

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

**October
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. The sign-up book and envelopes are currently in the church office. Contact the church office to access them.
- ◆ 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 Marion Angstadt at 610-683-3918.
- ◆ Sports cleats are not allowed in the church.
- ◆ Refreshments should be kept on the first floor of the church.

THE PASTOR'S PAGE



You've all heard the phrase "a picture is worth a thousand words." Nowhere is that truer than in the realm of religion and theology. Some things, like God and heaven, are beyond what human words are capable of expressing. So, it's no wonder that Jesus' favorite method of teaching was in parables—stories that are meant to open our eyes to the heavenly realm that is beyond the power of words to describe. Through his parables, Jesus is painting pictures in our minds and offering us a glimpse into the kingdom of heaven.

Over the summer months in our gospel readings we heard many of Jesus' most beloved parables. Jesus' parables are so popular because they're fun; they invite us to use our imaginations and delight in the wonders of God's kingdom. In every parable Jesus is making the very same point: that the kingdom of heaven "is near at hand," it is all around us for those "with eyes to see and ears to hear."

The great poet, Milton, summed up well what a parable expresses in his classic poem *Paradise Lost*:

*What if Earth
Be but the shadow of Heaven,
And things therein
Each to the other like,
More than on earth is thought?*

To Jesus, earth was "but the shadow of Heaven." Jesus was able to look everywhere around him and see the shadows and reflections of heaven in the seemingly mundane events of everyday life. Just as a shadow is a two-dimensional reflection of a three-dimensional object, so our world may just be a three-dimensional reflection of a higher spiritual realm. Many theologians have surmised that heaven is all around us, but invisible to our eyes. And this is not just theological speculation; scientists and mathematicians have proven that higher dimensional worlds—worlds of five, six, and even more dimensions exist all around us, but are invisible to our three-dimensional eyes. Science fiction stories abound with such speculations. These ideas of other dimensions can actually give us some insight into how the kingdom of heaven can be all around us, but invisible and hidden. Every one of Jesus' parable begins with the words, "The kingdom of heaven is like . . ." And then Jesus goes on to show how a seemingly ordinary event in this world is but a reflection of the way things are in heaven.

In the Parable of the Mustard Seed, Jesus is telling us that the kingdom of God surpasses our wildest dreams and expectations. Like the farmer who plants a mustard seed, the tiniest of all seeds, and ends up with a tree, so the

Kingdom is growing all out of proportion to its tiny, insignificant beginnings. It began with a baby in a manger and a tiny band of disciples who believed he was the Messiah. But out of these tiny, insignificant beginnings has grown a tree of tremendous proportions, a tree that 2,000 years later has branches spreading out into every nation on earth.

In another parable, Jesus compares God's kingdom to a woman mixing yeast into a batch of flour. The Kingdom, while all around us, is hidden just as the yeast is hidden in the dough. We can't see the yeast, but the bread is fuller and richer because of it, just as the world is fuller and richer because of the presence of Christians within it. Like the mustard seed, the Kingdom grows imperceptibly. Like the yeast in the dough, the Kingdom grows in tiny, unnoticed ways—through friendship, through words of kindness and forgiveness, and through the outstretched helping hand.

In another parable, Jesus tells us that the Kingdom is like what happens when someone finds treasure hidden in a field. That lucky person goes and sells everything he has in order to buy that field. Likewise, Jesus says that finding the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant who is constantly searching for the finest pearls. After finding one pearl of incomparable worth, the "pearl of great price," the merchant sells all he has in order to acquire that one pearl of incomparable value.

Can't you just picture the pearl merchant welcoming his friends into his home, then, in hushed tones, inviting them to come into the back room see the new pearl he bought? Carefully he unwraps it and says, "Look at the beauty of this pearl! I have searched all my life for a pearl as perfect as this. Isn't it incredible?" Then, picture the farmer in the field hitting a large pottery jar with his plow and finding glistening treasure inside. Picture him jumping up and down, hugging his mule, dancing all the way home! Jesus' parables talk about a heart-pounding, spine-tingling, mind-boggling thrill of a lifetime—discovering the kingdom of God.

Unfortunately, Christians don't often seem to feel quite that joyous about their faith. Many Christians find attending worship a dutiful routine rather than a magnificent opportunity to get a glimpse of heaven each week and experience the greatest joy we can know in this world. As we resume our in-person worship this month, perhaps the long time away will enable us to more fully appreciate the great treasure we have in worship and in having fellowship with our brothers and sisters in Christ. I truly believe the old saying that in every dark cloud there is a silver lining. And in the dark cloud of the Covid pandemic maybe the silver lining for the church is a renewed appreciation for the treasure we have in worship.

