

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

**June
2021**

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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 an envelope with your name, date, and what you are paying for and place in the offering plate in the rear of the church.
- ◆ Any checks written out for the offering, altar flowers, or bulletins should be made payable to **Zion's Union Church Maxatawny**.
- ◆ **Any checks for the cemetery should be made out to Maxatawny Zion Cemetery Company, Inc. not to the church.**
- ◆ We have DVDs of regular worship services available for use at home. Contact the church office if you would like to borrow one.
- ◆ Let the church office know if you have been admitted to the hospital. The hospitals **DO NOT** notify the church if members have been hospitalized.
- ◆ Zion's Union Church Maxatawny's website is www.zionsunion.org. Check out our website.
- ◆ Zion's has a prayer chain. If you would like to add a name to the Prayer Chain call Mary Laub at 610-248-2801.
- ◆ Sports cleats are not allowed in the church.
- ◆ Refreshments should be kept on the first floor of the church.

THE PASTOR'S PAGE



We are now leaving the Easter season behind and entering the long season of the time after Pentecost, which lasts until Advent. We just celebrated the last Sunday of the Easter Season—Ascension Sunday—which prepares us for Pentecost and the long time after. Ascension is one the six major festivals of the Church Year, but you sure wouldn't know it. Ascension never caught on in popularity like Christmas and Easter have. You don't see stores advertising Ascension Day sales, there are no Ascension carols played at this time of year, and no TV specials like "A Charlie Brown Ascension."

But seriously, there are theological reasons why Ascension Day is not as popular as other festivals. You see, Christmas and Easter are for *everyone*. Their message is for the whole world. But Ascension is really only for us insiders. Its meaning and significance are only meant for those of us who are active disciples of Jesus. The readings we heard on Ascension show this. The final message that Jesus left with his disciples just prior to his ascension was intended for their ears only: "You will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."

Jesus left his followers with their marching orders to be his witnesses to the world. Our gospel reading for Ascension Sunday contained the words of Jesus' final great prayer that he prayed at the Last Supper—that all his followers would be *one*. Even though it was prayed 2,000 years ago, it a prayer for *us*—Christ's followers today. And being that it was Jesus' final prayer, it should give us much food for thought: "I am asking on their behalf . . . on behalf of those whom you gave me . . . Holy Father, protect them in your name that you have given me, *so that they may be one, as we are one.*"

It is quite clear that, whatever other hopes and dreams Christ had for his followers, he considered Christian unity to be paramount. Unity among his followers was Christ's burning desire on the eve of his death, his greatest hope for the Church. Sadly, it is a prayer that has yet to be fulfilled. The past 2,000 years of Christian history starkly reveals our failure. And Christ's final prayer reveals precisely why it is imperative for us to live in unity and not divisiveness. He goes on to pray, ". . . so that the world may believe that you sent me." The point is that if we dwell together in love, forgiveness, and unity, we show evidence of the authenticity of the Christian faith. Christ's hope was that if we would live in love and unity with one another, then those who are outside our Christian family would be convinced of the genuineness of our faith, and might join with us as people of God. How can we expect the world to live in peace and harmony if we Christians can't?

Let's be honest. We have not tried nearly hard enough to live up to Christ's hopes and expectations. We are at odds with one another far too often. We are far too prone to insist that "our way" is the way Christ surely prefers. We love to pride ourselves that we are closer to the truth than other believers; that we've got it right, and other churches and other religions have it wrong. We stake out our ground, put up barriers, and end up repelling instead of attracting potential disciples. Perhaps William Sloan Coffin was on to something when he said, "Never do people so cheerfully do evil as when they do it from religious convictions."

Just look at the great evil that resulted from the so-called "Christian" Crusades. I think a lot of the reason that so many Muslims distrust Christians is because of our track record in dealing with the Muslim world. We set a horrific example in how we dealt with both Muslims and Jews during the Crusades and the Spanish Inquisition, where the method of evangelism was "turn or burn"—accept Christ or be slowly burned at the stake!

