



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

**May
2024**

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REMINDERS

- ◆ The cost for a vase of flowers is \$20.00 and the cost to be a bulletin sponsor is \$10.00. Payment may be given to Karen Warmkessel or Tara Berger or put the money in an envelope with your name, date, and what you are paying for 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.**
- ◆ 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.

PASTOR'S CORNER



April showers bring May flowers...

Our Resurrected Jesus leads us from death to life, for which we are eternally grateful. How do you worship as the days are warmer and much of Creation is blooming? What I mean is, where do you go to be close to God outside of Sunday morning? What fills your spirit? For some, it is a hike outdoors, reflecting, taking in the sights, and hearing the rolling waters and cracks of the twigs beneath one's feet. For others, it is working in the gardens, getting rid of that which no longer has life to make way for something new. Some of us cannot go out for various health reasons. Perhaps while inside we might be reflecting as we watch the birds, see the fox or deer wandering through our yards, or enjoy the bees doing their pollination work. Creation is a beautiful mystery, and it is good to offer thanks for all we can see and what we cannot. God calls us to be co-creators of Creation in its care and growth.

Additionally, we give thanks that our Lord and Savior Jesus has gone ahead to meet us wherever we are. As we prepare for the coming seasons in our lives, may you find rest in the beauty and majesty of God's Creation. May the spirit move you to interactive forms of worship on the way to the garden, hike, or by the window. Meditating on nature as you take in the sights and sounds of your surroundings, may you feel divine presence wherever you are.

God bless you,
Pastor Melissa

MAY AND JUNE WORSHIP

May 5	6 th Sunday of Easter HC	SS 9:00	church 10:15
May 12	7 th Easter/Mother's Day	SS 9:00	church 10:15
May 19	Pentecost/Confirmation HC	SS 9:00	church 10:15
May 26	Trinity Sunday	SS 9:00	church 10:15
June 2	2 nd Sunday after Pentecost	SS 9:00	church 10:15
June 9	3 rd Sunday after Pentecost	SS 9:00	church 10:15
June 16	4 th Sunday after Pentecost	SS 9:00	church 10:15
June 23	5 th Sunday after Pentecost	SS 9:00	church 10:15
June 30	6 th Sunday after Pentecost	SS 9:00	church 10:15

SPECIAL SUNDAY'S COMING IN MAY/JUNE:

- **May 5** - Volunteer Recognition and Altar Communion Sunday - We will give thanks for all our volunteers!
- **May 19** - Pentecost/Altar Communion and Confirmation Sunday - The confirmands will also be taking their first Communion. This is also Temple Talk Sunday. There will be refreshments and fellowship after worship.
- **May 26** - Memorial Day and Trinity Sunday.
- **June 2** - Graduate Sunday

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.

ACOLYTES, READERS, USHERS, GREETERS, SHEPHERDS

Schedules for acolytes, readers, ushers, greeters, and shepherds are on the upstairs bulletin board. A schedule is also included in each newsletter.

FLOWER AND BULLETIN SPONSORS

Do you ever look up at the altar and think, ‘wow, those flowers are beautiful’? Then you flip through your bulletin to see who sponsored them and if there was a special reason why? Guess what? You can sponsor the flowers too! There is a book in the Gathering Area that you can sign in advance to sponsor for a special date to honor or remember someone or an event that is significant to you. Then you get to take the arrangement home after the church service. If you do not want the flowers, you can consider sponsoring the bulletins instead. Each week we ask for two sponsors for the flowers and two for the bulletins. The cost to sponsor the flowers is \$20 per arrangement (you can sponsor one or both) and the bulletin is \$10 for half (again, you can sponsor half or all).

WASN'T IT DELICIOUS?

Easter Sunday morning the early dawn worshipers had the opportunity to share in the breakfast after church. The food was delicious and it filled our stomachs and the Lord filled our souls. A special thank you to all the people who donated food. A great big hand to those who prepared and cleaned up. We share our faith in many ways and the Easter experience is just one of them.



