



Zion News

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

“I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last.” ~Revelation 22:13

Revelation is a nasty book. There are beasts coming out of the sea, evil dragon read to eat babies right at their birth, horsemen bringing horrible calamities in the earth, and people being sucked into hell while others are elevated to heaven. It's a scary and horrible time to be alive. Before any of the rapture even starts, there is one thousand years of darkness and evil on the earth.

Yes, the book of John's Revelation on the island of Patmos is a scary story. Scary though it may be, the end of the story is indescribably beautiful. A new heaven and a new earth created for the children of God. The new heaven is described as a city of gold.

And the newness of creation is brought forth by Jesus Christ as he speaks the words of Revelation 22:13. “I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last.”

Transitions are scary times. It is always scary staring at the empty void not knowing what is in front of you or what might be staring back with hungry eyes and sharp teeth.

Transitions are times of ending and beginnings. I wonder how the verse would be perceived if it were phrased “I am the Omega and the Alpha, the end and the beginning, the last and the first.”

Placing the ending first reminds us of the period we are all about to enter in our own ways. For many of you it means the uncertainty of the future of Zion Blue Mountain, for precious few of us it means uncertainty about financial and fiscal survival.

No matter what this ending looks like, one thing is certain, Jesus is the great Omega, the glorious end, and the very last of us all. But Jesus is also the Alpha that follows the Omega. The new beginning that follows the end.

Jesus' death, his end, came before his resurrection, and so it must also be with us. Our endings may occur alongside one another, but my resurrection and Zion Blue Mountain's resurrection must occur apart from one another. This separation does not diminish the glory and wonder of the resurrections and new beginnings that are to come.

As Christians we are called to resurrection. We are called to life. May God Bless you all as you find that life in the days to come.

Blessings Now and Always, Rev K

In Case You Missed It...On Sunday July 16th Rev. Bill Worley led a conversation about the future of Zion Blue Mountain UCC and fielded many questions about current and future leadership of the church.

He began by explaining his qualifications as the Pennsylvania Southeast Conference Minister, and his current responsibilities. He spends the bulk of his time helping Pastors and Congregations work through situations and understanding what is and is not working in their churches.

Rev. Worley described his relationship with Pastor Josh and his observations of Pastor Josh's style of ministry. He told the Congregation that he would naturally need to grow during his first full time ministry. He then offered his opinion that Pastor Josh's hands off style of leadership was not compatible with the Congregation of Zion, which has been accustomed to greater involvement by the Pastor in activities of the church and in the community. To work well, a hands off leadership style means that the Consistory and other lay leaders must be given clear communication of the power and authority that the Pastor is bestowing upon them. In addition, there must be a clear sense of direction and training on how to do the work the Pastor is expecting them to do.

Rev. Worley noted that in order to be an effective leader you need to know when to ask for help. This seemed to be a stumbling block for Pastor Josh. He heard members concerns of how situations were handled. He also received suggestions for improvement from the Pastoral Relations Committee, but did not make any significant change in his leadership style. Over time, Pastor Josh came to realize that, in his own words, "as Congregation and Pastor, we are not a good fit for each other in order to do the work of the Gospel in the world."

After receiving many comments and suggestions from the Congregation, Rev. Worley responded to some of these concerns with his personal thought that one of the most

important qualities of a good Pastor was not to please everyone in their congregation but instead “to walk in righteousness with the Lord”.

Many members were concerned as to where do we go from here and what role will the conference play in our future. Our future is in the hands of God, he felt Pastor Josh was selected by God for us. He believes that his being our Pastor was part of our ongoing journey. Moving forward, he pointed out that we need to make it clear to our next pastor that the Consistory leads the church and the Pastor is the spiritual leader.

Rev. Worley also addressed the rumor mill. Sometimes we are our own worst enemies. Lack of honest communication, gossip and innuendos can kill a church. At this point rumors are starting to circulate, and this is where we as a church family play a vital role. We all need to take personal responsibility for our eternal salvation with Jesus Christ and for the future of our Congregation. Stop the rumors before they start and if you were not in church on July 16th, talk to someone who attended the meeting to learn more about what was said.

As far as the next chapter for Zion, the Consistory has already met with Pastor Sharon to place an interim minister. While this is the next step, we need to be patient because it may not happen immediately. Hiring an interim is dependent upon availability through the Conference. Once this person is hired, they will hold the place for our next minister. After that is complete, we will need to begin the search process. As we begin the search process, your Consistory encourages everyone to become involved in this next decision of the church. Whether it is talking to someone on Consistory, worshiping with us on a Sunday morning or serving on the committee to select the next minister. If you consider yourself a member of Zion Blue Mountain, Strausstown we consider your involvement key to our spiritual growth!



Worship times beginning September 17
8 & 10:30 AM **Christian Ed at 9 AM**

Deacon's Report: Where does your money go?

In 2009, we received a request from the Greater Berks Food Bank to open a food pantry to serve our area of northern Berks County. Since that request Zion Blue Mountain UCC has operated the food pantry to help those in need and to spread our mission of love and compassion through Christ.

