



BLAINE SHAHAN | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

A stained glass window at Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church, 1905 Broad St., East Petersburg, is known to members as the Good Shepherd window. The Oct. 2 service will focus on the history of this window.

# 175 FAITHFUL YEARS

*Zion Evangelical Lutheran marks milestone with music, fellowship*

**CAROLE DECK**  
FOR LNP | LANCASTERONLINE

“Great Is Thy Faithfulness” is a beloved Christian hymn with lyrics celebrating God’s steadfast love.

That’s why Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church chose its title for the theme of its 175th anniversary celebration.

“We started thinking about God’s faithfulness to us as a congregation,” says Mary Chesters, anniversary committee chair and 18-year church member.

The East Petersburg church has a slew of anniversary celebrations scheduled. They kick off Sunday and continue on Oct. 2, 9, 16 and 23. A variety of events will take place each Sunday to honor the church’s long-standing history at its original location, 1905 Broad St., East Petersburg.

**Church history**

Founded in 1847, the church had just 16 members at the time of its inception. By 1960, membership grew to 425. Today, there are 208 members.

The building underwent several remodeling projects over the years, from its first electric lights to the addition of a choir room in the 2000s.

Today, the three-floor brick building includes the sanctuary, office, classrooms, library, choir room and fellowship hall. A cemetery and memorial garden are located behind the church.

Church historian and 31-year church member Kim Gable did extensive research about the church.

“She created a wonderful historical museum in our library with photos and pictures to chronicle the past 175 years,” Chesters says.

Part of Gable’s findings included information about six stained glass windows in the church. Each window will be featured on different Sundays, and congregants will learn of their symbolism. Five of the windows were installed in 1904 and one was added in 1982 when the sanctuary was remodeled. The church has 25 stained-glass windows, but only six are symbolic.

**Music, a potluck and more**

On Sunday, the congregation will debut an original composition, “The Jubilee Hymn,” by music director Jim Riggs and his wife Sara. Flutist Morgann Davis, professor of flute at Millersville University’s Tell School of Music, will be a guest musician.

Interim pastor the Rev. Pamela Carnes will deliver a special message titled “God’s Love Has Found Us in Word, Water, Wine and Bread.”

“I’m grateful to serve as interim pastor and share this significant anni-

versary with the congregation,” says Carnes, whose service as interim pastor began in 2021 and will end in 2023.

After the worship service, there will be a potluck picnic in the church fellowship hall, followed by games.

The Oct. 2 service will focus on the history of one of the largest and most beloved stained glass windows, which features Jesus, the Good Shepherd. At 3 p.m., Lancaster female a cappella group Vocal Harmonix will perform a concert in the church sanctuary.

The Rev. Chris Rankin from Trinity United Church of Christ, East Petersburg, will be guest speaker on Sunday, Oct. 9, and the Rev. Beth Martini, assistant to the Bishop of the Lower Susquehanna Synod, will speak on Oct. 16.

The celebration continues Oct. 23 with Rev. John Smaligo of Greensburg preaching—former Zion pastor (2002-2008). Rev. Pamela Carnes will be presiding. The hymn, “Great Is Thy Faithfulness,” will be sung.

Former pastors also taking part in anniversary celebrations are Rev. Kent Krause, who served from 1976 to 1999 and lives in East Petersburg; the Rev. Angela Hammer of St. Paul Lutheran Church, Penryn; and the Rev. Mary-Margaret Ruth, associate pastor (2006-2018), East Petersburg.

“Zion has a wonderful congregation. I counted it a privilege to be affiliated with and serve them,” Krause says.

A luncheon buffet at Bent Creek Country Club will follow the Oct. 23 service; registration is required.

Church members who helped plan the celebrations as part of the anniversary committee are Chesters, Carnes, Lindsey Wagner, Ann Ober, Charlie Houck, Jessie Long, Kim Gable, Lisa Flood, Marci Mondock, Sam Maurer.

“I’m so happy to be celebrating with our church family. The committee did a lot of hard work to help us celebrate our 175-year church history,” says Lindsey Wagner, church council president and a 16-year member.

For more information about the anniversary events, visit [zionep.org](http://zionep.org).

## RENOVATIONS

Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church completed several renovations over the years, each costing anywhere from \$4,700 to \$987,000. They are as follows:

- **1904:** Tower and Sunday school room built, entrance changed, new furniture purchased.
  - **1912:** Electric lights installed.
  - **1921:** Basement excavated with construction of retaining walls and cement floor.
  - **1928:** Sunday School room and church interior renovated; new light fixtures and furnace installed.
  - **1964:** Education building added.
  - **1982:** Narthex and sanctuary remodeled; new lower ceiling added.
  - **1997:** New roof installed.
  - **2008/2009:** Additional bathrooms, choir room, utility furnace room with elevator built.
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- *Source: Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church.*



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From left, Mary Chesters, anniversary committee chair; the Rev. Pamela Carnes, interim pastor; and the Rev. Kent Krause, retired Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church in East Petersburg.