October 2026 | THE HERALD | Vol. 112 Issue 10

"We do none of this work alone"

Dear Siblings in Christ,

Grace and Peace to you in the surpassing Name of God, our Creator, Sustainer, and Abiding Presence!

I am writing to you with the news that I have accepted a Call to another congregation. My resignation from this Call is effective today, September 21, 2026. I have come to this discernment of Call with the guidance of the Holy Spirit. I have heard the Holy Spirit has direct me to recognize that it is time and that I have done what I was called here to do. I appreciate your prayers and will pray for you all and the continued movement of the Holy Spirit within the life of Harrold Zion in the coming days.

What a delight to know that this is God's church and as a congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America--we do none of this work alone. I am thinking of the line from the hymn, *We Plow the Fields and Scatter,* "But it is fed and watered by God's almighty hand…" and "No gifts have we to offer for all your love imparts…" It is God that does the work and will continue to establish, bless, and support the work and life of the church along God's path and design for mission and ministry. It is not any one of us, but all of us bringing out our individual gifts for the health and life of the church.

I encourage you to continue along the vision that I have cast before you with a joy that is present in Galatians 5, "For freedom Christ has set us free." We are free in the Gospel of Christ Jesus to share our resources, love and joy. I pray for your continued integrity in the challenges of this ministry.

My last weekend of worship with you all with be October 3 & 4th. After that I will be finishing my remaining time of Continuing Education and Vacation. My last day in the office will be October 20th.

May you and yours be strengthened in the peace and love of God in the coming days.

Peace,
Pastor Andrew Fitch

Memorials Received:
For Food 2 Go 4 Kids in loving memory of Marie Milliron are from: Carol Dallo, Curt & Rita Heasley, Pat & Linda Boyer, Dennis & Karen Henry, Glen & Marilyn Nickodemus, Carol Cope & Family, Mary Jane Diffendorfer, Judy Miller, Chad Altman & Doug Johnson & Bob, Jennifer & Bobby Tanyar. Thank you to Everyone!
Thank you!!! to my Harrold Zion Church family for your very kind words, all your cards and generous gifts for my retirement. The windchime and silver cross necklace I received from the church during my last service both mean a lot to me and are greatly appreciated. The reception in the social hall warmed my heart along with all your good wishes for retirement. It was a difficult decision to give up the organist position. It was the best job I ever had, working for all of you and to the Glory of God.
God Bless, Joanne

Thank you! Thanks for the prayers, cards and other expressions of sympathy shared with us. A heart-felt thanks for the time, effort and delicious food prepared for the funeral luncheon by the Helping Hands.
The Milliron Family

God is good All The Time
God is Good all the time and the Congregation responds with All The time God is Good. He never forgets to meet our needs. We are preparing for our new holiday season. Christ is coming again in the form of a babe in the manger, the greatest gift we will ever receive. What gifts are we preparing to give back to God? **Please join our Youth in collecting socks for Hannahs socks** campaign going forward through the Grace of God and all the generosity of the congregation. The socks need to be new and in all sizes. We will be collecting them from September 15 to the end of November. Remember these will be someone's Christmas gift. Please help. We can never Thank You all enough. We have many neighbors in need. This will be a major Youth project!

New Arrival Procedure for Sunday School/Faith Formation:
This fall as we welcome children and adults back to Sunday School/Faith Formation classes, we ask that everyone enter through the **Main Church Sanctuary Doors** and then proceed to individual classrooms. Thank you!

Hofbrauhaus Oktoberfest Sunday October 4th - Please join your church family in celebrating Oktoberfest at Hofbrauhaus Pittsburgh at 1:30 PM. Please sign-up in the communication center by Sunday September 27th so the correct number of reservation seats can be made.

