

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

<i>Message</i>	1-2
<i>Luther Chapel</i>	3
<i>Annual Mtg</i>	4-5
<i>Vicar Jane</i>	6
<i>Thank you</i>	7
<i>Social Min Rep</i>	8
<i>Green Corner</i>	9
<i>Prayer List</i>	10
<i>Giving Report</i>	
<i>Attendance</i>	11
<i>Food Pantry</i>	12
<i>Not Your Momma's</i>	
<i>Holiday Sch</i>	13
<i>Staff/Vol Lunch</i>	14
<i>Staff Bonus</i>	
<i>Giving Envelopes</i>	
<i>Christmas</i>	15
<i>Birthdays</i>	16
<i>Council</i>	17-18
<i>Adm/Fin</i>	19
<i>Property</i>	20
<i>Worship&amp;Music</i>	21
<i>Schedule</i>	22
<i>Calendar</i>	23

## Some Thoughts on Christmas

The Christmas season is upon us. I know this because XM Radio, which is our car music channel of choice, has started broadcasting Christmas themed music on some of its channels. Our choice is to tune into "Holiday Traditions". This is a mix of traditional carols and the holiday songs we grew up with in the 50's and 60's. The comfort provided to us by "Holiday Traditions" really gets us into the holiday spirit. My parents were big fans of Perry Como and Andy Williams and we loved their holiday themed Christmas shows. And who doesn't love watching Bing Crosby's "White Christmas". Now I love Charlie Brown and Rudolph and I have no problem with Santa, but the real message of Christmas always seems to take a back seat to the flood of music, and TV shows the secular Christmas Season provides from November through December. My daughters both spend Christmas eve watching Jean Shephard's "A Christmas Story". No one who grew up or lives in Indiana has not spent at least one holiday season watching "It's a Wonderful Life". By the time we actually get to December 24<sup>th</sup>, the world is ready to move on to Valentine's Day.

My mother and father hosted a "holiday open house" for several years. My mother would spend weeks planning and preparing for this event and we were often dragged into the vortex which was my mother's holiday passion by being required to help with cookie baking and tea sandwich preparation. My mother's "crab canapes" were legendary in the neighborhood. At its peak, we had nearly 100 people in attendance. The one special "Christmas moment" I remember most about my mother is that each year she would take us to center city Philadelphia to see the Wanamaker's Christmas tree (claiming one million lights) and to see Santa at the Gimbel's Christmas village. We always ate lunch at Kelly's or Horn and Hardart's automat. (If you do not know what that is you can google it). We traveled to the city on the Reading railroad (Yep, the one on the Monopoly board). You might recall my article about my mother's driving test. There was no way she would drive into the city in that big 1958 Mercury station wagon.

Merry  
Christmas

My mother did not “grow up” in the church. Her father died suddenly when she was six years old and my grandmother, now a single mom, was left to carry on. Life in the 1930’s was hard enough with the depression, and there was also no social safety net to speak of. But somehow, they survived. My mother’s life in the church began as an adult. She was baptized and confirmed while living, newly married, with her father’s parents. She chose the Episcopal church, the church of her father’s family. My father, whose family was Swedish Lutheran and my grandparents (my grandmother had remarried) were confirmed in the church at my mother’s urging as were the three of us. So, while my mother really enjoyed the secular Christmas, she never lost sight of what Christmas was really all about.

Mom was deep into the Church’s message concerning the birth of Jesus. She believed in the saving grace of God, the life-saving message of God’s only son Jesus Christ, and that God’s spirit is with us even into death. What she understood and what most people who celebrate Christmas outside the church do not is that the birth of Jesus Christ is the greatest gift ever given by God. Jesus’ birth really begins our new relationship with God. Jesus arrives in this world as we all do, as a baby. He lives the life we all experience, understanding our sorrow and joy, our pain and pleasure, and the actual physical touch of one hand to another. This makes “God among us” even more miraculous. God is with us means sharing our life experience and understanding what makes us, well us. The truth is that the birth of Jesus ushered in the age of Immanuel (God is with us) and He continues to be with us. We celebrate his presence every week during the eucharist. So, we don’t need eight weeks of Christmas carols. We have fifty-two weeks of God with us through celebrating the Eucharist. We don’t have to wait until December 24<sup>th</sup> to celebrate the birth of Jesus. We do it every week.

Perhaps God’s gift to us is just too big for most of us to grasp. Many of us are so programmed into “earning” all that we have, that it’s just too hard for us to accept this free gift. Many of us would feel better if we could do something good to earn God’s grace. We don’t want God to love us unless we can do something, anything, to earn his grace and love. Maybe it’s us and not God who makes life so hard. Accepting God’s grace is a liberating act. It frees us from the guilt of sin and allows us to be free to obey those commandments. Love God with all your heart and mind and soul. And love each other. Care for each other. Help each other. Be a friend to each other. That is the real message of Christmas.

I thank God for my knowing my mother. She above all others taught me that God’s life changing grace through Jesus Christ is ours for the taking. We just need the courage to be free enough to grab hold of it and live it.

