

FEBRUARY 2026

ZION YOUTH NEWS



HS Youth Group Meetings- February

Our February meetings will be February 5th. Lent starts on Feb 18th with Ash Wednesday. Youth devotionals and discussion space will be available after each Wednesday Lent Service.

See the full schedule on the website shawanozion.org/youth

Game Nights Go Monthly!

Get ready for some fun—our Game Nights are now happening on the 3rd Sunday of every month! The next Game Night is February 15th from 3:30-5 pm.

Join us for board games, card games, snacks, and laughter! Bring your neighbors, friends, and family to challenge them to games like Scattergories, Spoons, Battleship, or Twister. We'll have something for all ages—even Hungry, Hungry Hippos for the little ones! Don't miss out on the fun—see you there!

Spreading the Love: ZION Youth's Spaghetti Dinner"

Enjoy an evening of great food and fellowship as the youth of Zion Lutheran Church host a Spaghetti Dinner on Wednesday, February 11, beginning at 5:30 PM. This fundraiser supports our youth ministry and upcoming activities.



The dinner will feature a delicious menu including spaghetti with your choice of meat or meatless sauce, garlic bread, beverages, and a variety of homemade desserts.

Spaghetti Dinner

Tickets go on sale February 1 and are \$10 per person. Children 5 and under eat free. The entire congregation and community are invited—bring your family and friends for a fun and meaningful night together. Our youth will be serving the meal and will eat together for free after all guests have been served.

Parents' help is greatly appreciated! Donation and volunteer sign-ups are available on the bulletin board by the elevator and will also be shared in the Monday Updates.

This is more than just a meal—it's a chance to support our youth, connect with one another, and strengthen our church community. We hope to see you there!

Confirmation Mentors Needed Soon

Just a reminder as we come into Lent that Middle School Confirmation Students will need mentors. The mentor will meet with them after the Lenten service and sit with their student (and Family) during the service. There will be a question/discussion sheets to follow each worship service throughout the Lenten Season. These sheets will focus on getting the mentors and confirmand to know each other better and a certain aspect of faith and life issues.

For more info or questions, reach out to Kristin or Pastor Scott

Upcoming Activities

There are lots of activities "in the works"! We'll share more info and specific dates as they get closer.

HS Youth Fellowship Outing- We're going on an outing but yet to determine what that'll look like—snowshoeing, sledding, ice skating, bowling... something fun!! All we know is it will be fun! Date TBD also.

HS Youth Serve Dinner @ SAM25- We're looking at dates after Lent to go serve a meal at SAM25.

MS/HS- Masons Easter Egg Hunt Help- We've been asked to help with the Mason's Easter Egg Hunt March 28. More info to come- but mark your calendars!

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February at a Glance

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Feb 11- Spaghetti Dinner

Feb 15- Game Night

Feb 18- Ash Wednesday

Feb 25- Lent Service

UPCOMING DATES

March 28- Masons Easter Egg Hunt

"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

Cultivating a Habit of Prayer as a Family -Steve Eatmon | December 9, 2025

Prayer is one of the most daunting disciplines to keep as a Christian. Even more daunting is the task of keeping children engaged in it! We all have busy schedules, demanding bosses, school activities, sports, and other family obligations. Yet prayer is one of the foundational aspects of the Christian life. In Luke 5, we read that Jesus often withdrew to lonely places and prayed. If Jesus, the Son of God, made this his habit, how much more should we? Even though adding in a discipline of prayer for our family seems like a burden with our busy schedules, neglecting it will have devastating consequences for us and our children.

Given the importance the Bible places on prayer, how can we create a culture of prayer in our household? Here are four tips that can help us as parents.

Build a Strong Prayer Life for Yourself

As with most habits we want to develop in children, it starts with us as parents. If we don't have a regular discipline of prayer, how can we expect that to transfer to our children? Even if you feel like a failure as a parent in this area, don't be discouraged. Scripture tells us that God's mercies are new every morning. It tells us that he can repair the years that the locusts have eaten. Tune out the enemy telling you that this endeavor is worthless and begin today. Start with small, simple prayers to God each morning (or another time that works). The key is building consistency; depth in your relationship with God will follow.