On the third Thursday of each month, the food pantry is set up throughout the rooms downstairs with various items in each room with various food donations from church members and food purchased at a minimal price from the Greater Berks Food Bank. We also receive food donations from other places such as Bethel Elementary, Way Har Farms and the Seventh Day Adventist Church.

For Thanksgiving and Christmas, an extra bag is filled with items for holiday dinners, from donations of the congregation. We are blessed that Bell and Evans loves missions as much as we do and donates chickens for Thanksgiving. The funds from Boyer's Food Markets usually allow us to purchase small hams at Christmastime. Monetary gifts from organizations are given throughout the year for example Boyer's Food Market donates to local pantries through funds collected at the register during check out and Strausstown Rod and Gun Club donates both food and money through fundraisers held at their facility. The funds from these organizations provide us an opportunity to buy fresh produce as well as any additional meat for Thanksgiving or Christmas Dinners.

Each month we typically serve over 70 households – including adults under the age of 65, children, and senior citizens -- at a cost of only two to three dollars a family! Our average bill from the Greater Berks Food Bank is usually around \$200 a month, which includes a \$50 delivery fee.

Don't forget your envelope contributions! The most important givers are you. Thank you for your generous support of the food pantry, envelope contributions totaled \$2313 in 2016, enabling us to meet our pantry recipients' basic food needs.

In 2016 our total food mission -- Kennedy House trips, delivery costs, repackaging supplies and gift cards for emergency calls if the pantry shelves are bare – cost \$3521.46. We have also used some this year money to purchase salad and rolls for our free community dinners.

If you feel a tug on your heart to help with the food pantry (they are always looking for help) please feel free to come unload the delivery truck and sort items at 9 a.m. on the Third Thursday of the month or help during the distribution in the evening at 6:30 p.m. We would really appreciate it. Please feel free to speak to Robin Faust or Karen Miller if you are unsure about coming out to help! If you ever have an emergency food need – or know someone who does – contact Robin Faust or Lisa Shupp.

Bingo Kitchen August 11

Please have your Hot Pots in the kitchen by 4 pm. All dishes should be warm when they arrive. If you drop off the day before please let someone in the church know so that they can get the crock pot turned on during the day on Friday.

4 – 7 pm	7- close
Rose Freed	<i>Need help</i>
Sue Deisemann	<i>Need help</i>
Karen Kissling	<i>Need help</i>
Karen Miller	Karen Miller
5-8	
Amy Yeager	

Hot Pot – Wendy Schutt
Doris Wagner

Bakers – Amy Yeager
Shirley Breininger
Rose Freed
Karen Kissling

WORSHIP DUTIES

	<i>August 6</i>	<i>August 13</i>	<i>August 20</i>	<i>August 27</i>
<i>Flowers</i>			<i>Christine Bashore/ Sandy Readinger</i>	
<i>Greeter</i>	<i>Needed</i>	<i>Needed</i>	<i>Needed</i>	<i>Needed</i>
<i>Bulletins</i>	<i>Shirley Breininger</i>			

Flowers must be paid in the month they are ordered.



Do you have extra fresh produce that you would be willing to share with the Food Pantry?

Please drop off any fresh produce August 15, 16, or 17th at the church or call Robin Faust @ 610-488-1300.

ALL YOU CAN EAT POT PIE SUPPER

Saturday September 16 4 - 7 pm

Adult \$8

Children age 6 to 10 - \$4.50

Under 6 FREE

A.Y.C.E. Homemade Pot Pie

Includes Corn, Salad, Rolls, Drinks & Dessert

Take Out Meals \$7.00

Quarts Available for Purchase



8/1 Bree Shanaman
8/2 Reid Schrack
8/3 Alexa Shupp
8/4 Richard Yeager
8/5 Steve Reber
Erma Koenig
8/6 Ernest Bausher
Chad Kamp
8/7 Myles Himmelberger

8/10 Linda Bausher
8/11 Marian Long
8/13 Kenny Machmer
8/14 Brady Breininger
8/15 Stephanie Miller
8/17 Tom Moorhead
8/20 Jill Baver
Cindy Snyder
8/23 Josh Knappenberger

8/25 Sharon Kominsky
Wendy Schutt
8/27 Dawson Dubble
8/29 Alyssa Machmer
8/30 Josh Kline
8/31 John Miller III
Brett Schlappich



8/14 Allen & Marjorie Bashore
8/21 Kristen & Travis Breininger

8/28 Beth & Kenny Machmer Jr
8/31 Gerritt & Shirley Breininger

Spaghetti **FREE**
&
Meatballs Dinner

Friday August 18
4-7 pm

**Spaghetti, meatballs, salad, bread &
applesauce**



Choir Rehearsals begin
September 12th @ 7:30 pm

SMOKEY BEAR BBQ Takeout Dinner

Sponsored by
Boy Scout Troop 149

Thursday August 17 4:00 to 6:30 pm

Pick up at Frieden's Church Parking Lot, Shartlesville
28 Wolf Creek Road, Bernville – GPS Address

\$8.00

1/3 lb. BBQ Pulled Pork, Bun, Baked Potato, Butter and BBQ Sauce

For tickets call Reid or Cail Schrack 610-488-0340



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