



THE 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

**April
2016**

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REMINDERS

- ◆ The cost for a vase of flowers is \$18.00 and the cost to be a bulletin sponsor is \$8.00. Payment may be given to Jane Warmkessel or put the money in one of the flower/bulletin envelopes found in the back of the church 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 the worship services available for use at home. Contact the church office if you would like to borrow one.
- ◆ Don't forget to 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 new website.
- ◆ Zion's has a prayer chain. If you would like to add a name to the Prayer Chain call Marion Angstadt at 610-683-3918.

THE PASTOR'S PAGE



There's an old saying: "It's always the darkest just before the dawn." That was certainly true on the first Easter morning. Try to envision how dark Palestine was without electric lights. Try to imagine how dark the Garden of Gethsemane—Israel's ancient cemetery—was just before dawn that Sunday morning after Christ's crucifixion. But even darker than the night was the spiritual darkness in the hearts and minds of Jesus' disciples.

To fully appreciate the nature of the Easter faith we Christians proclaim in this Easter season, we must first be able to comprehend the awful reality of spiritual darkness—life without the light of Christ. We can only fully appreciate the joy of Easter if we have first understood the defeated spirit of the people who went to the tomb that Sunday morning 2,000 years ago. Until the risen Christ made himself known to them, their mood was one of darkest despair. The one in whom they had put all of their hope and trust had been arrested only three days earlier. He had been tried, convicted, tortured, and crucified. His mangled body had been laid in a cold, dark tomb, and a huge stone had been placed over the entrance and sealed with mortar by Roman soldiers. Jesus' disciples had come to believe that he was the Messiah, the King of Israel. In the last few weeks, Jesus had raised their hopes and expectations for the imminent arrival of the Kingdom of God. But now, with his crucifixion and burial, the light and hope that Jesus had given them had been snuffed out like a dimly burning wick.

And that is surely the way it is for all who do not have the hope of eternal life in their hearts. Without the knowledge of Christ's resurrection and his promise of new life for all believe in him, life must often feel dark and gloomy, especially when tragedy and despair come into our lives. Without the hope born of Jesus' resurrection, what looms ahead of us when life nears its end but utter darkness?

What a difference in our outlook on life and death our faith in Christ's resurrection can make! Thanks to Christ's resurrection, the grave has lost all of its darkness and dread; we need no longer be in despair in the face of death. For the light of Christ has illumined the dark shadows of every graveyard. For the disciples on that first Easter morning, and for all who believed their testimony, life would never be dark again. For Easter continues on. Christ has gone ahead of us through the grave and gateway of death and vanquished the darkness forever.

The Good News of Easter is that Jesus, who went ahead of us to the grave, continues to walk ahead of us every day of our lives illuminating our path. The women at the tomb were told by the angel that Jesus would go ahead of them to Galilee (Mathew 28). Galilee was their home, the home of all the

disciples. And perhaps the angel's statement is symbolic of how Christ is leading us all to our true spiritual home.

But then, we have a God who has always willingly gone ahead of us. When Moses led the people out of Egypt, the Lord went ahead of them into the darkness of the wilderness, as a pillar of fire by night. When the Israelites were struggling to establish a foothold in the Promised Land, the Ark of the Covenant—a symbol of God's presence in their midst—would always go ahead of them into battle. And when the women, filled with fear and dread came in the darkness to the tomb, God had already gone ahead of them and rolled away the stone.

God has gone ahead of us and led us every step of the way ever since the day of creation. And God, in Jesus Christ, willingly went ahead of us to the cross and grave. If God went ahead of us to face the pain, suffering, and death of the cross, then how can we ever doubt that God will not indeed go ahead of us wherever life leads? The Good News of Easter is that the light of Christ is always going ahead of us illuminating our darkness. The light of dawn on that first Easter morning has revealed to us that there is no place we can go, no limb we can crawl out on, where we won't find that God has already gone ahead of us and lit the way.

It *is* always darkest just before the dawn. But now the Son has risen, and for all who have faith in him, darkness is dispelled forever. The Good News of Easter continues on!

