

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
2021**

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Reminders	page 1
The Pastor's Page	pages 2, 3
Scam Alert	page 3
April and May Worship, Prayer Requests	page 4
Worship Service Readers, Greeters, Security, Ushers, Holy Week and Easter	page 5
Service Videos, Flower/Bulletin Book, Grand Ole Lady, Cookbook	page 6
Annual Reports, Food Drive, Ingathering	page 7
Opportunity House, Blood Drive, Women In Zion	page 8
Scrabble, Cancer Support, Senior Fellowship	page 8
Prayer Shawl, Church Board, Did You Know, Member Updates	page 9
From The Mailbox, German and English Book, Unwanted Items	page 10
Wine, Women, & Shoes, Mission Moment	page 11
Synod News	page 12, 13
Card Showers, Record Book, Our Sympathies To, Honor Roll	page 14
Mission Statement, Holy Communions, Newsletter Deadline	page 15
April Calendar, Board and Staff, Mission Moment	Yellow Insert

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 an envelope with your name, date, and what you are paying for and place in the offering plate in the rear of the church. The sign-up book and envelopes are currently in the church office. Contact the church office to access them.
- ◆ 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 Marion Angstadt at 610-683-3918.
- ◆ Sports cleats are not allowed in the church.
- ◆ Refreshments should be kept on the first floor of the church.

THE PASTOR'S PAGE



Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you." — John 20:19

On the evening of the resurrection, a small group of Jesus' disciples are huddled together behind locked doors (John 20:19-23). The few remaining disciples are very low in spirit. It is the end of a horrendous weekend in which they saw Jesus, the one they believed to be the Messiah, horribly tortured to death on a cross. It was night, they feared for their own lives, and they were despondent and scared. And something we don't often stop to consider is that there may have been a lot of blaming and finger pointing going on amongst the disciples, and a lot of shared guilt.

Imagine how Peter felt after all his grand declarations of fidelity and courage. What did those blustery words come to when the going got rough? Three times he denied knowing Jesus. But it wasn't just Peter. Except for the women, the disciples all forsook Jesus and fled. It wasn't only despised Judas who betrayed Jesus; they all had with their fear and cowardice. And yet here is the amazing thing that happened: It was to this pitiful, scared band of failures that the risen Christ appeared. He came through their locked doors and rejoined the very ones who had forsaken him. And what was the first thing Jesus said to them? "Peace be with you."

They couldn't believe it! Their fear, their blaming, and their guilt suddenly turned to great joy. And note the first thing the risen Christ said to them: "Peace be with you." In other words, the first thing he said to them was, "Don't be afraid, I forgive you."

Imagine how those words of forgiveness were received by the disciples. What if the first words Jesus spoke had been, "Where were all of you people? All that I did for you, and look what you did when I needed you most!" That's what Jesus might rightly have said. "You call yourselves disciples? I had a fairly good view from where I was, hoisted up on the cross to die. And I looked out into the crowds and I didn't see any of you! Where were you in my time of need?"

There was plenty of blame to go around. They were all betrayers. They had all failed Jesus. And yet these were the ones to whom Jesus returned. And John's Gospel tells us that the first thing Jesus said to them was, "Peace be with you." He immediately stilled their dread of what he might say or do to them and offered them full forgiveness.

And the disciples likely needed to forgive each other. Can you imagine all the blaming that was going on among them? If you have ever been a member of a church that was in trouble, a church in decline and fighting for its life, then

you will know how easy it is to blame one another for the church's problems. And it was to these disciples who formed the first church, who were caught up in despair, guilt, and finger pointing, that Jesus pronounced peace. Their broken relationship with Jesus was restored by Jesus' act of loving forgiveness.

Of course, forgiveness was at the heart of Jesus' ministry. Think of all those times in the Gospels where Jesus walks up to someone, and one of the first things he says is, "Your sins are forgiven." And here's the lesson for us: Jesus commanded us to be forgivers as well. Jesus told us that we are to forgive our enemies, even those who have done us serious wrong. I believe that Jesus wants us to forgive as individuals, as well as a nation, those who have attacked us and done us harm. That is something all self-proclaimed Christians in America today need to really take to heart at a time when our nation is severely divided and a lot of finger pointing is going on among us.

When Jesus taught the Lord's Prayer, he did not encourage us to bring all of our aches and pains and needs before God. Rather, he taught us to pray for forgiveness and to ask for the ability to forgive those who sin against us. As he hung on the cross, Jesus looked down upon us all and said, "Father, forgive them." And Jesus' first action after his resurrection is to return to his disciples and forgive them. Forgiveness appears to be the very nature of God. If you are going to try to be a disciple of Jesus, if you are going to try to be faithful and obedient in following him, then you better become accustomed to both offering and receiving a lot of forgiveness.

