

NOVEMBER 2024 NEWSLETTER

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

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Dear Zion Church Family and Friends,

As we enter November, my heart is filled with excitement and gratitude for the blessings we share in our church community and for the many events just around the corner!

One of the highlights this month will be our Thanksgiving Eve Ecumenical Service, hosted here at Zion. This special gathering, which will bring together six other local congregations, is a time to reflect on our shared faith and unity in Christ. I look forward to seeing each of you on Thanksgiving Eve as we lift up our voices in thanks with our neighbors.

On Thanksgiving Day itself, Zion will host our 6th Annual Free Community Thanksgiving Dinner. This has become such a meaningful tradition, offering a warm meal and fellowship to all who join us. To make this event a success, we still need volunteers to help with hosting, meal preparation, serving, and clean-up. If you can lend a hand, we'd be so grateful for your support—it's truly a team effort, and your help makes all the difference!

I'm also thrilled to announce that our new Adult Bible Study, centered around "The Chosen" series, will begin on Tuesday, November 12. This study gives us a unique, visual approach to deepening our understanding of the life and ministry of Jesus. Whether you prefer to join us in person at the church or online via Zoom, all are welcome. We'll meet every Tuesday, and I look forward to the conversations and insights this study will spark.

Finally, as we move toward the end of November, Advent draws near! This season of waiting and preparation for the coming of Christ is always one of the most meaningful times of the year. I eagerly anticipate observing Advent together and exploring what it means for each of us to prepare our hearts for the joy of Christ's birth.

I want to express my love and appreciation to each and every one of you reading this newsletter. It's a blessing to serve as your pastor, and I'm grateful for the ways we continue to grow together in faith and love. Thank you for your prayers, your dedication, and the kindness you bring to our church family and our community.

To God be the glory,
Pastor Alex



In Need of Ongoing Prayer:

Bill Vlastnik Family, Rusty & Mary Thies, Dale Jacobson, Jeff, Watkins family for health, Rod Petrowski Family, Dixie Tonozzi, Jim, Disaster victims, Country, Paul Nave, Jeff Rietgraf, Jean Mikus, Deb Cooper, Kathy Radke Family, Ryan Jyll Janz, Josie, Steve & Audrey, Carol Harris Family, Ben Vowels, Sr. Family, Mary Jo Nelson, Dick & Alice Tostovarsnik, Priscilla Dean, Tom & Gretchen Kaszynski, Lindenmier family, Kevin & Anne Orval, Evie Coulter, Karen Kradle, The Smith Family, Art Ramey Family, Cheryl Grosenbach, Jean Spayer, Emily, Renewal Team, Cindy Harzheim, Marilyn Haslam, Paul Lewis, Ron Narczewski, Bob & Holly Antkowiak.



Our deepest condolences go out to Lauren Knutson and family on the death of her mother, Kathy Radke. Kathy passed away on October 11, 2024.

The Altar Flowers October 6 were in Celebration of Dick & Alice Tostovarsnik's Anniversary.

The Altar Flowers October 27 were In Memory of Marge Stokvis, from Trudy & Bob Borostowski.

Memorials for Carol Harris were given by Lois Wilmot, Larry & Cheryl Grosenbach, Bill & Phyllis Bender, Holly Antkowiak, Jim Greening, Dona Ostermeyer & Erin Lewis.

A Memorial was given for Bill Janz, remembering him for his 90th birthday, 11/11/34. From, Shirley and Son Bill.

A Memorial in Loving Memory of David Splittstoesser was given by Georgia Splittstoesser.

Our deepest condolences go out to the family of Bill Vlastnik. Bill passed away November 3, 2024. Services were held November 7th at Mueller Funeral Home and officiated by Pastor Alex Garncarz. View Bill's legacy here: <https://www.muellerfh.com/obituaries/William-J-Vlastnik?obId=33620816>

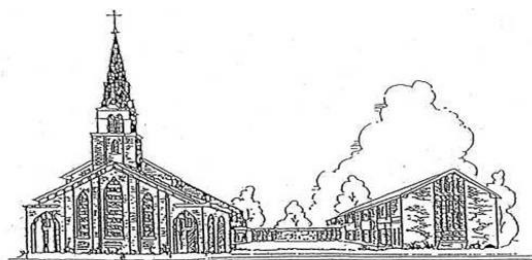
**Memorial donations for Mr. Vlastnik will be published in the upcoming bulletins and next month's newsletter.*



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.



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



Zion United Church of Christ
"The Church with the Carillon Tower Chimes"



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
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.



Exciting Announcement: Join the CREW!

