



Zion Lutheran Church and School
812 Western Ave, Columbus, WI

2022 Annual Report

Message From Our Congregation President

Dear Zion Family,

In 2021, the church council adopted a new mission statement, clarified the core values of our ministry, and set five long-range goals to be completed by 2027. Those details were reported to you in the 2021 annual report and are repeated below:

Mission Statement: *Connecting people with Jesus through God's saving Word now and for eternity.*

Our Core Values

As an imperfect family forgiven in Christ, we. . . 1. *Gather to praise God and to be strengthened by his Word.* 2. *Give God's Word first place in our life, adhering to the Lutheran Confessions.* 3. *Live a kingdom-minded life, proclaiming forgiveness for all through Jesus Christ.* 4. *Strive to meet the spiritual needs of those in our community* 5. *Support and promote life-long Christian education for all*

The following long-range ministry goals were established, with plans to be met by 2027:

1. *Membership is highly engaged in Zion ministries.*
2. *We are financially healthy and strong to carry out our mission and vision.*
3. *Our facilities allow us to fully carry out our mission and vision.*
4. *Fully implemented outreach culture and strategies are in place.*
5. *Planning for ministry staffing needs and procedures are in place.*

In order to make progress toward those long-range plans, each council position had specific one year benchmarks (called "Rocks") to strive toward that would ensure we are continuously moving forward together to meet the needs of our ministry. A few of the steps that were accomplished in 2022 are...

...towards engaging Zion's members - Mrs. Asmus' work towards a vibrant youth ministry that includes a new teen Bible study and outings and the Time & Talents booklet and fair held last winter

...towards financial health - several submissions by the Stewardship board throughout the year into the Weekly Word to discuss operating costs, debt reduction, and encouraging members to continue giving toward both the building and our general ministry needs

...towards facility needs - a Building committee was formed to begin the legwork for our next phase of expansion while the property management board continually performs maintenance and repairs for our current facilities to keep them functional

...towards outreach culture and strategies - an evaluation of the Choice program for our school was conducted (it was decided this is not in Zion's best interest for now, but the study of the issue was for this purpose)

...for staffing needs & procedures - currently advertising for a new office position, behind-the-scenes streamlining of shared information for staff and council members to efficiently work on goals together

I pray the Lord continues to bless Zion as he has in the past with loving and energetic members working together for our church family and community.

Dan Retzlaff
Congregation President

Message From Our Pastors

May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all (2 Corinthians 13:14).

God continues to bless us with his love at Zion. The saving message of the crucified and risen Christ is regularly shared, water is poured over the head of infants, children and adults in baptism, and the body and blood of our Lord are received together with bread and wine. Faith is created and strengthened, and so are Christian bonds of love and service.

As we attend worship weekly together, we follow orders of service and sing hymns from the new blue hymnal, Christian Worship ('21). While some of what we do sounds different, the blessings of God's love that we praise and proclaim remain the same. It truly takes an entire congregation to learn new settings and music together, and we have shared in all its challenges and joys. God will continue to bless us in 2023 as we become more familiar with this worship resource.

In February, we focused on management of two God-given gifts: time and talents. Not only did we evaluate what God had to say about using them in our personal lives, we examined how the members of Zion can offer their time and talents in congregational ministry. The campaign ended with a Time and Talents fair in the Fellowship Hall. Many ministries and committees at Zion signed up new volunteers as a result. May God continue to bless our collective work as Christians who use their time and talents to his glory in service to others.

In April, eleven teenagers received God's forgiving love in holy communion for the very first time—on their confirmation Sunday. As God has strengthened them in their faith through the early years of their life, may these blessings remain until eternal life in heaven. The same goes for all of us who have come to know the salvation of our God.

August 21st is a pleasant date to remember. One of Zion's former pastors, Robert Wilke, led us in worship. He reminded us that raising children in the training and instruction of the Lord brings eternal blessings. After the services, we enjoyed time of Christian fellowship together over food and many fun activities. May God bless the day we hold our church picnic in 2023 in equal measure!

