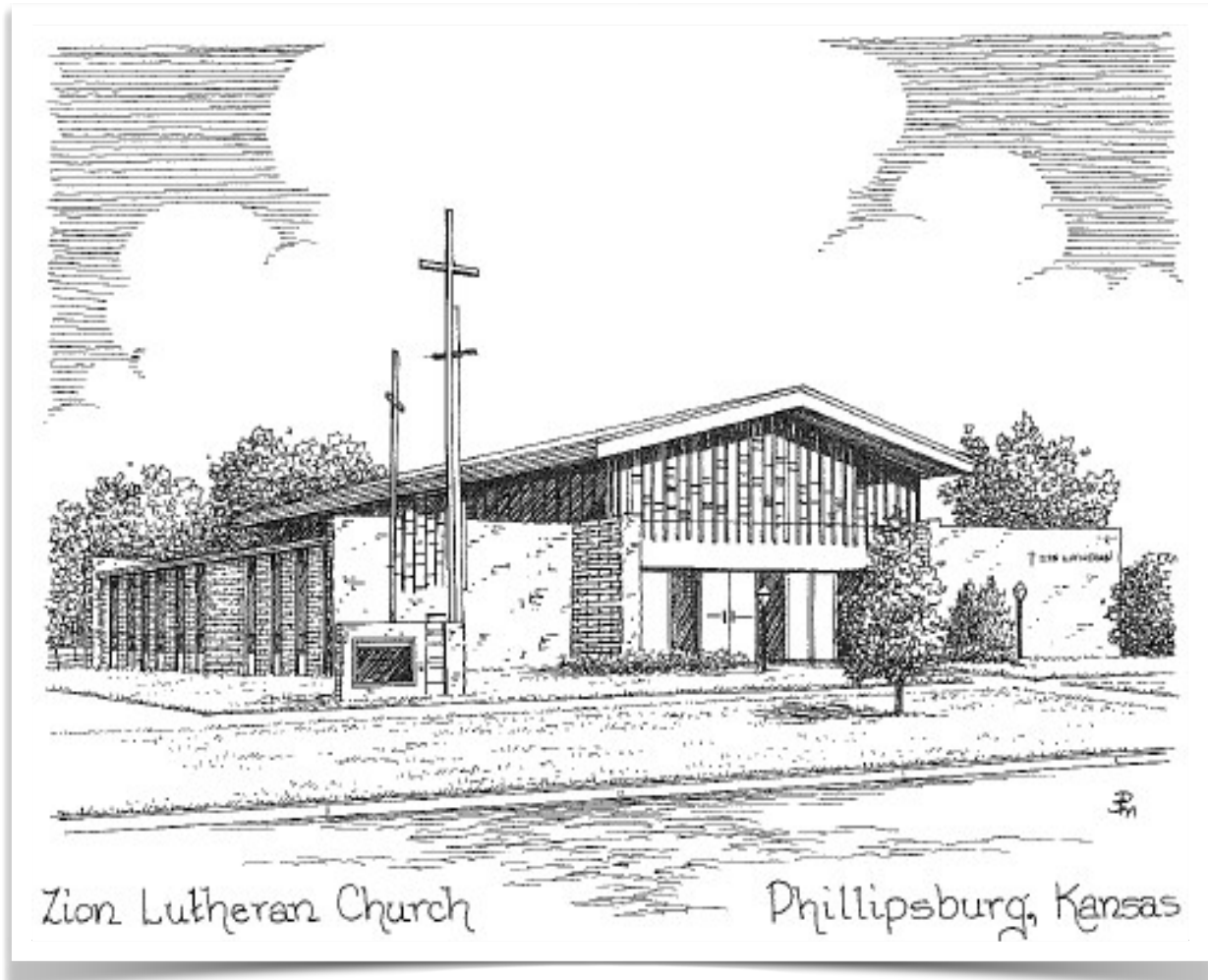


Zion Lutheran Church Phillipsburg, Kansas

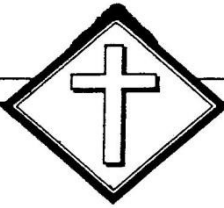
2023 Annual Congregation Report for 2024 Annual Congregation Meeting

January 21, 2024, at 12:30 pm



Zion Lutheran Church

Phillipsburg, Kansas



MISSION STATEMENT
(Revised 10/20/01)

Zion Lutheran Church is a community of faith
where God's grace, shared through Word and Sacrament,
is the foundation of all we do.

Guided by the will of God,
we welcome all people to a positive
and caring environment.

We encourage spiritual, personal and educational growth
to strengthen our faith and commitment to God.

Called by God's grace to serve, we bear witness
to our faith by sharing our resources
with our local and global community.



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**2024 Zion Lutheran Church
Annual Congregation Meeting Agenda
January 21, 2024, at 12:30 pm**

- I. Gathering
 - a. Call to Order – President Steve Rust
 - b. Certification of a quorum – Pastor Lee Bennight
 - c. Devotions – Pastor Lee Bennight
 - d. Approval of 2023 Annual Meeting Minutes
- II. Reports
 - a. Report from Pastor Lee Bennight including Parochial Report
 - b. Report from Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton
 - c. Report from the Congregation Council
 - d. Reports from the Congregation Treasurer
 - i. Income
 - ii. All Accounts
 - iii. Now Account Totals
 - e. Educational Ministry Committee Report (formerly Congregational Ministry Team).
 - f. Property Team Report
 - g. Trust Fund Committee Report
 - h. Worship & Music Committee Report
 - i. Affiliated Organizations
 - i. Women of the ELCA Report
 - ii. 2023 Disciples of the Plains Council Report
 - iii. 2023 Disciples of the Plains Parish Treasurer Report

