



Eye on Zion

A Quarterly Newsletter for the People of Zion Lutheran Church

May-June-July
2025

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Lead Pastor

Pastor Joel Pancoast

Pastor

Pastor Veronica Gould

Intern Pastor

Rosalie Brunner

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Alyssa Hart—High School / Nourish

Pam Stevens—Sacred Space

Director of Worship and Music

Noelle Bauman-Stucky

Organist / Praise Band Director

Neil Forsythe

Bell and Chimes Director

Neil Forsythe

Accompanist / Collaborative Artist

Ryan Marvel

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Lindsey Walter

Worship Technology Coordinator

Stig Oresjo

Bookkeeper

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Childcare

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Summer of Psalms: Songs of the Heart

Pastor Veronica Gould

There's a very old monastic tradition of reading through the entire book of Psalms in a week, from Psalm 1 to Psalm 150, and starting over again at Psalm 1. This would be done in times of worship with the entire community, and I imagine it has a few noteworthy benefits.

1. Repetition builds familiarity. As they heard the words over and over again, they could begin to memorize the psalms and hold them in their heart for the time when the soul would need them most.
2. Reading with context. Hearing each psalm in the context of the whole book of psalms can offer deeper meaning as they came to understand the relationship between hope and praise, lament and trust.
3. Bringing the whole self to God. Because the 150 psalms draw on a range of human experiences, they didn't have to hide certain emotions or sugarcoat their prayers. Being formed by the psalms gives

permission to be honest in prayer.

I've never personally tried reading all 150 psalms in a week, but I did read all 150 psalms in a semester in school. With the advice of my music professor, I reflected on each of the psalms in poetry, art, journaling, and other creative expressions. What I discovered in this process was that people thousands of years ago had a lot of the same questions of faith, fears, and longings that I had. People wondered whether God was present or absent. They longed for justice for themselves or others. They marveled at the beauty of the earth and waxed poetic about the joy of simply being alive.

Today, as a pastor, I am receiving more prayer requests than I ever have before for the future of our nation: prayers for leadership, prayers for protection for the vulnerable, prayers for God to save us. Friends, I have been praying for you and for this nation we all live in. I believe our prayers reveal both fear and hope.

Continued on page 2.

Summer of Psalms: Songs of the Heart continued from page 1.

The psalms teach us how much God can do with both our fear and our hope when we give them over in a spirit of prayer.

What is a psalm? At once a poem and a prayer, a song and a proclamation, these collections of verses express the depth and complexity of our human lives and invite us to discover God's presence in it all. Martin Luther called the psalms a "little Bible" because "most beautifully and briefly it embraces everything in the entire Bible."

In the psalms, we also discover both the personal and communal nature of faith. Each of us has our own unique experience of God. And we are called to share our faith and be transformed in community with other believers and seekers. The scriptures testify to our need to share our lives in Christian community—the highs and the lows. Some psalms were written from the absolute depths of the human experience. We will hear psalms that express sorrow, anger, vengeance, and repentance. As we move through these "songs of the heart," I invite you to listen with an open spirit, even if the particular "song" wasn't written for you. We rejoice with those who rejoice and weep with those who weep. How might our hearing songs from the depth help us to grow in empathy and love for the suffering?

The shape of the psalmbook also reveals a fundamental truth about God's redemptive nature in the world. In the light of faith, sorrow turns to praise; the prisoners are set free. We have reason to praise! There is hope for us. There is hope for the whole world.

There's a trick I like to teach to children when we read the Bible together. If you're looking for the psalms, split your Bible right in half. In most Bibles, we find the psalms right in the middle. Right in the middle of God's story of redemption. Right in the middle of our lives. Right at the center of our faith is a place for prayer and praise, for the songs of our heart. Let's sing together.

This summer, we will be journeying through the Book of Psalms in our worship:

June 15	Pilgrimage
June 22	Individual Lament
June 29	Communal Lament
July 6	Creation
July 13	Trust
July 20	Imprecatory (Cursing)
August 3	Communal Praise
August 10	Penitential
August 17	Messianic
August 24	Psalms of Zion
August 31	Wisdom

Music Ministry

Noelle Bauman-Stucky

Reflecting on Songs of the Heart

From Diane Farnham of Zion's Chancel Choir

I cannot remember a time when music wasn't a part of my life. According to my mom, I sang "Jesus Loves Me" for church when I was 2 and "I'd Love to Live in Loveland" for the Rotary Club when I was in kindergarten! (Our son Cale has a framed copy of that song in his home!) Music has been a part of joyful celebrations in my life and has gotten me through many hard times. Being a part of the Zion choir has given me so much love and support; I can't imagine life without my Zion family!

There is a phenomenon where you actually get chills when listening to music, and I have experienced that many times. Certain chords or harmonies (the last notes of a song by Take 6), singing Handel's Messiah and Bach's Saint Matthew's Passion with the Bethany Oratorio Society when I was in college, attending the Nutcracker every year when I was a child, singing The Ground with the Zion and Namaqua choirs the last two weeks. I could go on and on. All have been spiritual moments for me involving music.

We are so blessed to have such wonderful music leadership at Zion and I hope to be a part of worship here as long as I can!

—Diane Farnham

There is a syndrome named after the French author Marie-Henri Beyle who visited Florence, Italy, and was overwhelmed by the beautiful Basilica of Santa Croce. "Stendahl Syndrome" (named after Beyle's pseudonym) includes the symptoms dizziness, sweating, rapid heartbeat, and fainting, none of which sound

particularly enjoyable without planning. This is not the only attempt at defining the physiological and emotional responses some people have to art and music. There are many such as frisson (goosebumps or shivers) or art attack. Knowing we are capable of these responses thanks to neurotransmitters, dopamine, and the intricate workings of our brains can seem both awe defining and diminishing. Not even past experiences can claim cause as even young children show intense emotions when hearing and seeing beautiful things. I appreciate Diane sharing her experiences, and I know many of our musicians and congregants will appreciate and relate. As we reflect and study the psalms as a work of art where poetic writing and singing come together, I look forward to the unexpected or unexplained frisson moments.

Summer Song Leaders

Though our choir season has come to an end, there will still be many opportunities to share your voices in song and praise through the summer. Song leaders are welcome during our summer outdoor services. If you would like to lead during our 8:30 a.m. traditional service, please send me an email with the date(s) you are available. Email: noelle@zionloveland.com

Summer Musical Camp

This year we are combining with Trinity Lutheran Church to hold a week-long summer musical camp from June 2-6. The sessions will run from 9:00 a.m.-12:00 noon and will include song, dance, character development, snacks, and good times. Interested families can email Noelle at noelle@zionloveland.com or watch for information to go out to young families and Sunday school families.

Intern Update

Intern Pastor Rosalie Brunner

Happy Spring! It's difficult to believe I'm rounding out nine months with you all at Zion! The time has simultaneously flown by, and I feel as though I've been a part of this community for many years. It is a continued joy to lead and learn alongside each of you.