Hey Families! Get ready for an adventure because our Sunday School program, CREW, is back and better than ever! Join us every Sunday morning at 9:00AM for a fun-filled hour designed for kids in kindergarten through 6th grade.

At **CREW**, we dive into amazing stories, unleash our creativity with awesome crafts, and play exciting games that will keep everyone engaged and smiling! It's a great opportunity to make new friends, learn about faith, and have fun!

Don't miss out on the fun—come join the CREW this Sunday! We can't wait to see your smiling faces! See you there!



Sunday School

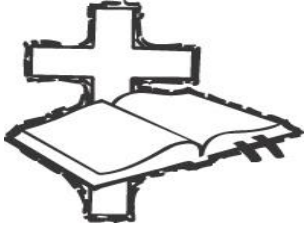


All praise be yours, my Lord

Through all that you have made,
And first my lord Brother Sun,
Who brings the day; and light
You give to us through him. -St. Francis of Assisi



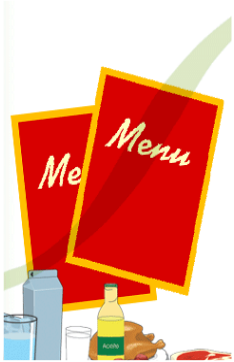
VETERANS DAY IS MONDAY, NOVEMBER 11TH
THANK YOU TO ALL VETERANS FOR YOUR SERVICE



New Bible Study Starting Soon!

We're excited to announce a new Bible Study series starting on **Tuesday, November 12th at 6:30 PM** in the **Fellowship Hall**. This will be a **hybrid event**, so you're welcome to join us in person at the church or participate via Zoom from home.

Our study will be based on the popular TV series, *The Chosen*, which brings the stories of the Bible to life in a fresh, powerful way. We'll explore themes from each episode, dive deeper into Scripture, and share our insights together. This study is open to all adults, and we encourage you to invite a friend! Whether you're tuning in on Zoom or joining us in person, we look forward to growing together in faith.



Zion Diners: The October Diners met at Blue Margarita in Oglesby with Candi as hostess. We collected dues in order to replenish our funds so we can donate to those projects that we have supported in the past. Candie brought everyone a "treat bag" that brought out the child in some of the guys. Join us Thursday, Nov. 21st at 6:00pm with the place to be announced.

COME, YE THANKFUL PEOPLE COME. RAISE THE SONG OF HARVEST HOME!



Harvest Home Sunday is November 24th. You will be able to celebrate your thankfulness to God and help support the Illinois Valley Food Pantry at Zion's annual celebration. This is a great way to get into the Thanksgiving spirit. If you would like Jim to do your food pantry gift shopping, please contact Jim Greening or the church office as soon as possible.



We will take an extra collection for turkeys. It is always amazing how generous Zion members and friends are to the food pantry. Thank you in advance for your tremendous support for the food pantry. Decorating the sanctuary for Harvest Home will take place on Thursday, November 21st starting at 3:30. It usually takes about an hour. Everyone is welcome to help. We need pumpkins, gourds, etcetera, for the decorating. Please have them at the church by Tuesday November 19th. What better way is it to thank God for all our blessings than to share them with others.

Ecumenical Thanksgiving Eve Service at Zion Church

Join us for a special evening of unity and gratitude! Zion Church is honored to host an **Ecumenical Thanksgiving Eve Service** on **Wednesday, November 27, at 7:00 pm**. With members from six other congregations, we'll come together to celebrate our shared blessings and express our thanks in a spirit of fellowship. All are welcome to attend. Let's come together to lift our hearts in worship and gratitude!

PLEASE JOIN US FOR THANKSGIVING AT ZION UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST!

****Join Us for Our 6th Annual Community Thanksgiving Dinner!****

This Thanksgiving, we're once again opening our doors and inviting everyone to share a meal, warmth, and connection. Whether you're in need of a meal or simply want to enjoy good company, we'd love to have you. We'll be serving a traditional Thanksgiving feast with turkey and all the fixings, completely free of charge. Whether you're coming alone or with family and friends, there's always room for more around our table. Contributions to help cover costs are welcome, but not required.

****Doors open at 11:30 AM****, and we'll serve approximately from noon until 2:00 PM. Afterward, you can stick around to watch football, or to enjoy some good conversation. If you plan to attend or would like to volunteer, please sign up as soon as possible. The sign-up sheets are located in the narthex and Fellowship Hall after service. Thank you in advance to all volunteers.



We look forward to sharing this special day with you!



Advent begins on December 1st this year. Join us on Sundays as we prepare our hearts and lives to celebrate the birth of Jesus.



The Festival of Flutes will take place at Zion on Sunday, December 8th at 2:00pm. Details to come!

