



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

**December
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 Gathering Area 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.
- ◆ 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.
- ◆ Sports cleats are not allowed in the church.

THE PASTOR'S PAGE



Those of you who hear me preach regularly know that I try hard not to get political in my sermons. This is because I know that there is a wide range of political opinions among the members of our congregation, ranging from extremely conservative to extremely liberal, and everywhere in between. This of course reflects the range of political opinions in our country as a whole. When it comes to politics, I simply let the words of Jesus speak to us all.

But this month, I do feel I need to make a statement about our recent election. Half our country is elated by the result, the other half very discouraged. And I am sure this is reflected among the members of our congregation as well. I am sure some of you are quite pleased with election of Donald Trump, others are mortified, and perhaps some of you are ambivalent or just plain sick to death of all the bickering and fighting that has accompanied this election.

None of this matters. What matters to us who are members of the body of Christ at Zion's Union Church is that we are citizens of another country – the Kingdom of God — ruled by our Lord, Jesus Christ. We are ambassadors for Christ the King, and this transcends even our loyalties to our nation and surmounts whatever is happening politically in the United States of America. Whether we are a Republican or a Democrat, a conservative or a liberal, or something else entirely, our duty now under President Trump is exactly the same as it was under President Obama. It is the vision articulated by the prophet Micah: to do justice, love kindness, and to walk humbly with God (Micah 6:8). In that sense, this election changes nothing.

However we voted, we must remember and put into practice our Christian theology which transcends all human labels. As St. Paul put it, "As many of you as were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. There is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male and female; [and if Paul were here today I am sure he would add there is no longer Democrat or Republican, liberal or conservative] for all of you are one in Jesus Christ" (Galatians 3:27-28).

Along with Paul, I urge all of you to "lead a life worthy of the calling to which you have been called, with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, making every effort to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace" (Ephesians 4:1-3).

Personally, in the next four years, I will continue to do as I did in the last eight years — constantly hold up our president in prayer and pray that he will lead our country to the very best of his ability.

And finally, wherever your own heads and hearts are at right now, let us make every effort to unite and fulfill Christ's final great prayer for his

followers:

“I ask . . . on behalf of those who will believe in me . . . that they may all be one” (John 17:20-21).

Your fellow citizen of the U.S.A. and of the Kingdom of God,

DECEMBER AND JANUARY WORSHIP

December 4	Second Sunday of Advent	SS 9:00	church 10:15
December 11	Third Sunday of Advent	SS 9:00	church 10:15
December 18	Fourth Sunday of Advent	SS 9:00	church 10:15
December 24	Christmas Eve Family Service		6:00 P.M.
December 24	Christmas Eve Candlelight Service		9:00 P.M.
December 25	Christmas Day		church 10:15
January 1	1 st Sunday of Christmas	SS 9:00	church 10:15
January 8	Baptism of Our Lord	SS 9:00	church 10:15
January 15	Second Sunday after Epiphany	SS 9:00	church 10:15
January 22	Third Sunday after Epiphany	SS 9:00	church 10:15
January 29	Fourth Sunday after Epiphany	SS 9:00	church 10:15

SPECIAL CHRISTMAS MUSIC

Any soloist or instrumentalists interested in performing during the Christmas season **MUST** notify Theresa **no later than December 1st**.

BELL CHOIR UPDATE

Some generous members of our congregation are willing to purchase the bells and associated supplies to start up a bell choir. John Perella, who has experience playing in a bell choir, has agreed to lead our bell choir. But, before we purchase anything, we need to be certain that we have enough people to make a bell choir work. So, anyone who would be willing to play in the bell choir, let John or our Worship & Music Committee chairperson, Tim Haas, know of your interest (no prior experience is needed). John can be reached at 610-530-7284 and Tim at 610-207-9564. We need a minimum of 11 people.



OVER 70 DINNER



Thank you to all the helpers (bakers, food makers, food donors, set-up crew, clean-up crew, servers, etc.) that helped make the Over 70 celebration/50+ Reunion a wonderful event. A special thank you to Lori Arndt who put it all together and everyone that helped.

DECEMBER CHOIRS SCHEDULES

Children's Choir: December 4th and 18th
Junior Choir: December 11th and 18th
Senior Choir: December 1st, 8th, 15th, and 22nd

BETHANY CHRISTMAS DONATIONS

On **November 27th** and **December 4th**, baskets will be in the back of the church and the Gathering Area of the church for any monetary donations for the Bethany Children's Home to purchase items for the residents for Christmas.



ALLEN ORGAN CONCERT

The Adult Fellowship Allen Organ Concert is **December 3rd** at 2:00 P.M. Cost of the tickets is \$15.00 and can be paid to Nancy Fulton. Following the concert, a meal at Hometown Bar and Grille will be planned for anyone who is interested in participating. Transportation may be arranged for members.

