

ADULT LEARNING AT ZION

Starting
Jan 2025

SMALL GROUP STUDIES



The Chosen: Season 2 - Starting the week of January 5

Our small group study resumes with Season 2 of *The Chosen*, a dramatic video mini-series based on the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. At times drawing directly from the Gospels themselves while at others imagining “what might have happened” or “what could have been going on” in the lives of those who became Jesus’ first disciples, the series seeks to unify the way the individual Gospels tell their particular “takes” on the story. Drawing from direct biblical context, historical background, and the creative imagination of the creators, *The Chosen* is a great way “to see” the Word—both what the Gospels themselves “say,” as well as sparking viewers’ imaginations to “see” Jesus, the Word made flesh. Each episode runs anywhere from 30 minutes to an hour. PLUS, each week we’ll have some time for discussion and study of the Bible itself, so this could be a little longer than “the usual” hour study. We will focus on the video presentation itself along with the study guide sheets (no book). If you were not a part of the Season 1 study, you are still invited, encouraged, and welcome to come. You likely know “the Jesus story” well enough to pick up in Season 2, or to catch up, you can watch Season 1 for free and without commercials at <https://watch.thechosen.tv/>. Season 1 study guides are available at www.zionanoka.org/ziondocumentcenter/; select *Adult Ministry*.



Schedule:

- Week of Jan 5 Special Christmas Episode & Episode 1 - "Thunder"
- Week of Jan 12 Episode 2 - "I Saw You"
- Week of Jan 19 Episode 3 - "Matthew 4:24"
- Week of Jan 26 Episode 4 - "The Perfect Opportunity"
- Week of Feb 2 Episode 5 - "Spirit"
- Week of Feb 9 Episode 6 - "Unlawful"
- Week of Feb 16 Episode 7 - "Reckoning"
- Week of Feb 23 Episode 8 - "Beyond Mountains"

Classes will be offered as follows :

- A - MONDAYS | 1 PM | LEGACY ROOM led by Pastor Sue Wallager
- B - TUESDAYS | 8:45 AM | FELLOWSHIP HALL led by Pastor Mike Pancoast
- C - WEDNESDAYS | 10 AM | LEGACY ROOM led by Pastor Connie Tiede
- D - WEDNESDAYS | 6 PM | LEGACY ROOM led by Pastor Mike Pancoast

Sign up at the Welcome Desk so we know how many weekly resources to produce.

WELCOME

We invite you to come experience God’s love at Zion Lutheran Church.

CONTACT US

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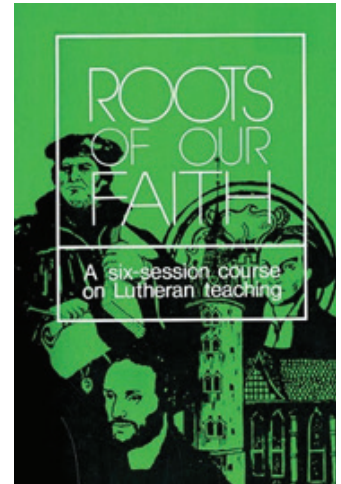
OFFICE HOURS

M-TH: 9:00 AM - 5:00 PM
FRI: 9:00 AM - NOON
SUN: 8:00 AM - NOON

Small Group Studies - cont'd

Roots of Our Faith -

Roots of Our Faith is a 6-session summary of the confessions of the Lutheran church and an explanation of the main parts of the Augsburg Confession. (For our schedule, we'll be fitting it into a 5-session calendar—see below.) It has been written to help congregants better understand their Lutheran heritage. Each learner copy (\$8.00) includes a short chapter for readings before each session and a usage guide for leaders that includes ideas and study suggestions for each session. Sign up will begin in early April at the Welcome Desk.



