

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

**January
2018**

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Reminders	page 1
The Pastor's Page	pages 2 & 3
January and February Worship, Service Update, Hurricane, Thank you	page 4
Music Thank you, Inclement Weather, Old Stairs	page 5
Reorganization Meeting, Ingathering	page 5
Church Cleaning, Memorial Thank You, Choirs, Annual Reports	page 6
Scout Sunday, Household Chores	page 6
Join Eucharistic Team, Eucharistic Ministry, Visits, Women in Zion, Zumba	page 7
Youth Group News, Congratulations	page 8
Senior Fellowship, Scrabble, Prayer Shawl, Honor Roll, Did You Know	page 9
Mystery Member, From The Record Book	page 10
From The Mailbox, Church Board, Member Updates	page 11
Pennsylvania German Book, Spirit On Tap, Theology With A Twist	page 12
Kutztown Kitchen, Building Finance Committee Update	page 13
Card Showers, Our Sympathies, Transportation, Unwanted Furniture	page 14
Mission Statement, Holy Communions, Newsletter Deadline	page 15
January Calendar, Worship Assistants, Board, & Staff	Blue Insert
Synod News	Ivory Insert
<i>Seeds of Zion</i>	Pink Insert
2018 Worship Schedule	Yellow Insert

REMINDERS

- ◆ The cost for a vase of flowers is \$18.00 and the cost to be a bulletin sponsor is \$8.00. Payment may be given to Jane Warmkessel or put the money in 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



We hear a lot today about so-called “fake news.” But just which news is “fake” news is very much in the eyes and ears of the beholder. It seems that whatever news reports go against our political agenda is deemed to be fake news.

In light of all the debate over real news versus fake news, it might be helpful to look at words that open the Gospel of Mark: “The beginning of the *good* news of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.” It would seem that very little news we hear today is good. Just about every piece of news we hear seems to be bad news, so just what is this *good* news that Mark is proclaiming? At its most basic, Mark’s message is the good news that *God has come among us*. And Mark quotes the famous words of the prophet Isaiah: “See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way; the voice of one crying out in the wilderness, ‘Prepare the way of the Lord . . .’” John the Baptist was the messenger who proclaimed the good news that God was coming into our world in Jesus Christ.

But there are many people today who consider this to be fake news. And, indeed, many people at the time of John the Baptist considered his message to be fake news. For to those first century Jews who eagerly longed for the coming of the Messiah, the Messiah came in a way that was totally and completely unexpected, leading many to believe that Jesus must be a fake Messiah. And if indeed Jesus is truly the Son of God as we believe, the God Jesus has revealed to us is not the God anyone imagined or expected.

There is a big gap between all of our human *conceptions* of God and who God really is. All of our limited, human conceptions of God are fake to a certain degree. We make God into who *we* want God to be. And that God is not the real, true God, but a false *idol*. In the second of the Ten Commandments, we are forbidden to make an idol—a false image of God. Counter to so much popular spirituality today, we are not free to come up with any old “god” who suits our personal needs and likes. In Jesus Christ, it was as if the true, living God said, “People of earth, you want a true image of me? Do you want to know who I really am and what I’m really up? Don’t attempt to make a fake image of me; I’ll give you a real, living breathing image—Jesus Christ.”

Almost every other religion in the world teaches a way for us finite creatures to climb up to the infinite. But only Christianity contends that the infinite descended and took on the form of our finitude. This is what Christianity calls Incarnation—God taking on human flesh in Jesus Christ. John the Baptist preached the good news that we mortal beings do not have to

attempt the arduous, indeed impossible feat of climbing up to God; for in Jesus Christ God has come down to us. And that is the great scandal of the Christian religion that many non-Christians consider to be heresy—fake news.

Incarnation is the counter-intuitive assertion that even though we could not avail ourselves of God, God lovingly made himself fully available to us in Jesus Christ. You could say that God *condescended* to be one with us, to be our Emmanuel — “God with us.” Of course, this unique belief of the Christian religion is not obvious and self-evident, or everyone in the world would be Christian. From the very first, people who encountered Jesus did not say, “Why, that Jew from Nazareth is God!” What those who saw and heard Jesus teach said was, “That’s not the way God is supposed to look and act!”

The question we need to ask is: Why isn’t Christ’s divinity more obvious? Well, for one thing, God is God and we are not. We have far-too-human expectations of how God ought to look and act. And from the first, Jesus failed to measure up to our worldly expectations of God. Jesus did not teach “an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth,” but “turn the other cheek” and “love your enemies.” This was quite a shock to people who assumed that God’s primary attributes were unrestrained power, wrath, and vengeance. There’s not much power and glory in a humble crucified rabbi. But those who looked closely at Jesus had their eyes opened by the Holy Spirit to see that there was much more to God than they previously thought. Jesus shockingly revealed to them that the main attribute of the God of Israel was not never-ending wrath and judgment, but steadfast love, compassion, and forgiveness.

