

WE ARE ZION



Zion Lutheran Church

2714 James Street

Marinette, WI 54143

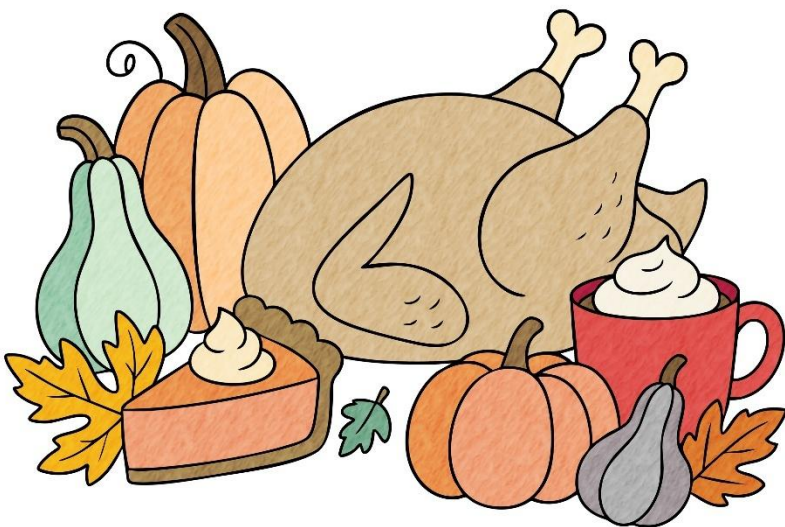
715-735-7898

zion@newbc.rr.com

www.zionlutheran-marinette.org

**E
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November 2025



Zion's 2025 Congregation Council

Laura Chaltry — President

Dean Schoen — V.P.

Eric Morois — Interim Secretary

LeeAnn Limberg — Treasurer

Tatem Schroeder

Phil Strohl

Sarge Rudell

Mark Swenson

Kathy Heimbuch

Adison Rosenfeldt, Youth Member

Zion Staff

Pastor — Amanda Kossow

Office Administrator and Financial Secretary — Marissa Tharp

Choir Director and Organist — Ann Buscher

Accompanist for Choir and Organist— Rachel Rosenfeldt

Zion Ministry Contacts

Worship

Worship Leadership Scheduling — Ann Buscher

Assistants — Ann Buscher (Ushers, readers, acolytes, communion assistants, set up/ clean-up communion)

AV Team — Troy Cording, coordinator

Banners — Karen Dill

Bulletin and Newsletter Assistance — Marissa Tharp

Candles (eternal and oil) — *In need of someone to do!*

Praise Band Worship — Bill Tipple

Hymn Selection — Ann Buscher

Wine and apple/grape juice — *In need of someone to do!*

Building Maintenance – Interior/Exterior

Supplies — Gary Grom

Handyman — Jack Heimbuch

Committees/Groups

150th Anniversary Committee — Ann Buscher and Sharon

Powilaites

Caring Ministry Team — Karen Sylvester, Judy Stehle, Sarge Rudell

Confirmation Classes — Pastor

Funeral Luncheon — Ann Buscher, Carol Johnson, Karen Sylvester and Cheryl Maxwell

Harvest of Hope Community Garden — John Radloff

Kitchen Supplies — *In need of someone to do!*

Mission Endowment Comm. — Phil Strohl

Money Counters — Karen Dill, Bonnie Schoen and Pat Mittag

Nominating Comm — Ann Buscher

Personnel Comm. — Troy Cording

Property Comm. — Mark Swenson

Ruth Women's Circle — Jane Landenberg

Sanctuary Arts — Barb Grom, Karen Dill, Carol Johnson, Sally Broetzman, and Ann Buscher

Sew for Mission — Carol Magnuson

Social Ministry — Heidi Beland

SPARK — Johanna Zuehls

Stewardship & Generosity — Karen Sylvester, Bonnie Schoen, John Radloff

Youth Ministry Treasurer — Karen Dill

Worship and Music — Ann Buscher



Reflections

No Longer Living in Christendom; How much do we trust God?

By: Michael Perera (Originally published Apr 9, 2024

on <https://faithlead.org/blog/>. Reprinted with permission.)

This article is the third in a miniseries within our ongoing [Guide for the Perplexed](#) series, in which we define a weighty theological term, and describe why it matters to Christian communities.

