

## **SEPTEMBER 2024 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 Zion UCC Family,

I hope this letter finds you refreshed and rejuvenated after a wonderful summer! As we transition into the fall season, I'm excited to share with you the many blessings and upcoming events at our beloved church.

First, I want to express my gratitude for the incredible summer we've had at Zion. Our building and grounds are looking better than ever, thanks to the newly sealed and restriped parking lot and handicap spaces. This was done at no cost to the church. Thank you, OSF!

We've had so much to celebrate! Vacation Bible School was a success, with 31 children joining us. Also, nine of our young people attended Spirit and Tenderfoot camp at Pilgrim Park, creating memories and friendships that will last a lifetime.

On a personal note, I had the joy of spending quality time with my family at a lakehouse in Michigan. It was truly a blessing to relax and recharge, and I hope each of you found similar moments of peace this summer.

Looking ahead, September promises to be an exciting month at Zion! Mark your calendars for Rally Day on September 8th. We have special activities planned for our young people during CREW (Sunday School), followed by a unique service where our kids will take the lead. Parents and grandparents, please bring your children – they won't want to miss this opportunity to shine! And to all our adult members, I encourage you to make attending this service a priority. Your presence and support mean the world to our young leaders.

We're also honored to host the Fall Meeting of the Prairie Association. It's a wonderful chance for us to welcome representatives from UCC churches across our region and share some time together.

We'll be starting a new Bible study in late September based on the popular series "The Chosen." It's going to be a great experience for all who participate.

Zion Renewal Team has been hard at work, developing fantastic initiatives to strengthen our church and take us into the future. Soon, you'll see new t-shirts and polos featuring our fresh Zion logo – a visible sign of our unity and renewed spirit. The team is also creating a new "Welcome" brochure to help newcomers feel at home in our church family. These are just a few examples of the innovative ideas coming from the Renewal Team, and I can't wait to see these things develop.

As I look at all that's happening at Zion UCC, I'm filled with optimism and excitement for our future. The energy and dedication of our congregation continue to inspire me, and I'm confident that God has great things in store for us.

Let's embrace this new season with open hearts and minds, ready to grow in faith and community. Remember, each of you plays a vital role in making Zion the warm, welcoming place it is. Together, we can shine Christ's light even brighter in our community.

Wishing you all a blessed and joyful fall!

With love and gratitude,  
Pastor Alex





**ZION UCC**  
Loving God, Loving People



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



## **Zion UCC Church Council Meeting**

**August 19, 2024 7:00pm**

Members present: Pastor Alex, Larry Grosenbach, Arnie Watkins, Marty Johnson, Alice Tostovarsnik, Jerry Koehler, Lauren Knutson, Dinelle Freschi, Elecia Lindenmier, Jyll Janz, Lori Rynke.

Larry Grosenbach called meeting to order.

Elecia L. led the opening prayer.

May 2024 meeting minutes were reviewed. Motion to approve by Marty J., seconded by Jerry K. Motion carried.

Treasurer's report: Corrected Memorial Money- to Building & Grounds for Organ repair. Motion to approve by Arnie W., seconded by Elecia L. Motion carried.

President's report: City of LaSalle asking for donations to City of Lights. Council agreed to contribute \$250 for maintenance.

Christian Education: VBS went well. 31 kids attended. Camaraderie was great. Terri Kelly has plans for Rally Day. Alice will be ordering Bibles for younger kids.

Evangelism: Dinelle F. sent children's birthday cards out.

Pastoral Care: Alice continues to watch for those in need. Prayers, cards sent.

Missions: Pastor Alex helped a family traveling through to Michigan. Sept. 22 is Annual CROP Walk. Envelopes available.

Building and Grounds: Sinks in Men's room & kitchen repaired. Ballast replaced in pastor's office. One needs repair in Education wing as well as doors. A/C unit in Nursery will be looked at.

Women's Guild: Will meet Thursday September 5 at 1:00pm in fellowship hall.

Renewal Team: Getting children involved in more facets of Sunday Service.

