



Zion Classical Academy

Monthly Newsletter

February 2026



Because He first loved me

February gives us a natural moment to reflect on love rightly ordered. In our classrooms, students are learning that love is not only a feeling, but a practice shaped by patience, kindness, and responsibility. As they read carefully, listen attentively, and learn to work well with others, they are being formed in habits that serve both their neighbors and their community.

Education is an act of love rooted in Christ. Scripture says, "we love because He first loved us" (1 John 4:19). This truth guides our teaching and our relationships daily.

In *The Velveteen Rabbit*, the rabbit longs to become real, but he cannot make that happen on his own. He is worn, played with, and even forgotten at times. Yet it is the steady, faithful love of the boy that gives him worth. Long before the rabbit understands what it means to be real, he is already loved. Over time, that love changes him. What was once only stitched and stuffed becomes something living.

This story speaks to a Christian truth we often return to: "We love because He first loved us". Like the rabbit, we do not begin our journey by earning love or proving ourselves worthy. God's love comes first. It meets us where we are, before we fully understand it or can respond. That love is patient, faithful, and shaping.

In the life of a school, this truth matters in practical ways. When children know they are loved, they are free to learn, to struggle, and to grow. We often learn more through our mistakes, where grace has room to do its work. As we guide students each day, we want them to rest in the assurance that God's love precedes their effort. From that love flows confidence, perseverance, and a growing love for others.

4th Grade Teacher Search

We are continuing our search for a fourth-grade teacher for the coming school year. Many of our applicants and families learn about our school through word of mouth. If you know a teacher who may be a good fit with our Christian mission, please consider passing this message along. We would welcome the opportunity to meet with them to discuss joining our school.



Author Fair, February 19th

Teachers and students have begun working on our Author Fair evening, scheduled for February 19th. At this event, students study and share about books and authors. Our younger students work on the project in collaboration with their teacher, while our older students work on individual projects.

The Reading Fair will be from 5:00-6:00 p.m in the gym.

Spelling Bee

The annual Spelling Bee competition is on February 6th at Adams Central. Our participants this year are Maliya Fitzgerald (2nd), Will Quinn (2nd), Atlas Wolfe (2nd Alternate) Emery Allen (3rd), Rory Piel (3rd), Zam Saang (3rd alternate), Camden Murphy (3rd Alternate) Cate Peterson (4th), Jack Fink (4th), Noah Siebert (4th alternate), Karsyn Piel (5th), Julia Jabs (5th), Faith Dittmer (5th alternate).



Enrollment Opens

Returning families can enroll for the 2026-27 school year. A link will be sent from the TADS system for our returning families. Our returning families registration fees are \$50, down from \$250.



FIRE 21 and ACLEA

It's FIRE season! ACLEA is excited for the 21st annual FIRE fundraiser on March 7th, 2026. Banquet tickets are on sale NOW through February 13th. Scan the QR code to buy your corporate table or an individual non-reserved seat. Raffle tickets are available at the schools or from an ACLEA board member.

Please contact Molly at 402-278-1936 or Phyllis at 402-469-4038 for tickets, volunteering, or donating/sponsoring an item or the event. All of your support directly helps students grow in Christ through Lutheran Education here in Adams County!

Preview night is open to the public, light refreshments served, Friday, March 6th, from 6 pm to 8 pm. We will see you at the Adams County Fairgrounds, Hastings, in March!

Learn more about FIRE and ACLEA by watching the video at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fklbeK0Dfrk&feature=youtu.be>

Zion Apparel and Small Town Famous

Small Town famous is new official vendor for ZCA apparel and gear. You can find the new links on our website under parents → Zion Classical Academy Apparel, or visit <https://shopstf.com/collections/zion>



The next PTU meeting is February 4th at 6:30pm in the East Fellowship Hall

Reading and Writing at Zion Classical Academy

Building Strong Readers

In the early grades, students receive explicit instruction in phonics, decoding, spelling, and fluency to learn to read accurately and confidently. We believe students must first understand how reading works before they can fully enjoy and comprehend what they read. This structured approach supports all learners and helps prevent gaps as students progress. Zion Classical Academy also provides strong support for students who may struggle with reading, with a proven record of helping students grow toward expected grade-level performance.

