



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

**February
2020**

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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 first floor of the church.

THE PASTOR'S PAGE



“No one puts new wine into old wineskins; if he does, the new wine will burst the skins and it will be spilled, and the skins will be destroyed.”

— Jesus, Luke 5:37

When ancient people squeezed grapes and put the juice into skins to ferment, they learned that you could not use old wineskins. This was an instance where recycling was not good. Only new skins could withstand the pressure of the fermenting grapes. Jesus uses this fact to make a valuable point about our life of faith. In no way was he finding fault with old wine (which improves with age), he was simply saying that there are times when we need to treat the new in fresh, unrestricting ways. What might this mean for our life of faith as we start a new year?

As we grow up and learn about our faith, we are instructed about how God and religion can be helpful in our daily lives. We learn to pray and worship. We gain insight into the nature of how God works among us and in the world. But as we become adults, things happen that challenge our thinking. Bad things happen to good people, as they say. Well laid out plans do not work as we had hoped. Some prayers do not seem to be answered, even in times of greatest need. What has happened? Where is God?

The old wine of childish understanding of faith is good. It helps us to see the world and life as a whole as good. Adults, though, need “new wine”—new and deeper understandings of God and faith. As St. Paul said, “When I was a child, I spoke like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child; when I became an adult, I put an end to childish ways. For now we see in a mirror dimly . . .” (1 Corinthians 13:11-12).

We realize as we grow in our faith that our childish understandings of God were only superficial. God is not Santa Claus. Through trials and tribulations we learn that God does not protect us from every possible harm. But what we also learn as we grow and mature in the life of faith is that God is always walking with us as we travel life’s sometimes rocky journey. God is always guiding us on the sometimes dark and treacherous paths of life and helps us to get up again when we fall.

In the church’s calendar, we have just ended the season of Christmas and begun the season of Epiphany, and we anticipate the coming of the season of Lent. Epiphany serves as a bridge between Christmas and Good

Friday, between Jesus' birth and his death. As we put the fermenting wine of our faith into new wineskins at the beginning of a new year, we are still in the midst of the 12 days of Christmas. The celebration of Christmas reminds us how God comes to us in new and unexpected ways. God, who may have seemed to be growing more distant, comes near to us in the unexpected form of a vulnerable baby—Emmanuel—"God with us." Jesus was born into this world to live and struggle and suffer with us, and ultimately to bring us redemption and salvation through his suffering and death on the cross. Christmas points us directly to Good Friday and Easter.

Here is new wine indeed, offering us a richer understanding of the truth that God is love. The baby born in Bethlehem is vulnerable, just as we are vulnerable, but God is acting in the world through that baby. God is indeed with us. In this new year, let us be open to new insights and new understandings of how our loving, compassionate God lives and works among us. Our God is the God of love and compassion who is always with us, especially in the darkest times to bring us new wine in the form of new hope and new life. Thanks be to God!

Pastor Jeff

INCLEMENT WEATHER

Worship service/Sunday School/activities cancellation:
www.wfmz.com (click on "storm center update") (**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.



SIMPLY GIVING

Our Simply Giving Program continues to grow. We are now up to 20 members taking advantage of this easy giving incentive. In 2019 we received \$8,983 in Benevolence Income and \$36,270 in Current Income from members signed up in this program. Enrollment is any time throughout the year and enrollment forms are on the 2nd floor bulletin board.

FEBRUARY AND MARCH WORSHIP

February 2	Fourth Sunday after Epiphany	SS 9:00	church 10:15
February 9	Fifth Sunday after Epiphany	SS 9:00	church 10:15
February 16	Sixth Epiphany/Youth Sunday	SS 9:00	church 10:15
February 23	Seventh Sunday after Epiphany	SS 9:00	church 10:15
February 26	Ash Wednesday		7:00 P.M.
March 1	First Sunday in Lent	SS 9:00	church 10:15
March 4	Mid-Week Lent 1		7:30 P.M.
March 8	Second Sunday in Lent	SS 9:00	church 10:15
March 11	Mid-Week Lent 2		7:30 P.M.
March 15	Third Sunday in Lent	SS 9:00	church 10:15
March 18	Mid-Week Lent 3		7:30 P.M.
March 22	Fourth Sunday in Lent	SS 9:00	church 10:15
March 25	Mid-Week Lent 4		7:30 P.M.
March 29	Fifth Sunday in Lent	SS 9:00	church 10:15

CHURCH DOORS

As part of our on-going commitment to providing a safe environment to joyfully worship the Lord, we will be keeping the front doors locked on Sunday mornings from 9:15 A.M. on. Greeters will be on duty to open the doors and welcome you to your morning worship. This recommendation came out of the intruder training by the Kutztown Police Department. Thank you, everyone, for your cooperation and understanding.

