

ZION NEWS

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



"She out of her poverty has put in everything she had."

MARK 12:44

In Mark's Gospel, chapter 12, verses 41-44, we read the story of Jesus observing the widow put two copper coins in the treasury. In this story from St. Mark, Jesus praises the poor widow's offering, and makes it clear that the standard measurement for assessing gifts is not how much we give to the work of God or how much we put in the offering plate, but how much we have left for ourselves.

It is clear to see that her gift is generous. When we think about the Gospel's description of Christian stewardship in the long term, everyone's giving of themselves to others is expected to be generous. Time, love, talent can be given generously; in this text it is about money. This is more than a symbolic gesture. It demonstrates a gratitude for God's generosity to us.

I am asking you to think about Stewardship, big picture stewardship. It is about our tending to all of the gifts God gives us. For us, stewardship is proportional. Stewardship is a percentage of our time, talent, and treasure. No one is expected to give up

everything like the early disciples (in Acts 4:32-35). But like the early disciples it is not unreasonable to expect that God's generosity to us would stimulate a grateful response in us.

Just as our own budget varies due to unanticipated expenses, the church's budget suffers both seasonally due to income variations and those unexpected expenses (like roof repairs). We cannot do much about the expenses. Zion UCC is cautious and frugal with expenses. Income is up to each of us, our sense of commitment, what is appropriate for each household, and prayerful reflection.

Here's another way to think about stewardship: What would you miss if Zion Blue Mountain wasn't here? Is there part of our ministry together that you are so grateful for that you are willing to support it? If not, well, I don't have any further way to encourage your faithful stewardship. But if there is, then do so...support it. This isn't begging it is encouraging your active participation.

Think about this while you are filling out your offering envelope in the weeks and months ahead. Think about this when someone calls up and asks you to volunteer for us (or for another good cause). When you update your will, think about this. All that is ever expected is a reflection of just how much you are thankful for.

Yours in Christ's service
Rev. Dr. Jon A. Fogle

I would like to thank everyone that helped with **Vacation Bible School** this year. Everything from the Kitchen to the Closing Program ran smoothly thanks to the volunteers.

**This year's theme was Time Lab:
Discovering Jesus from Eternity Past to Eternity Future.**

Approximately 45 children from age 3 to age 12 participated in the VBS program. As the children arrived with their parents, they were checked-in at the Registration table. Then they stopped at the Missions table to drop-off their donation for this year's mission project before heading into the Social Hall.

The Jared Box project was this year's mission project. The children were challenged to bring in a small toy, game or activity that would fit into a shoe box size plastic container (i.e., Jared Box) each day. Enough items were collected to fill 50 boxes. These boxes were then prepared and delivered to Reading Hospital and Hershey Medical Center for distribution to young patients receiving medical care. The staffs at these facilities were thrilled to receive the boxes. It is our hope that they brought joy and a welcomed diversion to many ill children.

As in prior years, each evening started off with a free kid-friendly meal prepared by the kitchen crew for the children and the volunteers (many of whom came right from their day jobs to the church each evening to help with VBS). Following dinner, the children gathered into four groups to sing and praise Jesus. Next the group leaders led the children from station to station where they learned that God has been and always will be with us through stories, crafts, games, music, puppet shows, missions and other activities. Story time and the puppet shows were held in a cool "time machine" built especially for VBS. The children had their picture taken the first night with "Robert the Robot" and were required to "scan" their right hand to gain entrance into the time machine. All were a big hit with the kids. As always, the children loved the fun games, contemporary music and cool crafts, all led by talented station leaders! I'd like to make a special shout-out to our group leaders who served the dinner and snacks and escorted the children from station to station, all while juggling bathroom breaks, skinned knees, uncooperative children and more. You're all amazing!

This year, instead of having the closing program during the church service on the Sunday following VBS, we decided to have the closing program on the last night. I am happy to report that all the parents and even some extended family returned early to view the closing program. The program was held the last half hour of VBS and included a brief review of the VBS program, acknowledgement of the volunteers, a slide show featuring the children and volunteers, two songs performed by the children and more. Many of the parents and children also stayed for the light refreshments offered after the program.

God has blessed our church with many talented and giving members. I am so grateful. I wouldn't have been able to manage VBS the last eight years without each and every volunteer. Thank you!

I would also like to thank the volunteers for the gifts presented to me at the closing program again this year. I love the picture and hung it immediately in my living room. I also love the gift cards to different eating places....yum. Thank you so much!!!

