

# THE ZION HERALD

Proclaiming Good News

January/February 2026

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***Living in Faith,  
Known by Love,  
Serving like Jesus***

***A community of believers who  
are diverse in background yet  
one in Christ. We serve the  
community and welcome all  
to worship, grow and learn  
the Word of God.***

## Food Pantry News

2025 was a very busy year! We are so grateful to all of our generous donors, volunteers and church family for supporting us so generously!!! We never ran out of food and so many families were fed with from this support of the pantry and the countless hours put in by our amazing volunteers. We are also very grateful for our partnership with Stark County Hunger Task Force whose support is invaluable!



***See More details on pages 20-21***

## Message from our President:

Although the months of January and February usher in a new secular year, let us view the world around us through the lens of the new Church Calendar Year. This is a time of transition between the Season of Advent and Christmas and the Lenten Season culminating in the Crucifixion of Jesus and His Resurrection as the Risen Christ. It is a time for reflection on Jesus' life and teachings and the incomprehensible magnitude of God's love.

Responsible stewardship of the abundant resources God has entrusted to our care is essential if we are to fulfill our Mission of "Living in Faith, Known by Love, Serving like Jesus." As we continue to maintain and improve Zion's physical infrastructure (windows, doors, parking lot, HVAC system); focus on meaningful Worship Services (Supply Pastors through June, 2026) with Observance of the Sacraments and joyful music; Christian Education; opportunities for laypersons to serve our Members (Stephen Ministry); and community outreach- all while ensuring Zion's maintenance of a financial stature conducive to attracting experienced Pastors seeking a call- wise stewardship of resources is critical.

At this impactful time in Zion's history we are fortunate indeed to have the services of dedicated employees such as Ray LePelley (IT), Herb Beadle (Custodian) and Hannah Aemmer (Church Secretary). And navigation of the Call Process would be impossible without the competent, compassionate guidance of our Pastor of Record, Pastor Tina Crog.

This year, Zion will be celebrating Lent beginning with Services on the evening of Ash Wednesday, February 18 and continuing for five consecutive Sunday evening Lenten Services starting on February 22. Pastor Bob Sander will preside over the Ash Wednesday Service, while Pastor David Rice will preside over the Lenten Services.

Zion will be holding a Congregational Meeting immediately following the Morning Worship Service on Sunday, February 22, 2026. The main order of business will be the election of Council members for the term beginning July 1, 2026. Please consider whether you are at a point in your life where you believe you can contribute to fulfilling Zion's Mission by offering your talents in serving as a member of the Council.

Lord, Thank You for Your sacrifice for us. Help us to grow in love for You and each other. In Jesus' Name we pray. Amen.

Respectfully submitted,  
Jim Fidler, Congregation Council President.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS FOR THIS YEAR'S HUNGER WALK!

# STARK HUNGER WALK



# FEED the NEED

## THE NEED IS CRITICAL.

### HUNGER AFFECTS 1 IN 5 CHILDREN

20.5% or 16,440 children may struggle with hunger in Stark County

### HUNGER AFFECTS 1 IN 7 INDIVIDUALS

14.5% or 54,230 individuals may struggle with hunger in Stark County

# SUNDAY, MAY 3, 2026

- 2:00 p.m. - Registration at North Canton Community Christian Church  
210 North Main St. North Canton, OH 44720
- 3:00 p.m. - Start of approximately 2.1 mile walk (RAIN OR SHINE)
- Afterwards - Hot Soup Social



AKRON-CANTON REGIONAL  
**FOOD BANK**

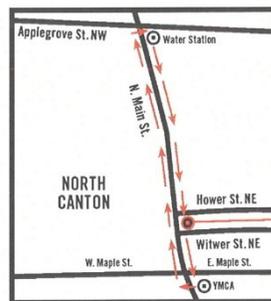
Serving Carroll, Holmes, Medina, Portage, Stark, Summit, Tuscarawas and Wayne Counties.



SCAN HERE

to sign up! Not required.

### STARK MAP



FACEBOOK: STARK-HUNGER-WALK  
STARKHUNGERWALK@GMAIL.COM

All proceeds benefit the Akron-Canton Regional Food Bank.



**LEARNING MINISTRY**– Debbie Fox

## **Adult Christian Education – Sunday Mornings at 10:15 am**

Bible Discussion during the Adult Christian Education hour will continue for the next few months. Join us each Sunday after service and refreshments for an engaging and interesting discussion on each week's lessons and Gospel. We are so grateful to all of our supply pastors for leading us each week to help us further our knowledge of God's Word.

## **Confirmation Class**

Cindy Bagocius continues to lead this group Sunday mornings at 10:15am. The group is currently working on individual long-term projects chosen by the participants that will further their education in God's Word. Please pray for them as they continue this important journey of affirming their baptism.

