

# CHURCH KEY

A NEWSLETTER THAT OPENS PEOPLE  
TO THE MINISTRIES OF



ZION'S UNION  
CHURCH MAXATAWNY

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**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  
2022**

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## REMINDERS

- ◆ The cost for a vase of flowers is now \$20.00 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.
- ◆ 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](http://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.

## 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 the 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, 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 our faith in Christ's resurrection makes! 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 Christ has gone ahead of us through the grave and gateway of death and vanquished the darkness of death 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 (Matthew 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 gone ahead of us leading the way. 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 the darkness. The light of dawn on that first Easter morning revealed for all to see that there is no place we can go in life where we won’t find that God has already gone ahead of us and illumined the path forward.

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.

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

Pastor Jeff

**ORGAN RESTORATION UPDATE as of March 1, 2022**

Total Restoration Cost - \$346,000

Designated Memorials & Estates Received - \$48,410.13

Donations Received - \$81,636

Investments Used for Expenses - \$100,570

Checking Account Money Used for Expenses - \$23,000

Investment Gains - \$58,000

Total Funds Into Organ Restoration Fund - \$312,116.13

## APRIL AND MAY WORSHIP

April 3	Fifth Sunday in Lent	SS 9:00	church 10:15
April 6	Mid-Week Lent		7:00 P.M.
April 10	Palm/Passion Sunday	SS 9:00	church 10:15
April 13	Mid-Week Lent		7:00 P.M.
April 14	Maundy Thursday		7:00 P.M.
April 15	Good Friday		7:00 P.M.
April 17	Easter Dawn		6:00 A.M.
April 17	Easter	SS 9:00	church 10:15
April 24	Second Sunday of Easter	SS 9:00	church 10:15
May 1	Third Sunday of Easter	SS 9:00	church 10:15
May 8	4 <sup>th</sup> Easter/Music/Mother's Day	SS 9:00	church 10:15
May 15	Fifth Sunday of Easter	SS 9:00	church 10:15
May 22	Sixth Sunday of Easter	SS 9:00	church 10:15
May 29	Seventh Sunday of Easter	SS 9:00	church 10:15

## SERVICE VIDEOS

A video recording of our worship service will be uploaded to our church website ([zionsunion.org](http://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.

## PLEASE USE PARKING LOTS

It has come to our attention that the township does not want us parking on the street, so please only park in our parking lots. There is also a secondary lot behind the church next to the cemetery garage which you may use.

## ANNUAL REPORTS

The 2021 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.



# **USHERS, GREETERS, SECURITY PERSONS**

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

## **CHURCH BOARD MEETING**

**February 22, 2022**

1. Current numbers for COVID receded to a level where we can unmask. The task force recommended and the board approved going back to a more normal worship service. We will continue with the communion pre-packaged cups in March and then transition to continuous communion via intinction. Refreshments can once again be served.
2. The History of Zion's Union Church is nearing completion. Rev. Heckler compiled and wrote much of the history with Rev Butz completing the work. Pastor Jeff is waiting for the completion of the organ restoration so it can be included in the history.
3. Bulletins will be mailed to the shut-in members.
4. Two of the flags waving out in front of the church have flown away in the last few weeks. One was found and one flew away. We will remove the remaining flags for the duration of the winter. Do you like the flags or are then not important to you? Let a board member know your opinion.
5. Total damage cost from the lightning storm is \$35,767.47. Insurance reimbursement is still in the works and we expect to get all but the deductible reimbursed.
6. Every Daylight Savings change is designated as an opportunity to raise awareness and funds for the Helping Hands Fund. Baskets will be ready on March 13<sup>th</sup> for your donations.
7. The Youth Group is searching for new leaders. Prayerfully consider filling this role.
8. The Sunday School is bringing back the Strawberry and Ice Cream Festival the first Friday in June. Also planned is the Sunday School Picnic and Rally Day on the last Sunday in August.

## **MASK UPDATE**

For those of you that don't get the church's email messages, the mask mandate for the church has been lifted.

# FLOWER/BULLETIN BOOK

The Flower and Bulletin sign-up book is available in the Gathering Area. Sign up for those special dates or call the church office Monday, Wednesday, or Friday to sign up.



## THANK YOU

No words can express how thankful I am for the gifts and words that were spoken at the service for my 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary as organist. Thank you to everyone and now we can look forward to the installation of our restored organ.