Roots of Our Faith discusses the following:

- Week of Apr 28: What are the Confessions?
- Week of May 5: The Ten Commandments
- Week of May 12: The Creed
- Week of May 19: The Lord's Prayer
- Week of May 26: Baptism, Confession and the Lord's Supper*

** The office will be closed on Monday, May 26 in observance of Memorial Day, but the rest of the small groups will finish up with our regular Tuesday and Wednesday offerings.*

Classes will be offered as follows:

- A - MONDAYS | 1 PM | LEGACY ROOM led by Pastor Sue Wallager
- B - TUESDAYS | 8:45 AM | LEGACY ROOM led by Pastor Mike Pancoast
- C - WEDNESDAYS | 10 AM | LEGACY ROOM led by Pastor Connie Tiede
- D - WEDNESDAYS | 6 PM | TBD led by Pastor Mike Pancoast

Adult Forum Schedule

Sundays 10:00 AM
Fellowship Hall

January 5: Epipha-WHAT? A Brief Explanation of the Season of Epiphany

Dr. Jonathan Campbell, Director of Music & Worship

In large parts of the Christian world, the season of Epiphany is a HUGE observation and celebration. The word "epiphany" means "to have a sudden realization." So beginning with the Day of Epiphany (always January 6), we hear the story from Matthew 2 of the Visitation of Magi, and with each weekly text, we are invited to ponder exactly WHO this Child born in Bethlehem really is! In addition, this identity of Jesus and its meaning also points us to the road Jesus will walk toward Jerusalem and his cross. Come join our own Dr. Jonathan Campbell as he talks about the season of Epiphany and how it fits into the liturgical and new church year. He will also play some examples of sacred choral music and hymns inspired by the season, a season of light and new beginnings.

January 12: Islam 101 (Part 1)

Dr. Tamim Saidi, from the Islamic Resource Group, St. Paul, MN

This past fall, one of our small group studies centered on a booklet produced by Lutheran Social Services of MN called *My Neighbor is Muslim*. The “bullseye” of this study for us was (a) to gain a basic understanding of Islam for the sake of, at the very least, offering a response of kindness and tolerance, and (b) to compare, contrast, and grow in our own self-understanding of followers of Jesus in the Lutheran Way. As a follow-up to that study, we are pleased to welcome Dr. Tamim Saidi, resident scholar for the Islamic Resource Group based in St. Paul.

Dr. Saidi was born in Afghanistan and forced to leave his family behind and take refuge in Pakistan. He came to the U.S. in 1990 and has considered Minnesota his home. Dr. Saidi received his Doctor of Pharmacy from the U and holds a Master of Divinity from Chicago Theological Seminary and Bayan Islamic Graduate School. He has presented to thousands of Minnesotans about Islam and the culture of Muslims. Dr. Saidi will be engaging us in learning and conversation on Sunday, January 12, 19, and February 9.

January 19: Islam 101 (Part 2)

Dr. Tam Saidi

January 26: The Art of Zion

Tim Sheie

Zion's building is blessed with a whole host of pieces of art—wood carvings, paintings, sculptures, stained glass and probably more. It's possible these pieces have become so commonplace we hardly ever notice them. But art is intended to be noticed, to be thought about it, to make an impact on us in some way. Come join Tim Sheie, the creator of our beautiful woodcarvings throughout our building, as he takes us on a "slideshow tour" of many of Zion's art pieces and invites us to notice, think about, and be impacted by this art in the ways that perhaps only art can!

February 2: A Nepal Travelog

Pastor Connie Tiede, Zion Lutheran Church Lead Pastor

This past October, Pastor Connie had the opportunity to travel with husband Mark, daughter Linnea, and son-in-law Nikesh to Nikesh's home country of Nepal. Nestled among the Himalayan Mountains, in between India to the south and Tibet to the north, Nepal is the home to approximately 30 million people and the birthplace of Siddhartha Gautama, the Buddha. Come hear about their trip to a part of the world most of us probably know very little about!

February 9: Islam 101 (Part 3)

Dr. Tam Saidi

February 16: Tech Day—Realm

Josh Myroniuk, Director of Technology & Media Arts

Join us for another Tech Help Day as we learn about Realm, a church-management software, that is utilized at Zion. We will cover the basics, from creating an account to signing up for a registration and everything in between. We will also cover some other basic functions of Realm and provide helpful tips so that you can stay connected and informed of Zion's daily activities.

