



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
2018**

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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 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.
- ◆ After church refreshments should be kept on the lower level of the church.

THE PASTOR'S PAGE



It's that time again! Time for the mad dash to Christmas. Once again our lives will be thrown into upheaval as we make our often frantic preparations for the big day. If you find yourself at wits end this holiday season, it may be because you've lost the real meaning of Christmas. And what is that? It's quite simple: *God loves us*. Christmas is the grand climax of the story of God's love affair with the human race. The entire Bible, from beginning to end, is the story of that love affair, an affair that culminated in a manger in Bethlehem two thousand years ago.

Prior to the birth of Jesus, God had been courting the human race and expressing his love to us for thousands of years. The Old Testament is the story of that courtship. But God had a difficult time delivering his message of love. The Old Testament is the account of God's many attempts to communicate his love to us—through miracles and mighty acts, through prophets, priest, and kings. But we never quite seemed to get the message. A few did, but most often the people misunderstood or even rejected God's message. They spurned God's love in order to pursue other suitors, to chase after idols and false gods.

But our God is a patient suitor who never stopped trying to win us over. And finally, God found one human being who was willing to fully accept his love: Mary. Mary did not reject God's love, but was willing to be the bearer of the Christ child. Mary responded to God's messenger, the angel Gabriel, with words that have forever changed human history: "Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be . . ." (Luke 1:38).

Finally, centuries of courtship culminated in the most intimate act between God and humankind. Through Mary, God literally united with humanity. The almighty God, creator of the universe, came breaking into time and space, came from heaven to earth, took on flesh and became one of us. In Mary an amazing union took place, a union of God and woman, of heaven and earth, of the physical and the spiritual, a union of our imperfect nature with the perfect. "And the Word became flesh and lived among us . . ." (John 1:14).

But, why? Why would God do this? Why would God take such a risk? Why would the immortal, omnipotent God come down out of heaven to live here with us, suffer here with us, and die here with us? If the answer lies anywhere, it lies in the name that the Christ child would bear: "All this took place to fulfill what had been spoken through the prophet: 'Look, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall name him Emmanuel,' which means, 'God is with us'" (Matthew 1:22-23). In the human body of Jesus, God was with us fully and intimately. God wanted us to know that he fully knows what being human entails, that he truly knows what pain and suffering and

death are like, for God himself endured some of the greatest pain and suffering anyone could know—on the cross.

Again, why? Why would God do this? God did this out of infinite love and compassion, in order that God could be fully and truly with us in our own battles with pain, suffering, and death. Whenever we face tragedy and suffering in our lives, we can never say that God doesn't know what we are enduring, for he has endured it all with us, and for us, on the cross.

Emmanuel! God is with us! God is with us through the good times and the bad, fully with us in the depths of our greatest suffering, fully with us even in death. Since God has become one with us in Jesus Christ, we know that we will never have to face anything in the world alone. God is *always* with us. Emmanuel! God took on human flesh, suffered, and died for us, so that we would know—know that we are loved forever.

Wishing you all a joyous celebration of God's love this Christmas,

Pastor Jeff

DECEMBER AND JANUARY WORSHIP

December 2	First Sunday of Advent	SS 9:00	church 10:15
December 9	Second Sunday of Advent	SS 9:00	church 10:15
December 16	Third Sunday of Advent	SS 9:00	church 10:15
December 23	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 30	S.S. Christmas Pageant	SS 9:00	church 10:15
January 6	Epiphany Sunday	SS 9:00	church 10:15
January 13	Baptism of Christ/Installation	SS 9:00	church 10:15
January 20	Second Sunday after Epiphany	SS 9:00	church 10:15
January 27	3 rd Epiphany/Scout Sunday	SS 9:00	church 10:15

DECEMBER CHOIRS SCHEDULES

Kid's Choir: December 9th and 23rd
 Senior Choir: December 6th, 13th, and 20th

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 70/50+ Confirmation celebration a wonderful event. A special thank you to Lori Arndt and Kim Miller who put it all together, and everyone that helped.

BETHANY'S BRIGHTER FUTURE FUND

On **November 25th** and **December 2nd**, 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 Brighter Future Fund to purchase items for the residents for Christmas.