Laugh with the Lutheran Comedy Matinee Sunday November 15th
Do you love to laugh? Do you need an afternoon out with friends and family enjoying good food, fellowship, and a riotous good time? On Sunday November 15th, Slapstick Comedy Funny Fundraiser Productions will be entertaining guests of Harrold Zion with a Two Act Performance. There will be many details to come. The ticket sales will be $40 per person (There will be Appetizers and Hor D'oeuvres), but the comedy club gives back a portion of the ticket sales as a fundraiser for the church general fund – estimate $1500-2000 for church. We are planning to have donated raffle baskets and adult beverages (glasses of wine sold individually). All proceeds will go towards the church general operating cost. Save the date and start rounding up your favorite friends & family members who love to laugh, cheer, and have a jolly good time at the Harrold Zion Comedy Matinee. Tickets go on sale the weekend of September 20th. Anyone who would be interested in donating a basket or item for the raffle, please contact Jeanne Toohey at 724-331-9915.

Calling All Singers!!
Anyone who enjoys singing and making music to praise the Lord is invited to join us as we begin choir practices for the new season! We will be singing at the 10:30 services.

HARVEST HOME COLLECTION – Now through November 1, 2026
The Harvest Home Collection is for the benefit of the Westmoreland Food Bank. Non-perishable food items and paper products can be given and brought to the church, as well as monetary donations. With every dollar collected the Food Bank can purchase 2-3 times more than we can purchase at a grocery store. This helps provide multiple meals due to the Food Bank's bulk buying power. If you wish to make a monetary donation, please make your checkout to Harrold Zion with a note on it for the Harvest Home Collection. Thank you for your continued generosity to those in need.
Any questions, see or call Linda Boyer, 724-635-0339.

Interested in serving on the church council? We have many council terms. ending this year. Each term is a 3-year term. This is a great way to serve your church. We typically meet once a month. Please reach out to any of the following who are on the nominating committee
Mandy Kanouff, John Millward, Joanne Gebhart, Don Freeman, & Kelly Fannerella.

National Youth Gathering Open to anyone currently in the 9th – 12th grade.



Please see Carson or Mandy with any questions, We will be registering on October 5th.

Harrold Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church Council Meeting Minutes September 10, 2026
Roll Call: Members present included Pastor Andrew Fitch, Jack Molnar, John Millward, Jeanne Toohey, Jason Barnhart, Pat Cahalane, Jennifer Hepler, Tony Gacek, Bonny Free
It should be noted that President Brad Zundel was absent due to a work obligation.
Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 6:00 P.M. by Vice President John Millward.
Pastor Fitch provided opening devotions based on the teachings of Martin Luther.
Minutes: The minutes of the previous meeting were approved as presented.
Treasurer's Report: The treasurer's report was approved on a motion by Patrick Cahalane and a second by Bonny Free. The Treasurer's Report appears at the end of the minutes.
Pastor's Report:
Devotions:
From The Freedom of a Christian (1520) by Martin Luther
Worship and Pastoral Acts:
Preaching and presiding in weekly worship with preparations
Pre baptism and new member meeting and planning
Funeral for Dirk Cunningham on 8/20 (NM)
Committal Prayers for Louis Diorio on 8/27 (Inactive)
Baptism of Cecelia Come and welcome of new members (parents) Matt and Jessica Come on 8/30
(new member total thus far: 14 5 new members and 9 baptisms (also new members))

Marriage of Candace and Curtis Poole on 8/23
Funeral for F. Marie Milliron with preparations and fellowship
Faith Formation:
Review of Curriculum pieces & resources for coming year
Review/discussion/meetings with Carson
Backpack Blessing
Rally Day planning
Confirmation and Sunday School Planning

