

FEBRUARY 2026

VOICE OF ZION

A Monthly Publication of
 Zion Lippe United Church of Christ
 9000 Copperline Rd E
 Mt Vernon IN 47620
 812 985-2437
 website: zionlippe.org

Secretary email:
zionlippesecretary@gmail.com
 Secretary Hours:
 Tues, Wed and Thurs 8:30 am – 12:30 pm

Rev. Jeff Long, Pastor
 Pastor cell: 812 306-4675
 Pastor email: zionlippepastor@gmail.com

Worship Attendance

Date	In Person	Virtual (est.)
12/28	135	81 devices
1/4	143	54 devices
1/11	156	25 devices
1/18	151	12 devices
1/25	Zoom service only	52 devices

Sunday School Average Attendance

January: Adult = 20
 Children = 7
 Youth (grade 6-12) = 3
 Confirmation = 8

SUNDAY WORSHIP SERVICES ARE LIVE STREAMED and RECORDED FOR LATER VIEWING ON YOUTUBE !

You can always join us for Sunday worship wherever you might be. To easily view the live worship service simply go to our church webpage... www.zionlippe.org... and click on the "Watch Live" tab and you will be able to

view the worship service when it goes live. YouTube and search for Zion Lippe.

For later viewing of recorded services, go to



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**With snow, ice, &/or other inclement weather...** Should questions arise concerning if Worship/Sunday School will be held on a given Sunday, cancellations will be announced on WFIE, Facebook, and the church's website.  
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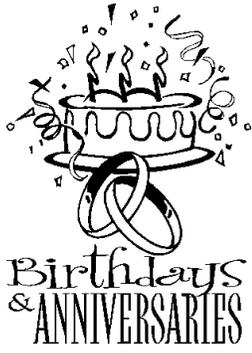
Greeter Schedule for upcoming Sundays:



- Feb 1 – Hans & Cindy Schmitz**
- Feb 8 – Patrick & Emily Schroeder**
- Feb 15 – Gabe & Amy Schroeder**
- Feb 22 – Steve & Cathy Schroeder**

- March 1 – Terry & Mary Jane Schroeder**
- March 8 – Dustin & Janelle Seitz**
- March 15 – Darrin & Lisa Seitz**
- March 22 – Andrea & Bexley Singer**
- March 29 – Ron Strupp**

We will have magnetic name tags available for our greeters, and hand-shaking is optional. Please try to be here about 9:30 am or so. If you know ahead of time that you can't greet the Sunday you are scheduled, you can let Rosie Bogard know – but if something comes up and you can't make it don't fret!



FEBRUARY

In order to share in the joys and celebrations of our lives as a congregation we publish a monthly list of birthdays and anniversaries of members and friends of Zion. Numbers in () represent year.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

- 1 Eleanor McRae
- 2 Kelley Esche
- 6 Patrick Schroeder, Dalton Berry
- 7 Aubrey Becker
- 8 Curt Muntzer, Gary Voegel
Jackson Madden
- 9 Ronald Schroeder
- 11 Rowen Englebright
- 12 Landon Will
- 13 Brandon Reese, Cindy Byrd
- 14 Leon Austin
- 15 Sherry Wuertz, Calvin Crase,
Raelynn Swope
- 18 Will Hargett
- 19 Adam Schroeder, Carl Barchet
- 21 Sarah Will, Pam Ford
- 22 Stephanie Duncan, David Reese,
Sarah Taylor, Knox Gibson
- 23 Regina Arguello
- 25 Darlene Roedel, Grace Cullman,
Levi Patterson
- 26 Cory Lingafelter, Chastity Axton
- 27 Mackenzie Schmidt, Kathy Duncan
- 28 Chellsie Parker, Nitza Long

HAPPY ANNIVERSARY!

No Anniversaries this month

If your birthday or anniversary is not listed or not correct, please call the office at 985-2437 so we may update our records. Thanks for your help!

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Sunbeams Senior Citizen Dinners

The Sunbeams are looking forward to continuing our Senior Citizen meal program for 2026. Our dinners begin at 11 am.

Dates planned for 2026 are:

- | | |
|--------------------|---------------|
| February 19 | May 14 |
| August 13 | October 15 |
| | December 17 |

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Community Lenten

Breakfast & Services. On Saturdays during the Lenten Season, various churches in the area host a breakfast at 8 am with a service following about 8:45 am. Anyone is welcome to attend.