- iv. 2024 Disciples of the Plains Parish Budget
 - v. 2023 Actual Expenditures and 2024 Proposed Budget
 - vi. Phillips County Ministerial Alliance Report
- III. Old Business
 - a. Living Lutheran Magazine
 - b. Clavinova and Carpet
 - c.
 - d.
- IV. New Business
 - a. Election of New Council Members
 - b. Election of Parish Council at large representative
 - c. Resolution One of Financial Goals – 2024
 - d. Amendments to Zion Constitution & Bylaws
 - i. Required constitution amendments per the latest ELCA Model Constitution.
 - ii. Other constitution amendments
 - iii. Amendments to Zion bylaws.
 - iv. Amendments to Zion Continuing Resolutions.
 - e. 2024 Mission Focus
 - f. Resolution of thanksgiving for all who served.
 - g. Resolution two of remembrance for those who have gone before.
- V. Sending
 - a. Prayer
 - b. Benediction

Zion Lutheran Church
January 22, 2023
2023 Annual Minutes

The Annual meeting of Zion Lutheran Church was called to order by President Steven Rust at 1:30 pm January 22, 2023. 22 members signed the attendance roster. Pastor Lee gave devotions from Acts and a prayer. Sue Kipp made a motion to approve the agenda and Nathaniel Grote seconded the motion, and the motion was approved. Benny Bennight made a motion to approve the 2022 annual minutes, seconded by Dennis Keesee and the motion was approved.

Pastor Lee gave his report, Parochial report and read the letter from Bishop Elizabeth Eaton. Steven Rust gave his Congregation Council Report, he would like to thank the Congregation for all they do. Thank you to the people who do the snow removal. Dennis Keesee gave the Treasurer report. Dennis made a motion to renew the Living Lutheran magazine at the cost of \$375.00 per year. Karin Patton seconded the motion, and the motion was approved. Shellie Lare Made a motion to approve the Pastor report, Congregation report, and Treasurer report. Karin Patton seconded the motion and the motion was approved.

TEAM REPORTS: Congregation Ministry, Property, Worship & Music, and Trust Fund committee reports were reviewed and there is a great need for PMA's. Pastor would like to thank everyone who help with these committees.

Organizations: Janet McCall gave the WELCA report, and letting the congregation know that she is stepping down as President. The Congregation thanked her for many years of service.

OLD BUSINESS: New carpet and clavinoia has been combined with committee members of Sue Kipp, LeAnn Driggs and Worship & Music team. Carpet fund will come out of the Now Account with a budget of \$3000.00 and budget of \$4000.00 for the clavinoia.

NEW BUSINESS: Resolution, Pastor Lee read the letter sent by State Synod before the vote so the Congregation could vote accordingly. We would need 10% of voting members to be able to make the vote. Three volunteers need to count votes, Marcy Rust, Janet McCall and Karin Patton. Resolution #1-- Voting for Kathryn Ann Whitney, to be called to serve as minister of Word and Sacrament of the Disciples of the Plains Parish. The vote was called by ballot. Yes was at 21

votes and No was at 0. Karin Patton made the motion to approve the vote and Dennis Keesee seconded the motion, the motion was approved. Resolution #2-- Shall the Disciples of the Plains council be authorized to negotiate the compensation package with Rev. Kathy Anne Whitney? The vote was called by voice and a Congregation majority was a yes. A motion was made by Dennis Keesee to approve this vote and seconded by Marci Rust, the motion was approved. Nathaniel Grote and Howard Kings' three year terms are up on council, they both have agreed to stay on for another term. Marci Rust made a motion to accept both Nathaniel and Howard for another term, Bob Lamp seconded the motion and the motion was approved. Benny Bennight and Shellie Lare will attend the Synod Assembly June 3rd 2023.

The Congregation reviewed the Disciples of the Plains 2023 proposed budget. 2023 proposed financial budget was reviewed. JeanAnn Wagner made a motion to gift Lutheran World Relief \$2500.00 and the offering from Lent and Advent. Marci Rust seconded the motion and the motion was approved. Janet McCall made a motion to approve the 2023 financial goal and Nathaniel Grote seconded the motion and the motion was approved. Resolution #3—Adoption of Financial goal for 2023, Dennis Keesee made a motion to approve Resolution#3, and Sue Kipp seconded the motion and the motion was approved. Resolution #4—Thanksgiving, with a correction of Steven Rust to Nathaniel Grote. Acknowledgement was also given for those members who have passed away. A motion by Benny Bennight to approve the Resolution #4 seconded by Janet McCall and motion was approved. Bob Lamp made a motion to adjourn the meeting after the Lords Prayer and Jeff Griffey seconded the motion, motion was approved.

Shellie Lare
January 22, 2023
Secretary

2023 Zion Pastor's Annual Report

Dear Zion Friends, Members, and Ministry Partners:

Grace and peace to you in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

WE ARE CHURCH.

As we reflect on 2023 and plan for 2024, we must remember that we **are** the church. During our Zoom Bible studies this year and the continuing studies by the councils from all four parish congregations, we have been using Rev. Kelly A. Fryer's book, **Reclaiming the "C" Word – Daring to be Church Again.** One point that Rev. Fryer makes very clear is that we do not "go to church," because going implies that we can also choose not to go. In our baptism, we do not "go" to church, we are the church in all the wide variety of ways that entails.



And with the realities in which Zion must live giving shrinking membership and resources, realities that most churches in rural and inner-city areas also face, I would like the focus on this report to not simply be about people who go to church but people who are the church. For every one of you have been called in your baptism to be the church in the world. Your life, your vocations, your mission fields are those you touch every day. And as a congregation, our mission is not simply measured by numbers in worship but by how we have responded to the call to be the church in our community for the sake of the world.

ROSTERED MINISTRY DUTIES AS THE CHURCH

First, I need to provide you some statistics for the Word & sacrament ministry to which you have called me. In 2023, I made 462 pastoral contacts. A pastoral contact can be a phone call to check up on someone or a trip to an out-of-town hospital to visit a sick parishioner. I have led 47 classes of Bible study or confirmation. I have led or participated in 139 worship services. I have attended 67 congregational or parish meetings. And I have attended 11 synod meetings or events.

Almost all my continuing education was done on Zoom this year, which helped to keep costs and travel time down. I attended the Festival of Homiletics, which is a fancy word for "preaching," from May 15th through May 18th. The

Festival of Homiletics brings pastors from throughout the country and many different seminaries together for lectures, workshops, and worship. It is an in-person event with thousands attending each year. But ever since COVID, they have included on-line options. I also attended various synod gatherings, the Central States Synod Fall Theological Conference that focused on dialogue between Pentecostal and Lutheran Christians and attended two more Zoom classes regarding the year of Mark's gospel.