Many folks have asked what next steps look like for my journey to ministry beyond Zion. In these next weeks, I will be going through a process called "approval" with my home synod's candidacy committee. That synod is called Lower Susquehanna (LSS) and is made up of just over two hundred churches across several counties in south-central Pennsylvania. I've met with the LSS candidacy committee twice before—once prior to entering seminary, once prior to internship—and now, for a third time, wrapping up my year with you all. Alongside paperwork, evaluations, and essays, the interviewing committee will be looking at everything from my theological articulation to my growth throughout internship. Once I am approved (fingers crossed), I will be eligible for ordination upon being called to my first-call congregation which is another process entirely and one I'm excited to share with you all once we make it there!



Intern Pastor Rosalie delivers the Easter sermon in the memorial garden for the sunrise service.

And because of you all and the tremendous support I've received here, I will have so much to share with this committee! Over the past weeks especially, I've had the great joy of walking through the season of Lent at Zion, leading and coordinating Holy Week services, and preaching Easter Sunday. The last is a gift that not every intern at every church receives, and I cannot fully express my gratitude for the opportunity and the positive response I heard following the Easter services. In hope for a long, rich life serving in ministry, this congregation and my first Easter sermon, surrounded by bubbles and butterflies, will always keep a special place in my heart. Thank you to each and every one of you for being a part of that milestone moment.

Internship

Pastor Joel Pancoast

Intern pastors make my heart sing! Hosting interns is a gift to the wider church, as we provide space for people in their final preparations toward pastoral ministry, but it is clearly a gift to ourselves as we celebrate the ministry, relationships, and creativity of each of our interns to date. While we still have time with Intern Pastor Rosalie, who will be with us through July 31, we want to take full advantage of the relationship and gifts God has given us through her. Please plan to join us Sunday, July 27, for Rosalie's last Sunday with us, including a special reception to give thanks for her presence with us and send her with a blessing for her next steps in ministry. At the same time, we are already preparing for our next intern pastor. We finally received confirmation in early May that Max

Miller will begin in early August as Zion's fifth intern pastor, and I invite you to read a brief introduction from him below.

Some of you may know from Zion's annual meeting at the beginning of the year that though we struggled to keep the internship in this year's budget, we had a generous gift to keep this ministry going. We will be sending information soon regarding an appeal to match this donor's gift in order to provide a future beyond just "one more year." Please stay tuned for that information, and if this ministry and the people who have served at Zion as interns are important to you, consider how you might be able to contribute beyond your regular giving to Zion's mission.

Meet Max, Zion's 2025-2026 Intern Pastor



Hailing from Falls Church Virginia, Zion's next intern pastor, Max Miller, has Colorado roots.

Max Miller, 26, is a native of Falls Church, Virginia, near Washington, D.C. Max graduated with his Master of Divinity from Duke Divinity School in May 2024 and just completed his Lutheran year at United Lutheran Seminary. Max also holds a Certificate in Preaching from Duke. He graduated from Susquehanna University in 2021 with degrees in history and religious studies. Max is a rabid sports fan, rooting for the Washington Nationals, Washington Capitals, and Duke Blue Devils. Max enjoys hiking, fly fishing, and golfing (although he is not very good). Max's late father, Don, was born and raised in Montrose, Colorado, and spent the summers working on the family farm, which still resides 18 miles northwest of Genoa in Lincoln County. Max considers himself a proud Coloradan by association. He is excited to be at Zion and to be able to continue his pastoral formation and spend some time with distant family.

Invitation Practices—How can we challenge ourselves to invite others into a life in Christ?

Intern Pastor Rosalie Brunner

Our Easter season theme is called *Sent by the Holy One*, which originally stemmed from a passion to teach and learn about invitation into a life in Christ and telling faith stories beyond the walls of Zion. How are you called to share your faith with others, even when it feels difficult? That can be a big question and one that, for some, is marked with fear and anxiety. What if I say something wrong? What if I'm judged or rejected? What if I hurt someone or our relationship changes?

We are addressing these fears alongside practices of invitation and telling our stories of faith in authentic ways throughout the month of May in the *Walking to Emmaus* adult education class, Sundays at 9:30 a.m. Join us any week to explore these ideas and learn how to walk alongside others in the hills and valleys, joys and challenges of faith just as Jesus walked alongside the travelers to Emmaus.

Unable to join us on Sunday mornings? Here are a few ideas for you to explore the practice of invitation and sharing your journey to a life in Christ with others.

100 Names

Begin my making a list of 100 people you know. They can be friends, family, coworkers, acquaintances, etc. Ask yourself if you've ever shared your faith with them or maybe they have shared theirs with you. What did that look like or what could that look like? Once you have your list, consider the ways you could invite even just one person on that list into a life in Christ.

Faith Story Practice

As we addressed before, sometimes sharing our own journey of faith can seem intimidating or scary. Find someone you trust, maybe even someone who knows about your journey to faith

already and take time to practice telling your story again. Better yet, go back and forth! Share and listen, then consider what the experience was like for you and how you could imagine sharing that same faith story with someone new.

Front Porch Challenge

Do you know your neighbors? Sometimes it is easy to miss the lives of those around us and the opportunities we have each day for connection. Try sitting on your front porch or in a shared common area of a building for 30 minutes. Notice who is going by, say hello, and if the time is right maybe start a conversation to check in on their life. Invitation so often begins with relationships, so let's begin there.

Dinner Party

We often have friends and family in different circles of our life who may never overlap. Let's change that! Plan a dinner party either at home or out at a restaurant. Invite friends from Zion and friends who may not have a church family and see what happens. Chances are between conversation and curiosity, faith will be shared in new and profound ways.



Invite friends from Zion and friends who may not have a church family to a dinner party and see what happens.

THE TABLE Brunch Church

Pastor Joel Pancoast

Last year, I explored many different churches around the country that have hosted a meal-church long enough to share what they have learned from the experience. After considerable conversation, prayer, and planning, we will be offering several opportunities this summer during the second service time (10:30 a.m.) on the first Sunday of June, July, and August to experience “The Table,” an experience of a gathering at the table to break bread in community with Jesus.

This will be a wonderful time of fellowship, worship, and a meal for you, but one of the most important things that others have learned after hosting a meal-church is that it is a perfect experience to invite those who do not have a church home, or may have never even been to a Christian worship. As much as some of us love our experience of worship, there are others for whom it feels strange, either because they have never been taught the meaning and purpose of worship or just do not resonate with worship as we know it. In the November 2024 - January 2025 edition of the *Eye on Zion*, I wrote that a meal-church is a “fresh expression that provides an opportunity to reach the growing number of people who for many different

reasons may have little interest in church today and yet do recognize the value of community, especially over a meal.”

A perfect experience to invite those who do not have a church home, or may have never even been to a Christian worship—

This holy experiment will only work with your help.

This holy experiment will only work with your help, and here are a few suggestions to help kick off The Table:

- We have already had several people offer to help with the meal and set up, but if you are interested in that, please let one of the pastoral staff know. We may invite different committees, small groups, or other ministries to help host or sponsor The Table later in the summer to provide an opportunity for each group to grow together as they serve and talk about what the work of their group does to make a difference.
- Take a flyer or a poster from the office to hang somewhere around Loveland, in public spaces, offices or other places where you work, or retail shops. Please be sure to get permission before hanging anything.
- Most important...invite someone to The Table. You don’t have to give a long, complicated description of what it is. Just invite them to join you at The Table to eat brunch and talk about God. Then, let God do the rest of the work.