During the Albigenian Crusade, in 1209, a Crusader army under the guidance of Pope Innocent III took the town of Beziers in southern France in order to wipe out all Jews and even fellow Christians deemed to be heretics. As the people of the town were being brutally slaughtered, the question was raised as to how to distinguish the true Christian inhabitants from the Jews and heretics. Simon de Montfort, the leader of the invasion, and a true Christian terrorist, said, "Kill them all! God will know his own."

History reveals over and over that our example of Christian love has not been a good one. This is something the late Pope John Paul II knew, and which he tried to make amends for. Of all of John Paul's huge accomplishments, including being one of the driving forces in bringing about the collapse of the Soviet Union, the thing for which he will be remembered among Jews and Muslims, is that he asked the leaders of both religions for forgiveness for the atrocities that Christians had committed against them over the many centuries. Asking for forgiveness is the first step to reconciliation, and reconciliation is the only way we can love as Christ calls us to love. The Church can never truly be the Church of Jesus Christ without practicing constant love and extending constant forgiveness.

Jesus' final prayer for Christian unity is perhaps more needed today than at any time in history, for our churches, as well as the citizens of our nation, are hardly of one mind. Our nation is more divided today than at any time since the Civil War. The conservative and liberal divide in our nation has devastatingly splintered our country as well as our churches. Think about all the differing opinions held by the members of our own congregation over things such things as immigration, welfare, same-sex relationships, and even how we understand the Bible. You soon begin to understand why outside

observers fail to see how Christians are united in mind and mission. Maybe that is why so many young people are looking elsewhere for God, often accusing church-goers of being hypocrites. We Christians certainly don't always make very good witnesses for Christ. One example is Facebook. It used to be a wonderful place to keep up with friends and family, but I truly can't stand all the political hate and vitriol I constantly see spewed by so many of my Facebook friends toward each other over political differences.

All of this divisiveness has made me ponder long and hard about what it means to be the church in the world today. The Gospel message is all about *sacrifice*. Over and over, Jesus taught us to sacrifice our own wants and needs for the good of others, especially the poor and needy. Jesus said that come judgment day, what will separate the righteous from the unrighteous is how we have treated the poor, the homeless, the sick, and the prisoner. And his final prayer was that his followers would be united in carrying out our mission to the lowliest members of society.

Mark Twain once said, "What bothers me is not the things in the Bible that I don't understand, but the things that I *do* understand." Shortly after World War II, the eminent historian Arnold Toynbee made a significant comment about the role of religion in the world following the Holocaust. He said, "Either the various churches and religions will snarl each other out of existence until no more is left of any of them . . . or else a unified human race will find their salvation in a religious unity." Today more than ever we must take Toynbee's words seriously. And it begins right at home—in our individual churches, in our own hearts. Heading into the long season after Pentecost, and having received our final orders marching orders from our Lord, let us strive above all else to be of one mind in sharing the Good News of Jesus Christ in both word and deed every day of our lives.

Pastor Jeff

JUNE AND JULY WORSHIP

June 6	2 nd Sunday after Pentecost HC	SS 9:00	church 10:15
June 13	3 rd Pentecost/Graduate Sunday		church 10:15
June 20	Fourth Sunday after Pentecost	SS 9:00	church 10:15
June 27	Fifth Sunday after Pentecost		church 10:15
July 4	6 th Sunday after Pentecost HC	SS 9:00	church 10:15
July 11	Seventh Sunday after Pentecost		church 10:15
July 18	Eighth Sunday after Pentecost	SS 9:00	church 10:15
July 25	Ninth Sunday after Pentecost		church 10:15

THE WORK HAS BEGUN



The work to repair the historic Möller pipe organ has finally begun. It took the crew 5 days to dismantle her. The above picture is of the Gathering Area before they loaded the more than 700 parts into trucks headed for the repair place.

