



**ZION LUTHERAN  
CHURCH  
KULM, ND  
2025  
ANNUAL REPORT**



**God is with us!**



# ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING OPENING LITURGY

Recognizing that our faith is a living, busy, active and mighty thing, may the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with each of you.

**And also with you.**

Teach us to love you with all our heart, soul, mind and strength.

**Receive our prayer, O God.**

Descend on our hearts, that we may love others in the ways Jesus loves us.

**Receive our prayer, O God.**

Empower us to be enthusiastic in pursuing your vision for our congregation.

**Receive our prayer, O God.**

Move us to engage issues in our community in Christlike ways, and to pursue deep and authentic relationships with those with whom we serve and partner.

**Receive our prayer, O God.**

Strengthen us to face the barriers we encounter in doing your work, learning to work with others amid disagreement.

**Receive our prayer, O God.**

Give us the ability to adapt to the cultural, economic and social changes that occur in the neighborhoods we serve.

**Receive our prayer, O God.**

Guide us to be a healthy congregation that learns from its failures as well as its successes and offers wisdom to others.

**Receive our prayer, O God.**

As we strive to become the church that we proclaim to be, raise up leaders who focus on the gospel of freedom, forgiveness and reconciliation as given to us through God's indescribable act of love in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Renew us daily in our baptism, that we may discover vitality in our relationships with you, each other and those we serve in the world.

**Amen.**

## Founded on Faith



1 Found - ed on faith, the church— a - live by grace—  
2 Your cross, O Christ, re - news our life each day.  
3 E - quipped by prayer, we live the Spir - it's call.  
4 Grow - ing in grace for God's cre - at - ed earth,  
5 Found - ed on faith, called forth, em - pow'ed to serve,



pro - claims the gos - pel here and ev - 'ry place.  
Bap - tized in you, we learn and teach and pray.  
Em - pow'ed to serve with gifts, both great and small,  
we yearn for jus - tice, peace, and hu - man worth;  
we share God's end - less love with - out re - serve.



The word of God re - sounds through time and space:  
Fed by your love, with thank - ful hearts, we say:  
we bring the liv - ing hope of God to all.  
a world re - stored; a faith - ful, car - ing church.  
Then let us shout a - loud the liv - ing Word!



Al - le - lu - ia!

*All Creation Sings, 1048*

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## A MESSAGE FROM PRESIDING BISHOP YEHIEL CURRY

Dear friends in Christ,

As Lutherans, we are set free to love our neighbors and seek justice. In Colossians 2, we read: "As you therefore have received Christ Jesus the Lord, continue to walk in him, rooted and built up in him and established in the faith, just as you were taught, abounding in thanksgiving" (6-7).

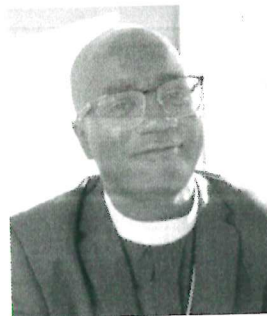
I am abounding in thankfulness for you, church. You are an integral part of this mission as we envision a world experiencing the difference God's grace and love in Christ make for all people and creation. The ministries of congregations including yours, our synods and the ELCA churchwide organization are all working together today and every day so more people may know the way of Jesus and discover community, justice and love. From providing food to people experiencing hunger, to helping train the next generation of leaders that will lead this church, your support is at work here at home and around the world.

Your generosity to each of the three expressions of the church — your congregation, your synod and the churchwide organization — has made it possible for us to do this work

together. Your financial resources, your time volunteering and accompanying others, and your voices are so valued.

As we look ahead to the coming year, I encourage you to continue to walk in Christ, remembering you are rooted and established in faith, and free to love and serve your neighbors. Thank you, church, for the ways you connect with and support our siblings across the ELCA and in our communities.

In Christ,



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Yehiel Curry". The signature is fluid and cursive.

The Rev. Yehiel Curry  
Presiding Bishop  
Evangelical Lutheran  
Church in America

“As you therefore have received Christ Jesus the Lord, continue to walk in him, rooted and built up in him and established in the faith, just as you were taught, abounding in thanksgiving.”

—Colossians 2:6-7

**ZION LUTHERAN CHURCH, KULM ND**  
**ANNUAL MEETING ADGENDA**  
**January 25, 2026**

Call to Order by President Neal Berntson

Devotions by Rev. Linda J. Schauer

Secretary's Report for January 26, 2025 Meeting

Treasurer's Report

Financial Secretary Report

President Report

Pastor Report/ Pastoral Acts Report

Synod Lay Minister (SLM) Report

SWAG Report

Zion Youth Group Report

Women of Zion Report

Trustee Report

Zion Food Pantry Report

Christians In Action Reports

Membership List

ELCA Bishop Report

Audit Committee Report

Nominating Committee and Elections

Nominating Committee for positions in 2027

Old Business

New Business

Close with the Lord's Prayer

**ZION MISSION AND VISION STATEMENT:**

*Our mission: we gather in faith to **worship** Jesus as Lord, **grow** through grace, and **share** the good news of Jesus Christ! Our vision: to be a **community of faith who follows Christ, loves one another and ministers to the needs of others!***

Zion Lutheran Church  
Annual Meeting  
January 26<sup>th</sup>, 2025

President Neal Berntson called the meeting to order at 10:19. There were 37 confirmed members present and three on Zoom. Devotions (in the program) were led by Pastor Linda Schauer. All reports are in the program.

Marla read the Secretary's Report from the 2024 Annual Meeting. Lindsay asked for a correction for the spelling of her name. There were no other additions or corrections. Darrell moved to approve the minutes, with Jeff seconding. All were in favor.

Treasurer's Report (Deann on Zoom) Deann mentioned that Keith had stated if each confirmed member gave \$1,000/year, we would not need to rely on the interest from the Endowments for bill paying. Harold raised a question on the Ministry Pension amount budgeted. Deann explained the difference between the amounts for 2023 and 2024 were because 2023 was a partial year for Pastor. All Pastor expenses are included in the 2024 total. There were no further questions. Pat moved to approve the Treasurer's Report, Krysta seconded, all approved.

Financial Secretary Report

President's Report

Pastor's Report—111 confirmed members=27 for quorum. 147 baptized members

SAM Report

SWAG

Confirmation—Phillip reported that the National Youth Gathering went well.

Youth Group—Liz reported on upcoming fundraisers. The next National Youth Gathering is in three years and will be to Minneapolis.

Women of Zion—Lucy reported that the group is not official any longer, but still active.

Card Ministry

Trustee

Food Pantry

CIA—submitted by Lucy—Pastor reported that CIA is doing a "round robin" schedule for Lent, but Pastor, Mary, Lucy and Neal decided Zion will have our own Lenten services and not participate in that. Neal reported on questioning whether we need to continue with CIA in the youth area; other than the trip to New Orleans for the Youth Gathering, there has not been much involvement from them. Pastor met with our Youth Group, Liz, Bobby, Phillip and Lindsay. When asked, our youth voted "No" on participating with the youth in the CIA. Phillip credited Liz and Bobby for the youth being so positive about staying with a local group and how active they are. It was also stated that Tara focuses on group rather than individual youth groups, which means we lose out on personal relationships.

Neal mentioned that the idea of a newsletter has been brought up. Deann reported that some churches offer hard copy, web access and e-mail newsletters, so members can choose how they want to receive the newsletter.