September 25th spotlighted the blessings of gathering with Christians in person. The theme of the Sunday was appropriately entitled: God's People Gather. While not everyone is able to be physically present for worship and Bible study, we thank God for the blessings that come to those who are enabled to do so. If you have not made it to worship and Bible study regularly, prayerfully consider making it a habit in 2023. If you are unable to make it and have not done so yet, speak with one of our pastors about receiving private communion.

Fall and early Winter required Pastor Schwartz to attend to additional responsibilities as Pastor Zuberbier was hospitalized and took time to adjust to other personal changes in his life, such as the sudden death of his father. During that time, God still continued to bless our congregation with his saving love through faithful gospel ministry and by answering the prayers of our members offered for both pastors. We are thankful for your support and humbly ask that you keep us in your prayers in 2023.

This brief overview of the past year doesn't even come close to highlighting all the blessings that God gave us in his enduring love. Between things done publicly and privately, in church and out of church, the blessings would be too many to count. Yet, we thank God for every single one. We also look to him at the start of another

year and trust that the following words will have effect: May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

Pastor Tim Schwartz
Pastor Ben Zuberbier

Message From Our Principal

We started the 2022-2023 school year with the theme: “Rock Solid in the Lord.” It is based on Psalm 18:2, “The Lord is my rock, my fortress and my deliverer; my God is my rock, in whom I take refuge...” Students at Zion are reminded of the comfort that God gives: we can always go to him in every situation. Our school provides a safe and caring environment that allows students to grow academically and spiritually. We can always rely on God to be there for us and surround us with his protecting arms. This encouragement helps us to focus on the mission of our school: to partner with parents of Zion and reach out to the community through a Christ-centered education, empowering students to live lives of service for God’s glory on earth and preparing them for eternity in heaven. We can rejoice knowing that God will be with us and give us the strength to continue this mission at Zion.

Our first semester mission offering went to Zion in Leeds. The church is establishing a second site in Lodi. They have already leased a ministry center where the 17-person ministry team hopes to launch worship this year. We were excited to help them with our chapel offerings. Last fall, Zion went through a school safety assessment with local authorities. The report had over 40 suggestions to help improve student safety in and around our building. The Board of Education and faculty are prioritizing the suggestions and working on implementing them over the next year. The faculty and staff are also going through ALICE training to better prepare for difficult situations.

Zion went through the re-accreditation process last spring. I am very thankful for the many volunteers that conducted a self-study and examined Zion’s progress on fifteen standards with many benchmarks in each standard. A visiting team came from WELS School Accreditation and granted Zion full accreditation status again.

The accreditation process gave us an opportunity to look at best practices among schools and renew our efforts with existing programs. A major benefit that resulted was the Mission, Vision, Objectives document. This was a collaborative effort to examine Zion’s ministry and come up with a plan for our future. There are over forty objectives spread out over five years that we would like to accomplish. Another planning document that came from accreditation is our Harvest Strategy. This will help guide our efforts to reach out to the community and share the Gospel.

Zion has been blessed with a dedicated faculty and staff that teach 75 students in K4-8th grade. We also have many wonderful volunteers that give their time each week to help Zion’s students. Our administrative assistants work tirelessly to make sure the inner workings of Zion are carried out. Another large part of what makes Zion work is our congregation. I cannot thank our members enough for all the time and prayers that are given to help Zion prosper. The generous financial support members give to our school is essential in keeping Zion school going.

Please continue to pray for our school, our students, and our teachers. May God bless our efforts in continuing to carry out his all important mission of spreading the Gospel.

In Christ,
Principal Chad Grambsch

2022 Elected Zion Church Council Members

The Zion voters elect council members to three year terms. According to Zion's church constitution, no council member shall serve more than two consecutive full terms. Council members shall be considered eligible again for election one year after the expiration of the second consecutive term of office. For vacancies that occur after the annual January voter's meeting, the Church Council may appoint someone to fill a vacated office.