SIMPLY GIVING

A reminder to anyone who is participating in this program that any changes in the amount of giving for 2019 need to be submitted to Peggy Morgan as soon as possible so they are in place by January. We welcome new members any time throughout the year. Forms are on the upstairs bulletin board.

INCLEMENT WEATHER

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



ALLEN ORGAN HOLIDAY CONCERT

The Adult Fellowship Committee has obtained 15 tickets for the matinee holiday concert on Saturday, **December 1st**, at 2:00 P.M. at Allen Organ. Cost of a ticket is \$15.00. See Nancy Fulton for tickets.

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 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 8th** 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 9th**.



GREETING CARDS

Remember to take advantage of the greeting cards that are available in the Gathering Area of the church. \$1 will get you a card and stamp and someone will even address and mail it for you. This is a great way to let someone know that you care and are thinking about them. Get your Birthday, Get Well,

Anniversary, Thinking of You, Blank (add your own message), and Christmas card(s) Sunday mornings and make someone's day extra special.

ACTIVE INTRUDER TRAINING

Our congregation's leaders recently received Active Intruder Training in the event of an armed intruder at our church. This is the same training that is being offered by police departments to schools and organizations at risk of an armed intruder. We urge all our Sunday School teachers and other interested persons to watch an on-line video used at Penn State to educate students and faculty to the best way to respond in case of an attack. The seven minute video can be viewed at <https://police.psu.edu/run-hide-fight-surviving-active-attacker>.

SPECIAL CHRISTMAS MUSIC

If there is anyone who would like to do special music for the Christmas musicale on **December 23rd**, please let Theresa know by **December 2nd**.

MEMBERSHIP DIRECTORY

Pick up the new Membership Directory (no photographs) in the back of the church or the Gathering Area. If you can't get to church to pick one up, one can be mailed to you just let the church office know.

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 9th**.



POINSETTIA SIGN UP

NAME

NUMBER OF POINSETTIAS: RED..... WHITE

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

ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

This year's **Annual Congregational Meeting** will be held on **December 9th** immediately following the worship service. Your input and vote is vital.

CHRISTMAS EVE WORSHIP 2018

FAMILY SERVICE AT 6:00 P.M.

This early service to celebrate the birth of Jesus will have a specific focus for families and children. 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 AT 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.

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 Ellie Merkel if interested.

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 3 Christmas Sharing at Lutheran Home
at Topton 9:00 to 11:00 A.M.
- December 10 Meeting and cookie exchange at 1:30
P.M.
- January 14 Meeting at 1:00 P.M. (**Note new
time**) Special speaker, Jim Laub,
"The Life of Bees".



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

COLLECTING WALL CALENDARS FOR THE YEAR 2019. They can be placed in the container in the Gathering Area through **December 16th**.

COOKIE SALE – A sign-up sheet for the WIZ's Cookie Sale is on the second floor bulletin board. The cost is \$6.50 for a box of at least a pound assortment delicious home-made cookies. The pick-up date is Sunday, **December 16th**. Sign-up soon because supplies are limited.

SENIOR FELLOWSHIP GROUP

The Senior Fellowship Group will meet **January 28th** 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.



GO FUND ME

The Kutztown Borough Police Department has created a "Go Fund Me" page on their website for Nikki Nolte and Anthony Myers. Nikki is a recent KASD graduate and Anthony is the son of KASD's assistant high school principal. Both are battling cancer. The department is having a "No Shave November" as an opportunity to raise awareness and raise funds for the families. If interested, you just click on the red rolling banner on that site if you would like to contribute. See Todie or Ray Schell with questions.

YOUTH GROUP NEWS

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

Activity Schedule:

December 2	Advent Social, Senior dinner
December 8	Pack nuts.
December 16	Caroling to shut-ins at 1:30 P.M.
December 20	Volunteer at Friends
January 5	Eagle Stadium Tour
January 20	Practice for Youth Sunday, 1:30 P.M.



Offering Schedule:

December 2	Caleb Krause and Cayden Ciccone-Haas
December 9	Nick Perella and Kelly Leiby
December 16	Emily Bortz and Elizabeth Schell
December 23	Connor O'Neil and Dane Fegely
December 24 (6 PM)	Ashley DeLong and Volunteer Needed
December 24 (9 PM)	Volunteers Needed

If you are available and would like to volunteer for one of these times, please notify the church office.