Nominating Committee—Dylan (outgoing Deacon), Keith K, and Carol. Dylan announced the following names for open positions:

Deacon—***Justin*** and Harold

Trustee—***Keith H*** and Cole

Financial Secretary—***Amy G***

Treasurer—***Melanie F***

Next year's nominating committee will be: Keith K (outgoing Deacon), Krysta, and Marla.

Delegates for the Eastern ND Synod Assembly, which is scheduled for June 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup>, in Fargo, will be Lindsay, Pastor and Mary.

Lynette would like a church time change, and passed out ballots with options of times. Leona stated that with Pastor and Mary going to other churches, that does not work well. Pastor will report results to the council for further discussion.

CIA Representative—Mary moved to keep Lucy on as our representative. Krysta seconded. All were in favor.

Installation of new council members will be February 9<sup>th</sup>.

Meeting was adjourned at 11:50.

Marla Berntson  
Acting Secretary

**Zion Lutheran Church**  
**Profit & Loss**  
 January through December 2025

	Jan - Dec 25
<b>Ordinary Income/Expense</b>	
<b>Income</b>	
<b>General Fund Income</b>	
Thrivent Income	25.00
Vanco Offering	31,630.09
VBS Income	160.00
Weekly Sunday Offering	45,000.46
General Fund Income - Other	0.00
<b>Total General Fund Income</b>	76,815.55
Interest Earned	1,937.85
<b>Other Income</b>	
Patronage	243.87
<b>Total Other Income</b>	243.87
<b>Total Income</b>	78,997.27
<b>Expense</b>	
Bank Service Charges	110.00
<b>Church Expenses</b>	
Janitorial Services	1,004.99
<b>Utilities</b>	
Electricity	6,916.86
Heating Fuel	2,748.78
Telephone	1,414.64
Water Bill	1,159.75
<b>Total Utilities</b>	12,240.03
<b>Total Church Expenses</b>	13,245.02
Church Service Supplies	1,138.21
Conference/Meetings	308.00
Insurance Expense	5,089.13
<b>Ministry Expenses</b>	
CIA Membership	1,058.26
Mileage Expense	5,691.39
Pastor Cell Phone	437.04
Pension Expense	28,702.02
Salary Expense	31,522.36
Supply Pastor	2,100.00
Ministry Expenses - Other	320.00
<b>Total Ministry Expenses</b>	69,831.07
<b>Miscellaneous</b>	
Christmas Bonus	450.00
Taxes	319.64
Vanco fees	275.99
<b>Total Miscellaneous</b>	1,045.63
Office Supplies	358.90
Organist	1,020.00
<b>Parsonage Expenses</b>	
Electricity	2,254.15
Pastor Expense	1,341.49
Water Bill	1,117.55
<b>Total Parsonage Expenses</b>	4,713.19

1:01 PM  
01/14/26  
Accrual Basis

**Zion Lutheran Church**  
**Profit & Loss**  
January through December 2025

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	Jan - Dec 25
Repairs and Maintenance	3,457.44
Supplies	2,284.80
<b>Total Expense</b>	<b>102,601.39</b>
Net Ordinary Income	-23,604.12
Other Income/Expense	
Other Income	
Benevolence Income	400.00
Building Fund Income	71,712.14
General Endowment Earnings	12,161.88
Memorial Fund Income	225.00
ND Endowment Earnings	109,135.00
<b>Total Other Income</b>	<b>193,634.02</b>
Other Expense	
Benevolence Expense	
Eastern ND Synod	103.00
Benevolence Expense - Other	2,000.00
<b>Total Benevolence Expense</b>	<b>2,103.00</b>
<b>Building Fund Expense</b>	<b>48,834.85</b>
<b>Total Other Expense</b>	<b>50,937.85</b>
Net Other Income	142,696.17
<b>Net Income</b>	<b>119,092.05</b>

**Zion Lutheran Church**  
**Balance Sheet**  
**As of December 31, 2025**

	Dec 31, 25
<b>ASSETS</b>	
<b>Current Assets</b>	
<b>Checking/Savings</b>	
<b>HSB Checking</b>	
Benevolence Fund	1,944.00
Building Fund	31,720.29
Memorial Fund	5,772.53
HSB Checking - Other	5,979.39
<b>Total HSB Checking</b>	45,416.21
<b>Total Checking/Savings</b>	45,416.21
<b>Other Current Assets</b>	
HCU Savings	19,159.68
HSB - MMDA	16,388.49
Mission Investment Funds 1	14,230.32
Mission Investment Funds 2	23,111.57
<b>Total Other Current Assets</b>	72,890.06
<b>Total Current Assets</b>	118,306.27
<b>Fixed Assets</b>	
<b>General Endowment Fund</b>	
General Endowment Earnings	37,534.14
General Endowment Principle	52,390.00
General Endowment Withdrawal	-20,524.05
General Endowment Fund - Other	18,593.70
<b>Total General Endowment Fund</b>	87,993.79
<b>ND Endowment Fund</b>	
ND Endowment Earnings	199,394.16
ND Endowment Principle	336,552.60
ND Endowment Withdrawal	-126,475.95
ND Endowment Fund - Other	267,985.42
<b>Total ND Endowment Fund</b>	677,456.23
<b>Total Fixed Assets</b>	765,450.02
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	<b>883,756.29</b>
<b>LIABILITIES &amp; EQUITY</b>	
<b>Liabilities</b>	
<b>Current Liabilities</b>	
Other Current Liabilities	
Payroll Withholdings	28.38
<b>Total Other Current Liabilities</b>	28.38
<b>Total Current Liabilities</b>	28.38
<b>Total Liabilities</b>	28.38
<b>Equity</b>	
Opening Balance Equity	391,633.16
Temp. Restricted Net Assets	30,606.99
Unrestricted Net Assets	342,395.71
Net Income	119,092.05
<b>Total Equity</b>	883,727.91
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES &amp; EQUITY</b>	<b>883,756.29</b>

## 2025 Zion Lutheran Endowment Funds Report

### General Endowment Fund

#### Edward Jones Account

Principle	\$78,174.81
2025 Value Adjustments	\$12,161.88
2025 Withdrawals	(\$2,342.90)
Ending Value	\$87,993.79

### North Dakota Qualified Endowment Fund

#### Edward Jones Account

Principle	\$591,978.33
2025 Value Adjustments	\$109,135.00
2025 Withdrawals	(\$23,657.10)
Ending Value	\$677,456.23

