



CHURCH KEY

A NEWSLETTER THAT OPENS PEOPLE
TO THE MINISTRIES OF



ZION'S UNION
CHURCH MAXATAWNY

**329 Church Road
Kutztown, Pennsylvania
610-683-7485**

a Federated Church of
The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
and
The United Church of Christ

**February
2024**

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REMINDERS

- ◆ The cost for a vase of flowers is \$20.00 and the cost to be a bulletin sponsor is \$10.00. Payment may be given to Jane Warmkessel or put the money in an envelope with your name, date, and what you are paying for and place in the offering plate.
- ◆ Any checks written out for the offering, altar flowers, or bulletins should be made payable to **Zion's Union Church Maxatawny**.
- ◆ **Any checks for the cemetery should be made out to Maxatawny Zion Cemetery Company, Inc., not to the church.**
- ◆ We have DVDs of regular worship services available for use at home. Contact the church office if you would like to borrow one.
- ◆ Let the church office know if you have been admitted to the hospital. The hospitals **DO NOT** notify the church if members have been hospitalized.
- ◆ Zion's Union Church Maxatawny's website is www.zionsunion.org. Check out our website.
- ◆ Zion's has a prayer chain. If you would like to add a name to the Prayer Chain call Mary Laub at 610-248-2801.
- ◆ Sports cleats are not allowed in the church.
- ◆ Refreshments should be kept on the first floor of the church.

WELCOME PASTOR MELISSA

Please extend a loving Maxatawny Zion's WELCOME to Rev. Melissa Burkhart, our new Settled Pastor. Her first day in the pulpit will be February 4, 2024.

Pastor Melissa is a very gifted minister that will be an incredible blessing to Zion Maxatawny; and likewise, we hope that we can be that for her. Pastor Melissa is an ordained minister of the United Church of Christ with a Master of Divinity degree from Lancaster Theological Seminary. Growing up in Manheim, PA, she discovered a passion for youth and family ministry at an early age, which led her to earn a Certificate in Youth Ministry from the Lutheran Theological Seminary. Pastor Melissa previously served as an Associate Pastor for Youth and Family Ministry in a larger church about an hour away; and she brings that experience with her. Pastor Melissa is well versed in preaching, teaching, and mission work and she is an active participant in the Conference. She describes her leadership style as authentic, affirming and available.

Pastor Melissa will be relocating with her husband, Jon, and their dogs in the near future. We look forward to also welcoming their family to our church whenever they are available: son Joshua, and daughters Makayla and Emily, and Emily's husband Alex. Thanks be to God as we look forward to our spirit-filled ministry together!

FLOWER/BULLETIN

The Flower/Bulletin book for 2024 is available in the Gathering Area. Sign up for those special dates. You may also call the church to sign up or leave a message on the answering machine. The price to sponsor Altar Flowers will be \$20.00 per vase (\$40.00 for both vases.) The price to sponsor bulletins will be \$10.00 (\$20.00 to sponsor both.)



SERVICE VIDEOS

A video recording of our worship service will be uploaded to our church website (zionsunion.org) by early Sunday afternoon and can be viewed for the rest of the week. Prior services can be viewed on Youtube — type “Zion’s Union Church” into the Youtube search bar.

FEBRUARY AND MARCH WORSHIP

February 4	5 th Sunday after Epiphany HC	SS 9:00	church 10:15
February 11	Transfiguration	SS 9:00	church 10:15
February 14	Ash Wednesday		7:00 P.M.
February 18	1 st Sunday in Lent	SS 9:00	church 10:15
February 21	Mid-Week Lent		TBA
February 25	2 nd Sunday in Lent	SS 9:00	church 10:15
February 28	Mid-Week Lent		TBA
March 3	3 rd Sunday in Lent	SS 9:00	church 10:15
March 6	Mid-Week Lent		TBA
March 10	4 rd Sunday in Lent	SS 9:00	church 10:15
March 13	Mid-Week Lent		TBA
March 17	5 th Sunday in Lent	SS 9:00	church 10:15
March 20	Mid-Week Lent		TBA
March 24	Palm Passion Sunday	SS 9:00	church 10:15
March 28	Maundy Thursday HC		7:00 P.M.
March 29	Good Friday		7:00 P.M.
March 31	Easter Dawn Service HC		6:00 A.M.
March 31	Easter HC	SS 9:00	church 10:15

INCLEMENT WEATHER

Worship service/Sunday School/activities cancellation:
www.wfmz.com (click on “storm center update”) (**please note:**
 worship delays or closings will be listed on WFMZ website and
 not on Channel 69 except for extreme weekend weather
 conditions) or call the church office (610-683-7485). A
 message will be on the answering machine.