Administration:
Bulletin preparations
Newsletter preparations
Misc./other: newsletter article, communications, contacts, and misc. communications and meetings.
Office work with Robyn.
Website updates.
Personnel meeting and communications for organist/choir director search
Contacts, meetings, and check-ins with leaders and staff – in person, phone, text, email.
Fellowship, Congregational & Community Life:
Office Visits—regular and extended, check-ins and contacts
Preschool Contacts
Hymn Sing on 8/19
Planning and preparation for next Hymn sing 9/29
Common threads mtg on 8/16
Synodical/ Collegial:
Synodical & Collegial meetings, conversations, and contacts
Pastoral Care:
Hospital and home visits with Scripture and prayer and/or Holy Communion
Special, around surgery, emergency and urgent visits, contacts and/or prayers [in person and phone]
Phone calls and check-ins.
Pastoral contacts and office visits
Continuing Education/Discernment/Spiritual Growth:
Professional readings and review of resources on current and best practices. Regular readings and articles
Clergy Coaching session
Miscellaneous:
CE Days used 4 | planned: September 14-17, 20 (Pr. Ed Sheehan) October 5-8, 11 (Pr. Dave C.)
Pastors are required to do Boundary and Racial Justice Training every 3 years (I am due) and Continuing Education hours for each year.
Vacation: used 22 (incl. 3 Sundays) | planned October 12-15, 17/18 (Pr. Dave C.)

Youth and Family Ministry Report: Grace and peace to you in the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ!
The past month, I have:
● Planned and executed Slip-n-Slide Day (shout out to Common Threads for all their help!) ● Planned and executed a prayer walk.
● Had the monthly Youth Group for July. In the summer months the Youth Group

transitioned from weekly to monthly to account for summer vacations, etc. The curriculum is one I am writing based on Short Stories by Jesus: The Enigmatic Parables of a Controversial Rabbi by Dr. Amy-Jill Levine.
● Had my third Bob Ross Paint Night.
● Had my third Water Games Day.
● Started the Littles Play Time, a time for little ones to have a brief faith formation and time to play while parents can talk amongst themselves.
● Selected backpack tags for the blessing of the backpacks.
● Ordered a gift for the blessing of the athletes, as well as sketched a rough draft for the liturgy.
● Met with Joanne Steiner, who has agreed to be a new preschool teacher.
● Met with Donna Dorsey to discuss the youth ministry taking over Hannah's Socks.
● Met with Brad Zundel to discuss a potential youth space.
● Attended the first Q&A for Youth Gathering.
● Took the first curriculum for Youth Gathering as provided by The Academy by the ELCA.
● Met with Mandy Kanouff to discuss Youth Gathering and begin planning for it.
● Created a rough sketch for Rally Day faith formation activities.
● Planned the high school Sunday school for the coming program year.
● Scheduled a youth meeting to discuss Youth Gathering as well as to match the fall programming with their school schedules.
● Planned a back to school bash.
Additionally, I am working on:
● Finalizing Rally Day.

● Finalizing the Blessing of the Athletes.
● Researching curriculum for the 7-9 Youth Group.
● Planning weekly chapel programming for the preschool.
Thank you so much for all you do for our faith community! May God continue to bless the work of your hands.
Rev. Carson Hollis
Director of Youth and Family Ministry This report was submitted 8/16/2026
Communications: None at this time
Audit Committee: No report
Cemetery Committee: No report
Christian Ed. Committee: See Youth and Family Ministry report.
Property Committee: Storage Room Doors are being repaired due to a sagging lentil. There is a "blowout in the storm drainpipe that drains the church roof. The yellow lines and ramp at the main doors will be painted and sand applied for traction. A handicapped stencil has been made available to convert the Pastor parking spaces to handicapped spaces. There is another possible bid coming in for the Church doors. The Boiler Room door has been adjusted and no longer sticks. We are getting a price on doing curb cut-outs for easier access. We will be replacing the benches in the playground due to deterioration. October should be good for the fire inspection.
Common Threads Committee: Basket donations are needed for the Comedy Night Basket Raffle. Contact Jeanne Toohey if you wish to donate. Rally day events organized by common threads include the God Work our Hands stations which will highlight all the different groups, committee and organizations within our church. Thanks to Susan Yaksic for making up the sign-up sheets for each group. We will also