Zion Lutheran Church of Kulm								
Accounts Income	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	Average	2026 Budget
General Fund	\$ 99,379.11	\$ 76,700.99	\$ 67,528.29	\$ 70,121.82	\$ 84,502.29	\$ 76,630.55	\$ 79,143.84	\$ 100,000.00
Building Fund	\$ 3,477.00	\$ 2,850.00	\$ 4,500.00	\$ 2,915.00	\$ 12,320.00	\$ 71,712.14	\$ 16,295.69	\$ 5,000.00
Cemetery Fund	\$ 100.00	\$ 100.00	\$ 50.00	\$ -	\$ -		\$ 41.67	\$ -
Memorial Fund	\$ 325.00	\$ 875.00	\$ 625.00	\$ 3,485.00	\$ 782.00	\$ 225.00	\$ 1,052.83	\$ -
Benevolence	\$ 1,760.00	\$ 2,408.00	\$ 897.00	\$ -	\$ 1,944.00	\$ 400.00	\$ 1,234.83	\$ 2,500.00
VBS/SWAG	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 160.00	\$ 26.67	\$ -
Thrivent	\$ 121.00	\$ 117.00	\$ 118.00	\$ 70.00	\$ 271.00	\$ 25.00	\$ 120.33	\$ 100.00
Interest Earned	\$ 835.50	\$ 431.00	\$ 232.12	\$ 880.63	\$ 1,946.38	\$ 1,937.85	\$ 1,043.91	\$ 750.00
Other	\$ 5.00	\$ 19,346.07	\$ 2,072.09	\$ 187.44	\$ -	\$ 243.87	\$ 3,642.41	\$ -
<b>Total Operating Income</b>	<b>\$ 106,002.61</b>	<b>\$ 102,828.06</b>	<b>\$ 76,022.50</b>	<b>\$ 77,659.89</b>	<b>\$ 101,765.67</b>	<b>\$ 151,334.41</b>	<b>\$ 102,602.19</b>	<b>\$ 108,350.00</b>
<b>Expenses</b>								
Ministry Salary	\$ 35,337.28	\$ 21,437.50	\$ 21,000.00	\$ 41,192.02	\$ 44,352.66	\$ 31,522.36	\$ 32,473.64	\$ 45,000.00
Ministry Pension	\$ 30,344.21	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 27,088.00	\$ 50,301.06	\$ 28,702.02	\$ 22,739.22	\$ 30,000.00
Ministry Education	\$ 195.23	\$ 776.25	\$ 643.00	\$ 630.00	\$ 200.00	\$ 308.00	\$ 458.75	\$ 500.00
Ministry Supply Pastor	\$ 900.20	\$ 1,825.05	\$ 1,546.07	\$ 2,440.00	\$ 166.00	\$ 2,100.00	\$ 1,496.22	\$ 300.00
Ministry Mileage	\$ 640.32	\$ 1,021.76	\$ 2,418.86	\$ 3,632.27	\$ 3,542.95	\$ 5,691.39	\$ 2,824.59	\$ 3,500.00
Ministry Other	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 661.88	\$ 728.00	\$ 1,426.66	\$ 757.04	\$ 595.60	\$ 1,000.00
Youth Director	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 925.50	\$ 2,940.00		\$ 644.25	\$ 3,000.00
CIA Membership	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 887.50	\$ 600.00	\$ 1,058.26	\$ 424.29	\$ 600.00
<b>Total Ministry Expense</b>	<b>\$ 67,417.24</b>	<b>\$ 25,060.56</b>	<b>\$ 26,269.81</b>	<b>\$ 77,523.29</b>	<b>\$ 103,529.33</b>	<b>\$ 70,139.07</b>	<b>\$ 61,656.55</b>	<b>\$ 83,900.00</b>
Church Fuel	\$ 2,265.35	\$ 2,272.90	\$ 4,332.75	\$ 2,828.47	\$ 3,114.59	\$ 2,748.78	\$ 2,927.14	\$ 3,000.00
Church Electricity	\$ 6,124.95	\$ 5,723.08	\$ 6,126.93	\$ 6,349.12	\$ 6,207.82	\$ 6,916.86	\$ 6,241.46	\$ 6,500.00
Church Internet	\$ 1,120.78	\$ 1,305.41	\$ 1,570.37	\$ 1,140.58	\$ 1,294.20	\$ 1,414.64	\$ 1,307.66	\$ 1,500.00
Church Water	\$ 871.73	\$ 912.74	\$ 963.38	\$ 1,040.38	\$ 1,133.57	\$ 1,159.75	\$ 1,013.59	\$ 1,000.00
Church Other	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 435.20	\$ -	\$ -		\$ 72.53	\$ -
<b>Total Church Expenses</b>	<b>\$ 10,382.81</b>	<b>\$ 10,214.13</b>	<b>\$ 13,428.63</b>	<b>\$ 11,358.55</b>	<b>\$ 11,750.18</b>	<b>\$ 12,240.03</b>	<b>\$ 11,562.39</b>	<b>\$ 12,000.00</b>
Parsonage Fuel	\$ 1,588.29	\$ 1,514.17	\$ 915.20	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 1,341.49	\$ 893.19	\$ 8,603.75
Parsonage Electricity	\$ 905.43	\$ 303.51	\$ 475.46	\$ 3,234.61	\$ 2,647.45	\$ 2,254.15	\$ 1,636.77	\$ 3,000.00
Parsonage Water	\$ 1,014.92	\$ 767.21	\$ 889.18	\$ 1,096.99	\$ 1,157.65	\$ 1,117.55	\$ 1,007.25	\$ 1,000.00
Parsonage Other	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 1,151.49	\$ 777.30	\$ 233.44		\$ 360.37	\$ 500.00
<b>Total Parsonage Expenses</b>	<b>\$ 3,508.64</b>	<b>\$ 2,584.89</b>	<b>\$ 3,431.33</b>	<b>\$ 5,108.90</b>	<b>\$ 4,038.54</b>	<b>\$ 4,713.19</b>	<b>\$ 3,897.58</b>	<b>\$ 13,103.75</b>
Benevolence	\$ 5,016.00	\$ 1,675.00	\$ 50.00	\$ 3,305.00	\$ 4,830.00		\$ 2,479.33	\$ 3,000.00
Janitorial Service	\$ 2,160.00	\$ 2,830.00	\$ 2,850.00	\$ 3,075.00	\$ 3,020.00	\$ 1,004.99	\$ 2,490.00	\$ 3,000.00
Organist	\$ 360.00	\$ 230.00	\$ 300.00	\$ 280.00	\$ 430.00	\$ 1,020.00	\$ 436.67	\$ 1,000.00
Guest Speakers	\$ -	\$ 150.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 125.00		\$ 45.83	\$ 200.00
Insurance	\$ 2,888.25	\$ 3,215.75	\$ 3,528.75	\$ 3,754.25	\$ 4,824.75	\$ 5,089.13	\$ 3,883.48	\$ 5,000.00
Real Estate Taxes	\$ 491.70	\$ -	\$ 356.70	\$ 344.34	\$ 349.48	\$ 319.64	\$ 310.31	\$ 500.00
Vanco Fees	\$ 221.39	\$ 109.97	\$ 98.69	\$ 161.25	\$ 227.47	\$ 275.99	\$ 182.46	\$ 200.00
Repairs/Maintenance	\$ 1,863.96	\$ 1,183.11	\$ 2,078.33	\$ 324.97	\$ 3,177.03	\$ 3,457.44	\$ 2,014.14	\$ 2,000.00
General Supplies	\$ 102.57	\$ 481.50	\$ 393.46	\$ 976.16	\$ 733.58	\$ 2,284.80	\$ 828.68	\$ 600.00
Service Prep	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 500.00	\$ 480.00	\$ 1,138.21	\$ 353.04	\$ 500.00
VBS/SWAG Supplies	\$ 167.39	\$ 665.85	\$ 318.58	\$ 401.15	\$ 325.00		\$ 313.00	\$ 500.00
Confirmation Supplies	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 96.13	\$ 563.80	\$ 24.15		\$ 114.01	\$ 500.00
Church Services Supplies	\$ 816.93	\$ 708.79	\$ 1,558.93	\$ 1,312.48	\$ 1,964.47		\$ 1,060.27	\$ 1,400.00
Office Supplies	\$ 609.37	\$ 90.08	\$ 170.16	\$ 717.00	\$ 1,011.41	\$ 358.90	\$ 492.82	\$ 1,000.00
Conferences/Meetings	\$ 640.00	\$ 514.89	\$ 640.97	\$ 1,398.60	\$ 1,819.55		\$ 835.67	\$ 2,000.00
Bank Service Charges	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 119.09	\$ 50.00	\$ 110.00	\$ 46.52	\$ 100.00
Christmas Gifts	\$ 175.00	\$ 175.00	\$ 350.00	\$ 450.00	\$ 450.00	\$ 450.00	\$ 341.67	\$ 450.00
Payroll Expense	\$ 535.52	\$ 1,709.68	\$ 1,606.56	\$ 159.26	\$ -		\$ 668.50	\$ -
Benevolence Fund Expense	\$ 1,410.02	\$ 1,147.69	\$ 50.00	\$ -	\$ 2,886.00	\$ 2,000.00	\$ 1,248.95	\$ 3,000.00
Building Fund Expense	\$ 2,705.28	\$ 3,523.37	\$ 30,805.51	\$ 22,422.34	\$ -		\$ 9,909.42	\$ 4,000.00
Memorial Fund Expense	\$ 1,098.00	\$ 367.45	\$ 106.99	\$ -	\$ -		\$ 262.07	\$ 500.00
Other	\$ -	\$ 1,585.00	\$ 1,721.38	\$ 1,450.00	\$ -	\$ 103.00	\$ 809.90	\$ 1,000.00
<b>Total Other Expenses</b>	<b>\$ 21,261.38</b>	<b>\$ 20,363.13</b>	<b>\$ 47,081.14</b>	<b>\$ 41,714.69</b>	<b>\$ 26,727.89</b>	<b>\$ 17,612.10</b>	<b>\$ 29,126.72</b>	<b>\$ 30,450.00</b>
<b>Total Operating Expenses</b>	<b>\$ 102,570.07</b>	<b>\$ 58,222.71</b>	<b>\$ 90,210.91</b>	<b>\$ 135,705.43</b>	<b>\$ 146,045.94</b>	<b>\$ 104,704.39</b>	<b>\$ 104,222.54</b>	<b>\$ 139,453.75</b>
<b>Net Income</b>	<b>\$ 3,432.54</b>	<b>\$ 44,605.35</b>	<b>\$ (14,188.41)</b>	<b>\$ (58,045.54)</b>	<b>\$ (44,280.27)</b>	<b>\$ 46,630.02</b>	<b>\$ (9,909.91)</b>	<b>\$ (31,103.75)</b>