Join us at The Table in the fellowship hall at 10:30 a.m. June 1, July 6, and August 3, and bring a friend, neighbor, or acquaintance to share the abundance!

Invitation Task Force Update

Intern Pastor Rosalie Brunner

Wondering what the invitation task force has been up to? We are happy to share! You may have noticed a few subtle changes around Zion designed to welcome visitors to our space in the best possible way.



The updated welcome board features statements of welcome and community resource information.

Entering through those same doors, you may also spot the bright and shiny, newly named, invitation station! Staffed throughout Holy Week, this welcome center space served as a conversation starter, over the candy bowl, to connect with visitors and introduce them to some of Zion's recurring opportunities for fellowship, learning, and service.

The bulletin is also looking slightly different these days! There is a box with basic information for visitors that originally lived on the front cover and has now moved to the inside cover. It shares resources for kids, invitation/instruction for communion, and reminders about the welcome of this space for all!

Why make these little adjustments? You'd be surprised what small details can truly make a person feel welcome and included in a space. Entering a church for the first time, having basic information about how communion works, or where I can include my child in the service can make a world of difference! Do you have ideas about how we can continue to be invitational into this church space and into a life in Christ? Join our team to offer some ideas! Contact Intern Pastor Rosalie (internpastor@zionloveland.com) with any questions or interest in this important work!



Check out the newly named invitation station; connect with visitors about Zion's recurring opportunities.

Local Service Committee Update

Erin Bachman, Committee Chair

As I reflect on our songs of the heart theme, and especially how it relates to the work that the local service committee is doing at Zion, I'm reminded of one of my all-time favorite worship songs: "Build Your Kingdom Here" by Rend Collective. It's one we occasionally sing together in second service, and it never fails to leave me in a good mood. It's a wonderful reminder of the importance of our call to bring God's kingdom to earth. While the whole song is wonderful, this line has stuck with me: "*We are the church, and we are the hope on earth.*" This line feels like a great encapsulation of why we do the work we do on the local service committee. While we know we have hope in God through the power of the resurrection, we also have a beautiful responsibility to share this hope with others during our time here on earth, especially to those who need it most.

For those not familiar with the local service committee, the committee was formed as part of Zion's long-range plan with a focus on connecting members of Zion with opportunities to serve those in our community. The committee was extremely instrumental in getting the SafeLot program off the ground and running well. SafeLot is now being run by its own board and has become a great ecumenical partnership among several churches in Loveland, providing a great service to unhoused people in our community. Zion continues to host SafeLot participants every other month and is always happy to have extra volunteers to help! Because of SafeLot, we've been able to extend a part of God's kingdom into this community.

Now that SafeLot is running so well, we've decided to shift gears a bit and see how we can

keep extending God's kingdom through service to others on a broader scale. We've evaluated standing partnerships with other community organizations to find additional volunteer opportunities for Zion members. Our current community partners are SafeLot, The Landing, Alternatives to Violence, Loveland's Community Kitchen, KidsPak, Larimer County Food Bank, Mobile Laundry, Habitat for Humanity, House of Neighborly Service, A Little Help, and local schools Sarah Milner Elementary and Peakview Academy K-8. Since the start of the year, we've contacted these organizations to determine their needs and how we can best support them. Our next steps are to schedule these organizations to speak to our congregation about the work they do and schedule some group volunteer opportunities and events. We're excited about the possibilities to connect members of Zion to these organizations. It's a lot of work with a lot of opportunities. We're invigorated as we continue our work of building God's kingdom here. We will share updated information as it comes to us.

If you are interested in being the church and building hope on earth, and don't want to wait for a scheduled event, please let us know! Many of these organizations have an ongoing need for consistent volunteer help, and we would be happy to help get you connected. Please feel free to reach out to our committee members, or the church office; it would be our joy to help you find ways to use your gifts to be the hope in our community.

The committee members are Erin Bachman, Brenda Fosse, Kathy Hume, Kristin Otteson, and Ruth Sprain.

Outreach Opportunities

Kathleen Hume, Local Service Committee Member

By way of introduction, I am a member of Zion's service committee and a volunteer in the clothing boutique of House of Neighborly Service (HNS). This article, however, is a request for needed items and volunteer services not only for HNS but also for the Mobile Laundry and the Loveland Habitat for Humanity. Contact information is provided for each organization if you are able to support them.

House of Neighborly Service

HNS collects a variety of items to help those in need. Items of particular need are

- men's jeans and shoes
- clothing for women and children
- bedding (especially queen sheets and blankets)
- backpacks
- sleeping bags
- pots and pans
- bakeware
- coffee pots
- toasters
- crockpots
- dishes
- silverware
- food (always a great need).

HNS is located only 1 mile from Zion at 1511 East 11th Street. If needed, you can ask for help to unload and carry items into the building through the door on the east side.

If you have questions, call Kathy Hume at 970-290-0322.

Mobile Laundry

The Mobile Laundry is a program of Homeward Alliance. Its mission is to break down barriers to success for low-income families and for adults experiencing homelessness in Larimer County through free, mobile laundry services. The Mobile Laundry truck is equipped with six sets of washers and dryers. Program participants drop off their dirty clothes and then pick them up 90 minutes later (or at the end of the day) clean, dry, and folded!

The Mobile Laundry operates at the Loveland Public Library on Thursdays and Fridays and needs volunteers. The morning shifts are from 8:30 a.m. to 12:00 noon; afternoon shifts are from noon to 3:30 p.m.

They also welcome tax-deductible donations as well as laundry supplies (Lysol Laundry Sanitizer), garbage bags, gloves, and Lysol wipes.

For information or to volunteer contact Woody at carlsonwoody@comcast.net

Loveland Habitat for Humanity

"Seeking to put God's love into action" is the mission of the Loveland Habitat for Humanity, bringing people together to build homes, community, and hope.

On Saturdays from July through September 2025, they are building 47 homes in Grace Gardens at Derby Hill.

Volunteers can help in a variety of ways:

- serve lunch to the volunteers onsite
- lead a prayer walk through Grace Gardens
- help build!

For information or to volunteer, call Jordan Clegg of Habitat at 970-669-9769, extension 102 or Kathy Hume at 970 290-0322.

"There is always light, if only we are brave enough to see it. If only we are brave enough to be it."

—AMANDA GORMAN

Summer Faith Formation Updates

Pastor Veronica Gould

We are finishing up the spring semester on a high note, celebrating our high school and college graduates on May 18 with a blessing of the graduates. May 18 will also be the last day of Sunday school before we take a much needed summer break until September. There's still lots to look forward to in the summer!