## **Sunday Bible Adventure Pre-K thru 6<sup>th</sup> Grades**

Connie Riffle and Janet Slease continue to lead our kids each Sunday morning at 10:15 for adventures in learning important Bible lessons that include games, crafts and fun. We are looking forward to Lent, Holy Week and Easter and have some special activities planned!

## **Women's Bible Study**

The next two gatherings will be Monday, February 2<sup>nd</sup> and Monday, March 2<sup>nd</sup> at Cindy Bagocius's home on Market Ave in Canton. They continue to discuss the Bible Study in the ELCA's magazine, "Gather". Don't worry if you don't have the magazine – we can get you signed up, and we also have a copy at the church!

The women will continue to meet on the first Monday of each month with a 1:30pm arrival and 1:45pm start time at Cindy's home. All women are invited and encouraged to join and bring a friend! Please contact Cindy Bagocius or Debbie Fox for more information.

## **Men's Bible Study**

The men will meet on Saturday, February 28<sup>th</sup> at 8:30am this month. They are currently studying and discussing Paul's Letter to the Romans.

The men meet at Zion once a month on the last Saturday of the month at 8:30am for good food, fellowship and an hour of engaging Bible discussion. All men are invited and encouraged to attend and bring a friend or two! If these times don't work for you, contact Ken Reinoehl to see if we can arrange a time that does work!



## Vacation Bible School

Great news! We set the date for this year's VBS – the week of June 22<sup>nd</sup> - 26<sup>th</sup>, Mark your calendars and plan to join us that week at Road Trip! We will be on the go with God as He guides us wherever we go! Stay tuned for more information next month!

**Dear God,** help us open our minds, our ears and our hearts to what You are telling us, and to do Your will! Guide us in our pursuit of learning and walking in your Word every day. Amen



*Chancel Flowers are available in memory or honor of your loved one (s) and are used in the Chapel for any Sunday Service of your choice.*

*They are only \$20.00 each and you can order as many as you wish!*

*You also get to take them home after the service and enjoy their beauty and your memories!!*

*Arrangements can be made in the front office.*



*New office hours*

*Monday through Friday  
9:00 am to 2:00 pm*

*January Birthdays*

January 7th  
January 14th  
January 15th  
January 19th  
January 20th  
January 21st  
January 27th

Bobbi Wilson  
Juanita Cignetti  
Randy Cizek  
Drew Keith  
Randy Elsass  
Liam Medina  
Ray LePelley

*February Birthdays*

February 3rd  
February 14th  
February 15th  
February 15th  
February 26th

Sandy Cizek  
Mary Humbert  
Rick Riffle  
Donna Roan  
Darlene Dague



*Happy Anniversary*

*February Anniversaries*

February 23

Mark & Laura  
Thompson



## Blood Drive – Critical Need, Please Help!

Our next blood drive is **Sunday, February 22<sup>nd</sup>** from **10am – 1:30pm** in the gym.

**We Want Your Blood! They Really Need Your Blood! Due to the holiday season, illnesses and bad weather, many blood drives and donation appointments have been cancelled leaving a critical shortage for hospitals and patients in need! Please donate and give the gift of life.**



Brooke - I happen to be a staff member here at Vitalant, but I'm also a frequent blood recipient. I was born with a rare blood disorder called beta thalassemia and cannot survive without blood transfusions every four weeks.

**Without blood donors like you, I wouldn't be here today.**

My body doesn't make red blood cells properly, so I don't get the oxygen required to live a normal, healthy life. Because I am transfusion-dependent, **I have received more than 300 units of blood throughout my lifetime.**

You can schedule your own appointment, or Debbie Fox can schedule one for you.

To make your own appointment, go to:

<https://donors.vitalant.org/dwp/portal/dwa/appointment/guest/phl/timeSlotsExtr?token=rpWCGMfJ%2FslDXPH1ITaq1NzJHQ7cpgCjvLt%2BSI4t9kg%3D>

**Mark Your Calendars for the rest of 2026 and plan to donate! Ask a friend or family member to join you in donating and giving the gift of life!**

**Sunday, April 26, 2026 10am – 1:30pm**  
**Sunday, July 12, 2026 10am – 1:30pm**  
**Sunday, September 13, 2026 10am – 1:30pm**  
**Sunday, November 15, 2026 10am – 1:30pm**

If you are unable to donate on the above dates, you can go to the Vitalant Donation Center at 4119 Tuscarawas St West, Canton, OH 44708. Call 877-258-4825 or schedule an appointment online. Thanks be to God for everyone who is willing and able to donate blood and give the gift of life.