ADOPT-A-HIGHWAY

Thank you to our Adopt-A-Highway volunteers that picked up trash along 222 on Saturday, April 13th. The participants were Lisa and Kevin Krause, Richard Haas, Sherie Mohn, Greg and Patty Haas, Ben Heffner, Jared Heffner, Harry Snyder, Andrew Schell, Jake Fegely, Cindy O'Neil, and Kevin and LaRee Fegely. They picked up 22 bags of trash and assorted debris and 2 tires.



INGATHERING

On the first Sunday of each month the Mission Outreach Committee will continue to collect items to fill backpacks with food staples for needy children and their families in the area. 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
single serve cereal
oatmeal packets

peanut butter
canned tuna
granola bars

fruit cups
canned soup
fruit snacks

ZION'S WELCOMES NEW MEMBERS

On Sunday, April 21st, the following persons joined as members of our congregation: Donna Bailey, Mark and Aly Bucci and daughters, Jon Burkhart, Joshua Burkhart, and Makayla Burkhart. We welcome them in worship services and other activities.

RELAY FOR LIFE



Relay for Life of Kutztown & Eastern Berks will be held **May 18th beginning at 10:00 A.M.** at William DeLong Park in Bower's. Anyone interested in being a part of Zion's Union Church Maxatawny Relay Team can sign up online at <http://www.relayforlife.org>, then click on "Join A Relay", and click on Relay for Life for Kutztown and Eastern Berks or call 1-800-227-2345 and someone will walk you through the process.

WHO ARE OUR GRADUATES?

Graduate Sunday will be held **June 2nd** and we are compiling a list of our graduates for the year 2024, including December 2023 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 MAY 26TH**. 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**.



SNACK AND CHAT

We will have lunch in small groups at restaurants in the area. Our Zion's shirts could identify us and hopefully generate interest in our church. The next outing is **May 8th at Airport Dinner**. Notify Nancy Fulton if you are able to attend.

YOUTH GROUP NEWS

Youth Group updates are announced during the Sunday School opening and posted in the bulletin

WOMEN IN ZION

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

- May 11 Saturday – Retreat at the Church, 9 AM to noon, “The Many Hats A Woman Wears” with Rev. Lori Esslinger.
- June 10 Meeting, picnic, fun, games.



For more information contact Linda Ballew-Johnson (484-553-1981)

WOMEN’S RETREAT

WIZ is offering a woman’s retreat on **Saturday, May 11th from 9 A.M. – 12 Noon**. The retreat will be led by Rev. Lori Esslinger and the theme will be *The Many Hats A Woman Wears*. Cost is \$10 per person. Continental breakfast will be served. The event is open to all women. The sign-up sheet is now on the Bulletin Board and will be there until **May 5th**. Registration fees can be paid to Nancy Fulton. If paying by check, make out to “Women in Zion”. Please plan on joining us.

SENIOR FELLOWSHIP GROUP

The Senior Fellowship Group will meet **May 20th and June 24th** at 12 noon. Persons attending should bring a bag lunch. Dessert and beverages will be provided. Games provide entertainment for the afternoon. Guests are always welcome.



PRAYER SHAWL



Comforting wraps are still available to all who are in need. Please alert the church office or Loretta Flicker if you or someone you know would benefit from this ministry.

PLASTIC BAGS PROJECT

The group will meet from 10:00 A.M. to 12:00 P.M. **May 8th and May 22nd** to weave plastic bags into mats. All are encouraged to participate. Contact Tanya Schaedel at 484-705-5533 or Carol Leiby at 484-695-8318. Plastic bags may be brought to church and deposited in the box in the Gathering Area. **ONLY plastic bags that are used at the register when leaving are wanted. We are unable to use produce bags, plastic from cases of water, toilet paper plastic, etc.** If anyone can flatten the bags and cut at home, please find a weaver and we will show you after a church service how quick the bags can be prepared. It's a great activity while watching tv, relaxing. Thank you!!