One of the most commonly-asked questions by churches today—perhaps *the* most-commonly asked question— is [what can we do to increase attendance?](#)

Since the mid-20th century, church membership across denominations has been trending downwards. Surveys and statistics have suggested that the rate of decline is accelerating, and various organizations (both faith-based and secular) posit that we’re fast heading towards a future where only a third of Americans will say they regularly attend church services. That future—and even our present reality—is a long way from the days when the church was one of the public foundations of political and economic power. The tangled relationship stretches back millennia, to a strange confluence of religion and empire known as “**Christendom.**”

The idea of Christendom is a complicated one, as much a Rorschach as anything in Christianity can be. Originally simply meaning “Christianity,” the historical term Christendom came to refer to countries where Christianity was publicly and politically dominant. As wars were won and empires expanded, European rulers (particularly Charlemagne, who united much of Western Europe) attributed this favor to God; and, not understanding that correlation is not causation, they fretted that if their lands ever became bare of churches, God might rescind that favor.

Over centuries, Christendom became synonymous with the idea of the church as a dominant socio political entity. Newspapers would dedicate entire sections to covering local church news, including publishing full-text sermons on Christmas and Easter.

Industrialists and politicians would share pews on Sunday mornings. In the Age of Association, church was where things happened.

But while historical Christendom had hegemony, contemporary Christendom did not enjoy the same luxuries and privileges. Amid the transition to the [Age of Authenticity](#), churches became less of the cultural touchstone that they had been for decades. As people turned their backs on traditional social, political, and religious institutions, membership and influence fell away, and have kept falling.

What if it's not about power?

I once asked a priest at my (Episcopal) cathedral in Seattle for his thoughts on declining church attendance, both in the context of [denominations that are getting smaller](#), and of being in a city where 65 percent of residents barely, if ever, attend church. He pointed out that this means the people who do turn up on Sundays are there because they want to be there; and not only do they want to be there on Sundays, they want to be part of the church's life and its work beyond Sundays.

That, to me, is the goal, and the bigger point: not the fear of the fall of Christendom by those who grasp at the power structures of Christianity; not the human instinct to fix these inherited structures in order to reverse the loss of privilege; but trusting and relying on God through this age of change.

Maybe we're a long way away from the mythical "good old days" of every pew being filled on Sundays, but Christ's local church will always endure. As long as churches preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and do his work in the world, there will be people in those pews. An authentic church of 20 can be a better body of Christ than an entitled church of 2,000.

The lens of trust

One way of thinking about this shift of the church is through the lens of trust. How much do we trust God that our churches are in good hands? If we do, then the decline of Christianity in the public

sphere is not a sign of the end times, and is instead an evolution of the role of the church in a rapidly developing world; a role where the church continues to bear witness to God's salvation by faith and practice. Hardly revolutionary.

But if we don't trust God, we panic; we desperately try to make church the center of the world again, following false gods of record-breaking Sunday attendances and Wall Street-like budgets. Church becomes less about the Gospel, and more about us; and a church in our image cannot stand.

Kelle Brown, the senior pastor of Plymouth United Church of Christ in Seattle, writes "Maybe the church isn't dying. Maybe the consumers are leaving, the ones who can only imagine staying if things are as they remember, or if their control is sustained. Just maybe, the church will be what's left after nationalism, capitalism, patriarchy, and supremacist culture bows out. Maybe we're losing; as in, getting more healthy, more agile, more lean, and the ones who insisted on moments will stand aside as we build a movement."

Those are comforting words, but it is nonetheless hard to read news of yet another church closing, or to look out at our own churches and see empty seats, especially when we have to acknowledge that people have many good reasons for leaving the institutional church. Generations' worth of scandals, abuse, and cover-ups, have left multitudes outright hostile towards organized religion.

All the more reason that the work of a post-Christendom church not be hell-bent on stuffing pews or calling for bigger pledges and tithes from its members. A church free from the chains of dominant culture can be a church that is the hands and feet and voice of God in the world; not demanding more rights and privileges and power for itself, but instead demanding justice, mercy, and compassion for those the world—and the church itself—has left behind.