KH



## News from Luther Chapel - Part of the 3-2-1 Ministry— November

### News from LUTHER CHAPEL LUTHERAN CHURCH

We welcome Vicar Jane to our ministry. She is an exciting addition to our worship service and meetings. She will be continuing her studies and with her program she will be with the 3-2-1 for sometime and sometimes she will be doing other and required activities.

Sunday we received a gift from the Coral-Graceton Sportsman Club. They were seeking places in the community to spread some funds and were kind enough to think of us at Luther Chapel and asked if we needed something for our mission. We said YES! We are thinking of some gravel for our parking. Thank you Coral-Graceton Sportsman's Club. We appreciate the funds.

On Sunday, Nov.13, Darlene Brown Beatty held a Veteran's Day program after Service. Everyone seemed to enjoy the program. She taught us about the many Memorials available to visit and the importance of visiting these sights. She held a flag folding demonstration and prepared a delicious meal. Thank you Darlene!

Her next project will be a game day event in the Social Hall on Jan.13th, 2024 for the Congregation from 2:00 til 4:00. This is a Saturday afternoon activity for the whole family. Bring your favorite game and be ready to play. There will be light refreshments, but you never know she might have pizza.

Sarah Shaffer will be serving on the intern committee.

Gary Alsop and Darlene Brown will be leaving our Council this Jan. And so we are in need of two members willing to fill the gap. Please consider joining us—we are a fun group and share our Joys and Concerns at each meeting and we are flexible with our times and locations.

We are hosting an Advent 4 service on Dec. 23 at 5:30. After the service we are having Chicken and Biscuits dinner with dessert. Come out and join in the waiting for the Bridegroom to start the Feast.

Christmas Eve Service will be at Luther Chapel at 10:00 pm.

Zion in Indiana will host a Christmas Day breakfast and service starting at 9:30 am.

A busy month ahead and a busy month behind us. Pastor Tedd reminded us Ash Wednesday is coming up on February 14th, ready or not.

Next council meeting will be Dec.29 . And we will be reviewing our budget 12/10/23 after Services.

Peace and prayers fr all during these busy days.

Kathy Keller

## Zion Holds Annual Meeting

On Sunday November 19, 2023, Zion Lutheran Church in Indiana, PA held its annual meeting. The congregation met to elect new representatives to council and administration and finance and appoint representatives to the 2024 Synod Assembly and Trinity 321. Membership also approved a budget for fiscal year 2024.

The meeting was convened at 4:03 PM. Vicar Jane Miller provided an opening prayer. The minutes from the 2022 annual meeting were reviewed and approved. Pastor Coger presented his report and council president Kevin Huston provided the membership with a review of Zion's activities during 2023. The 39 attending members were provided with Zion's 2023 Annual Report. The report contained committee reports and the proposed 2024 budget. Annual reports for those not in attendance at the annual meeting are available at the back of the Nave.

A ballot for 2024 was distributed and the attending membership cast their votes. Kim Balcerak and Rik Wissinger were appointed as tellers.

The following members were elected to council for a three-year term:

**Jerry Ruffner, Becky Slade, Barry Widdowson**

The following members were elected to Administration and Finance for a three-year term:

**Dave Keith**

The following members were elected to represent Zion on the Trinity 321 board:

**Rik Wissinger, Barry Widdowson**

The following members were elected to represent Zion at the 2024 Synod Assembly:

**Beth Grafton, Dirk Grafton, Dory Campbell**

The following members were elected to serve on the Endowment Fund Committee:

**Dawn Seagren, Don Seagren, Sheri Bowersox, Pernel Bowersox**

The congregation received an update on the ZARP project. With the completed landscaping of the area south of the nave (former parish house location) all aspects of the congregation's ZARP plan have been completed. The congregation approved a plan to purchase an outdoor bench and re-name the outdoor space "the Rossman Shaffer Garden" in memory of Rossman Shaffer who provided all of the funds for the landscaping to be planned and completed. The property committee will purchase the bench, position the bench and attach a memorial plate to the bench. Funds for this were authorized to be expended from the undesignated Memorial Fund Account.

Reports on ongoing capital improvement projects were provided.

The 2024 budget was presented. Our 2024 budget requires \$190,000 of current and benevolence contributions from the congregation. This is in line with our actual 2023 contributions. The 2024 budget includes expenses (\$32,000) for additional ministry support through our participation in the seminary intern program. The budget includes \$6,400 to support the IUP Music Scholars program. The budget has increased support for more robust programming from the Evangelism committee (\$5,000) and the Recreation and Fellowship committee (\$5,000). An additional \$10,000 was added to the Property budget for a general maintenance fund (\$10,000). These three additional expense line items will be funded with Zion's 2023 budget surplus. Our total budget for 2024 is \$223,085.00. Following discussion on all these items, the budget was passed by unanimous vote.

The congregation also took action on providing a one time gift for Lutherlyn's capital improvement program. The congregation voted to contribute \$5,000 to the campaign with funds being sent from our Undesignated Memorial Fund account.