KUTZTOWN COMMUNITY CHOIR SPRING CHORAL CONCERT

The Kutztown Community Choir will present their annual Spring concert on **Sunday, May 19th** at 7:00 P.M., at Trinity Lutheran Church, 357 W. Main St., Kutztown. "Hope springs eternal..." so the poets attest. Spring offers the hope of renewal and starting fresh, a season that reminds us that change and new growth are possible! The pieces to be performed in our spring concert echo that longing and hope. Selections across genres are represented, including *The Road Home*, *Be a Light*, *Hope for the World*, *Music in the Air*, a moving arrangement of *MLK* and a medley of Beatles love songs. It is *our* hope that the program will leave the audience feeling both uplifted and hopeful. Please join us as we welcome the return of spring and summer with an evening of fellowship, fun, and fine music!

HOPE RESCUE MISSION CLOTHING DRIVE

Zion's Union Church Maxatawny will be supporting the clothing drive to benefit Hope Rescue Mission and Lighthouse from **June 9-20, 2024**. The Mission provides clothing for men; the Lighthouse supports women and children. We'll be collecting all seasons of clothing for men, women, and children. Coats, scarves, hats, gloves, shoes, towels, belts, purses, and new men's underwear in sizes small to xxxl.

Donations may be brought to the church M, W, F from 9-12; Saturday from 9-12; Sundays from 8:30 -12. Other arrangements can be made by calling Nancy Fulton at 484-357-8024.

APPLE DUMPLING/FALL FESTIVAL

The festival will take place on **October 12th**. We have started our planning committee. Our next meeting will be on **May 12th** following the church service.

The June meeting will be after the worship service on **June 9th**. If you have any questions, or would like to help, see Traci Gehring.

CHURCH BOARD MEETING

March 26, 2024

- Please see the information in the bulletin and newsletter about sponsoring flowers and bulletins.
- There will be a Senior Dinner this year held on November 3rd following the church service. We will be inviting any confirmation classes that would have hit the 50 year reunion mark from 2020-present.
- Zion's Union Church Maxatawny is turning 200 in 2026. This calls for a celebration, we will be seeking individuals interested in being on the planning committee.
- The Nursery on the 2nd level has been cleaned up and is ready for our families with young worshipers to use during service. We love to have the kids in the pews, but wanted to make this space available for families, as needed.

STRAWBERRY & ICE CREAM FESTIVAL

The annual Strawberry and Ice Cream Festival will be held **June 7th** from 6:00 to 9:00 P.M. Watch for more information in the bulletin and next newsletter.



SENIOR DINNER

The Senior Dinner is being planned for **November 3rd**, following the worship service. Members of the congregation who are over 70 years of age will be invited to attend, as well as individuals who were confirmed fifty years ago. Anyone willing to assist with the dinner should notify Nancy Fulton 484-357-8024. Volunteers will be greatly appreciated

MYSTERY VOLUNTEER

The April Mystery Volunteers were Kyle and Judy Koller.

Can you identify the May Mystery Member?

She was born in 1959 at home in Mertztown, the youngest of 3 girls. We were lucky enough to have many of our extended family close by. I spent much time with my aunt's family, a sister of my mom. They did a lot together. I remember all the neighbors sitting on the porch at night in the summer, just catching up. Days were spent playing with neighbor kids, and in the summer, at the Topton Pool.

I graduated from Brandywine High School.

My grandparents lived right up the road so we would pop in to visit all the time. They had a vine with pop grapes, a favorite in the summer, and she always had a tin with cookies or pretzels. An embarrassing (?) story...while mini golfing with the Youth Group, as a teen, I fell in the water hazard not once but twice. Seriously, who does that! We always went to Dorney Park on Report Card Day and Hot Dog Day.