Even given this busy schedule, there were periods of time that I was unavailable due to illnesses and hospitalizations. Thank you for your support during these times, especially when both Pastor Kathy and I were ill at the same time. We both are doing very well right now. We anticipate and pray for a healthier 2024.

Pastor Kathy was officially called as a Word and sacrament minister of this parish on January 29th. Pastor Kathy and I have worked towards having a consistent and more frequent sharing of pulpits throughout the parish, which I feel is working. We have also done more collaborative projects together, such as the Longest Night Services this past Advent that were provided to help support those who struggle during the holiday season. We also gathered together to participate in a congregation vitality surveys conducted by the synod.

I continue to serve as co-dean of Central States Synod Western Kansas Conference. The duties of a dean are to help communication with the bishop regarding issues in the Western Kansas Conference, to provide synod representation when distance or other logistics prevent a synod representative from responding to a situation quickly, to help support other pastors in the conference, and be an advisor to the bishop's office when needed.

I was also appointed this year to be on the task force regarding the election of a new bishop. (I do not think we have an official name, yet). Bishop Susan Candea has announced that she will not be seeking a second term as bishop. Her current term ends in August 2025. Assistant to the Bishop Dave Whetter is also retiring. To provide some guidance and cultivate interest from qualified candidates, the task force is beginning to meet now to discuss what type of pastoral and leadership skills are needed from the next bishop. One good part of being on this task force is that I cannot be nominated for bishop.

I also continue to serve as a member of the Phillips County Ministerial Alliance. Through the PCMA, I take turns monitoring our aid phone called "The Care Phone." I regularly lead worship at Phillips County Retirement Center. I also did the research and helped the PCMA obtain the proper insurance needed for its operations, including the Food Pantry and commodities program.

MEMBERS OF ZION LUTHERAN ARE THE CHURCH

Turning now to more of how Zion is the church in our community, I offer these highlights from our ministry this year.

We have been blessed that Andrea Keesee has officially become a candidate for the Pastoral Ministry Associate program. PMAs work with rostered leaders either in their home congregations or parishes, or sometimes as the pastor of a congregation that has difficulty calling a Word and sacrament or Word and service minister. This is a three-year program and I urge us all to encourage Andrea as much as possible during her journey.

We said goodbye this past November to Deanna Ewing, who served as our office administrator for three decades. Issues of finances and allocation of resources led the Zion Council to terminate the office administrator position as of January 1st of this year, but Deanna's preference was to end her employment in November. We pray that she is happy and well in her new endeavors and are very thankful for her years of service.

One confirmation student from Zion, Drayden Simpson, attended confirmation camp at Tomah Shinga in Junction City from June 18th through the 23rd. He was joined by me and two students from Emmanuel: Jhett Johnson and Blayne Johnson. Zion did not have any students affirm their baptism in 2023. In 2024, however, we should have two: Carter Grote and Jacob Driggs. We currently have ten students in confirmation from both Zion and Emmanuel. I anticipate having eight students in Fall 2024.

Dedicated volunteers from both Zion and Emmanuel resumed hosting Vacation Bible School this year from May 22nd through May 24th. I apologize for not having exact numbers, but there were at least forty children in attendance, and the goal is to host another VBS this summer.

Many members of Zion, including Benny Bennight, Sue Kipp, Howard King, and Bob Lamp volunteer many hours to ensure the operation of the Phillips County Food Pantry and the federal commodities program. This ministry is vital to so many in Phillips County.

Zion has opened its doors to the Cub Scouts, the Boy Scouts, the Summer Lunch Program, and to a regular group of people praying for our schools weekly.

I am personally grateful for our council leadership and those who serve on other boards and committees of Zion. Thank you to Steve Rust for serving as council president, Nathaniel Grote as vice president, Shellie Lare as congregation secretary, and Dennis Keesee as treasurer. Thank you to Shellie Lare and Christina Dettmer for completing their first term on council. Thank you to Doug Zillinger for

completing his first term as Parish Council representative at large. Thank you to Janet McCall for her years as WELCA president and Jeff Griffey as the Zion Trust Fund chairman. Thank you to Jean Ann Wagner for her dedication in providing music and worship leadership. Thank you to all those who serve on altar guild, as ushers, as lectors, and as acolytes. Thank you to Howard King and all those who help him with property maintenance. Thank you to Melvin Grau and those who help him keep our cemetery maintained. Thank you to Karin Patton and Deena Lamp in processing Sunday offerings and statements. Thank you to Dennis and Andrea for their janitorial duties. And thank you to all those on committees or who serve in ways that I have neglected to mention.

And then there is you. When you leave worship on Sunday, never forget that you are part of the vital work of Christ. I know the temptation is to try and diminish your importance in your vocation, your family, and in all the ways you become Christ for others. I know it is tempting to say I am too old, too young, too sick. No matter how or where you are, you are the church and the presence of Christ for others. Never forget that.

GOALS AND CHALLENGES IN BEING THE CHURCH

As a congregation, we also need to reflect on goals completed and those that still need to be addressed.

We have successfully updated our constitution and will be voting on changes during this 2024 Annual Meeting on January 21, 2024. This was not an easy task because it had been so long since the last update was done.

We have implemented new church membership software called “Breeze.” Breeze is a cloud-based program, so it can be accessed from any computer. Access is also customized so that volunteers can only access those parts for which they are responsible. There is also the possibility of giving every member a log-in credential so that he or she can update their own personal and family information when needed. Breeze also prints custom reports, allows instant printing of picture directories, makes it easier to take attendance, and has donation tracking that can be imported directly into QuickBooks if we wish. So, as we continue to update and gather information, please be patient with us.

Praying for others in our community and in the wider church throughout the world is always an area for growth, but I think we are indeed growing in this area.