VBS Day Camp at Zion June 16-20

This year's theme is all about finding "another way" in Jesus. We live in a world that sets certain expectations—who is lovable, what makes us worthy, and how we should live. We want to share the good news of Jesus with our children through art, music, games, and storytelling. In Christ, we are freed to live *another way*, to follow the path of love. If you have a child, grandchild, neighbor, or friend in preschool (ages 3-4) or completing grades K-5 this spring, please share this opportunity with their families so they can experience this community of love and transformation! The preschool program is Monday-Friday, 9:00 a.m.-12:00 noon. The elementary program is Monday-Thursday, 9:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m. and Friday, 9:00 a.m.-12:00 noon.

High School Mission Trip to Chicago July 14-21

Please keep our high school students in your prayers as we travel to Chicago for a mission trip. We will be accompanying the community at Second Presbyterian Church as they offer a VBS program to children in their homework help program and provide meals to food-insecure people in their community. Please pray for safe travels and for God to bless our young people as they seek to know the Lord through service to others.

Loveland Pride at Mehaffey Park June 20

As a welcoming congregation, Zion celebrates people of all genders and orientations. In a time when we cannot take this spirit of welcome for granted, we especially want to show our support for our members and friends who belong to the LGBTQ+ community! If you are interested in gathering together as a group, repping our Zion community, or just want to know more, please contact Pastor Veronica. This event promises to be family-friendly, so kids and adults are all welcome!

First Communion

"O sing to the Lord a new song, for he has done marvelous things." (Psalm 98:1). On Maundy Thursday, Hiatt Coleman, Graham Farasyn, and Zach West received their first communion, surrounded by their families and faith community. [See photo on page 22 of this newsletter.] In our class, they learned that at this table, they receive the body of Christ in the bread, and they become the body of Christ in the community of the church. We celebrate their presence in the body of Christ!

High School Summer Events

All current high school students and rising freshmen are welcome to attend the following summer events on second Saturdays:

- June 7—Pool Party at Winona Pool
1:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.
- July 5—Dinner and Drive-in Movie
6:45 p.m. - 11:15 p.m.
- August 2—Denver Zoo
9:00 a.m.- 5:00 p.m.

Thank you for your generosity!

Kristen Benton

Thank you for allowing Mom (Kathy Pancoast) and me to introduce you to our nonprofit, OneSun Foundation, and the children and families we serve. Thanks to the generosity of Zion Lutheran Church, we found advocates for five children and fully funded our water well project! This is such a huge answer to prayer!

We continue to need support through prayer, advocates for educational scholarships for kids we serve, and financial support to reach our 2025 budget needs. We have half of our budget covered for our programs and are confident the Lord will bring us provision for our remaining shortfall.



To learn more about OneSun Foundation, please visit our website at www.onesunfoundation.org. There, you can also find the link to shop our hand-crafted products from Uganda, find information about advocating for a child's education, organize a team trip to serve in Uganda, and read our latest newsletter.

We would love to have you join us on our journey to Educate, Elevate, and Empower the impoverished in Uganda! Together, we can make a difference around the world!

Gratitude Moment from Jessica Kuhns

Thank you, Zion family, for supporting me next year with a seminary scholarship. As I write this, I am just finishing my second year at Luther Seminary, located in St. Paul, Minnesota. I am what they call a distance learner, meaning I take my classes online—some synchronous, some asynchronous. Each semester, I try to attend an RFS (Residential Focus Session) which is a three-day intensive introduction to a semester-long course. The Zion scholarship will help me with travel and lodging expenses for these vital opportunities to meet in person with fellow students and professors, attend chapel, and experience the wonder of St. Paul (usually in winter). Scholarship dollars also help with books, which I have read quite a lot in the last two years. I am focusing particularly on Lutheran theology, so please ask me your burning theological or biblical questions. I'd love to think with you and share what I've learned so far. I value your continued prayer and support. I am two years into a five-year program (if I finish on time). I hope to do CPE (Clinical Pastoral Education) in the spring of 2026 followed by a year internship. I am working on a Master of Divinity with the goal of becoming a deacon in the ELCA. This means I need to find a deacon-focused internship and will not be Zion's next intern pastor. I am absolutely loving being a seminary student, and I thank you all for your support.

A Letter of Appreciation from Hassib

Dear Members of Trinity, Zion, and King of Glory,

I'm writing to express my sincere gratitude for the welcoming and supportive members of all three churches that supported me and my family throughout this journey. Your support, while being away from my family and helping us get back together, is deeply appreciated. Thank you each and every one who took the time to write letters to congress members that helped pass AAA and also for sponsoring Afghan families. I am very grateful for all the work and help of your incredible members who helped accomplish the goal of being reunited with my family. A special thanks goes to the core team, all the pastors at the three churches, and Cheryl and Ed Smith who were there for me anytime I called or I needed anything. My family and I are truly blessed. We are grateful for your sponsorship and will continue to keep the relationship going. The picture shows how happy we are together, and this happiness is a reflection of the results of hard work and support of each of you. Thank you! God bless you all.



The happiness of being reunited is expressed in the smiles of Hassib, his wife, and daughters.

Hassib Ibrahimkhail

[AAA is the Afghan Adjustment Act that was passed in 2021 as a way to provide permanent residency for Afghans who provided support to the United States in Afghanistan.]

Endowment in Action

Kathy Loken

Your endowment committee, Pastor Veronica, Sandy Bilstad, Kristin Blundell, Marthann Dahlen, Cindy Kurtz, and Kathy Loken meets quarterly.

Financials are reviewed; donation requests and quarterly programs are planned. In April, \$24,000 was awarded for scholarships. Emma Blundell, Maddie Elder, Jessica Kuhns, Kam Otteson, Hannah Pancoast, and Sophia Pancoast are our 2025 scholarship recipients.

If you would like to learn more about how you can leave a legacy at Zion, contact one of the committee members.

Scholarships Awarded

Pastor Veronica Gould

O give thanks to the LORD, for he is good; his steadfast love endures forever.—PSALM 118:1

Did you know that Zion has been awarding scholarships to students since 1987? Maybe you or someone you know has been a recipient of a scholarship from our Zion community. We are grateful for the generosity of those who have made these awards possible. We celebrate this incredible legacy as we continue to support students in their academic and vocational futures. This year, we are honored to present awards to six outstanding students.

The Sprenger Scholarship is awarded to students attending an ELCA college, university, or seminary. In the 2025-2026 academic year, three students have been awarded the Sprenger Scholarship: Jessica Kuhns, Hannah Pancoast, and Sophia Pancoast.

The Petersen Scholarship is awarded to students majoring in education. In the 2025-2026 academic year, the Petersen Scholarship is awarded to Maddie Elder.

The Boyce Tate Distinguished Disciples Scholarship is awarded to active members of Zion who have shown outstanding contributions to the ministries of

Zion and have lived their faith in the community. In the 2025-2026 academic year, three students have been awarded the Boyce Tate Scholarship: Emma Blundell, Kam Otteson, and Sophia Pancoast.



Emma Blundell is pursuing her ADN and BSN through concurrent enrollment at

Laramie County Community College and the ReNEW program of the University of Wyoming, in addition to working as a medical assistant. She shared that her experience of church at Zion was formative to her approach in nursing: “As a future nurse, I am able to give the gift of grace and unconditional love and empathy every day to my patients.”