## Financial Update

- All that we have, all that we are, flows from the generosity and abundant love of our Creator.
- Thank you for your continued generosity and commitment to healthy stewardship. Zion finished 2025 in a great position financially. As for the Operating Budget for the full year, we broke even. Or simply said, our Giving Income equaled our Expenses.
- In the Operating spending we invested in our mission and service to the community and the wider church. Activities like Food Pantry, Vacation Bible School, Blood Drive, Trunk or Treat, Cruise In for Veterans, Shared Goods, Habitat for Humanity, new AV system for the Worship space, Stephen Ministries, new windows for the church just to name a few!
- In addition to all of those things, we have set aside over \$32,000 for expenses related to interviewing and moving a new Pastor. This remains a priority for us.
- Our parking lot is an essential part of delivering our mission. It is heavily used all 12 months of the year. We have also been given about \$16,000 in 2025 towards this large project in 2026.
- Our long term investment funds continue to deliver returns. We are well prepared to welcome a new pastor while continuing to make improvements in our church.
- When we choose to share from what our Father has already given us, we open ourselves to extraordinary possibilities to bless others and to be blessed. Thank you for your support.

**Laura Thompson**  
**Resource Ministry**

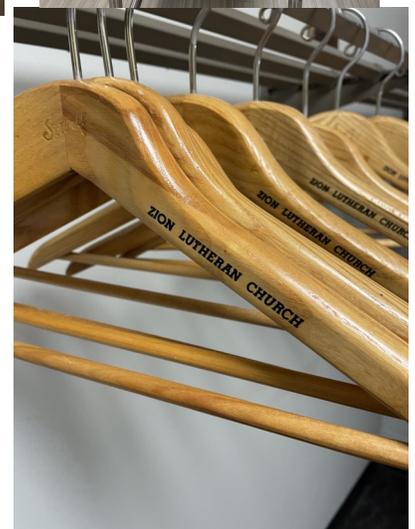
### Property

This year has been busy for property with the replacement of the windows, which changed the looks of the church. The new windows have helped in so many ways. The rooms are a lot brighter and there are no more drafts. In December, we had the exterior doors replaced. The doors have increased the beauty of the church and the efficiencies.

It was sad to hear that Zion Lutheran Church on Raft road closed. One of their members called us and asked if we would like to have their dishes that were engraved with Zion Lutheran Church. We said yes. We thought it would be nice to have all the dishes matching. We had a lot of dishes but there were 5 different sets. We are offering the members the dishes if any one wants any of them. What dishes are left we are going to put into Shared Goods for the community to have. They also offered us their wooden hangers. It was nice to have wooden hangers again to replace the white plastic ones.

We thank everyone for your support enabling us to do these must needed improvements.

**Darlene Milavickas**  
**Property Chairperson**



Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church -- Book Club Schedule; **REVISED**  
 November 2025 – May 2026 -- First Friday\*, 10:00 – 11:00 am  
 Zion Church Classroom  
 Coordinator, Peggy Ingalls (330-284-3518)

**January 9\*– Laura Thompson -- A Gentleman in Moscow, Amor Towles**

*1922 Moscow...Count Rostov, aristocrat...tribunal...sentenced to house arrest Metropol, a grand hotel...erudition and wit...never worked...lives in an attic...witness to tumultuous decades...entry into larger world of emotional maturity.*

**February 6 – Linda Gotthardt -- The Last Temptation of Christ, Nikos Kazantzakis**

*Based on Luke 4:13...masterpiece...brilliantly fleshes out Christ's Passion...courted controversy...depicting a Christ far more human than the one seen in the Bible...gloriously divine but earthy and human... subject to fear, doubt, and pain.*

**March 6 – Johanna Henderson – Saturday Night at the Lakeside Supper Club, J. Ryan Stradal**

*Mariel needs a break...Ned...having an identity crisis...beloved restaurant bleeding cash...mother Florence...holed up at church...lasting rift between mother and daughter...devastating tragedy...will the Lakeside Supper Club be their salvation?*

**April 3 – Carol Rossbach -- My Sister's Keeper, Jodi Picoult**

*A family torn apart...Anna...countless surgeries...so her sister, Kate...can fight leukemia...preimplantation bone marrow match...sue her parents...rights to her own body...perhaps fatal...what it means... a good person...morally correct?*

**May 1 – Kay Reiss -- The Great Bridge, David McCullough**

*Years around 1870...building Brooklyn Bridge...longest suspension bridge...greed, corruption...vision...optimism, heroism...lives lost...odds overwhelming...social climate of the time...remarkable family...great personal cost...Emily's dedication.*

**"May Bonus Book" – Cindy Bagocius -- Junkyard Wonders, Patricia Polacco (Grades 3-5)**

*Based on true events...celebrates influence of a teacher...Trisha devastated...new school...special class known as "the junkyard" ...teacher divides into tribes...sense of unity...visit a local junkyard...science fair...school bully... the Junkyard Wonders.*

**\*January 9 = Second Friday**



**WOW Christmas Gathering**  
 The single women's group met for a Christmas lunch on December 12. Carol Rossbach showed us a beautiful snowflake craft to make and Susan Kaschak led us in singing Christmas carols. These talented women made sure we had a great afternoon! Everyone had a nice time relaxing and enjoying the Christmas activities.