Our Lutheran heritage always calls us by the power of the Holy Spirit to rely on God’s grace as revealed to us in our savior Jesus Christ. But to do this, we need to be more intentional in both individual and community Bible study. This was a goal

from last year and we have fallen short. Bible studies still are sparsely attended, and I have not received much help or suggestions for new times, places, or areas of study. So, I remind us that our Zoom Bible Study has returned at 4:00 pm on Sundays. This study is currently focused on the book of Acts. On the second and fourth Thursdays of the month, we have a Bible study at Zion at 7 pm. The focus of this study is currently on Mark. We also have the Daily Lectio Facebook page, which I apologize for not keeping current. My goal is to revitalize this page and encourage more people to participate. I am also open to suggestions as to how we can be more faithful stewards of scripture.

We will continue to encourage confirmation students to attend camp at Tomah Shinga. So far, we have been able to pay for every student who has gone to camp. This year's confirmation camp is June 2nd through June 7th, 2024.

There are currently five youths and four adults registered to attend the 2024 ELCA Youth Gathering in New Orleans, from July 16th through July 20th, 2024. Thank you to all who have supported our efforts and continue to pray and support us as we prepare for this event.

THANKS BE TO GOD THAT WE ARE THE CHURCH

I want to thank Zion and all its members and friends for the privilege of continuing as your pastor. 2023 was my twentieth year of ordained ministry, almost nine of which have been with Disciples of the Plains Lutheran Ministry. I feel we still have a great deal of ministry to do together. May we always point to Christ as the Holy Spirit sends us to serve for the sake of our communities and world.

Your Friend in Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Robert Lee Bennight". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized initial 'R'.

Rev. Robert Lee Bennight

(Pastor Lee)

ZION LUTHERAN CHURCH

Phillipsburg, KS

2023 Parochial Report

	BAPTIZED	CONFIRMED
Membership as of 01/01/2023	220	179
Accessions:		
<i>Baptisms:</i>		0
<i>By Affirmation of Faith / Confirmation:</i>	0	0
Discharges:		
<i>By Death:</i>	0	0
Statistical Adjustment:	<71>	<61>
<hr/>		
Membership as of 12/31/2023	149	119
Inactive Baptized / Confirmed Members:		<52>
TOTAL ELIGIBLE VOTING MEMBERS		67
QUORUM NEEDED FOR ANNUAL MEETING:		7

First Communion: Mason Dettmer 1/8/2023

Marriages: None

MEMBERSHIP TREND

	<u>2013</u>	<u>2014</u>	<u>2015</u>	<u>2016</u>	<u>2017</u>	<u>2018</u>	<u>2019</u>	<u>2020</u>	<u>2021</u>	<u>2022</u>	<u>2023</u>
Baptized	208	213	209	211	211	222	219	218	219	220	149
Confirme	171	175	171	174	175	179	178	179	178	179	118

**Membership records were updated and entered into new software.*

SUNDAY WORSHIP ATTENDANCE TREND

	<u>2014</u>	<u>2015</u>	<u>2016</u>	<u>2017</u>	<u>2018</u>	<u>2019</u>	<u>2020</u>	<u>2021*</u>	<u>2022</u>	<u>2023</u>
Total Sunday Attendance	2361	2445	2006	2009	1934	1936	960	1409	1454	1320
Average per Sunday	47	47	40	40	39	39	28	29	31	26
% of Baptized Worshiping	22%	22%	19%	19%	18%	18%	13%	13%	14%	17%

*Due to Covid-19, Zion only worshiped in-person for 34 weeks in 2020. These numbers do not include the number of people who participated via streaming.

**These numbers do not include those who participated via streaming.

A MESSAGE FROM PRESIDING BISHOP

ELIZABETH EATON



2023 Presiding Bishop Eaton Statement

Dear friends in Christ,

Over the past year we have continued to experience changes in the world around us. Even as our church finds ways to adapt to this changing world, we find hope in the unchanging and always present promise of God’s love through Jesus Christ. We change and adapt not to conform to the world but because we believe that the gift of God’s Son is for the world, and that our congregations and worshiping communities are places to gather and be sent into the world, where we will tell the story of God’s love in word and deed.

The ministries of our congregations, our synods and the churchwide organization provide ways for the church to move beyond the boundaries of structures and geography and to share God’s love with people in our neighborhoods, our cities, our country and beyond. We engage in this ministry knowing that our church walks by faith, trusting in God’s promise in the gospel, and that we exist by and for the proclamation of this gospel word. In John 15:5, Jesus reminds us, “I am the vine; you are the branches. Those who abide in me and I in them bear much fruit, because apart from me you can do nothing.” We are connected by the promise that we do all through Christ and can do nothing apart from him.

God gives the Holy Spirit, who uses gospel proclamation — in preaching and sacraments, in forgiveness and in healing conversations — to create and sustain this faith. Just as we rely on God to sustain our faith, we rely on each other to sustain the ministries that offer God’s love to the world. Through your generosity to each expression of this church — your congregation, your synod and your churchwide organization — you add to our collective voice proclaiming God’s love for all.

I am grateful for your generosity over this last year. My gratitude spreads far beyond your generous financial gifts. You’ve shared your gifts of time through countless hours of volunteering, serving and accompanying. You’ve shared the gifts of your voices as we’ve tried to discover and learn how God is calling us to be the church now and into the future. And, finally, dear church, you have shared the gift of the realness of God’s love with the world around you. Be well, dear church, and stand steadfast in the promise of God’s love and grace as you take that promise with you into the world.

The Rev. Elizabeth A. Eaton

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Elizabeth A. Eaton".

Presiding Bishop
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

“I am the vine; you are the branches.

Those who abide in me and I in them
bear much
fruit, because apart from me you can
do nothing. —John 15:5”

2023 Congregational Council Report

In 2023 the Zion Lutheran Church met once a month with the exception of April. Council members were Steven Rust, Shellie Lare, Dennis Kesee, Howard King, Christina Dettmer, Nathaniel Grote, and Pastor Lee.

We continue in our Disciples of the Plains shared parish. I'd like to thank those who volunteer to serve on the committee to continue to make this a successful partnership.

Thank you to all who volunteer on our congregational teams.

Thank you to the women of Zion for the events, meals, and missions they volunteer their time to.

Thank you to Melvin Grau, Bob Lamp, Jeff Griffey, and Sheila Solida for their continued efforts to keep our church lawn and cemetery looking beautiful.