It has been my pleasure to work with all of you the past eight years; however, I have decided to make this my last year as the Director of the VBS Program so that I can devote more time to other interests and obligations both at church and outside of the church. I pray that someone within the congregation finds it in his/her heart to offer his/her time and talent to continuing the VBS program in the coming years both for our church and for the community.

Many Blessings, Wendy



**Worship times beginning September 16
8 & 10:30 AM**

Bingo Kitchen Sept. 14

4 – 7 pm	7- close
Ruth Himmelberger	Volunteer needed
Beth Machmer	Volunteer needed
Volunteer needed	Volunteer needed
Karen Miller	Karen Miller
5-8 pm	Melissa Miller

Hot Pot – Karen Miller
Steve Shollenberger

Bakers – Rose Freed
Cindy Emore
Pat Moyer
Melissa Miller

If you are available to help out in the kitchen and are not in church to sign the volunteer sheet, please email lshupp@zionbluemountainucc.org with the time slot that you are available.

MISSION COMMITTEE REPORT

The Mission Committee continues to get themselves established. They delivered 5 cleanup buckets to St. Paul's in Pine Grove following the flooding and 2 buckets to the Salvation Army in Hamburg.

We cannot thank Caroline Bashore enough for organizing another successful COMMUNITY DINNER. She served 86 friends hot dogs, hamburgers, salads and dessert! There will not be another FREE DINNER until next year so we hope to see you there if you didn't make it this time.

We will be selling Redner's Sandwich tickets in the upcoming weeks. The tickets will be \$5 and may be redeemed at the quick shop in Bernville or any store that makes the sandwiches. Visit us at the bake sale at the Pot Pie Dinner to purchase one of our homemade desserts. These funds are crucial for us to continue with Mission projects for the church so please support this effort!

Thank you for your support in the Mission of Zion Blue Mountain!



09/01 Jeremy Bentz
09/02 Brianna Bashore
09/03 Russell Hartman
09/04 Lily Bentz
09/05 Amy Stafford
09/07 Allen Leshar
09/08 Julie Schlappich
09/10 Harvey Stambaugh
Sharon George
09/11 Eileen Deisemann

09/12 Caroline Bashore
09/13 Andrea Faust
09/16 Laura Ditzler
09/20 Larry Newhard
09/24 Mike George
David Breidigan
Samantha Moyer
09/25 Barry Harbonic
09/26 Sara Ruth
09/27 Margaret Luckenbill
Zach Zweizig
09/28 Stanley Deisemann
Amy Yeager
09/30 Dean Kirkhoff
Anne Binner



LAURA DITZLER: Birthday 9/16 – 96 years young!
PC 201
99 Bethany Road
Ephrata PA 17522

09/02 Dennis & Adele Dietrich married 29 years
 09/07 Barbara & Kenny Grimes married 50 years
 09/08 Brad & Robin Faust married 45 years
 09/10 Ronald & Myong Emerich married 51 years
 09/12 Robert & Susan Deisemann married 20 years
 09/16 Pinky & Lynda Himmelberger married 57 years
 John & Melissa Miller married 12 years
 09/19 Arthur & Karen Kissling married 20 years
 09/20 Tim & Lori Rentschler married 32 years
 09/21 Jim & Lisa Shupp married 27 years
 09/22 Ralph & Esther Sweigart married 17 years
 09/24 Brian & Sherry Wessner married 35 years
 09/26 Barry & Susan Harbonic married 48 years
 09/30 Dwain & Julie Schlappich married 23 years



*Samantha Neifert and Anthony Moyer on their marriage on
 August 25, 2018*

FUNDRAISING

The fundraising committee met on Monday August 13. Upcoming fundraisers were confirmed and some new ones were introduced. Here is the schedule for the next few months:

- September 22 Pot Pie Dinner
- October 20 Apple Dumplings
- November 10 Pumpkin Rolls (adopted by fundraising)
- Nov 25 – Dec 16 Chinese Auction (4 Sundays)
- December 16 & 23 Christmas Cookie Sale
- February 3 Super Bowl Chili Sale
- March 2 Meatloaf Dinner (Snow date - March 9)
- April 11 & 12 Turtle Candy Sale

We hope you join us for the Pot Pie Dinner coming up in September. We really brainstormed and are **trying to make a good thing better!** Martha's Circle has passed the pumpkin roll fundraiser to the committee, same recipe - some new helpers! Finally we are trying a homemade sub sale on Sunday Oct. 6th. Subs will be made in house with ATV rolls and fresh sliced meats and cheeses! Buy one for yourself and sell a few to friends. Order forms will be available for multiple orders.