* = appointed by the council to fill a vacated position and term

Name	Role	Term Ends - January of	Term
Dan Retzlaff	President	2023	1st
*Jeff Krakow (Matt Weidner)	Vice President	2024	NA
Nick Uebelacker	Secretary	2023	1st
Will Penterman	Treasurer	2024	1st
Andy Tratar	Education	2025	2nd
Noah Litherland	Elders	2025	1st
Vacant	Outreach	2024	NA
Aaron Larson	Property	2025	1st
Otto Mattke	Stewardship	2024	2nd
Craig Lathrop	Family Ministry	2023	2nd

Board of Education Report

Current Board of Education Members

Andrew Tratar - Chairperson

Jordan Crave - Vice Chairperson

Dan Schultz - Treasurer

Josh Meyer - Secretary**

Guili Alvarez - Voting member

Chad Grambsch - School Principal

Pastor Benjamin Zuberbier - Spiritual advisor of the board

**New member September 2022, taking position held previously by Nate Nehmer, who stepped out of the position in June 2022

Zion School Staff Updates

- Mr. Alex Vandenberg took a call at Grace Lutheran Church and School in Oshkosh, WI, to serve as middle school teacher and athletic director. His last day as 7th and 8th grade teacher and principal at Zion was June 20, 2022.
- Mrs. Marie Becker resigned her call as 5th and 6th grade teacher and School/Church Music Director. Her last day was June 29, 2022.
- Mr. Chad Grambsch transitioned into the role of Principal at Zion School. While he maintained his call to serve as the 3rd and 4th grade teacher, he transitioned away from his call to serve as Athletic Director in light of his transition into the principal role.
- Mrs. Megan Schwartz was extended and accepted a call to serve as the 7th and 8th grade teacher and Athletic Director, beginning this call on 7/5/22.
- Ms. Cathy Backer was extended and accepted a call to serve as 5th and 6th grade teacher and school/church music director, beginning this call on 7/5/22.

Enrollment and Budget

- Current enrollment at end of 2022 calendar year at Zion School is 68 K5-8 students and 7 K4 students.
- See attached proposed 23-24 budget summary at end of report.

Notable information at ZLS for 2022

- Helen Petrich Scholarship awarded in May 2022 to Hallberg Family (Emma) for students attending LLHS in the fall of 2022.
- New math curriculum purchased and implemented for start of 22-23 school year
- New phone system and interactive instruction panels purchased and installed at school
- Full WELSSA Accreditation received in September 2022 after resolution of limited conditions identified during initial visits at the end of February 2022. A forward-looking plan to address the next

accreditation cycle outlined by Mr. Grambsh to be carried out over the next 5 years.

- A significant blockage in the sewer at school forced a very brief school closure to investigate the source and to address causes. The source was identified as deteriorating sewer lines going out of school, located under the office/front hallway. Thankfully, resolution was accomplished as drains were cleared, but likely only temporarily.
- New PATZ co-chairpersons Cassie Owens and Amy Lanzhammer volunteered for the position.
- Annual BOE observation day completed in November 2022

2023-2024 Zion School Budget Summary

	Proposed Budget	Change
Total Expenses	\$92,854	2% - \$1,525
Total Income : (2022-2023 tuition received)	\$92,209	-7% - (\$6,550) Operating deficit of \$644.74 planned and managed by current funds in school accounts.

Feedback

As a reminder, the beginning of each BOE meeting is set up with time to receive any feedback or suggestions from our school families or congregation members. We encourage you to discuss any ideas or general concerns that you have pertaining to school operation or governance. This is done most efficiently by informing the board in advance if you plan to attend a meeting to discuss a topic, as meeting times and location can vary, so that you may be given an appropriate time to do so. Please feel free to contact any BOE members with questions should they arise. We are here to serve the whole Zion family.