If God is not ultimately power and glory and might as humans define those things, if the real, true God is actually suffering, redemptive love, then it begins to make sense that God might indeed come among us as a lowly servant who healed, taught, forgave, suffered and died to bring us much closer to God than we ever thought possible. How wonderfully and gloriously ironic that the true God should turn out to be most godly precisely in God’s suffering and dying for ungrateful, erring sinners, who for far too long had been worshipping a false image—a fake God—an idol of our own making. This is the shocking truth that lies behind John the Baptist’s proclamation of the Good News of Jesus Christ, the one whom we declare in the Nicene Creed to be “true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one Being with the Father.”

That’s not fake news; that is the Good News of the one *true* God made fully known to us in the compassionate, forgiving love of Jesus Christ, our one true Lord.

JANUARY AND FEBRUARY WORSHIP

January 7	Baptism of Our Lord	SS 9:00	church 10:15
January 14	Second Sunday after Epiphany	SS 9:00	church 10:15
January 21	Third Sunday after Epiphany	SS 9:00	church 10:15
January 28	4 th Epiphany/Scout Sunday	SS 9:00	church 10:15
February 4	5 th Sunday after Epiphany	SS 9:00	church 10:15
February 11	Transfiguration	SS 9:00	church 10:15
February 14	Ash Wednesday Service		7:00 P.M.
February 18	First Sunday in Lent	SS 9:00	church 10:15
February 21	Mid-Week Lenten Service		7:30 P.M.
February 25	Second Sunday in Lent	SS 9:00	church 10:15
February 28	Mid-Week Lenten Service		7:30 P.M.

SERVICE UPDATE

Please note that our evening services will be held at 7:00 P.M. instead of 7:30 P.M. (except for Christmas Eve and the Mid-Week Lenten Services) beginning in 2018. This was decided at the Church Board meeting in October.

HURRICANE DONATIONS CONTINUE

We will continue to collect monetary donations for the Hurricane disasters. Envelopes are available on the cabinet in the back of the church. Place any donations in this envelope and place it in the offering plate or you can mail any donations in any envelope to the church. If you want credit for your donation you need to include your name and/or envelope number on the envelope. Donations will be split 50/50 between the Lutheran and UCC disaster relief programs. Make any checks out to Zion's Union Church Maxatawny.

A YEAR-END THANK YOU

As we begin another year we need to stop and say thank you to ALL those who gave of their time, talents, and treasures to insure ministry happened here at Zion's these past 12 months. Also thank you everyone that sponsored the altar

flowers and/or bulletins at the last minute when no sponsors had signed up and for those who filled in as security persons, greeters, and ushers when needed.

MUSIC THANK YOU

Thank you to all choirs, instrumentalists, and soloists for their talents during the Christmas holiday.

INCLEMENT WEATHER

Where to watch/listen for worship service/Sunday School/activities cancellation in case of inclement weather: www.wfmz.com (click on “storm center update”) (**please note**: worship schedule delay or closing information will be listed on WFMZ website and not on Channel 69 except for extreme weekend conditions) or call the church office (610-683-7485). A message will be on the answering machine.



OLD STAIRS

Please **DO NOT** use the old staircase. This is for safety reasons. We don't want anyone to fall and not be found because no one uses that staircase.

REORGANIZATION MEETING

The Church Board Reorganization meeting will be **January 6th** from 9:00 A.M. to 12:00 P.M. Church organizations are invited. (Snow date is January 13th.)

INGATHERING

On the first Sunday of each month the Mission Outreach Committee will continue to collect items to fill backpacks/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
single serve size applesauce
fruit cups

peanut butter
canned tuna
granola bars

canned pasta
canned soup
fruit snacks

CHURCH CLEANING

Thank you to all those who came out to clean the church during Enos' recovery from surgery: Nancy Fulton, Bill Brensinger, Peggy Morgan, Sandy Leiby, Sue Haas, Dan Blanchard, Anthony Blanchard, Sherie Mohn, and Julia Mohn. Welcome back Enos!

THANK YOU

Thank you to the Carlton "CR" Fegely Memorial Fund for the purchase of new candle objects and for the new Christmas tree in the Gathering Area.

CHOIRS' REHEARSALS

The next Children's Choir rehearsals will be **January 7th and January 21st** at 8:45 A.M. The next Senior Choir rehearsals will be **January 11th, 18th, and 25th** at 7:00 P.M. **Mark your calendars!**



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**.



SCOUT SUNDAY

Scout Sunday will be held **January 28th**. Any active scout or active leader should contact Randy Noll or Kevin Krause as soon as possible so they know who you are.