I was married on October 13, 1984. (It is hard to believe it will be 40 years.) I met my husband while out with friends at a place I had never been before or went afterward. Was it fate... to be determined. Our wedding started a bit late because one of the groom's men forgot his pants and my husband had to drive him back to get them. Most of the attendants were family members.

As a teen, I worked at the Folk Festival from age 14 to 18 and picked potatoes (not a fun job). After graduation, I was at Kutztown Sportswear, mostly in the Cutting Department, until they closed. I worked as a Payment Processor at AARP until I had my daughter. Later, I worked in child care. No "paying" job now. My husband works for Intel. My daughter followed her path out west and whom I have always been proud. There are no grandchildren, but 4 young ones whom I am thankful to be part of their lives. My extended family all live close so we see each other often.

I have a cat named Jesse. He likes me when it's time to eat. Otherwise, he's my husband's buddy. I do a lot of puzzles, volunteer at Macungie Park and Macungie Flower Park. I have led a water aerobics class at Macungie Pool for 25 plus years. My happy place is baking in the kitchen.

I have taught Sunday School for many years, always the older grades. I oversee our church meal program. I sing on the choir. I am an officer in WIZ. I've served on Church Board. I am part of the Adult Fellowship Committee. I help with communion set up. I am church co-treasurer. I have had the honor of being on 2 Search Committees. I do what I can, when I can, because I love this church and am so grateful that the members are my second family.

MYSTERY MEMBERS

The April Mystery Member was Wendy Grim.

Can you identify the May Mystery Members?

He was born in Pottstown, and she was born in Allentown. They bought their first house together in Topton in August 2023. Her family attends Zion's Union church. They both went to Brandywine Heights where they met in high school band in 2015. He played the trumpet and was the marching band drum major, and she played the flute. They were together all through high school and college. They both attended Kutztown University. She earned her Bachelor's degree in environmental science and geology, and he earned his Bachelor's degree in marketing. When they were younger, she played softball and he was an Eagle Scout. Now, they enjoy doing house projects together and playing with their orange cat named Pumpkin. They got engaged in Hawaii in 2021, and they were married at Zion's Union Church in 2023. They are expecting their first baby in September 2024.

REJOICING SPIRITS WORSHIP SERVICE

Rejoicing Spirits of Eastern Berks County service is at **3:00 P.M. the first Sunday of every month** at St. Paul's UCC, 47 S. Whiteoak Street, Kutztown. This no-shush worship enriches the lives of all people, especially those with disabilities. Rejoicing Spirits includes music and joyous singing, brief, meaningful messages, and the chance to connect with others.

200TH ANNIVERSARY OF ZION'S UNION CHURCH MAXATAWNY

In December 2026, we will be celebrating the 200th Anniversary of our church. Committees are being organized to plan this special event. Members who are interested in helping with the plans for the celebration should notify Greg Haas.

OUR SYMPATHIES TO...

... the family of Ralph Noll, Sr.
... the family of Melvin Adam.
... the family of Larry Siegfried.

... the family of Richard Warmkessel.
... the family of Mary Haas.

THANK YOU

Thank you for all the cards, phone calls, visits, and food during Richard's passing. It is great to have a caring church family.

Jane Warmkessel

Thank you to all who supported and participated in Zion's Relay for Life fundraisers. We raised \$297 for Daffodil Days and \$582 for the R&K sandwich sale. As always, we appreciate the continued support of our generous congregation.

Zion's Relay for Life Team

Thank you for all the cards and condolences we received after Richard's passing. We are so blessed to have so many caring friends.

Randy and Karen Warmkessel

WIZ CART LIBRARY

WIZ invites you to take a book or jigsaw puzzle from their WIZ Cart Library, which is available in the Gathering Area every Sunday. Feel free to keep the item, return it, or add to the inventory. Enjoy reading or 'jigsaw-ing' with others in the congregation who share your common interest. Have fun!