The Rev. Amy Butler, of the National City Christian Church in Washington, D.C., contrasts the grief of church closures, with the resurrection of Jesus being the whole heart and point of Christianity. To that end, she started Invested Faith, a fund that receives assets from closed churches, and distributes them to faith-based social justice entrepreneurs. The mandate of the Gospel, she says, never ends.

A more spiritual than political entity

In 2013, Pope Francis criticized Christendom in his *Evangelii Gaudium* ("The Joy of Evangelism"), decrying the (Catholic) church's "[obsession] with immediate results," instead of taking the longer view of the mission of the church. Before his predecessor became Pope Benedict XVI, Father Joseph Ratzinger said in 1969 that he hoped a post-Christendom church would be more a spiritual than a political entity. And if this comes at the cost of institutional power, the church that emerges on the other side of this transition will be "the Church of the meek."

The sentiment is echoed by author Brian D. McLaren, who writes that before Christianity had wealth and power, and televangelism and colonialism, it was a revolutionary moment that believed in, and fought for, life on the margins of society.

Perhaps there was a reason Jesus didn't climb the Mount of the Beatitudes to say "Blessed are the powerful, for their churches shall never be empty." Perhaps Jesus sees the churches of the meek, of the merciful, of the poor in spirit, and sees that even as they struggle to keep the lights on, they are the ones welcoming refugees, sheltering unhoused people, comforting runaways, and nursing people with addictions.

And perhaps, even as we pivot away from Christendom, we turn towards something new and beautiful; something not made of human hands, but of the trust that only comes from, and with, God.

Mental Health Corner

"Now my soul is troubled. And what should I say—'Father, save me from this hour'? No, it is for this reason that I have come to this hour. Father, glorify your name." (John 12:27a)

Jesus has just entered the holy city. It's the last days before his excruciating and very public death. He's surrounded by a crowd of people. There are Greeks who had been going to worship at the festival who want to see him. He's instilling final lessons to the disciples. He doesn't pretend everything is fine. He honestly expresses his vulnerability. Simultaneously, he is troubled and trusts God completely. It's okay not to have it all together all the time. It's okay to not be okay.

Loving & Serving All of Our Neighbors

In a document titled "A Call for Climate Justice and the Common Home," Roman Catholic leaders in early July, 2025 appealed to world leaders to address the climate crisis more forcefully. At the same time, Pope Leo approved a new Mass titled "Mass for the Care of Creation" inspired in part by Pope Francis' landmark 2015 encyclical on the environment, "Laudato Si," (Praise Be To You). The new Mass "offers liturgical, spiritual and communal support" for all who care that parts of our world are being ravaged, "a matter of social, economic and human justice" according to the Vatican. In the midst of the triple threat of climate change, species extinction (60 percent of all land and water animal life, 30 percent of bird and insect species), and pollution (PFAS or "forever chemicals," microplastics, carbon emissions, industrial and farm run-off, etc.), the decree for the new Mass states: "At this time it is evident that the work of creation is seriously threatened because of the irresponsible use and abuse of the goods God has endowed to our care." Add your voice to those of Pope Leo and other religious leaders by urging our own leaders to work toward the care of our shared common home.

upcoming events

What's Around the Corner?

Zion is buzzing with upcoming worship, service, and fellowship opportunities! Below is a brief outline of what is “around the corner.”

- Nov. 2: All Saints Sunday, 9:30 a.m. worship with Holy Communion and via YouTube. Remembering of the Saints. Coffee hour to follow worship.
- Nov. 5: Bible Study, 5:00 p.m.; SPARK, 5:30 p.m.; Confirmation, 6:30 p.m.; Choir, 6:30 p.m.
- Nov. 9: 22nd Sunday after Pentecost, 9:30 a.m. worship with Holy Communion and via YouTube. Coffee hour to follow worship.
Menominee Valley Youth bowling party at Dome Lanes from 1-3 p.m.
- Nov. 11: Sew for Missions, 9 a.m.; Council meeting, 6:30 p.m.
- Nov. 12: Bible Study, 5:00 p.m.; SPARK, 5:30 p.m.; Confirmation, 6:30 p.m.; Choir, 6:30 p.m.
- Nov. 16: 23rd Sunday after Pentecost, 9:30 a.m. worship with Holy Communion and via YouTube. Coffee hour to follow worship.
- Nov. 19: Bible Study, 5:00 p.m.; SPARK, 5:30 p.m.; Confirmation, 6:30 p.m.; Choir, 6:30 p.m.
- Nov. 20: Ruth Circle, 3 p.m.
- Nov. 23: Christ the King Sunday, 9:30 a.m. worship with Holy Communion and via YouTube.
- Nov. 25: Sew for Missions, 9 a.m.
- Nov. 26: SPARK, 5:30 p.m.; Confirmation, 6:30 p.m.; Choir, 6:30 p.m.
- Nov. 27: Thanksgiving. Office Closed.
- Nov. 30: First Sunday in Advent, 9:30 a.m. worship with Holy Communion and via YouTube.