The congregation also took action on moving several dedicated account funds into the Endowment Fund. Moving these funds to the Endowment fund serves two purposes. First, the accounts will now be further protected as all funds from the Endowment Fund cannot be expended without a two-thirds vote of the congregation at a properly called meeting. Second, they will be available to be bundled with other endowment fund money to secure higher interest investments. This will produce increased interest income allowing the Endowment Fund Committee the ability to have a greater impact in providing outside funds for ongoing ministry opportunities. The following dedicated accounts were moved into the congregation's Endowment Fund:

Thrivent Fund: \$22,570.00      Steinway Piano Renovation Fund: \$19,022.00

Along with the contributions (\$51,000) the fund received from the Fish estate, this action has increased our total Endowment Fund to \$200,000

With no other business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at 5:05 PM.

## **Who is Vicar Jane?**

I am Vicar Jane Miller. I live in the small rural community of Mayport, Pennsylvania. I live in my paternal great grandparent's home that consists of an approximately 90-acre farm, the family homestead, and barn. My home is in Clarion County about halfway between New Bethlehem and Brookville, Pennsylvania, right off of Route 28. I am a retired pediatric nurse practitioner and finished my career at Children's Community Pediatrics in Kittanning and Children's Express Care in Monroeville.

I am a cradle Lutheran and lifelong member of Zion Lutheran Church in Shannondale. I have served on church council, played in the bell choir, and have taught Sunday School and Vacation Bible School. I have been an Authorized Lay Worship Leader (ALWL) for several years. I believe that my discernment process began when I was a child. At about age 10, I was involved in a farm accident that should have taken my life; however, miraculously, I was not injured. My father made me realize that God had saved me and on that summer day I came to know that Jesus was real. Over the years as an ALWL, members of my home congregation have asked me to do their weddings or baptize their babies. Things of which I am not qualified to do. These requests began to plant a seed in my heart that perhaps I was being called to something greater. So here I am in my third semester at United Lutheran Seminary. I am pursuing a Master of Divinity through the ULS distributed learning program. At the end of this semester, I will have half of the required credits. Because of their distributed learning program, I am able to take my classes via Zoom.

I am divorced and have two grown adult children, Ron and Kari, and two young adult grandchildren, Preston and Regan. My hobbies include gardening, both flowers and vegetables. In addition, I like to read, knit, and crochet, although being in seminary does not permit many of these pastimes.

I look forward to getting to know all of you and sharing the love of Christ.

## THANK YOU

At the congregation's 2023 Annual Meeting, I decided to withdraw from serving on Zion's council. I have been on council six out of the last seven years. It has been a challenge for sure as we navigated the pandemic and undertook to finish the work of the ZARP program and continue to work through several large capital projects.

Through it all, I have had a wonderful and supportive council to work with. They really understand our obligation to protecting our place in the Indiana faith community and they are dedicated to preserving what we have for future generations of Zion.

I look forward to supporting the new council and its leadership as they begin a new year of service to the congregation. I know they will chart a course that will make us proud.

I will remain as a non-voting member of the administration and finance committee, Kathy and I will continue the home communion commitment which we enjoy, and I will do the other things, bulletins and newsletter writing, since these can be accomplished at home.

KH

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## The incorrect Social Ministry Report was inserted in the 2023 Annual Report Booklet — the report below is the correct one

### **Annual Report**

#### **Social Ministry 2023**

This year started out with a lot of giving to those in need in our Indiana Community.

Zion Food Pantry permanently closed in the fall of 2022. During the fall and early 2023, time was spent clearing out all of the remaining food in the Food Pantry room at Zion. Food was distributed to Calvary Presbyterian Church Little Free Pantry, Chevy Chase Community Center Food Pantry, and IUP Student Food Pantry.

In January 2023 the remaining Food Pantry funds were distributed to 10 local Food banks and agencies (\$1,000 each) to help those in need. Zion Food Pantry helped so many for so many years and it was a blessing to continue to help the other programs after we closed.

Two of Zion's large freezers were also donated to two area food banks; Chevy Chase Community Center, and Creekside Area Food Pantry serving Creekside, Ernest and Washington Twp. These newer freezers were sitting empty, using electricity, and we felt they could be better used by others. (We do still have a freezer.) Both agencies were so happy to receive the freezers, saying they would now have more space to store the frozen food they ordered to be given to the hungry families.

Zion kept on giving, when throughout the year, any offering received for Food Pantry were sent each month to a different food Pantry on our original list.

#### Back To School Bash

Zion participated in the 15<sup>th</sup> annual Back to School Bash on August 19. When asked to donate school supplies Zion members did not fail and donated over 70 plastic pencil boxes, and 125 composition books. This year we had 390 children registered. At the Bash, each received a free new backpack filled with school supplies, \$10 gift card, \$40 clothing voucher for Salvation Army thrift store, free haircut, and many activities and free gifts given out by the vendors at the event. Zion's building was utilized as a bathroom stop during the event. Thanks to Zion member Rik Wissinger who was the "door watcher" and enjoyed watching the activities taking place and talking to the families participating.

What can we do in the future? I am always looking for ideas and need your help in giving back in mission to our community. Come join me on this committee.

Sue Dickson



## Green Corner NWPASynod Green Team

### *Earth Friendly Holiday Celebrations*

Here are some ideas for “greening-up” your holiday get togethers!