REMINDER ABOUT OUR CARD MINISTRY

Cards are available in the Gathering Area for all occasions – thinking of you, birthday, etc. If you need help addressing, please see Grace Haas. Cards are \$1.00 with postage stamp included. **Why not make someone's day special?**

ANNUAL REPORTS

The 2019 Annual Reports should be available the end of February or the beginning of March. If you are unable to get to the church to pick one up, call the church office and one can be mailed to you.



INGATHERING

On the first Sunday of each month the Mission Outreach Committee will continue to collect items to fill 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	fruit cups
single serve size applesauce	canned tuna	canned soup
single serve cereal	granola bars	fruit snacks
oatmeal packets		

RELAY FOR LIFE BRUNCHES

Zion's Relay for Life Team will hold brunches immediately after the worship service on **February 23rd and April 26th** to raise funds for this year's event. Donations are \$7.00 for adults, \$4.00 for children ages 6-12, and children under age 6 eat free. Join us for breakfast items, lunch items, and yummy desserts! Everyone is welcome.



ASH WEDNESDAY WORSHIP

February 26th, 7:00 P.M.

Ash Wednesday marks the beginning of Lent with ash on our foreheads. This cross echoes our baptismal anointing, when we were buried with Christ. The ash is a chilling reminder of our mortality, but because our death is now in Christ, our endings are beginnings. The Lenten disciplines of acts of kindness, prayer, and fasting are tools of discipleship that can lead us to renewal as we bury all that is holding us back from being truly alive. (reprinted from *Words for Worship*, copyright Augsburg/Fortress, 2003)



AUDIT NOTICE TO ALL ORGANIZATIONS

Please remember: All organizations in the church should do an internal audit of their books as stated in the Federated Constitution by the end of March.

OPPORTUNITY HOUSE

The Mission Outreach Committee will serve the evening meal at the Opportunity House on **February 26th**. Volunteers are needed to prepare and serve the meal. Please sign up on the second floor bulletin board. Any questions can be directed to Cindy O'Neil.

CEMETERY CLEAN UP



ALL flower arrangements must be removed from the cemetery by the 3rd Saturday of March. The only exceptions will be the arrangements attached to the top of the tombstones. Cemetery clean-up will take place **March 14th** (weather permitting).



2020 BLOOD DRIVES

3:30 P.M. to 7:00 P.M.

Tuesday, March 10
Tuesday, August 11

Tuesday, May 5
Tuesday, November 3

A sign-up sheet will be on the bulletin board on the second floor by the stairs. You can also sign up online at giveapint.org (Group ID: 3303). There is always a dire need for blood. Please consider donating!



MORE BUILDING USE! MORE COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT! MORE!

Do you ever look around and think what a beautiful building we've been blessed with? It would be wonderful to share with the community, wouldn't it? If you belong to an organization or group that is currently looking for a home, suggest holding your meetings here. And remember, the building is handicap accessible. If you have questions, contact the church office.

EUCCHARISTIC MINISTRY

The Eucharistic Ministry Team will make their visits after the **April 5th** Communion Service. If you know of anyone who is temporarily unable to come to the service for communion and would like a visit from one of our Eucharistic ministers, please notify Grace Haas at 610-683-3910 as soon as possible.



RELAY FOR LIFE 2020, MAY 29TH AND MAY 30TH AT KUTZTOWN UNIVERSITY

Relay for Life, sponsored by the American Cancer Society, is about celebrating survivorship, remembering those we've lost, and bringing awareness to our community. Held over a 24 hour period, the Relay for Life involves teams of 10-15 people, asked to raise \$100 each for the American Cancer Society, who take turns walking, running, strolling around the track. Relay for Life will begin on Friday, June May 29th at 3:00 P.M. Anyone interested in being a part of the team please see Sue Haas or Enos Bleiler for a registration packet.