Purchased by our forefathers in 1928 (during the Great Depression) at a cost of \$6,000 (almost a million dollars today!), this “grand old lady” celebrated her 93rd birthday in May. She has served us faithfully, but was having “breathing difficulties” caused by the aging of her wood, leather, and electronic parts. Please support her much-needed transplant of her worn-out parts so she can continue to help us lift up our voices in worship and praise for the next century.

If you are able, prayerfully consider making a contribution to help pay for the major renovation of our historic organ. Envelopes are available in the rear of the church or use any other envelope (put organ fund on the front). Make any checks out to “Zion’s Union Church Maxatawny”. Put “organ fund” on the memo line. You can place the envelopes in the offering basket in the rear of the church or mail them to the church.

PICTURES WANTED

If anyone has any pictures of the dismantling of the organ and would like to share them with the church, please contact Theresa Grim. She is trying to get together pictures that can be shared with the congregation and retained by the church as a record of what took place during this project.

ORGAN RESTORATION UPDATE

As of May 1, 2021

Total Restoration Cost - \$346,000

Designated Memorials Received - \$1,140

Donations Received - \$44,939

Investments Used for Expenses - \$65,000

Checking Account Moneys Used for Expenses - \$15,000

Total Funds Into Organ Restroation Fund - \$126,079

SERVICE VIDEOS

A video recording of our worship service will be uploaded to our church website (zionsunion.org) by early Sunday afternoon and can be viewed for the rest of the week. Prior services can be viewed on Youtube — type “Zion’s Union Church” into the Youtube search bar.

BOARD VACANCY

After our recent Congregational Meeting, we find ourselves still in need of a volunteer to fill a vacancy on the Board. This person’s term would go until the end of this year plus another 2 years (until December of 2023). Time commitment is minimal— weekly counting, occasional offering and communion help and 10 monthly meetings each year. Board members, however, serve an important role in keeping our church running smoothly and are essential in the success of our church life. We ask each member to prayerfully consider stepping up to help us fill this Board vacancy. Thank You.

ANNUAL REPORTS

The 2020 Annual Report is now available at the church. If you can't get to church to pick one up, call the church office and one can be mailed to you.

FLOWER/BULLETIN BOOK

The 2021 Flower and Bulletin sign-up book will be available in the Gathering Area beginning in June. You may still call the church office to sign up for your special dates in 2021.



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. Thanks so much for your continued support of this important community outreach project. 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 | | |

WHO ARE OUR GRADUATES?

Graduate Sunday will be held **June 13th** and we are compiling a list of our graduates for the year 2021, including December 2020 graduates. Please write down the name of your graduate, the school from which he or she is graduating or did graduate, their degree (if applicable), and their plans for the future (including name of college, trade school, any continuing education they may be planning, etc.). Place the information in the secretary's mail slot in the Gathering Area or call or email the church office with the above information **NO LATER THAN JUNE 6TH**. We do not want to miss anyone, so please help us out.



HIGHER EDUCATION FUND

As part of the Siegfried Bequest, a higher education fund has been established to offer loans of up to \$1000.00 (based on the number of applicants and availability of funds) for a maximum of 4 years per student to those members of Zion's enrolled in a higher education program. A student loan application has been developed by the loan committee (Nancy Fulton, Grace Haas, Jennifer Weidman) and can be obtained from one of them or in the church office. Deadline is **June 15th**.



WOMEN IN ZION COOKBOOK

The Women In Zion cookbook is available to purchase. Cost of the cookbook is \$12.00. Checks should be made out to "Women In Zion". Contact Nancy Fulton at 610-682-6357 if you are interested in purchasing a cookbook.



WOMEN IN ZION

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

NO MEETINGS UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE.

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



SCRABBLE

Scrabble has been cancelled until further notice.

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.