FOR A SUCCESSFUL COOKIE (AND MORE) SALE

HERE IS WHAT WE NEED:

COOKIES OF ALL KINDS

Especially Springerles, Almond Stars, Butter Spritz,
Lebkuchen, Pfeffernusse and Cinnamon Stars

Also appreciated: Holiday Breads and Pastries, Pies, and Candies.



***Please have all baked goods at Zion by 9:00AM**

Please label all items with name of cookie, kind of pie or pastry, or candy.

Please also indicate with or without nuts.

HELPERS ARE NEEDED:

Sunday, Dec. 8th after worship and fellowship to arrange tables and chairs in fellowship hall and hallway. This should take no more than half an hour if we have lots of helpers.



Thursday, Dec. 12th - 9:00am till we get done. A sandwich and chips lunch will be provided. This is a busy time during which we put the cookies in “display boxes” ready to be set out on the tables, package “specialty cookies” and those that are fragile or sticky, price other baked goods and candy, and arrange the goodies on the tables for sale. It’s busy, but it’s fun (and you get to snack on any cookies that get accidentally broken).



Friday, Dec. 13th - 2:30pm till we’re done The “Elves” gather for last minute instructions and prayer. The sale will begin at 3:00. During the sale the elves will be handing out containers and gloves, answering questions, doing check out (weighing by the pound cookies, totaling purchases, accepting payment) restocking the tables, sometimes helping people carry out their purchases, and finally cleaning up. Some jobs are jobs during which you can sit; others require mobility. People of every age, youth included, can help. If you work and can’t be present at the beginning of the sale time, you can come later and help with clean up and rearranging the fellowship hall.



Thank you in advance to everyone who helps make this sale a success. Sign-up sheets are available at church or call the church office. And let’s not forget **THE PURPOSE OF THE COOKIE SALE:** The money raised helps with maintenance and improvements around the church, helps send kids to camp at Pilgrim Park, and is used to make donations to community service organizations. The Women’s Guild organizes the sale and disperses the funds, but we rely on the whole congregation to make it happen.





ILLINOIS VALLEY PUBLIC ACTION TO
DELIVER SHELTER
Established 1991

****HELP FEED THE HUNGRY!****

Each month, Zion UCC delivers a hot, nutritious meal to the Peru PADS homeless shelter, supporting those in need in our community. With the increased demand, the shelter reopened earlier this year, and your help is essential to continue this ministry through May.

We invite you to make a difference by donating. Every contribution, big or small, helps us provide a hearty, healthy meal to those who need it most. To give, please write a check to the church with "PADS Meals" in the memo or donate online through the Giving page on our website.

Thank you for opening your hearts to this mission of compassion and care!

Hope House Donations

Savanna Rietgraf is currently interning at a halfway house in Iowa that provides transitional housing and support services for men coming out of prison or jail. Many of the residents at this halfway house, known as Hope House, arrive with few personal belongings and are in need of basic necessities like clothing as they work to get back on their feet.

Savanna is asking our church family and friends to consider donating any gently used men's clothing that you or someone you know may be able to provide. The residents of Hope House range in age from 18 to 70+, so all sizes and styles of men's clothing would be greatly appreciated - everything from casual shirts and pants to professional attire for job interviews.

These donations can make a big difference for the men at Hope House as they work to reintegrate into the community and become productive members of society. If you have items you'd like to contribute, please bring them to the church office or contact Jim Greening. Thank you in advance for your generosity in supporting this important cause.

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

Support Needed for Food Pantry Expansion!

The Illinois Valley Food Pantry is seeking donations as it searches for a new, larger facility to better serve those in need. A larger space will allow for the storage of additional perishable and non-perishable food items, ensuring that we can meet the increasing demand in our community.

Your financial support can make a real difference! Contributions can be sent to:

*Illinois Valley Food Pantry
122 Wright St.
LaSalle, IL 61301*



Feeding the Community

Together, we can work to end hunger in our community. Thank you for your generosity!



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.

**COMMUNITY
PROGRAMS**

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

Jesus' Words to Us

In the Bible, Jesus asks his followers to do certain things. Choose words from the Word List to fill spaces in the crossword puzzle. Then use the crossword numbers to arrange the words to reveal Jesus' words to us.