Congregation Council Highlights



The Congregational Council met on October 14, at 6:30 p.m.

Pastor's Report: September 2025 average attendance was 73. During the month of September, pastor made 8 home visits, 3 hospital visits, 1 office visit, and was in various committee meetings.

September Financial Reports

- General Fund: Balance: \$147,430
- Large Disbursements:
 - Insurance: \$4,908
 - Yard Care: \$255
 - Dry Cleaning: \$538
 - Furance repairs: \$500
 - Bug extermination: \$255
 - Transfer of \$18,419.50 to Capital Improvement for the bell tower.
- Capital Improvement: Balance: \$75,369
- LeeAnn presented the council with the first draft of the 2026 budget. The council will submit questions to her by Oct. 31.
- Total deposits for September 2025: \$14,726.11
- Total disbursments for September 2025: \$18,778.51

Committee Reports

- **Personnel:** A motion was made to approve 3% pay increase to all employees. Self evaluations were sent to all employees with Laura asking Pastor Amanda to submit an evaluation on each employee.
- **Property and Safety Committee:**
 - Bell is working sporadically; Verdin Company will be coming within the month.
 - Dishwasher: The dishwasher was filling up with water and caused a major leak in the

kitchen. Hobart was called and the leak was due to a bad solenoid, which was repaired.

- A kitchen fridge was purchased with memorial money from Annette Anderson. The fridge that was in the kitchen was moved to the back hallway to be the secondary fridge. The old second fridge was removed.
- The copy machine was purchased in 2020, life expectancy is 5-8 years. Marissa feels it is working well at this time and has no concerns.
- Electricity usage has been running high. Mark will reach out to WPS to see if an evaluation is in order to find out why.

Old Business

- **College Scholarship Fund:** Tabled
- **Vanco App & Online giving:** Tabled

Tabled Business

- **Kitchen Floor:** New quotes are being done.
- **Website Redesign:** Quotes were received from 4 local companies.
- **Revisit percentage formula of general fund transfers from congregation donations.** Pastor Amanda and LeeAnn met to discuss.

The council will meet again November 11 at 6:30 p.m.

A Note From The Financial Secretary

If you give online and want to change your donation for 2026, make sure you click on the donate button on our website to be brought to our pink donation page. From there, you will log in to your account to change your offering. You only need to do this if you set an END DATE on your 2025 offering. If you have questions or need help with how to change your offering, please call our office at 715-735-7898, and I will call you back as soon as I can!

Marissa Tharp, Financial Secretary

November Collection

Zion is Called to Go Where Jesus Leads and our Social Ministry Committee is committed to showing our congregation ways to live out that calling in our community. During the month of November, we will be collecting food items to help people celebrate the CHRISTMAS HOLIDAY.

Everything we collect in November will be split up and delivered to THREE locations: Dorothy's Haven of Hope, Rainbow House, and the St. Vincent de Paul Food Pantry.

By collecting in November, we can get these items delivered EARLY in December and help everyone plan for their holiday meals.

Ideas for SHELF STABLE items for a Christmas meal are:

- Cookie mixes, sprinkles, icing, peanut butter, chocolate stars/kisses, peppermint candies
- Instant potatoes, stuffing mix, biscuit mix, gravy mix or jarred gravy
- Cranberry sauce, canned yams, French fried onions, canned corn, canned green beans
- Canned apple and/or other pie filling, shelf stable pie crust
- Shelf stable milks such as Almond, Rice or Soy
- All other non-perishable food items such as canned vegetables, fruits and proteins especially chicken or turkey are certainly appreciated also!

