

# NEWSLETTER

Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church  
Stetsonville, WI



*“See, I lay a stone in Zion, a chosen and precious cornerstone,  
and the one who trusts in him will never be put to shame.” (1 Peter 2:6)*

## April 2025

### **HOW CAN I BE HAPPY?**

How happy can I be  
when I’m scared of dying?

*“Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on.” (Revelation 14:13)*

Many things are scary. Watching your infant wiggle out of the car carrier that you had momentarily set on the table—that’s scary. Witnessing a car swerve into oncoming traffic—that’s scary. But of all the scary things, death for many people is the scariest.

It’s scary because of what we know and don’t know. We know death is certain. Its cloud hangs over us at every traffic intersection, on every consult with our doctor, and during every violent storm. What we don’t know is what dying is like or what, if anything, happens after death.

If there is no God, then death is the end and that’s it. If so, then death may be final and sad, but it’s hardly something to be afraid of. However, if there is existence after death and God is waiting to judge us for all the things we have done, then death is more than sad. It’s scary.

God does exist. There are no ifs about that! The Bible pinpoints the greatest fear about dying and facing God: *“It is a dreadful thing to fall into the hands of the living God”* (Hebrews 10:31). Yes, that’s scary! So how happy can I be when I’m scared of dying?

If it were up to us to find happiness in the face of death, we would be on an impossible journey. What we need to calm our fears and to find happiness is for someone to do something about death. The good news is that someone has.

God, who awaits you after death, sent Jesus to destroy death’s fear. Jesus began that work by obeying God’s laws for you. Then he traded places with you. He gave you his perfect life in exchange for your sins. And so, with your sins laid on him, he suffered a most horrible death, which earned God’s forgiveness for you. With all sin forgiven, death lost its power. So, three days after his burial, Jesus rose to life from the dead. He defeated death so that it can no longer hold the lives and bodies of those it has claimed. God will raise all people from the dead.

Believe this good news and know for sure that God waits for you with open arms to welcome you into his heaven. This is why God tells us in the Bible: *“Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on.”*

The unknown experience of death may still be scary for you, but because death has been conquered by Jesus Christ, you can live happily, now and ever after.

### **Membership Changes Release**

At her request a member was released from her communicant membership at Zion.

### **With the Lord**

On Friday, March 28, 2025, the soul of Rose Kloth was called out of this world to her eternal home. She was aged 87 years, 7 months and 6 days. The Service of Christian Funeral will be held Friday, April 4, 2025, with internment at Evergreen II Cemetery, Medford.

Remember in your prayers those who mourn her passing. *“Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on. They will rest from their labor.”* (Rev 14:13)

## Offering Statements

Your 2024 Offering Statements are available for you to pick up from the wooden box on the north side of the counter in the church entry.

## Church Anniversary

On Sunday, April 6, 2025, we will mark the 140<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Zion Congregation with a cake served at our Fellowship.

“The first Lutheran service was conducted in Stetsonville on Easter Sunday, April 15, 1884, by Pastor Bernhardt Ungrodt of Immanuel Lutheran, Medford, at the home of John William Hearth. This was a wedding service uniting Hans Silbertson to Emma Bockrandt in marriage according to the rite of the church.

Encouraged by this beginning, August Berner began to interest fellow Lutherans in regular divine services and set aside a room in his home for this purpose. Pastor Ungrodt promised to hold services once a month on Sunday afternoon for which he would receive a salary of \$30.00 per year.

The first service under this arrangement was held May 25, 1884. One year later, April 5, 1885, the members assembled to organize and incorporate a congregation. Fourteen voting members were present. The incorporation was duly organized and the name of Evangelical Lutheran Zion Congregation was incorporated and duly registered on April 21, 1885.” (From the Church’s history)

## *Forward In Christ*

The April *Forward In Christ*, entitled “*The Dawn After The Darkness*,” is available on the entryway counter. Don’t you hate it when the electricity goes out and you have to live in darkness until it is fixed? It’s the best feeling when power is restored and the lights come on, chasing away the darkness

Multiply that feeling by a thousand (probably more) and we may start to understand how Jesus’ followers felt that first Easter morning when they discovered the empty tomb and later saw Jesus in person. Read more about that Easter joy and light and how it continues to chase away the darkness.