January 6	Sarah Grim and Ashley DeLong
January 13	Maisy Kellum and Emma Heffner
January 20	Andrew Haas and Archer Scaffidi
January 27	Julia Perella and Owen Shorette

NUTS – The Youth Group are selling nuts for the holiday season. The prices are \$9.00 for a pound of cashews or mixed nuts, and \$4.00 for a pound of peanuts, salted or unsalted. See any Youth Group member to order nuts. Deadline for orders is **December 2nd**. Orders will be ready for pick-up on **December 9th**.



ADVENT SOCIAL – The Youth Group will be having their Advent Social on **December 2nd** at 7:00 P.M. The congregation is welcome to join them for some fun and fellowship.



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.

Archer Scaffidi
YOUTH GROUP CAMP NEWS

We had 17 young people registered for our camp weekend, along with three advisors. The themes for the weekend included “Jesus’s Stress, Our Stress” and “When God Doesn’t Make Sense”. The Rev. Lori Esslinger kicked off our Friday night session with a discussion of stress and that was followed by several sessions on Saturday and Sunday on different stress topics and studies on Job and Joseph. They can be used as two illustrations of how God’s plans may not seem to make sense until much time passes. Of course there was still plenty of time left for renewing friendships, games, fun, a movie, vespers, and an informative communion service with Pastor Jeff. (We also made over 7 gallons of soup that was donated to the soup kitchen in Reading.

DID YOU KNOW?

- Ben Chapkovich was on the Brandywine Heights Homecoming Court.
- Steven Gehringer and his dad were pictured in the *Reading Eagle* helping at the Fleetwood High School Music Programs mattress sale.
- Archer and Arden Scaffidi are swimming for the 2018-2019 winter season with the Boyertown YMCA Navy Seals.
- Archer and Arden Scaffidi recently competed in the Boyertown Boo Invitational. Arden placed 1st in all her events (8 & Under 25 Free, 8 & Under 25 Back, 8 & Under 50 Free, 8 & Under 25 Breast, and the 8 & Under 100 Free Relay).
- Archer and Arden Scaffidi attended a breaststroke swim clinic with Kristy Kowal, a graduate of Wilson High School and a silver medalist from the 2000 Olympic Games.
- Army veteran SPC.5 Dave Merkel received the 2018 Patriot Award during the Brandywine Heights Area School District’s annual Veteran’s Day Assembly. He served in the U.S. Army from 1967 to 1969, coached boys baseball and girls softball for a total of 38 years, and now operates the Cans For Kids program. Congratulations Dave!

KUTZTOWN KITCHEN

Usually 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.

MYSTERY MEMBER/S

The Mystery Member last month was Kaylen Leiby, daughter of Melissa and Kevin Leiby. This month you will be introduced to another member of the church's Youth Group.

This young man was born in the Lehigh Valley Hospital in 2001. According to him his early years were mostly spent playing with his older brother.

He is a High School Student where he participates in many activities; including soccer, tennis, playing French horn in the band and wind ensemble, trumpet in jazz band, and cello in orchestra. He also sings bass in the Men's Chorus, Choraliars, Chorale and Vocal Ensemble. He is involved in Future Business Leaders of America, Science Olympiad, and Fellowship of Christian Students. He performed the role of Hugo in the School Musical, "Bye Bye Birdie". In addition to all of the above he is active in Boy Scouts and STEM Scouts. He has the honor of being an Eagle Scout. He has two siblings and tells us that when he was younger he had a chameleon named Jackie.

Among his hobbies are playing the piano, collecting baseball and football cards, playing card games, and throwing quoits.

His church involvement is as a regular attendee, Youth Group member, and as a reader during the service. He recently attended the Houston Youth Gathering where he enjoyed the closeness of the group during this trip.

As with many of our younger members it seems that they must have more than 24 hours in their days because of all they do. Have you guessed who this young man is?