be providing food for the all-church picnic. September 25th is the Hempfield Homecoming parade. There will be Hotdogs and a bonfire (weathering permitting). Please read the weekly bulletin for detailed information. On Sunday October 4th, Harrold Zion will be going to Hofbräuhaus Pittsburgh for 1:30 lunch. There will be a sign-up in the communication center for those interested, including if people would like to carpool. Sunday November 15 th will be a matinee comedy fundraiser show by SlapStick Comedy Production. There will be two comedians along with the MC, David Kaye. We will be working on the appetizers and hors d'oeuvres for the event. The price will be $40 per ticket. Ticket sales will begin the week of Sept. 20th. Its time to round up all your friends and family, as we need to sell 120 tickets to meet our quota.

Finance Committee: No Report

Investment Committee: No Report

Mission and Vision Committee: No Report

Mutual Ministry Committee: No Report

Nominating Committee: The committee's work is in process. Please notify Amanda Kanouff or John Millward if you are interested in serving on church council.

Personnel Committee: Personnel Committee Meeting Minutes 8/26/2026 Attendees: Bob Eicher, Vanessa Henry, Deb Mertz, Carol Trent, Jack Molnar, Pastor Andrew Discussed our job postings for a choir director and organist. We will post jobs separately We will note the salaries on all postings. Choir Director, $12,000 Organist $14000 Volunteers for Organist on a rotation schedule – Lori Farrell, Sue Molnar, Brad Zundell They will be paid as Supplies, One service $100, Two services $150 Lori Farrell has volunteered to be choir director until a permanent is found. Committee recommendation salary of $75 per engagement. (Jack, take to Council for approval) Annual Staff Reviews Pastor has done Robyn and Carson. Debbie, Lavanya are in process. Recommendation for salary increases for 2027 Robyn, Debbie and Lavanya the Cola for 2027 of 3.6 % Carson, 3.6 % after his one year of service. Pastor, 3.6 % He will work out the balance of the package based on the salary and Portico Insurance increases (Up 15%) . All recommendations will be finalized and presented to Denny Ernette and the Finance Committee. Discussed dividing forces in our Congregation. Bob Eicher, Chair

Preschool Report: Preschool has just begun with a day of orientation for each class. We start first days of class the 10th and 11th. The kids and parents seem ready to go, so prayers appreciated for a successful year.

Pastor Andrew and Carson came to both orientations to introduce themselves and talk to the kids and parents and also talk about upcoming chapel that they will be doing with the kids.

Our theme this year is Zoo, so we will be focusing on that and doing lots of activities having to do with animals.

One of my teachers is having major surgery this week and will be returning in the next few months. One of our previous teachers, Ms. Jessica has agreed to come back and fill in until Ms. Jen L. can return.

Any questions please let me know.

Lisa Zundel and the staff of All About Kids Preschool, Ms. Jen V. Ms. Debby and Ms. Jessica

Social Ministry Report: All social ministry projects have been ongoing. Thanks to all members of the congregation who keep these projects running. There will be a Harvest Home Collection to benefit the Westmoreland Food Bank and local food pantries. The collection will include both monetary contributions and donations of non-perishible food, paper and personal care items.

Stewardship Committee: No report
Worship and Music Committee: No report
Old Business: On a motion by Jason Barnhart and a second by Tony Gacek council approved the purchase of a Knox Box for the church at a cost of $500.00.
New Business. On a motion by Amanda Kanouff and a second by Jeanne Toohey, council approved a $75 stipend for each engagement for the substitute choir director position. .
Good of the order: It is time to prepare for the 2027 budget. Committee chairs are asked to submit budget requests as soon as possible. Also Committee chairs are encouraged to have annual reports ready as soon as possible.
The meeting was adjourned with the praying of the Lord's Prayer on a motion by Jason Barnhart and a second by Jack Molnar.