The good news for all of us in this Easter season is that even with all our failures, all of our guilt and blaming, we have a God who not only came back to life on Easter in a glorious resurrection, but who also comes back to his betrayers and forgives us. Therefore, we can go on. We can go on living and go forward in faith. We can follow Jesus because he will not let us be trapped by our failures. Every step of the way, with each faltering, stumbling step we take as disciples, Jesus forgives us. That is the Good News. That is the great message of Easter. Christ is risen and we are forgiven!

Pastor Jeff

SCAM ALERT

Some of our members have received emails or text messages asking for gift cards that appear to have come from Pastor Butz. **THESE ARE SCAMS.** If anyone is victim to one of these scams call your local police and report it.

**PLEASE UNDERSTAND THAT SOME OF THE EVENTS IN
THIS NEWSLETTER MAY NOT HAPPEN DUE TO THE
CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC.**

APRIL AND MAY WORSHIP

April 1	Maundy Thursday	no service
April 2	Good Friday	pre-recorded service online
April 4	Easter Dawn HC (reservations needed)	6.00 A.M.
April 4	Easter Service HC (reservations needed)	church 10:15
April 11	Second Sunday of Easter	church 10:15
April 18	Third Sunday of Easter	church 10:15
April 25	Fourth Sunday of Easter	church 10:15
May 2	Fifth Sunday of Easter	church 10:15
May 9	Sixth Sunday of Easter	church 10:15
May 16	Seventh Sunday of Easter	church 10:15
May 23	Pentecost Sunday	church 10:15
May 30	Trinity Sunday	church 10:15

PRAYER REQUESTS

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

Althea Moyer, Janet Geiger, Pat Miller, Beatrice Bennecoff, Carolyn Wiltrout, Tracey Lutz, Dave Merkel, Marian Stettler, Lisa Walker, Loretta Flicker, Marlene Costello, Barry Miller, Kay Weidner, Bill Howard, Nikki Phillips, Joe Karaisz, Janet Fegely, Anna Bortz, Lucille Zettlemoyer, Gloria Haas, Richard Warmkessel, Steve O'Neil, Ralph & Helen Noll, Mary Kutz, Marilyn & Bill Bird, Lowell Thomas, Karen Weaver, Sylvia Heckler, Gladys Leibold, Donna Slotter, Leora Haas, Donna VanDeCar, Mary Jane Williams, Elaine Seaman, Mr. & Mrs. Kermit Kemp, Beverly Keller, Brandon Hamm, Karen Ames, Taylor Moyer, Betty Wiltrout, Joyce Kemp, Ian Miller, Tom Seifert, Elia, Victoria Slotter, Donna Rabert, Deb, Lisa Szarko, Arthur Sell, Niki Nolte, Jamie Jordan, Christopher Mercardo, Jo Corrado, Rayann Roth, Michele Rodriguez, Sue Zimmerman, Renee Wolfe, Kim Markham, Valerie, Drew & Mary Jane Stump, Caitlin Dickey, Frank Knight, Christy Ryan, Lorraine Miller, Judy Redman, Betty Houck, Mary Fox, Larry Hockman, Mary, Betsy, Gary Deder, Gary Sell, Russell Peden, family of Cindy Nowotarski.

WORSHIP SERVICE READERS

If anyone scheduled to read does not want to read that is fine just let the church office know. The church office will check with you before the actual date to make sure you still want to read.

April 4 (6 AM)	Tim Haas
April 4 (10:15 AM)	Mary Laub
April 11	Linda Ballew-Johnson
April 18	Lisa Krause
April 25	Renee Perella
May 2	Andrew Haas
May 9	Diane Herber
May 16	Richard Haas
May 23	Mandy Graff
May 30	Amanda Shorette

It is time to make a new readers schedule. If you have read in the past and would like to be removed from the schedule or you have not been on the schedule and would like to read, please email the church office.

GREETERS, SECURITY, USHERS

We will not be using the scheduled greeters, security persons, or ushers until further notice. The Re-opening Task Force and Church Board members will continue to do these jobs until we can safely start using other volunteers.

HOLY WEEK AND EASTER SERVICES

Maundy Thursday Service	– No service.
Good Friday Service	– Service will be pre-recorded and available online.
Easter Dawn Service	– In person, April 4th at 6:00 A.M. Holy Communion
Easter Service	– In person, April 4th at 10:15 A.M. Holy Communion



Reservations are required for the Easter Day services. Between 80 and 90 reservations will be accepted. Email the church office or call the church office to make your reservations.

