

JULY/AUGUST 2026 NEWSLETTER

PUBLISHED BY: ZION UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST, PERU ALEX GARNCARZ, PASTOR

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FOLLOW US ON FACEBOOK: ZION UCC, PERU, IL

Dear Church Family,

I hope that you are enjoying these beautiful summer months. July and August have a different rhythm, don't they? The days are longer. The schedules are very different. Some of us are traveling. Some are working in the yard. Some are enjoying ballgames, family gatherings, cookouts, vacations, and maybe even a little quiet time on the deck. However you are spending these summer weeks, I hope you are finding time to rest, breathe, and give thanks for the goodness of God.

Summer is a gift. It reminds us that life is not meant to be lived in a constant hurry. It's good to slow down. There is joy in being with people we love. Take some time to notice the beauty around you—the sunshine, the flowers, the laughter of children, friends spending time together, and the simple blessings we sometimes overlook.

At the same time, I want to gently encourage you to remember your church family during these summer months. I know schedules change. I know vacations happen. I know weekends fill up quickly. But when you are in town and able, I hope you will make worship a part of your summer rhythm.

The church feels different when you are not here. Your presence matters. Your voice in the hymns matters. Your prayers matter. Your smile, your hug, your conversation after worship, your encouragement to someone else—all of it matters. We don't gather because we have to, but because we need one another. We gather to be reminded that God is still good, Christ is still with us, and the Spirit is still moving among us. Even in the slower days of summer, God is still at work at Zion. Worship continues. Ministry continues. Care continues. Fellowship continues. And every Sunday is another opportunity to be renewed by God's grace and strengthened for the week ahead.

As we enjoy these summer days, we are also looking ahead with excitement to August and the return of CREW, our Sunday School ministry. What a blessing it is to have children and young people in the life of the church. Their energy, questions, laughter, and faith help remind all of us what the kingdom of God looks like.

I am grateful for those who teach, lead, organize, support, and encourage CREW. I am also grateful for families who make the effort to bring their children and grandchildren. That commitment matters. It plants seeds of faith that can grow for a lifetime.

So enjoy your summer. Take that trip. Sit outside. Watch the ballgame. Visit family. Rest when you can. Laugh often. Give thanks daily. And when Sunday comes, and you are able, come home to worship. Your church family will be glad to see you. I'll be glad to see you.

To God be the glory,

Pastor Alex



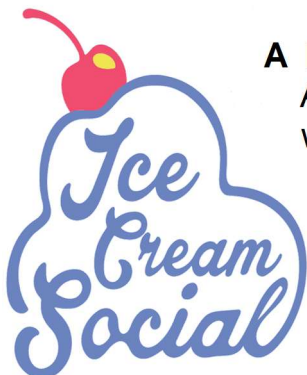
Flower Charts There are many open dates for Altar flowers. The dates are hung on the bulletin board outside of the Fellowship Hall. We have 4 months hanging at a time. If you would like to reserve flowers you may sign up on the chart or contact the church office to ask about availability. Altar Flowers will be seen on YouTube services, the weekly bulletin, monthly newsletter, and on the church website in the posted bulletin. The cost for flowers is \$25.00. Please be sure to include all names, first and last, and any information you would like added to announcement.

Prayer Requests In the Bulletin - We are grateful for the privilege of praying for one another. To help us keep our prayer list current, each new request will be included in the bulletin for four weeks. After that time, we will remove it unless we are asked to continue sharing it longer. If you would like a request to remain, please let us know—we want to walk alongside you in prayer for as long as you need.

In Need of Ongoing Prayer:

Pastor Alex, Shelly, Alice, Henry, Marsha, Rebecca, Lauren, Barb Giese Family, Bob Holsinger Family, Elinor Lindenmeyer Family, Ed Dergance Family, Streator Tornado Victims, Ned Yoder, Heather, Jean Spier, Nancy Schmidt, Baby Brexton, Monreal-Berner Family, Cindy Harzheim, Jean, Renee, Austin, Arnie, Barb, Debbie, Gene and Family, Stacy's Family, Randy, Stacy Demerest, Nicole Griffith, Linda, Mary Jean, Jon Marcacci, Donna, Joyce Patton family, Alan Fupler, Stephanie Heilstedt, Larry Grosenbach, Karin, Chelsea, Arnie & Jan Watkins, Dixie, Deb Cooper, Paul Lewis, Marilyn Haslam

Thank you to all our CREW students, teachers, and families for a wonderful season of faith and fellowship. Enjoy your summer break — we can't wait to welcome our CREW back in the fall.