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.*

- | | |
|-------------|--|
| February 10 | Meeting at 1:00 P.M. Bible study led by Pastor Jeff, Introducing Lenten Challenge - February 26 th to April 4 th |
| March 9 | Meeting at 1:00 P.M. Prepare cards for graduates and college students. |
| March 19 | Prepare food and serve at Bern Church. |



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

CANCER SUPPORT GROUP

The Cancer Support Group will meet the second Monday of the month at 6:30 P.M. See Loretta Flicker for more information.

YOUTH GROUP NEWS

*Youth Group meetings are open from age 10.
Schedules are on the upstairs bulletin board.*

Activity Schedule:

February 2	Practice for Youth Sunday at 1:30 P.M.
February 16	Youth Sunday.
March 1	Progressive meal.
March 15	Potato cutting (all welcome)

Offering Schedule:

February 2	Andrew Schell and Jonah Shorette
February 9	Owen Shorette and Paige Carvalho
February 16	Steven Gehringer and Mitchell Grim
February 23	Ben Heffner and Kaylen Leiby
March 1	Jewel Karaisz and Adam Noll
March 8	Madison Held and Zachary Haas
March 15	Jonathan Weidman and Katelyn DeLong
March 22	Sydney Sheetz and Caleb Krause
March 29	Ethan Weidman and Cayden Ciccone-Haas



SENIOR FELLOWSHIP GROUP

The Senior Fellowship Group will meet **February 24th and March 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.



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.

D.E.A.R.

NEIGHBORHOOD SHEPHERD PROGRAM:

As the household preparedness surveys make their way back to the committee, information such as emergency contacts and special needs are being added to our Zion's members' map, created through Google Maps. Please be sure to fill out your survey and return it to your Shepherd or the church office as soon as possible so that we may input your information.

So far, one preparedness item that is missing from a majority of Zion's households is an emergency evacuation bag or "bug out bag". This is a pre-packed duffel or backpack ready to grab and go at a moment's notice in a sudden emergency situation. Example: There is a large explosion at Air Products which releases a toxic combination of gases into the air and everyone within a five mile radius of the plant needs to evacuate immediately to prevent permanent lung damage. Your bag should contain items for an overnight stay, important papers, and emergency supplies. If a pet/s would be evacuating with you, they should also have an emergency bag packed with food and immunization records. We will focus on this preparedness piece over the month of March with a daily calendar to help you build a bag.

WIND/SOLAR ENERGY GENERATION:

The pursuit of renewable energy generation for our church was chosen as a top priority from the Strategic Plan. The D.E.A.R. committee will be leading this effort. Maxatawny Township ordinances regarding alternative energy have been obtained and a bid proposal is in the process of being prepared for presentation to possible vendors.

Kevin Krause, Pat Kutz, Sherie Mohn, Steve O'Neil, and Ray Schell

FROM THE MAILBOX

Thank you for your generous gift of \$21 to the Faith Fund. This fund provides the homelike environment and therapeutic services needed to support the physical, emotional, and spiritual growth of our youth. It also assists us to provide services such as life skills training, birthday parties, church services, and incentive trips which are at the heart of providing a home setting. Thank you for helping our youth take the right steps to a Brighter Future.



Sincerely,
Carolyn Shultz Spano, Director of Development

DID YOU KNOW?

- Dave Ehrig is Pennsylvania's Mr. Black Powder. The *Reading Eagle* featured a story on him being an outdoor writer and muzzle loading expert.
- Kelly Leiby and Connor O'Neil are members of the Leo Club and/or Art Club at Kutztown High School.
- The WFMZ morning team wished Katelyn DeLong a Happy 16th Birthday.
- Dan Blanchard was co-coordinator of the 2020 Berks County Science Olympiad at Kutztown University.
- Zachary Haas participated in the Gravity Vehicle event at the Science Olympiad at Kutztown University.

SUNDAY SCHOOL NEWS

DID YOU MISS THE "SPIRIT-SUNDAY-SONG" IN JANUARY?