- Schedule: Feb 21 at Christ Church
3601 Washington Ave, Evansville
Feb 28 at Zion Lippe
March 7 at Bethlehem UCC
6400 Oak Hill Rd, Evansville
March 14 at St Lucas UCC
33 W Virginia, Evansville
March 21 at St John's East
7000 Lincoln Ave, Evansville
March 28 at St Paul German Twp
8701 Cynthiana Rd, Evansville
Contact Dwight Esche 812 455-5187 with any questions.

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CHANGE OF ADDRESS



Carol Jo Droege
103 Cub Cove, Evansville IN 47712

When the Church Clears Its Throat

February is a curious little month. It's short. It's cold. It asks us to hold Valentine candy in one hand and ashes in the other. One minute we're talking about love and chocolate, the next we're being reminded that we are dust—and not even the sparkly kind.

Every year, Lent sneaks up on us like that. We're still finishing the leftovers from Christmas when the church calendar gently taps us on the shoulder and says, "*Hey... we should talk.*" Lent, of course, is not about being gloomy or grim. Despite the purple paraments and somber hymns, Lent isn't a season for spiritual sulking. It's more like a season for honest reflection—clearing our throats, cleaning out the attic, and asking some questions we're usually too busy (or too polite) to ask.

Questions like:

- * What am I carrying that I don't need anymore?
- * What habits are shaping me—intentionally or not?
- * Where is God trying to get my attention?

The church has a long tradition of "giving something up" for Lent, and that can be meaningful. But sometimes the most faithful Lenten practice isn't subtraction—it's addition. Adding time for prayer. Adding kindness. Adding patience. Adding the courage to listen instead of react. Adding space for God to do something new.

After all, Jesus didn't wander into the wilderness to prove how miserable he could be. He went to get clear about who he was, what mattered, and how love would guide him—even when it cost something. That's really the invitation of Lent: to slow down enough to notice what's forming us. The news cycle? Our fears? Our assumptions about each other? Or something deeper and more life-giving?

Lent also reminds us that faith is not a solo project. We walk this road together—asking questions, stumbling forward, encouraging one another, sometimes laughing at ourselves when we realize we've been taking the wrong shortcut again. (Grace has a way of meeting us there too.) So as February unfolds—with its chilly mornings, longer afternoons, and the quiet promise of spring—may this season be less about perfection and more about honesty. Less about guilt and more about grace. Less about what we *should* be and more about who God is gently shaping us to become.

And if you happen to forget what you gave up for Lent by the second week... don't worry. That, too, is very on-brand for humanity. God is not surprised. God is patient. And God is still walking with us—one step, one breath, one honest prayer at a time. Looking forward to walking through this Lenten season with you... *PJ*



Reminder that our Annual Congregation Meeting has been rescheduled for Sunday February 1st, following worship.



Ash Wednesday marks the beginning of the season of Lent. Its traditional name is the “Day of Ashes,” a reference to the ancient practice—still observed in many churches—of marking the forehead with ashes in the shape of a cross. These ashes are a visible reminder of our humanity, our mortality, and our need for grace.

Because Ash Wednesday always falls exactly forty days (not counting Sundays) before Easter, it will always land on a Wednesday. Interestingly, neither Ash Wednesday nor Lent is mentioned directly in the Bible. Instead, Lent developed over time as the church’s way of creating space for repentance, reflection, and spiritual renewal in preparation for Easter.

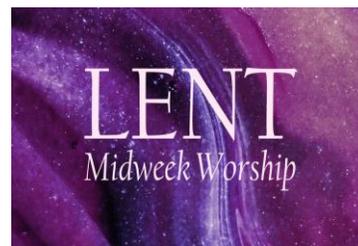
Lent is traditionally a season of self-examination and intentional living. It invites practices such as fasting, moderation, prayer, and the letting go of habits or patterns that no longer give life. Ash Wednesday signals the start of this journey—a call to slow down, pay attention, and realign our hearts with God.

This year, we will begin our Lenten journey together on **Wednesday, February 18, at 7:00 p.m.** We invite you not only to join us that evening, but to commit to walking the season together by gathering each Wednesday night throughout Lent, leading us all the way into Holy Week. May this season be a meaningful time of reflection, growth, and renewed faith for us all.



Wednesday Nights in Lent: Come Hungry—Leave Full
(in all the good ways)

Lent is better when we walk it together—and when there’s dinner involved. You’re invited to **Wednesday Evening Meals during Lent**, beginning at **6:00 p.m.**, followed by **worship at 7:00 p.m.** We will meet for dinner and worship on February 25, March 4, 11, 18, 25.



These evenings are simple, welcoming, and nourishing—food for the body first, then food for the soul. Come as you are, bring a friend, and stay for worship. Want to help make it happen? If you or a group would like to provide a meal, please sign up on the sheet titled **“Wednesday Evening Dinners”** in the foyer. Whether you cook, cater, or creatively assemble—every offering is a gift. Pull up a chair. There’s a place for you at the table.