Jesus' parables invite us to look in the ordinary to find the extraordinary. We can find God's presence and a foretaste of heaven in

ordinary, earthly things like the waters of baptism and the bread and wine of the Lord's Supper. We can catch glimpses of the Kingdom in the everyday things of this world, but one day we shall see it revealed in all its glory. For now, we can see God most fully in Jesus. Jesus himself is our great treasure, the pearl of great price. He came to show us the kingdom that is here now, and to give us a glimpse of the kingdom that is yet to come. As Jesus' disciples, it is our duty to let our lives become pictures of the kingdom, so that others can discover the priceless treasure to be found in being a citizen of the Kingdom of God.

Pastor Jeff

PRAYER REQUESTS

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

Dave Merkel, Jane Warmkessel, Marian Stettler, Lisa Walker, Loretta Flicker, Marlene Costello, Barry Miller, Kay Weidner, Bill Howard, Nikki Phillips, Arlene Oswald, Joe Karaisz, Janet Fegely, Anna Bortz, Lucille Zettlemoyer, Gloria Haas, Richard Warmkessel, Beatrice Bennecoff, Steve O'Neil, Ralph & Helen Noll, Mary Kutz, Lowell Thomas, Marilyn & Bill Bird, Richard Derr, Karen Weaver, Sylvia Heckler, Gladys Leibold, Althea Moyer, Donna Slotter, Ed & Donna VanDeCar, Mary Jane Williams, Leora Haas, Taylor Moyer, Betty Wiltrout, Joyce Kemp, Penny Keller, Ian Miller, Tom Seifert, Victoria Slotter, Donna Rabert, Elia, Deb, Lisa Szarko, Arthur Sell, Herbert Noll, Niki Nolte, Christopher Mercardo, Jo Corrado, Jamie Jordan, Rayann Roth, Michele Rodriquez, Sue Zimmerman, Renee Wolfe, Kim Markham, Valerie, Drew & Mary Jane Stump, Caitlin Dickey, Frank Knight, Christy Ryan, Lorraine Miller, Judy Redman, Betty Houck, Mary Fox, Larry Hockman, Mary, Betsy, Gary Deder, Gary Sell, Russell Peden, family of Elaine Berger.

FROM THE MISSION OUTREACH COMMITTEE

Many thanks to those of you who have continued to support the Mission Outreach Committee's efforts to supply food items to families in need within the Kutztown School District. Another 25 bags were delivered on September 14th. If you are interested in making a donation, food items can be delivered to Cindy O'Neil's home at 250 Church Road, Kutztown. Thank you!

PLEASE UNDERSTAND THAT SOME OF THE EVENTS IN THIS NEWSLETTER MAY NOT HAPPEN DUE TO THE CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC.

OCTOBER AND NOVEMBER WORSHIP

October 4	18 th Sunday after Pentecost	church 10:15
October 11	19 th Sunday after Pentecost	church 10:15
October 18	20 th Sunday after Pentecost	church 10:15
October 25	21 st Sunday after Pentecost	church 10:15
November 1	22 nd Pentecost/All Saints Sunday	church 10:15
November 8	23 rd Sunday after Pentecost	church 10:15
November 15	24 th Sunday after Pentecost	church 10:15
November 22	Christ the King Sunday	church 10:15
November 25	Thanksgiving Eve	7:00 P.M.
November 29	First Sunday of Advent	church 10:15

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. **DO NOT DELIVER items to the church. Deliver donations to Cindy O’Neil’s home at 250 Church Road, Kutztown.**



- | | | |
|---------------------------------------|---------------|--------------|
| 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 | | |

OPPORTUNITY HOUSE

The Mission Outreach Committee will provide the evening meal for Opportunity House on **October 7th**. If you are willing to prepare meatloaf, mashed potatoes, or provide large cans of green beans and fresh fruit, please contact Cindy O’Neil at 610-683-5412 by September 28th. Thank you!

NEIGHBORS IN NEED

Sunday, **October 4th**, we will be receiving the Neighbors In Need special mission offering. Your gift to the Neighbors In Need offering will support United Church of Christ's ministries of justice and compassion throughout the United States. One third of the NIN funds support the Council for American Indian Ministry. Two thirds is used by the UCC Justice and Witness Ministries to support a variety of justice initiatives. Please think about how your own generosity can help reflect the Neighbors In Need theme, "All Children Have The Right To Simply Be Children" and consider making a gift to the Neighbors in Need offering on October 4th.