Reading for Knowledge and Understanding

As students grow, they engage with carefully selected literature, history, science, and informational texts. These readings are rich, age-appropriate, and content-focused. Students build vocabulary and background knowledge while learning to read closely, ask good questions, and discuss ideas thoughtfully. Reading is not treated as an isolated skill, but as a way to grow in knowledge and understanding.

Writing Connected to Reading

In the early grades, students practice forming sentences, retelling stories, and responding to texts. As they mature, they learn to organize ideas into paragraphs and short compositions. Students write about real content drawn from literature and classroom study, helping them see writing as purposeful communication. Spelling, phonics, vocabulary, and high-frequency words are intentionally connected so students build strong and lasting reading and writing habits.

A Classical and Structured Progression

Our curriculum choices reflect a classical approach to education. Students move from imitation and guided practice to independent writing over time. Teachers provide clear models, structured instruction, and regular feedback. Grammar, spelling, and sentence structure are taught explicitly so students can write with clarity and confidence.

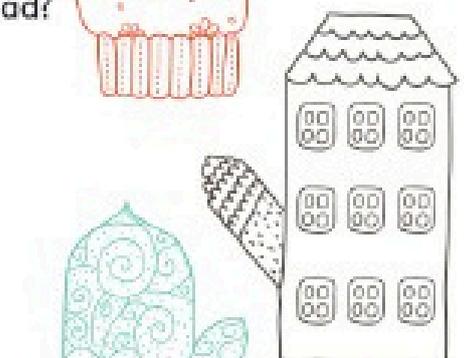
Curriculum Options Under Review

As part of our commitment to strong instruction, Zion Classical Academy has been carefully reviewing several high-quality reading and writing curriculum options. Each option reflects a different approach to supporting literacy development, and we are evaluating how well each aligns with our classical, Christian mission and the needs of our students.

- Memoria Press emphasizes a traditional, classical approach to literacy. It focuses on systematic phonics, grammar, spelling, and composition, helping students develop strong foundational skills and clear, structured writing.
- Great Minds offers a knowledge-rich approach through high-quality literature and informational texts. Using Wit and Wisdom resources, students build comprehension and vocabulary by engaging with meaningful content and shared texts.
- Houghton Mifflin Harcourt provides a comprehensive literacy framework that combines foundational skills, reading practice, and writing activities. Into Reading materials offer flexibility and a range of supports for different learners.

Celebrating the Month in Stories: A February Reading Challenge for Kids

- For Black History Month, read a Coretta Scott King Award-winning book. (Named for Martin Luther King Jr.'s wife, this award is given to the most distinguished children's and teen's books about the African American experience. You can find a list of all the winners since 1970 at ala.org.)
- Find a book that rhymes and read it aloud. Using a silly voice is encouraged.
- Reread a favorite picture book and write or draw a valentine to one of its characters.
- Celebrate Presidents' Day (the third Monday of February each year) by reading a book about a U.S. president.
- Close your eyes and run your hands along a shelf in the library. Choose any book at random and read it.
- Read the first book in a series you've never tried.
- Ask a Librarian: What's a book you fell in love with as a kid (or a kids' book you've read lately) that you think I should read?
- Read a book with a delicious food in the title.
- Read a book about an athlete. (If you're really into winter sports, tack on a book about one of your favorites!)
- Read a book under the covers. Any time of day will do, but we recommend using a flashlight!





FEB 2026

MON

TUE

WED

THU

FRI

02

03

04

05

06

Cooks Choice

Beef Tacos

Popcorn
Chicken

Potato Soup

Lasagna

09

10

11

12

13

Hamburgers

Cowboy Beans

Baked chicken

Turkey and
Noodles

Pizza Bake

16

17

18

19

20

Goulash

Chili

Chicken Strips

Potato Soup

Hamburgers

23

24

25

26

27

Pizza Bake

Beef Tacos

Popcorn
Chicken

Turkey and
Mashed
Potatoes

Hamburgers





FIRE

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Saturday March 7th,
2026

Adams County Fairgrounds

Doors open at 5pm- Dinner at 6:30pm

Join us for a night of
elegance and excitement!

Preview Night Friday March 6th 6-8pm

WWW.ACLEAFIRE.ORG