## ACME Community Cash Back

The ACME Community Cash Back Program ends in February. **Please bring in your ACME receipts dated between August 1, 2025 and February 15, 2026 with a Community Cashback amount listed on the bottom.** Zion will receive 5% of the total Community Cashback amounts from all the receipts we collect. Final day to drop off receipts is Sunday, February 22, 2026. Thank you for your support of this year's program. Stay tuned for how much we will earn this year!



# Thank You

Dear Debbie + the Zion Church Parishioners,  
The North Canton City Schools Family Support Specialists would like to thank all of you for your generous donation of blankets to our Santa's Closet Program. We were able to serve 407 families + provide gifts for over 200 children in our community.  
With Gratitude,  
Renee, Kathy + Jen

**Zion Lutheran Church  
North Canton, Ohio**

**FEBRUARY 2026 ASSISTING MINISTER SCHEDULE**

February 1 <sup>st</sup> , 2026	Ken Reinoehl
February 8 <sup>th</sup> , 2026	Jim Fidler
February 15 <sup>th</sup> , 2026	Beth Heller
February 22 <sup>nd</sup> , 2026	George Miller

**FEBRUARY 2026 ACOLYTE SCHEDULE**

February 1 <sup>st</sup> , 2026	Ben Keith
February 8 <sup>th</sup> , 2026	Eli Haga
February 15 <sup>th</sup> , 2026	LJ Brown
February 22 <sup>nd</sup> , 2026	Ben Keith

**FEBRUARY 2026 LECTOR SCHEDULE**

February 1 <sup>st</sup> , 2026	Mark Denman
February 8 <sup>th</sup> , 2026	Laura Thompson
February 15 <sup>th</sup> , 2026	Brian Milek
February 22 <sup>nd</sup> , 2026	Renee Keith

**FEBRUARY 2026 ACCOMPANIST SCHEDULE**

February 1 <sup>st</sup> , 2026	Susan Kaschak
February 8 <sup>th</sup> , 2026	Susan Kaschak
February 15 <sup>th</sup> , 2026	Steven Moore
February 22 <sup>nd</sup> , 2026	Digital Music

**FEBRUARY CHANCEL GUILD SCHEDULE SATURDAY**

February 7 <sup>th</sup> , 2026	Jane Fairman & Janet Slease
February 14 <sup>th</sup> , 2026	Corlene Coulter & Linda Smith
February 21 <sup>st</sup> , 2026	Jane Fairman & Janet Slease
February 28 <sup>th</sup> , 2026	Corlene Coulter & Linda Smith

**SUNDAY**

February 1 <sup>st</sup> , 2026	Jane Fairman & Janet Slease
February 8 <sup>th</sup> , 2026	Corlene Coulter & Linda Smith
February 15 <sup>th</sup> , 2026	Jane Fairman & Janet Slease
February 22 <sup>nd</sup> , 2026	Corlene Coulter & Linda Smith

**SUNDAY SERVICE DOOR LOCKERS February 2026**

February 1 <sup>st</sup> , 2026	Dave Palumbo
February 8 <sup>th</sup> , 2026	Jayne Schrader
February 15 <sup>th</sup> , 2026	George Miller
February 22 <sup>nd</sup> , 2026	Janet Slease

## January Stephen Ministry – Ken Reinoehl

Stephen Ministry has begun training future ministers. The first class was accomplished on Dec. 4. The first module touched on what would be expected of a caregiver. On Jan. 8<sup>th</sup>, we will be looking at the topic of Yours, Mine and Ours. We all have feelings; yours are probably not the same as mine; and we will delve into how to find out the feelings of a care receiver and determine if there needs to be compromise.

On Jan. 15<sup>th</sup>, our topic of discussion and learning will be around the art of listening. For indeed, we cannot get to know each other if we fail to listen to what others care about. On Jan. 22<sup>nd</sup>, our module will occupy the time of a double session on how our caring is DISTINCTIVE CHRISTIAN. (How to employ the Christian 'tools' in our care giving). We will emphasize the difference between servanthood and servitude; feel more comfortable including prayer in our conversations; how to incorporate appropriate Bible passages to suit the current situations; and how to best help meet other's spiritual needs.

We will conclude our January training on Jan 29<sup>th</sup>, by addressing the 'proper approach' to caring; realize the problems associated with using the wrong approach; and practice a proper process to approach caring.

**PLEASE KEEP US IN YOUR PRAYERS.**

## Stephen Ministry - February Training

The Stephen Ministry studies continue into its second month. Feb. 5 and 12, the future caregivers will be addressing the volatile issue of passive vs. aggressive, or assertiveness in **Module 6, Assertiveness: Relating Gently and Firmly**. We will learn how assertiveness has its foundations in the Bible. We will also learn how to live assertively. The module begins on Feb. 5, but continues into Feb. 12 with an assignment between the two weeks. This is one of those attributes which almost require role play in order to become more comfortable using it.

On Feb 19, **Module 7 Maintaining Boundaries and Caregiving** will explain how to maintain boundaries with our care receivers, and will be combined with **Module 8 Crisis Theory and Practice**, defining Crisis Theory with 'practical' practice.