Thank you to Howard King and others for performing maintenance on our church.

Thank you to Jean Ann Wagner for her continued service providing music for Zion Lutheran.

Thank you to everyone who has volunteered their time and energy for Zion over this past year. We again hosted the summer lunch program, enjoyed worship in the park alongside Emmanuel and the Methodist church, implemented a backup music system, and decorated the church for Christmas.

I would also like to thank the Zion Church Council for their time and effort over this past year.

Respectfully submitted by,

Steven Rust

Zion Lutheran Church

Phillipsburg, KS

2023 Income Report

Current	\$65,405.00
Ash Wednesday	\$209.00
Lent	\$625.00
Easter	\$450.00
Advent	\$40.00
Maundy Thursday	\$96.00
Good Friday	\$70.00
Thanksgiving	\$35.00
Christmas	\$626.75
Epiphany	\$16.00
Initial	\$95.00
2023 Total Income	<u>\$67,667.75</u>

Zion Lutheran

2023 All Accounts Treasurer's Report

Dear Members of Zion:

At the beginning of 2023, the account balances in the Zion Lutheran Church Accounts were as follows.

Date:	January 1, 2023
General Fund Checking	\$11,263.94
Now Account Checking	\$41,914.30
Zion Trust Fund Checking	\$6,204.27
Luther League	\$10,915.32
Certificate # 40145 HV	\$3,000.00
Certificate #40524 LM	\$7,070.63
Certificate #16078 KL	\$12,415.35
Parsonage Certificate #21124	\$77,855.60
Total:	\$170,639.41

The year-end totals for 2023 are as follows.

Date:	December 31, 2023
General Fund Checking	\$13,866.96
Now Account Checking	\$27,973.19
Zion Trust Fund Checking	\$6,863.54
Luther League	\$10,897.32
Certificate # 40145 HV	\$3,000.00
Certificate #40524 LM	\$7,070.63
Certificate #16078 KL	\$12,424.54
Parsonage Certificate #21124	\$78,167.33
Total:	\$160,263.51

Expenditures of \$76,428.46 were distributed from the General Fund Checking account. Of this amount, we had expenditures of \$1075.00 through the pre-paid expense accounts.

Respectfully submitted,
Dennis Keese, Treasurer

2023 Now Account Totals Account QuickReport All Dates

DATE	ACCOUNT	AMOUNT	BALANCE
	1025-S. Walvoord Scholarships	\$337.00	
	1028-Undesignated Gifts	\$2,740.58	
	1029-Library	\$758.53	
	1051-Armstrong Foundation Gift	\$5,145.67	
	1081-Special Maintenance	\$3,127.48	
	1083-Money Market Interest	\$623.03	
	1098-Cemetery Maintenance	\$393.10	
	1099-Lawn Care	\$ -570.00	
	1116-Lizzie Miller 40524	\$282.37	
	1137-Harold Beckman Memorial	\$1,695.52	
	1138-Howard & Marie Vogel	\$3,031.70	
	1141-Bob Lamp Sr. Memorial	\$863.00	
	1193-Kinter Land Sale	\$2,878.72	
	1195-Stock Gift -General Use	\$0.00	
	1196-Lutheran Magazine	\$125.00	
	1208 - Thrivent Funds	\$636.74	
	1211 - Andy Zillinger Memorial	\$1,350.00	
	1217- Midweek Zion Meal	\$342.75	
	1218 - John Gibbs Memorial	\$407.00	
	1224- Laverne Merklein Memorial	\$1,470.00	
	1225 - Burnell Goll Memorial	\$1,850.00	
	1226 - Larry Ott Memorial	\$485.00	
	TOTAL	\$27,973.19	

2023 Zion Education Committee (Formally Congregational Ministry Team)

The Zion Education Committee needs more volunteers for 2024 because right now it is a committee of one. The educational opportunities available are confirmation classes, a Bible study that meets at Zion every second and fourth Thursday evening at 7 pm to study the Gospel of Mark, and a parish-wide Zoom Bible study that meets on Sundays at 4:00 pm that is studying the book of Acts. There is also a Facebook page the parish sponsors called Daily Lectio that offers daily scripture readings.

We were blessed this year with a group of volunteers from Zion and Emmanuel to lead Vacation Bible School here at Zion.

Vacation Bible School was a three-day gathering from May 22nd to 24th and featured a game show type theme to encourage following Jesus. Attendance was very good. This was one of the few VBS opportunities in the community during 2023. It is hoped that we continue to provide VBS together as Zion and Emmanuel into 2024.

There were no confirmation students that confirmed their baptisms in 2023.

We currently have ten committed students in confirmation who began their Lutheran Catechism Year in October 2023. Four of these students are from Zion. They are Emerson Grote, Carter Grote, Drayden Simpson, and Jacob Driggs. Carter and Jacob will affirm their baptism this year. Adults are always welcome to

come and observe class. We continue to meet on Wednesdays at 7:00 pm. Projections are that we will have eight students starting in the fall of 2024.

We also sent three confirmation students to Camp Tomah Shinga this year with two being from Zion: Carter Grote and Drayden Simpson. Confirmation Camp at Tomah Shinga is scheduled this year for June 2nd through June 7th.

We have five youth and four adults registered to attend the 2024 ELCA Youth Gathering in New Orleans from July 16th through July 20th. The youth from Zion are Kadence Grote, Carter Grote, and Jacob Driggs. Adult leaders from Zion are Pastor Lee, Nathaniel Grote, and Christina Driggs. Thank you to those who have already helped support their attendance at the gathering.

If there are ideas for more Bible studies or adult forums before or after Sunday worship, please let me know.

Right now, we have no younger children's educational opportunities. We could use volunteers to make this happen.

Thank you for all you do to keep the educational ministries of this congregation going.

God's Blessings,

Pastor Lee Bennight.