SIMPLY GIVING

In 2023, we received \$31,120 in Current and \$6,898 in Benevolence Offering through this automatic giving program. We currently have 18 congregational families enrolled. Anyone interested in joining this initiative may do so anytime throughout the year. Forms are on the Bulletin Board upstairs to be filled out and returned to Peggy Morgan.

ACOLYTES, READERS, USHERS, GREETERS, SHEPHERDS

Schedules for acolytes, readers, ushers, greeters, and shepherds are on the upstairs bulletin board. A schedule is also included in each newsletter.

AUDIT NOTICE TO ALL ORGANIZATIONS

Please remember: All organizations in the church should do an internal audit of their books by the end of March as stated in the Federated Constitution.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS

Church Board voted to elect the following officers for 2024: President – Greg Haas, Vice-President – Tim Haas, Secretary – Traci Gehringer, Co-Treasurers – Peggy Morgan and Sandra Leiby. Patty Haas is the Financial Secretary.

INGATHERING

On the first Sunday of each month the Mission Outreach Committee will continue to collect items to fill backpacks with food staples for needy children and their families in the area. Please participate by dropping off non-perishable items from the list below in the container provided in the Gathering Area.



single serve size macaroni and cheese
single serve size applesauce
single serve cereal
oatmeal packets

peanut butter
canned tuna
granola bars

fruit cups
canned soup
fruit snacks

SNACK AND CHAT

We will have lunch in small groups at restaurants in the area. Our Zion's shirts could identify us and hopefully generate interest in our church. The upcoming outing is **February 14th at Jaks**. Notify Nancy Fulton if you are able to join this fun time together.

ANNUAL REPORTS

The 2023 Annual Reports should be available the end of February or the beginning of March. The reports will be available at the church or call the church office and one can be mailed to you.



PLASTIC BAGS PROJECT

The group will meet from 10:00 A.M. to 12:00 P.M. **February 14th, February 28th, March 13th, and March 27th** to weave plastic bags into mats. All are encouraged to participate. Contact Tanya Schaedel at 484-705-5533 or Carol Leiby at 484-695-8318. Plastic bags may be brought to church and deposited in the box in the Gathering Area.

WOMEN IN ZION

A group of Christian women in service, mission, and study for the benefit of all.

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|-------------|--|
| February 12 | Meeting at 1:00 P.M. Wear Red! Tea Party, Games, Bring hygiene supplies. |
| March 11 | Meeting at 1:00 P.M. Meals on Wheels Craft, Bring clothes and accessories. |



*For more information contact Linda Ballew-Johnson
(484-553-1981)*

YOUTH GROUP

Youth Group updates are announced during the Sunday School opening and posted in the bulletin



SENIOR FELLOWSHIP GROUP

The Senior Fellowship Group will meet **February 26th and March 25th** at 12 noon. Persons attending should bring a bag lunch. Dessert and beverages will be provided. Games provide entertainment for the afternoon. Guests are always welcome.



PRAYER SHAWL



Comforting wraps are still available to all who are in need. Please alert the church office or Loretta Flicker if you or someone you know would benefit from this ministry.

CEMETERY CLEAN UP



ALL flower arrangements must be removed from the cemetery by the 3rd Saturday of March. The only exceptions will be the arrangements attached to the top of the tombstones. Cemetery clean-up will take place **March 16th** (weather permitting).



THANK YOU

Thank you to the board and congregation for the gift card. When I was asked to serve as the president, I had been looking for a volunteer opportunity. Working with friends and members of the congregation for the past two years has enriched my life and brought joy to be part of Zion's church family, as we embrace change and continue to grow spiritually. I feel blessed. Nancy

APPRECIATION TO STEVE

We appreciate Steve's ability and willingness to program the organ for the service on December 31, when he was unable to attend the worship. Thank you, Steve. Thanks to Lisa Krause for pushing the correct buttons. It was uplifting to realize the capabilities of our organ.