February 23: NO ADULT FORUM—Zion Lutheran Church Annual Meeting

March 2: Camp Wapogasset

Heather Eggers, Camp Wapogasset Executive Director

Camp Wapogasset is OUR CAMP. Executive Director Heather Eggers will be with us to share not only about Camp Wapo but their other sites "Ox Lake & Wilderness Canoe Base", as well.

March 9: Black Men Teach

Markus Flynn, Executive Director

We will be hearing about an organization here in the Twin Cities called Black Men Teach from its executive director, Markus Flynn. Through BMT, Flynn champions accessible and affordable pathways for Black men to become elementary educators. A dedicated leader in the Twin Cities community, Markus collaborates with partner schools, teacher training programs, and community organizations to recruit, prepare, place, and retain Black male teachers. Since joining Black Men Teach in 2021, Markus has driven transformative growth, expanding both program participation and financial resources by over tenfold. Under his leadership, the organization has forged innovative initiatives, including the HBCU (Historically Black Colleges & Universities)-to-Minnesota pipeline at the University of Minnesota, which offers Black male graduates of HBCUs fully funded master's degrees in education. He also established a groundbreaking homeownership program in partnership with Twin Cities Habitat for Humanity, providing Fellows with at least \$30,000 in fully forgivable down payment assistance to support first-time homebuyers. Before stepping into his role at Black Men Teach, Markus pursued his passion for education as a fifth and sixth grade teacher in Minnesota. He considers his connection with and impact on his students among his most meaningful professional achievements. Markus holds both a Master of Science and a Bachelor of Science from Iowa State University.

March 16: Zion Addiction Awareness Ministry

Sheri Cindrich, President and Founder of Recovery Café Frogtown

The Zion Addiction Awareness Ministry (ZAAM) is a new ministry at Zion. This ministry offers faith-based, confidential, non-judgmental, care and hope to those seeking information and direction about drugs, alcohol, and mental health issues affecting self, family members, and our surrounding community. This forum will offer an opportunity to learn more about how addiction affects all of us from someone who has experienced it along with an opportunity to ask questions and share.

March 23, May 4 & 11: Confirmation Review for Those For Whom it Has Been a While (Part 1)

Pastor Mike Pancoast, Associate Pastor

Beginning after Easter (April 20), our weekly small group Bible study offering will be a study on some of the key writings of Lutheran theology and identity called "Roots of Our Faith". The study is intended to help participants better understand their Lutheran heritage—what does it mean that we identify as followers of Jesus in this particularly LUTHERAN way? In these forums we will be previewing some of the material we'll be covering in the small group study, particularly the Augsburg Confession and Luther's Small Catechism.

April 6: Zion Lutheran Church Security Team

Come hear the latest updates in policy and procedure from Zion's Security Team.

April 13: NO ADULT FORUM—Palm Sunday

April 20: NO ADULT FORUM—Easter Sunday

April 27: Creation Care Team

To be announced.

May 4: Confirmation Review for Those For Whom it Has Been a While (Part 2)

May 11: Confirmation Review for Those For Whom it Has Been a While (Part 3)

May 18: Topic—To be announced

Dr. Mark Tranvik, Professor of Reformation History and Theology, Luther Seminary, St. Paul, MN

In his Faculty Profile on Luther Seminary's website, Dr. Tranvik writes: "I like to think of myself as a parish pastor at heart. I spent almost ten years (1984-93) as a pastor at Cross of Glory Lutheran Church in Brooklyn Center, Minnesota. It was a rich experience, full of struggle and joy. Even today as a teacher I try to keep one eye on the parish pastor or lay leader when I talk about the Reformation or a theological topic. One of my favorite things to do is to visit congregations and lead adult forums. I do not want my scholarship to be divorced from the "real world" of the parish. I retired in 2020 after twenty-five years of teaching at Augsburg University. That also was a good experience. I learned much from my Auggie students and colleagues. Following my "retirement", I was offered a full-time position in Reformation history and theology at Luther Seminary. My academic interests are in Reformation sacramental theology and Luther's doctrine of vocation in particular. I look forward to introducing my students to the crazy idea that Luther picked up from Paul: "God's love for the unlovable."

