

SEPTEMBER 2026 NEWSLETTER

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

Phone:815-223-2671 Email:office@zionperu.org www.zionperu.org

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Dear Zion Family & Friends,

September always seems to bring with it a feeling of change. The days get a little shorter, the mornings a little cooler, and before long we see the colors of fall. There's something about the changing seasons that reminds us that life is always moving forward. God is always at work, often in ways we don't see.

There are some good things happening at Zion this fall. Our CREW Sunday School program will be returning in September. It will be good to see our kids back together learning more about God's love. Our kiddos are such an important part of this church family, and I'm grateful for everyone who helps make CREW possible.

On Sunday, September 27, the Illinois Valley CROP Walk Against Hunger will take place at Rotary Park in La Salle. Registration starts at noon, with the walk starting at 1:00 p.m. This year I have the privilege of serving as the Event Coordinator. CROP Walk is a great opportunity to live out Jesus' call to care for our neighbors. I hope you will consider walking, sponsoring a walker, or supporting the effort in some way.

Our Women's Guild also has some plans in the works for the fall, including a "Grubby Sunday," when we'll roll up our sleeves and help Marty and Laurie with some extra cleaning, and an all-church potluck. One involves work and the other involves food, so I bet you can guess which one I'm looking forward to more! But both are important. Caring for our church building and spending time around a table together are both ways we grow closer as a church family.

As we move from summer into fall, I hope we'll remember that seasons change in the church, too. Some seasons are busy. Some are quiet. Some bring challenges, and others bring new possibilities. And through every season, God is faithful. And through every season, we are a church family.

I say this often, but I hope you never get tired of hearing it: I love you all. It is a privilege to be your pastor, to worship with you, laugh with you, pray with you, and walk alongside you through all the different seasons of life. I'm looking forward to what this fall will bring.

To God be the glory,

Pastor Alex



Zion UCC Church Council Meeting

August 17, 2026 7:00pm

Members Present: Pastor Alex, Dinelle Freschi, Lauren Knutson, Marty Johnson, Elecia Lindenmier, Larry Grosenbach, Jyll Janz, Lori Rynke, Jerry Koehler, Phyllis Bender, Keith Jarosz, Lexanne Jarosz

Call to order: Larry G.

Opening Prayer: Elecia L.

Last month's minutes: None Available.

Treasurer's Report: Motion to approve by Jerry K. seconded by Jyll J.

Christian Education: working with Lauren K and Dinelle Freschi getting new curriculum for children, looking for new material to order

Evangelism: Per Jerry K. – Music copyright recording up to date.

Missions: PADS meals to start up in September

Building and Grounds: Troy H. to start on church roof after September. He can't do metal flashing on steeple as flashing is completely off exposing wood, probable have to complete by November as weather permits. Looking forward to repairing Sunday School Doors, also looking at next year to replace outdoor faucets..

Women's Guild: Returning for meeting 9/3

Minister's Report: (See minister's report)

Old Business: Important to attend 8/23 Church Council meeting. Purpose of Meeting – options available in going forward. All ideas on point are important and encouraged.

Jyll J. made motion to adjourn meeting.

The Lord's Prayer: Alex G.

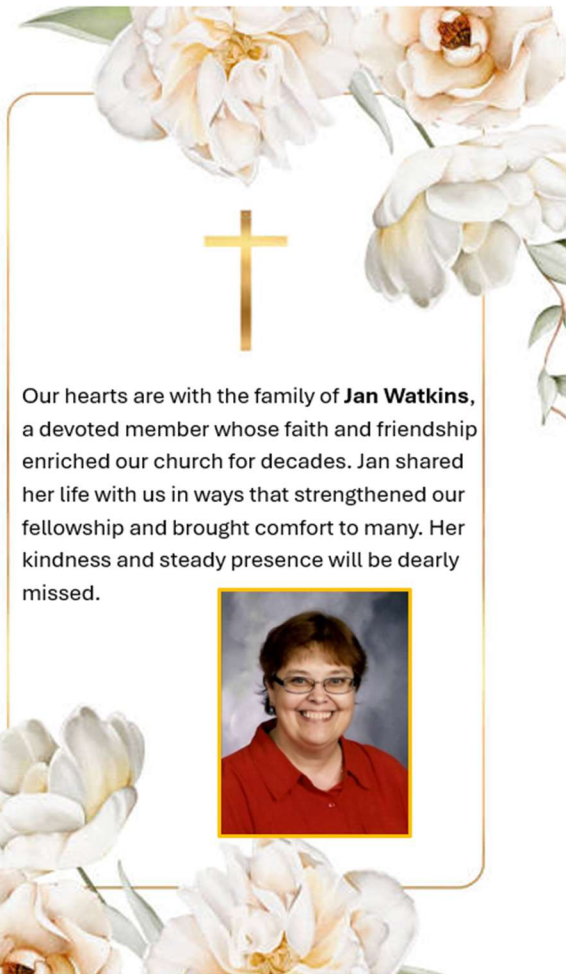
Respectfully submitted by: Marty J.