REJOICING SPIRITS WORSHIP SERVICE

Rejoicing Spirits of Eastern Berks County service is at 3:00 P.M. **the first Sunday of every month** at St. Paul's UCC, 47 S. Whiteoak Street, Kutztown. This no-shush worship enriches the lives of all people, especially those with disabilities. Rejoicing Spirits includes music and joyous singing, brief, meaningful messages and the chance to connect with others.

MYSTERY MEMBER

Note: The December Mystery Members were David and Tina Ehrig.

This person was born in Western NY in the 1970s. Her father passed away when she was very young. She grew up in a household with her mom and two siblings. Since mom had to work, she learned to cook by the time she was 8 years old and took care of most of the household chores including the laundry. In school, this person was active in many clubs including cheerleading, band, and chorus. At the age of 16, her mom's job was transferred to Allentown, so the family moved to Bowers, PA. She graduated high school from Kutztown Area High School, with the intent of attending Monmouth College to pursue a degree in psychology. Plans changed when her then boyfriend proposed, and they were soon married.

The couple married in 1995 and they lived in Norfolk, VA. Out of the first year of marriage, her husband was out to sea for 10 months. She became involved in the military wives' club, and you could say that is where she began her "career" in volunteering.

Despite her high school typing teacher telling her to "never take a job where you have to type", this person has had positions doing administrative work since she was 17, where she started as a receptionist at the Kutztown Manor. She worked several customer service and administrative positions throughout her career, she was at one company for 15 years and the company she currently works at for eight years.

She is still married to the same guy and has two young adult children. Funny story, when they got married, everyone kept asking her when she would have kids. She said to give them five years. Their first child was born two days before their 5th wedding anniversary.

She loves animals and currently has one dog and two cats. Her hobbies include volunteering, baking, and theatre.

She joined Zion's Union Maxatawny in 2000 and has been on several committees within the church. At one point she was a Sunday school teacher and President of the Sunday School. She ran the Strawberry and Ice Cream Festival (with help of course) for several years, has been on Church Board, in the church choir, Mutual Ministry, and on a Search and Call Committee. She loves this church and believes that it is an extension of her home and family.

OUR SYMPATHIES TO...

... the family of James Brett.
... the family of Benjamin Miller.

... the family of Sandra Hall.
... the family of Ann Wentzel.

MYSTERY VOLUNTEERS

Note: The December Mystery Volunteer was George Leiby.

Our mystery volunteer couple this issue is native to Berks County. She entered this world as a home delivery during a wicked blizzard. He was born in Reading Hospital, barely making it there on time for arrival. Both grew up with loving, hard working parents, active in the church. Vacations and family get togethers highlighted their respective childhood memories.

They met in college as chemistry study partners and became good friends, enjoying Outing Club and various school activities. Their first date was going to The Ground Round and seeing Ghostbusters in the Eric Theater. After graduation (hers-Millersville University, his-Juniata College and Thomas Jefferson University) they were married at Zion Maxatawny. They still live by Rev. Heckler's marriage counseling advice of not living high on the hog, keeping up with the Jones', or going to bed angry with one another.

She went on to initially work in plastics engineering while he started a career in physical therapy, subsequently completing his doctorate at Weidner University. They owned their own business for 30 years, recently retiring. They were blessed with 2 beautiful children and were very active in things their kids were involved with: sports, music, FFA, Scouting, Youth Group, etc. In their spare time, they restored a farmette, where they've resided during the last 20 years.

They have two working canines, one is a bird dog and one is being trained in Search & Rescue. He enjoys all kinds of hunting and she is an avid gardener, always relishing in their time spent outside. They both love to cook, cut wood, and travel.

During their time at church over the last decades, they have volunteered in groups such as: Sunday School Teachers and Officers, Choirs, Board, WIZ, Confirmation, and Early Communion Class Instruction, Youth Task Force, Audio/Visual Support, Seeders & Sow On; and on Committees of Safety, Good News, Personnel, Worship & Music, Mutual Ministry, Search, Strategic Planning, and Disaster Relief. They take time every day to be filled with joy and thanksgiving to God for His goodness.

