

OCTOBER 2024 NEWSLETTER

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

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Dear Zion Family & Friends,

As the leaves begin to change and a crisp autumn breeze fills the air, It reminds me of the beauty of God's creation and the rhythms of life that God has set in motion. October brings with it a sense of transformation, a time of change, that reflects the spiritual journey we're on together as a congregation.



Looking ahead, I'm filled with anticipation and excitement for the coming months. Advent will soon be upon us, a time of hopeful waiting and preparation for the miracle of Christ's birth. As we approach Thanksgiving, I encourage us all to reflect on the many blessings God has given our church family and our families at home. And of course, the joy of Christmas is not far behind, when we'll celebrate the greatest gift of all - our Savior Jesus Christ.

I want to share with you my deep optimism for the future of Zion United Church of Christ. Our congregation has shown remarkable resilience, faith, and love throughout the years. I see God working in our midst daily, through acts of kindness, growth in faith, and our continued commitment to serving our community.

As we move forward together, I'm excited about the opportunities that lie ahead for our church. Whether it's expanding our outreach programs, deepening our spiritual practices, or just growing closer as a church family, I believe God has great plans for Zion UCC.

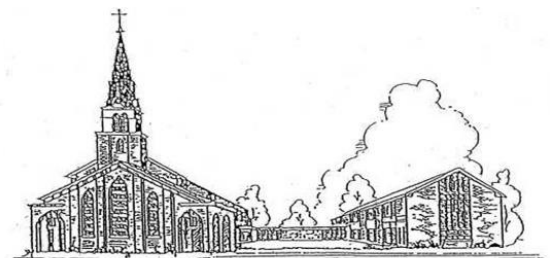
Let's embrace this season of change with open hearts, ready to see where God leads us next. May we continue to be a beacon of hope and love in our community, reflecting Christ's light in all we do.

With blessings and excitement for our journey ahead,

Pastor Alex



ZION UCC
Loving God, Loving People



Zion United Church of Christ

"The Church with the Carillon Tower Chimes"

In Need of Ongoing Prayer:

Family of Carol Harris, Family of Ben Vowels, Sr., Mary Jo Nelson, Jim Brown, Cathy's family & friends, Dick & Alice Tostovarsnik, Alan, Kathy Radke, Eric, Jean Mikus, Jocie, Audrey, Bobby, Kim, Steve, unspoken, Priscilla Dean, Doug Jakse Family, Karen, Tom & Gretchen Kaszynski, Lindenmier family, Rusty & Mary Thies, Kevin & Anne Orval, Jim, Evie Coulter, Family of Devin, Mary Leone Family, Karen Kradle, The Smith Family, Art Ramey Family, Cliff Smith, Arnie Watkins, Cheryl Grosenbach, Jean Spayer, Emily, Deb Cooper, Melissa, Marissa, Cindy Harzheim, Dixie Tonozzi, Marilyn Haslam, Paul Lewis, Ron Narczewski, Bob & Holly Antkowiak, Bill Vlastnik.



Our deepest sympathies go out to the family of Carol Harris, Rhonda Essl's mother. Carol passed away September 25, 2024. Services will be held Monday, September 30th at Mueller Funeral Home in Peru. Visitation will begin at 9:00am until the service at 11:00am, with Karen Karczewski officiating.

Our deepest sympathies go out to the family of Ben Vowels, Sr. Ben passed away September 25, 2024. Services will be held Monday, September 30th at First Baptist Church of LaSalle. Visitation will begin at 10:00am until the service at 11:00am.

The Altar Flowers September 1st were In Celebration of Candis Zelenak's birthday. "Happy Birthday!" from Karen, Kim & Jim.

The Altar Flowers and Bulletin Sponsorship September 8th were In Memory of our parents Rev. Phillip & Peggy Krause on their 78th Anniversary, from Kathy Krause Learn.

The Altar Flowers September 15th were In Memory of Jean Greening, from Jim.