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

LIVE NATIVITY

The Sunday School's Live Nativity will be held **December 10th** from 5:00 to 7:30 P.M. Shows will be held every ½ hour. The final show will be at 7:00 P.M. Refreshments will be served. Help is needed with set up, acting, parking, and serving refreshments. Anyone from 3rd grade through adult is welcome to help. You do not need to be a Sunday School member. Anyone interested in helping out, contact Sue Haas at 610-683-6099.



ANGEL PROJECT

The Sunday School has begun their Angel Project. This program allows needy children in our community to receive Christmas gifts through Zion's generosity. Check the tree for an angel and shop for that perfect gift. **DO NOT WRAP GIFTS. Gifts can be put in a box or gift bag.** Gifts are due back by **December 11th**.



ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

This year's **Annual Congregational Meeting** will be held on **December 11th** immediately following the worship service. Your input and vote is vital.

POINSETTIA DISPLAY



We will be decorating our church with poinsettias for Christmas. The cost will be \$10.00 per plant. A tear off sign-up sheet is below and may be placed in the offering plate during worship. Please see Karen Warmkessel to pay for your poinsettias. You may also mail the sign-up sheet and payment to the church. Any checks should be made out to Zion's Union Church Maxatawny. Deadline for orders is **December 11th**.

POINSETTIA SIGN UP

NAME

NUMBER OF POINSETTIAS: RED..... WHITE

IN HONOR OF or IN MEMORY OF (*circle one*)

.....

CHRISTMAS PAGEANT

This year's Sunday School Christmas Pageant will take place on Sunday morning, **December 11th** at 10:15 A.M. There will be no regular worship service that Sunday. Sunday School will be held at 9:00 A.M. Rehearsal/Christmas party will be **December 10th** from 11:00 A.M. to 1:00 P.M. Lunch will be served.



CHRISTMAS EVE WORSHIP 2016

CHILDREN & FAMILY SERVICE 6:00 P.M.

This early service to celebrate the birth of Jesus will have a specific focus for families and children. Our Children's Choir and the Junior Choir will offer their praise gifts to God in song. The story of Jesus birth will be shared and Holy Communion will add to the joy of this wondrous celebration.



CANDLELIGHT SERVICE OF HOLY COMMUNION 9:00 P.M.



This traditional Christmas Eve worship will include the singing of familiar carols, the retelling of the story of our Lord's birth, the distribution of Holy Communion, and will end with all in attendance sharing a candlelight celebration of praise to our Lord and Savior Jesus.

ANNUAL REPORTS

As the year comes to an end, so does the time for all organizations, groups, and committees to get their annual report information into the church office. All information for the annual report **MUST** be in the church office by **January 15th**.



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.

SENIOR FELLOWSHIP GROUP

The Senior Fellowship Group will meet **December 26th** and **January 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.



WOMEN IN ZION

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

Meetings are open to all women of the congregation.

- | | |
|-------------|--|
| December 5 | Christmas Sharing at Topton Home at 9:00 A.M. |
| December 12 | Meeting, cookie exchange, and games at 1:30 P.M. |
| January 9 | Meeting at 1:30 P.M. |



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

COLLECTING WALL CALENDARS FOR THE YEAR 2017. They can be placed in the container in the Gathering Area through **December 18th**.

WIZ collects Campbell soup labels (they no longer accept only the front panel, but must have the UPC bars) to support Kutztown Elementary School. A box for your labels is located in the back of the church.

ZION'S MEN'S GROUP

The Men's Group will no longer function. There has been less interest and no new members are coming forth, so it was decided by the members present at the last two meetings that the group will no longer function. The balance of their Sunshine club will go towards the Building Fund. Also, there will be no Christmas party this year either.

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. See Nancy Fulton if interested.

PROPERTY COMMITTEE

The Property Committee will meet on **December 13th** at 7:00 P.M.

ZUMBA CLASSES

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

YOUTH GROUP NEWS

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

Activity Schedule:

December 4	Advent Social/Secret Pal Dinner
December 10	Pack nuts
December 15	Helping at Friends, Inc.
December 18	Caroling to shut ins
January 8	Alumni Day
January 22	Underground Railroad



Offering Schedule:

December 4	Jake Walker and Jonah Shorette
December 11	Tyler Gilfert and Amanda Noll
December 18	Anthony Blanchard and Dana Gehringer
December 24 (6 PM)	Ashley DeLong and Volunteer Needed
December 24 (9 PM)	Volunteers Needed
December 25	Steven Gehringer and Lexi Webb
January 1	Madison Held and Mitchell Grim
January 8	Jewel Karaisz and Kaylen Leiby
January 15	Benjamin Haas and Caleb Krause
January 22	Zachary Haas and Adam Noll
January 29	Sydney Sheetz and Katelyn DeLong

ADVENT SOCIAL – The Youth Group will be having their Advent Social on **December 4th** at 7:00 P.M. The congregation is welcome to join them for some fun and fellowship during the Advent season.