Wishing you a most blessed Easter season filled with light and joy,

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE VOLUNTEERS

Volunteers are needed to do the Children's Messages. A sign-up sheet is on the upstairs bulletin board. Please sign your name and include your email address so the scriptures for that Sunday can be sent to you. Thank you.

ANNUAL REPORTS



The 2015 Annual Reports are available in the back of the church or on the counter in the Gathering Area. If you are unable to get to the church to pick one up, please call the church office and one can be mailed to you.

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 Kutztown, Brandywine, and Fleetwood School Districts. 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	peanut butter	canned pasta
single serve size applesauce	canned tuna	canned soup
fruit cups	granola bars	fruit snacks

SOUP SUPPER THANK YOU

Again in Lent we had great Wednesday, pre-worship Soup Supper gatherings. Thanks to Loretta Flicker for setting up each week. Thanks to these folks for providing great soups: Loretta Flicker, Mary Laub, Tim Haas, Enos and Ashley Bleiler, Sheryl Wiltrout, Cindy O'Neil, Jane Warmkessel, Dorothy Moyer, Peggy Morgan, LaRee Fegely, Ruth Miller and Nikki, Bill and Karen Howard, Bill and Diana Gehman, Lori Arndt, and Ellie Merkel.



USED STUFF COLLECTION

The Youth Group is sponsoring a "used stuff collection". The last collection date is **April 2nd** from 8:00 A.M to 11:00 A.M. Items include men's, women's and children's usable/wearable clothing and shoes; accessories include purses, backpacks, briefcases, hats, belts, gloves, scarves.; household items made of fabric include linens, pillows, towels, rugs, drapes; toys include soft (stuffed animals) or hard (cars, action figures, dolls), bikes. **NO** books, DVD's, VCR tapes, CDs, appliances, furniture, baby items. Any questions, contact Richard Haas at 610-683-3910.

RELAY FOR LIFE BRUNCH

Zion's Relay for Life Team will hold a brunch immediately after the worship service on **April 10th** to raise funds for this year's event. Donations are \$7.00 for adults, \$4.00 for children ages 6-12, and children under age 6 eat free. Join us for breakfast items, lunch items, and yummy desserts! Everyone is welcome.



PICTORIAL DIRECTORIES

The new directories are being shipped on April 1st. Plans have been made to distribute the directories on **April 10th, 17th, and 24th** in the Gathering Area following the worship service. The committee continues to be grateful to the following groups for providing financial support to add additional activity pages emphasizing the ministries of Zion's: former Ladies Aid, Sunday School, and Dave's Cans for Kids. The cooperation of members to schedule photos was also appreciated. The committee for this project included Pastor Jeff, Ray Schell, Grace Haas, Ellie Merkel, Jackie Ziegler, LaRee Fegely, Karen Warmkessel, Ray Wiltrout, and Nancy Fulton.

SEEDERS AND SOW ON – BUS TRIP

The Seeders and Sow On group is sponsoring a bus trip to Longwood Gardens on Wednesday, **April 20, 2016**. The landscape there will be BURSTING with colors as vibrant tulips, daffodils, wisteria, and flowering trees herald spring's blessed arrival. The beauty is absolutely inspiring and breathtaking. A chartered bus will depart Zion's parking lot at 9:00 A.M., and departure from Longwood will be at 3:30 P.M. The cost per ticket for admission and bus transportation is \$46. You are welcome to bring a bagged lunch or eat in Longwood's cafeteria (their mushroom soup is renowned!). Please plan to join us for this fun day celebrating God's goodness. It is a rain or shine event, and tickets are non-refundable. Contact Lisa Krause (lkrausewbpt@gmail.com/610.488.0289) or Sherie Mohn (smohn@ptd.net/610.683.8391) for tickets.

