



Zion Lutheran School Newsletter

May 18th , 2026

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ZLS Families,

The past couple of months, the homeroom teachers have been writing articles on aspects of classical education. Our fifth and final article in this series is by Dr. Martin Zummersch, the 5th and 6th Grade teacher on **“Critical Thinking and Problem Solving in Christian Education”**.

Enjoy the Read.!

Headmaster - Mr. Joshua Swigart

ZLS Prayer Requests and Praise of Thanks:

- * Please pray for the following staff, parents, and students: Continued prayers for Ellie Hudnall's maternal grandmother Roxanne, who continues to battle cancer with weekly infusions, Ellie's mom - Katie, for a safe pregnancy ; Ellie's dad - Mike for his back, the Tomayer Family for their nephew & cousin Bennett, Chase Fagenstrom's stepdad Chris Thelander, Natalie Hastriter's grandma who is going through cancer treatment, Mackayla Main's recovery from knee surgery, Gianna Gargan's Great Grandmother who is recovering from cancer and dealing with other health issues, safe travels for Dylen's father, Andrea Carter as she heals from her recent foot surgery, Pastor & Mrs. Rippey's parents, their cousin Jessica, Mrs. Alverson's cousin Kerry, who was diagnosed with a Glioblastoma Tumor, and continues to recover after surgery, Mrs. Swigart's pregnancy induction on May 26th, Mrs. Allwardt's neighbor and veteran Bill Dudman who is in the final stages of hospice, Mrs. Allwardt's friend Lanie for heart surgery on May 19th, and for Mrs. Allwardt's health issues.

An article from our 5th & 6th Grade homeroom teacher, Dr. M. Zummersch:

“Critical Thinking and Problem Solving in Christian Education”.

From an *ex prospectu magistri* perspective, one truth becomes increasingly clear through years in the classroom: education is not merely the transmission of information, but the formation of minds and hearts. Within a Lutheran understanding of Christian education, this calling carries even greater significance. Teachers are not simply preparing students for examinations, careers, or academic achievement, but for lives marked by discernment, wisdom, vocation, and faithful service to both God and neighbor.

An article from our 5th & 6th Grade homeroom teacher, Dr. M. Zummersch:
“Critical Thinking and Problem Solving in Christian Education”.

Critical thinking and problem solving are, therefore, not optional academic skills. They are disciplines connected to the pursuit of truth, stewardship of God-given abilities, and the responsible exercise of reason within God’s created order.

Modern education often struggles under pressure that hinders the development of deep and reflective thinking. In many classrooms, there exists a curriculum-heavy focus on outcomes and coverage. Teachers are expected to move rapidly through content, often sacrificing understanding for pace. Reflection, questioning, intellectual struggle, and meaningful discussion are frequently pushed aside in favor of efficiency. Yet genuine learning rarely occurs through speed alone. Students need time to wrestle with ideas, to ask difficult questions, and to make connections between concepts.

Problems arise when memorization becomes the final goal rather than the beginning of wisdom. Students may retain isolated facts while lacking the ability to apply knowledge meaningfully or transfer it into new situations. Knowledge disconnected from understanding remains fragile and shallow. True education requires students to synthesize information, evaluate ideas critically, and apply learning across disciplines and real-life contexts. Several broader cultural and pedagogical factors contribute to these challenges. Instruction in both schools and homes is often shaped by external pressures, schedules, and systems that prioritize short-term performance over long-term formation.

Technology itself is not the enemy. Like Gutenberg’s printing press during the Reformation, technological advancement can serve as a tremendous blessing. The widespread accessibility of Scripture, educational resources, and communication reflects opportunities that previous generations could scarcely imagine. Yet the digital age also presents serious challenges to sustained thought and intellectual discipline. Constant stimulation, endless scrolling, and rapid information consumption can weaken attention spans, diminish working memory, and reduce the capacity for careful reflection.

From a Lutheran perspective, the issue is not technology itself but faithful stewardship. Christians are called to exercise wisdom and self-control in how tools are used. When digital engagement replaces meaningful interaction with people, ideas, Scripture, and creation itself, it can erode the habits necessary for deep thinking and spiritual maturity. Parents and teachers, therefore, share the responsibility of providing guidance, boundaries, and intentional formation.

A Lutheran approach to education, therefore, calls for a different vision of teaching and learning. Classrooms should cultivate curiosity rather than suppress it. Questions should not be viewed as threats to authority or signs of weakness, but as evidence of intellectual engagement and the human desire to seek truth. God created humanity with the capacity to reason, investigate, and explore His creation. Encouraging students to examine assumptions, wrestle with ambiguity, and engage thoughtfully with ideas helps develop intellectual humility and courage. Such humility recognizes both the power and the limits of human reason. While reason is a gift from God, Lutheran theology also acknowledges that human understanding is imperfect and must ultimately remain grounded in God’s revealed truth.

For the Christian teacher, this means guiding students not only toward knowledge, but toward truth grounded ultimately in Christ. In doing so, educators help prepare students not merely to solve problems efficiently, but to understand the world through the lens of God’s wisdom and to engage it with clarity, humility, compassion, and purpose.