February will end with us explaining how important **Module 9 Confidentiality** really is. It can easily be compared to Top Secret classifications in the military. We will also emphasize how important it is to protect whatever is discussed with the care receiver. This is another training session which will include role play.



Here we are--six **GATHER GIRLS** and one **GATHER DOG** at the home of Cindy Bagocius on Monday, January 5th. All are modeling scarf creations from Lauren Friedman's book, **25 Ways to Style Your SCARF**. We "tied up" the old year and kicked off a new one.

It is hoped that for February's **GATHERing** on the 2nd, there will be a guest presenter with the theme of "I Wonder." Both our human bodies and the Earth's are sources of wonder! Come gather with us! 1:30-3:00 p.m. at 2308 Market Ave N in Canton.

We **GATHER GIRLS** received a thankful acknowledgement from the ELCA for providing funds to purchase an environmentally-friendly cook stove for a family in need of one. The letter from Rachel Wind of the ELCA is on the left and the description is on the right. The stove in the middle is just a cute prop!

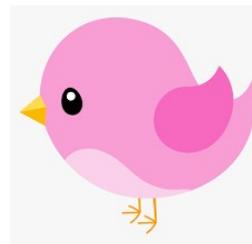


Zion "ladies" of all ages are invited to a sweet and springy event on Saturday, March 21st right here at Zion. We are calling the event "Sweet Tweets."

Come at 10:00 a.m. Megan Schoenfelt, owner of Terra Depot in Navarre, will be presenting an engaging powerpoint about her beloved backyard birds, how she cares for them, and how they come to thrive under her care. Her talk will also include information on the value and beauty of Ohio's native plantings. Each participant will choose a **MAKE-IT TAKE-IT** station to prepare a backyard bird goody. Each one looks good enough to eat!

Speaking of eating, lunch will be a boxed one. (More information to come about that.) The event will go until 1:00 p.m.

Please RSVP to Ruth Reinoehl (330-284-6080) or to Cindy Bagocius (234-207-3638) by March 14th.





## **Worship and Music Ministry Council report for January, 2026.**

We are planning for the Easter Season. We will have Ash Wednesday service with Pastor Bob Sander on Feb. 18. All Lenten services will be led by Pastor David Rice at 6:15pm on Sunday evenings (Feb. 22, March 1,8,15,22) and on Palm Sunday (March 29). (We hope Parish Life will

organize dinners at 5:30pm prior to the Lenten services.) Pastor Bob will lead services for Maundy Thursday (April 2 at 7pm), Good Friday (April 3 at 7:30pm), and Easter Sunday (April 5 at 9am). There will not be a Wednesday service on April 1.

To encourage individuals who do not wish to drive in the evening during the Easter Season, we will organize a list of potential drivers whom they can contact for a ride.

Scout Sunday will be February 1. The Scout leaders have been contacted and agreed that names will be provided and a walk-through with the designated boys will take place on January 20 during their normal meeting time. If the leaders are not ready, Scout Sunday may need to be postponed.

Pastor David Rice has been scheduled for Wednesday and Sunday services through June 21 after Easter Sunday.

We have not been successful in procuring an organist for our Sunday services. We have contacted several leads and organizations. We have posted the opening on the "Indeed" website and are using our outdoor sign as well. Any other suggestions are appreciated.

We are in need of additional people to learn our sound and video system. Currently, we only have three regulars plus Ray (our IT person). Maggie McCormick seems interested and will begin training very soon on the sound system.

Susan Kaschak has agreed to be the new Ministry Elder for one year beginning July 1, 2026.

**Respectfully submitted,  
Paul Bagocius, Elder**



## 2026 Habitat for Humanity Faith Build

Great news! Thanks to several very generous donations and everyone's support of our Christmas Raffle, we have made our \$5,000 commitment to be part of the 2026 Habitat for Humanity Faith Build! We are so excited to continue our partnership with Habitat! This year's build will include 2 homes:

1895 Bloominghills Pl. SE, Massillon, OH 44646 – Swogger Family  
 2010 Tuscarawas St. E, Canton, OH 44707 – Hernandez Family

Included in this newsletter are photos and bios for both families!

We will have opportunities for everyone to get involved in this year's build! Stay tuned for more details later this Spring! Please keep praying for the families, volunteers and staff at Habitat as they continue to build safe, affordable homes for so many deserving families in our community!



We have some exciting news! We are having the Fall Charity Craft Show this year to benefit Habitat for Humanity future Faith Builds. The show will be Saturday, October 10, 2026 from 10am - 3pm.

Applications are available in the office!

# Hernandezfamily



Joshua • Karla  
Keo (5) • Mia (5) • Ilai (3) • Uri (1)

## Family and Current Housing

Joshua and Karla live in Canton in a privately rented home. Both grew up in Puerto Rico and moved to Ohio to be closer to Karla's family as their own family grew. While they are grateful for housing, their current rental presents significant challenges for a young family.