Each week throughout 2020, the Sunday School classes will acknowledge and celebrate their Sunday-School-Spirit by praising God with singing. The classes are memorizing this Bible verse as well:

- **Psalm 100: 2 - Serve the Lord with gladness; Come into His presence with singing.**

The Adult Class was the first to share their Sunday-School-Spirit by singing the popular gospel song: "Just a Closer Walk with Thee." We learned that the song's lyrics allude to two Bible verses:

- **2 Corinthians 5:7 - We walk by faith, not sight.**
- **James 4:8 - Come near to God, and He will come near to you.**

Class members Mike, Jim, Dave, Loretta, Karen, Diane, Dottie, and Linda were our singers, accompanied by Judy and Kyle on piano/guitar.

Do not miss the February 2nd "Spirit-Sunday-Song." Grades 1, 2, 3 will share their favorite song during the Sunday School opening at 9:00 A.M.

MYSTERY MEMBER

Our Mystery Member last month was Diana Gehman who is the most recent church sexton. She is married to Bill Gehman and you can greet them nearly every Sunday as they attend services. Let Diana know how much we appreciate her efforts in providing a clean, comfortable place to worship. Our church members have been fortunate in having caring people dedicated to attending to the upkeep of the building facilities.

FARM FAMILY APPRECIATION CELEBRATION

The Farm Family Appreciation Celebration at the Hamburg Field House will be held **March 21st**. Doors open at 6:15 P.M. (but no earlier). Dinner buffet is from 7:00 to 8:00 P.M. Music by “The Outlaws” is from 8:00 to 11:00 P.M. Cost: farm families – free will donation at the door; farm family supporters – \$18.00 for adults, \$10.00 for children 3-10, and children 2 and under are free. This year’s theme is “trucks”. Any questions, contact Lisa at 610-378-1327 or go to www.nepasynod.org under the events heading. Deadline is **March 6th**.

SPIRIT ON TAP – READING

Spirit on Tap will be held **February 18th** at 7:00 P.M. at the DoubleTree Hotel, 701 Penn St., Reading. The events are free and open to all. On **February 18th**, Marcia Rowe will present “*Dances of Universal Peace*”. For more information, contact Dr. Harry L. Serio at 610-944-7032 or HLSerio@aol.com or Dr. Robert Stewart at 610-775-2836 or rastheo1951@msn.com.

THEOLOGY WITH A TWIST

Theology with a Twist will be held **February 10th and March 10th** at 7:00 P.M. at the Kutztown Tavern, 272 W. Main St., Kutztown. Theology with a Twist is free. Food and drink are available for purchase. For information see facebook page Theology with a Twist; email theologywithatwist@outlook.com, or call 610-926-3907.

SYNOD NEWS

Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod, ELCA

Mission Trip to Puerto Rico



Imagine riding in one of two fifteen-passenger vans, both navigating a narrow two-lane road that twisted and turned up into the tropical mountains of central Puerto Rico. The views were spectacular. Palms, giant philodendron, and the fiery flowers of the Flamboyant Royal Poinciana tree grace the roadsides and green mountain walls. Small, compact, and humble homes supported by what looks like toothpick legs hug the steep slopes. A morning journey brought the volunteers to the town of Comerio, where the streets have yielded to the mountain's natural topography, reminiscent of the hilly streets of San Francisco.

On June 30, 2019, under the guiding eye of Lutheran Disaster Response working through Lutheran Social Services of Puerto Rico, 25 Lutheran volunteers from 5 Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod churches traveled to Puerto Rico to repair homes damaged by Hurricane Maria. The volunteers divided into four teams. One team repaired a house needing to have the roof power washed and sealed, as well as its interior ceiling and walls scraped and painted. This house had stood empty for the past two years and was unlivable in its current state. The family who had lived there pre-Maria were hoping to return to their home as soon as possible.

Thanks to God and the excellent guidance and organization of Lutheran Social Services of Puerto Rico, the team was able to power wash their roof and seal it. They scraped ceilings and painted the interior of their home. Much of their nearly new furniture, now moldy and warped, still awaited removal. All their kitchen appliances had been destroyed.