FROM THE RECORD BOOK

FUNERAL: *Sandra I. Hall*, 66, of Blakeslee, PA, died January 2, 2024. A memorial service was held January 10, 2024 in Zion's Union Church Maxatawny, Kutztown, PA by Vicar Jeremiah Heydt.

PRAYER REQUESTS

We ask God's blessings upon those who are ill, recovering from surgery, homebound, or have asked for our prayers:

Tracey Lutz, Marilyn Quinter, Bonnie Haas, Bill & Karen Howard, Elaine & Paul Heffner, Irene Isamoyer, Loretta Flicker, Jamey Webb, Julia Mohn, Liz Jones, Owen Shorette, Walter & Doris Dietrich, John & Marlene Costello, Barry & Ann Miller, Marilyn & Bill Bird, Marian Stettler, Mary Kutz, Gladys Leibold, Donna Slotter, Randy Warmkessel, Karen Weaver, Donna VanDeCar, Sherry S., Joseph Karaisz Sr., Jeremy Crum, Jim, Chad, Chris, Laura G., Keith Egley, Mark Miller, Colid Hollin, Bruce Fritzingler, Sherri Gehringer, Vera, Leila, Linda Menges, John Laird, Paige Sechler, Ely, Ian Miller, Rosemary LaFratte, Mary Jane Schlenker, Owen Lamendola, Randy Schlegel, Joanne Pauley, Sarah Johnson, Victoria Slotter, Regen Zimmerman, Karen Ames, Elia, Donna Rabert, Tom Seifert, Rayann Roth, Chris Szarko, Lorraine Miller, Mary Fox, Valerie, Sue Zimmerman, Christy Ryan, Christopher Mercardo, Michele Rodriquez, Judy Redman, Frank Knight, Betty Houck, Mary, Betsy, family of James Brett, family of Sandra Hall, family of Benjamin Miller, family of Ann Wentzel.

If anyone can be removed from this list, please notify the church office.

If you know of other persons in need of prayer and you wish to have a name included on the list please email the church, call the church office, or leave a message on the answering machine. If you want a name included on Zion's Prayer Chain call Mary Laub at 610-248-2801.

MEAL PROGRAM

As we begin a new year, we are sending a reminder that there are 19 eager cooks waiting to help members of our congregation through our meal program. It is generally provided to help out families during an illness or after a procedure. We provide 3 meals per week for an average of a month. Meals are brought to the church by our volunteers and taken by the family after the Sunday service. Please contact Peggy Morgan if you are in need of our assistance.

To our current volunteers: If you are no longer able to participate in the program, please let Peggy know.

To future volunteers: if you would like to sign up to be part of our great crew, also let Peggy know.

CARD SHOWERS

We are listing those couples married 50 years or more and those people 70 years or older. If we are missing anyone, please call or email the church office.

February 4	Irene Stauffer
February 17	William Bird
February 19	Ted Silliman
February 19	Carol Bauman
February 20	Carol Kane
February 20	Jacqueline Ziegler
February 20	Elizabeth (Liz) Jones
February 21	Theresa Grim
February 22	Wilfred Radcliffe
March 9	John Costello
March 11	Donna VanDeCar
March 13	Guerin Nester
March 15	Jerry Schwenk
March 18	Doris Dietrich
March 19	Carl Flicker
March 20	Robert & Gladys Leibold (70 wed)
March 26	Marilyn Bird
March 27	Dorothy Moyer
March 27	David Herber
March 28	Sharon Weigle
March 31	Patricia Miller





MISSION STATEMENT

Energized by the Spirit! Humbled by Christ's Grace! Working for God's glory!

UPCOMING HOLY COMMUNION

You are invited by Jesus Christ to this awesome feast of the Children of God.



February 4	Pew Holy Communion
March 3	Altar Holy Communion
March 28	Table Holy Communion
March 31 (6 AM)	Pew Holy Communion
March 31 (10:15 AM)	Pew Holy Communion

MARCH NEWSLETTER DEADLINE

The next issue of the newsletter will come out the beginning March. If you have any information to be included in the March newsletter, please have it in the church office by **February 15th**.