D.E.A.R

In August God called us to help a local family with post Isaias storm yard damage and basement flooding clean up through our UCC Disaster Coordinator Karl Jones and Crisis cleanup. A Zion's crew worked two evenings. We sawed up downed trees and did general yard debris cleanup one evening and removed flood ruined items and mud muck out from the basement another evening. I'd like to extend a huge thank you to those who took time out of their lives to answer God's call and help lighten the burden of a family in a time of devastation: Pastor Jeff, Joe and Lisa Walker, Kevin and Lisa Krause, and Greg and Patty Haas. If anyone is interested in helping on a clean-up work crew in the future or has a clean-up issue that they could use help with, please contact Sherie Mohn at (H) 610-683-8391 or text 484-661-8109.

Blessings, Sherie

CLEARANCES NEEDED

Please make copies of your completed Criminal and Child Abuse clearances and send them to the church along with the other paper that needs to be signed. Clearances must be on file in the church office when Sunday School and church events resume. Put "Attention Karen" on the outside of envelope. Thank you to those who have already returned their clearances to the church office.

CHURCH BOARD

August 25, 2020

1. Reopening – The reopening task force will meet again on 9/14 and if the numbers continue to drop, we plan on opening the church on 9/27. A letter will go to the congregation with reopening information at that time.
2. Electronic sign – Installation will begin as all necessary permits and approvals have been obtained. All monies have been raised except \$4,500.
3. Telephone – A new telephone has been installed in the elevator.
4. Sunday School – Sunday School will not be active until at least January.
5. Worship and Music – The “Over Seventy” Day and Senior Dinner scheduled for November 1st has been cancelled for this year.
6. Finance – The 6 month audit of the books has successfully concluded.
7. WIZ – The Cookbook is complete and available for \$12.00 each.
8. New Board member – Sharon Leiby agreed to take Loretta Flicker’s vacated place on the board. The board would like to thank Sharon for stepping up!

CHURCH SIGN

The Church Board has given the approval to upgrade the church sign along the Rt 222 highway. This upgrade will allow us to post messages electronically instead of the manual lettering we now use. Our sign has been a source of wonderful messages in the past to many people passing by and we want to continue that service, however working with the old sign and the lettering has become quite cumbersome and requires attention. The upgrade will cost approximately \$45,000. The majority of the funding has already been donated or pledged but we are looking for help with the remainder of the cost. If you are interested and are able to help by donating to this sign expense, send your donation to Peggy Morgan, Church Treasurer, 39 S. Church St., Macungie, PA 18062. Checks should be made out to Zion’s Union Church Maxatawny with Church Sign on the check’s memo line. Thank you in advance for considering to help fund this project.

OVER 70 DINNER

The Church Board and the Worship and Music Committee have decided there will not be an Over 70 Day and Senior Dinner this year.

SENIOR MINISTRY COMMITTEE

The Senior Ministry Committee will meet **October 14th**.

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.*

November 9 Meeting at 1:00 P.M. (Ketch Up Day)

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



ANNOUNCING THE LONG-AWAITED COOKBOOK

The WIZ (Women In Zion) have wonderful news to share. The cookbooks have arrived and some fine tuning had to be done before we offered them FOR SALE. We wish to extend our heartfelt THANKS to everyone who helped with this project. It truly became a labor of love.



The price per book is \$12.00 and is a great bargain for all the wonderful meals you will be able to prepare and enjoy. Cookbooks can be purchased from Nancy Fulton at her home or in the parking lot at the church. Call her at 610-682-6357.

SENIOR FELLOWSHIP GROUP

The Senior Fellowship Group will not meet in October. Hopefully we can meet **November 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.



SCRABBLE

Scrabble has been cancelled until further notice.

CANCER SUPPORT GROUP

The Cancer Support Group will not meet in October. The next meeting will be the first Monday of November, **November 2nd** at 6:30 P.M.

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.

BLOOD DRIVE

The Blood Mobile will be at Zion's on **Tuesday, November 3rd** from 3:30 P.M. to 7:00 P.M. Sign up online at giveapint.org (Group ID: 3303).



The 2021 Blood Drive dates are for the third **Thursday of the month** from 3:30 to 7:00 P.M. Please mark your calendars.

February 18, 2021

May 20, 2021

August 19, 2021

November 18, 2021

CEMETERY CLEAN UP



ALL flower/wreath arrangements must be removed from the cemetery by the 3rd Saturday of November. The only exceptions will be the arrangements attached to the top of the tombstones. Cemetery clean-up will take place **November 21st** (weather permitting).



DID YOU KNOW?

- Jennifer Weidman, who was serving as interim director, has been named director of human resources at Kutztown University. Jennifer has been at KU more than 20 years.