## Financial Secretary Report: Reporting on the 2025 year of offering.

We had a good year with the participation on the Vanco online portal. We have 19 active users on the Vanco portal in 2025. We had 23 Zion members who deposited traditionally in 2025. Zion also received 4 memorials in 2025. We started raising money to replace 6 windows on the north side of the church. We have raised enough for the windows themselves and we will continue to raise more in 2026 for the labor costs. We also received a full donation for the church siding that will also be replaced.

2025 year-end statements were totaled and be mailed to the out to ensure the January 31<sup>st</sup> delivery.

Amy Giesler

## President's Report

Greetings and welcome. I would like to share a few thoughts that come to mind when I review the past year.

Mary Jo has been filling in as our SAM since Pastor Chimezie left and has continued to fill in for the one week a month that Pastor Linda has off. She has notified the council that she will be resigning her position this fall. We thank Mary Jo for the leadership and ministry she has shared with us over the years.

We are one of the members of a group of eight ELCA churches called Christians in Action, (CIA). A benefit we receive from the organization is the scheduled pulpit and ministerial service when Pastor Linda is off. This has helped us fill our needs in the past and will grow in the future with Mary Jo stepping down. The shortage of supply pastors will continue and grouping together with area churches is in our best interest for the future.

The council chose to move forward to replace the windows in the sanctuary. This project has been discussed for many years but has been shelved before because of the difficulty of matching the arched windows we currently have. The council decided that now was the time to proceed. We will be replacing six of the windows and closing up the narrower one on the south side. A fund raiser for the windows was started this fall. We have raised enough to cover five of the windows. The congregation has again stepped up and made this possible. The church will be resided with steel after the windows have been replaced. The cost of the siding project has been covered by an individual so there will be no cost to the church.

This past year we started a newsletter. The council recognized the need to get information out to our members and decided to give the newsletter a try. Currently it is published quarterly. Pastor Linda and Deann have done a nice job putting the letter together. Please give them feedback on what you like and share with them ideas for future newsletters.

I would like to thank our council members for serving on the board. With the fact that some members in our congregation are aging and there being many activities in the community requiring a commitment of time; it is important that we do not forget the needs within our congregation. The council meets six to seven times a year and oversees the operations and activities of the church. If we want a strong, growing congregation, we need people to volunteer their time to serve on our council. Our numbers may be limited but our congregation's impact in the church and community go far. I welcome the new members to council and thank the outgoing members; Keith Kinzler as Deacon, Andrea Kjergaard and Casey Jans as Sunday School Superintendents, and Troy Johnson as Trustee.

Neal Berntson, Kulm Zion Lutheran Council President

**2025 PASTORAL ACTS  
FOR ZION LUTHERAN CHURCH, KULM ND  
BY: REV. LINDA J. SCHAUER**

**0-BAPTISMS**

**1-FUNERALS AND BURIALS ( 1- non- member)**

Lorraine Jenkins Memorial Service at Christ the King Lutheran Church, Ellendale ND and Burial at Ellendale City Cemetery on April 14, 2025



**1-MARRIAGES- (1 non-member and 1- associate member )**

Joshua Allen Cook and Tabitha Jo Kinzler married on July 12, 2025 at Zion

**5- FIRST HOLY COMMUNION on Maundy Thursday, April 17, 2025**



Olivia Marie Braun  
Sophia Serena Braun  
Hunter James Filbert  
Drake Paul Kjergaard  
Henry Adam Schlepp

**3-AFFIRMATION OF BAPTISM**

**October 26, 2025**

Rylan Michael Beeson  
Kendal Rae Jans  
Shelby Grace Schlepp



**Confirmation Faith Projects**

**0-NEW MEMBERS RECEIVED INTO ZION**

**1- TRANSFERS OUT OF ZION**

Rory Schlenker – transferred to Trinity Lutheran Church, Napoleon ND

# 2025 ANNUAL REPORT "GOD IS WITH US"

by Pastor Linda J. Schauer

*"All this took place to fulfill what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet: 'Look, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall name him Emmanuel, which means 'God is with us'." (Matthew 1:23)*



## GOD IS WITH US HERE AT ZION!

God is present and active here at Zion, Kulm ND! I see God in and through each one of you here at Zion and in the Kulm Community! 2025 has been a wonderful year of ministry together!

Here is where I have seen "God is with us" here at Zion in 2025 :

**SWAG (Saved With Amazing Grace):** I see God in the faces, the questions, the hunger and passion these children have to learn about Jesus! Thank you to Andrea and Casey for organizing and leading the SWAG kids each week! Thank you to Pat R for teaching the kids the beautiful old hymns! I love leading the SWAG kids in a devotion and prayer, and of course singing my favorite song with actions: "*Jesus Loves Me*"!

**CHRISTIANS IN ACTION:** I see God in neighbors helping neighbors- Rostered and lay leaders working together to fill the pulpits, lead worship, collaborate and do ministry together! Monthly, I go to Christ the King, Ellendale to lead worship and Holy Communion. I attend bi-monthly Rostered Leader CIA meetings in person and ZOOM. Thank you to Lucinda Malm, our CIA Board Member for 2025. CIA collaborates in three special fall worship services "*Seasons of Creation*", in which I was a part of the worship planning team! CIA also had a retreat for all eight churches and leaders in March at Gackle, I was on this planning team too!