CANCER SUPPORT GROUP

The Cancer Support Group **WILL NOT MEET** until further notice.

SENIOR FELLOWSHIP GROUP

There are no plans for the Senior Fellowship Group to meet.

MEMBER UPDATES

610-573-7423	Graff, Mandy K.	P.O. Box 23, Bowers, PA 19511
unknown	Teeters, Laura E. Adisyn M. Canaan D.	4613 Darby St., Center Valley, PA 18034
610-762-3876 (R)	Weller, Robert C. & Erdman, Lizette (Liz)	
484-510-6162 (L)		320 Fairview Dr., Kutztown, PA 19530
Losses:	Miller, Ruth K. Williams, Mary Jane	

FROM THE MAILBOX

Thank you to the congregation for all the cards, thoughts, and prayers on the recent death of Lucille Zettlemoyer.

Sharon & Tim Tyson &
the Zettlemoyer family



OUR SYMPATHIES TO

... the family of Joshua Drey.
... the family of Linda Wotring.
... the family of Dorothy Breidegam.
... the family of Mary Jane Williams.
... the family of Ronald Malone Sr.

... the family of Dennis Bailey.
... the family of Harry Herman, Jr.
... the family of Ruth Miller.
... the family of Dr. Jeffrey Folk.

DID YOU KNOW?

- Ashley DeLong made distinguished honors for the 3rd quarter at Brandywine Heights.
- Archer Scaffidi made honor roll in the 3rd quarter at Brandywine Heights.

BILINGUAL PA GERMAN AND ENGLISH BOOK

Mary Laub published another bilingual book, *Uff der Bauerei: Der Bsuch* (On the Farm: The Visit) which is the 4th in the Uff der Bauerei series. This story continues with Henny, die Katz (the cat) and Spunky, der Hund (the dog). In this story, children visit on the farm and create challenges. Find out how Henny and Spunky help. Spunky's favorite dog biscuit recipe is even included in the book! To facilitate learning the Pennsylvania German language, Book 4 has an expanded Glossary with page numbers to easily locate words within the story. The story is written in PA German with a phonetic spelling and an English translation underneath. An illustration matches the text and there is an audio recording of the story which can be downloaded for free or a CD can be purchased separately. Books can be purchased at Dietrich's Meats (they also sell the CDs), Leid's Saddlery, Wooden Bridge Dry Goods, and Burkholder's Farm Market on Topton Road or online at Amazon.com and Masthof.com or from Mary (610-248-2801 or jmlaub@aol.com). Books are \$10. CDs are \$5.

BRAKE THE CYCLE OF POVERTY

Brake the Cycle of Poverty will be held **August 14th** beginning and ending at Rickenbach Learning Center at Kutztown University, 250 College Blvd., Kutztown. There are four courses that offer something for everyone. For more information or to register go to www.friendinc.org or call 610-683-7791.

QUIET DAYS

Quiet Days takes place **June 1st and July 6th** from 9:30 A.M. - 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, bag lunch. Information: suewunderlich2@gmail.com.

UNWANTED ITEMS

There is a container marked “Opportunity House” at St. Paul’s Lutheran Church in Mertztown (near Radcliffe’s) where you can donate goods. Lisa Walker will **no longer** take items to Opportunity House.

“COURAGE TO BE WHO WE ARE”

Ed Ramirez’s journey to find a church was a long one, filled with disappointments. Ramirez, who uses the pronouns they/them, wanted a place where they could feel at ease and fully accepted, but nothing they’d encountered in the Los Angeles area fit.

Ramirez’s search led them to Hollywood Lutheran Church, where Joseph Castañeda-Carrera served as pastor. “I was the member that zipped in and out of service,” Ramirez said. “I didn’t want to engage with the community out of fear of being rejected like in other ‘affirming’ congregations. Joseph was quick enough to catch me one day and ask what I was looking for, and I answered honestly: ‘A place where I can be all of me.’”