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

A Memorial was given for Rev. Garber, from Dona Ostermeyer.

A Memorial was given for Jean, from Jim.

A Memorial was given for Shirley Hamilton, from Jim Greening.



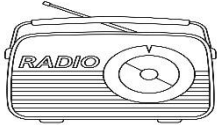
Flower Charts There are many open dates for Altar flowers. The dates are hung on the bulletin board outside of the Fellowship Hall. We have 4 months hanging at a time. If you would like to reserve flowers you may sign up on the chart or contact the church office to ask about availability. Altar Flowers 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.



CROP Walk Against Hunger

Zion had 11 walkers who raised \$1700! The four churches combined raised \$5200 to help feed the hungry in our community and around the world. Thanks to walkers and sponsors!





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



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

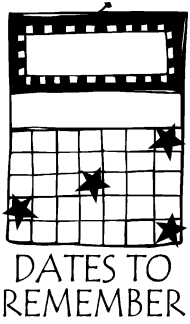
Evangelism: We are updating our visitor information about Zion church and will be creating a visitor packet that will contain our new updated information about Zion Church and a thank you gift or two for them visiting. If you would like to help the Evangelism Team with the visitor project you can let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



Choir practice has begun! We meet Wednesdays at 6:30 pm. We need new members! If you like to sing and have fun, please contact the church office or Jim Greening (815/223-1858) with questions, or come to practice.



October 6th is World Communion Sunday

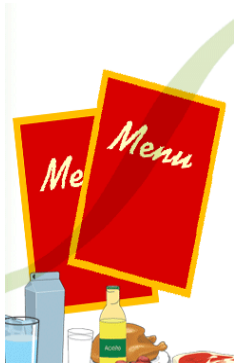


The Women's Guild will meet Thursday, October 3rd at 1:00pm in the Fellowship Hall. All ladies are welcome to attend.



Calling All CREW Members! Get ready for adventure, fun, and faith! Our Sunday School program, CREW, has set sail again! Join us every Sunday at 9:00AM if you're in kindergarten through 6th grade.

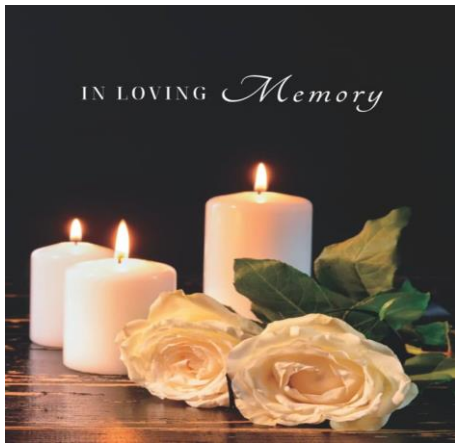
We'll have games, stories, crafts, and more that will help you grow in your faith and friendships! We cannot wait to see everyone at CREW this Sunday!



Zion Diners met September 19th at Tony's Butt Shack for a fun time. Bill & Phyllis Bender hosted. The next Diners event will be Thursday, October 17th at 6:00pm with Candis Zelenak hosting. The restaurant will be The Blue Margarita in Oglesby. Plan to join us to see what we talk about when we say we have such a good time. I will be making out next year's program. If you have a particular month that you'd like to host, let Phyllis know. All are welcome!




The Illinois Valley Flute Ensemble will present a Halloween concert on October 24th at 7:00PM in the sanctuary of Zion UCC. Please come and join us and enjoy a "flutey" Halloween with HAUNTINGLY beautiful music. It will be open to the public with a free will donation.



Memorial Sunday, when we will remember members of our family of faith who have died during the past year, will take place on October 27th.

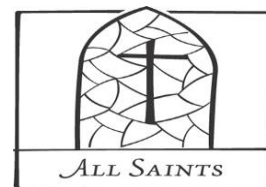
*Neil A. Tipton
Gary J. Splittstoesser
Mary E. Fiedler
Bonnie I. Bird
Carol A. Harris*

We share in this time of grief but also in the memories of your loved

one. 