CERTE DE FASTIS

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

MAY 2026

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
26 April	27 April	28 April	29 April 4th Quarter Mid-term	30 April	1	2 SB Fundraiser Chili Cookoff & Dessert Auction 5-8 pm
3 Students Sing at Good Shepherd Lutheran Church in Boise 09:40 am	4 Bridge Students Attend Iowa Testing of Basic Skills (3rd - 9th)	5 Iowa Testing of Basic Skills (3rd - 9th) Football Game & Cheerleading	6 Bridge Students Attend Iowa Testing of Basic Skills (3rd - 9th)	7 Iowa Testing of Basic Skills (3rd - 9th)	8 Make up Day for Iowa Testing of Basic Skills (3rd - 9th)	9
10 Mother's Day	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21 PTF Meeting 3 :15 pm Officer Voting	22	23
24 / 31	25 NO SCHOOL Memorial Day	26	27 Academic Fair Rehearsal (Preschool - 9th) 10:15 am Includes Bridge Families	28 Academic Fair (Preschool - 9th) 5:30 - 7:30 pm	29 PTF End of the Year BBQ (11 am) Last Day of School (12 pm) Dismissal	30

3rd	Students Sing at Good Shepherd Lutheran Church 09:40 am	
4th - 8th	Iowa Testing of Basic Skills	
7th	Last Day for ZLS Chess Club	07:00 - 07:45 am
14th	PTF Meeting - Voting for 26-27 PTF Officers	3:15 pm
25th	NO SCHOOL - Memorial Day	
28th	Academic Fair (Preschool - 9th grades)	5:30 to 7:30 pm
29th	PTF End of School Year BBQ	11:00 am
29th	End of 4th Quarter / Last Day of School	12: 00 pm Dismissal

CERTE DE FASTIS

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

JUNE 2026

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
31 May	1 2025-26 Teachers Close Out Week	2 2025-26 Teachers Close Out Week	3 2025-26 Teachers Close Out Week	4 2025-26 Teachers Close Out Week	5 2025-26 Final Teachers In Service	6
7	8 ZLS Summer Hours Start M-TH 9 am to 1 pm	9	10	11	12 Front Office Closed SUMMER HRS	13 Flag Day Free Fishing Day
14	15 2026-27 New Family Enrollment Deadline ZLC VBS June 15 - 17	16 26 & 27 June Practicum Registration Deadline ZLC VBS June 15 - 17	17 Zion Lutheran Church Vacation Bible School June 15 - 17	18	19 Front Office Closed SUMMER HRS	20
21	22	23 Student Summer Meet Up #1 1:30 - 3:00 pm Art with Mrs. Bockenstette	24	25	26 CCLE Practicum at ZLC & ZLS	27 CCLE Practicum at ZLC & ZLS
28	29	30	1 July	2 July	3 July Front Office Closed	4 July 4th of July Independence Day

1st - 5th

End of Year Teacher's Inservice

8th

Front Office Summer Hours Starting (Monday - Thursday 9 am to 1 pm)

15th

2026-27 New Family Enrollment Deadline

15th -17th

Zion Lutheran Church Vacation Bible School (VBS)

23rd

Student Summer Meetup # 1 of 3 - Art w Mrs. Bockenstette 1:30 to 3:00 pm

26th -27th

CCLE Practicum at ZLC and ZLS

NUNTIUS - ANNOUNCEMENTS:

- ♦ **2025-2026 Report Cards** will be mailed out of the Front Office in June upon completion of grades by the Homeroom Teachers and the following areas have been confirmed by the front office:
 - All Text Books and Library Books have been turned in.
 - All Tuition and ASC charges have been paid in full for 2025-26
 - Hot Lunch Program charges for 2025-26 have been paid in full. (Any meals that were paid for and not used, will be transferred over to next year's hot lunch meal account for the students and families).

If there are any questions, please don't hesitate to contact the Mrs. Alverson in the Front Office for clarification.

NUNTIUS - ANNOUNCEMENTS:

- ♦ **The ZLS Parent Teacher Fellowship (PTF)** will voting on the PTF Officers for SY 2026-27 during the May 21st PTF meeting at 3:15 pm. If you are interested in volunteering and serving as PTF Officer, let Mr. Swigart know which position you would like to run for before you come to the meeting. The following are brief explanations of some of the duties and responsibilities for each of the positions:

- **PTF President:**

- ♦ Coordinate the work of the officers, committees and parents.
- ♦ Preside at all PTF meetings and prepare agendas.
- ♦ Be an unofficial member of all committees except the Nominating Committee.
- ♦ Be the official representative to the School Board.
- ♦ Perform other duties that may be prescribed in the bylaws.

- **PTF Vice President:**

- ♦ Shall act as an aide to the President and perform the duties of the President in the absence or disability of the Officer to act.
- ♦ Act as an official representative of the PTF.