Maddie Elder is studying special education with an emphasis in elementary education

at Colorado Christian University. One of Maddie’s teachers shared that “her ability to consider different perspectives and her kindness toward others makes her a natural leader in group settings.”



Jessica Kuhns is continuing her Master of Divinity studies at Luther Seminary, where she is preparing for the Ministry of Word and Service as a deacon. One of Jessica’s friends shared that “she has shown a hunger for wanting to support the mission of the church, serve her neighbor, and share the Gospel.”



Kam Otteson will be attending Pacific Lutheran University, where she plans to major in mathematics with an interest in accounting and language. One of Kam’s teachers shared that “she is intelligent (but is so much more than test cores). Kam radiates happiness, energy, and life.”



Hannah Pancoast will be pursuing a degree in psychology at Luther College. Hannah’s experience as a Girl Talk leader and middle school mentor have inspired a vocational interest in school counseling. Hannah’s counselor shared that Hannah “helps students grow into their most authentic selves and celebrates their successes when they do.”

Continued on page 15.

Celebrating Zion's 2025 Graduates

Brett Duncan—Doctor of Pharmacy from Purdue University.

Angie Elder—Master of Divinity with an emphasis in Chaplaincy from Denver Seminary (Littleton, Colorado). Angie is currently working as a Chaplain at Pathways Hospice in Fort Collins.

Kam Otteson—From Thompson Valley High School. Will attend Pacific Lutheran University in Parkland, Washington, majoring in mathematics, possibly accounting and language.

Hannah Pancoast—From Loveland High School. Will attend Luther College in Decorah, Iowa, studying psychology and will also study harp with Professor Amy Nam, the second best harpist in the world. Will participate in the theater program, focusing on the technical aspects of theater. Following Luther, Hannah plans to get a master's degree in school counseling and become a high school counselor.

Josh Samuels—Bachelor of Science in business administration with an emphasis in finance from California Lutheran University.

Anna Schlager—From Community Connections.

Rebecca Smith—Bachelor of Science in cyber operations and computer forensics and two associated technical certificates from Dakota State University in Madison, South Dakota. Graduating with honors. She plans to work in the Northern Colorado area.

Olivia Tate—Nursing degree, indigenous and religious studies from Pacific Lutheran University.

Ryan Ward—From Loveland High School.

Kate Weimer—From Thompson Valley High School. Will attend the University of New Haven in West Haven, Connecticut, studying forensic psychology.



Scholarships Awarded continued from page 14.



Sophia Pancoast is majoring in biology with minors in chemistry and anthropology at Pacific Lutheran University. Sophia's professor shared that she "lives a life true to the spirit of a Lutheran education, one focused on both mind and body."

100+ Downloads for the Nourish Podcast

Joel Brauner

Nourish is celebrating a major milestone! “NoCo Nourish” podcast has been downloaded over 100 times.

The goal of Nourish is to create space for meaningful conversations that can change our lives, our friendships, our communities, and our world. The podcast isn’t the culmination of this mission, but the podcast can help us create new spaces for these conversations.

We began recording our starter conversations last year to keep people connected. Let’s face it, we all have busy schedules and can’t join Nourish in person each month. So the podcast is a touchpoint to keep up with discussions or maybe even start your own outside of Nourish.

If you haven’t already, you can find the podcast by searching for “NoCo Nourish” on all major podcast platforms. There’s also a link in the weekly Zion announcements email.

Another benefit of the podcast is how easy it is to share. I recently was talking with friends and the topic of friendship came up. I shared with the group that I had recorded a podcast that discussed friendships and sent it to the group. It was an easy way to share something I find important and to be open about my personal faith.

If you’ve felt a calling lately to practice sharing more about your faith and beliefs, recording a podcast with one of our Nourish hosts is a great place to start. The conversations are recorded one-on-one, the discussion questions are pre-planned, and we can always edit the recording if you say something wrong.

If you’re feeling the call to share, talk to Joel Brauner. I’ve already got a list of pre-planned topics, or we can make a topic for whatever is on your mind, heart, or soul.

LoveUke is excited to be moving to Zion Lutheran Church for its Friday meet-up jams. May 16 will be our first day, and we’d like to introduce ourselves!

The LoveUke ukulele group formed in 2017 when Brad Endo and a few other players gathered to play two songs with Danielle-Ate-the-Sandwich who was the headliner at the Loveland Cherry Pie Festival. This small group led by Brad, eventually began meeting twice a month at the Art Space in Loveland.

The group has grown over the years to about 30 folks who come from Loveland, Longmont, Fort Collins, Greeley, and environs. In addition to our jams, we have played in various senior centers, assisted living facilities, and at the Loveland library’s winter festival.

Currently led by Robin Stein, LoveUke is open to all ukulele players. All levels of experience are invited to come and play and sing with us. We meet on the first and third Fridays of the month from 1:00-3:00 p.m.

What Is Your Superpower?

Amy Black, Chair of Leadership Development



Have you ever thought about what makes you special and unique? What are your strengths and how can you use them for the greater good? For the next several weeks in the bulletin, you will see various questions posed that relate to the many committees at Zion. (Hopefully you've already noticed a few the past couple of weeks.) We all have God-given talents and spiritual gifts. However, we on the leadership development committee don't know what those all are for every member of Zion! Our hope is that after reading and thinking about the questions in the bulletin, you might realize your **SUPERPOWERS** and consider serving on one of the committees in

the future. Our congregation at Zion is vibrant, but it takes the willingness of many people to serve to be effective. The next time a call to serve is offered, will you use **YOUR SUPERPOWER** to enhance our Zion community?

If you have any questions or want more information, feel free to contact anyone on the leadership development committee: Ron Buchholz, Tracey Klammer, Cindy Kurtz, Cindy Vosberg, and Pastor Veronica.

Zion's 2025 Women's Retreat—Save the Date!

Amy Brauner

Zion will be hosting this year's women's retreat on October 17-18 **at Zion**. The theme we will be exploring is looking into the lives of the Myrhhbearers—a title given to the women who prepared Jesus' body for the tomb and were also the first to witness and proclaim his resurrection.

The retreat will start with a Friday night kickoff featuring a call to gather with games and socializing. Then on Saturday morning, the retreat will resume with a dive into the lives of the Myrhhbearers and conclude with a church service after dinner.

Since the retreat will be in Loveland this year, participants have the option of sleeping in their own beds or joining a "sleepover" or a potential lock-in at the church. If you are interested to host a small sleepover at your house during the retreat, please indicate your interest on the registration form.

Registration will begin in mid-May and close on Labor Day. The cost is \$50 to cover the expense of dinner and supplies. Scholarships are available.

We hope that you prayerfully consider attending the women's retreat in October. If you have any questions, please ask anyone on the women's retreat planning team. Team members are Amy Brauner, Sarah Gall, Bonnie Schowalter, and Pastor Veronica.

Among Members and Friends

At Rest in Our Father's House

Sandy Lewis, sister of Linda Sterner. Sandy lived in Minnesota and attended Zion Sunday worship religiously via Zoom. When Linda turned to the camera to share the peace, it was always with her sister.