NUT SALE – The costs are \$9.00 for a pound of cashews, \$9.00 for a pound of mixed nuts, and \$4.00 for a pound of peanuts, salted or unsalted. See any Youth Group member to order nuts. Orders will be ready for pick-up on **December 11th**.



FALL CAMP

The Youth Group fall camp was held the weekend of October 21st to 23rd, with 18 youth members and 3 advisors in attendance throughout the weekend. We were fortunate to have The Rev. Lori Esslinger lead discussions on Friday evening on “Humor in the Bible”, and on Saturday morning on “Angels”. Saturday afternoon included craft making with Lisa Bartera, T-shirt dyeing with Hannah and Lisa Krause, and vegetable soup cooking for the soup kitchen (8 gallons) made with veggies brought in by our group. After free time the rest of the afternoon, we closed the evening with the enjoyable film, “Angels In The Outfield” and a communion service led by Pastor Jeff. He did a great job explaining the sacraments and we finally let him get home....very late.

Following are notes we received back from Pastor Lori and the soup kitchen. Thanks for all the congregational members who helped make this camp possible.

From Rev. Lori Esslinger: Thanks again for inviting me. I haven't worked with excited youth like that in a long time. It was very refreshing and inspiring to me. You leaders are terrific. Keep doing what you are doing because it is working!!

From the Soup Kitchen: Dear Friends, Thank you for the very hearty vegetable soup you donated to our Soup Kitchen. Each donation is important to us. We are glad for all our friends who help us feed the hungry. From Ann Marie Wallace.

THE KUTZTOWN KITCHEN

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

GETTING TO KNOW OUR COMMITTEES

We will be highlighting a different committee each newsletter.

The Safe Kids Policy is carried out under the guidance and oversight of the Safe Kids Committee. The Safe Kids Committee is responsible for (1) maintaining this policy and related forms, (2) overseeing policy implementation, (3) evaluating and ensuring effectiveness, (4) requesting adequate funding and staffing, (5) overseeing the screening and selection process, (6) providing training, and (7) overseeing record keeping. The committee includes: 3-4 congregational members, experience with Safe Kids or Human Resources policies a plus; Church Board liaison; Pastor; Office

manager assists with paperwork and background check processing. Terms: 3 year term, with no maximum number of terms, appointed by Church Board.

STRATEGIC PLANNING

The Strategic Planning Task Force and the Church Board gathered and assessed a lot of information from you, the members of Zion's, to establish strategic priorities for Zion's Union Church Maxatawny. Two key priorities centered around youth programs and outreach programs. We are currently searching for several individuals to step forward to lead and/or participate in developing and implementing activities in these two focus areas:

- (1) Funding youth projects and programs.
- (2) Outreach to less active and non-active members.

Please prayerfully consider helping with these initiatives. Contact Steve O'Neil or Greg Haas, or call the church office.

CARD MINISTRY

The Senior Ministry Committee has organized a card ministry for use of members and friends of the congregation. During the service we sometimes think that we should send a card, but as the week



progresses, we may forget about our good intentions. Birthday, Get Well, and Thinking of You cards are available in the Gathering Area to make it easier to remember cards after the worship service. Stamps will be provided with the cards. Donations of \$1.00 per card will make it possible to replenish the cards and stamps. The honor system will be in place. Feel free to browse the card box. If assistance is needed, see Grace Haas. A church directory will be provided to make finding an address more convenient. Donations of cards may be given to Grace Haas.

MYSTERY MEMBER

The Mystery Member in November was Ruth Bailey Miller. She is able to attend regularly with her caregiver, Nikki Phillips.

There is no Mystery Member for December but in January your recognition skills will once again be tested. Use the month of December to talk to at least one member that you do not know well.

Have a Happy Thanksgiving and a Blessed Christmas followed by a Happy and Healthy New Year.

FROM THE MAILBOX

Dear Friends Zion's Union Church.,

Thank you so much for your generous gift in the amount of \$296.00 for Friend, Inc. Community Services from your Harvest Home Collection. Our goal is that families remain in their homes, keep warm, have food on their tables, and find gainful employment whenever possible. Thank you again and we look forward to your continued support.

Sandra L. Wise
Executive Director



Dear Zion's Church,

Thank you for all your prayers and thoughts while I was in the hospital. Also thank you Pastor Jeff for your visit. I am feeling much better.