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.

FLOWER/BULLETIN BOOK

The 2021 Flower and Bulletin sponsor book is available. Call the church office to sign up for your special dates in 2021. Please do not pay for your flowers or bulletins until that specific date. It will be easier to keep track of in case the church would need to close down again. Thank you for your understanding.



HELP RESTORE OUR “GRAND OLD LADY”

If you are able, prayerfully consider making a contribution to help pay for the major renovation of our historic Möller pipe organ. Purchased by our forefathers in 1928 (during the Great Depression) at a cost of \$6,000 (almost a million dollars today!), this “grand old lady” celebrated her 92nd birthday in May. She has served us faithfully, but is now having “breathing difficulties” caused by the aging of her wood, leather, and electronic parts. Help us give her a much-needed transplant of her worn-out parts so she can continue to help us lift up our voices in worship and praise for the next century. Envelopes are available in the rear of the church or use the envelope included in the January newsletter or yearly statement or any other envelope. Make any checks out to “Zion’s Union Church Maxatawny”. Put “organ fund” on the memo line. You can place the envelopes in the offering basket in the rear of the church or mail them to the church.

THE LONG-AWAITED COOKBOOK

The Women In Zion cookbook is available to purchase. Cost of the cookbook is \$12.00. Checks should be made out to “Women In Zion”. Contact Nancy Fulton at 610-682-6357 if you are interested in purchasing a cookbook.



ANNUAL REPORTS

The 2020 Annual Report is now available at the church. If you can't get to church to pick one up, call the church office and one can be mailed to you. Reports have been placed in the mail slots in the Gathering Area for committees, groups, and Church Board to pick up. Please check your mailboxes.



FOOD DRIVE

There are still many families in our area struggling so the Church Board has decided to once again have a Lenten food drive to benefit Friend, Inc. Collection of items will run from **until April 4th**. There will be a collection bin outside the main doors **Monday thru Friday from 10:00 A.M. to 3:00 P.M.** **They will not be left out overnight or put out when the weather is bad. The container will be available Sunday mornings in the Gathering Area.** Any donated items are appreciated but there is a dire need for canned fruits, vegetables, and meats. We will not be setting a goal this year but items will be counted and the congregation will be kept up to date on how the drive is going. Another way to help is through monetary donations – checks can be made out to the church and designated for “Food Drive” in the subject line. Let's do what we can to help our neighbors in need.



INGATHERING

On the first Sunday of each month the Mission Outreach Committee will continue to collect items to fill bags with food staples for needy children and their families. Thanks so much for your continued support of this important community outreach project. **DO NOT DELIVER items to the church. Deliver donations to Cindy O'Neil's home at 250 Church Road, Kutztown.**



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

OPPORTUNITY HOUSE

The Mission Outreach Committee will be supplying the evening meal at Opportunity House on **April 7th**. Volunteers are needed to prepare the meal. Donations of meatloaf, mashed potatoes, and fresh fruit are needed. Donations can be dropped off at Cindy's house by **April 7th at 9:30 A.M.** Anyone wanting to donate something can contact Cindy O'Neil at 610-683-5412.

BLOOD DRIVE

The Blood Mobile will be at Zion's on **Thursday, May 20th** from 3:30 P.M. to 7:00 P.M. Sign up online at giveapint.org (Group ID: 3303).



WOMEN IN ZION

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

NO MEETINGS UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE.

*For more information contact Linda Ballew-Johnson
(484-553-1981) or Loretta Flicker (610-683-3627).*



SCRABBLE

Scrabble has been cancelled until further notice.

CANCER SUPPORT GROUP

The Cancer Support Group **WILL NOT MEET** until further notice.

SENIOR FELLOWSHIP GROUP

There are no plans for the Senior Fellowship Group to meet.

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.

CHURCH BOARD MEETING

February 23, 2021

- Scams – Two Board members received scam text message requests attributed to Pastor asking if they would purchase something for the church. Both members contacted Pastor before acting on the request and were not fooled. The Church Key will contain a warning to the congregation to watch out for scams. Be vigilant.
- Organ update – Theresa Grim informed us the whole top keyboard of the organ is no longer responding. Emery Brothers plan on starting the restoration after Easter. The earliest start date is April 6th and the latest is April 12th.
- Finance – The financial books were audited and are fine.
- Sunday School – No tentative start date until the church actually reopens.

DID YOU KNOW?