- ♥ Substitute throw-away plastic table covers with cloth tablecovers, bed sheets or butcher/craft paper (furnish crayons or makers for guests to decorate).
- ♥ Choose organic and local foods.
- ♥ Use real plates and silverware or consider compostable options.
- ♥ Having a large number of guests? Provide markers or labels for their cups, so only one per person is needed.
- ♥ Give socially conscious gifts, consider “no gifts” or encourage attendees to bring a donation for the area animal shelter or food pantry.
- ♥ Decorate using plants and other botanicals that are natural can be very pretty and reused, disposed of environmentally, or donated, for example. Wreaths and other decorations can be made from fabric.
- ♥ Choose gift wrap wisely as described in the November, 2023 Green Corner
- ♥ Provide labeled trash bags, separating landfill and recyclable items.

The Green Team’s purpose is to “raise awareness of and advocate for the care of creation”. Our mission is to support and encourage creation care ministries, raise awareness, model creation care advocacy consistent with ELCA teachings in our faith communities and public life.

[nwpasynodgreenteam@gmail.com](mailto:nwpasynodgreenteam@gmail.com)

<https://www.northwesternpasynodelca.org/nwpa-green-team.html>

PRAY for those who suffer oppression, death, and tragedy. Please pray for those who travel. Please pray for those who serve in the armed forces and for their families. Pray for peace for all peoples.

Remember all those requesting prayer: Caroline Anderson, Ron Anderson, Tina Anderson, Mike Bash, Susan & Bob Butchkoski, Jim Carloni, Adam Chilenski, Ann Cogar, Deb Cosgrove, Jeff Davis, Paul Davis, Kalise Dugan, Ernie Fisher, Beth Ford, Carol Forster, Jen Frick, the Guella family, Bonnie Hilty, Chris Howard, Dan Howard, Diane Howard, Family of Warren & Vicki Isakow, Neil Isenberg, Family of Sue Johns (sons-Avery & Holden), Bishop Michael Lozano, Prisca Maier, Richard Malacarne, Paula Miller, Dave Nycum, Otto Family (Jill Shively-Mason-Cole), Fred Park, Loretta Piper, the Prinkey Family, Bob Reifsteck, Family of Larry Rice, Jenn Rising, Georgie Sandrowicz, Coleen Seagren, Shelby Sisco, Gladys Smith, Todd Walters, Jane Williams, Dominic Yensi, Holly.

We pray for all those currently serving in the military especially, Zachery Horner, Mark Collins, Chad Beighley and Nicole Beighley, Matthew McEldowney, Corey Feretti and Franklin Feretti, and Stephen Davis.

We also pray for comfort and peace for our homebound including Geraldine Shatzer, Marietta (Mo) Foltz and Bea Ruth.

**Prayers for our family and friends is a cooperative effort**

We at Zion, are privileged to pray for you and your loved ones and friends. Please be sure to let us know of your prayer requests. And it would help us so much if you could update us on the status of those on our prayer list.

We want to continue praying for those who are in need, to give thanks to God for those who have been healed and to pray for any family if they lost a loved one. That can only happen if YOU keep in touch with Zion's office and update us regularly.

You can speak to Beverly Monday through Thursday from 8 AM until 2 PM or email her at

[zion.lutheran@comcast.net](mailto:zion.lutheran@comcast.net).

Thank you in advance for your partnership in this prayer venture.

NOTE: Zion council discussed our prayer list management at their recent monthly meeting. Council has suggested that a quarterly review be conducted on the prayer list. With that in mind we need your help in verifying that ALL who continue to need our prayer support remain on the list.

**GIVING REPORT: MONTH OF NOVEMBER**

Needed for November operating budget:	\$ 12,899.40
Received in November:	<u>\$ 14,036.60</u>
Amount Still Due for November:	<b>\$ -1,137.20 (over budget)</b>

**In-Person Worship Attendance and On-line Viewing Last Month**

<u>Service Dates</u>	<u>Saturday</u>	<u>Sunday</u>
November 4 and 5	19	30
November 11 and 12	19	47
November 18 and 19	17	29
November 25 and 26	25	29

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### **Zion Continues its Food Pantry Support**

While we no longer have a Food Pantry to distribute food to our area neighbors who are in need, we can still help with Indiana's food insecurity by contributing to the other local food pantries who are still working hard to ease hunger in our area.

Zion's council has endorsed this effort. Those of us at Zion who still wish to contribute to help feeding our neighbors in need, can do so by donating each month to "Food Pantry". We will combine our monthly "Food Pantry" offering and then distribute it to one of our local food banks.

You can support this program by sending your contribution along with your regular Zion offering. Please make the dollar amount you wish to contribute to "Food Pantry" by marking that amount in the "Food Pantry" box on your contribution envelope.

We will select a different food bank each month and send our collected monthly contributions to that food bank.