***Zion offers up prayers for those
in need—for members, for friends,
for community, for our country,
and for the world.***

Wednesday Evening Prayers of the People

Jessica Kuhns

Zion is a praying congregation. We pray in so many ways, yet I often hear from people that they are not comfortable praying out loud. This may be because Lutherans are historically stoic people or maybe because prayer is a deeply personal experience when we can pour our hearts out to God.

Zion is also a congregation who values relationships. We are a profoundly caring group who genuinely enjoys each other's company. Part of a caring community is lifting each other up in prayer but also knowing each other's concerns and praying together.

Over Lent, I experimented with offering Prayers of the People after Holden. Each week I had a few people join me, and each week many people were hesitant yet found the experience to be positive. Every person who told me they could not pray out loud found a way to add their voice to the room. Prayer together is an opportunity to exercise your prayer muscle in a safe and supportive space. I encourage you to come and add your voice to Zion's collective prayer—our hearts' song of love, care, concern, gratitude, and praise to God for our community and world. Come experiment with me!

Zion Thank You

We want to thank Zion for its gracious hospitality at the Service of Thanksgiving for our son, dad, and brother, Timothy. To Pastor Joel and Lindsey, to all who participated in the service, to all who prepared and served a magnificent lunch, and to all who attended, thank you for your love, care, and support expressed in a variety of ways. We couldn't have asked for a more meaningful and uplifting worship service and a better day. May you continue to be a place where the spirit of Christ is abundantly present and thrives.

The family of Timothy Barber

Among Members and Friends

Zion Prayer Shawl Ministry

Kathy Pancoast

This shawl is just beautiful!! And thank you for keeping me in your prayers. The surgery should be a simple one, but this shawl and your prayers will be welcome encouragement during my healing which could take 6 - 8 weeks.

That was so very kind and sweet to receive this lovely prayer shawl. It is good to be home from rehab after my fall. I continue therapy and am gaining strength. I appreciate your thoughtfulness.

Thank you for these lovely shawls. It was such a comfort to come home from the hospital to this gift, know of your prayers, and concern for my wife in my absence.

*Zion Lutheran Church and Pastor Joel,
Thank you for your faithful support! You do so much for our community, and we are truly grateful!*

God Bless You!

*Cherri Hourle, Executive Director
House of Neighborly Service*

Dear Zion Lutheran Church,

Thank you for your recent gift of \$175 to Lutheran Episcopal Campus Ministry. We truly appreciate your thoughtfulness, generosity, and kindness. You are a wonderful blessing to this ministry, and we thank you for your continued support! God Bless You!

*With grateful hearts,
The Board and Students at LECM*

Dear Zion Family, Thank you for the floral arrangement that embraced a consoling angel figurine all of which gave me heartfelt comfort upon the sudden and unexpected death of my sister.—Linda Sterner

ZQT (Zion Quilt Ti-ers)

Susan Osborn

Zion's quilt ti-ers (knotters) plan to meet on May 15 to finish up our quilts for Lutheran World Relief (LWR). Our finished quilts will then be blessed, boxed, and sent to the warehouse for distribution.

We will take a break for the summer and begin again in September on the third Thursday.

Thank you to all who sew the quilts and to those who come to tie quilts each month. Thank you, also, to our Zion family for contributions of fabric and batting for the making of the quilts.

Donations of funds to LWR for quilt distribution make it possible for the quilts to reach those needing the warmth and protection our quilts offer.

Thank You Letters to Zion

- January 17, 2025—From House of Neighborly Service for a donation of \$100.
- March 3, 2025—From Loveland and Berthoud Meals on Wheels for a donation of \$1,354.16.
- April 3, 2025—From Loveland's Community Kitchen for a donation of \$250.
- April 10, 2025—From House of Neighborly Service for a donation of \$62.51.
- April 11, 2025—From KidsPak for a quarterly donation of \$761.89.
- April 26, 2025—From The Matthews House for a donation of \$1,000.

Thank you for the Wedding Shower!

Pastor Veronica Gould

When I was a young girl, one of my favorite things to do was sit on the swings and sing to myself—whatever tune or words came to mind. Over the years, I’ve come to appreciate this kind of “play” as a true outpouring of the heart. I often ask people if there is a song on their heart. I guess this is my poetic way of asking what your heart is full to the brim with—joy, sorrow, worry, hope. In this season, as I have been preparing for my marriage to Greg, the song of my heart has been thanksgiving—*thank you, thank you, thank you!* God has blessed me so richly to be called to this community of love.



Greg and Pastor Veronica will be married in the church where they met.



The wedding shower was a joyful event obvious by the smiles on the faces of Greg, Pastor Veronica, and their families.

Greg and I were so touched by the love and support from our Zion community at our wedding shower on April 5. Not only was this a wonderful time to celebrate with you all, we want to thank you for the warm welcome you shared with our families. They can’t wait to come back and visit again! Thank you to Lindsey, Janine, Debbie, Terri, Pastor Joel, and everyone else who helped make the day so special. We have been blessed by everyone’s words of encouragement, prayers, Bible verses, and advice shared. Thank you to everyone for your generosity in giving gifts. Please know that you have already given us the best gift by welcoming me and Greg here in our Zion family!

We celebrate our wedding on May 10 in Sacramento, at the church where we first met.

A Psalm of Thanksgiving: *Psalm 100*

***Make a joyful noise to the LORD, all the earth.
Worship the LORD with gladness;
come into his presence with singing.***

***Know that the LORD is God.
It is he that made us, and we are his;
we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture.***

***Enter his gates with thanksgiving,
and his courts with praise.
Give thanks to him, bless his name.***

***For the LORD is good;
his steadfast love endures forever,
and his faithfulness to all generations.***

Inspired by psalms of thanksgiving, let me give thanks to the Lord for

Kathy Pancoast

Once again I have personally received so much care from my faith family that “Songs of the Heart” writes another thank-you note for me. When I googled psalms of thanksgiving, I finally stopped at 30. There are probably even more because often “praise” and “thanks” are used as synonyms. What an exceptional challenge for us if 25-30 percent of 150 psalms express thanksgiving!! I especially like Psalm 107 when the writer lists his blessings and then sings the chorus “Let them give thanks to the Lord” or Psalm 136 where each item in the list is followed by the chorus “His love endures forever.” So I use that model for another of my thank-you notes to you.

For the amazing, brilliant hospital team and staff, especially my surgeon....Let me give thanks to the Lord. For your prayers for this team and my recovery....Let me give thanks to the Lord. For my fantastic family and friends who provided home care and drivers.....Let me give thanks to the Lord. For your beautiful cards and notes of encouragement.... Let me give thanks to the Lord. For delicious meals to heal....Let me give thanks to the Lord. For our entire church staff who planned uplifting worship and banner memorials for Elliott that encouraged me to keep getting out....Let me give thanks to the Lord. YES! His love endures forever through you. Thank you!



Banners displayed behind the altar throughout the Lenten season were provided by the Elliott Pancoast memorial fund.