The home has noticeable air leaks that cause severe draftiness during the winter months. There are signs of water damage throughout the house, and at times the pipes freeze and become clogged, on some occasions forcing the family to rely on a portable toilet. Several light switches and outlets throughout the home are inoperable, and one room has no functioning outlets or switches at all.

The most difficult challenge is the lack of accessibility for their son, Ilai. Ilai was diagnosed with spina bifida and wears leg braces. Stairs are incredibly challenging for him, and Joshua and Karla currently must carry him up and down,

## A Bright Future

Joshua has worked for CSafe, LLC as a Customer Support Specialist for the past four years and has been with the company for six years total. Karla stays home caring for their four children, whom they describe as their whole life and purpose. Twins Keo and Mia are both incredibly loving. Ilai, despite his spina bifida, is active, determined, and full of energy. Uri, the youngest, is a



a task that becomes more difficult as he grows. As people of faith, Joshua and Karla have been praying for an open door to meet their housing needs, an answer that led them to Habitat for Humanity East Central Ohio.

Joshua and Karla have worked diligently in the Habitat program, often dividing sweat-equity assignments to manage childcare needs. Karla, whose primary language is Spanish, uses a translation earpiece to fully participate alongside other partner families and volunteers. Together, they have completed hours at ReStore and on construction sites and graduated from the House2Home homebuyer education program in fall 2025, gaining skills in finances, home maintenance, lawn care, and personal development. 🏠

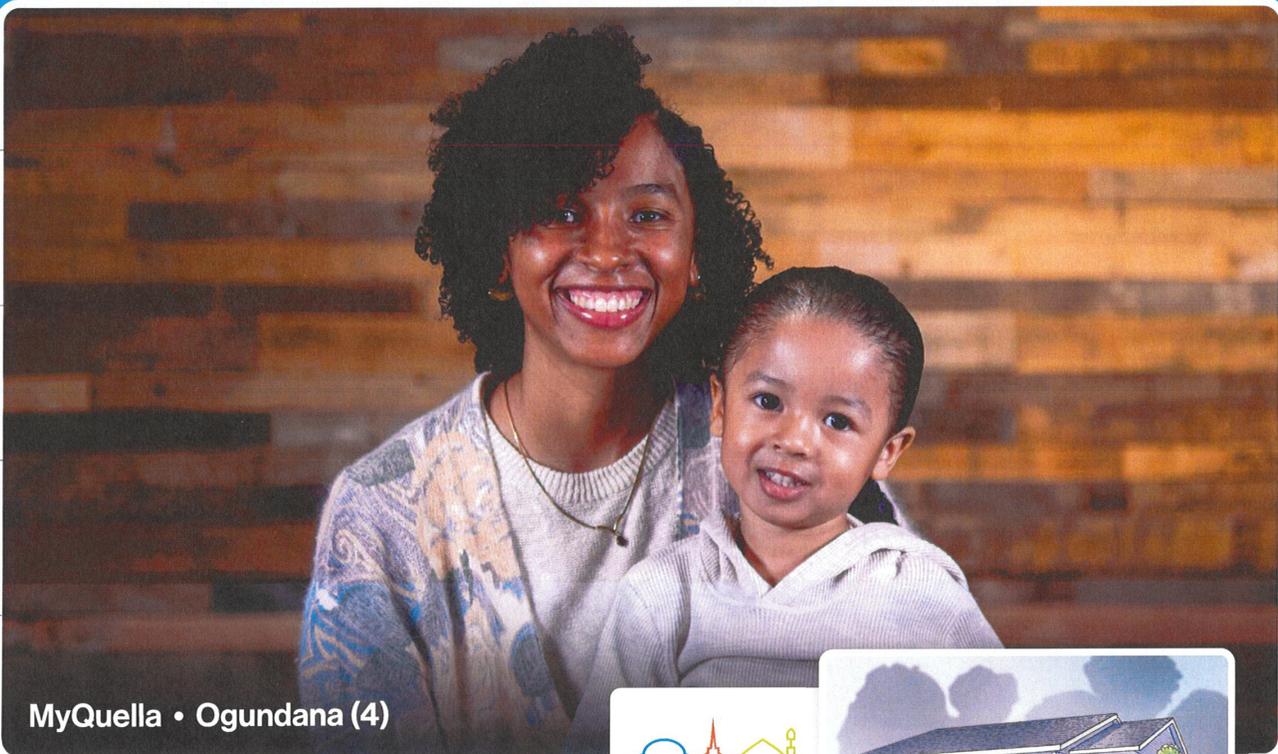
sweet baby who will soon be a toddler. The family is very close and cherishes the time they spend together.

Joshua and Karla are looking forward to a home that will provide relief, accessibility, mental and emotional peace, tranquility, and security, for themselves and for their children. 🏠

Together, we build homes, communities, and hope.