The pastor told Ramirez about ADORE LA, a digital faith community that Castañeda-Carrera served as mission developer. **Supported in part by grants from the churchwide organization and the ELCA Southwest California Synod, which are funded by Mission Support, ADORE LA is driven and led by people of color and the LGBTQIA+ community.**

“So often in our church, we don’t have very many queer people of color,” Castañeda-Carrera said. “Community can’t build around them because we’re all spread out all over the place. ... People from all over have joined ADORE LA because it’s creating a community that doesn’t exist in their own neighborhoods.” As church buildings were shuttered and some congregations struggled to stream worship

online during the COVID-19 pandemic, ADORE LA didn’t skip a beat. It was already using digital channels and messaging apps such as GroupMe to engage members. The faith community used the time to innovate and enhance its ministry, Castañeda-Carrera said.

“PEOPLE FROM ALL OVER HAVE JOINED ADORE LA BECAUSE IT’S CREATING A COMMUNITY THAT DOESN’T EXIST IN THEIR OWN NEIGHBORHOODS.”

Ramirez is grateful for their faith home at ADORE LA. “Faith is something that has been taken from a lot of us,” they said. “So ADORE LA focuses on community that then lets us reclaim faith and grow into it together. It also helps to sow our roots like a beautiful LA palm tree because being fully yourself in this world and church aren’t always the easiest things to navigate. The faith we gain as a community provides that: the courage to be who we are, fully created in [God’s] image.”

Thank you for your generous gifts of Mission Support, which made this story of faith in action possible. Mission Support is the portion of your offering your congregation shares with your synod, and your synod shares with the churchwide organization. To learn more, visit ELCA.org/SOFIA.

SYNOD NEWS

NORTHEASTERN PENNSYLVANIA SYNOD, ELCA

Synod Assembly 2021 & MinLab

Our assembly is virtual to protect the most vulnerable around us, but we will be holding an in-person Ministry Laboratory (MinLab) on August 14, 2021. The MinLab will be held at the Lutheran Center. It's open to anyone, even people who were not voting members to the Synod Assembly. The Lab will allow participants to engage, in real time, with ministry ideas, congregations already participating in ministry projects, and allow space for participants to experiment with ideas, eat good food, and have fun!

Together we'll wonder about how we're healing the hurting, loving the land, and engaging the stranger!

The Good News

June is here, and hope is busting out all over. We can worship outdoors, reducing greatly the still ongoing threat of the pandemic. The vaccines are effective and safe, and I urge everyone to get their doses, so we can move back indoors more safely this fall. Our synod just hosted its first event addressing racial issues, on May 22. Our online Synod Assembly June 4 and 5 is giving us new opportunities for **“growing young and vital,”** as we share ministries that **“heal the hurt, love the land, and engage the stranger.** And going forward from here, we are discovering how to partner more, as we are **“gaining strength”** and **“going beyond death to life.”**

See the **boldface** type? Yes - I've just written a paragraph incorporating ALL the new vision and direction that we are exploring together! But more than just boldface words...what are we called to BOLDLY FACE - as ELCA, as synod, as congregations, and as baptized children of God?

The answer comes to us, simply and directly, from our scripture, both Old and New Testaments: St. Paul writes “For I am not ashamed of the gospel; it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who has faith...” (Romans 1:16). The prophet Micah declares: “[The lord] has told you, O mortal, what is good; and what does the lord require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?” (Micah 6:8)

With these **bold directions**, how will we, the Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod, proceed? HEAL THE HURTING: **“[Jesus told them]: ‘As you go, proclaim the good news, “The kingdom of heaven has come near.” Cure the sick, raise the dead, cleanse the lepers, cast out demons.’”** (Matthew 10:7)

LOVE THE LAND: "[The lord spoke to Moses]: The land shall not be sold in perpetuity, for the land is mine; with me you are but aliens and tenants. Throughout the land that you hold, you shall provide for the redemption of the land." (Leviticus 25:23-24)