**LENT:** Lent Wednesday night service is always a special time here at Zion! This year, for Ash Wednesday the three confirmation youth, placed the ashes on everyone's foreheads as the words: "*Remember you are dust and to dust you shall return*", were said and it was very moving! Our Mid-Week Lenten Meal and Worship was very well attended. Thank you to the Youth and Council for meals served. Lenten theme was "*Stepping Stones: Pray, Shine, Love, Help, Look*"!

**FIRST HOLY COMMUNION:** Five 5<sup>th</sup> graders and their parents attended classes "*Fed & Forgiven*"! God is truly present in the bread, wine/juice and God's Word! I saw God in their eyes as I said "*Given FOR YOU and shed FOR YOU*", as we shared the Lord's Supper for the first time—what a joy!

**CONFIRMATION:** Three youth were Affirmed their Baptism and were Confirmed on Oct 26<sup>th</sup>! I saw God in their eyes and heard God acting through them as they read their Bible verses and spoke about their wonderful, very creative Faith Projects! This year, some new changes in Confirmation class: we added the five 6<sup>th</sup> graders for a total of seven youth! Thank you for the leadership and teaching from Lindsay and Phillip King! I see God acting in all the youth here at Zion. **2<sup>nd</sup> GRADE BIBLE PRESENTATION:** I saw God in the excitement of these three 2<sup>nd</sup> grade girls as they received "*Spark*" Bibles on Oct, 26 and the SWAG kids sang too!

**YOUTH GROUP:** Thank you to Liz and Bobby Braun for leading and organizing the monthly Youth group gatherings and events! It is so wonderful to see the youth gathering regularly and having fun together!

**SENIOR RECOGNITION SUNDAY:** On April 27- I saw God in the eyes of our two seniors: Braeden and Addisen as they received their quilts, blessing and prayers for their future journeys- as indeed God goes with them! On May 14, Kulm Ministerial had a very meaningful Baccalaureate Service, giving of Bibles and praying for the Seniors!

**JOSH & TABBY'S WEDDING:** Wedding bells rang here at Zion for the wedding of Tabby and Josh on July 12! I saw God's love in their eyes as they stated their vows to another in front of God, family and friends gathered here at Zion!

**OUTDOOR SUMMER WORSHIP:** I see God outdoors in creation! Outdoor worship: Wed July 2 at Pavilion to "Celebrate Freedom" and Outdoor Creation Worship at Kulm Park on Wed Aug 6 and Rally Sunday moved indoors due to very low temps on Sept 7. Kids played games outdoors and potluck was delicious!

**I see "GOD WITH US":** through pastoral care, visiting in the Edgeley Manor, your homes, nursing homes, at church, downtown, at Kulm Community events and through prayers on the phone calls or texts! God is with us no matter what is happening in our lives- you are not alone!

**KULM MINISTERIAL ASSOCIATION (KMA):** is very active in Kulm, we meet monthly to plan activities and pray for another in our ministries. KMA does National Day of Prayer in May, Community services for Thanksgiving and Good Friday. We assist where needed in Community Vacation Bible School at the Kulm School. Last year, I saw God as the kids "Walked Through the Old Testament" it was excellent learning and this year they will "Walk Through the New Testament" **on May 25-28, 2026 – mark your calendar for Community VBS!**

**KHS HOMECOMING PARADE:** I saw God from a Zion Float and cheering on our football team! **LORD'S ACRE SPECIAL SERVICE & OFFERING:** I saw God in the abundance and generosity of giving for the new sanctuary windows! Thank you all for your generosity!

**RED WILLOW BIBLE CAMP:** God is truly present at the Red Willow Bible Camp in the campers and staff! I ended my three -year term on the RWBC Board of Directors!

**MUSIC MINISTRY:** I see and hear God is with us through the awesome music during our worship! Thank you to Amy, Lucinda and Pat for their beautiful gifts of music!

**THANK YOU:** Thank you to my colleague, Mary Jo Kinzler (SAM) – you and I and God make a wonderful team doing ministry together here at Zion! Thank you from the bottom of my heart, Mary Jo for all you do! Thank you to Kris and Keith for your time & creativity in decorating for each season! Thank you to Deann for the beautiful, creative quarterly newsletters! Thank you to all of our wise and wonderful Zion Church Council for their leadership! Thank you to all at Zion!

**COMMUNITY THANKSGIVING MEAL:** Thank you to all those who help organize, cook and serve our traditional Community Thanksgiving Meal at Zion. This year total of 115 meals!

**ADVENT/CHRISTMAS SEASON:** A wonderful SWAG Christmas program! Zion Ladies Christmas Celebration/ Prayer Partner exchange! On **CHRISTMAS EVE:** I see God in the candles shining and I hear God in the voices of your singing the Carols, hearing God's Word- the story of Jesus' birth "*and he shall be named Emmanuel, which means 'God is with us'!*"

**CHRISTMAS DAY,** we gathered at 10am, we rang the church bells, sang and worshipped Christ the newborn king! **God is truly present and active in & through each of you and through all these events at Zion! Thank you, God- for your never-failing presence with us always as we gather to worship, live and love another in Jesus' name!** Peace be with you, Pastor Linda

#### **ZION MISSION STATEMENT:**

*Our mission: we gather in faith to **worship** Jesus as Lord, **grow** through grace, and **share** the good news of Jesus Christ!*

## ZION LUTHERAN CHURCH, KULM, ND – SLM'S ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2025

First, I am so grateful to be working together as we continue to carry out God's Mission for Zion Lutheran Church. Thank you to everyone who has helped in any way as we are God's hands and feet in this world. Your time and talents are greatly appreciated! And I thank God for Pastor Linda as she continues to faithfully serve as our pastor. My plan for 2026 is to continue as Zion's and Christians in Action's part-time SLM through August 31. At that time, I will be retiring from my position. Thank you to everyone for all your prayers and support these past five years!

Pastor Linda, Lindsay King, and I attended the EaND Synod Assembly on June 7 and 8. Summary of the 2025 Synod Assembly: On June 7-8, 2025, the Eastern North Dakota Synod, ELCA gathered together at the Holiday Inn in Fargo, ND for the thirty-eighth annual Synod Assembly under the theme of "Grace upon Grace."

\*There were a total of 263 people in attendance (177 Lay Voting Members; 70 Rostered Minister Voting Members; 16 Visitors).

\*The business items included reports from officers; the Synod Mission Plan (budget) was adopted, and the only resolution before the assembly was the 2026 Compensation and Benefit Guidelines; Nancy Farnham was elected Synod Secretary; Ron Twedt was elected Synod Treasurer; Synod Council members were elected; and Rev. Nancy Monke was elected to the Committee on Discipline.

\*Participants also heard a State of the Synod from Bishop Tessa Moon Leiseth and State of the ELCA from our churchwide representative, Rev. Tim Brown, ELCA Director of Congregational Stewardship.

\*Rostered Ministers and Congregations celebrating significant anniversaries were acknowledged.

\*Opening worship was Saturday morning with Bishop Tessa Moon-Leiseth preaching.

\*Conference meetings were held.

\*Saturday evening there was a Creation Celebration hosted by St. John Lutheran Church.

\*There were opportunities to attend two of the nine workshops offered.

\*The offering was designated to the Evangelical Lutheran Church of the Central African Republic for education priorities.