CPR Classes will be held at Zion on
 - Monday Feb 16, 5-8 pm
 - Tuesday Feb 24, 5-8 pm
 - Sat March 7, 9 am – noon

Please sign up on the big pink poster on table in foyer.
 Contact Carla Barnhart with any questions. 812 838-1710.

Zion Lippe UCC January 13, 2026 Church Council Meeting Highlights

Members Present: Patrick, Pastor Jeff, Adam, Roger, Lauren, Tim, Bob, and Nancy Via Zoom.
Meeting called to order at 6:38PM

Devotions & December Meeting Minutes Review and Approve

December Financials

12/31 YTD Regular Offering: \$221,440.24

12/31 YTD General Fund Income: \$238,584.65

12/31 YTD General Fund Expense: \$230,859.97

Vice President/Membership Report

Long Range Planning – Had kickoff meeting last Sunday after Church

Members present; Nancy deClaisse-Walford, Stacy Wagner, Bob Juncker, Justin Long, Dwayne Mahrenholz, Peggy Mahrenholz, and Alicia Becker. Not present Terry Schroeder.

Initial list to investigate is:

1. Paint second floor education ceiling
2. Basement restrooms remodel
3. Battery backup for solar
4. Elevator life expectancy
5. Solar for garage

Three items resolved: Verified no power on old church wiring just abandoned wires. Church Bell wheel repaired and lubed. Ladder for access to the top exit door acquired from Steve Wolf.

Worship Report - Acolytes are going well – only a few openings in coming weeks; received well by congregation

Education Report

-Discussion on ZNC Director role for 2026/2027 School year– Sandy Schmitt remaining in place and Grace Cullman joining as Assistant Director

-Hacienda give back night raised \$1,946.57 – desire to use funds towards sun shades for the playground – exploring more options and will share them with the council

Property Report

- a. Steeple Repair including aluminum trim \$113,016.08
- b. Paint of the louvers and trim \$11,350.00. Total:124,366.08
- c. Elevator State Inspector made their yearly visit. We passed
- d. The old water well on north side of parsonage garage has been filled with sand. Will sow grass this spring
- e. Ice Maker has been repaired
- f. Steeple repair Update – Discussed finance of expected invoices

Stewardship Report: Endowment Committee meeting on Thursday January 15th

Recreation Report – Plan to have NCAA championship watch party Monday Jan 19 at 6:30 pm in upstairs SS hall.

Council Highlights cont'd.

Pastor Jeff Report

Request for time off before Lent-February 2-8, Approved by Council
Zion Staffing Discussion

- Council Secretary Andrea Singer resigned from Council effective 12-19-2025. The Council is looking for someone to fill the one year spot per constitution guidelines. Council agreed to contact Jeff Droege, Bob will contact him.
- Carol Jo Droege and Sandy Willett are retiring from being pianist and choir director, respectively, after Easter – will be seeking new staff to fill these positions

Upcoming Lenten events

Old Business: Solar Update, Couples Retreat

New Business: Preparation for Annual congregation Meeting, Zoom will be available for those wanting to attend online.

Next meeting February 10th 2026 at 6:30 PM

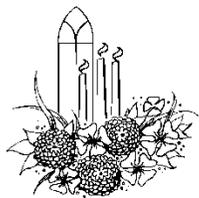
January 20, 2026 – Additional Council Action by email and text

Jeff Droege agreed to fill the Council Secretary position for 2026. Council approved.

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**The Family of Faith Retreat/Spring Gathering** will be held on March 13-15 at Santa's Lodge in Santa Claus, Indiana. All church members (and friends) are invited to gather together and explore the theme "Resurrecting Faith". Please call Hans Schmitz at 812-483-7554 or Gabe Schroeder at 812-449-9445 for more information, or see the materials for sign-up in the church lobby.

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We extend our heartfelt sympathy to the families of . . .

- **Charlotte Green**, who passed away December 25, 2025 at the age of 85. Funeral services were held Dec 29 at Pierre Funeral Home, with entombment at Memorial Park Cemetery.

- **Warren Evrard**, who passed away January 6, 2026 at the age of 71. Funeral services were held Jan 18 at Holy Rosary Catholic Church in Evansville, with burial at Zion Lippe on Jan 19.

- **Pamela Martin**, who passed away January 12, 2026 at the age of 77. Funeral services and burial were held Jan 17 at Zion Lippe.

We cherish good memories of Charlotte, Warren and Pam.

See zionlippe.org for calendar events