Minister's Report: Attended two IV Food Pantry Board of Directors meetings. Met with ministers group three times. Recorded twelve radio shows that aired on WLPO. Attended Committee on Ministry meetings in June, July and August. Our Renewal Leadership Team had meetings on June 24 and July 29. Coordinated the PADS meal on May 28. We had another amazing morning worship and lunch at Pilgrim Park with excellent attendance on May 26. Met with Kathy Lawes regarding ordination preparation. Met with Ordination Candidates Group seven times. Counseled several individuals and one couple. Ice cream social on June 20. Officiated at two gravesides and a funeral. Attended Zion Diners at Verruchi's June 27. Vacation Bible School was July 22-26. We had 31 children in attendance. Just returned from vacation August 12-18. Had a very relaxing, refreshing time. Friday August 30 I'll be at Hy-Vee working the Pack the Racks Food Drive for the Food Pantry. Respectfully submitted, Pastor Alex

New Business: Church Council approved background check for Pastor Alex ordination process. Also, a letter of approval was sent.

Elecia L. made a motion to adjourn meeting.

Meeting ended with The Lord's Prayer. Respectfully submitted by Marty Johnson

### *In Need of Ongoing Prayer:*

Jean Mikus, Students & Teschers, Cathy, 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, Renewal Team, Marissa, Victims of war, Cindy Harzheim, Dixie Tonozzi, Marilyn Haslam, Paul Lewis, Ron Narczewski, Bob & Holly Antkowiak, Bill Vlastnik.



**A Memorial** was given for Doug Jakse, from Lois and Dean Wilmot.

**A Memorial** was given for Bill Janz, remembering him two years of his passing, August 14, 2022. From, Shirley and Son Bill.

**The Altar Flowers** August 25<sup>th</sup> were In Memory of my parents, Anne and Richard Greening, on their birthdays, from Jim.

Rev. Jerold (Jerry) Garber passed away on Sunday, August 18. He was 82 and lived in Twentynine Palms, CA. Our prayers go out to his family and friends at this time.



**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!



**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.

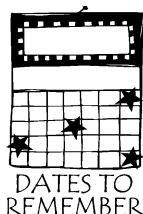
**A Special Thank You:** Zion Women's Guild had a very successful Ice Cream Social thanks mainly to ALL that helped. We have an awesome group of church family who pitch in to make our efforts a success. Our men are our strength who do the heavy work. Our women work very hard at setting up, preparing the kitchen and dining room, organizing the food, serving it, and the massive cleanup. We have an advertising group that makes signs and posters and contacts radio and banks to promote our event. Our church family makes and donates the delicious cakes pies and BBQ. Our youth joyfully help with many tasks. Our president works hard at planning and purchasing all we need. It's a very involved process and we want to thank Mary for that. So you see it's a group effort with each and every person having an important part in our success.

**THANKS TO EACH AND EVERY ONE OF YOU.**

**Thank you** to everyone: construction crews, group leaders, storytellers, craft, science and recreation leaders, and snack preparers, who helped with Vacation Bible School in July, and to all the kids who attended.

We had a great time at Camp Firelight, where we learned to put our trust in God!

**Very special thanks** go to Shelly Garncarz for who did a wonderful job as director.



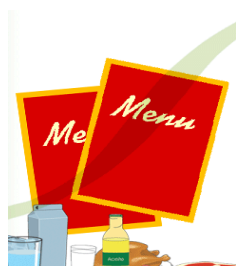
**Choir Announcement:** Choir practice will begin Wednesday, September 4<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 pm. We need new members! If you like to sing and have fun please contact the church office or Jim Greening (815/223-1858) with questions, or come to practice when it begins.



**The Women's Guild** will meet Thursday, September 5<sup>th</sup> at 1:00pm in the Fellowship Hall. All ladies are welcome to attend.



**Mark your calendars- September 8<sup>th</sup> at 9:00am CREW will begin on Sunday School Rally Day- We hope to see you!**



**Zion Diners** met August 15<sup>th</sup> with Jan & Arnie Watkins hosting. Everyone had a great time. The next Diners event will be Thursday, September 19<sup>th</sup> at 6:00pm with Bill & Phyllis Bender hosting. The restaurant will be Toby's Butt Shack in Hollowayville. Their menu is updated on their website. They have good sandwiches, tacos, salads and fried chicken. All are welcome!



### **Put On Your Walking Shoes**

We will gather with other church members and friends in our community to fight hunger locally and around the world.

We've been doing this for over 50 years and we want to keep this worthwhile tradition alive.

Join us for the annual **CROP Walk Against Hunger** on Sunday, September 22<sup>nd</sup> at LaSalle's Rotary Park, starting at noon. This walk will raise money to fight hunger locally and globally.