Theresa Grim

## 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	peanut butter	fruit cups
single serve size applesauce	canned tuna	canned soup
single serve cereal	granola bars	fruit snacks
oatmeal packets		

## OPPORTUNITY HOUSE

The Mission Outreach Committee will provide the evening meal at the Opportunity House on **April 6<sup>th</sup>**. Volunteers are needed supply the meal. Please sign up on the second floor bulletin board. Any questions can be directed to Cindy O'Neil.

## EGG HUNT

The Youth Group is sponsoring an Egg Hunt on **April 9<sup>th</sup>** at 1:00 P.M. (rain or shine). Children nursery through grade 4 are invited.



## KID'S CHOIR

Any kids that want to sing on the Kid's Choir on Easter morning should contact Theresa by **April 10<sup>th</sup>**.

## HOLY WEEK AND EASTER SERVICES

- Maundy Thursday Service – **April 14<sup>th</sup>** Service with Holy Communion at 7:00 P.M.  
Good Friday Service – **April 15<sup>th</sup>** Service at 7:00 P.M.  
Easter Dawn Service – **April 17<sup>th</sup>** at 6:00 A.M. Holy Communion  
Easter Service – **April 17<sup>th</sup>** at 10:15 A.M. Holy Communion



## MUSIC SUNDAY



Theresa is looking for soloists, groups, and instruments to help with Music Sunday on **May 8<sup>th</sup>**. All information must be given to Theresa by **May 1<sup>st</sup>**.

## WOMEN IN ZION

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

- April 11 Meeting at 1:00 P.M. Making Easter craft.  
May 9 Meeting, Mother's Day with Nancy Fulton. Bring in photos of your mom or someone like a mother to you.



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

## SCRABBLE

Scrabble will meet the third Monday of the month at 1:30 P.M. at the Lutheran Home in the social area near Sylvia's room.



## SENIOR FELLOWSHIP GROUP



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

## 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.

## YOUTH GROUP NEWS

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

### Activity Schedule:

April 3	Easter Egg Coloring 1:30 to 3:00 P.M.	
April 9	Egg Hunt for children through 4 <sup>th</sup> grade at 1:00 P.M. Youth arrive at 12:30 P.M. for set-up.	
April 23	Potato cutting at Becker's St. Peter's. Leave church at 1:00 P.M. Return at 4:00 P.M.	
May 14	"David" at Sight and Sound.	
July 24-30	Mission Trip	

## RELAY FOR LIFE

Kutztown's 25<sup>th</sup> Relay for Life will be held **May 21<sup>st</sup> from 10:00 A.M. to 10:00 P.M.** at the Kutztown Fairgrounds. Relay for Life, sponsored by the American Cancer Society, is about celebrating survivorship, remembering those we've lost, and bringing awareness to our community. You can sign up for Zion's Team at [relayforlife.org](http://relayforlife.org), then enter our zip code 19530 and follow the information. See Sue Haas for more information.



## STRAWBERRY AND ICE CREAM FESTIVAL

The Sunday School has agreed to hold this event this year, and it is scheduled for Friday, **June 3, 2022**. This event will be different in that we plan to approach this as a “Take Out” not on a “Dine In” basis with respect for health concerns. We expect to feature a number of the usual menu items, just in this different format. We are hoping to find a person or persons that would be willing to organize and coordinate this festival. Please contact Sue or Tim Haas, either in person or by phone (610-683-6099) to receive more information. Thanks for considering assisting and we value your interest!

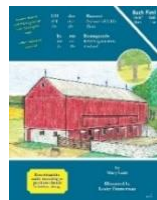


## WOMEN IN ZION COOKBOOK

The Women In Zion cookbook is still available to purchase in the Gathering Area. Cost is \$12.00. Checks should be made out to “Women In Zion”.

## GERMAN AND ENGLISH BOOK PUBLISHED

Mary Laub published another bilingual book, *Uff der Bauerei: In em Baamgaarde* (On the Farm: In the Orchard) which is the 5<sup>th</sup> in the Uff der Bauerei series. This story continues with Henny, die Katz (the cat) and Spunky, der Hund (the dog). When Frank, the owner of the farm goes to the orchard, Henny and Spunky go with him. They are enjoying themselves until they hear Frank scream. What happened? Why can't he move? Once again Henny and Spunky prove to be helpful and actually are able to help others, too.