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# Swoggerfamily



MyQuella • Ogundana (4)

## Family and Current Housing

MyQuella and her son, Ogundana, currently live in an apartment complex in Massillon. They moved there after living in a private rental that became financially unsustainable. When the landlord decided to sell the property, the family was forced to search for new housing and ultimately relocated to their current apartment. While the rent is lower than at their previous residence, it still exceeds thirty percent of MyQuella's gross monthly income.

More concerning, the apartment has several maintenance and safety concerns, including inoperable windows that cause air leaks, a hole in the ceiling from upstairs plumbing issues, sloping floors, sagging ceilings, and nonfunctioning

## A Bright Future

MyQuella works as a Student Success Advisor at Walden University and finds deep fulfillment in helping students achieve their educational goals. When speaking about her son, Ogundana, she shares that he loves all things dinosaurs, monster trucks, Legos, and Matchbox cars. He especially enjoys bedtime stories, with *Llama Llama Red Pajama* being a favorite. Together, they enjoy cooking meals, going to the park, and building Lego sets.

The family looks forward to the stability of living in one



bedroom lights. As rent continues to rise each year, MyQuella realized the situation was unsustainable and applied to the Habitat for Humanity homeownership program in pursuit of stability and long-term affordability.

Since joining the Habitat program, MyQuella has completed her sweat-equity hours at ReStore, in the Habitat workshop, and on Habitat construction sites, and finished homebuyer education classes in spring 2025, gaining essential budgeting, financial planning, and home maintenance skills. 🏠

place – one home – without the constant fear of having to move. MyQuella has spent years working longer hours simply to keep up with rising rent, often at the expense of time with her son. She believes that homeownership will provide stability not only in the physical structure of their home, but also in long-term affordability. MyQuella believes that owning her own home will give her the freedom to truly make it a family home, while allowing her to save and plan for Ogundana's future. 🏠

Together, we build homes, communities, and hope.

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**Call Committee:**

We are at a standstill until Pastor Phillips gets us names of new candidates. He said that after Christmas they see more candidates updating and putting their profiles out there. So, he should be coming up with some new candidates for us. This is not unusual for us to be going through another set of names. I know for those newer members it doesn't make sense that it would take this long, but it is a long process. Those of us that have been here or even at other Lutheran churches that have gone through the call process know it is a long process. The last call committee reminds us that Pastor William was the 11<sup>th</sup> candidate they interviewed. It took three years to find him. Our other call committees took that long and some even longer.

We have been told by some of our supply pastors that we are doing a great job keeping our ministries and missions going without a pastor. We should be proud of what we are doing. We are proud of all that everyone has done and are doing to spread God's Love throughout the community. Also, all we have done to improve God's building for His people to use and worship in.

We need to keep our focus on our mission, to work together on our projects and ministries. We need to continue to come to worship and bible discussion with our supply pastors. I know you don't have the continuity that you have with having one pastor leading everything. But we are still receiving the Word and Sacrament every week, two times a week if you want to attend. It is very important that everyone stays engaged in the church functions and our faith. Continue praying for the call committee and for everyone at Zion that we continue to stay strong in our faith.

**Darlene Milavickas**  
**Chairperson of Call Committee**

**Thank You to Maggiore's**

At this time of the year when we count our blessings, Zion would like to thank Terry at Maggiore's in North Canton for his generosity in providing our wine for communion. Terry has been doing this for many years, and we like to show our appreciation by providing him with a gift basket with Heggy's candy & nuts and also a gift card to a restaurant. Please be sure to stop by and thank him at Maggiore's on Portage – right down the street beside Palombo's restaurant.

Connie Riffle and Janet Slease

## Food Pantry News

2025 was a very busy year! We are so grateful to all of our generous donors, volunteers and church family for supporting us so generously!!! We never ran out of food and so many families were fed with from this support of the pantry and the countless hours put in by our amazing volunteers. We are also very grateful for our partnership with Stark County Hunger Task Force whose support is invaluable!

### 2025 Service Numbers:

- 1,836 Households served which includes 4,351 people
- 63,738 Pounds of food ordered from the Foodbank to be distributed in addition to congregational and community donations
- 2,177 hot lunches served to our pantry friends; thanks to our amazing kitchen crew lead by Dave Palumbo

Praise God! Well done good and faithful servants, well done.

We pray for God's guidance and that he will continue to lead us to do his will as we look to help end food security in 2026 for our community, and share his love. We currently are a very healthy Food Pantry with funding and volunteers! Thanks be to God!!!

As always, we need our staple items to keep the Pantry supplied – Cereal, Hearty Soups, Spaghetti Sauce, Jelly (especially Strawberry), Canned Tuna, Canned Fruit, Peanut Butter

We will continue with the same schedule in 2026 with food distributions being on the first and third Tuesdays of each month with the following volunteer opportunities:

Set up on the Monday before our distribution dates from 9 -11 am.

Volunteer on distribution days (1<sup>st</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesdays of the month). We start at 9am with final set up, lunch starts at 11:30 am for volunteers and 12:15 pm for our pantry families, and food distribution from 1-2 pm with tear down to follow. We appreciate any time you may have available to volunteer from 9:30 am – 2:30 pm on those Tuesdays.