We need walkers of all ages, as well as sponsors to donate to this important cause.

Funds raised will go directly to our local food pantry and the global mission of CROP Hunger Walks to feed the hungry around the world. Help us take steps to end hunger!

Sign up and donation envelopes are available in the church office. Contact Pastor Alex for more information or to sign up to be a walker and/ or sponsor.



🍁 On **September 28th**, Zion UCC will Host 2024 Prairie Association Fall Meeting 🍁

**Save the date!** Zion UCC is honored to host the 2024 Fall Meeting of the Prairie Association of the United Church of Christ. This is a wonderful opportunity for our congregation to showcase our hospitality and connect with fellow UCC members from across the region.

We need your help to make this event a success! Volunteers are needed for:

- Set-up and take-down of tables and chairs
- Creating welcoming and directional signs
- Preparing and replenishing refreshments
- Serving lunch (catered)
- Clean-up

More details and your opportunity to sign up to help will be coming soon. Together, we'll make our guests feel warmly welcomed at Zion UCC! \*A sign up sheet is now available at the church or you may contact the church office to volunteer.



**HELP  
WANTED**

**Ushers**

**HELP  
WANTED**

**Building  
and  
Grounds**

**HELP  
WANTED**

**Evangelism**

**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](mailto:ushers@zionperu.org) to be added to the ushers list.

**Building & Grounds:** We have several places around the church and the parsonage that need to have mulch added. Should you be willing to help please let Jerry Koehler know or email [buildinggrounds@zionperu.org](mailto:buildinggrounds@zionperu.org) to let us know you are willing to help.

**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](mailto:evangelism@zionperu.org).



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.

