



HS Youth Group Meetings- August

We will have Youth Group on Wednesday, August 6 at 6:30 at the Church. These summer sessions are a great time to bring a friend who might be interested in joining!!

Shawano Fest Setup Crew- THANK YOU!

On July 12- A group of MS and HS students and parents helped set up for Shawano Fest in downtown Shawano. We had the setup done in record time and the organizers were totally impressed! Thank you for showing up and showing our community the outstanding kids and families we have here at Zion! This was a fundraiser for the youth as well as a service opportunity. We will again help with setup for Octoberfest on Oct 4th.

Float the Wolf River

Thank you to everyone who joined us in some soggy fellowship while we floated the Wolf River! We look forward to more opportunities to have fun and build community here at ZION.



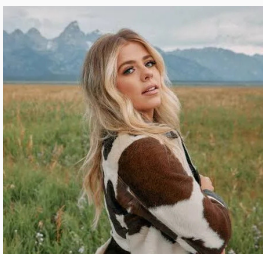
Confirmation Retreat

Instead of attending Confirmation Camp this summer- we have decided to take all of our students on a short retreat this fall. More details will be coming soon. Watch your emails for information and a possible poll for dates.

Lock In and Service Day

ZION MS and HS Youth will be having a service day and lock-in. This will be an opportunity for our students to get out into the community and help those in need and enjoy some fellowship time.

More details and date will be coming soon.



Anne Wilson Concert, Hope in the Park

The Hope in the Park festival will again take place in Wausau in August. We are looking to put together a group to go see Anne Wilson in concert on Sunday, August 24. More information to come, save the date if you're interested in attending

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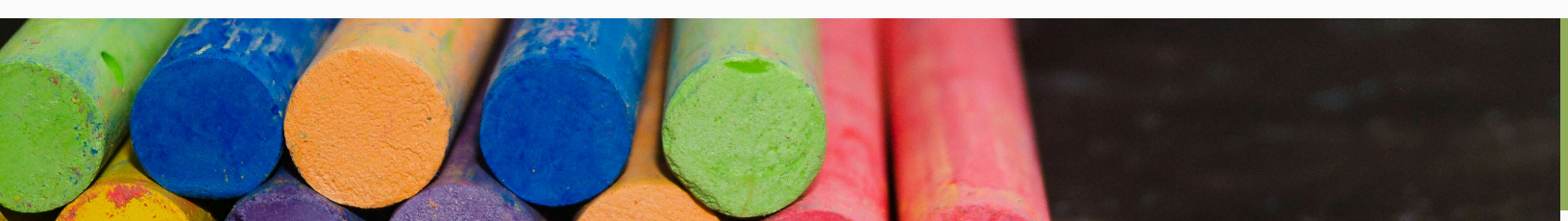
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"Don't let anyone look down on you because you are young, but set an example for the believers in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith and in purity."

1 Timothy 4:12



BINGO

Council has approved us getting a raffle license which will allow us to host Bingo as a fundraiser! This will be an opportunity for us to have an ongoing fundraiser for the Youth. Dates will be set soon. We are looking at starting with once a month. More information to come!



August at a Glance

Aug 6- HS Youth Group

Aug/ Sept TBD- Lock In

Aug 24- Hope in the Park,
Anne Wilson concert

Mark Your Calendars:

Sept 7- Rally Sunday

Oct 4- Octoberfest Setup

God's Little Wonders Update

Our God's Little Wonders classes will continue through August, with sessions on Aug 7 and 21 at Memorial Park at 11am

Then in the fall, we'll launch our MomCo program, featuring special curriculum for the kids while moms enjoy their meeting time.

MomCo Kickoff and Informational Meeting

MomCo kick-off meeting will be Thurs., September 4 @ 10:30 or 6pm. Come learn what MomCo is about and what it will look like at Zion.

You can learn more about MomCo at www.themom.co.

Let's come together to support the moms in our community and help them thrive!

Parent's Corner

Every month, I'll share insights on issues that many parents of teenagers face. I hope you find the information helpful and thought-provoking. If there's a specific topic you'd like me to cover, please let me know!

"Don't let anyone look down on you because you are young, but set an example for the believers in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith and in purity."

1 Timothy 4:12

Parent's Corner

Scripture Before Phone Justin Whitmel Earley | July 15, 2025

For the word of God is alive and powerful. It is sharper than the sharpest two-edged sword, cutting between soul and spirit, between joint and marrow. It exposes our innermost thoughts and desires. Hebrews 4:12

Social media has always been a great temptation for me because I'm a vain person. I've never been able to sign on to social media without my mind and heart immediately beginning to spin: How many followers or likes do I have? Why does so-and-so have more when she always posts stupid kid stuff? Wait, when did he get promoted? Is his new title better than mine?