And yet, because of the hard work of the team, and a generous grant from The Witness and Service Ministry Team supported through Mission Support giving to the Synod, the work was accomplished. Donations of various gift cards from a number of congregations enabled the team to purchase a new refrigerator for the family. What a joy to see faces of hope as these homeowners came so much closer to reclaiming their home. Truly the team used its hands to do God's work!



Don't Be Fooled by Email Phishing Scams

There have been several phishing attempts recently that appear to be emails from Bishop Zeiser asking for "help." Two were phony Gmail addresses (bishopnepsynod@gmail.com and rzeiserbishopr@gmail.com). Neither the bishop nor any of the synod staff will ever email you directly asking for "help." This is a scam. Please don't reply; even better, just delete the email without even opening it.

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.

Adam Noll

Cayden Ciccone-Haas

Andrew Schell

Parish Secretaries' Christmas Luncheon



On December 10 the fourth annual Parish Secretaries' Christmas Luncheon was hosted by the Synod's Support Staff at The Lutheran Center in Schoenersville. This year the luncheon was opened to all lay workers in the congregations of the Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod. There were 45 people in attendance. After greetings from Bishop Zeiser, a hot, catered lunch was served, introductions were made, and there was time for some get-to-know-you games and plenty of fellowship.

The luncheon always has some return guests and some first-time attendees. This year there was a parish secretary who

was in her sixth week of church work, and one who has been serving in the church for 50 years. Pastor Laura Csellak went above and beyond by driving two secretaries from Ashland in Schuylkill County to The Lutheran Center so they could be a part of the festivities. The cost of the luncheon was subsidized with Thrivent Action Team grants.

About 45% of the staff members who attended were treated by their congregations and/or pastors. Let's try to increase that percentage next year and encourage congregation workers to take advantage of a fun, relaxing afternoon in the middle of the Advent season. It's a wonderful opportunity to build partnerships with other church workers and the synod. Look for a keep-the-date card with next year's date at the synod assembly.



New Director of Youth, Young Adults, and Faith Formation



Sammy Kelly (she/her/hers) is a 2019 graduate of United Lutheran Seminary at Philadelphia where she earned a Master of Arts in Ministerial Leadership. She continues to be on staff at New Life Evangelical Lutheran Church in New Tripoli, where she has served for the past five years. Her husband, Billy Miller, was just hired as Youth Director at Lenape Valley Church in Doylestown and is pursuing the Crossroads Lay Leadership program at Moravian Theological Seminary. They are both excited to enter into a new year of life and ministry in 2020!

In this newly formed position, Sammy will provide leadership and support to both the Youth, Young Adult, and Family and the Faith Formation Ministry Teams of the Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod. She looks forward to dreaming with and working alongside the many church leaders who love our youth, young adults, and Jesus. She is a 7 on the enneagram, always open to swapping dog stories, and would love if you were to email her at sammy@nepssynod.org to introduce yourself and/or set up a time for conversation.

Synod News is published monthly by the Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod, ELCA
2354 Grove Road, Allentown PA 18109; 610-266-5101. nepsinfo1988@gmail.com.
View the full color edition online at <http://nepssynod.org>.

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.

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.



February 4	Irene Stauffer
February 12	Helen Noll
February 15	Margaret Stettler
February 17	William Bird
February 19	Ted Silliman
February 19	Carol Bauman
February 22	Fred Radcliffe
February 25	George Isamoyer
February 28	Janet Fegely
March 1	William Gehman
March 2	David Herber
March 3	Anna Bortz
March 9	John Costello
March 13	Guerin Nester
March 15	Arlene Oswald
March 16	Dorothy Zettlemoyer
March 18	Doris Dietrich
March 19	Carl Flicker
March 20	Robert & Gladys Leibold (66 wed)
March 20	Ralph Noll, Sr.
March 25	Sarah (Millie) Christman
March 26	Marilyn Bird
March 27	Dorothy Moyer
March 28	John Mertz
March 29	Betty Dietrich
March 31	Patricia Miller

OUR SYMPATHIES TO

... the family of Betty Boyer.

...the family of Anna Mae Gambler.

... the family of Anna Bachman.

“To love another person is to see the face of God.”

—Lyrics from *Les Misérables*, Claude-Michel Schönberg



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.

February 2

March 1

Altar Holy Communion

Pew Holy Communion



MARCH NEWSLETTER DEADLINE

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