### **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.

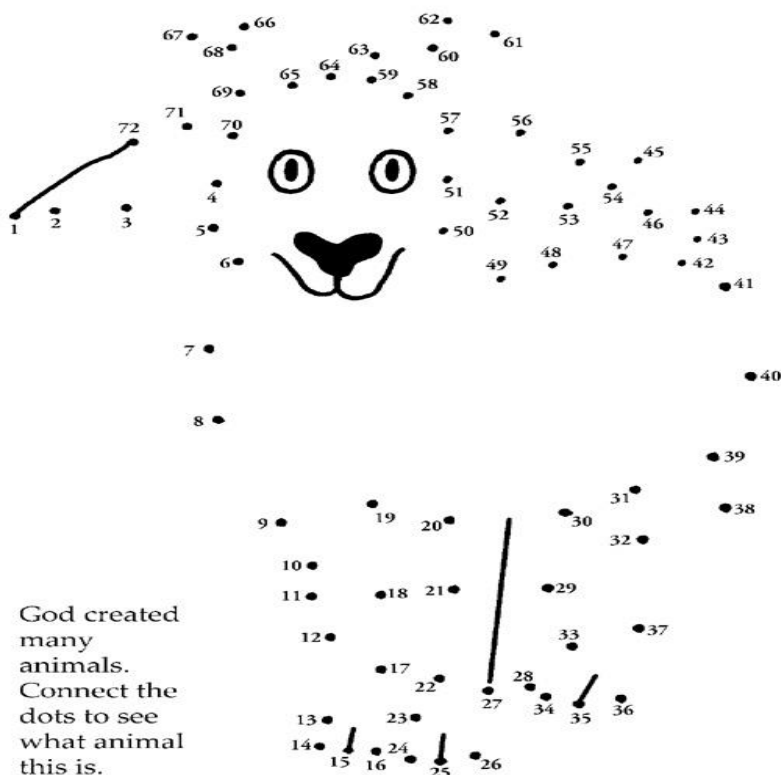


**October 6<sup>th</sup> is World Communion Sunday**



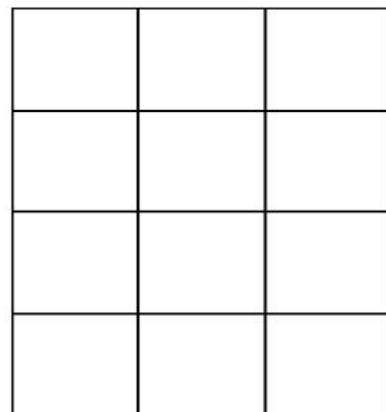
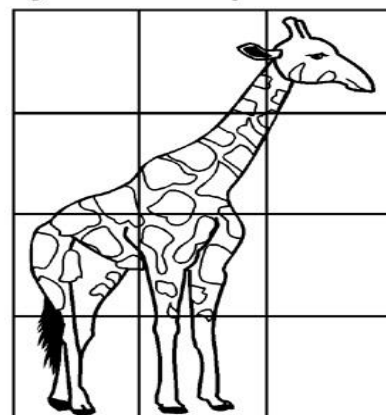
**The Illinois Valley Flute Ensemble** will present a Halloween concert on October 24<sup>th</sup> at 7:00PM in the sanctuary of Zion UCC. Please come and join us and enjoy a "flutey" Halloween with HAUNTINGLY beautiful music. It will be open to the public with a free will donation.

### Dot-to-Dot



### Drawing

Using the grid as a guide, redraw the picture below.







### **September Birthdays**

2. Brad Bingheim
3. Andrea McGarvey
4. Nickolas Miller  
Candis Zelenak
5. Jon & Rileigh Lemmer
6. Beth Coutre'
7. Barry Breuning
8. Jodee Ploch
10. Cheryl Grosenbach
13. Barbara Ryba  
Molly Ryan
14. Daniel Johnson  
Mary Kuzma  
Ellie Gardner
15. Erin Lewis
17. Cindy Harzheim
18. Steve Theisinger
20. Jennifer Mize
21. Debbie Miller  
Harper Sprong
23. Kaylee Ploch
25. Maureen Lemmer  
Pastor Alex Garncarz
26. Gerald Koehler
27. Shug Grosenbach  
Katelyn Bejster
27. Grant Grosenbach  
Cindy Van Cleave
29. Debbie Baltikauski



### **September Anniversaries**

2. Mary & James Thies
3. Steve & Carol Theisinger
5. Sharon & John Eustis
11. Grant & Miranda Grosenbach



### **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. Jerriid & Tanya Ware
10. Pastor Alex & Shelly Garncarz
13. Dan & Sheryl Churney
15. Adam & Jennifer Mize
16. Brant and Megan Baltikauski

*"Faith is to believe what you do not see; the reward of this faith is to see what you believe." - Saint Augustine*

# September 2024

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1. <b>8:25</b> Pastor Alex WLPO <b>10:15</b> Worship- Also available on You Tube	2 <b>Labor Day</b>	3	4 <b>6:30</b> Choir practice	5 <b>1:00pm</b> Zion Women's Guild Meeting	6	7 <b>8:00am</b> Weight Watchers meeting
8. <b>8:25</b> Pastor Alex WLPO <b>Sunday School Rally Day</b> <b>9:00</b> CREW <b>9:30</b> Choir practice <b>10:15</b> Worship- Also available on You Tube & Coffee Fellowship	9 <b>6:30pm</b> Live Life Group meeting	10	11 <b>6:30</b> Choir practice	12	13	14 <b>8:00am</b> Weight Watchers meeting
15. <b>8:25</b> Pastor Alex WLPO <b>9:00</b> CREW <b>9:30</b> Choir practice <b>10:15</b> Worship- Also available on You Tube & Coffee Fellowship	16 <b>7:00</b> Church Council Meeting	17	18 <b>6:30</b> Choir practice	19 <b>6:00</b> Zion Diners	20 Newsletter info Due	21 <b>8:00am</b> Weight Watchers meeting
22. <b>8:25</b> Pastor Alex WLPO <b>9:00</b> CREW <b>9:30</b> Choir practice <b>10:15</b> Worship- Also available on You Tube & Coffee Fellowship <b>12:00-3:00 CROP Walk</b>	23 <b>6:00pm</b> Renewal Leadership Team meeting	24	25	26 <b>6:30pm</b> Compassionate Friends Group meeting	27	28 <b>8:00am</b> Weight Watchers meeting  <b>Prairie Association Fall Meeting</b>
29. <b>8:25</b> Pastor Alex WLPO <b>9:00</b> CREW <b>9:30</b> Choir practice <b>10:15</b> Worship- Also available on You Tube & Coffee Fellowship	30.	Oct. 1	Oct. 2 <b>6:30</b> Choir practice	Oct. 3 <b>1:00pm</b> Zion Women's Guild meeting	Oct. 4	Oct. 5 <b>8:00am</b> Weight Watchers meeting