- **PTF Secretary:**

- ♦ Keep accurate record (minutes), of all the PTF meetings.
- ♦ Be prepared to refer to the minutes of the previous meetings.
- ♦ Keep a current copy of the by-laws and standing rules.

Note: All new officers will receive a copy of the bylaws. All new parents and re-turning parents automatically become members upon enrollment of their child.

- **PTF Treasurer:**

- ♦ Keep permanent books of accounts and records. Such books of accounts and records shall at all reasonable times be open to inspection by an authorized representative of the ZLC School Board and Ministry Council.
- ♦ Shall handle all the funds of the PTF , pay bills authorized by the PTF.

CONMEMORATIOS - REMINDERS:

- ♦ **Family Service Hours Policy** - School Board approved on 2-23-26, and handed out in return family additional information packets on 2-26-2026.

- ♦ **2025/26 School Year**

2025/26 families have been asked to complete family service hours. All uncompleted hours will be added to the required hours in 2026/27, and the fee for uncompleted hours from both years will be charged at the end of the 2026-27 school year.

- ♦ **Zion CCLE Practicum: Friday & Saturday June 26th, and 27th**

- * Zion Lutheran School will be hosting a CCLE Practicum conference on June 26-27, 2026, at Zion Lutheran Church and School. The conference theme is “Fathers and Mothers: God’s Chosen Educators.” This Conference will look at the theology and practice of education with a special focus on the parental duties of education. Come hear presentations on the roles of parents and schools in education, the complementary roles of fathers and mothers, parent-led worship and devotions in the home, educating in accordance with God’s design, and the importance of choosing good friends for children. For more information, visit <https://www.ccle.org/practicum>

- ♦ **The last day of registration is Tuesday, June 16th, 2026.**

Register Today!



Zion Lutheran School

Academic Fair

Thursday, May 28th, 2026

5:30 pm - 7:30 pm

5:30 - 6:10 pm

- Taco Bar Dinner

5:15 - 6:25 pm

- People's Choice Voting

6:25 - 7:20 pm

- PK - 9th Grade Presentations

7:20 - 7:30 pm

- Presentation of Judges Awards,



Zion Lutheran School 2025-26

PTF End of the Year BBQ!

May 29, 2026 at 11:00 am

To celebrate the school year and kick off the summer!

Each student is asked to bring the item assigned to their grade level.

Families with 3 or more students, please speak with Mrs. Ratcliff.

Food will be served from 11:00 am to 11:30 am.

PK	(3)	(1) veggie tray per student
Kindergarten	(3)	(1) fruit tray per student
1st	(7)	(1) dozen hot dog buns per student
2nd	(4)	(2) cans of baked beans per student
3rd - 4th	(4)	(2) bags of chips per student
5th & 6th	(10)	(1) 3 lb. container of potato salad per student
7th - 9th	(7)	(1) dozen hamburger buns per student
Kitchen	(2)	Coleslaw
Front Office	(1)	(1) veggie tray & (1) fruit tray

Please have all items to the kitchen by 8:30am Thursday, May 28th.



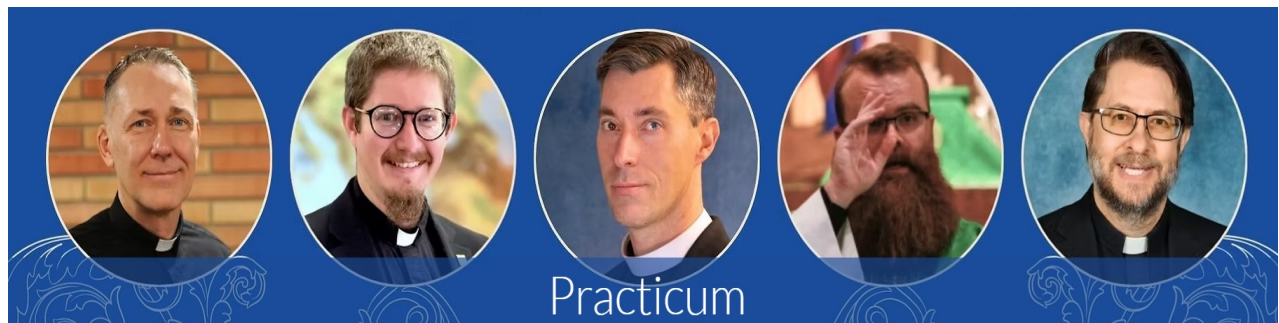
CCLE Practicum at Zion Lutheran School

June 27–28 | Nampa, Idaho

“Fathers and Mothers: God’s Chosen Educators.”

The Consortium for Classical Lutheran Education (CCLE) is partnering with Zion Lutheran School to host a two-day practicum at Zion Lutheran Church and School. Explore the Christian foundations of education and learn tools for educating children in the home and in school.

Rev. Dr. Harold Ristau, Rev. Andrew Richard, Rev. Shawn Barnett, Rev. Marcus Williams, Rev. Sean Rippy.



Registration opens April 1, 2026.

Learn more and register at ccle.org/practicum