October Participants

	Acolytes	**Lectors**	**Comm. Assistants**
Oct. 4	8 am Heidi Koehl 10:30 am Ben Hayes	8 am Kevin Torrance 10:30 am Tony Gacek	8 am Bob Eicher- Host, Susie Eicher, Glen Nickodemus 10:30 am Deb Mertz- Host, Brad Zundel, Kim Elias
Oct. 11	8:00 am Grace Dansak 10:30 am Aiden Uhrinek	8:00 am Linda Boyer 10:30am Fred Wineman	8:00 am Glen Nickodemus- Host, Bernie Zundel, Bob Eicher 10:30am Fred Wineman-Host, John & Mary Lou Millward
Oct 18	8 am Madison Hoffman 10:30 am Abigal Eckles	8 am Krissy Korona 10:30 am Melissa Houston	8 am Linda Boyer- Host, Donna Dorsey, Tom Kubinec 10:30 am Deb Mertz- Host, Mandy Kanouff, Lloyd Fait
Oct. 25	8 am. Anna Dansak 10:30 Ryan Gacek	8am Kevin Torrance 10:30am Shawn Carolan	8am Kevin Torrance- Host, Bob & Susie Eicher 10:30 am Jack Molnar-Host, Ann Wineman, Missy Houston
Altar Care	Kim Elias Christy O'Neill	Ushers 8 am 10:30 am	ED Pesci Lloyd Fait, Jason Barnhart

October 2026

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1 09:30 AM-PSCHOOL 07:00 PM-BOY SCOUTS	**2** 09:00 AM-P SCHOOL 10:00 AM-Ladies Bible Study	**3** 08:00 AM-MEN'S BREAKFAST 05:00 PM-WORSHIP
4 08:00 AM-WORSHIP 9:30 Parent's Breakfast 10:30 AM-WORSHIP	**5** 09:00 AM-P SCHOOL 10:30 AM-QUILTING MINISTRY 01:00 PM-QUILTING MINISTRY	**6** 09:30 AM-PSCHOOL	**7** 09:00 AM-P SCHOOL 6;00 PM Handbell Practice 07:00 PM-CHOIR PRACTICE	**8** 09:30 AM-PSCHOOL 07:00 PM-BOY SCOUTS	**9** 09:00 AM-P SCHOOL 10:00 AM-Ladies Bible Study	**10** 05:00 PM-WORSHIP
11	**12** 09:00 AM-P SCHOOL	**13** 09:30 AM-PSCHOOL 10:00 AM-Prayer Shawl Ministry 07:30 PM-COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS	**14** 09:00 AM-P SCHOOl 6;00 PM Handbell Practice 07:00 PM-CHOIR PRACTICE	**15** 09:30 AM-PSCHOOL 07:00 PM-BOY SCOUTS	**16** 09:00 AM-P SCHOOL 10:00 AM-Ladies Bible Study	**17** 05:00 PM-WORSHIP
18	**19** 09:00 AM-P SCHOOL	**20** 09:30 AM-PSCHOOL	**21** 09:00 AM-P School 6;00 PM Handbell Practice 07:00 PM-CHOIR PRACTICE	**22** 09:30 AM-PSCHOOL 07:00 PM-BOY SCOUTS	**23** 09:00 AM-P SCHOOL 10:00 AM-Ladies Bible Study	**24** 05:00 PM-WORSHIP
25	**26** 09:00 AM-P SCHOOL 10:30 AM-QUILTING MINISTRY 01:00 PM-QUILTING MINISTRY 06:30 PM-PROPERTY MEETING	**27** 09:30 AM-PSCHOOL 10:00 AM-Prayer Shawl MInistry	**28** 09:00 AM-P SCHOOL 10:00 AM-NEWSLETTER 6;00 PM Handbell Practice 07:00 PM-CHOIR PRACTICE	**29** 09:30 AM-PSCHOOL 07:00 PM-BOY SCOUTS	**30** 09:00 AM-P SCHOOL 10:00 AM-Ladies Bible Study	**31** 05:00 PM-WORSHIP

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Debby Schlegel
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