

JANUARY 2026

ZION YOUTH NEWS



HS Youth Group Meetings- January

Our January meetings will be January 7th and 21st. With Bible Study on the 14th and 28th.

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

Cookie Fundraiser a Sweet Success!

This year's Youth Christmas Cookie Fundraiser was another incredible success! Our middle and high school students gathered to decorate hundreds of festive cookies, filling the room with Christmas cheer, creativity, and plenty of sugary fun. From frosting bags to sprinkles scattered everywhere, the students worked hard—and had a blast doing it!

Every cookie sold quickly Sunday morning, thanks to the amazing support of our congregation. We're already dreaming even bigger for next year! A heartfelt thank-you to the parents and volunteers who jumped in to help—your support makes all the difference!



Game Nights Are Coming Back!

Mark your calendars—Game Night and Bingo are back at Zion! Join us on Sunday, February 15 at 3:30 PM for an evening of fun, fellowship, and friendly competition. Whether you love classic board games, fast-paced card games, or the excitement of bingo, there's something for everyone.

Bring your friends, family, and favorite games, or just come ready to play. Snacks will be provided, and all ages are welcome. It's a great way to connect, laugh, and enjoy time together as a church family. We can't wait to see you there!



Save the Date - Synod Youth Retreat: Journey with Jesus

February 20–22, 2026 | Green Lake Conference Center

Middle school and high school students—mark your calendars! Our synod's annual youth retreat, Journey with Jesus, is coming up this February. Planned by youth for youth, this weekend is packed with fun, faith-building experiences, workshops, Bible study, worship, and time in community. It's a great chance to step away from the busyness of life, grow in faith, and connect with students from across the synod. We will be planning what this looks like for our group in early January. Parents are invited to join for the weekend too!

Carwash Cards

We will continue to sell Kwik Trip carwash cards to raise funds for our programming. They are always available in the main office and will be available between services several times a month.

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!

This issue:

PAGE 01

Youth Group Meetings

Christmas Cookie Baking

Game Nights Are Back

Synod Youth Retreat

Carwash Cards

Page 02

Parent's Corner

January at a Glance

Jan 7- HS Youth Group & Confirmation Class

Jan 14- HS Bible Study & Confirmation Class

Jan 21- HS Youth Group & Confirmation Class

Jan 28- HS Bible Study & Confirmation Class

"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

Running On Empty: Finding Rest in Parenting Burnout -Katie Polski | November 4, 2025

I'm a runner—or at least a jogger. I've run many races in the past. About five years ago, I decided my body had enough of the longer distances, and I waved good-bye to half and full marathons...until my daughter mentioned she was training for a half.

I couldn't help myself. How could I not run her first race with her? The day of the race, I felt pretty good—ready to pound out 13 miles. And for ten of those miles, my body did alright. I even considered bringing racing back. But at mile ten, I hit a wall. I trudged through those last three miles like a hiker enduring a mud pit up a steep mountain. It felt endless. I turned to a friend at one point and said, "I have got to be close! Tell me I'm close?"

I think of how I felt during those miles when I talk to parents about burnout. What I've experienced, and what I know many parents feel, is absolute exhaustion in a life-race that seems never-ending. How do we faithfully parent when we feel utterly depleted?

What Does the Bible Say About Burnout?

It's important to acknowledge that burnout is a real thing. The word itself isn't mentioned in Scripture, but we see glimpses of its repercussions. In Exodus 18, for example, Moses receives life-altering advice from his father-in-law, Jethro, who notices Moses over-extending himself. Morning and night, Moses leads the people of Israel, providing for their needs while offering ongoing wisdom and advice.

In verse 17, Jethro says, "What you are doing is not good. You and the people with you will certainly wear yourselves out, for the thing is too heavy for you. You are not able to do it alone." Moses was at a breaking point, trying to manage too much on his own, and someone close to him recognized what we might call "burnout."

Parents, I know you can relate deeply—the exhaustion from trying to manage all the things. But we weren't meant to carry everything alone. In God's goodness and kindness, he provides us with a community of believers to help bear the load. Even better, he gives us himself, the only one who is strong enough to carry our burdens for us.

Leaning Into Community: Sharing the Load

Burnout in parenting often comes from constant demands not only from our children, but also from aging parents, friends, or employees.

When we ignore the increasing stress or discount sage advice from the "Jethro" figures in our lives, we tend to become short-tempered, lashing out at someone who doesn't deserve it. And no matter how much we strain to do well, when we're drowning we can't serve as God has called us to.

We often get to that point by thinking we can do it all, but we can't. God did not create us as machines to function around the clock. God created rhythms of work, rest, and play. When these rhythms get out of balance and each day is a mere grind to meet everyone's needs perfectly, we are acting unwisely.

In wisdom, Moses appointed capable men to help him care for the people. He leaned into the community God gave him in order to lead well. Like Moses, we need to recognize when our load is too heavy and allow others to step in. This is not out of weakness, but wisdom.

What does this look like in parenting? It looks like utilizing the community of believers we've been given, whether that's our church family, mentors, parents, or even spiritual parents and grandparents.

Maybe you trade school pick-ups or drop-offs with another parent or accept a meal from someone when they offer. If your children are younger, reach out to a trusted church member and ask them to watch your kids while you take a few hours away just to breathe and regroup. It may mean discipling your children by asking them to pitch in with household help.

It might also look like being vulnerable and inviting in a prayer partner or mentor who you know will offer needed encouragement when you're weary and can't see clearly. And, perhaps most significantly, it's being with the body in corporate worship. God intended for singing, sacraments, preaching, and fellowship with our brothers and sisters to all be a means of deep refreshment in our souls. We need to worship with our church family when we feel depleted.

Leaning into community isn't an abstract idea: it's choosing humility and wisdom in everyday life. Sharing the load will help you to faithfully live out your calling.

Leaning Into Jesus: Finding Soul Rest

Equally important is leaning into Jesus when we experience burnout. In these familiar and precious words in Matthew 11:28, Jesus says, "Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."

The invitation is to come to Jesus—he drives no one away. Because of Jesus' shed blood on the cross, we can come to him in personal trust, knowing that he receives us with perfect love and absolute delight. And not only does he receive us, but he takes our burden onto himself, relieving us of our need to live in self-sufficiency.

And the rest Jesus promises isn't the kind of rest that's solved by a vacation. We often equate rest with a break or time away, but rest can and should intertwine with daily mayhem when we understand that true rest is being rooted in Christ. It's a heart posture of dependence, not just inactivity.

Do you have a good theology of rest? This might be the first place to start if you feel like you're on the brink of burnout. We need to rethink what rest might look like in our week. This may look like opening our Bibles regularly, taking a walk and talking with Jesus daily, or prioritizing Sabbath worship and rest weekly.

When your steps feel heavy, lean on the brothers and sisters Jesus has placed in your life. God has given us people to come alongside us when we feel worn thin. And even more, he gives us himself—the One who doesn't just cheer from the sidelines, but who carries our burdens and gives us true, abiding rest.

<https://rootedministry.com/running-on-empty-finding-rest-in-parenting-burnout/>