ZION UCC
Loving God, Loving People



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:

Angel, McLaughlin Family, Jim Brown, Jan Watkins Family, Joe, Jean, Mary Lamps Family, Jim, Dick Tostovarsnik, Paul Lewis & Family, Pastor Kay, Fran Mcfarland Family, Chris Lamps, Keith Jarosz, Mary Thies, Frank Leone, Matthew, Adeline, Baby Eli, Barb, Gary Janisch, Mary Garnarz, Shelly, Alice, Henry, Marsha, Rebecca, Lauren, Ned Yoder, Heather, Jean Spier, Cindy Harzheim, Arnie, Mary Jean, Jon Marcacci, Alan Fupler, Stephanie Heilstedt, Dixie, Deb Cooper, Marilyn Haslam

I can't thank all of you enough for the blessings that have been poured on and through my life and you were all a great part of it!

-Pastor Betty Delgado





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 Garnicarz. 



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.



Menu

Zion Diners

Thursday, September 17th

Right Spice - 6:00pm

Jyll Janz is our Host



Illinois Valley CROP Walk

Sunday, September 27-1:00 pm

CROP Walk 2026 will be held at Rotary Park in La Salle. Registration will begin at noon at Bacidore Shelter. Walk will take place on the path around the soccer field. Any questions, contact Pastor Alex at 815-579-5189

crophungerwalk.org/chw/event/lasalleil



In Kenya and Tanzania, CWS is empowering people to learn, grow and thrive. Through the CROP Hunger Walk, you're helping provide the tools families need to support themselves and their communities.

CWS is committed to meeting immediate needs while also advocating for long-term change. We prepare communities for the future, working with them to adapt to a changing world and overcome challenges.

Your support brings access to clean water, nutritious food and life-changing resources. It helps protect children, responds to disasters, offers safe housing and creates sustainable solutions to combat poverty. Your support also helps provide educational opportunities for children and adults, builds local economies and empowers individuals to start their own businesses – truly helping them achieve their big dreams.

Through your steps, you're doing more than just providing chickens or teaching sustainable farming. You're fostering inclusivity, introducing new technologies to improve harvests and ensuring that every community member is supported.

Together, we're empowering individuals, strengthening communities and creating lasting change.

Chickens, Beans and Big Dreams!



Chickens for a family in Tanzania



A month of groceries for a refugee in Egypt



A sheep in Haiti



A share of a well in Cambodia

CROP WALK- We will gather with others in our community to fight hunger both here and around the world. We need Walkers and sponsors for the Illinois Valley CROP Hunger Walk on September 27. Please see Pastor Alex for more details and to sign up to be a Walker, a sponsor, or both. You may also call Pastor Alex at 815-579-5189. Last year, we raised over \$4000. Thanks for helping feed the hungry both in our community and throughout the world.

****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.

JOIN US FOR SUNDAY MORNING WORSHIP

If you're unable to attend in person, we 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



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
- 12 — John Lamps
- 13 — Barbara Ryba, Molly Ryan
- 14 — Daniel Johnson, Mary Kuzma,
Ellie Gardner
- 15 — Erin Lewis
- 17 — Cindy Harzheim
- 18 — Steve Theisinger
- 20 — Jennifer Mize, Connie Sprong
- 21 — Debbie Miller, Harper Sprong
- 23 — Kaylee Ploch
- 25 — Maureen Lemmer,
Pastor Alex Garnarz
- 26 — Gerald Koehler
- 27 — Shug Grosenbach,
Katelyn Bejster, Grant Grosenbach,
Cindy Van Cleave
- 29 — Debbie Baltikauski

September Anniversaries

- 3 — Steve & Carol Theisinger
- 5 — Sharon & John Eustis
- 11 — Grant & Miranda Grosenbach
- 28 — Keith & Lexanne Jarosz

October Birthdays

- 1 — Mark Beister
- 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,
Olivia Bergagna
- 26 — Bill Becker
- 27 — Anna Coutre'
- 29 — Lexanne Jarosz

October Anniversaries

- 5 — Dick & Alice Tostovarsnik
- 7 — Bill & Sue Johnson
- 9 — Jerriid & Tanya Ware
- 10 — Pastor Alex & Shelly Garnarz
- 13 — Dan & Sheryl Churney
- 15 — Adam & Jennifer Mize
- 16 — Brant & Megan Baltikauski
- 29 — John & Mary Lamps



September 2026

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