\*Closing worship on Sunday included Holy Communion and Rev. Timothy Brown preaching. **\*\*The 2026 Synod Assembly will be held on June 5-7, 2026, at the Holiday Inn in Fargo, with Bishop election.\*\***

Zion hosted its 15<sup>th</sup> Annual Thanksgiving Day on November 27, 2025. We offered dine-in, take-out, and delivered meals. At noon 76 people gathered to eat in the fellowship hall; 9 take-out meals were picked up; and 5 meals were delivered. Twenty-five more meals were served at suppertime for a total of 115 meals served. We received \$958.00 in donations, used \$146.00 to cover expenses (We also had a \$250 Thrivent card to cover expenses.), and have \$812.00 to donate to our window project. Thank you to everyone involved for making this day such a success!

I am looking forward to this year and the work that God has for us to do. Let's remember how blessed we are, and all the ways we can be a blessing to others! To God be the glory!!!

*Mary Jo Kinzler, SAM (Synod Authorized Minister of the EaND Synod of the ELCA)*

## SWAG Annual Report 2025

Pre-School – 1	Kindergarten – 1	1 <sup>st</sup> Grade – 4	2 <sup>nd</sup> Grade – 3
3 <sup>rd</sup> Grade – 4	4 <sup>th</sup> Grade – 2	5 <sup>th</sup> Grade – 4	

6<sup>th</sup> Grade – 5 (6<sup>th</sup> Grade now attends confirmation in lieu of SWAG)

TOTAL SWAG ROSTER = **19 CHILDREN** (13 of which are Zion Lutheran kids)

In March & April, Children once again participated in the Wednesday night Lenten Services at Zion Lutheran in lieu of meeting separately for SWAG. Spring SWAG nights resumed as normal for the end of April & May with our last night of Spring SWAG on May 7<sup>th</sup>.

The 5 – 5<sup>th</sup> Graders had their 1<sup>st</sup> Holy Communion Classes in March & April and received their first Holy Communion on Maundy Thursday Service on April 17, 2025.

Vacation Bible School (VBS) was hosted by the Baptist Church this year as part of our rotational partnership with the local churches. It was held June 2<sup>nd</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> at the Kulm Public School with a theme of “Stories of the Old Testament”.

Fall SWAG resumed on September 10<sup>th</sup> and finished for the year on December 10<sup>th</sup>, 2025.

The SWAG Christmas Program was held at Zion Lutheran Church on December 10<sup>th</sup> @ 7pm with all 19 SWAG children participating that evening. Pastor Linda, Pat Rutschke & Lucy Malm assisted with the program and music.

SWAG resumed regular Wednesday night meetings on January 15<sup>th</sup>, 2026.

Andrea Kjergaard  
Casey Jans

## Zion Youth Group

Checking Balance: \$1437.31

Savings Balance: \$3652.91

We have 14 kids in youth group this year. Youth group started in August. We played games at the church and had snacks. The kids were asked to make a list of things they would like to do this year. In September we had tacos for supper at the church and had a Spoons tournament. In October we all headed out to Kulm Service for pizza and pumpkin carving. We held a jerky fundraiser in October and made roughly \$1000 profit. Those funds are used for future youth gatherings. Keith and Kris Heidinger hosted November's youth group and the kids helped decorate the church for Christmas. (Thank You Keith and Kris)

We hosted a New Years Eve Lock In at the church, starting at 7pm and ended at 9 am. Five kids attended. We had all kinds of food options and breakfast in the morning. We had a tournament style of variety of games. Just to name a few, we played Yahtzee, Horse Races, catch a life savor with only a straw (no hands). The kids had a great time. The tournament ended in a tie. We welcomed in the New Year with fruit juice.

The youth group will be serving the meals for the upcoming Lent services. We plan to take the kids to Thrill Hills and Ice Fishing weather permitting with Bowling as a backup.

## Women of Zion Annual Meeting Report

The women of Zion had a quiet year without any funerals lunches. We hosted a Senior graduation time of refreshments and gave quilts to the 2 seniors. We have had some discussion about replacing or eliminating the covers on the folding chairs, but no definite plans are in place yet.

Lucinda Malm

### Treasurer's Report

#### Income:

Donation	1000
Janice King Funeral (2024)	150
Card Sales	277
Thankoffering	<u>493.34</u>
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>\$1920.34</b>

#### Expenses:

Cards	176.85
Thankoffering	493.34
Christmas gift donations	<u>750.00</u> (\$150 to Anne Carlsen Center, State Hospital, Red Willow, Designer Genes, Kedish House)
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$1420.19</b>
<b>Balance on hand</b>	<b>\$1092.60</b>

Audrey Fregien, Treasurer

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### Card Ministry Report by Pat Rutschke

24 Get Well cards, 11 Sympathy cards and Birthday cards to the children of Zion.  
All cards sent and signed Zion Lutheran Church.

## 2025 Trustee Report

Over the past year, the trustees worked to oversee the care, maintenance, and improvement of church property and facilities.

### Grounds Maintenance

- Cemetery lawn mowing was completed by Brad Kinzler.
- Church lawn mowing was completed by Benet and Gage Giesler.

### Completed Projects

- Installed a new dishwasher in the parsonage.
- Installed new carpet in the fellowship hall.
- Replaced the sump pump in the southwest corner of the fellowship hall.
- Repaired light fixtures in the northwest room of the sanctuary.
- Westside Heating serviced the church furnace.

### Projects Not Completed (Planned for Spring)

- Installation of new windows in the sanctuary.
- Installation of new siding on the church.

Troy Johnson

## Zion Lutheran Food Pantry 2025 Report

The beginning of 2025 there was a balance of \$3949.71. The current balance is \$4,781.52. Being the voucher system is being used, donations this year were mostly in cash donations. Hometown Events, Kulm Public School, and Hometown Credit Union all raised funds for the Food Pantry.

In 2025, there were 41 vouchers and boxes given out.

Submitted by Sherri Maddock

## 2026 Christians in Action Board Annual Meeting Report

Christians in Action is a non-profit consisting of Trinity, Atonement and St. John's in Jamestown, Christ the King in Ellendale, Emmanuel in Gackle, English in Medina, Montpelier, and Zion. Meetings are held over Zoom on the first Sunday of the month, from 6:00-7:00 pm with occasional exceptions. Pastor Kristi leads the meetings. Officers were elected at the first meeting. Terms are for one year, but members can serve 3 years (or more). The main purpose of the board is to oversee the operations. Meetings consist of approving financial statements, supporting plans the pastors have in place, voting on recommendations that are then taken to the congregations, and offering up questions and concerns. An annual retreat was held in March for face-to-face time among board members where the goals were re-visited and brainstorming sessions were held to determine what comes next. Anyone is welcome to attend.

Goals were set at the first retreat and continue to be our focus:

**Core Personnel:** A single call committee was formed with Christ the King, Emmanuel, Montpelier, and Zion to seek an additional pastor. The congregations can decide how to move forward with the call process. Pastor Erik Weber will assist. The vacancy continues. Pastor Kristi works out a schedule so that all congregations have a pastor preaching on at least a rotating basis.

**Sharing Resources:** The Treasure Chest of resources is being utilized.

**Recruit and Equip Lay Leaders:** Each congregation is to recruit members willing to serve as lay minister, local worship leader, local visitation, etc. Specific pastors in CIA will support and train these individuals.