2023 Property Team Report

Completed Projects:

- Replaced the fixtures in the NE classroom w/no ballast LED 4' fluorescent
- Replaced the fixtures in the secretary office w/no ballast LED 4' fluorescent
- Replaced bulbs that were out in the kitchen w/ballast, plug-n-play LED 4' fluorescent
- Replaced the rope light on the outside cross
- Replaced (3) fixtures in the Library using plug-n-play, w/ballast LED 4' fluorescent
- Installed the blind between the kitchen and the fellowship hall
- Replaced 6 bulbs in the fellowship twice during the year
- Replaced the sinks and faucets in the men's and children's restrooms upstairs
- Bob and Jeff repaired the bell after it didn't work one Sunday in November
- Jeff repaired the outlet on the outside cross (light)
- Melvin and Bob mowed and used a weed eater at the cemetery during the year
- Melvin sprayed the cemetery with 2,4-D in the fall
- Nativity scene installed for the Christmas season
- Sheila and Jeff mowed the Church lawn during the year

Unfinished projects:

- Sign in front of the church: light, point and tuck, and replace clear cover
- Finish the windows above the sacristy
- Repair the color panels and wooden framework around the bell tower
- Repair interior wall on west side of the staircase going upstairs
- Finish removing the basketball pole
- Still need to raise a few sprinkler heads
- Replace/repair cooling in the Fellowship Hall

I want to thank everyone who has volunteered of their time to keep our church home looking as good as it does. To Ricky, Jerry and anyone else for snow removal in the parking lot and sidewalks. Many thanks to Sheila Solida and Jeff Griffey for mowing the church yard. Also, a thank you to Melvin and Bob for taking care of our cemetery lawn. Melvin is still saying that he is finished mowing the church cemetery. Who will step up? Thanks to everyone who decorated the interior and exterior of the church during the Christmas season. I know that I will forget to mention someone who has donated toward the upkeep of our church home, but it is unintentional. We will need to continue to repair our church home.

Sincerely,

Howard D. King

ZION LUTHERAN CHURCH 2023 TRUST FUND REPORT

Dear Members of Zion,

I am pleased to present to you the 2023 Annual Report for the Zion Lutheran Church Trust Fund. This past year has been a successful one for the trust, and I am grateful to have had the opportunity to serve on the committee alongside Dennis Deschner, Christina Dettmer, and Dennis Keese, with guidance from Pastor Lee who served as a non-voting member and advisor.

Throughout the year, our committee convened regularly to review grant applications and assess the financial status of the trust. I am delighted to report that the Trust Fund experienced a positive annual return of +6.09%, a testament to the effective management and investment of assets by First National Bank and Trust, especially in the face of the challenging economic climate.

In terms of financial performance, the Trust Fund had a carryover balance of \$6,205 from 2022 and distributed a substantial \$9,117 in 2023, leaving the Trust Fund with \$15,322 to allocate towards 2023 projects. After accounting for project expenses, the remaining balance of \$6,797 will be carried over to FY 2024.

In 2023, the committee approved the following grants:

Zion College scholarships (3 students) - \$4,500
Lutheran Disaster Response (Turkey & Syria) - \$1,000
Lutheran Disaster Response (Hawaii) - \$2500
Confirmation Camp - \$525
Total: \$8,525

We are proud to have been able to support these worthy causes and extend our sincere thanks to the members of Zion for their continued support.

Looking ahead, we remain committed to our mission of stewardship and service, and we are optimistic about the future of the Trust Fund. I would like to express my gratitude to everyone involved in making the past year a success and look forward to another year of meaningful contributions and positive impact.

Sincerely,
Jeff Griffey

2023 Worship and Music Committee Report

Zion's Worship Committee members are Jean Ann Wagner, Shellie Lare, Marci Rust, Janet McCall, and Pastor Lee. We still have room for more. The committee helps pick songs and hymns for each Sunday, evaluates different liturgies, and brainstorms about worship. Let one of the committee members know if you are interested in joining.

Many thanks are due to Jean Ann Wagner for her musical gifts that continue to enrich our worship life together. Many thanks are also due to those who have played for worship as special music this past year.

We have incorporated Church Music Solutions Substitute Organist Service (SOS) as an option for Sunday morning music so that Jean Ann can have some time off. Like all recorded options, it is not perfect but is much better than other options of the market because it customized the music list for us during the Sundays we use it.

We continue to stream worship with a handful participating each Sunday. We do not know exactly how many people watch later. We do know that some of our shut-in members rely on this ministry.

We have been switching worship liturgy settings with each season. This spring, however, we are going to continue with setting eight from Evangelical Lutheran Worship through the season of Easter so that we become familiar with it.

With the defunding of the office secretary position, worship bulletins are currently being printed at Emmanuel by Janet Conn. You can continue to submit items for the bulletin or newsletter to Pastor Lee. You can also call and leave a message at the church because the new voicemail system delivers all messages to Pastor Lee's email.

During the 2022 and 2023 Annual Meetings, there was discussion about new carpet and a clavino to match what Emmanuel bought. However, there has been no action on these items. The Congregation Council removed them from Old Business this year until they are able to be addressed by an appropriate temporary committee or task force of the congregation to be determined at this or a future special or annual meeting of the congregation.

Thank you to all who have contributed to the worship life of Zion in praise of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Sincerely,

Pastor Lee Bennight

ZION LUTHERAN CHURCH

2023 WELCA Report

The women of Zion hosted the potluck lunch before the annual meeting on January 22nd.

At the January 29 meeting, Janet McCall resigned as president of WELCA. Janet has served as president for many years and we are thankful for all she's done. New officers were elected. Marci Rust is president, Sue Kipp continues as secretary, and Ceshalyn Rust is treasurer.

We purchased a new wooden blind for the serving window between the kitchen and the fellowship hall.

Zion hosted a parish meeting on February 26th. A synod representative was present to review the results of the congregational surveys. The women of Zion provided a light meal.

The women hosted the 2023 gathering of the parish women on March 19th. Women from American, St. John, and Zion attended. Nathaniel and Caydence Grote provided special music. Pat Dunavan brought greetings from the Central States Synod.

On March 26th we hosted a drive-thru fundraiser dinner of pulled pork sandwiches, potato casserole, baked beans, and cookies. The youth helped us by delivering meals to the cars and the men of Zion directed traffic for us. We raised \$1,128.41

We donated a \$150 bundle of assorted meats from Phillipsburg Lockers to the annual Hospice Dinner and Auction.