We will be sending our donation this month to: **Homer City/Center Township Food Bank – Sponsored by Homer City United Methodist Church**

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## **Not Your Momma's Advent Celebration**

**Saturday, December 02, 2023**

**3:00-4:30 PM**

**Zion's Social Hall**

Come and help us prepare for the coming of our Savior in a fun and interactive way. All ages need to come and participate in the festivities. Dress in comfy clothing. Be prepared to let your hair down, laugh and enjoy this family time. Feel free to bring a friend or relative to hang out with us. The Evangelism Committee will bring a hot chocolate bar with all the fixings. You can bring some Christmas cookies to share if you have begun to bake already. We are looking forward to seeing you there.

## Trinity 321 Holiday Schedule Announced

Trinity 321 has announced the service schedule for our upcoming Advent and Christmas services.

### Advent 2023

#### Advent Mid-Week services will be held as follows:

Advent 1      Wednesday November 29, 2023 – 7:00 PM at Zion

Advent 2      Wednesday December 6, 2023 – 7:00 PM at Zion

Advent 3      Wednesday December 13, 2023 – 7:00 PM at Zion

Advent 4      Wednesday December 20, 2023 – 7:00 PM at Zion

*These services will be held in the Zion office area. The service will provide time for prayer and discussion and be followed by a Eucharist.*

#### Weekend Advent Services will be held as follows:

Advent 1      Saturday December 2, 2023 – 5:30 PM at Zion

Sunday December 3, 2023 – 9:30 AM at Zion

Sunday December 3, 2023 – 11:15 AM at Luther Chapel

Advent 2      Saturday December 9, 2023 – 5:30 PM at Zion

Sunday December 10, 2023 – 9:30 AM at Zion

Sunday December 10, 2023 – 11:15 AM at Luther Chapel

Advent 3      Saturday December 16, 2023 – 5:30 PM at Zion

Sunday December 17, 2023 – 9:30 AM at Zion

Sunday December 17, 2023 – 11:15 AM at Luther Chapel

Advent 4      Saturday December 23, 2023 – 5:30 PM at Luther Chapel (Dinner Following)

### Christmas 2023

Christmas Eve      Sunday December 24, 2023 – 7:00 PM at Zion

Sunday December 24, 2023 - 10:00 PM at Luther Chapel

Christmas Day      Monday December 25, 2023 – 9:30 AM at Zion

### **STAFF & VOLUNTEER LUNCHEON**

The annual staff and volunteer Christmas Luncheon will be held at 11:30 AM on Thursday, December 14, in the Social Hall. This is for everyone who has ever volunteered (doesn't matter how long ago). A sign-up sheet is in the office directly under the clock. Please join us!

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### **STAFF BONUS ANNOUNCEMENT**

Our staff works hard throughout the year to support the Worship Life, Education, and Mission Outreach programs of our congregation. Keeping our facilities clean and ready to support our mission work, providing worship materials, newsletters and other communications for the congregation and preparing and overseeing our educational programs is all work our staff does behind the scenes for us during the year. Now we can show our heartfelt appreciation to our staff by contributing generously toward the Christmas bonus to be distributed to the staff. You can contribute using your weekly envelopes or the envelopes in the pew rack. (Mark the envelope with the amount you wish to contribute to the staff bonus by writing the amount and "Staff Bonus" on the envelope). We will be accepting contributions through Sunday, December 3.

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### **2024 Giving Envelopes**

Giving envelopes for the calendar year 2024 are now available.

Following the annual meeting, the envelopes will be available for pick up at the rear of the nave until December 31, 2023.

We will mail any unclaimed envelopes to members the first week in January.

To save the cost of postage, we urge you to make arrangements to pick up your envelopes before the New Year. We also ask that you pick up envelopes for someone you know who may be unable to pick up their envelopes personally.

The Stewardship Committee thanks you all in advance for your help and cooperation.

## Christmas Candles and Funds – 2023

*Due to the increased cost, care, clean-up, and disposal of fresh poinsettias and greens the Worship and Music Committee has switched to silk for the Christmas season. Therefore, members may want to consider other options for memorializing or honoring your loved ones.*

- \_\_\_\_\_ Instrumental Musicians
- \_\_\_\_\_ Kelly Jones Lutherlyn Scholarship Fund
- \_\_\_\_\_ Emergency Fund for Members
- \_\_\_\_\_ Helen Myers Memorial Musicians
- \_\_\_\_\_ Candelabra Candles @ \$10.00 each
- \_\_\_\_\_ Processional Torches @ \$15.00 each
- \_\_\_\_\_ Votive Lights (Altar) @ \$5.00 each
- \_\_\_\_\_ Sanctuary Lamp @ \$5.00

In Memory of: \_\_\_\_\_

In Honor of: \_\_\_\_\_

Given By: \_\_\_\_\_ Envelope # \_\_\_\_\_

***Please place your order form (with payment) in the offering plate OR return it to the Zion office by December 3, 2023.***

# HAPPY BIRTHDAY

## DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS

Barry Widdowson  
Beth Grafton  
Betty Wingard  
Bruce Johnson  
Carol Donahue  
Charles Clark  
Claudia Ditch  
Crosby Campbell  
Daniel Budris  
Dante Adamson  
Diana Metzger  
Eugene Ferg  
Gretchen Barbor  
Hannah Rising  
Kalise Dugan  
Karen Gresh  
Kathryn Anderson  
Kathy McKelvey  
Kristian Dugan  
Lily Grafton  
Martha Higgins  
Matthew Black  
Pastor Arlene Schweitzer  
Pastor Tedd Cogar  
Paul Myers  
Ruth Nelson  
Sherene Hess  
Steve Higgins  
Tamie Blank

Every member needs to check Zion's birthday list each month. Have we missed a member of your family? **PLEASE** call (724-465-5597) or email ([zion.lutheran@comcast.net](mailto:zion.lutheran@comcast.net)) Bev at the Zion office and alert her of the member's name and birth date so we can correct our error. Thank you!