Please contact Debbie Fox if you have any questions or would like more information.



### Food Pantry News Continued



## With Gratitude and Love for Everyone's Support in December

So much love and generosity was shared this past Christmas season for so many in our community! Thanks be to God for all of you and your support!

- 86 of our Food Pantry families each received an extra bag with tissues, paper towels, toilet paper, laundry detergent and dish soap in December. A huge thank you to everyone who donated these items that are so appreciated! We were also able to give all of those families an assorted tray of homemade Christmas cookies from the over 1,300 cookies that were donated by Zion's amazing bakers! Thank you for baking and helping us to give everyone an extra special Christmas treat! You are all such a blessing! Thanks be to God!
- We provided 83 donated fleece blankets to the North Canton Cares Team for their Santa Shop. Families in North Canton that have been identified as needing some extra help were able to shop in the Santa Shop for gifts for their children paying a nominal fee allowing them to feel some pride and dignity in providing a nice Christmas for their families.
- We supported three families in Plain Local Schools with gifts from our Giving Tree. We were able to give each family presents for all of their children and gift cards to help with groceries, gas and restaurants for an extra treat from all of your donations!
- We collected gift cards, toys and new clothing for Abby's Helping Hands, Hopeful Hearts. The toys and clothing went to children in our community to help them have a Merry Christmas, and the gift cards went to homeless teens to give them some hope and love! The collection bin was overflowing – thank you, thank you, thank you!
- We raised over \$3,800 with our Christmas Raffle to support the Habitat for Humanity Faith Build! This money allowed us to reach our goal of \$5,000 to commit to being a part of the 2026 Build. Congratulations to our Raffle Winners: Christmas Quilt – Jenny Elkins, Christmas Basket – Marcia Miller, Lottery Christmas Tree – Norma Arter



## Children's Christmas Program – "CHRISTMAS"

Thank you to our amazing kids for showing us what Christmas is really about! As the group of kids sitting around a table discussed what each of the letters in CHRISTMAS could stand for, they were lost in secular things like cookies, trees, ads, icicle lights, Santa and more. Then one child reminded that they had it all wrong! CHRISTMAS is about a census, a hard journey to Bethlehem, no room at the inn, shepherds, magi with treasures, angels, and most importantly the Birth of a Savior – our Savior, Jesus Christ, the best gift of all who came to save us and paid a great price! Praise God for our wonderful children and for the gift of Jesus!



# **2026 Lent/Easter** **Schedule**

**February 18th**                      **Ash Wednesday Service at 7:00pm**

**February 22nd**                      **Lent Service at 6:15pm**  
**(Dinner At 5:30pm)**

**March 1st**                              **Lent Service at 6:15pm**  
**(Dinner At 5:30pm)**

**March 8th**                             **Lent Service at 6:15pm**  
**(Dinner At 5:30pm)**

**March 15th**                          **Lent Service at 6:15pm**  
**(Dinner At 5:30pm)**

**March 22nd**                          **Lent Service at 6:15pm**  
**(Dinner At 5:30pm)**

**March 29th**                          **Palm Sunday Service at 6:15pm**

**April 1st**                                **No Service**

**April 2nd**                               **Maundy Thursday Service at 7:00pm**

**April 3rd**                               **Good Friday Service at 7:30pm**

**April 5th**                               **Easter Service at 9:00am**

Zion Lutheran Church  
349 Lindy Lane NW  
North Canton, OH 44720  
An ELCA Congregation

Return Service Requested



**THE ZION HERALD**  
**JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2026**

**Worship Services**  
**Sunday Morning: 9:00 a.m. Traditional Worship**  
**Wednesday Evening: 7:00 p.m. Worship Service**  
**Services are streamed through Facebook**

**Office Hours**  
**9:00am to 2:00pm M-F**  
**Doors open at 9am**

**Zion's Staff**  
Administrative Assistant: Hannah Aemmer  
Phone: 330-499-3909  
Email: [Office@zion-nc.com](mailto:Office@zion-nc.com)  
IT Manager: Ray LePelley  
Email: [Tech@Zion-NC.com](mailto:Tech@Zion-NC.com)  
Website: [www.zion-nc.com](http://www.zion-nc.com)  
Custodian: Herb Beadle  
Like us on Facebook [@zionnorthcanton](https://www.facebook.com/zionnorthcanton)

**Council Members**  
Jim Fidler—President  
Darlene Milavickas—Vice President  
Jayne Schrader—Secretary  
Beth Shaheen—Treasurer  
Debbie Fox—Learning Ministry  
Tina Linz—Parish Life Ministry  
George Miller—Property Ministry  
Laura Thompson—Resource Ministry  
Cindy Bagocius—Social Ministry  
Ken Reinoehl—Witness Ministry  
Paul Bagocius—Worship Ministry