RMS Synod Assembly 2025: Dios está Aquí / God is Here Thursday May 22–Saturday May 24

Embassy Suites Hotel and Convention Center, 1000 Woodward Place NE, Albuquerque, NM

Pre-Assembly Immigration Accompaniment Summit

Rostered and lay leaders are invited to attend a pre-Synod Assembly Immigration Summit May 21-22, where we will deepen our understanding of the immigration challenges as well as strategize how to faithfully accompany our immigrant siblings.

Representing Zion at the 2025 Rocky Mountain Synod Assembly are Tom and Joyce Robinson along with Pastor Veronica. Intern Pastor Rosalie is going with them as a guest.

Thank you to Our Lenten Midweek Witnesses!

As we sang our hearts out with Holden Evening Prayer on Wednesdays in Lent, we also were privileged to hear others share parts of their own faith stories, especially as they related to our gathering topic of “The Good Life,” based on Jesus’ Sermon on the Mount in Matthew’s Gospel. We have given people the opportunities to share their faith stories several times over the years, but 2024 and 2025 are probably the first time we have done so two years consecutively. We were not sure if we would be able to find enough speakers after doing it last year, but people responded to our newsletter request, and we only had to ask one person to consider sharing! So, here’s your notice for next year. We do not have the theme or supporting scriptures yet, but if you think you might be interested in sharing next year, let one of the pastoral staff know.

In the meantime, we are so thankful for those who shared pieces of their stories this year and the way they have experienced the “good life” as Jesus taught it:

Naomi Mibrath	Salt and Light (Matthew 5:13-16)
Sarah Gall	Prayer and Fasting (Matthew 6:5-18)
Hannah Pancoast	Do Not Worry (Matthew 6:25-34)
Jessica Kuhns	Judge Not (Matthew 7:1-5)
Jim Poppe	Build on a Rock (Matthew 7:24-27)



Hannah Pancoast shared how Jesus helps through worry and anxiety.

Songs of the Heart during Holy Week

Thank you to everyone—staff, volunteers, and worship participants—for making Holy Week such a beautiful, meaningful season as we walked with Jesus through his last supper with the disciples, the garden of Gethsemane and his betrayal and arrest, the crucifixion, a time of holy waiting, and finally the celebration of the resurrection. Christ is risen, he is risen indeed! Alleluia!

MAUNDY THURSDAY

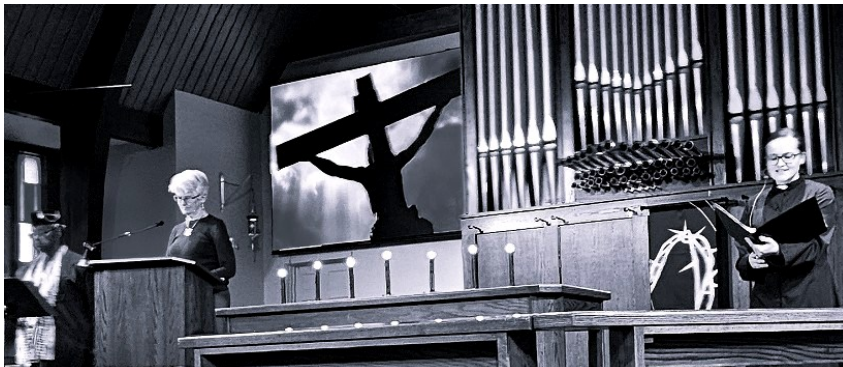


Hiatt Coleman, Graham Farasyn, and Zach West received their first communion in Maundy Thursday worship.



Pastor Veronica and Catherine Glaser wash Jessica Kuhns' feet during Maundy Thursday worship.

GOOD FRIDAY



We heard Jesus' Seven Last Words from the Cross and how they speak into the tension of "acceptance and resistance" in our lives today.

EASTER VIGIL

We gathered around a "holy fire" for Easter Vigil before processing into the sanctuary at Trinity to hear stories of resurrection told by confirmation youth and their parents.



EASTER SUNDAY



Lora Patrick helped hang butterflies for Easter that were colored throughout the Lenten season (thanks to Lora for the wonderful idea and pulling together supplies).



Breathing out joy (and bubbles) during Easter worship!



After a beautiful and busy Holy Week, Zion's pastoral staff were ready to borrow Jesus' empty tomb for a little rest.

The Matthews House 20th Anniversary

“Illuminating Hope” was the theme of the 20th anniversary birthday celebration of The Matthews House held on April 26. If you are not aware of what The Matthews House is about, it is an organization founded in 2005 to provide a safe space for “system-involved youth,” offering resources and support needed to break free from cycles of poverty and abuse and move toward independence. They have since expanded their work by providing various programs to prevent crises like homelessness and abuse before they occur. At the beginning of 2025, in partnership with Thompson School District, The Matthews House opened Northern Colorado’s first youth shelter called The Landing, located right across the street from Zion Lutheran Church!

As a partner to The Landing (and therefore The Matthews House), Zion provided volunteers to help set up and run the birthday celebration. Thank you to Desi Boyce, Sarah Gall, Catherine Glaser, Debbie Joncas, Josiah Kuhns, Amy Moore, Joyce Robinson, and Terri Sloan. Apologies if we left anyone out; there were many people volunteering all day, starting at noon and lasting late into the evening!

Zion also had a table of support during the main event with Erin Bachman, Ron and Sarah Christensen, Chuck and Marthann Dahlen, Bonnie and Paul Schowalter, and Pastor Joel in attendance. It was amazing to hear stories from volunteers, staff, and receivers of service from The Matthews House. And “The Basement Kids,” a band of youth participating in The Matthews House programs, were truly *songs of the heart!*



Seated at this table are Zion participants Sarah and Ron Christensen, Bonnie and Paul Schowalter, Marthann and Chuck Dahlen, Erin Bachman, and Pastor Joel.



Amy Moore and Josiah Kuhns helped check in participants.

Rocky Mountain Synod Staffing Announcement!

Pastor Chris Davis begins his call as Director for Evangelical Mission (DEM)-North and Synod Minister for Generosity on May 15. Pastor Chris has served as a mission developer and pastor in three congregations in the Rocky Mountain Synod, most recently at Trinity, Loveland, Colorado. Pastor Chris will be serving half time as DEM with a portfolio including Utah, Wyoming, and part of Colorado; the other half of his call as Synod Minister for Generosity will focus on supporting stewardship, mission support, grants, and other efforts to build financial capacity throughout the synod.



Pastor Joel has worked closely with retired ELCA Lutheran Pastor Chuck Hubbard on issues of homelessness and justice. Considering Zion's readers are supportive of community outreach opportunities and sympathetic to people in need, we believe this reprint of the article from the Loveland Reporter-Herald newspaper will be of interest to you.

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Chuck Hubbard is leading with faith

Pastor tackles issue of homelessness



Chuck Hubbard poses for a photo Friday outside the Loveland Public Library downtown. JENNY SPARKS — LOVELAND REPORTER-HERALD

By Jocelyn Rowley

jrowley@prairiemountainmedia.com

After retiring from the ministry and moving to Loveland in 2019, Chuck Hubbard didn't wait very long before getting involved with local social justice causes. Almost immediately after arriving, the former Lutheran pastor joined up with faith-based advocacy group Together Colorado to continue his work on behalf of society's most vulnerable members.