## **MINUTES OF THE CONGREGATIONAL COUNCIL**

**October 9, 2023**

**Call to order:** 6:31 pm

**Present:** Kevin Huston, Sue Dickson, Kimberly McCullough, Becky Slade, Pernel Bowersox, Sheri Bowersox, Dory Campbell, Kim Balcerak, Gail Sechrist, Shirley Horner, Rik Wissinger, Pastor Tedd Cogar

Absent:

**September Minutes:** The wrong minutes were included in the packet. Kevin will have Bev email the September minutes to all council members for review.

**Addendum:** September minutes emailed to council members for review. One minor grammar change, motion to approve (Shirley/Kim)

**Facebook/website** – Sheri Bowersox

Facebook is fine. Anyone have pictures from Oktoberfest? Nothing new for the website.

**September Financial Report:**

**September Financials:** September giving was again above monthly budget with our YTD income at 100.5% with 3 months to go. Our expenses to date are at 90%. \$15,184 budget surplus. Review of the September financials and motion to approve (Rik/Kim)

**Standing committee Reports**

**Administration and Finance**

**2024 Budget Process:** 2024 Budget draft has been reviewed. Some of the variance increases are salary, intern salary, and funding for choir support. Our CD interest income is expected to go up in 2024. We will have a surplus at the end of this year. This year we used the surplus from 2022 to balance the budget for 2023. This time with the increase in interest income from CD investments, we will use some of that to help balance the budget. Synod Benevolence will remain the same. Most other groups are about the same. Kevin asked that all on council look over the draft budget before our next meeting.

Committee reports need to be in by the first week of November.

Funding of IUP Student Choir Support: There is enough in the Helen Myers Scholarship fund to fund this fall semester. To continue to fund this choir support it is planned to make this a line in the 2024 budget. The congregation will be asked at the Annual meeting for approval and commitment for this project.

**Staff Support** – Rik Wissinger

Jim Laughlin doing well and a good liaison with repair companies such as Terminex for bat removal.

**Nominating Committee** – Don Seagren

Don has been working on finding nominees. So far we have 2 people to nominate for council.

**Evangelism/Stewardship** – Dory Campbell

Dory submitted a list of activities/plans for the next year. She listed other committees to partner with for each event. Next up will be the Faith Float on Friday November 17, partnering with Christ Episcopal and Calvary Presbyterian and Trinity Methodist churches. These groups will be walking in the Indiana Christmas parade and can distribute information flyers listing our holiday service times. Walkers are needed!

Bible Study - continuing

## **MINUTES OF THE CONGREGATIONAL COUNCIL—cont**

**Parish Education** – Gail Sechrist Sunday School has started. No other report.

**Property** – Becky Slade

Green Space – Landscaping has been completed, along with new mulch around the church.

Window Project – Window construction is in process

Sign – The new sign has been ordered.

Bat Removal – Terminex has been on site, with some progress made. Working on bell tower access.

Elevator Repair – Repair work will start on Tuesday Oct 10, lasting max 2 days. Paperwork is in for the permit. It was noted that we are signing up with Right Elevator Company to continue with yearly maintenance. They offered a significant savings over our previous maintenance company.

Kney Organ – Refurbishment is continuing. Completion will be delayed till Feb/March 2024.

Furnace room sidewalk support – This has been completed by Pennington.

Three new items were brought up by council members for discussion.

Kitchen storage room wall - water damage and mold. Discussion. Pennington to be called to check.

Kitchen dishwasher – There was a leak when using recently. Will see if Pennington can check on it.

Plaster damage in stairwell leading to choir loft. Masonry Company to be called.

**Recreation and Fellowship** – Shirley Horner

Oktoberfest – Well attended with 49 people, and lots of good food, fun, and fellowship.

Synod Convocation – Oct 16, 17, 18 at Zion. Plans are underway for meals, activities.

**Social Ministry** – Sue Dickson No report

**Trinity 3-2-1** – Rik Wissinger

Pastor will be having a meeting tomorrow about the intern, Vicar Jane Miller. She should be able to start within the next two weeks.

**Worship and Music** – Pastor Tedd

Kney Organ –Hoping the organ will be finished and returned by March. Note that it will take some time to sound its best because it needs to acclimate to the room. This is a reason why the rededication will not be till Fall 2024.

Reformation Sunday – Sunday Oct 29. We will be confirming 3 young men during the Sunday service.

Online worship – in progress

A council member asked about having the ability to hold our meetings online if a member is not able to be present in person. Discussion about getting a microphone to use so everyone could be heard. Rik had some suggestions and will look into it.