Book 5 has an expanded Glossary with page numbers to easily locate words within the story. There is also a Reference Section. As 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 and CDs can be purchased from Mary, at Dietrich's Meats (they also sell the CDs), Leid's Saddlery, Wooden Bridge Dry Goods, and Burkholder's Farm Market on Topton Road or online at Amazon.com and Masthof.com. Books are \$10 and CDs are \$5.

## DID YOU KNOW?

- Representing the Boyertown YMCA Navy Seal Swim Team, Archer and Arden Scaffidi competed in the YMCA PA East District Championship. Archer advanced to the YMCA State Championship in the following events: 4 X 100 Free Relay and 4 X 50 Free Relay.

## PRAYER REQUESTS

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

Helen Noll, Owen Shorette, Elaine Heffner, Marilyn & Bill Bird, Kay Weidner, Randy Noll, Steve O'Neil, Walter Dietrich, John & Marlene Costello, Althea Moyer, Betty Dietrich, Pat Miller, Beatrice Bennecoff, Barry Miller, Carolyn Wiltrout, Arlan Berger, Marian Stettler, Bill & Karen Howard, Joe Karaisz, Anna Bortz, Lowell Thomas, Ralph Noll, Mary Kutz, Karen Weaver, Sylvia Heckler, Gladys Leibold, Donna Slotter, Leora Haas, Donna VanDeCar, Losito family, Randy Schlegel, Kevin Moyer, Linda Menges, Joanne Pauley, Richard Harter, Mary Jane Schlenker, Sarah Johnson, Juliana Leshner, Bill Rinear, Michael Zimmerman, Regen Zimmerman, Elia, Beverly Keller, Ian Miller, Karen Ames, Elaine Seaman, Victoria Slotter, Betty Wiltrout, Jo Corrado, Donna Rabert, Tom Seifert, Deb, Rayann Roth, Lisa & Chris Szarko, Arthur Sell, Jamie Jordan, Lorraine Miller, Renee Wolfe, Christopher Mercardo, Kim Markham, Valerie, Mary Fox, Sue Zimmerman, Michele Rodriguez, Christy Ryan, Drew & Mary Jane Stump, Frank Knight, Betty Houck, Judy Redman, Mary, Betsy, Gary Sell, family of Joseph Jalbert Jr.

**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 in next week's bulletin, please 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.

**If the Lord Jesus Christ has washed you in his own blood and forgiven you all your sins, how dare you refuse to forgive yourself?**

**—Francis MacNutt**



# SYNOD NEWS



NORTHEASTERN PENNSYLVANIA SYNOD. ELCA

APRIL 2022 • ISSUE 4 • VOLUME 30

## Easter 2022 - No Idle Tale

"I love to tell the story..." So goes the great old hymn. But the world is filled with stories today, that are tough to tell. As Covid lingers. As the war in Ukraine breaks our heart. What's next? And will it be worse? Just as much, I worry: can we trust each other anymore? Trust enough to share any kind of news, and believe it, together? Do we still hold in common, any of the assumptions, beliefs, and causes we used to share? Or is our world now filled only with suspicions and deceptions – "fake news" from all sources, on all sides?

On that first Easter Sunday, still overshadowed by Good Friday, bleakness and distrust were also all around. Even when those energized, overjoyed women burst in, announcing the most amazing thing they had ever seen and heard – HIS TOMB IS EMPTY! JESUS IS RISEN! – even then, "all the rest" dismissed their report as nothing more than "an idle tale" (Luke 24:11).

We are the church. We are called to be different. If the prevailing winds of our world today are seeking to blow us apart, the Holy Spirit winds us back together. God calls us to come to the places of sadness and sickness and doubt and despair – where all hope is dead and buried – and be ready to be amazed. Ready to see (and say!) what was dead – is now ALIVE. What was lost – is now FOUND. What was impossible – is now POSSIBLE. Real. True. And trustworthy. Jesus is risen, and we shall arise. The Bible prophets foretold it. Jesus said it, again and again. But almost nobody could trust it. Until God made it true, and sent people out to spread the word, the good news, the gospel. God is still sending us today. This Easter Sunday is like the first: a world full of doubt and distrust. A world full of conflict and separation. In the midst of it all, Christ is standing here with us. The Holy Spirit is in us and giving us courage. And God is making all things new, even now.

Jesus is risen, and we shall arise. Let us share this good news, for ALL people, for ALL creation. Holy God, give us the power to trust it, and to share it. Rebuild in us: trust in you. And through us: rebuild trust throughout our world, with justice, with peace, with faith, hope and love.