SUNDAY SCHOOL NEWS

The Sunday School officers have met and discussed our options for resuming Sunday School. After much thought and prayer we have decided at this point to not plan on a reopening until 2021. In the meantime students can find Sunday School activities on the church website under the Sunday School heading.

There were a lot of factors that went into this decision and we want our students, parents, and teachers to feel comfortable and safe upon returning. We are hoping to resume classes slowly, possibly meeting twice a month at first, then going back to meeting weekly. When we do finally get to meet together as a group we will hold our Promotion Sunday.

As we all know things can change very quickly, so, we will keep everyone updated in future newsletters.

Courtney

FROM THE RECORD BOOK

FUNERAL: *Elaine M. Berger*, 73, of Kutztown died September 2, 2020 in Kutztown. Graveside service was held September 10, 2020 in Zion Maxatawny Union Cemetery by Rev. Jeffrey J. Butz.

MEMBER UPDATES

Loss: Elaine M. Berger

“Miss no single opportunity of making some small sacrifice, here by a smiling look, there by a kindly word; always doing the smallest right and doing it all for love.”

—St. Therese of Lisieux

EMPOWERED TO EMPOWER OTHERS

Leaving her home in Suriname for Augsburg University, Minneapolis, Sarah Abendenon felt frightened and excited.

"Before my departure for the U.S., I was a very insecure girl," she recalled.

Abendenon's home church, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Suriname, had endorsed her to pursue her bachelor's degree in the United States through the ELCA's International Women Leaders (IWL) program.

Since graduating in May 2018, Abendenon has found work as a publications officer, started her own small business and volunteered her marketing skills to her church. She credits her Augsburg education as invaluable. "I came back much more confident," she said.

Abendenon is one of 39 young women who have received IWL scholarships, awarded through partnerships with 11 ELCA colleges and universities. The scholarships continue for the duration of their bachelor's degree programs.

Thanks to the generosity of ELCA members during and after *Always Being Made New: The Campaign for the ELCA*, all the women's expenses are covered, "a type of scholarship that's extremely rare these days," said Kaleb Sutherland, director, International Leaders program for scholarship administration and student engagement. "The idea is to remove any barriers for students to access this opportunity."

Mission Support dollars fund IWL program administration and help to support ELCA companion churches, some of which encourage young women to apply for IWL.

Yuen Ching Lee graduated from Luther College, Decorah, Iowa, in 2019 with the help of an IWL scholarship. She was endorsed by her home church, the Lutheran Church in Malaysia.

Originally from Selangor, Malaysia, Lee said studying in the United States "broadened my mind and mindset to what things and society could be like, especially when it comes to women empowerment and going against patriarchy."

Today, Lee is a teacher for a Malaysian nonprofit, Dignity for Children Foundation, that educates underprivileged youth to pursue careers that could lift them out of poverty.

Sutherland noted that the ELCA designed IWL to accompany young women from ELCA companion churches in the hope that they would return to their communities and churches to pursue their vocations with confidence. Recent graduates such as Abendenon and Lee are thriving.

"I continue to do the work of the [church] and the IWL program [by using] my gifts and talents," Abendenon said. "And I pass it on by helping [my] neighbors wherever I can. No matter where we are and where we are from. We are one."

To watch a video about this ministry, visit [ELCA.org/SOFIA](https://elca.org/SOFIA).

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](https://elca.org/SOFIA).

Reprinted from Stories of Faith in Action

SYNOD NEWS

Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod, ELCA

Growing Young in a Changing World: Virtual Summit

Growing Young In A Changing World

Virtual Summit

November 10-11, 2020

\$40.00 per person

Registration open to all NEPA Church Members and Rostered Ministers

Resources & Presentation by Jake Mulder of Fuller Youth Institute

Have you watched again and again as youth leave your church after they have affirmed their baptism?

Or maybe you have youth who only attend youth group and are not part of the larger congregation?

Does your congregation have a large age gap missing of people in their 20s and even 30s?

If you see any of the above as problems that the church needs to address, **then this event is for you!** It is also for as many folks as you can bring along with you.

The Youth, Young Adult, and Family Ministry Team is thrilled to welcome everyone in our synod to a two-day Virtual Summit titled "Growing Young in a Changing World."

Dozens of youth leaders in our synod have already reaped some of the benefits from a book called Growing Young. On November 10th and 11th, one of the authors of that book, Jake Mulder from the Fuller Youth Institute, will be working with our synod specifically to help us be more welcoming and engaging to the youth

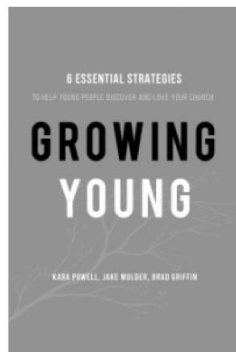
and young people in our midst. **ALL synod church staff, rostered ministers and members are welcomed and encouraged to attend.**

We will meet digitally in the morning and afternoon of Tuesday, November 10th and the morning of Wednesday, November 11th, with an optional afternoon session that day.