Now Hubbard is on a mission to bring Loveland's faith community together to tackle an issue near and dear to his heart: homelessness.

"We have a special needs daughter, and so I have a self-interest in dealing with the unhoused, because she is vulnerable to becoming unhoused," Hubbard said. "She would die on the streets."

On May 15, Hubbard and other members of Together Colorado will host a gathering of local faith leaders to discuss how churches, synagogues and other religious institutions can work together to identify and implement meaningful solutions for the unhoused.

Invitations went out to more than 70 pastors, rabbis, spiritual and lay leaders in the Loveland area, with the goal of sparking a conversation and hopefully, coordinated action.

"We're wanting to lean on the collective wisdom of spiritual leaders," Hubbard said. "We've tried to make contact with anyone and everyone who is leading a church." The Reporter-Herald caught up with Hubbard last week to discuss homelessness in Loveland and his work with Together Colorado.

What drew you to get involved in efforts to address homelessness?

For many years my heart has been drawn to those who live in the margins. It started with pizza. The university I attended allowed students to eat all the pizza they wanted when served. On one occasion the pasta effect put me to sleep right in front of a lecturing professor. About mid-hour he began to talk about Carl Jaspers who spoke of the *grenza* experiences; that is, living in the tenuous boundary areas between life and death when people struggle with illness, financial threat, and other life altering calamities.

I awoke with the strange but profound sense that I was to walk with people who were struggling in the boundaries, sharing their *grenza* experiences. That is exactly what I did in my career as a teacher, hospital chaplain (particularly in psychiatric care) and as a parish pastor. People who are unhoused struggle for survival; every day they are faced with the very basics of maintaining life.

What are the biggest misconceptions you think people have about Loveland's unhoused population?

There are many and the answer might vary depending on the day. Here are two: First, there is a misperception that unhoused people are mean and dangerous. Certainly, I have encountered people exhibiting belligerent or bizarre behaviors. Thank heavens I have never experienced or seen a physical confrontation. It happens but rarely. The vast majority of unhoused people are simply focused on getting through the day and having their basic needs met. It's sad that their mere presence often is perceived as a threat.

A second, common misperception is that homeless people "just need a job." "Working Homeless ...," a study by Bruce Meyer ("Homelessness and the Persistence of Deprivation" 2023), University of Chicago, showed that roughly 52% of sheltered, homeless people had jobs. Roughly 40% of unsheltered people also had jobs either while being unhoused or the year they become unhoused. It's important to keep in mind that many unhoused persons are unable to work because of mental/emotional or even physical limitations. The notion that homeless people don't want to work is mostly untrue.

The problems they face are related to low pay and underemployment.

How did your experience in ministry help shape the way you approach homelessness?

Intentional relationship building and showing respect are fundamental to providing support to anyone. Mom was a wonderful listener; people loved her for it. Dad could be strikingly insightful. I benefited from my parental mentors. I also benefited from a couple of years of intense clinical training at Baylor University Medical Center. These formative influences have greatly shaped my practice as a pastor.

When the encampments were going strong in the Kings Crossing area, I would ride a bike along the river. I liked to engage people who I thought might be unhoused. To my surprise and delight, they were almost always willing to talk. I would hear again what I often heard early in my career of a profound loss or a cluster of losses that resulted in a crisis, such as becoming homeless.

Respecting boundaries is essential. I would never walk into somebody's camp without announcing myself at a distance and asking for permission to approach. Though I was on public property, I kept in mind the fact that I was approaching somebody's home, temporary though it may be. A home is deserving of respect.

How are local faith communities coming together around this issue and what role do you see them playing?

It's not easy to bring faith communities or even their pastors together, which is something those of us associated with Together Colorado here in Loveland would like to do. Our hope is to examine the challenge Loveland faces in addressing the needs of unhoused people. We hope to do that in a meeting of faith leaders that crosses the religious spectrum. We want to benefit from a collective wisdom. That meeting will be held May 15, 1:00 — 2:30 p.m. at the library.

Most spiritual leaders are well meaning. We tend to agree that poverty must be addressed. As Moses says, "There shall be no poor among you." Most Christians see "neighbor care" as fundamental to the mission of the church.

Faith communities and their leaders can play a central role in influencing civic leaders and public opinion. They also represent a source of potential donors to the cause of establishing and maintaining a resource center with temporary housing.

From your perspective as both a pastor and a resident, what gives you hope that Loveland can make meaningful progress on homelessness?

I am encouraged when I hear our mayor say, "I don't want to see people dying on our streets." Her instincts are right. One study found that "non-elderly people experiencing homelessness have 3.5 times the mortality risk of those who are housed" (Bruce Meyer, "Life and Death . . .," 2023). Living without adequate shelter is a harsh existence.

I am encouraged by council members who essentially say, "Our community has asked for a resource center and shelter, and we can't keep kicking the down the road." I enjoy hearing people express support for a local center at city council meetings. I also understand and respect people who give voice to their fears saying, "Not in my community!" The fear is real. I further realize that the fear tends to dissipate once a center is established, and that gives rise to hope.

Finally, I am encouraged when reminded of The Landing. Just this past year the shelter opened for unaccompanied youth. It was years coming. That gives me hope that the community will eventually contribute personal resources along with tax dollars to provide a resource center with a shelter inside to help those who have fallen into the difficult state of being unhoused.



**Evangelical Lutheran
Church in America**

God's work. Our hands.

Zion Lutheran Church
815 East 16th Street
Loveland, CO 80538

Phone: 970-667-1836
Fax: 970-667-1468
Email: info@zionloveland.com
Web: www.zionloveland.com
Facebook: Zion Lutheran Church-Loveland
Instagram: [zionlutheranloveland](https://www.instagram.com/zionlutheranloveland)
YouTube: Zion Lutheran Church Loveland

Join Us in Worship

Summer hours begin June 1.

- 8:30 a.m. Traditional Worship
In Person or Zoom
Outdoors
- 10:30 a.m. Contemporary Worship
In Person or Zoom
Outdoors except for The
Table Brunch Church
Sundays (see below)
- 10:30 a.m. The Table Brunch Church
June 1, July 6, August 3
Indoors

Our Mission:

Together we share God's
abundance to transform lives
through the love of Jesus.

Our Vision:

Living in God's boundless
love, in Christ we envision a
future where church and
community are one.

**Celebrate Your Faith—
Renew Your Spirit—
Love One Another**

Issue 5/25

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Change of Service Requested

Important Dates Related to Newsletter Content (Read the Articles for Details)

May 15	ZQT
May 16	LoveUke at Zion
May 18	Blessing of the Graduates
May 22-24	RMS Synod Assembly
June 1	Summer Worship Hours Begin The Table Brunch Church
June 2-6	Summer Musical Camp
June 7	High School Party at Winona Pool
June 16-20	VBS Day Camp
June 20	Loveland Pride at Mchaffey Parak
July 5	High School Dinner and Drive-in movie
July 6	The Table Brunch Church
July 14-21	High School Mission Trip
July 27	Intern Pastor Rosalie's Reception
August 2	High School Denver Zoo
August 3	The Table Brunch Church