Old Business

New Business

Discussion on Preschool drop off and dismissal procedure.

Submitted by Sue Dickson 10/11/23

## **ADMINISTRATION AND FINANCE COMMITTEE MINUTES**

**November 8, 2023**

**Call to order** 7:01 pm

**Present:** Kevin Huston, Gail Sechrist, Rik Wissinger, Pastor Tedd Cogar, Pernell Bowersox, Kim Balcerack, Sue Dickson.

**October minutes:** Reviewed, no changes. Motion (Rik/Kim)

**October Financials:** YTD income is \$18,225 above budget and at 111% (goal 88.33%). Expenses are running high at 98% of budgeted expenses (goal 88.33%)

ZARP O2 account – Kevin proposes that since the ZARP projects are done, to move the remaining \$363.47 to Capital Improvement. Also the Back to School Bash account is now zero so can remove that.

**2024 Budget-** Reviewed the 2024 proposed budget.

A few adjustments made on Ministry Support.

Worship & Music-The IUP Music Scholars amount was added.

The Organ repair and maintenance was reduced since it will be newly refurbished.

The annual elevator maintenance expense have been greatly reduced since we have contracted with a new Elevator maintenance company.

### **Ongoing Facilities Projects-**

Windows –spring

Kney Organ Refurbishment – Mid January

Fund raising campaign pledges are \$95,000 with cash in hand \$24,757

On line project – ongoing, may be ready by Easter

### **Old Business-**

Vicar Jane has started.

### **New Business-**

New Capital projects

Elevator repair –Elevator repair is complete. It has been inspected & licensed and is operational.

Bat removal– This is now complete. Future? Clean up bat guano up in attic.

### **Annual Congregational meeting –**

Nov 19 at 4 pm., with pot luck dinner to follow

Thrivent Building Maintenance fund – Kevin explained about asking the congregation to allow it to be moved to the Endowment Fund. This fund is for long term and in the endowment fund would need to have 2/3 of congregation vote to allow it to be used.

Adjourn 7:53 pm.

## **PROPERTY COMMITTEE MINUTES**

**November 21, 2023**

**Members Present: Becky Slade, Jim Laughlin, Kevin Huston, Kathy Huston, Jerry Ruffner**

### **Current Projects**

1. The committee is waiting for Blue Sky to supply a new Marque Sign at the corner of Church and Sixth Streets. (\$4,470.00 with funds from undesignated memorial fund)
2. Environmental Pest Control performed monthly pest service.
3. Bob Cochrane came to repair the sidewalk they did earlier in the year and provided quotes for repairing the sidewalk along the green space area as well as replacing the stairs and landing at the pastor's office. This bid was referred to council for action.
4. Terminix Wildlife Division completed the removal of the bats and pigeons and sealed the building Terminix will perform annual inspections of the building to ensure success with the program (\$489.00)
5. Right Elevator was contracted to perform quarterly service for the elevator at an annual cost of \$780.00
6. A problem with mold in the kitchen storage area was addressed. While temporary, this seemed to mitigate the problem. We received two bids for this and referred the bids to council for action.
7. Stairway ceiling and walls going up to the choir loft need to be re-plastered. Jim will contact Russ Crane for a schedule to do this work. We received quotes for this and referred the bids to council for action.
8. Per the congregation's action at the annual meeting, Jim will contact the Borough to determine the cost of purchasing a bench for the Rossman Shaffer Garden.
9. The Kney organ refurbishment is continuing and with an anticipated completion in mid-February.
10. The committee also discussed the use of our grass area between our parking lot and the parking lot at Graystone by Calvary for two above ground planting beds. Several issues were raised addressing, insurance and workman's compensation insurance for the venture. The committee referred this to council for discussion and action.

Hobart was contacted to come in and service the power boost attachment on the dishwasher.

### **On Going Projects:**

1. Window replacement project continues with final window measurements being taken in July. Installation schedule appears to be in early spring
2. Kney Organ refurbishment continues and is on schedule to be completed in early December.

The railing going up the Sixth Street entrance needs to be scraped and re-painted.

### **Available Funds for Projects**

Capital Improvement Account Balance: \$129,271.62

Kney Organ Refurbishment Pledges - \$80,395.00

Thrivent Building Maintenance Fund - \$22,570.67

ZARP Account Balance: \$0.00

**The Committee's next meeting will be Tuesday, January 16, 2024 at 7:00 PM**

**WORSHIP & MUSIC COMMITTEE MINUTES**

**November 21, 2023**

**Members Present: Kathy Huston, Kevin Huston, Pastor Tedd Cogar, Vicar Jane Miller, Sue Dickson, Rik Wissinger, Dave Keith, Dr. Christine Clewell**

**Topics Discussed:**

1. The committee is planning a Kney Organ rededication service. A hymn sing and a hymn fest featuring Tom Trenney will be part of that.
2. The committee reviewed the services for Advent and Christmas.
3. The committee selected hymns for Epiphany.
4. The committee is exploring having Kevin Eisensmith with his 18-piece brass ensemble to play on March 24, 2024 (Passion Sunday) to help welcoming back the Kney organ. Plans are progressing to follow the worship service with an afternoon concert. Proceeds from offering to go to the Kney fund.

