

ZION NEWS

For the Members, Family and Friends of Zion Blue Mountain United Church of Christ

This year, February marks the beginning of Lent.

In your travels, you may find that some of your friend's congregations do not observe this part of the church year. It is an ancient practice, once used to focus the preparation of new 'members' of the church, who were baptized, and entered into 'full communion' on Easter. Insofar as each one of us renews our baptismal vows regularly, Lent was also a time for disciples to focus their attention on their spiritual journey with Christ.

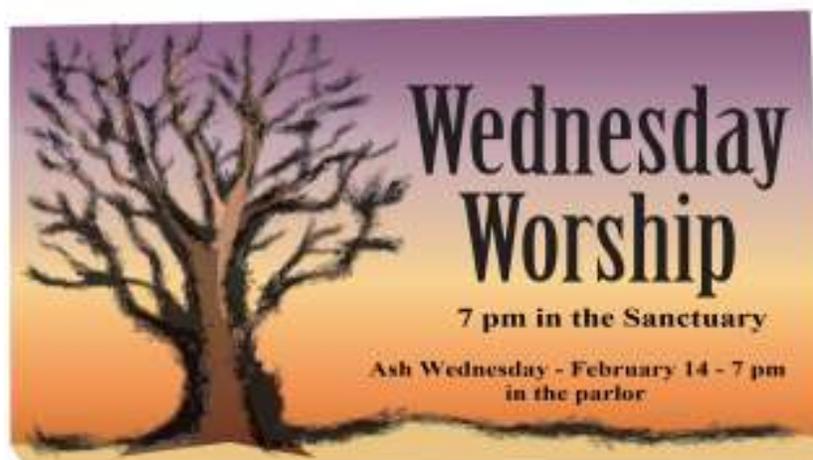
This focus was attempted to be achieved by fasting (justice toward self), by giving to the needy (justice toward others), and prayer (justice toward God). These, of course, are merely outward exercises; but by their practice, they strengthen our faith.

The intensity of these practices were originally a few days, but based upon the Gospel's record of Jesus' 40 days in the wilderness being tempted by the devil (Matt 4:1-11; Mark 1:12-13; Luke 4:1-13). Over time, Protestants (that's us) have lightened up this exercise to mean giving up chocolate or a glass of wine. These symbolic gestures are important, but to get at the heart of the matter, transformation, may require additional practices.

I invite you to think about Lent. How can this focused 40 days strengthen your faith? We are planning activities around worship and fellowship to try and do this. I hope you will participate. Worship is the central act of the church, but discipleship happens through each of us every day..

Yours in Christ's service,
Jon

P.S. Rev. Sharon Morris will be here on February 18th. She will preach in morning worship and then meet with the Consistory to introduce us to the 'new' search process.



Were You There...



**Northern Berks
Ministerium
Lent Series**
Thursdays, 11:30 AM
Service of Prayer
Soup & Bread Lunch
Free Will Offering
Supports the Ministerium's
Outreach Assistance
to the Needy

February 15

...In the Shouting Crowd?
Zion Lutheran
Perry Twp.

February 22

...As a Spectator?
St. Mary Roman Catholic
Tilden Twp.

March 1

...As a Confessor?
St. John Lutheran Hamburg

March 8

...As a Sympathizer?
Friedens Church
Shartlesville

March 15

...As His Family?
St Paul "Smoke" Lutheran
Edenburg

March 22

...As a Demonstrator?
Zion Blue Mountain UCC
Strausstown

March 30, Good Friday

...When He Was Crucified?
11 AM Cross Walk
(Victory Chapel, N 4th St.)
12 PM Service
First UCC, Hamburg
(No Luncheon)



Send payments to the church office or place it in the offering plate.

Hyacinths; Tulips; Lilies

ALL FLOWERS \$10.00

Name: _____ Phone: _____

In honor of: _____

In honor of: _____

In memory of: _____

In memory of: _____

Hyacinths # ____ Tulips # ____ Lilies # ____ Total plants: ____

Amount paid: _____

ORDERS DUE March 18th

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY _____



FEBRUARY FOOD PANTRY ITEM OF THE MONTH

Spaghetti Sauce

MAY 5TH
CHURCH
SOCIAL HALL



If you've been thinking about cleaning out your attic, basement, or that hall closet that is overflowing with stuff, now is the time to do it! If you have a chance to pre-sort the items, that is appreciated, but not necessary.

Items We Can Accept

- Children's clothing in good condition (no adult clothing)
- Linens or Bedding
- Housewares
- Jewelry
- Books, CDs, DVDs, BluRay discs
- Toys
- Holiday Items
- Knick-knacks
- Garden equipment, pots, tools

Items We Cannot Accept

- TVs of any kind
- Bathing suits that have been worn
- Encyclopedias
- Waterbeds, box springs or mattresses
- Furniture
- Large appliances
- Automotive parts
- Ammunition, weapons
- Hazardous materials

Donation days will be: **Saturday April 14 from 9 am -12 pm,**
Sunday April 22 from 12 pm – 3 pm,
Thursday April 26 from 1 pm to 6 pm.