BABY SHOWER

The WIZ (Women in Zion) invite all women to join us for our second Baby Shower to benefit the residents of Mary's Shelter on **April 30th** from 9:00 A.M. to 11:00 A.M. If you would like, you can bring a small baby gift or mother item to donate to this great cause to help young mothers at the shelter. We will have food and games to celebrate the event. Questions, contact Loretta Flicker.

BLOOD DRIVE

The Blood Mobile will be at Zion's on **May 3rd** from 3:30 P.M. to 7:00 P.M. A sign-up sheet is on the bulletin board on the second floor by the stairs for people interested in donating blood.



MUSIC SUNDAY



Theresa is looking for soloists, groups, and instruments to help with Music Sunday on **May 8th**. All information must be given to Theresa by **April 24th**.

RELAY FOR LIFE 2015, JUNE 3RD AND 4TH AT KUTZTOWN UNIVERSITY

Relay for Life, sponsored by the American Cancer Society, is about celebrating survivorship, remembering those we've lost, and bringing awareness to our community. Held over a twenty-four hour period, the Relay for Life involves teams of 10-15 people, asked to raise \$100 each for the American Cancer Society, who take turns walking, running, strolling around the track. Relay for Life will begin on Friday, June 3rd, at 3:00 P.M. Anyone interested in being a part of the team please see Sue Haas or Enos Bleiler for a registration packet. Zion's Union Church Maxatawny has been a part of Kutztown's Relay for Life since 1996. We hope you can join us as a participant or just come out to cheer us on.



HIGHER EDUCATION FUND

As part of the Siegfried Bequest, a higher education fund has been established to offer interest-free loans of up to \$1000.00 (based on the number of applicants and availability of funds) for a maximum of 4 years per student to those members of Zion's Union Church Maxatawny enrolled in a higher education program. A student loan application has been developed by the loan committee (Nancy Fulton and Grace Haas) and can be obtained from one of them or in the church office. Deadline is **June 15th**.



STRAWBERRY & ICE CREAM FESTIVAL

It isn't too soon to think about the annual Strawberry and Ice Cream Festival. Please note that this year's festival will be held **June 10th** from 6 to 9 P.M. If you would like to help with the festival see Traci Gehringer or contact her at 610-944-1818.



VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL

Vacation Bible School is scheduled for the week of **June 20th through June 24th**. The closing program will be **June 26th**. If you are interested in helping, please see Tara Berger. **PLEASE NOTE: all VBS volunteers 18 and older MUST have current Criminal and Child Abuse clearances done in order to help with VBS. Obtaining clearances takes some time so don't wait until the last minute to volunteer.** Contact Tara Berger or the church office with any questions.



CHURCH BOARD

February 23, 2016

- It is time for the annual audits for all organizations with a treasury. Audit forms will be distributed shortly.
- Board approval for Property Committee to proceed with energy audit proposals.
- Board approval for Rexine Krause and Helen Schellenberger as assistant organists.
- A new welcome brochure was presented by the Good News Committee and approved by the Board.
- Rough electrical work in the basement was approved by the Township so we can begin installing drywall.
- Strategic Planning presented the top priorities in five focus areas with the Board individually selecting three they feel are most important. Strategic Planning will review results and advise at a future meeting.
- Sunday School Christmas Pageant is scheduled for December 11, 2016.

SCRABBLE

Scrabble will meet the third Monday of the month at 1:30 P.M. in the social area near Sylvia's apartment at The Lutheran Home at Topton. Nancy Fulton if you are interested.

PRAYER SHAWL



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

WOMEN IN ZION

April 11
April 30
May 9

Tea Party at 1:30 P.M.
Baby Shower, 9:00 – 11:00 A.M.
Making tray favors at 1:30 P.M.



YOUTH GROUP NEWS

Youth in grades 5 through high school are welcome to join.