Plans are underway to celebrate Pastor Tedd's ordination anniversary (11 years) on Sunday, March 17, 2024.


**Recommendation to Council:**

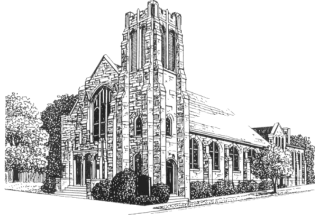
Date of next Meeting: Tuesday January 23, 2024 at 7:00 PM

Respectfully submitted,  
Kevin Huston

## December 2023

Date	Lay Reader	Altar Guild	Ushers	Assist. Min.	Tellers
Dec 2/3	5:30-Karen Gresh 9:30-Josh Widdowson	Sat-AM & PM-Maggie Dugan Sun-Sue Dickson	5:30-No Ushers 9:30-Pernell Bowersox	5:30-Rob Wilt 9:30-Beth Grafton	Kim Balcerak
Dec 9/10	5:30-Jerry Ruffner 9:30-Jenn Rising	Sat AM-Kathy Huston, PM-Ruth Houser Sun-Becky Slade	5:30-Rik & Bev Wissinger 9:30-Jim Slade	5:30-Kim Balcerak 9:30-Stephanie Brady	Kim Balcerak
Dec 16/17	5:30-TBD 9:30-Gail Sechrist	Sat-AM & PM-Sharon O'Keiff Sun-Becky Slade	5:30-Dave & Linda Malin 9:30-Don & Dawn Seagren	5:30-Rik Wissinger 9:30-Kevin Huston	Kim Balcerak
Dec 23/24	5:30-No Service at Zion 9:30-Tyson Ellenberger	Sat-No Service at Zion Sun-7 PM-Kathy Huston  Mon-12/25-9:30-Kathy H	5:30-No Service at Zion 9:30-Gary Ellenberger	5:30-No Service at Zion 7-Kevin Huston  Mon-12/25-9:30-Jenn R	Kim Balcerak
Dec 30/31	5:30-Kami Dugan 9:30-Beth Grafton	Sat-AM-Jan Cikowski, PM -Shirley Horner Sun-Sue Dickson	5:30-Dave & Linda Malin	5:30-Sue Dickson 9:30-Jenn Rising	Kim Balcerak
	Jenn Rising	Kathy Huston	5:30 Dave Malin 9:30 Dave Keith Pernell Boxwersox	Kim Balcerak	

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Alcoholics Anonymous meetings Wednesday evenings	Narcotics Anonymous meetings Sunday evenings				1 Zion office closed	2 5:30 Liturgy
3 9:30 Liturgy 8:30 Choir Rehearsal 10:45 Choir Rehearsal Sunday School	4	5	6 6 Adm/Fin Mtg <b>(Special Time)</b> 7 Advent Mid-Week Service	7	8 Zion office closed	9 5:30 Liturgy
10 9:30 Liturgy 8:30 Choir Rehearsal 10:45 Choir Rehearsal	11 6:30 Council Mtg	12	13 7 Advent Mid-Week Service	14 11:30 Staff/Volunteer Lunch	15 Zion office closed	16 1-3:30—Mehus Party 5:30 Liturgy
17 9:30 Liturgy 8:30 Choir Rehearsal 10:45 Choir Rehearsal Sunday School	18	19	20 7 Advent Mid-Week Service	21	22 Zion office closed	23 5:30 Liturgy— <b>Luther Chapel</b>
24 7 Christmas Eve Liturgy (Zion) 10 Christmas Eve Liturgy (Luther Ch)	25 9:30 Christmas Liturgy Office Closed/Jim Off 	26 Jim Off	27 7 Parish Ed Mtg Jim Off	28 Newsletter Mailed	29 Zion office closed	30 5:30 Liturgy
31 9:30 Liturgy						



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**PASTOR/PASTORAL CARE**

Pastor Tedd Cogar 724-422-4676 tcogar@iup.edu  
 Vicar Jane Miller 814-856-2766 jmillier@uls.edu  
 724-525-3260 (texts only)

**ZION STAFF**

Administrative Assistant Beverly Swatsworth  
 Sexton Jim Laughlin  
 Director of Music Christine Clewell

**TRINITY 3-2-1 MINISTRY REPRESENTATIVES**

Rik Wissinger  
 Barry Widdowson

**ZION COUNCIL MEMBERS**

Kevin Huston (Pres)  
 Rik Wissinger (Vice Pres)  
 Sue Dickson (Sec)  
 Gail Sechrist (Treas)  
 Kim Balcerak (Fin Sec)  
 Becky Slade  
 Dory Campbell  
 Kim McCullough  
 Pernell Bowersox  
 Sheri Bowersox  
 Shirley Horner  
 Pastor Tedd Cogar  
 Vicar Jane Miller

NEXT NEWSLETTER MAILED — December 28, 2023; Deadline: December 15, 2023

THERE IS NOW A LINK ON THE ZION WEBSITE TO ACCESS THE TRUMPET