A HUGE THANK YOU to everyone who helped make our Annual Ice Cream Social a wonderful success. From those who prepared, served, donated, and cleaned up — to everyone who came out to enjoy the evening — we are grateful for each of you.

It is always a joy to see everyone working together and having fun, we were blessed with a good crowd and great music!!





On July 3rd, we gathered together in front of Zion to watch Peru's Firework Show. We had a great turnout and enjoyed a wonderful evening of fellowship as we celebrated together. It was a great opportunity to spend time with friends, family, and our church community while enjoying the fireworks.



Listen to Pastor Alex at 8:25 every Sunday morning on 103.9 **WLPO**. Tell your friends!

If you would like to provide special music during worship, please contact Shelly Garncarz. 



Join us for coffee fellowship after worship! If you would like to sign up to provide coffee fellowship (most Sundays) after worship there is a sign up sheet in fellowship hall or contact the church office.

****HELP FEED THE HUNGRY!**** Zion UCC is providing a delicious hot meal delivered to the **Peru PADS homeless shelter** each month. Every little bit helps us provide a nutritious meal each month through May. Write a check to the church and note **"PADS Meals."** Or go online and donate through the Giving page on our website. Your donation helps provide a healthy, hearty meal to those who need it most. Thank you for your generosity and support in feeding the hungry!

How You Can Help: Donate: Every gift—big or small—ensures that we continue providing hearty, healthy meals.
Ways to Give: Write a check to the church with "PADS Meals" in the memo or donate online through the Giving page on our website.

HELP WANTED

Ushers

Ushers: We are building a new Ushers List. If you previously served as usher and would like to serve again, we would like to add you to the new ushers list. Previously ushers served for an entire month. Ushers now will serve when they are available to serve even for a single Sunday. You can let Larry Grosenbach know you will serve as usher or email ushers@zionperu.org to be added to the ushers list.

HELP WANTED

Evangelism

Evangelism: We are updating our visitor information about Zion church and will be creating a visitor packet that will contain our new updated information about Zion Church and a thank you gift or two for them visiting. If you would like to help the Evangelism Team with the visitor project you can let Pastor Alex, Jerry Koehler or email evangelism@zionperu.org.

THE CHURCH IS OPEN FOR SUNDAY MORNING WORSHIP

Please follow all safety guidelines when in attendance. We understand if you are not comfortable coming in person and invite you to watch services on YouTube.

JOIN US LIVE ON YOUTUBE SUNDAYS AT 10:15

HOW DO YOU GET THERE? EASY.....

- 1) Go to Youtube.com
- 2) Click on "Search" box at top of the page.
- 3) Type in "Zion UCC Peru Illinois"
- 4) Click on the big purple circle with a "Z" in it.
- 5) Click on the video that says "LIVE"



THAT'S IT! SEE YOU SUNDAY!

*Bulletins available to view on our website!

You can donate to Zion Church with a credit card or by bank transfer from your bank account. All you need to do is go to our web page and click "Donate" located on the right-hand side.

Also, here's the link to give to our church: <https://zionuccperu.breezechms.com/>

You can also donate to Zion Church by Text to (815)-393-1954 : Enter the amount you want to give to Zion in the Text box and send. If it the first time you are giving by text you will be prompted to set up your giving method. *Thank you for giving during these difficult times*



COMMUNITY
PROGRAMS

Live Life (Pre and Post Transplant Support Group) meets the second Monday of each month at 6:30pm at Zion UCC.

The Compassionate Friends Group meets at Zion every fourth Thursday at 6:30pm. This meeting is open to any parent who has lost a child. Please contact the church office for information.