All Saints Day is Friday, November 1st



We will have Sunday morning worship at Pilgrim Park on November 3rd

Anyone who would like to carpool can meet at the church at 10:00. **Our service will begin at 11:15am.** If you need a ride, please let Pastor Alex know. We'll have lunch after the service. There will be a sign up sheet in the Narthex, or contact the church office. Please sign up so that we can let Pilgrim Park staff know how many are coming and how much food to prepare. If you haven't worshipped at Pilgrim Park with us before, please join us. It's an amazing place to enjoy nature.



Harvest Home Sunday will take place on November 24th this year. If you would like Jim Greening to do your shopping for you, please contact him during October!

Zion will serve a **Community Thanksgiving Dinner** this year. Details to come!



LOOKING FORWARD TO THE DECEMBER 13 CHRISTMAS COOKIE (AND MORE) SALE

Christmas decorations are beginning to make their appearances in stores. That's a pretty good indicator that we had better be making plans for the annual Cookie Sale. There are a few things that we'd like to let you know well in advance so that you can plan accordingly. **FIRST, THE PURPOSE OF THE COOKIE SALE:** The money raised from this sale helps both our congregation and the community. Some of the money helps with maintenance and improvements around the church, for example replacing the elevator, redoing the roof on the education wing, and the annual cleaning of the Fellowship Hall carpet. Funds are also used to help send kids to camp at Pilgrim Park every year. Annual donations are made to community organizations: The Illinois Valley CROP Walk, Starved Rock Regional Center for Child Development, Illinois Valley Food Pantry, United Way, Horizon House, The Red Cross, Lighted Way, Pilgrim Park, North Central Youth Services, Human Needs, Harvest Home, and PADS Homeless shelter.

The Women's Guild organizes the sale and disperses the funds, but we rely on the whole congregation to make it happen.

SOME DATES TO REMEMBER:

The sale will be **December 13**. Please mark your calendars now. We will be asking for people to sign up to help with the sale beginning in late October.

But a lot of work will be done **December 12**, the day before the sale. The cookies and other items will be priced, wrapped, put in boxes, the tables laid out with sale items, and weighing and check out stations set up that day. We will need lots of help. Again, we will be asking people to sign up to help with this beginning in late October.

Sunday, **December 8**, after church we will need help moving tables and chairs into position for the sale.

Regarding the "AND MORE" in the heading of this article. During the pandemic we had people preorder cookies and we packaged the orders for people to pick up. To accomplish this we needed to offer a limited variety of cookies, and no other baked goods. Last year we just sold cookies, but many more varieties.



But before the pandemic, we also sold **breads, pies, coffee cakes and candies...**

We're bringing those back! If you would like to make some things from the "and more" category we'd love to have them.



Regarding DECORATED CUT-OUTS, aka sugar cookies. The return of the decorating party did not go as well as hoped last year so we are going to try something a little different this year. If you want to make cut-outs and decorate them yourself, that is fine. But if you want some help decorating your cut-outs we're asking that you sign-up for a cookie glazing session at the church. Glazing goes faster than frosting them. Dixie Tonozzi will be organizing one or two sessions depending on the number of people interested. Sign-ups for this will take place in Nov. and early Dec.

We'll keep you up to date and plans progress. Thanks for your interest and your support.



ILLINOIS VALLEY PUBLIC ACTION TO
DELIVER SHELTER
Established 1991

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

Zion UCC is once again providing a delicious hot meal delivered to the Peru PADS homeless shelter each month. As the summer winds down, the shelter reopened earlier this year due to a greater need than ever.

Please open your hearts and wallets to support this important cause. 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.

Together we can make a difference for the less fortunate in our community! 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!

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.