Sharing that Easter joy and light is essential to reach those living in darkness. Two authors this month share stories of patience, heartache, and joy as they reach out with Christ’s love to hurting souls. Read “A cup of

coffee and God’s grace” and “Roommates again.”

In this issue:

- “My Christian life: Missionary wife values family ties” A missionary wife shares the importance of family ties.
- “He lives!” “But Christ has indeed been raised from the dead” (1 Corinthians 15:20).
- “Confessions of faith: Tammy Stewart” A single mother finds her Savior as well as answers, healing, and community in a compassionate church family.
- “A cup of coffee and God’s grace” is a story of patience, heartache, and the joy that comes from sharing Christ’s love with a hurting soul.
- Why is it important for Christians to have a devotional life? Why do I need a devotional life? My life is so busy, and I feel as if I know the stories already because of religion courses and being in church.
- “When you feel inadequate as a parent, remember . . .” I know I’m not a perfect parent.
- “Roommates again” Two hospital roommates are reunited in heaven.
- “Christ through us”: A synod convention preview. WELS is not merely a religious organization or a Christian ...
- Please explain: “How will Christians’ bodies be changed on the Last Day?” In what ways will Christians’ bodies be changed on the Last Day?
- “Distorted Bible passages” Examining misquoted, misused, and misapplied Bible verses.
- “Earth-shattering days” It was an unnerving experience for the inhabitants of Jerusalem on that late Friday afternoon in spring.
- “My little room” Death is nothing to be afraid of because Jesus has a room ready for you in heaven.
- “The dawn after the darkness” Jesus’ resurrection chases away the darkness and gloom, bringing joy and light that first Easter and every day afterward.

## Cancellations

Should weather cause the cancellation of Services, it will be announced on the radio on 99.3 WKEB; and on TV on WAOW channel 9 and on WSAW channel 7. You may also call the church or the parsonage.

## Service Streaming

Zion's worship services are streamed at [zionlutheranстетonville.com](http://zionlutheranстетonville.com). A copy of the most recent bulletin is available under the News tab.

## God's plan flourishes in Vietnam

It has been 14 years since Hmong church leaders in Vietnam invited WELS to train their pastors in the truth of the gospel. It has been seven years since the communist government in Vietnam invited WELS to build a theological education center in the capital city of Hanoi. From the very beginning, we knew that the Lord had opened a door to reach the more than two million Hmong people who live in Vietnam and the surrounding countries. We also knew that this door could close at any time. Our WELS World Missions team worked quickly to ensure WELS took full advantage of the time the Lord had provided. And God's work moved forward in ways we could have never predicted.

With the generosity of faithful donors, we built a sturdy building—complete with classrooms, sleeping quarters, and a kitchen—meant to house 60 students at a time and train pastors for Christ's service. Almost two years ago at the dedication, it stood ready, a beacon of hope. But government regulations have kept us from using it for now. The paperwork continues, and the delay has a story of its own. A local church body that once supported us began demanding practices contrary to Scripture—insisting we stop baptizing babies and allow non-Lutheran teachers to train our pastors. In a Martin Luther-esque stand, our partner church broke away, choosing faithfulness over compromise. Since then, they've lost government recognition, which has slowed the process for gaining occupancy of the theological education center. Yet we trust that access could come any day, because God's timing is not ours.

Some might see this as a delay, a plan stalled. But God has provided paths we never expected. Since we began, our sister church has grown to over 160,000 souls, hungry for the Word. Fifty-five pastors have been trained—not in that building but in rented spaces and internet classrooms where God gathered them to learn. Another 120 seminary-level students are studying now, their hearts set on preaching the gospel. Catechism classes, led by trained leaders, echo through every congregation in the rural training program that was developed by WELS missionaries and is now being

supported by 12 fully trained Hmong pastors. This flock proudly calls themselves Lutheran, not because of a building but because of the truth they've learned through WELS training.