We collected bars of soap and assembled personal care kits, layette kits, and school kits for Lutheran World Relief. We are grateful for all the items collected and money donated to complete these kits. They will help people around the world.

Our Thankoffering service was November 12th and our Thankoffering was sent to churchwide Women of the ELCA.

November 12th was our fall fundraiser. We served pulled pork sandwiches, party potatoes, baked beans and cookies. It was a great success and we appreciate the help from the youth who delivered meals to the waiting cars and the men who directed traffic for us. We raised \$1,413.00

We gave monetary Christmas gifts to Oaks Indian Mission, H.E.L.P Philippines Mission, Phillips County Food Pantry, Pastor Lee, and Lutheran World Relief.

“As a community of women, created in the image of God, called to discipleship in Jesus Christ, and empowered by the Holy Spirit, we commit ourselves to grow in faith, affirm our gifts, support one another in our callings, engage in ministry and action, and promote healing, and wholeness in the church, society, and the world.”

2023 Disciples of the Plains Parish Council

This time of year often brings an opportunity to not only look ahead at a new year but to also bring about reflections of this past year.

The parish council has regularly sent our minutes to every congregation after each meeting. We provide these minutes so that everyone has the opportunity to know what decisions the council has made. We continue to work on refining how our parish works and how to best provide for our congregations. That has always been our driving force.

I have had the privilege of serving as council president the past four years. During that time, we have faced many challenges and I truly believe that we are stronger and more capable of moving into the future because of them.

Disciples of the Plains Lutheran Ministry can be a strong and viable cooperation in ministry to our area and to each other as we go into 2024 and beyond. If we continue to trust God and work to do His will in our lives, this parish will thrive. I have seen many people who wish for that to happen. Please get involved and be a part of our future.

Best wishes for a wonderful new year in Christ!

Paul Merklein

2023 DISCIPLES OF THE PLAINS TREASURER'S REPORT

Beginning Balance **\$ 9,947.52**

Income

American \$ 46,224.64

Emmanuel \$ 46,224.64

St. John \$ 55,983.04

Zion \$ 36,911.20

Other Income \$ 3,100.00

Total **\$ 188,443.52**

Expenses

Pastor Lee Salary \$ 43,140.24

Pastor Kathy Salary \$ 37,454.40

FICA \$ 8,550.96

Pension \$ 15,793.44

Pretax Pension \$ 5,339.28

Health Insurance \$ 44,649.96

FSA (Flexible Spending Acct.) \$ 6,099.84

Life Insurance \$ 456.72

Other Medical (Vision) \$ 198.72

Mileage \$ 10,257.68

Phone \$ 960.00

Insurance \$ 1,657.00

Utilities \$ 3,791.99

Continuing Ed \$ 2,262.24

General Op. \$ 3,425.03

Missions	\$	-	
Synod Assembly	\$	130.00	
Bishop Convocation	\$	835.80	
Pulpit Supply	\$	2,350.00	
Youth Events	\$	525.00	
Total			\$ 187,878.30
Ending Balance			\$ 10,512.74

Note: Other income of \$3,100 consists of a \$100 donation for the leftover meat from mission festival, and a \$3,000 contribution from Emmanuel Lutheran Church. This is from a grant Emmanuel received, and they chose to share a part of it with the parish. Thank you to the Emmanuel congregation for this donation!

2024 Disciples of the Plains Proposed Budget

	Pastor Lee	Pastor Kathy	Total
Pastor Salary	\$ 50,054.00	\$ 45,416.00	\$ 95,470.00
FICA	\$ 4,581.06	\$ 4,199.11	\$ 8,780.17
Pension	\$ 8,523.12	\$ 7,740.00	\$ 16,263.12
Health	\$ 19,999.28	\$ 21,620.92	\$ 41,620.20
Continuing Ed	\$ 1,600.00	\$ 1,600.00	\$ 3,200.00
Phone	\$ 480.00	\$ 480.00	\$ 960.00
Utilities			\$ 4,800.00
Mileage			\$ 8,000.00
Synod Assembly			\$ 1,000.00
Bishop Convocation			\$ 1,000.00
Pulpit Supply			\$ 2,000.00
Insurance			\$ 1,800.00
Youth Events			\$ 400.00
Gen. Operations			\$ 3,000.00
Total			\$ 188,293.49
1/2 of total			\$ 94,146.75
	Emmanuel	Zion	
Avg. attendance	47	28	
% of total attend.	24.23%	14.43%	
	Emmanuel	Zion	
Monthly Pmt	\$ 3,862.37	\$ 3,093.51	

2023 Actual Expenditures and 2024 Proposed Budget

	2023 Budget	2023 Actual	2024 Budget
CHURCH & HOME			
5551-Church Water	\$1,000.00	\$994.09	\$1,050.00
5552-Telephone	\$550.00	\$497.13	\$550.00
5553-Church Gas	\$1,500.00	\$2,188.00	\$2,000.00
5554-Church Electric	\$1,800.00	\$1,816.61	\$1,800.00
5555-Custodian	\$5,700.00	\$5,575.00	\$5,700.00
5556-Custodial Supplies	\$300.00	\$223.05	\$300.00
5557-Church Insurance	\$4,800.00	\$4,777.00	\$5,100.00
5567-Church Pest Control	\$750.00	\$720.00	\$800.00
5558-Church Maintenance	\$500.00	\$288.84	\$500.00
5568-Internet	\$800.00	\$799.40	\$863.40
5569-Website	\$180.85	\$192.00	\$205.00
<u>CHURCH TOTAL</u>	<u>\$17,880.85</u>	<u>\$18,071.12</u>	<u>\$18,868.40</u>
CONGREGATIONAL LIFE			
5231-Lutheran Publications	\$300.00	\$257.40	\$300.00
5234-Congregational Life	\$100.00	\$-00	\$100.00
5275-Fellowship Meals	\$100.00	\$-00	\$100.00
<u>CONGREGATIONAL LIFE TOTAL</u>	<u>\$500.00</u>	<u>\$257.40</u>	<u>\$500.00</u>
MISC EXPENSES			
5331-Synod Assembly Expense	\$375.00	\$130.00	\$750.00
5332-Synod Assembly Offering	\$75.00	\$-00	\$75.00
5335-Safety Deposit Box Rent	\$12.50	\$12.50	\$12.50
5337-Miscellaneous Expense	\$100.00	\$-00	\$100.00
<u>MISC EXPENSES TOTAL</u>	<u>\$562.50</u>	<u>\$142.50</u>	<u>\$937.50</u>