**Expand Area Outreach:** The guiding question is "How can Christians in Action be more visible in our communities?" During the goal setting portion of the retreat, the group decided to pursue developing an online ministry, primarily through Facebook and Instagram. Deacon Tara was hired to be in charge. Zion council opted to decline involvement. The image on the right is the logo. Anyone can go on facebook and check it out.



**Marketing:** The website is NDChristiansAct.org. An article about us was featured in the October issue of Living Lutheran Magazine. A copy of the article will be made available.

**Administration and Support:** Non-profit status has been attained.

In 2025, Zion completed our financial obligation to Deacon Tara. We expressed interest in entering into a contract with her for specific services focused on the ELCA youth gathering. We have received a cost estimate and the council has reviewed it.

Lucinda Malm

# CHRISTIANS IN ACTION

## 2026 Budget by Congregation

	TOTAL	ATONEMENT	CTK	EMMANUEL	ENGLISH	MONTPELIER	ST JOHN'S	TRINITY	ZION	281 BOLD
<b>INCOME</b>										
Administrative fees	4,800	600	600	600	600	600	600	600	600	
Director of CYF Ministries* [salary/benefits/taxes] less housing	45,330	-	-	2,430	1,320	-	9,840	31,740	-	
281BOLD : grants	24,000									24,000
	<b>74,130</b>	<b>600</b>	<b>600</b>	<b>3,030</b>	<b>1,920</b>	<b>600</b>	<b>10,440</b>	<b>32,340</b>	<b>600</b>	<b>24,000</b>
		50	50	Jan - Jun/mo	Jan - Jun/mo	50	870	2,695	50	2000
				455	270					
<b>EXPENSES</b>										
Administrative expenses	4,800									
Director CYF Ministries - salary/benefits	79,590			Jul - Dec/mo	Jul - Dec/mo					
DCYF expenses : <i>continuing ed/ Synod Assembly, etc</i>	2,400			50	50					
	<b>86,790</b>									
Projected Net Loss	<b>(12,660)</b>									

per month>

### ADDITIONAL ACTIVITY : *to be billed actual for reimbursements, as occurring*

- Youth events
- Pulpit supply
- Mileage for DCYF & Pulpit supply
- 281BOLD - participation fees and administrative expenses
- Youth Gathering Coordination / congregation [\$180/mo for 24 months]

\* Monthly Youth Director fees includes \$200 for continuing ed/Synod Assembly, etc

## **Zion Lutheran Membership List**

**January 1, 2026**

Beeson, Rylan  
Benton, Brad & Rhonda  
Berntson, Cole  
Berntson, Deann  
Berntson, Lowell & Carol  
Berntson, Neal & Marla  
Berntson, Phyllis  
Boyer, Diane  
Braun, Bob & Liz  
    B-Olivia  
    B-Sophia  
Braun, Max  
Braun, Zoe  
Filbert, Melanie  
    B-Hunter  
Fregien, Audrey  
Foley, Josh  
Gackle, Darrell  
Gackle, Ruby  
Giesler, Benet  
Giesler, Bradon  
Giesler, Brandon & Amy  
    B-Gage  
Haag, Keith & Kathy  
    B-McKenzie  
Haag, Jacob  
    B-Roland  
    B-Valentina  
    Arwen  
    Theoden  
Hagen, Harold & Karen  
Heidinger, Dustin  
    B-Cade  
    Bentlee  
    Scottie  
Heidinger, Keith & Kris  
Heidinger, Ryan & Marlene  
Jans, Brad & Casey  
    B-Elin  
Jans, Kendal  
Johnson, Trent  
Johnson, Troy & Amy  
    B-Carter  
King, Phillip & Lindsay  
    B-Maeve  
    B-Everett  
    B-Rhea  
Kinzler, Aaron & Robin  
    B-Norah  
Kinzler, Braeden  
Kinzler, Emily  
Kinzler, Keith & Mary Jo  
Kinzler, Rodney & Geri  
Kinzler, Thelma  
Kinzler, Vangie  
Kjergaard, Cody & Andrea  
    B-Drake  
    B-Bailey  
Lundgren, Egan & Krista  
    B-Astrid  
    B-Hazel  
    B-Iris  
Maddock, Sherri  
Malm, Jeff & Lucinda  
Martinson, Ruby  
Nill,  
    B-Art  
    B-Crew  
Nitschke, Nash  
Pesek, Ben  
Pfeifle, Leona  
Roloff, Addison  
Roloff, Cherie  
Roloff, McKenna  
Rutschke, Jim & Pat  
Schauer, Gary & Linda  
Schlepp, Adam & Daphne  
    B-Henry  
    B-Emery  
    B-Penny  
Schlepp, Shelby  
Schnabel, Dylan

Schnabel, Florian  
Schnabel, Floyd  
Terjesen, Justin  
Terjesen, Lynette  
Terjesen, Travis  
Wolf, Ellie  
Wolf, Ken & Ann  
Wolf, Madison

**Members Not In Immediate Area**

Berntson, Kara  
Berntson, Maren  
Berntson, Sarah  
Haag, Eric  
Hagen, Phillip  
Hastings, Mikel  
Hille, Llewellyn & Marian  
Kinzler, Randa  
Kocon, Jasmine  
Lindgren,  
    B-Lincoln  
Magnan, Sherry  
    B-Grayson  
Pesek, Dylan  
    B-Rhyatt  
    Arya  
Praus, Megan  
Schnabel, Dalton  
Schuldheisz-Gibbs, Sandy  
Ukaonu, Heather

**Associate Members**

Cook, Tabitha  
Haag, Xandria  
Kinzler, Owen  
Kinzler, Steve & Joleen  
Land, Bruce & Jacey  
Nelson, Wyatt  
Nitschke, Tom & Marsha  
Nitschke, Wyatt  
Pesek, Stacy & Lason, Dan  
    B-Brody Hetlevedt  
    B-Colt Larson  
Rolloff, Rowen  
Schnabel, Jennifer  
    Eliyanah  
    Emberlynn  
    Ensley  
    Cael

**Inactive Members**

Batsch, Danielle  
    B-Charlie  
Batsch, Diane  
Batsch, McKenna  
Batsch, Morgan  
Just, Ashley  
    B-Benjamin  
    B-Triston  
    B-Spencer  
King, Todd  
    B-Ashlyn  
    B-Trace  
Parsley, Adam  
Wolf, Darlene  
Wolf, Keith & Monica  
Wolf, Kris  
Wolf, Michael  
Wolff, Robin

# EASTERN NORTH DAKOTA SYNOD

## Our Life Together: 2025 Annual Report

### Being The Church Together

*"For just as we have many members in one body and not all the members have the same function, so we, though many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another".*

This scripture text continues to be both my prayer and vision for us as a synod and the Body of Christ: that we are church together. Or as our EaND strategic plan names: to be radically connected as the people of God.

In this radically connected way of being church, each entity (individual, congregation, ministry, synod, churchwide) is deeply rooted in collaboration and shared ministry, while also having distinct expressions of ministry. You as congregations are called to be local communities of worship while you provide direct service and care[BL1] to your communities. Synods are hubs for resourcing and convening, providing support and accompaniment for leaders, ministries, and congregations. Our Churchwide Organization is rightly positioned to steward our global witness and hunger and disaster initiatives. And because we are interconnected, you get to fully claim the ministry of global mission and disaster response as YOUR ministry, done by YOUR church.

This radical connection also means that there is ministry that can only be done together. The candidacy process for new pastors and deacons has touchpoints in each expression. Each part needs to play their role in supporting and equipping new leaders in the church. Radical connection also means that we commit to supporting neighboring congregations, developing new partnerships, attending synod and conference events, and sharing our resources for the sake of the flourishing of the entire Body of Christ.