Love,
Lee Miller

MATCHING FUNDS

The church is in the process of finishing the rooms in the basement. WELCA 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.

QUIET DAYS

Quiet Days takes place **December 6th** from 9:30 A.M. to 1:00 P.M. at New Goshenhoppen UCC, 1070 Church Road, East Greenville. There is no registration, but a minimum donation of \$5.00 is requested. Bring a Bible, journal, pen, and a bag lunch. For information contact Rev. Wanda Craner at 610-489-2056, ext. 303 or craner@psec.org.

BUILDING FINANCE COMMITTEE NOVEMBER 2016 UPDATE



Our outstanding loan balance has now gone below the \$100,000 level. As of November 14th, it stands at \$99,000.

As in past years, keep the Building Fund in mind as you are trying to decide on a memorable gift for someone who has everything or to give a lasting impression. A gift to the Building Fund in someone's name will produce a letter of recognition to that person with your name listed as the donor. Make sure that the donation is properly identified so that we can give proper credit.

Wishing you blessed holidays.
The Building Finance Committee:
Karen Howard, Ray Wiltrout, Sharon
Leiby, Evan Slotter, and Richard Haas

INCLEMENT WEATHER

Where to watch/listen for worship service/Sunday School/activities cancellation in case of inclement weather: WFMZ (TV Channel 69) or www.wfmz.com (click on “storm center update”), WAEB am 790 Allentown or www.waeb.com (click on “operation snowflake”). The church office (610-683-7485) can also be called. Information about meetings, Sunday School, and worship cancellation will be on the voicemail message.



PRAYER REQUESTS

A new Prayer Request Box has been placed on the windowsill in the narthex (the entranceway to the sanctuary). Prayer request forms are sitting on top of the box. Place the completed form in the slot on the side of the box. Pastor Jeff will include these names/needs in his daily prayers. Only Pastor Jeff will see these and the names of persons in need of prayer will only be put on Zion’s prayer chain if so requested.

HOLIDAY HOUSE TOUR

The Friends of the Kutztown Community Library 2016 Holiday House Tour will be held on Sunday, **December 4th** from 12:30 to 4:30 PM. The self-guided tour themed “Town, Gown, & Country” features six homes. Light refreshments will be served at the library. Tickets can be purchased for \$20 in advance or \$25 the day of the tour at the library and Countryside Farm & Greenhouse (439 Krause Rd., Fleetwood). For more information call 610-683-5820.

KUTZTOWN COMMUNITY CHOIR’S CONCERT

The annual Kutztown Community Choir Christmas choral concert will be Sunday, **December 11th**, at 3:00 P.M. at Trinity Lutheran Church, 357 W. Main Street, Kutztown. There are traditional carols, medleys of seasonal favorites, and a choral version of the beautiful December prayer, by Idina Menzel. The children’s choir will add their youthful exuberance to the holiday program. The concert will close with members of the audience being invited to join the choir in singing the *Hallelujah Chorus* from Handel’s *MESSIAH*. A reception with punch and cookies provided by members of the choir will follow the concert. There is no admission, but an offering will be received for the benefit of the choir’s music fund.

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.



December 2	Leon Neimeyer
December 3	Kenneth & Dianne Angstadt (56 wed)
December 12	Lucille Zettlemyer
December 15	Willard & Vivian Angstadt (65 wed)
December 16	Diana Gehman
December 17	Joseph & Mary Fatzinger (50)
December 18	Mike & Evelyn Dietz (51 wed)
December 25	Sylvia Heckler
December 26	Michael Dietz
December 30	Rev. Willis Heckler
January 2	Joan Stettler
January 4	Marian Stettler
January 14	Irene Isamoyer
January 17	Walter Dietrich, Jr.
January 17	Raymond Kulp
January 20	Mary Haas
January 30	Ruth Carolyn Swoyer
January 30	Roeller Dietrich
January 30	Elaine Heffner

FROM THE RECORD BOOK

NEW MEMBERS: November 20, 2016

Mandy Graff

Nikki Jakbert-Phillips

Jamey and Traci Webb

BAPTISMS: *Alexandria Jade Webb and Gabriella Camille Webb*, daughters of Jamey and Traci (Hollenbach) Webb, were baptized November 20, 2016 by Rev. Jeffrey J. Butz. Alexandria was born October 28, 2002 and Gabriella was born June 11, 2004.

OUR SYMPATHIES TO.....

... the family of Ronald Manwiller.



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.



December 4	Altar Holy Communion
December 24	Pew Holy Communion (both services)
January 1	Pew Holy Communion

DECEMBER NEWSLETTER DEADLINE

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