It is strongly encouraged that you read *Growing Young* prior to attending. You can purchase the book at <https://shop.fulleryouthinstitute.org/products/growing-young>.

Please note: Throughout this event, you will spend time in break out groups with others from either your congregation or mission district as we develop action plans to carry our teachings forward. Therefore, it will be helpful if you know in advance if others from your congregation or a partnering congregation are attending.

Please email sammy@nepsynod.org with questions and register at <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/growing-young-in-a-changing-world-virtual-summit-tickets-117650278149>.



Assembly 2020 - A New Way of Being Church Together

Friday evening, October 16 & Sunday afternoon, October 18

Friday evening, October 23 & Saturday morning and afternoon, October 24

Watch the Assembly Online

Registration for voting members closes on October 1. However, even you didn't register as a voting member, you can still watch all the proceedings, including the election of a new bishop. The entire assembly will be broadcast live and can be viewed by anyone with an internet connection. For "visitors" - those who simply wishes to watch the proceedings - unlike past years, there is no need to register.

The information you need to watch the Assembly will be posted on the synod website (nepasynod.org).



**We Are Church
Together**

NEPA Synod Assembly 2020

ELCA "Stories of Faith in Action"

Stories are the foundation of our faith. They teach us how to serve God with humility. They remind us of our identity as God's beloved children. They bring us together and give us hope for the future. Given the challenges of 2020, we need stories of hope and unity more than ever before. That's where your 2020-2021 edition of "Stories of Faith in Action" comes in.

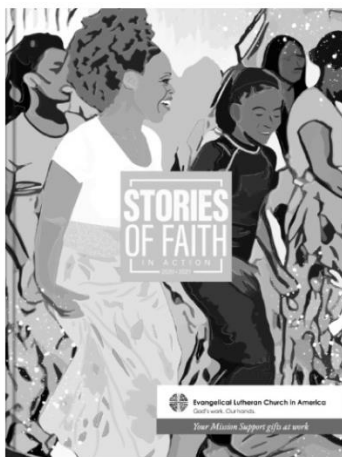
This annual publication illustrates how God is at work across the ELCA through your generosity. It highlights how a portion of your offering, called Mission Support, advances the ministry of our church – particularly the ways the ELCA nurtures vital congregations, raises up leaders and grows the global church. Most importantly, it's one way we say thank you for your faithful generosity to your congregation, your synod and the churchwide organization – by showing your offering at work.

The latest edition is now available digitally and includes:

- A special message from ELCA Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton.
- Nine inspiring stories from around the country and world.
- Your 2019 financial report on Mission Support – the portion of your offering your congregation shares with your synod and your synod shares with the churchwide organization.
- A story-based devotional for use at Bible studies or committee meetings.

Visit the ELCA website at <https://www.elca.org/sofia> where you can either download a printable version or view it as a "Flip Book."

[This article is taken from an email authored by Victoria Flood, Director, ELCA Mission Support and Nick Kiger, Associate Director, ELCA Mission Support.]



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View the full color edition online at <http://nepasynod.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.



October 1	Mary Jane Williams
October 11	William Brensinger, Jr.
October 13	Paul Heffner
October 14	Richard & Jane Warmkessel (53)
October 16	Jeanette Fegely
October 21	Ernest & Carolyn Wilttrout (64 wed)
October 22	Grace Haas
October 23	William & Karen Howard (55 wed)
October 25	Edward VanDeCar
October 26	Larry Stamm
October 30	Richard & Grace Haas (55 wed)
October 30	Jean Harter
October 31	Eleanor Merkel
November 1	Richard Haas
November 3	David Kamp
November 4	Ernest Wilttrout
November 6	Donald Mertz
November 6	Kay Mertz
November 6	Fay Kamp
November 6	Carl & Loretta Flicker (55 wed)
November 10	Althea Moyer
November 10	Richard Weigle
November 10	Barry Ziegler
November 14	Nancy Held
November 14	Karen Howard
November 15	Catherine Freeby
November 16	Barry & Ann Miller (52 wed)
November 17	Leora Haas
November 22	Dale Grim

OUR SYMPATHIES TO

... the family of Elaine Berger.



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.

November 1

Holy Communion (tentative)



NOVEMBER NEWSLETTER DEADLINE

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