Stay tuned for more details in the coming months!



2/1 Alex Bentz
 2/5 Olivia Leshner
 2/6 Barbara Witman
 2/8 Bryce Kamp
 2/9 Doris Moyer
 2/11 Barbara Spohn
 2/12 Kermit Wagner
 2/14 Jim Schutt
 2/19 George Stankiewitch
 Alyssa Dietrich
 2/20 Steve Shollenberger
 2/21 Scott Sechler Jr.
 2/23 Mike Kamp
 Jacelyn Stine
 2/24 Dru George
 2/26 Ivy Bentz
 Colton Guinther
 2/28 Barbara Grimes



ANNIVERSARIES

2/9 Bill & Judy Lando
 2/14 Richard & Sharon Hoh
 Terry & Sharon Kominsky
 2/25 Lynn & Melissa Koenig



SURPRISE DORIS AND KERMIT with a mailbox full of cards! On February 9 Doris Moyer is turning 90 and on February 12 Kermit Wagner is turning 80!

Doris Moyer
PO Box 21
Strausstown PA 19559

Kermit Wagner
PO Box 26
Strausstown PA 19559

Bingo Kitchen February 9

4 – 7 pm	7- close
Sharon Eaton	Anne Binner
Karen Kissling	Lynda Himmelberger
Pastor Jon	Help Needed
Karen Miller	Karen Miller
5 - 8 pm	Wendy Schutt

Hot Pot – Keith Hamm
Karen Miller

Bakers – Amy Yeager
Peg Wagner
Cindy Emore
Tammy Davis

“What Do I Have?”

What do I have, Lord, that you would need me as a servant?

Eyes, he said,
to see the beauty in all that I’ve made –
and my children as they travel life’s highway.

Hands, he said,
to reach out and touch hurting souls,
to give a hug or encouraging pat on the back.

Feet, he said,
to lead my children through this world of strife
and to help them run from sin and follow me.

Mouth, he said,
to lift up your voice and sing praises to me
so others may hear the joy in your heart.

Ears, he said,
to listen to my still, small voice of love
and to hear my children when they cry for help.

Heart, he said,
so you may know the full love of my Spirit
and love my children as I have loved you.

—Thomas Butler

If you loved our Kettle Cooked Cashews wait till you try our

**Dark Chocolate Cashew
Caramel Bark**

Coming March 24th

from the Consistory

This past Sunday our 2018 Consistory was installed and met for the first time. We spent time discussing what it means to be a member of Consistory. We also fellowshiped and talked about future of the church. Pastor Sharon Morris will be meeting with the Consistory in February to start the transition process and searching for a new Pastor. We look forward to her visit.

During our meeting, each group within the Consistory was able to discuss their responsibilities and concerns about the church. The busiest over the past year were our trustees. They care and maintain ALL of our properties inside and out (that is a lot of light bulbs!) They reported that the majority of the work on the Parsonage has been completed and the tenants have moved in. There are just a few things that still need to be done but we need a break in the weather. The trustees would like to thank everyone that volunteered their time, materials and talents in getting the house ready for rental. They have been tackling some odds and ends around the church and we are waiting again for a break in the weather to get some roof repairs to the church done. The company had to cancel twice because of the weather conditions but with our fingers crossed they should be here the last week of January. Over the summer our plans are to renovate the bathrooms downstairs in the old part of the building. We would also like to thank Butch Berger for his service as a trustee, although he has resigned his position as a trustee, don't be surprised to see him still contributing to the mission of the trustees to repair and maintain the church and its buildings.

The Fundraising Committee has also met and organized themselves for the coming year. They have retired some of the fundraisers from the past and have added a few new ones. There will be candy making coming in March and a Rummage Sale in May. Bingo remains their largest fundraiser and that will continue monthly. If anyone would like to volunteer in the Bingo Kitchen please let Lisa Shupp know.

We must continue to pray that the Lord moves among us. Sometimes, the uncertainty of what lies ahead prevents us from moving forward. Yet, ironically, none of us know what tomorrow will bring. In addition to fears and uncertainty holding us back, doubts can too. We must have faith in ourselves and in what God can do for us and through us. Faith sees the invisible, believes the unbelievable and receives the impossible. When in doubt, pray. Your prayer can push through the muddy waters of doubt and lead us in a new direction.





Zion (Blue Mountain) Church
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Strausstown, PA 19559

Staff

Interim Minister: Rev. Dr. Jon Fogle (Fogleja@comcast.net)

Office Administrator: Lisa Shupp (lshupp@zionbluemountainucc.org)

Consistory

Elders: Doris Wagner (President), Anne Binner, Ruth Himmelberger, Cathy Diggan

Deacons: Sharon Eaton, Wendy Schutt, Susan Harbonic, Melissa Miller

Trustees: Jon Schaeffer, Keith Hamm (Vice President), Brad Faust

Contact Information

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ZIONNEWS is published monthly to keep our congregation and friends informed of current events, ministry opportunities, and other pertinent information. We reserve the right to print any letter or article, unless, in the opinion of the elders, it is unsuitable for the newsletter. We also reserve the right to edit or alter any article for length and content.