Blessed Easter to you and yours!  
Bishop Christopher deForest



## TOGETHER

Our 2022 Assembly will be held online on June 10-11. Each congregation is entitled to bring two voting members. If you are interested in attending the synod assembly as a voting member please reach out to your congregation's leadership for more information.



check out  
our new  
website

godslove.org

NEPA SYNOD

Faith  
FORMATION  
Saturdays

Join us on the 2nd  
Saturday of every month!  
(more information on our website)

## STEWARDSHIP EXTRAVAGANZA

JUNE 18, 2022  
TRINITY LUTHERAN  
CHURCH, LANSDALE  
AN EVENT ORGANIZED BY THE  
SEPA AND NEPA SYNODS  
(REGISTRATION FORTHCOMING)



APRIL 23 & 24, 2022, 1PM-4PM  
RAIN OR SHINE, BAREBONES EVENT, BRING  
YOUR OWN KNIFE, CUTTING BOARD, DRINKS,  
AND SNACKS. WE'LL BE CUTTING THE SEED  
POTATOES FOR PLANTING SEASON! ALL ARE  
INVITED! JUST WALK-IN AND HELP!

BECKER'S ST. PETER'S LUTHERAN CHURCH  
265 MAIDENCREEK ROAD  
FLEETWOOD, PA 19522

## MISSION MOMENT

### Into Jerusalem

Accompany Jesus on his Holy Week journey. Take time to read the scripture and pray each day of this sacred time.

*Sunday, April 10 Jesus enters the city of Jerusalem during the festival of Passover.* Read Luke 19:28-40. Jesus asked the disciples to go and find a colt for him to ride. That must have seemed like a strange request, but they did it anyway. What strange thing is Jesus asking of you? How might you respond?

*Monday, April 11 Jesus enters the temple and clears out the signs of commerce.* Read Luke 19:45-46. Jesus drove the people who were exploiting the poor out of the temple. Who is being exploited today? How might Jesus respond? How might we?

*Tuesday, April 12 Jesus teaches that “the stone the builder rejected will be the cornerstone.”* Read Luke 19:47-20:19. This passage is imbued with menace, as the political and religious leaders of Jesus’ days seek a way to punish him. Why was his message so threatening to those in power in Jesus’ day? Why is it so threatening today?

*Wednesday, April 13 Jesus continues to teach those gathered in Jerusalem.* Read Luke 21. This teaching begins when Jesus observes the difference between the wealthy and the impoverished. What differences do you think Jesus would notice now? What differences do you notice? What stories will grow from noticing these differences?

*Thursday, April 14 The celebration of the Passover is followed by arrest and betrayal.* Read Luke 22:1-62. You hear these words when we celebrate communion together. Read them now and listen for what is new or challenging in this message. What does communion mean to you? How do you acknowledge or celebrate that meaning?

*Friday, April 15 Good Friday. Jesus is crucified.* Read Luke 23. Jesus is executed in a state-sanctioned act of violence. Even in his final moments of suffering, Jesus promises forgiveness and eternal life to those crucified near him. What places of suffering need to hear Christ’s voice? In your own life? In your region? In the world?

*Saturday, April 16 Holy Saturday. Jesus lies in the tomb.* Scripture says nothing about what Jesus did on this day and there is no scripture reading for this day. In your prayer time, light a single candle, and meditate on the illumination cast by even one small flame. How has God been steadfast, even in times of seeming absence?

## 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	John & Marlene Costello (66 wed)
April 8	Joanne Stamm
April 10	Gladys Leibold
April 11	Irene Boyer
April 17	Ralph & Helen Noll, Sr. (68 wed)
April 27	Robert Leibold
May 1	Arlan Berger
May 11	Eleanor Nester
May 16	Loretta Flicker
May 16	Donald & Kay Mertz (52 wed)
May 24	Lennia Mertz
May 24	Harlow Bailey
May 28	Carol Toth



## OUR SYMPATHIES TO

... the family of Joseph Jalbert, Jr.

## UPDATE ADDRESSES

The church is updating addresses, phone numbers, and email addresses. If you have recently changed any of the above, have moved, or have children that are no longer living with you and have their own places, please email the church office at [zionsunion@verizon.net](mailto:zionsunion@verizon.net) with the new information. Any information is strictly for church use.



## 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	Holy Communion
April 14 (7 PM)	Holy Communion
April 17 (6 AM)	Holy Communion
April 17 (10:15 AM)	Holy Communion
May 1	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 15<sup>th</sup>**.