Activity Schedule:

April 2 Used stuff collection from 8:00 to 11:00 A.M.
April 3 Sanctuary at Haafsville, 1:30 P.M.
April 17 Pioneer Coal Mine – Ashland
May 1 Discussion/games, 1:30 – 3:00 P.M.
May 15 Bike hike, place to be announced



Offering Schedule:

April 3 Zachary Schell and Ashley Bleiler
April 10 Sarah Grim and Ryan Korutz
April 17 Carson Sheetz and Jarrett Mohn
April 24 **Volunteer Needed** and Ashley DeLong
May 1 Lauren DeLong and Madison Sheetz
May 8 Andrew Haas and Maisy Kellum
May 15 Emma Heffner and MacKenzie Sheetz
May 22 Julia Perella and Ashley Korutz
May 29 Hannah Walker and Owen Shorette

SENIOR FELLOWSHIP GROUP

The Senior Fellowship Group will meet **April 25th and May 23rd** at 12 noon. Persons attending should bring a bag lunch. Dessert and beverages will be provided. Games will provide entertainment for the afternoon. Guests are welcome.



ZUMBA CLASSES

Zumba classes are Sunday evenings at 6:00 P.M. Zumba classes will also be held Wednesday mornings at 11:00 A.M. Wear clothes you can move in, sneakers, bring a towel, and water, and lots of energy! The goal is to have fun and be more active.

ZION'S MEN'S GROUP

The next Men's Group meeting will be held **April 5th and May 3rd** at 7:00 P.M. at Ron's house.



MYSTERY YOUTH

Allison Witman, daughter of Bill and Sharon Witman was our mystery person last month. It is always a pleasure to have her in our midst. Now here is another talented young person although we do not get see him often enough.

He was born in Reading in 1981 and spent his early years in Berks County. He worked in a restaurant for nine years until graduating from college. He is a Hamburg Area High graduate. His Bachelor's Degree from Alvernia College is in Information Systems and his Master's Degree is in the same subject from the University of Phoenix.

When in high school he enjoyed playing baseball, basketball, and soccer. He also enjoys football as a spectator. He is an avid runner, averaging 12 miles daily. His hobbies include exercise, the beach, and any outdoor activity. He has one sibling and a niece and a nephew.

The Youth Group was an important part of his church life both as a member and later as a junior advisor. He was able to attend four youth gatherings. When he is in the country he is always available to help out. He has spent most of the last ten years working overseas, having been in unique places like Ethiopia, Sudan, Thailand, Afghanistan, and Iraq.

It is difficult to disguise the accomplishments of this young man but it is important to recognize our young members. We feel pride in all of them.

FROM THE MAILBOX

We want to thank everyone for their prayers, visits, cards, and concerns when Bill had his back operation. We are so happy to belong to such a wonderful family as Zion's.

Bill and Marilyn Bird



Thank you for all the cards, calls, concerns, and prayers during my recovery. .

Love,
Gloria Haas

DID YOU KNOW?

- Arden Scaffidi received 2nd place in the Daisy Rope Runner Competition.
- Some high school members from Zion's participated in the MiniTHON held at Kutztown High School.

MEMBER UPDATE

610-682-3940

Warmkessel, Alex M.

19 Shady Creek Ln., Mertztown, PA 19539

LARGE PRINT BULLETINS AND VALET PARKING

A discussion about the possible need for large print bulletins and valet parking was brought up at a recent Senior Ministry Committee meeting. We would like to find out if there is a need for either of these items before any action is taken. If anyone would like large print bulletins or interested in using valet parking please contact the church office or Nancy Fulton.

90TH BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS

The Senior Ministry Committee, with approval from the Church Board, will begin celebrating the 90th birthday of members by recognizing them during the worship service and providing cake in the Gathering Area after the service.

MATCHING FUNDS

The church is working on finishing of the rooms in the basement. WELCA has contributed \$20,000 to this project and we are looking for matching funds to finish the project. Any contributions should be given to Sharon Leiby.

THE KUTZTOWN KITCHEN

The third Sunday of each month from 4:00 to 6:00 P.M. a Community Meal is held at Trinity Lutheran Church, 357 W. Main St., Kutztown. All are invited. There is no cost. Parking is in the rear of the church on Sacony Alley. Menu: TBA.