HOUSEHOLD CHORES

If you would like a friend to lighten the load of household chores contact the church office.

JOIN THE EUCHARISTIC MINISTRY TEAM

Members of the Eucharistic Ministry teams at Zion's Union Church Maxatawny visit and share the sacrament of Holy Communion with members of our church who are not able to attend our regularly scheduled church services. This ministry is very much appreciated by the 17 members we are currently serving. If you would like to join our ministry team, please contact me by phone 610-683-3910 or email ggclh@aol.com. It would be great to have you join our ministry. Coordinator – Grace Haas

EUCHARISTIC MINISTRY

The Eucharistic Ministry Team will make their visits after the **February 4th** 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.



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.*

January 8 Meeting at 1:30 P.M.
February 12 Meeting at 1:30 P.M.



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

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.

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:

January 7	Bowling/snow event, 1:30 - 3:00 P.M.
January 21	Practice for Youth Sunday, 1:30 – 3:00 P.M.
February 4	Youth Sunday
February 18	Dart Ball 1:30 – 3:00 P.M.



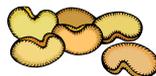
Offering Schedule:

January 7	Zachary Haas and Katelyn DeLong
January 14	Sydney Sheetz and Jake Heffner
January 21	Dane Fegely and Ivan Fegely
January 28	Boy Scouts
February 4	Johnathan Korutz and Kelly Leiby
February 11	Emily Bortz and Gabby Webb
February 18	Elizabeth Schell and Ben Haffner
February 25	Zachary Schell and Carson Sheetz

ADVENT SOCIAL – The Youth Group would like to thank everyone who attended the Advent Social. The unveiling of our secret pals was the highlight of the early evening. That was followed by our Advent Program presentation. \$260.00 was collected at the Advent Social. All the donations will go to a needy family in the area. Thank you for your generosity.



NUT SALE – The Youth Group would like to thank everyone that purchased nuts during the Youth Group's Annual Nut Sale. Your support of Zion's Youth is overwhelming.



CONGRATULATIONS

Zion's Youth Group has again been selected to receive a grant from Kutztown's Fraternal Order of Eagles. This grant was for \$750. (Last year we received \$1,500 and this year we already received \$1,000.) These funds will go toward our upcoming expenses. The grants given are influenced by the service work done by those applying.

SENIOR FELLOWSHIP GROUP

The Senior Fellowship Group will meet **January 22nd and February 26th** 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.



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.

PRAAYER 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.

HONOR ROLL

These names were taken from the lists published in the Patriot. However, it appears the school districts may not be getting the lists to the Patriot. 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.

Zachary Haas
Ashley DeLong
Marisa Berger
Elizabeth Schell

Trevor Gilfert
Kelly Leiby
Maisy Kellum
Carson Sheetz

Benjamin R. Haas
Gabriella Webb
Julia Perella

DID YOU KNOW?

- Jake Walker is a member of the Kutztown High School Leo Club.
- Ashley DeLong won 2nd place for the sculpture she entered in the Brandywine Community Library's Annual Teen Art Show.
- Jillian Siefert was listed in *The Reading Eagle Athletes of the Year Best of Fall* for the All-Berks II Tennis Team.

MYSTERY MEMBER

Yes, everyone who guessed that our Mystery Member last month was Liz Jones is absolutely correct. This month we introduce a couple that attends services regularly.

He was born on a farm right below the church looking towards Topton. He grew up in Monterey but spent many days on his grandparents farm in the Maxatawny area.

She was born in Allentown Hospital and spent her early years growing up in downtown Kempton. She was very active at the Kempton Community Center and the WK&S Railroad.

They are both graduates of Kutztown High School. When they began dating she recalls that they spent some of that time playing cards with her grandparents.

They were married in Jacobs Union Church, Jacksonville, PA, in 1967. Their wedding was followed by a reception in the church social room. Just two days after their wedding they left for Oklahoma City where he completed his military service in the Air Force.

After returning to the area he worked for 33 years at electronics plants in Allentown. She worked at various factories in the area where "she pressed many shirts." He also drove a school bus for 13 years.

They are the parents of a son and a daughter and grandparents to 3.

They currently share their home with two feline fur babies.

In her spare time she enjoys reading and working in her flowerbeds while he enjoys bowling and golf. He has the distinction of having bowled one perfect game and making one hole-in-one.

He was baptized and confirmed in this church and is a past Sunday School teacher and president, a past church board member, a member of the dart ball team, as well as many other related positions. He remembers being an acolyte as a teenager when one person handled all the candles. She sang on the choir at one time and was also active in Sunday School. She is a member of Women in Zion.

Do you know who they are?