It is much easier to teach our children something that we already do ourselves. Behavior is more caught than taught. Children will pay more attention to what they see us doing (or not doing) than what we merely tell them, and this is true of our prayer lives.

Develop a Proper Theology of Prayer

Before praying as a family, it's imperative that children understand what Scripture has to say on the topic. These discussions will guard against children developing erroneous views about God and the nature of prayer. Jesus gives us an example on how to pray in Matthew 6. The Lord's prayer not only gives us the words, but also a sound theology of how to approach prayer.

We can learn three important lessons from this prayer. First, we learn about a proper understanding of God. The prayer starts with the words "our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed by your name." We know from the Lord's prayer that God is our Father, not just a distant CEO or a cosmic power figure in another part of the galaxy who occasionally comes to earth. Because he is our Father, he loved us enough to send his son to die for us. He grants us the opportunity for eternal life.

Second, we learn about the true nature of heavenly requests. We're to pray for God's kingdom and will. Prayer is not about imposing our will on God. The goal is to align ourselves with the will of heaven, not to press for that which we think is best for ourselves.

Third, we learn about what we should ask for. Knowing that our goal in prayer is to align ourselves with the will of God, we see three requests: to receive daily necessities (bread), forgiveness for ourselves and others, and to avoid temptation. The emphasis of these requests is much more about character formation rather than it is about ease, comfort, and a pain-free life.

It's important to have regular discussions with our kids about the biblical view of prayer alongside praying with and modeling it for them. One of the things I really appreciate about my wife is that when we start to have a tense conversation as a family, she reminds us to pray in the middle of it. This teaches our children that we should always be seeking the Lord's wisdom in a time of crisis.

There is a tendency in our culture to think that if you are a good person, when you ask God for something, he is obliged to give it to you. This is a flawed view. Without discussing Matthew 6 and other related passages on prayer, our children will be vulnerable to adopt this theology and become disappointed when things don't go their way. A proper theology is the foundation of a vibrant prayer life.

Start Small

Earlier in Matthew 6, Jesus tells the disciples in verse seven to, "not heap up empty phrases as the Gentiles do, for they think that they will be heard for their many words." Our family started integrating a nightly prayer ritual when our kids were very young. Although I am the first to say that we have not been perfect in keeping to this spiritual habit, the principle is to pray together every night before the kids go to bed. It typically doesn't last long, but it's the consistency that's the key. Kids need to learn that God doesn't have a timer in heaven, whereby he only honors our prayer if it meets a certain threshold.

It's also okay to write out prayers. Often in the past, our kids have requested that they copy our prayers as parents. Many parents bristle at the notion of written prayers because the activity may seem forced or too religious. Often, the opposite is true. Written prayer creates a framework for children and teenagers to understand God. It helps them see the process of prayer and releases them from the burden of trying to wade through it without any guide. This in turn gives them confidence to start praying.

In addition, small prayers stay in step with kids' attention spans. They will pick up more from the consistency of two-minute prayers every day than one hour-long prayer once every few weeks. When working with young children, it's better to keep to a habitual activity than to try to generate a mountaintop spiritual experience. Do this even though it may feel like a ritual. As we carry out this discipline with a heart for God, we can trust that he will meet us—and our kids.

Use Simple Language

As Jesus told his disciples that they do not need excessive words, we also do not need excessive language. If you are a parent, you know children often have limited vocabulary, especially if they are very young. God is not impressed when we use words like "progressive sanctification," "anointed," and "eschatology," or use Greek and Latin words. We won't impress our children either. Most likely, we'll lose them. Simple language works best.

Jesus tells us in Matthew 6 that our Father knows what we need before we ask him. That relieves us from the burden of having to find the exact right words. I remember a commercial about a man who found a genie granting him three wishes. The man wished for one million bucks, and to his surprise the genie gave him one million male deer. Thankfully, our Father isn't prone to miscommunication like that. Prayer is more about our hearts aligning with God rather than our finding the right words to get exactly what we want.

Hope For Weary Parents

Trying to pray with our children can feel like an uphill battle, but fortunately, we don't have to fight alone. Romans 8:26 tells us that "the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us through wordless groans." Even when we are confused or feeling far from God, he is always near in prayer, even when we may not know what to say. Knowing this truth can encourage us and our children as we implement a regular discipline of prayer.