PRAYER REQUESTS

We ask God's blessings upon those who are ill, recovering from surgery, homebound, or have asked for our prayers:

Larry Stamm, Jane Warmkessel, Cooper Kellum, Sherie Schaeffer, Tracey Lutz, Bonnie Haas, Bill & Karen Howard, Elaine & Paul Heffner, Irene Isamoyer, Jamey Webb, Liz Jones, Julia Mohn, Owen Shorette, Walter & Doris Dietrich, John & Marlene Costello, Barry & Ann Miller, Marilyn & Bill Bird, Marian Stettler, Mary Kutz, Gladys Leibold, Donna Slotter, Karen Weaver, Randy Warmkessel, Donna VanDeCar, John Laird, Deb P., Beth S., Drew Stump, Linda Carter, Jim, Sparky Grace, Chris Pinkerton, Laurel Rudy, Grayson Rudy, Livvy Rudy, Sherry S., Joseph Karaisz Sr., Jeremy Crum, Chad, Chris, Bud, Laura G., Keith Egley, Mark Miller, Leila, Bruce Fritzinger, Sherri Gehringer, Vera, Ian Miller, Rosemary LaFratte, Paige Sechler, Ely, Mary Jane Schlenker, Owen Lamendola, Elia, Joanne Pauley, Sarah Johnson, Chris Szarko, Victoria Slotter, Regen Zimmerman, Karen Ames, Donna Rabert, Tom Seifert, Rayann Roth, Valerie, Lorraine Miller, Mary Fox, Christopher Mercado, Christy Ryan, Michele Rodriguez, Judy Redman, Frank Knight, Betty Houck, Mary, Betsy, family of Ralph Noll Sr., family of Richard Warmkessel, family of Melvin Adam, family of Mary Haas, family of Larry Siegfried, family of Darwin Haas Jr.

If anyone can be removed from this list, please notify the church office.

If you know of other persons in need of prayer and you wish to have a name included on the list please email the church, call the church office, or leave a message on the answering machine. If you want a name included on Zion's Prayer Chain call Mary Laub at 610-248-2801.

**“Marks of Faith”
John 20:19-31**

https://www.ucc.org/science_and_technology_network_page/

You are invited into the story of Thomas. Whether it is new to you or very familiar, take a few moments to read his story in the book of John. Sit with one or more of these questions. What words, phrases, or ideas jump out at you? What seems comforting? What is unsettling? What about this story stands the test of time? What part of this story seems better left in the past? What is God calling you to, using this story?

Although he is sometimes called “Doubting Thomas,” the disciple’s willingness to ask questions does not show doubt but in fact its opposite; curiosity and a deep desire to experience the

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.



May 11	Eleanor Nester
May 16	Loretta Flicker
May 16	Donald & Kay Mertz (54 wed)
May 24	Harlow Bailey
May 26	Marilyn Quinter
May 28	Carol Toth
June 7	Mary Kutz
June 8	Shirley Derr
June 15	Eva Christman
June 15	Guerin & Eleanor Nester (61 wed)
June 19	Carol Bennecoff
June 21	Dave & Tina Ehrig (55 wed)
June 24	George & Sandra Leiby (57 wed)
June 27	David & Diane Herber (54 wed)

HISTORY BOOK

The Church History Book is still available to be purchased. The cost is \$15.00. Call the church office if you would like one. Any checks should be made out to "Zion's Union Church Maxatawny". Put "History Book" on the memo line.



MISSION STATEMENT

Energized by the Spirit! Humbled by Christ's Grace! Working for God's glory!

UPCOMING HOLY COMMUNION

You are invited by Jesus Christ to this awesome feast of the Children of God.



May 5	Altar Holy Communion
May 19	Altar Holy Communion (Confirmation)
June 2	Pew Holy Communion

JUNE NEWSLETTER DEADLINE

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