Support Groups

Grief Support Group -

TUESDAYS IN JANUARY | 11 AM-12:30 PM | LEGACY ROOM

TUESDAYS IN MARCH & APRIL | 6:30-8 PM | LEGACY ROOM

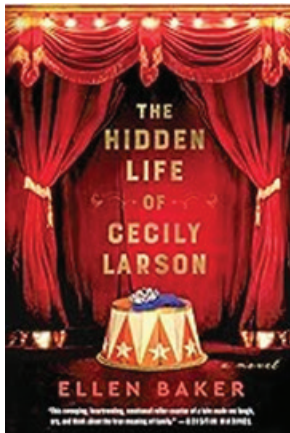
This weekly support group offers help and encouragement after the death of a spouse, child, family member or friend. Meetings are open to anyone who has suffered the loss of a loved one, or knows someone who has. Facilitated by Pastor Sue Wallager. For more information contact Pastor Sue at swallager@zionanoka.org.

Monday, January 27, 2025 - *West with Giraffes: A Novel* by Lynda Rutledge

An emotional, rousing novel inspired by the incredible true story of two giraffes who made headlines and won the hearts of Depression-era America. “Few true friends have I known and two were giraffes...” Woodrow Wilson Nickel, age 105, feels his life ebbing away. But when he learns giraffes are going extinct, he finds himself recalling the unforgettable experience he cannot take to his grave. It’s 1938. The Great Depression lingers. Hitler is threatening Europe, and world-weary Americans long for wonder. They find it in two giraffes who miraculously survive a hurricane while crossing the Atlantic. What follows is a twelve-day road trip in a custom truck to deliver Southern California’s first giraffes to the San Diego Zoo. Behind the wheel is the young Dust Bowl rowdy Woodrow. Inspired by true events, the tale weaves real-life figures with fictional ones, including the world’s first female zoo director, a crusty old man with a past, a young female photographer with a secret, and assorted reprobates as spotty as the giraffes. Part adventure, part historical saga, and part coming-of-age love story, *West with Giraffes* explores what it means to be changed by the grace of animals, the kindness of strangers, the passing of time, and a story told before it’s too late.



Monday, February 24, 2025 - *The Hidden Life of Cecily Larson: A Novel* by Ellen Baker

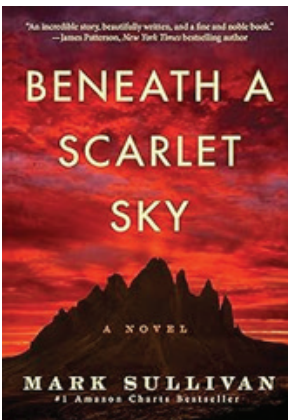


“A family secret, a DNA test, a journey as rich and colorful as the early-day circus itself. Through Cecily Larson’s hidden life, Ellen Baker tenderly examines personal determination, lost love, family ties, and our innate need to discover our own truth.” — Lisa Wingate, #1 New York Times bestselling author of *Before We Were Yours* and *Before and After*. *Orphan Train* meets *Before We Were Yours* meets *Water for Elephants* in this compelling multigenerational novel of survival, love, and the families we make. In 1924, four-year-old Cecily Larson’s mother reluctantly drops her off at an orphanage in Chicago, promising to be back once she’s made enough money to support both Cecily and herself. But she never returns, and shortly after high-spirited Cecily turns seven, she is sold to a traveling circus to perform as the “little sister” to glamorous bareback rider Isabelle DuMonde. With Isabelle and the rest of the circus, Cecily finally feels she’s found the family she craves. But as the years go by, the cracks in her little world begin to show. And when teenage Cecily meets and falls in love with a young roustabout named Lucky, she finds her life thrown onto an entirely unexpected—and dangerous—course. In 2015, Cecily is now 94 and living a quiet life in Minnesota, with her daughter, granddaughter, and great-grandson. But when her family decides to surprise her with an at-home DNA test, the unexpected results not only bring to light the tragic love story that Cecily has kept hidden for decades but also throw into question everything about the family she’s raised and claimed as her own for nearly seventy years. Cecily and everyone in her life must now decide who they really are and what family—and forgiveness—really mean. Sweeping through a long period of contemporary history, *The Hidden Life of Cecily Larson* is an immersive, compelling, and entertaining family drama centered around one remarkable woman and her determination to survive.