November Youth Event



Menominee Valley Conference Youth between 6th - 12th grade are invited to go BOWLING on Sunday, November 9. We will meet at the Dome Lanes (801 University Ave. in Marinette) from 1:00 – 3:00 pm

for bowling, pizza, fellowship, and fun! Football games will be playing on the TVs so you can keep tabs on your favorite teams. There is no cost to attend but reservations are needed. Please RSVP to Stefanie at youthcoordinator@nglsynod.org by Nov. 7.

The Stewardship and Generosity Corner

The goal of Zion's Stewardship and Generosity Committee is to help God's people grow in their relationship with Jesus through the use of the time, talents, and finances God has entrusted to them.

The Seven Marks of Discipleship

#Pray

#Worship

#Study

#Invite

#Encourage

#Give

#Serve

Christians the world over have been working on faith practices since the very beginning of time. We don't do faith practices to earn points with God. We don't need points with God. God loves us dearly for Christ's sake, and nothing we do or don't do can change that. God doesn't need our faith practices, but we certainly do, and so do our neighbors.

Years ago, Zion developed its Seven Marks of Discipleship, our Faith Practices - Pray, Worship, Study, Invite, Encourage, Give and Serve and we have benefited from them ever since. These faith practices can help us see where God's powerful love is at work.

They encourage us to notice God and to join God in action.

Giving money for God's work is an ancient practice we learned from our Jewish forebearers. Giving a tithe, 10 percent, is the rule of thumb in the Old Testament. Even though I grew up on a farm in the early 50's and 60's and had nine brothers and sisters, I can remember my parents filling out their envelope each week for the church we attended. I knew we were poor and that my mother and dad pinched their pennies, but they always told me that God would provide, and he did.

Since then, because of many pastors, stewardship studies, special appeals, and real live examples of givers right here at Zion I have learned a lot. I began to understand that we are called to be faithful managers of 100% of what we have – we don't own it, God does. We need to do our very best to manage and look after God's property. I've always felt I managed money well; frankly, I'm a frugal person, some say cheap, but it wasn't until I was diagnosed with Ovarian Cancer in 1995 that I felt the need to

make a change in my life and in my giving. It was a sudden and very powerful realization, or moment of insight, for me. I felt strongly that I needed to put God first and so I took the leap and started to worship weekly and to tithe. I discovered that writing that first check to Zion guaranteed my commitment to Zion was met, but even more importantly, writing that check was a monthly reminder that I could trust God to sustain my family. Though initially I was a bit anxious, I came to understand that the percentage I did not give away was enough to meet my family's needs. At various times, I would fall behind in giving and needed to catch up, but when Zion introduced electronic giving, I decided to utilize it so I would never fall behind. There are two ways to get to Zion's donate page - by clicking the "Donate" button on Zion's website or by clicking on the "shop now" button on Zion's Facebook. If you need help setting up electronic giving, call Marissa at Zion and she'll be happy to assist. Once set, it automatically withdraws funds from your account. This is still another way to give to God first.

Many of us support other worthwhile causes over and above Zion. There are so many outstanding causes to support here in our own community and nationwide, especially now. Do some research and choose carefully before you lend your support. Certainly, you want your donated funds to have maximum impact. It makes you feel fantastic when you help others. Teaching me to trust God's care in everything is ongoing. He never falters but sometimes I do.

2 Corinthians 9:7 *"Each of you should give as you have made up your mind, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver."*

Dear Lord, as 2025 ends, help us reflect on our support for Zion and its ministries. What would you have us do in 2026? I pray, dear Lord, that you will lead and guide us in whatever that might be. Amen

In God's peace, joy, and love,
Karen Sylvester

November Birthdays

November 1: Georgann Griffiths

November 2: Jaclynn Knopik, Phillip Strohl

November 3: James Jagielski, Jo Schutt

November 4: Hope Goes

November 5: John Kloida, Wendy Strutz

November 6: Henry Zuehls

November 7: Niklas Williams

November 9: Sharon Schmidt, Mary Thielen

November 10: Michael Harding

November 12: Lisa Cook, Carol Magnuson

November 15: Barb Bereza

November 18: Kenny Sallee

November 19: Barbara Baumgarten

November 21: Jane Landenberger

November 24: Naomi Dumke

November 25: Susan Fischer

November 26: Bethany Emler

November 27: Karen Sylvester

November 28: Lanse Dill, Alex Gressel

November 29: Carissa Kempka, Sydney Lund, Travis Lund





November Eternal Light

The Eternal Light for November is sponsored by Jim Cook and is in memory of Don Limberg.

