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

101 N. Greenwood Street

Tamaqua, PA 18252

Return Service Requested

This Newsletter was prepared  
Especially for:



*May 2025  
Newsletter*

*Happy Mother's Day!*