- Andrew Haas won 1st place in Spreadsheet Applications at the virtual Regional Leadership Conference.

FROM THE MAILBOX

Dear Friends and Family of Zion,

We would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone for their thoughts, prayers, and homemade meals as we deal with the loss of a son, husband, father, friend, and grandfather: Edward VanDeCar. Your support was most appreciated. We take our Zion family for granted. It is moments like this that we are reminded how special the Zion family is.



Betty Dietrich
Donna VanDeCar
Jen, Ted, Archer, & Arden Scaffidi
Jamie & Erica Adams

BILINGUAL PA GERMAN AND ENGLISH BOOK

Mary Laub published another bilingual book, *Uff der Bauerei: Der Bsuch* (On the Farm: The Visit) which is the 4th in the Uff der Bauerei series. This story continues with Henny, die Katz (the cat) and Spunky, der Hund (the dog). In this story, children visit on the farm and create challenges. What happens? Find out how Henny and Spunky help. And Spunky's favorite dog biscuit recipe is even included in the book! To facilitate learning the Pennsylvania German language, Book 4 has an expanded Glossary with page numbers to easily locate words within the story. Like in previous books, the story is written in PA German with a phonetic spelling and an English translation underneath. An illustration matches the text and there is an audio recording of the story which can be downloaded for free or a CD can be purchased separately. Books can be purchased locally at Dietrich's Meats (they also sell the CDs), Leid's Saddlery, Wooden Bridge Dry Goods, and Burkholder's Farm Market on Topton Road. Books and CDs can be purchased online at Amazon.com and Masthof.com or from Mary. Books are \$10 and CDs are \$5. You can contact Mary at 610-248-2801 or jmlaub@aol.com.

UNWANTED ITEMS

There is a container marked "Opportunity House" at St. Paul's Lutheran Church in Mertztown (near Radcliffe's) where you can donate goods. Lisa Walker will **no longer** take items to Opportunity House.

WINE, WOMEN, & SHOES

Tickets for Wine, Women, & Shoes, benefiting Opportunity House, are on sale for the event on **Thursday, June 17, 2021** from 5:00 to 8:00 P.M. at PPC Excursions Hangar at the Reading Airport. For more information visit www.winewomenandshoes.com/opphouse.

MISSION MOMENT

Now What?

The resurrection story is the story of a journey from death to life - not only for Jesus the Christ but also for those who loved and followed him.

Jesus' friend Mary is the first to the tomb, along with some other women disciples. She arrives at the tomb uncertain, and in the telling from the Gospel of Mark, leaves that place "trembling and bewildered." At first, the Gospel says, they said "nothing to anyone, for they were afraid." And yet the story must have leaked out, because we tell it again today. The story moved from the tomb of confused silence to the resurrection light of confident proclamation.

We also often find ourselves trembling and bewildered, silent and afraid. How can we move from the speechlessness of fear to the joyful speech of the good news? Maybe following Mary to the tomb can give us some ideas about how to take the journey ourselves from death to life. Like Mary and her friends, we can meet grief face to face, and to take the risks that challenge us in that encounter.

Mary was willing to meet grief face-to-face. Personally, she had witnessed the brutal torture and murder of her teacher, healer and friend. By tending to the tomb of her loved one, Mary was enacting one of the rituals of grief. At first, it might cause more sadness, but she had the wisdom to know that pausing to grieve was an important step on transformation's path. How awful it must have been to face that terrible grief. But the good news is that no matter the grief, joy will come in the morning.

In her grief, Mary was also willing to take a risk. How scary it must have been for Mary and the other women to be there in the garden, before first light had come. There is so much that tells us to be afraid. But the good news is that the new life that Christ promises is greater than any fear.

SYNOD NEWS

NORTHEASTERN PENNSYLVANIA SYNOD, ELCA

Growing Young & Vital: June 4&5, 2021

Registration for the 2021 Virtual Synod Assembly will run from the beginning of April through May 17, 2021. Our theme for this year is "Growing Young and Vital," which engages three different lanes: loving the land, healing the hurt, and engaging the stranger. We are a church in three expressions, Churchwide, synods, and congregations. In each expression of the church we seek to find joy and vitality in ministry with people of all ages.

This year we'll welcome Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton to participate in the installation of our Bishop, Christopher deForest! We'll also elect members of our synod to attend the Churchwide Assembly (CWA) as voting members in 2022.

Along with electing voting members to the CWA, we will be engaging important issues



"So then if any person is in Christ, that person is part of the new creation. The old things are gone away, and look, new things have arrived".