Andy Tratar
Board of Education Chairman

Stewardship Board Report

Our major initiatives in 2022 were as follows:

Fiscal Budget 2022-2023

- Total budget came in at \$823,219
- Called workers paid at synod recommendations
- Spouses of called workers who have been provided with a house who are themselves called workers were given a housing allowance as part of their salary. This is being phased in over a four-year period. This year it was at 50% of the full amount. Every called worker regardless of marital status should be paid according to synod recommendations.
- Housing equity payment approved at 1.75% up from 1.50 last year. Goal is 2% (synod recommendation). This is for called workers to offset lack of building equity in a house they could purchase if they were given a housing allowance instead of being provided housing.

Contributions

- Contributions were steady in 2022
- Zion Board of Education made a one-time transfer of \$50,000 to the General Fund
- Generous individual contributions and memorials allowed the revolving loan from FMUB to be paid off in its entirety
- Vanco online giving continues to be an ever-greater percentage of giving

Zion mortgage

- Mortgage balance at beginning of the year \$910,178.75
- Balance at the end of the year is \$774,436.53
- Payments are \$5,425 every two weeks

Financial Audit

- Financial audit completed in 2022
- Months of September 2021 and December 2021 were randomly picked for examination
- All found in good order
- Recommendations made
 - Better documentation for Health Reimbursement Account
 - Document Scrip accounts digitally
 - Stop backdating checks to WELS & Lakeside (this had been done to make sure all additional donations were included in the month they were given. Decided this was not necessary)
 - Consolidate some bank accounts
 - Update authorized signatures on bank accounts

Banking adjustments

- Moved smaller accounts into the General Fund
- Some accounts consolidated
- Some accounts had special files created to preserve the funds for the intended use
- Wherever possible, minimal amounts were left in non-interest bearing checking accounts and the balance into interest bearing savings accounts
- List of authorized members with access to bank accounts was completely updated

New Capital Campaign

- Continue to Let Your Light Shine program ended December 31st
- We are asking members to continue their contributions to the Building Fund through this year
- New Capital Campaign to begin with the help of Walsh Associates in the late summer of 2023

New Board Members – Christian Bogocius and Wyatt Browskowski were added to our board

Proverbs 3:9 Honor the LORD with your wealth, with the first fruits of all your crops.

The Lord has given us many blessings. May we continue to return our best offerings to the Lord to advance his work in our congregation and in our community.

Otto Mattke
Stewardship Board Chairman

Zion Lutheran Church - Estate Funds Report

<u>2022 Summary of All Estate Funds</u>	
Previous Year Assets	\$116,084.42
Total Transactions	\$31,632.45
Total Current Assets	\$147,716.87
Portion for New School/Church	\$140,351.94

Accounts	Undesignated Checking	Undesignated Savings	New Church/School Fund Savings	New Church/School Checking
Previous Balance	\$446.07	\$7,443.98	\$71,791.03	\$36,403.34
Total Transactions	\$0.92	-\$526.04	\$65,969.17	-\$33,811.60
Current Balance	\$446.99	\$6,917.94	\$137,760.20	\$2,591.74
* Transactions by type				
Credits	\$1,820.92	\$1,273.96	\$207,019.17	\$113,174.34
Debits	-\$1,820.00	-\$1,800.00	-\$141,050.00	-\$146,985.94

Elders Board Report

The mission of the board of Elders and Zion Lutheran Church is to help grow our congregational faith through loving encouragement and service and to visit, encourage and aid in building our congregations' faith through worship in God's house.