Monday, March 24, 2025 - Has Anyone Seen My Toes? by Christopher Buckley

During the pandemic, an aging screenwriter is holed up in a coastal South Carolina town with his beloved second wife, Peaches. He's been binge-eating for a year and developed a notable rapport with the local fast-food chain Hippo King. He struggles to work—on a ludicrous screenplay about a Nazi attempt to kidnap FDR and, naturally, an article for *Etymology Today* on English words of Carthaginian origin. He's told Peaches so often about the origins of the world mayonnaise that she's developed an aversion to using the condiment. He thinks he has Covid. His wife thinks he is losing his mind. In short, your typical pandemic worries. Things were going from bad to worse even before his doctor suggested a battery of brain tests. He knows what that means: dementia!

But even in these scary times, there are plenty of things to distract him. His iPhone is fat-shaming him. He's been trying to read Proust and thinks the French novelist missed his true calling as a parfumeur. And he's discovered nefarious Russian influence on the local coroner's race. Why is Putin so keen to control who decides who died peacefully and who by foul play in Pimento County? Could it be the local military base?

**Monday, April 28, 2025 - Beneath a Scarlet Sky: A Novel** by Mark Sullivan

Pino Lella wants nothing to do with the war or the Nazis. He's a normal Italian teenager—obsessed with music, food, and girls—but his days of innocence are numbered. When his family home in Milan is destroyed by Allied bombs, Pino joins an underground railroad helping Jews escape over the Alps, and falls for Anna, a beautiful widow six years his senior.

In an attempt to protect him, Pino's parents force him to enlist as a German soldier—a move they think will keep him out of combat. But after Pino is injured, he is recruited at the tender age of eighteen to become the personal driver for Adolf Hitler's left hand in Italy, General Hans Leyers, one of the Third Reich's most mysterious and powerful commanders.

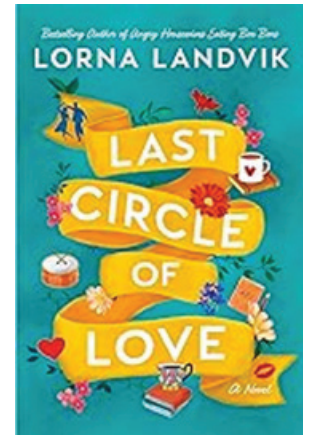
Now, with the opportunity to spy for the Allies inside the German High Command, Pino endures the horrors of the war and the Nazi occupation by fighting in secret, his courage bolstered by his love for Anna and for the life he dreams they will one day share.

Monday, May 19, 2025 - Last Circle of Love: A Novel
by Lorna Landvik (a Minnesota author)

Newly installed at All Souls Lutheran, Mallory “Pastor Pete” Peterson soon realizes that her church isn’t merely going through turbulent waters, but is a sinking ship. With the help of five loyal members of the Naomi Circle, the young, bold minister brainstorms fundraising ideas. They all agree that the usual recipe book won’t add much to the parish coffers, but maybe one with all the ingredients on how to heat up relationships rather than casseroles will.

Pastor Pete has her doubts about the project, but it turns out the group of post-menopausal women has a lot to say on the subject of romance. While Charlene, the youngest member at fifty-two, struggles with the assignment, baker-extraordinaire Marlys, elegantly bohemian Bunny, I’m-always-right Velda, and ebullient Edie take up their contributions enthusiastically. After all, their book is really about cooking up love in all its forms.

But not everyone in the congregation is on board with this “scandalous” project. As the voices of opposition grow louder, Pastor Pete and these intrepid women will have to decide how hard they’re willing to fight for this book and the powerful stories within—stories of discovery, softened hearts, and changed lives.



If you have questions or wish to participate contact Pastor Sue Wallager at swallager@zionanoka.org.