Take a pastoral student and his brother, for example. When they feared funding had faltered, they sold their family's water buffalo—a sacrifice that cut deep in their rural life—so one could join the biblical training they feared might pass them by. Today, that student is a pastor, shepherding souls, his brother's faith beside him. What earthly hurdles could stop God's Spirit at work?

These twists and turns and extra red tape have given us more time—time to train, time to grow, and time to stand firm without interference. We thought we needed that building. God knew we needed him—and him alone. In his hands, this work triumphs, brimming with hope for tomorrow.

## A Lutheran church body in Tanzania is recommended for fellowship with WELS

The WELS Commission on Inter-Church Relations (CICR) has the responsibility of overseeing our synod's relationships with other Lutheran church bodies in the United States and around the world. The vast majority of the commission's time is spent strengthening the bonds of fellowship with our sister church bodies. But the commission also monitors what is going on in other Lutheran church bodies with which we are not in fellowship.

The CICR also communicates with Lutheran church bodies that are seeking fellowship with WELS. In recent years, discussions with such churches have led our synod to declare fellowship with Lutheran churches in Ethiopia, Kenya, and Uganda.

This beautiful trend continues as the worldwide fellowship expands. After several years of detailed doctrinal discussions between WELS representatives and the Africa Mission Evangelism Church of Tanzania, the CICR is recommending that our synod publicly and officially declare fellowship with the Africa Mission Evangelism Church at this summer's synod convention. Such celebrations of newly established fellowship are always one of the highlights of a synod convention.

The Africa Mission Evangelism Church is a growing Lutheran church body that separated from its

previous affiliation because of doctrinal reasons. It consists of 12,000 members in 78 congregations and is served by approximately 65 pastors. The head of the Africa Mission Evangelism Church is Bishop Baltazar Kaaya. Bishop Kaaya will be attending our convention this summer to tell us more about our new partner in Africa.

We thank God that he continues to build his church.

## Former ELFK President Called Home

On January 11, 2025, Pastor Rolf Borszik—a former president of the Evangelical Lutheran Free Church (ELFK) of Germany—was called to his heavenly home. He died at the age of 75 after a heart attack, and he was buried as a Christian in Nerchau, Germany, on January 20 with a large crowd in attendance.

Some in the CELC may remember him. Among other things, he attended the 2005 CELC convention in Japan, and several times he visited the Ukraine. With this obituary, we would like to take a brief look back on his life.

Rolf Borszik was born on September 22, 1949, in Chemnitz, Germany. After successfully completing his schooling, he first learned a technical profession at the East German State Railways (Deutsche Reichsbahn).

Originally, he was a member of the Evangelical Lutheran State Church. With God's help, the children's catechist of his parish succeeded in opening his heart to faith in Jesus. He was grateful for this throughout his life. Through his active participation in the church's youth organization, Rolf decided to train as a deacon. From 1968 to 1972, he completed the corresponding training in Moritzburg near Dresden and then worked as a children's deacon in the Meissen church district of the Evangelical Lutheran State Church. During this time, he married Rosemarie, who had also been trained as a children's deacon. The couple was given six children.

Starting in 1976, Rolf Borszik worked as a deacon in the parish of Pomßen (near Leipzig) and, after 1980, in Nerchau (near Grimma). There he met Rev. Karl-Heinz Stiehler, who opposed the increasing pluralism and decline of confessionalism in the Evangelical Lutheran State Church. Rolf Borszik shared this perspective, and in 1982, he and his family joined those who were beginning to leave. That is how he came

to the Evangelical Lutheran Free Church (ELFK). Because he was no longer able to practice his profession as a deacon in the regional church, he worked as a handyman in the Farmers' Trade Cooperative (BHG) starting in 1982.