Weight Watchers meets every Saturday morning at 8:00. We're happy to provide space for this worthwhile service to our community.

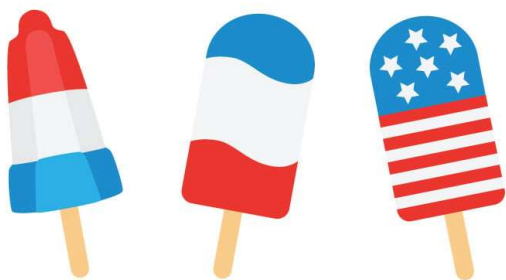


July Birthdays

- 3. Lauren Trumpinski
- 4. Kalli Ware
- 6. Bob Holsinger
- 8. Miranda Grosenbach
- 9. Nicholas Grosenbach
- 10. Jack Kuzma
- 11. Paul Gillmann
Austin Ploch
Michelle Fupler
- 12. Martin Johnson
Lilley Nicole Boroski
- 24. Wes Baltikauski
Makenna Zimmer
- 25. Bill Becker
- 28. Addison Opsal
- 29. Ryan Lindemier
- 30. Richard Ploch

July Anniversaries

- 14. Martin & Laurie Johnson
- 15. Bob & Holly Antkowiak



August Birthdays

- 1. Kayla Daugherty
- 6. Kari Ann Baker
Terry Hoelle
- 7. Cassidy Elizabeth Baker
Marjorie Huetteman
- 8. Charles Schmollinger
- 10. Aubrey Goff
- 12. Jennifer Berkley
Terri Bergagna
Camri Garncarz
- 18. Isla Kilday
Evan Grove
- 22. Bill Bender
- 23. Debra Jacobson
Francis Paul Baker
- 24. Parker Cronk
- 27. Randy Fouth
Michael Hoelle
Lauren Knutson
- 29. Leian Breuning
Abigail Watkins
Mary Garncarz-Opsal

August Anniversaries

- 2. Nathan & Lauren Trumpinski
- 6. Barry & Leian Breuning
- 17. Richard & Beth Vlastnik
- 18. Tony & Beth Coutre'
- 24. Bruce & Kelly Merkel
Bill & Phyllis Bender
- 28. Larry & Cheryl Grosenbach

July 2026

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1	2	3	4 8:00am Weight Watchers meeting
5. 8:25 Pastor Alex WLPO 10:15 Worship- Also available on YouTube &Coffee Fellowship	6	7	8	9	10	11 8:00am Weight Watchers meeting
12. 8:25 Pastor Alex WLPO 10:15 Worship- Also available on You Tube &Coffee Fellowship	13 6:30pm Live Life Group meeting	14	15	16 6:00pm Zion Diners @ Angelos	17	18 8:00am Weight Watchers meeting
19. 8:25 Pastor Alex WLPO 10:15 Worship- Also available on You Tube &Coffee Fellowship	20	21	22	23 6:30pm Compassionate Friends Group meeting	24	25 8:00am Weight Watchers meeting
26. 8:25 Pastor Alex WLPO 10:15 Worship- Also available on You Tube &Coffee Fellowship	27	28	29	30	31	1

August 2026

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
2	3	4	5	6	7	8 8:00am Weight Watchers meeting
9. 8:25 Pastor Alex WLPO 10:15 Worship- Also available on YouTube &Coffee Fellowship	10	11	12	13	14	15 8:00am Weight Watchers meeting
16. 8:25 Pastor Alex WLPO 10:15 Worship- Also available on You Tube &Coffee Fellowship	17 6:30pm Live Life Group meeting	18	19	20 6:00 Zion Diners	21	22 8:00am Weight Watchers meeting
23. 8:25 Pastor Alex WLPO 10:15 Worship- Also available on You Tube &Coffee Fellowship	24	25	26	27 6:30pm Compassionate Friends Group meeting	28	29 8:00am Weight Watchers meeting
30. 8:25 Pastor Alex WLPO 10:15 Worship- Also available on You Tube &Coffee Fellowship	31					