ENGAGE THE STRANGER: "[The Son of Man will say when he comes in his glory]: 'Come, you that are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world; for I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me...'" [Matthew 25:34-35]

These are just a few of the bold words, given to us by the God who created everything; who led the marginalized Hebrew people God loved out of slavery, through the wilderness, into the promised land; who came to us in the person of Jesus, healing the sick and raising the dead; who died for all for the forgiveness of all our sin; and who is raised from the dead and reigns forever, and will return to judge the living and the dead and live here forever with us in our resurrected creation.

This is a **bold promise**. We are called to **bold action**. And in this lovely month of June, one of those bold actions can be, that we love our LGBTQIA+ neighbors, who still feel like strangers in our midst. One bold action – simple, small, but significant – is my request to change our SYNOD NEWS banner, to reflect the BOLD RAINBOW COLORS of June Pride Month. I en-courage all of us to engage in more conversation and work together with our members and leaders who are Queer, to learn more and share more of the Good News and the good work of God, together. As Paul writes: **"For the whole law is summed up in a single commandment: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.'"** (Galatians 5:14)

In God's love,
Bishop Christopher deForest

Did you know we are a "Reconciling in Christ" Synod?

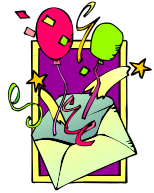
Way back in 2001, the Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod at its Synod Assembly adopted a Continuing Resolution (#39) to make known its caring and concern for LGBTQIA+ people, their families and friends. Across our synod, congregations and organizations have themselves discerned and decided to join the RIC journey. "Reconciling in Christ" is a Lutheran movement led by the group RECONCILINGWORKS, whose vision is "to keep expanding the welcome, liberating those who are forced to live in the margins; to keep dismantling barriers and building bridges; and to keep working until all of God's beloved have equity."



An independent, Lutheran, membership-supported organization, RECONCILINGWORKS advocates for the acceptance and full participation of all sexual orientations, gender identities, and gender expressions within the Lutheran Church. To find out more, go to www.reconcilingworks.org.

CARD SHOWERS

We are listing those couples married 50 years or more and those people 70 years or older. If we are missing anyone, please call or email the church office.



June 1	Diane Herber
June 7	Mary Kutz
June 8	Shirley Derr
June 15	Eva Christman
June 15	Guerin & Eleanor Nester (58 wed)
June 19	Carol Bennecoff
June 21	Dave & Tina Ehrig (52 wed)
June 24	George & Sandra Leiby (54 wed)
June 25	John & Betty Mertz (66 wed)
June 27	David & Diane Herber (51 wed)
July 2	Richard Warmkessel
July 6	Nancy Fulton
July 10	Marlene Costello
July 10	Sandra Leiby
July 12	Dianne Angstadt
July 14	Carolyn Wilttrout
July 14	Gloria Haas
July 18	William Howard
July 19	Janet Geiger
July 21	Beatrice Bennecoff
July 22	William & Marilyn Bird (60 wed)

FROM THE RECORD BOOK

Ruth K. Miller, 90, of Kutztown, PA died April 30, 2021 in her residence. Services were May 6, 2021 in Ludwick Funeral Home, Kutztown by Rev. Jeffrey J. Butz. Interment was in Zion Maxatawny Union Cemetery, Kutztown.

Mary Jane Williams, 81, of Orwigsburg, died May 4, 2021 in Orwigsburg. Services were private at the convenience of the family.

“If you don’t learn contentment, you’ll never be happy. You’ll always want more.”
—Rick Warren



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.

June 6

Holy Communion

July 4

Holy Communion



JULY/AUGUST NEWSLETTER DEADLINE

The next issue of the newsletter will come out the beginning of July. Please note that this is a **combined July/August** newsletter. If you have any information to be included in the July/August newsletter, please have it in the church office by **June 15th**.