In 1986, he applied to study theology and came to the Lutheran Theological Seminary in Leipzig. In 1988, he was able to complete the advanced courses (building on his deacon training) with the theological examination. He then worked as a vicar in Zwickau-Planitz and the Vogtland parishes. On January 10, 1989, he was ordained to the holy ministry in Lengenfeld by President Gerhard Wilde, and then he served as pastor of the ELFK in Lengenfeld and Plauen until his retirement in 2015.

His heart beat for the youth work of our church. He was always involved in retreats and other events for the whole church.

In 1994, the 80th Synod of the ELFK in Crimmitschau appointed him to the Synodal Council and elected him vice president. From 2002-2010, he served the Evangelical Lutheran Free Church as president. From 2007-2015, he also worked as a religion teacher at the Dr. Martin Luther School in Zwickau. He spent his retirement with his wife in his house on the outskirts of Grottewitz, near Nerchau. The last 20 years were overshadowed by illnesses, including a brain tumor. The temptations associated with this could not take away his childlike, cheerful faith. He was happy to bear witness to this when he recently reported vividly on his path to the ministry at the seminar day in Leipzig in September 2024.

He now sees what he had believed. The eternal light shines for him! *"Multitudes who sleep in the dust of the earth will awake: some to everlasting life, others to shame and everlasting contempt. Those who are wise will shine like the brightness of the heavens, and those who lead many to righteousness, like the stars forever and ever."* (Daniel 12:2-3)

☺ *For A Smile* ☺

A woman was out driving with her husband. She was speeding along about fifty when a motorcycle cop appeared alongside and indicated for her to pull over. The cop looked at her and said, "Hmmm...I'm going to put you down for fifty-five." She turned to her husband. "See! I told you this hat makes me look old."

## April

1. Matthew 22:1-14
2. Matt. 22:15-46
3. Matt. 23:1-22
4. Matt. 23:23-39
5. Matt. 24:1-31
6. Matt. 24:32-25:13
7. Matt. 25:14-46
8. Matt. 26:1-16
9. Matt. 26:17-29
10. Matt. 26:30-56
11. Matt. 26:57-75
12. Matt. 27:1-14
13. Matt. 27:15-31
14. Matt. 27:32-50
15. Matt. 27:51-66
16. Matt. 28:1-20
17. Jeremiah 26
18. Jer. 27, 28
19. Jer. 29
20. Jer. 30:1-31:26
21. Jer. 31:27-40
22. Jer. 32, 33
23. Jer. 34
24. Jer. 35
25. Jer. 36
26. Jer. 37, 38
27. Jer. 39-41
28. Jer. 42, 43
29. Jer. 44, 45
30. Jer. 46, 47

## Through My Bible

### In 3 Years

To the left is a Bible Reading schedule for the month of April. It is hoped that such a schedule will help each of us “*grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.*” (2 Peter 3:18) As we grow in God’s Word, we will be anchored securely on the solid foundation of Christ crucified and arisen. Also, we will be better prepared to give the reason for the hope that we have. (1 Peter 3:15)

### Hospital

Please notify Pastor Russow of your hospital stay. By notifying Pastor Russow, he can visit you and include you in his private prayers, and in the Prayer of the Church in worship, if you so desire.

## Offerings

Please remember the ongoing financial needs of the church. If travel, illness or other reasons keep you from attending, remember God’s amazing grace in daily forgiveness and in supplying your daily bread. Our offerings are part of how we thank Him.

## Kwik Trip Scrip

The Ladies of Zion (LOZ) thank you for your continued support of their Kwik Trip Scrip fund raising program. Kwik Trip gift cards for the purchase of fuel or in store purchases in various denominations. Scrip cards may be purchased from one of the Ladies of Zion.

## Private Communion

If physical problems prevent you from attending services and you desire private Communion, please schedule a visit with Pastor Russow. To contact Pastor Russow, please call: (Office): 715-678-2208; (Home): 715-678-2204; or (Cell): 715-965-1782.

## Address or Phone Change?

Please inform Pastor Russow of any address or phone change you make. Please update your address with the church. If you no longer have a land line, or a cell phone is the best way to contact you, please inform Pastor Russow.