My invitation to you in this coming year is to lean in even more. I invite you to take one step as an individual, ministry, and congregation further towards connection and community, whether that's with another congregation, a partner ministry, or a synod event. And when you do, share the story so we can celebrate and learn with you.

With gratitude for your ministry,

Bishop Tessa



### Ministry Spotlight

#### Connecting with Congregations

As the landscape of congregational leadership continues to change, a gap in connectivity was identified: the majority of synod communications were centered around a congregation having a called or contracted leader, which is no longer the reality for all. In 2024-2025 three initiatives were introduced to live into our commitment to **"radically connect the people of God"**:

- Re-introducing a mailed, paper newsletter
- A series of listening sessions with congregation members who do not have a called/contracted leader.
- A part-time Congregational Relator to connect with those congregations and parishes.

### 2025 By the Numbers

- 140 ministry visits
- 45 committee/team meetings
- 32 conference gatherings
- 4 ordinations
- 10 installations
- 33 learning and equipping events
- \$352,000 anticipated mission support shared with our Churchwide Organization
- \$162,900 grants received from our Churchwide Organization

## Mission and Priorities

United in Christ, we dare to  
**invite, connect, and act.**

Invest in robust, diverse, and well-equipped leadership for each ministry

Radically connecting the people of God

Living with extravagant grace as the body of Christ

Flourishing as a vital church into the future

## Radically Connecting the People of God

### Ministry Together in 2025

- Congregational Relator and intentional connection with congregations without a minister
- Launch of new SLM Cohort
- Retired Rostered Ministers Brunch
- 1<sup>st</sup> Third of Life Ministry Brunch
- Sunday worship, conference gatherings, council meetings
- Synod Authorized Minister & Mentor Retreat
- Fall Theological Conference
- Synod Assembly
- Pizza & Possibilities Events
- Interim Network
- Castaway Youth Retreat
- Worship Workshop Road trip
- Newsletter & Synod Communications
- Synod Council and Synod Teams
- Technology Survey & Analysis

### Looking ahead to 2026

- Retired Rostered Ministers Brunch (west location)
- Post First Call Cohort
- Professional Development Day
- Stewardship Planning Day
- Conference Caucuses
- Joint Theological Day
- Youth Road Trip (led by Campus Ministry)
- Congregations gathering for weekly worship
- New partnership and parish agreements
- Holy Innovation Grants
- Resurrection Fund Grants
- Vital Church Conversation Events





Evangelical  
Lutheran Church  
in America

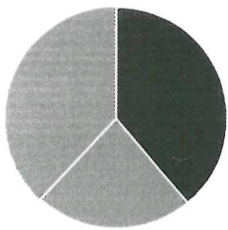
# MISSION SUPPORT: WHAT DOES MY OFFERING DO?

## Eastern North Dakota Synod

Every week, Lutherans across the country gather to worship. Many of us give to our congregation as part of this experience. ELCA members give about \$1.6 billion annually as regular offerings to ELCA congregations and worshipping communities. When you give your offering, most of it stays with your congregation to fund its vital work. A portion — about 5%, on average — becomes Mission Support, given by your congregation to your synod. In FY2024 the Eastern North Dakota Synod shared \$348,074 in Mission Support for ELCA churchwide ministries. Because of Mission Support, our hands can do God's work in more places than any one person or congregation could alone. Together we experience the way of Jesus; discover community, justice and love; and help more people experience the difference God's grace and love in Christ make for all people and creation.



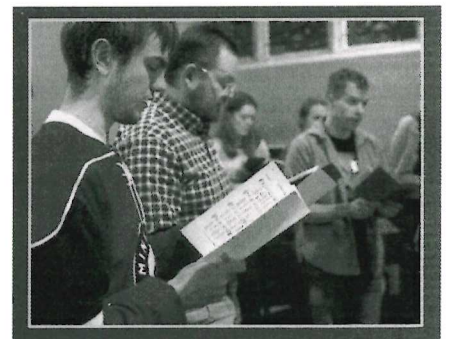
Your **MISSION SUPPORT** funds a variety of churchwide ministries.

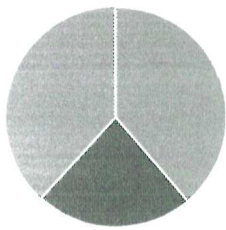


**38% BUILDS CHRISTIAN COMMUNITIES** in the United States by enabling us to:

Thank you for \$132,268 from the Eastern North Dakota Synod for these ministries!

- Plant and support hundreds of worshipping communities.
- Revitalize congregational ministries and reach out to their surrounding communities.
- Promote leadership opportunities, discernment and education through leadership initiatives.
- Support the work of seven ELCA seminaries and 27 ELCA colleges and universities.
- Host events and leadership opportunities for youth and young adults.
- Support regional work through directors for evangelical mission as well as candidacy and leadership managers.
- Prepare and implement a system for recruiting and assigning rostered ministers.

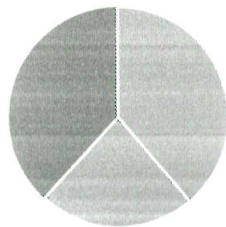




Another **23% GROWS THE GLOBAL LUTHERAN CHURCH** and addresses issues around the world, enabling us to:

Thank you for \$80,057 from the Eastern North Dakota Synod for these ministries!

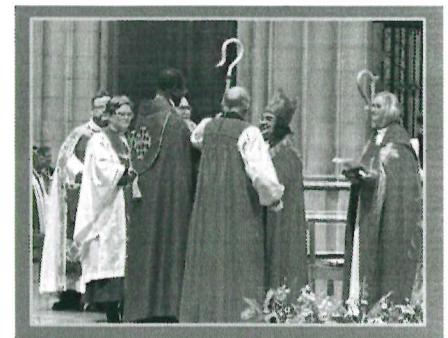
- Accompany new Lutheran churches, expand ministries and train leaders and evangelists.
- Send missionaries to accompany communities around the world.
- Address social inequities and work for justice.
- Cultivate and maintain relationships with 149 other churches through the Lutheran World Federation to strengthen the church and its global work.
- Foster relationships between ELCA synods and 65 companion churches, for a total of 127 official relationships.
- Work with leaders and members of our African-descent, American Indian, Alaska Native, Arab, Middle Eastern, Asian, Pacific Islander and Latiné communities.



Finally, **39% STRENGTHENS AND SUSTAINS THE MINISTRY and MISSION** of the whole church, enabling us to:

Thank you for \$135,749 from the Eastern North Dakota Synod for these ministries!

- Offer ministry resources and opportunities to lay leaders for networking.
- Develop social messages of the ELCA as topical documents to focus attention and action on timely, pressing matters of concern to church and society.
- Sustain ecumenical and interfaith relations.
- Partner with congregations and ministries across the church as they explore new, innovative ways of being church in a constantly changing world.
- Invest in technology and communications.
- Engage in research and strategic planning.
- Create and share resources for faith, discipleship, prayer, stewardship and worship.



Thank you for your ongoing support and faithful partnership! For stories of your impact, visit [LivingLutheran.org/SOFIA](http://LivingLutheran.org/SOFIA). To find additional Mission Support resources, visit [ELCA.org/SOFIA](http://ELCA.org/SOFIA). Scan the QR code to view the new Mission Support video "What Does My Offering Do?"





**JESUS LOVES YOU!**