2 Corinth. 5:17, CEB

New Life and Vital Signs

We are resurrection people living in the hope and promise of eternal life in Christ. For us as Christ's followers, new life follows death, and there are signs of new life everywhere!

Sometimes, it feels as if we have been in a place between sleep and waking for these past twelve months, but new life is happening! If last spring was a time when we experienced more closely than ever the kind of fear and sadness the disciples may have felt at the death of Jesus, this year, while there is still much grief and weariness of these difficult days, we are also experiencing the newness of life, in powerful ways, as we head toward the empty tomb and lives of liberation, aliveness, and joy of the resurrection!

Some of the most moving moments of new life for me in recent weeks has been visiting people in local nursing homes for the first time since last year. It was wonderful to be physically present and spending time with God's people.

There is much energy and new life at **Christ Lutheran**

and topics, attending to the business of our synod as outlined in the constitution, and participating together in festival worship.

While we talk about, wonder about, and carry out our theme: Growing Young and Vital, we'll be setting the stage for asking congregations and ministries throughout our synod to identify their vital signs and places they're healing the hurt, engaging the stranger, and loving the land!



Growing Young & Vital
Northeastern PA Synod

BISHOP INSTALLATION

You're invited to worship with us as we install our Bishop, Christopher deForest. This will take place after the synod assembly. Whether you attend the synod assembly or not, you're invited to participate fully in the Installation Worship! We will broadcast the installation worship live for all to participate and witness this truly joyous occasion. More information will follow letting you know how to connect to the worship and specific start time. Please plan to attend as we connect all three expressions of the church!

Conyngham, and it feels exciting, like when the beautiful spring flowers pop out of the thawing ground in spring. Some of the new and renewed life, includes getting started with **Growing Young**, and having our first get together this week to dive into the book and the six essential strategies so that we might continue to engage people of all ages in the life of the church. We hope to create excitement and vitality for people of every age on the disciple's path engage in leadership, and God's ministries in action. For Easter there are various exciting things happening... Among them, Christ Lutheran will have its first Outdoor Sunrise Easter Service, and stations of the cross set up in the outdoor areas. We've invited people from the congregation and community to pick up a devotional, and take a self-guided prayer walk any day during Holy Week. **We are also re-establishing a congregational care team** and adding some new ways for folks to minister to one another. We also experience new life in getting back to many of the already established life-giving ministries here! Thanks be to God for new life, new creation, and new beginnings!

Meet Eric Gombert

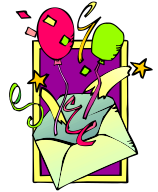
I was born and raised in the Lehigh Valley where I graduated from Whitehall High School. College years found me at Westminster Choir College, completing my degree in Sacred Music with a concentration in organ. During the thirty plus years since, I've taught both piano & organ, directed a community chorus, performed with regional ensembles, worked in business with roles including payroll, accounts payable, & technology, and served both part-time and full-time as musician for Lutheran congregations. All of this has come together to a place in my life when I am actively utilizing my gifts in both the musical & administrative areas. As **Director of Operations at the Synod**, I am responsible for overseeing building resources & technology, & the functions of bookkeeper and financial administrator. My husband, Matthew, and I have been together since 2000 & married since 2015. We are actively involved with raising our Great Dane puppy, wiping dog drool from everything, including the ceiling, roasting coffee, and tending our organic garden.



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.

April 1	Betty Mertz
April 6	Jeremiah Heffner
April 6	John & Marlene Costello (65 wed)
April 8	Joanne Stamm
April 10	Gladys Leibold
April 11	Irene Boyer
April 17	Ralph & Helen Noll, Sr. (67 wed)
April 19	George & Irene Isamoyer (63 wed)
April 24	Marion Angstadt
April 27	Robert Leibold
May 1	Arlan Berger
May 11	Eleanor Nester
May 16	Loretta Flicker
May 16	Donald & Kay Mertz (51 wed)
May 24	Lennia Mertz
May 24	Harlow Bailey
May 28	Carol Toth



FROM THE RECORD BOOK

Cindy L Nowotarski, 65, of Hummelstown, PA, died February 28, 2021.

Private memorial service at convenience of the family.

OUR SYMPATHIES TO

... the family of Cindy Nowotarski.

HONOR ROLL

If you would like a name included please email the church office or put a note in the secretary's mailbox in the Gathering Area of the church.

Jewel Karaisz
Julia Perella
Maisy Kellum

Kelly Leiby
Andrew Schell

Gabriella Webb
Alexandria Webb



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 4 (6:00)	Holy Communion
April 4 (10:15)	Holy Communion
May 2	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**.