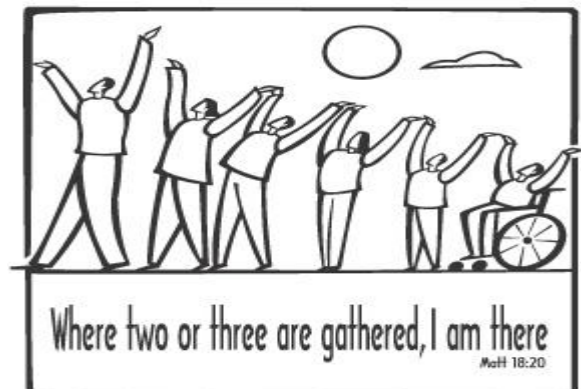
Praying Together:

Without the Way, there is no going;

Without the Truth, there is no knowing;

Without the Life; there is no Living.

-Thomas á Kempis



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

Food Pantry Seeks Donations for Expansion

The Illinois Valley Food Pantry is in need of financial support as it searches for a larger facility. The expanded space will allow the pantry to store more perishable and non-perishable foods, enabling them to better serve our community's needs.

Your monetary contributions can make a significant impact. To donate, please send checks to:

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

Together, we can help ensure no one in our community goes hungry. 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.



October Birthdays

- 1 Mark Bejster
- 3 Leah Wilmot
5. Jyll Janz
7. Michelle Johnson
Ryan Ploch
8. Kristen Eustis
9. Libby Mize
10. Lucy Breuning
11. Klaire Wilmot
12. Dona Ostermeyer
13. Stephanie Heilstedt
Olivia Shetterly
16. Sharon Eustis
Bentley Moisant
20. Lanie Lynn Gardner
24. David Baltikauski
- 25 Becky Wicinski
Nathan Tipton
25. Olivia Bergagna
26. Bill Becker
27. Anna Coutre'



October Anniversaries

5. Dick & Alice Tostovarsnik
7. Bill & Sue Johnson
9. Jerrid & Tanya Ware
10. Pastor Alex & Shelly Garncarz
13. Dan & Sheryl Churney
15. Adam & Jennifer Mize
16. Brant and Megan Baltikauski

Laughter gives us distance. It allows us to step back from an event, deal with it, and then move on.

-Bob Newhart

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 Garncarz



November Anniversaries

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

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GREAT COSTUMES ... HERE, HAVE SOME LOCUSTS

10-28-2011

October 2024

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1	2 6:30 Choir practice	3 1:00pm Zion Women's Guild Meeting	4	5 8:00am Weight Watchers meeting
6. 8:25 Pastor Alex WLPO 9:00 CREW 9:30 Choir practice 10:15 Worship- Also available on You Tube & Coffee Fellowship	7	8	9 6:30 Choir practice	10	11	12 8:00am Weight Watchers meeting
13. 8:25 Pastor Alex WLPO 9:00 CREW 9:30 Choir practice 10:15 Worship- Also available on You Tube & Coffee Fellowship	14 6:30pm Live Life Group meeting	15	16 6:30 Choir practice	17 6:00 Zion Diners	18 Newsletter info Due	19 8:00am Weight Watchers meeting
20. 8:25 Pastor Alex WLPO 9:00 CREW 9:30 Choir practice 10:15 Worship- Also available on You Tube & Coffee Fellowship	21 7:00pm Church Council Meeting	22 PADS Meal	23 6:30 Choir practice	24 6:30pm Compassionate Friends Group meeting 7:00pm Halloween Flute Concert	25	26 8:00am Weight Watchers meeting
27. 8:25 Pastor Alex WLPO 9:00 CREW 9:30 Choir practice 10:15 Worship- Also available on You Tube & Coffee Fellowship Memorial Sunday	28. 6:00pm Renewal Leadership Team meeting	29.	30. 6:30 Choir practice	31. 	Nov. 1 All Saints Day	Nov. 2 8:00am Weight Watchers meeting

*For all who seek to live and grow,
to search and find, to ask and know;
unfolding journey, never done:
we sing your glory, Holy One!*

-a doxology by Mary Luti, in *Praise God from Whom All Blessings Flow*