OFFICE EXPENSE

5251-Secretary	\$8,752.84	\$8,247.58	\$-00
5334-Employer's Tax SS Medicare	\$669.59	\$-00	\$-00
6001-Intuit Payroll	\$540.00	\$776.40	\$-00
5252-Office Equip Purchase	\$100.00	\$174.26	\$100.00
5253-Office Supplies	\$800.00	\$423.06	\$1,000.00
5254-Postage	\$100.00	\$66.00	\$100.00
5256- Maintenance (Copier)	\$500.00	\$429.77	\$500.00
<u>OFFICE EXPENSE TOTAL</u>	<u>\$11,462.43</u>	<u>\$10,117.07</u>	<u>\$1,700.00</u>

OUR MISSION TO OTHERS

5276- Compassion International	\$456.00	\$486.00	\$516.00
5011-Central States Benevolence	\$8,100.00	\$6,472.92	\$8,100.00
5237-Emergency Outreach	\$500.00	\$515.00	\$500.00
5236-Missions & Memberships	\$-00	\$200.00	\$200.00
<u>OUR MISSION TO OTHERS TOTAL</u>	<u>\$9,056.00</u>	<u>\$6,958.92</u>	<u>\$9,316.00</u>

PARISH EDUCATION

5272-Vacation Bible School	\$200.00	\$63.19	\$300.00
5273-Confirmation & First Communion	\$350.00	\$-00	\$350.00
5274-Adult Education	\$125.00	\$314.07	\$200.00
<u>PARISH EDUCATION TOTAL</u>	<u>\$675.00</u>	<u>\$377.26</u>	<u>\$850.00</u>

STEWARDSHIP

5311-Offering Envelopes	\$135.00	\$134.80	\$135.00
5312 - Membership Software	\$-00	\$-00	\$924.00
<u>STEWARDSHIP TOTAL</u>	<u>\$135.00</u>	<u>\$134.80</u>	<u>\$1,059.00</u>

WORSHIP AND MUSIC

5210-Worship Materials	\$300.00	\$804.42	\$500.00
5212-Festival & Religious Occasions	\$100.00	\$93.94	\$100.00
5214-Piano And Organ Maint.	\$200.00	\$257.95	\$300.00
5215- Organist	\$350.00	\$646.50	\$650.00
<u>WORSHIP AND MUSIC TOTAL</u>	<u>\$950.00</u>	<u>\$1,802.81</u>	<u>\$1,550.00</u>

DISCIPLES OF THE PLAINS

5000- Disciples of the Plains	\$37,091.50	\$36,911.20	\$37,122.12
<u>DISCIPLES OF THE PLAINS TOTAL</u>	<u>\$37,091.50</u>	<u>\$36,911.20</u>	<u>\$37,122.12</u>

Total Expenses	\$78,313.28	\$74,773.08	\$71,903.02
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2024 Zion Lutheran Church Annual Elections

CURRENT PARISH / CONGREGATION COUNCIL MEMBERS

- President Steven Rust: Elected 2022 (2nd Term)
- Vice President Nathaniel Grote: Elected 2023 (2nd Term)
- Secretary Shellie Lare: Elected 2021 (Completed 1st Term)
- Treasurer Dennis Keesee: Elected 2022 (1st Term)
- Howard King: Elected 2023 (2nd Term)
- Christina Dettmer: Elected 2021 (Completed 1st Term) (Also Parish Council Rep)
- Parish Council Representative At Large: Doug Zillinger: Elected 2022 (Completed 1st two year term)
- Mutual Ministry Committee: Andrea Keesee & Tamra Griffey (Ongoing terms)

POSITIONS THAT NEED TO BE FILLED

I. Zion Council Position:

- a. Shellie Lare (Incumbent):
- b.
- c.

II. Zion Council Position:

- a. Christina Driggs
- b.
- c.

III. Parish Council Representative At Large:

- a. Doug Zillinger (incumbent)
- b.
- c.

IV. 2024 Central State Synod Representatives

- a.
- b.
- c. *If Youth, we can have a third representative:*

Resolution No. 1 - Adoption of Proposed Financial Goal

Whereas, the proposed financial goal for Zion Lutheran Church for 2024 has been assembled by the Congregational Council, taking into account all the pertinent and available data and information, and

Whereas, the proposed financial goal for 2024 is an accurate representation of the funds deemed necessary to adequately carry out the mission of Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church outside our walls and to provide for the care and upkeep for the buildings and grounds of the congregation during the coming year, and

Whereas, the proposed financial goal has been made available to the membership of Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church for review and study through publication in the 2023 Annual Report booklet; therefore,

Be It Resolved, that the voting membership of Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church, assembled in the regular Annual Meeting on January 21, 2024, adopts the proposed financial goal for 2024 as printed or with properly added amendments as to be noted and published in the minutes of this meeting.

Resolution No. 2 - Thanksgiving

Whereas, so many members and friends of Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church, Phillipsburg, Kansas have labored with great dedication to fulfill the mission and ministry of this congregation during the past year by serving in many capacities, and

Whereas, Christina Dettmer and Shellie Lare have faithfully completed one three-year terms on the Congregational Council, and Doug Zillinger has faithfully completed one two-year term on the Disciples of the Plains Parish Council,

Be It Resolved, that we give all those who have served in any capacity a tremendous vote of thanks and gratefully acknowledge that every contribution of time, talent, or treasure, whether large or small, is important to the life of this congregation, and

Be It Further Resolved, that those forgotten be assured that this seeming neglect is unintentional. Although human eyes and memories are imperfect, God knows the service you have rendered in God's name and will bless your efforts on behalf of the Kingdom of God.

"And whatever you do in word or deed,
do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus,
giving thanks to God the Father through Him"
Colossians 3:17