PRAISE BAND

On Sunday, **April 10th** at 4:00 P.M., the Praise Band from Trinity Lutheran Church (ELCA) Valley View, PA will visit Huff Union Church, 540 Conrad Rd., Alburtis, PA. (upstairs in the Huff Church chapel). Rev. Brian Beissel will lead the 6 person Praise Band and conduct the service which will include Holy Communion. A free will offering will be received as a gift to Trinity Lutheran Church. For more information, contact Tom Mitchell at 610-845-2978.

POTATO PROJECT

We need your help cutting 17,500 pounds of seed potatoes for the Spring planting. The Potato Seed Cutting Sessions are scheduled on Saturday, **April 16th** and Sunday, **April 17th** from 1:00 P.M. to 4:00 P.M. at the Shoolhaus at Zion Moselem EL Church, 340 Zion Church Rd., Kutztown. This is a rain or shine event, inside and outside if weather permits. **Bring your own knife, cutting board, drinks, and snacks. Come 1, or come as a group, stay an hour, stay the afternoon, any and all time given to the project truly appreciated.** Check the web site (<http://IHartHarvest.dyndns.org>) if needed.

JOURNEYS THROUGH GRIEF

Are you grieving the loss of a loved one and need support in dealing with the grief? Journeys Through Grief support groups will be held on Monday mornings, **April 4th through May 9th** from 10:30 A.M. to 12:00 P.M. at Luther Crest, Fuellenbach Room, 800 Hausman Road, Allentown and Tuesday evenings, **April 5th through May 10th** from 7:00 to 8:30 P.M. at Emmaus Moravian Church, 146 Main St., Emmaus. There is no charge, but registration is required. Forms are available in the church office.

SPIRIT ON TAP – READING

Spirit on Tap will be held **April 26th and May 24th** at 7:00 P.M. at the Reading Crowne Plaza Hotel in the Goodnites Lounge, 1741 Papermill Road, Reading.

On April 26th, Dr. Mark Rader will present “Future of American Health Care”. On May 24th, Dale G. Derr, Berks County Director of Veterans Affairs, will present “Serving Those Who Served”.

Contact Dr. Harry L. Serio at 610-944-7032, HLSerio@aol.com or Dr. Robert Stewart at 610-775-2836, rastheo1951@msn.com for more information.

REMINDERS!!!

**After church refreshments should be kept on the lower level of the church.
Sports cleats are not allowed in the church.**

PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

The Personnel Committee is looking for two new members. Please contact Liz Jones (484-788-8062) if you are interested on being on this committee.

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 the church office.

April 1	Betty Mertz
April 4	Richard Jacoby
April 6	Jeremiah Heffner
April 10	Gladys Leibold
April 11	Irene Boyer
April 17	Ralph & Helen Noll, Sr. (62 wed)
April 18	Joseph Zajac
April 19	George & Irene Isamoyer (58 wed)
April 24	Marion Angstadt
April 27	Robert Leibold
April 27	Elmer Hensing
May 1	Arlan Berger
May 3	Clark & Nancy Held (52 wed)
May 11	Eleanor Nester
May 13	Clark Held
May 13	Terry Bennecoff
May 20	Richard & Shirley Derr (55 wed)
May 24	Lennia Mertz
May 24	Harlow Bailey
May 28	Jean Bailey
May 29	Ron Fulton
May 30	Charles & Lennia Mertz (63 wed)
May 31	Irvin Miller



OUR SYMPATHIES TO...

... the family of Linda Henninger.

OPT-OUT FORM

The Church Board has approved a new Welcome Brochure which will be made available to new church members and visitors to our church. It does include some small photographs of church activities that include some of our youth. None are identified by name. The brochure will not be available on the church's website or any other social media. If you do not want their child's photo on the Welcome Brochure, obtain and complete the Opt-out form from the church office or our website and return it to the church office.



MISSION STATEMENT

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

UPCOMING HOLY COMMUNIONS

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

April 3

Altar Holy Communion

May 1

Pew Holy Communion

May 15

Pew Holy Communion



MAY NEWSLETTER DEADLINE

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