Ruth Circle Group

The Ruth Group will meet Thursday, November 20, in the family room at Zion at 3 p.m. for our monthly Bible study. All are welcome to attend!

Join us in lifting up our siblings in Christ, in prayer as we remember their baptism

November 1: Carole Boerner, Daniel Lemire, Laura Chaltry, Kathi Gutknecht.

November 2: Michael Cook, Georgann Griffiths, Timothy Saxton

November 3: Kensley Renne

November 5: Leah Rose

November 7: Beckham Betts, Donna Dietrich

November 9: Mark Swenson

November 10: Vicki Guay, Jack Heimbuch

November 11: Alexa Oleson

November 12: Barbara Grom

November 13: Nora Plym

November 15: Chad Francour

November 16: Megan Buenning

November 18: Gary Grom

November 26: Thomas Kaufman, Kaya Bodam

November 28: Eric Morois

November 29: Sharon Schmidt, Jo Schutt



Upcoming Coffee Hour

There will be a coffee hour after worship today to celebrate the confirmation students who are affirming their baptism! There will also be a coffee hour on Nov. 2, 9 and 16. If you would like to sponsor a coffee hour, call the office at 715-735-7898 to reserve a date!



From Our Families To Yours...



To you who celebrate Thanksgiving, may you have a safe and happy holiday. To you who struggle with the day and all that it carries, may your truth be acknowledged and affirmed. To you who find yourselves in both realities, may you have the space and place to be your whole self. And to all, may you perceive the ever-present Companion wading in all of these waters with you.

Grace and Peace, Pastor Amanda, Gina, Ann, Rachel, and Marissa

Funny Corner!

Apparently exercise helps you with decision making. It's true. I went for a run this morning and decided I'm never going again.



Poinsettias serve as beautiful Christmas decorations. If you make a donation of at least **\$15.00** you may take one of the plants home following the 8:00 p.m. service on Wednesday, December 24, 2024. You may also designate it as a gift in memory or honor of someone.

If you are willing to purchase one or more Poinsettia, please fill out the form below and place it in the offering plate.

The order forms and payment must be received in Zion's office by **Friday, November 28.**

GIVEN BY _____

IN MEMORY OF _____

IN HONOR OF _____

AMOUNT CONTRIBUTED: \$ _____

Envelope # _____

PLEASE ENCLOSE THIS FORM WITH YOUR MONEY AND DROP OFF AT ZION, MAIL TO ZION OR EMAIL ZION'S OFFICE @ ZION@NEWBC.RR.COM SO WE CAN SUBMIT OUR ORDER.

Where to find Zion's Information_____

Zion has a gauntlet of places where you can stay current with the happenings within Zion!

- ⇒ We publish a weekly Announcement sheet that includes, but is not limited to: the schedule of events for the upcoming week, Birthdays, special announcements and members to lift up in prayer.
- ⇒ Zion has a Google calendar! You can view it by going to our website and clicking the "Calendar" tab.
- ⇒ Zion also has a Facebook page, that contains pictures of various activities, events that will take place (Sew for Missions & Blood Drives—just to mention a few).
- ⇒ We also publish a monthly Newsletter; you're reading it right now! It is available in print, on the website, and via email. If you have not received a notification via email and would like to, please email your request to:
Zion@newbc.rr.com
- ⇒ Occasionally reminders and/or the weekly announcement sheet is sent via email. If you have not received any of these messages and would like to, please email your request to:
Zion@newbc.rr.com

If you have information to be shared with Zion, please submit it to: Zion@newbc.rr.com The submission deadline for the monthly newsletter is the 21st of every month. The submission deadline for the weekly announcements is every Monday.



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zion@newbc.rr.com
Phone: 715.735.7898**

www.zionlutheran-marinette.org

Going Where Jesus Leads



**Northern Great Lakes Synod
Bishop Katherine Finegan
1029 N. 3rd St. A
Marquette, Michigan 49855**

www.nglsynod.org

Equipping the Saints for Ministry



**Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
Bishop Elizabeth Eaton
8765 W Higgins Road
Chicago, Illinois 60631**

www.elca.org

God's work. Our hands.