My identity spiral rages as I get pulled into others' posts and become aware of my lack of social impact. During some points in my life, I would wake up, roll over, pick up my phone, and start scrolling. Many times I would look at work emails. Other times I would get my blood boiling by reading news alerts about political dealings. And, of course, I would sometimes go onto social media. The abyss of my smartphone consumed me. And I'm not alone.

More than 70 percent of teens say they often or sometimes grab their phone to check for messages and notifications as soon as they wake up.¹

By starting our morning facing a screen, we're allowing our smartphones to set the tone for the day. After finding myself caught in this trap for years, I realized something deeper was happening. It was like my head was asking my phone a very practical question: What do I need to do today?

And in the same moment, under the surface, my heart was asking my phone a much more profound question: Who do I need to become today?

Fractured, Not Reflective Identity

Who am I? And who am I becoming? These are the questions our morning routines inevitably ask and answer for us. No words except the words of Scripture can accurately reply to these questions.

The story of Scripture is clear. We do not know who we are apart from the God who made us, and we do not know who we are becoming apart from the God who is renewing us.

We long to know who we are. We daydream about versions of ourselves that we hope to become. But apart from Jesus we can do neither of these things.

Picture a broken mirror. Shards of glass litter the ground. That's what we humans are—broken reflectors. Alone we reflect a small piece of who God is. Together and redeemed by Christ, we fully can reflect him.

his means we can't know who we are by looking deep inside, discovering our true identity, and then mustering up all our effort and willpower to become that person. That is not how it works at all.

If we look inside ourselves, we often find a self in conflict. This is because we are created in the image of God, but we are fallen. Good and evil war within us.

This isn't a new phenomenon. The apostle Paul, the greatest missionary of all time and author of much of the New Testament, faced the same inward battle. In Romans 7:19-20 he writes, "For I do not do the good I want to do, but the evil I do not want to do—this I keep on doing. Now if I do what I do not want to do, it is no longer I who do it, but it is sin living in me that does it" (NIV).

So what did Paul do? Was he able to discover his true self? Yes, but not by turning within. He turned to Jesus. And we can do the same.

Paul went from being frustrated at his inner conflict and calling himself a "wretched man" in need of rescue, to thanking God for delivering him through Jesus Christ (see Romans 7:24-25 NIV). Like Paul, we have different versions of ourselves that fight against each other. There are versions of ourselves we think we should be, versions our parents think we should be, versions our coaches and teachers think we should be, versions our culture urges us to be—and the list goes on.

This means the way we guide our formation is not by looking in and choosing our favorite identity; it is actually by looking out. Because we are little mirrors made to reflect big things, our internal sense of identity actually ends up reflecting the many different things we've spent our life looking at, whether good or not.

We can't become ourselves by ourselves. The way we discover ourselves is by staring at someone else.

This can be dangerous if we look to another person for identity, such as a boyfriend, girlfriend, friend on social media, or influencer. Staring at another broken shard of glass only makes us more broken.

But when we turn our eyes toward Jesus, we finally see the kind of person we were made to be. We are children of the King, perfectly loved—not because that's "who we are," but because that's who he is making us.

In his death and resurrection, Jesus gave us his place in the universe. We're heirs to the King of the new heavens and the new earth. Our most true sense of identity is found only in the story of who we are becoming, and that story is found in the words of the Bible.

We become ourselves only by gazing on that story. But every morning there are other stories competing for our identity. The Common Rule habit of Scripture before phone is intended to cultivate the habit of resisting those stories and embracing the true story.

Each morning presents us with these questions: Who am I? And who am I becoming? Each morning, the Scriptures answer the same, with God saying, "You are my child, and you are becoming like me." That is something to stand the day on.

¹ Jingjing Jiang, "How Teens and Parents Navigate Screen Time and Device Distractions," Pew Research Center, August 22, 2018, www.pewresearch.org/internet/2018/08/22/how-teens-and-parents-navigate-screen-time-and-device-distractions/.

Adapted for Rooted from The Common Rule Youth Edition by Justin Whitmel Earley. ©2025 by Justin Whitmel Earley. Used by permission of InterVarsity Press. www.ivpress.com. Stay tuned to the Rooted Parent Podcast for an interview with Justin, coming August 2025!