KUTZTOWN COMMUNITY CHOIR'S CONCERT

The Kutztown Community Choir will present their annual Christmas concert on Sunday, **December 9th** at 3:00 PM, at Trinity Lutheran Church, 357 W. Main St., Kutztown. This season's selections include the lovely medley *Rejoice!*, *Jesus Christ the Apple Tree*, and *Ding Dong! Merrily on High*. This *Holy Night* combines an original tune with the much-loved *O Holy Night* and a sprinkling of holiday fun is injected into our program with secular favorites,



including *It's the Holiday Season*. In what has become an audience favorite, the concert will once again conclude with the *Hallelujah* chorus, from *Händel's Messiah*, in which the audience is invited to join the choir.

FROM THE MAILBOX

Hi Zion's Church!

Thank you so much for your delicious soup delivery. We appreciate you for thinking of our clients. God bless each of you.



Denise,
Food Program Coordinator
New Journey Community
Outreach, Inc.

Dear Friends at Zions Union Church,

Thank you for becoming an Encourager with your gift in the amount of \$215.00 to Friend, Inc. Community Services from your Harvest Home Collection. Your recent donation tells us that you agree that **no one in Northeast Berks County should go hungry** or cold...not at the holidays...not this winter...not ever! Every monetary donation helps us fill the needs of real people each and every day. Your gifts make a real difference in the lives of many people and make our community a better place for everyone.

With deep appreciation,
Sandra L. Wise
Executive Director

Zion's Union Church Maxatawny,

On behalf of the entire membership of the Topton Volunteer Fire Cr. No. 1, I would like to thank you for your recent \$150.00 donation. Donations like these help to provide valuable equipment and training to our members. We truly appreciate your support of the Topton Fire Co. and we wish you and yours a Happy and Healthy 2019.

Steve Kline
Recording Secretary
Topton Vol. Fire Co. No. 1

QUIET DAYS

Quiet Days takes place **December 4th** 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 Sue Wunderlich at sawmsw@dejazzd.com.

KUTZTOWN LIBRARY BUS TRIP

Instead of the House Tour, the Kutztown Community Library is inviting you on a bus trip to Longwood Gardens on **December 2nd** to see their magical array of Christmas trees. Outdoor lights and fountain display seen as well (weather permitting). \$82.00 for adults and \$68.00 for children (5-18) includes bus fare, tip, and admission. Lunch NOT included. Call the library at 610-683-5820.

THEOLOGY WITH A TWIST

**Tuesday December 11th
at 7:00 P.M.**

**Kutztown Tavern,
272 W Main St., Kutztown
Dr. Greg Carey
*The Politics of Christmas***

Long before the media declared there was a War on Christmas, the authors of Matthew and Luke wove political messages into the stories of Jesus' birth. We'll explore how the Gospels' ancient audiences might have resonated with Herod, the magi, the census, the manger, and the shepherds as we prepare for our own Christmas celebrations.

Dr. Greg Carey is professor of New Testament at Lancaster Theological Seminary. He is author or co-editor of six books, including *The Gospel According to Luke: All Flesh Shall See God's Salvation*, *Soundings in Cultural Criticism*, and *Sinners: Jesus and His Earliest Followers*.

Theology with a Twist is free. Food and drink are available for purchase.

For more information see facebook page Theology with a Twist or call 610.926.3907.

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 (58 wed)

December 12	Lucille Zettlemoyer
December 16	Diana Gehman
December 17	Elaine Silliman
December 17	Jane Warmkessel
December 18	Michael & Evelyn Dietz (53 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	Roeller Dietrich
January 30	Elaine Heffner



OUR SYMPATHIES TO

... the family of Earl "Duke" Christman. ... the family of Clark Held.
 ... the family of Ruth Carolyn Swoyer.

FROM THE RECORD BOOK

Earl R. "Duke" Christman, 87, died October 3, 2108. Services were private by Rev. Jeffrey J. Butz. Interment was in Zion Maxatawny Union Cemetery.

Clark E. Held, 81, of Kutztown, died October 21, 2018. Services were October 25, 2018 in Zion's Union Church Maxatawny by Rev. Jeffrey J. Butz. Interment was in Zion Maxatawny Union Cemetery.

Ruth Carolyn Swoyer, 95, of Emmaus, died November 9, 2018. Graveside burial was held November 12, 2018 in Zion Maxatawny Union Cemetery.



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 2	Altar Holy Communion
December 24 (6 PM)	Pew Holy Communion
December 24 (9 PM)	Pew Holy Communion
January 6	Pew Holy Communion

JANUARY 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**.