Key Contributions:

1. Organize ushering schedule for all services throughout the calendar year.
2. Elder booth at Time and Talents fair.
 - a. Developed a poster board sharing the characteristics of those with the gift for elder work:
 - i. Have concern for the souls of the sheep currently in the fold.
 - ii. Enjoy connecting with members of the congregation and checking in on spiritual needs.
 - iii. Active prayer life for the members of the church.
 - iv. Evangelical adaptability when communicating with a missing member.
 - v. Enjoys working with/alongside a pastor.
 - b. Elders visitation tasks:
 - i. Conducting face-to-face visits with members
 - ii. Calling members
 - iii. Writing to members
 - iv. Praying with/for members
 - v. Communicates with a pastor concerning member needs.
3. Organize and collaborate with church members for **God's People Gather weekend**.
 - a. Goal was to share an open invitation with all current Zion members to feel welcome to attend church service.
 - i. Contributions of time and service by over 30 volunteers from the congregation.
 - ii. Sent letters to congregation members inviting them to God's People Gather.
 - iii. Made phone calls to every household with a current phone number in the directory to extend a warm invitation to God's People Gather.
 - iv. Made house calls to all those without phone numbers.
 - b. God's People Gather was a success with increased attendance.
 - c. Great collaboration among church members to implement God's People Gather.
4. Implementation of a new approach to congregational service.
 - a. Peter Plan - training schedule for encouraging congregation in their walk of faith.
 - b. Recruit members to reach out to as many people in our congregation as possible before Easter with phone calls, letters of encouragement, home visits, and words of encouragement.
5. Represent Board of Elders at Monthly Church Council Meetings

In the service of Christ to you,

Noah Litherland
Elders Board Chairman

Board members Randall Koehn, Jeff Henning, Joel Wiedmann, Pastor Schwartz

Family Ministry Board Report

The Board consists of Craig Lathrop, Mike Hallberg, and Josh Voelker along with Pastor Zuberbier.

This year, Craig ends his second, three year term as chair.

Under the family ministry board are the following committees that report to the board: Church Library, Decorating, Fellowship, Ladies Aid, Pantry, and Youth Ministry

The family ministry committee meets as needed to cover topics brought forward to the committees under the board. The board also sets up and takes down the sanctuary Christmas trees.

The Church library has a wonderful assortment of religious materials for all ages to enjoy.

The decorating committee is the reason our church is always so beautifully decorated all year long.

The fellowship committee meets monthly and plans events throughout the year. This past year they held an euchre tournament, 25 years in teaching celebration for Chad Grambsch, A teacher farewell for Mr. Vandenberg and Mrs. Becker. Organizing the Lenten meals and the annual Church picnic in August.

Ladies Aid meets regularly and does so much for our congregation. They also donated money again this year and assembled the children's treat bags for Christmas services.

The Pantry committee members take turns making sure the pantry is stocked with items for bible studies and fellowship hall events. They also do a wonderful job making sure dishes are clean, and the serving pantry is clean and organized.

Youth ministry has been becoming more active and holding more events. Mrs. Gretchen Asmus heads this up as part of her teaching call. The teens have been attending bible studies, a baseball game, cookout/campfire, and bowling. Gretchen is getting help from parents and other active church members.

Craig Lathrop
Family Ministry Board Chairman

Property Management Board Report

Projects completed in the last few months:

- Garage floor at the Zuberbier parsonage
- Misc. Roof leaks at the school (on going)
- Sewer/plumbing blockage cleaned out at the school
- Annual inspections and maintenance of the church HVAC system
- Software update on the church HVAC controls
- Reinstall siding on the Megan Schwartz teacherage

We will be conducting a walk through this spring on all properties and creating a list of current and future needs for each property. This will help us to plan/budget for expected projects and forecast for projects that will be coming years down the road. There will also be a “want/needs” list comprised of smaller projects and posted at the church with an associated cost for some “special giving” opportunities to help keep our properties looking and performing as they should.

Board Members

- Aaron Larson (chairman) 608-220-6906
- Tom Schultz
- John Brey
- Matt Yaroach
- Zach Freter

Aaron Larson

Property Management Board Chairman