FROM THE RECORD BOOK

NEW MEMBERS: December 4, 2017

Larry & Joanne Stamm

Losses: 26 persons to Inactive List.

FROM THE MAILBOX

Dear Zion's Union Church Maxatawny,

Thank you for your generous gift of \$100 to the Faith Fund. When a youth enters Bethany they are not only provided their basic needs of food, shelter, and clothing but also a supportive environment to help them work through the trauma they have faced. Through your ongoing support of the kids we serve you are providing them with hope, courage, and opportunity for a brighter, stronger future.



Sincerely,
Kevin Snyder
Chief Executive Officer

CHURCH BOARD UPDATE

NOVEMBER 28, 2017

- Reorganizational meeting is scheduled for January 6th from 9 – 12 with a snow date of January 13th.
- The old set of stairs from the sanctuary to the old entrance will be designated for emergency use only.
- A contract was signed for organ maintenance.
- The inactive membership roster was finalized.
- The main entrance will be locked at 10:30 during worship hours; keep this in mind if leaving the building. Security is on duty to let you back in.
- The personal loan balance is \$55,000.

PENNSYLVANIA GERMAN BOOK PUBLISHED!

Lanne Deitsch (Learn Dutch)! Mary Laub has recently published a picture

book, *Uff der Bauerei (On the Farm)*, written in Pennsylvania German/Pennsylvania Dutch. This story is uniquely different in that there is a phonetic spelling written in parenthesis under each word to facilitate pronunciation. In addition, there is an English translation at the bottom of each page, and an illustration to match each page of the text. A recording of the story is also available to download from the internet or purchase as a CD so you can follow along. The book and CD are available to purchase from Mary. The fee for the book is \$8 (which includes tax) and the CD is \$4 (which includes tax). The book and CD can also be purchased at several businesses in the area including Wooden Bridge Fabrics, Leid's Saddlery, Dietrich's Meats, Albright's Mill, Wanamakers General Store, and Burkholder's Farm Market (Topton Road). Online purchases can be made at www.masthof.com; or Amazon.com. Mary will sign books upon request.

SPIRIT ON TAP – READING

Spirit on Tap will be held **January 23rd and February 20th** at 7:00 P.M. at the DoubleTree Hotel, 701 Penn St., Reading. The events are free and open to all. There is free parking in the enclosed adjacent garage, enter from Penn St. or Court St. On **January 23rd**, Dr. Stephen Ohnsman will present “*Religious Tyranny*”. On **February 20th**, Dale Davis will present “*Faithful Presence: How People of Faith Can Make A Difference in Today’s World*”. For more information, contact Dr. Harry L. Serio at 610-944-7032, HLSerio@aol.com; Dr. Robert Stewart at 610-775-2836, rastheo1951@msn.com; or Dr. Stephen Ohnsman at ohnsman@comcast.net.

THEOLOGY WITH A TWIST

Theology with a Twist will be held **January 3rd and February 13th** at 7:00 P.M. at the Kutztown Tavern, 272 W. Main St., Kutztown. **January 3rd**, James Jackson will present “*You Say Chi...I Say Holy Spirit – Religion and the Way of Budo*”. **February 13th**, Rev. Dr. Steve Ohnsman will present “*God and Tyrants: How Religion Gets Used*”. 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.

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.

BUILDING FINANCE COMMITTEE DECEMBER UPDATE



As we celebrate the New Year, let us take a moment to celebrate huge continued effort by everyone in the congregation at reducing our building loan balance. Back in 2006, we started with a total of \$775,000 in building loans. The current building loan balance is now down to \$55,000. This has been a fantastic effort and commitment by everyone in the congregation.

We are very grateful for everyone's continued support. It is a real possibility that paying off the rest of the building loan may happen in 2018.

The Building Finance Committee:
Karen Howard, Ray Wilttrout, Sharon
Leiby, Evan Slotter, and Richard Haas

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.

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
February 4	Irene Stauffer
February 12	Helen Noll
February 15	Margaret Stettler
February 17	William Bird
February 19	Ted Silliman
February 21	Wilfred Radcliffe
February 25	George Isamoyer
February 28	Janet Fegely



OUR SYMPATHIES TO....

... the family of Jayne Siegfried. ... the family of Ivan Cronrath.
... the family of Shirley Smith. ... the family of Nancy Ritter.
... the family of Alfred Knabb.

TRANSPORTATION

Anyone needing transportation to attend worship or a church function, please contact Ellie Merkel at 610-683-7585.

UNWANTED FURNITURE

If you want to donate furniture to Opportunity House, please call Cindy at 610-374-4696, ext. 221 to schedule a pick up date.



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.

January 7

Pew Holy Communion

February 4

Altar Holy Communion



FEBRUARY NEWSLETTER DEADLINE

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