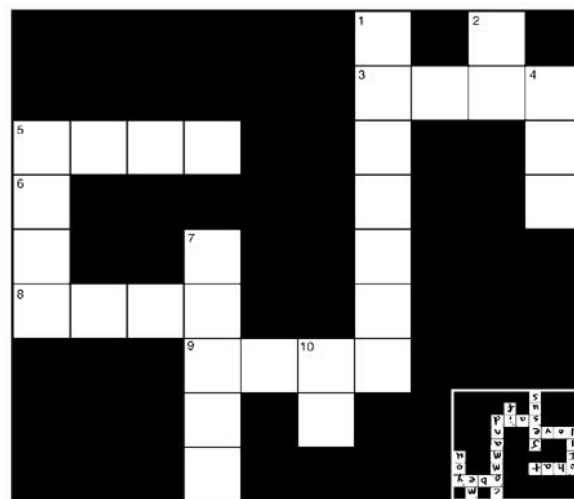
Word List
I
if
me
you
said
obey
love
will
what
Jesus
command

(7) _____

(9) _____, " (10) _____ (4) _____

(8) _____ (2) _____, (4) _____

(5 down) _____ (3) _____ (5 across) _____ (6) _____ (1) _____."



Answer: Jesus said, "If you love me, you will obey what I command."



November Birthdays

1. Reid Baltikauski
Charles Lindenmeyer
4. Ellyn Hylla
7. Elinor Lindenmeyer
14. Brian Butkus
15. Taeden Freschi
16. Mary Thies
Austyn Sprong
18. Kevin Rynke
19. James "Rusty" Thies
21. Sophie Bergagna
22. Jacob Miller
23. Katherine Grosenbach-Cronk
25. Beverly Keutzer
26. Hanna Sprong
27. Zach Freschi
Adaline Grove
28. Lauren Dergance
29. Evelyn Jayne Lindenmier
30. Caidin Garnarz



December Birthdays

3. Alice Tostovarsnik
Arnie Watkins
Savanna Rietgraf
Abigale Baker
Aiden Grove
4. Alton Beck
5. Andrew Merkel
7. John Eustis
8. Roger Rynke
Lena Claire Trumpinski
11. Marissa Becker
14. Holly Antkowiak
Jack Fetzer
20. Joanne Bejster
Noah Martinez
22. Abigail Mize
26. Brian Donahue
29. Bill Grosenbach
Matthew Jacobson
30. Jim Greening
31. Sheryl Churney



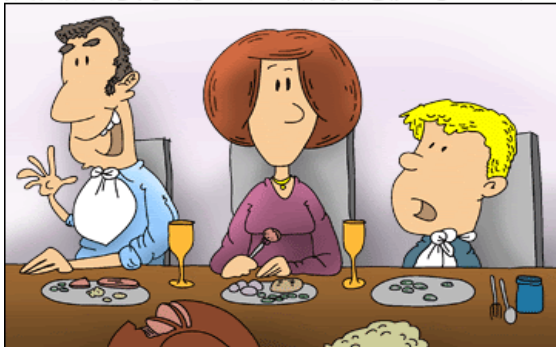
November Anniversaries

10. Arnie and Janis Watkins
26. Roger and Lori Rynke

December Anniversaries

4. Dave and Debra Baltikauski
29. Jim and Barbara Ryba

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11-19-2012

I WOULD BE ABLE TO GIVE A LOT MORE
THANKS IF I DIDN'T HAVE TO FINISH OFF
THESE LIMA BEANS

*Twenty years from now you will be more
disappointed by the things you didn't do
than by the ones you did.*

-Mark Twain

November 2024

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1 All Saints Day	2 8:00am Weight Watchers meeting
3. 8:25 Pastor Alex WLPO 11:15 Worship- & Lunch at Pilgrim Park	4	5 Polling Place 	6 6:30 Choir practice	7 1:00pm Zion Women's Guild Meeting	8	9 8:00am Weight Watchers meeting
10. 8:25 Pastor Alex WLPO 9:00 CREW 9:30 Choir practice 10:15 Worship- Also available on You Tube & Coffee Fellowship	11 6:30pm Live Life Group meeting	12 6:30pm Bible Study	13 6:30 Choir practice	14	15	16 8:00am Weight Watchers meeting
17. 8:25 Pastor Alex WLPO 9:00 CREW 9:30 Choir practice 10:15 Worship- Also available on You Tube & Coffee Fellowship	18 7:00pm Church Council Meeting	19	20 6:30 Choir practice	21 3:30 Decorate for Harvest Home 6:00 Zion Diners	22 Newsletter info Due	23 8:00am Weight Watchers meeting
24. 8:25 Pastor Alex WLPO 9:00 CREW 9:30 Choir practice 10:15 Worship- Also available on You Tube & Coffee Fellowship HARVEST HOME SUNDAY	25. 6:00pm Renewal Leadership Team meeting	26. PADS Meal	27. 6:30 Choir practice 7:00pm Ecumenical Service at Zion	28. Thanksgiving Day Dinner at Zion Doors open 11:30am	29	30 8:00am Weight Watchers meeting