A.Y.C.E POT PIE SUPPER

Saturday September 22 4 - 7 pm

Adult \$8

Children age 6 to 10 - \$4.50

Under 6 FREE

Includes Corn, Homemade Coleslaw, Rolls, Drinks & Ice Cream

Take Out Meals \$7.00

Quarts sold by PREORDER only

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PREORDER HOMEMADE CHICKEN POT PIE QUARTS - \$ 7.00
(Orders will not be accepted the night of the dinner)

Name _____ Phone # _____

of Quarts _____

Pick up Saturday only 2 - 7 pm

Place orders in the box in the Narthex or mail to PO Box 98 Strausstown PA 19559

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It's hard to believe it's time to start planning our annual **Chinese Auction**. This year's auction will be held Sunday, November 25 to Sunday, December 16. In addition to Sunday mornings, the auction will be open to the public on the following dates:

Friday, December 14 4:30-8:00 pm (Bingo)

Saturday, December 15 9:00 am - 3:00 pm

Sunday, December 16 5:00 - 8:00 (Live Nativity)

All donations should be placed on the designated auction table in the parlor. No auction items will be accepted after November 24.

Winning tickets will be drawn Monday, December 17. Prizes not claimed that evening will remain in the parlor and can be picked up during regular church office hours. Any questions please contact Keith Hamm, Susan Harbonic or Steph Miller.

BASIC NEEDS DRIVE



Razors, Shampoo, Bar Soap, Liquid Hand Soap, Toothpaste, Deodorant, Cleaning Products, Toilet Paper, Laundry Detergent, Garbage Bags and Paper Towels

Please place all your donations in the food pantry box
We will be collecting these items through the remainder of the year!



Many Hands Make LIGHT Work

Thank you to everyone that helped to make
our community dinner a success.

We served 86 dinners!

**A special thank you to Caroline Bashore for
organizing the event!**

From the Treasurer- July Financials

	Month	Actual YTD	Budget YTD
Receipts	\$12,919	\$155,971	\$163,600
Expenditures	\$15,342	\$168,924	\$173,845
	(\$2423)	(\$12,953)	(\$10,245)

What makes for good stewardship? Proportional, Voluntary, Recurrent giving.

Biblical giving is proportionate. God's people have always given back a percentage of what God has first given them. Old Testament people gave back 10% to the Lord's work. This was considered the "Sacred Portion" of their possessions. Proportionate giving is found in the New Testament as well. In Luke 12:48, Jesus says, *"From everyone who has been given much, much will be demanded; and from the one who has been entrusted with much, much more will be asked.* (N.I.V. © 2011) In Luke chapter 21, Jesus praised a widow who gave two copper coins into the temple treasury. Other gifts were much larger in terms of the total amount but much smaller in terms of the percentage of income they represented. Giving a percentage of income ensures that Christians bear the burden equally.

Annual Income	Weekly Income	4%	6%	8%	10% Tithe
\$5,200	100	4	6	8	10
\$10,400	200	8	12	16	20
\$26,000	500	20	30	40	50
\$32,500	625	25	38	50	63
\$52,000	1000	40	60	80	100
\$78,000	1500	60	90	120	150
\$104,000	2000	80	120	160	200
\$130,000	2500	100	150	200	250
\$169,000	3250	130	195	260	325
\$195,000	3750	150	225	300	375

Biblical giving is voluntary. The Apostle Paul says: Remember this: Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also reap generously. Each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. And God is able to bless you abundantly, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work. (N.I.V. © 2011)

Salvation is a gift of God's grace. Our stewardship is expressed not as a function of the law, but as a function of the Gospel. In the Old Testament, the tithe was the law of the land. But in the New Testament, giving is voluntary. The Good Samaritan gave the innkeeper two silver coins, the equivalent of two months wages, to pay for the care of his injured neighbor. He gave voluntarily, prompted by the love of God.

Giving is recurrent. Having prayerfully determined a proportionate amount of money to give, voluntarily, the one thing to remember is that it is most helpful to do so regularly. A gift that is on your calendar, say weekly or monthly, is easier to remember and it is better for the church. One way to do this is to sign up for electronic giving. It is safe, you are in control of the amount and the frequency.

Plus, if you are away and not in worship, Zion still gets your gift.



Roof Update

The trustees would like to provide some information our roof situation. After a wet spring and several leaks throughout the building we had all of the roofs inspected. This includes the slate portion over the sanctuary, the flat roof over the Sunday School /Overflow area, and the social hall roof. The slate roof over the sanctuary was inspected and initially deemed to be in good condition. The flat roof needed some minor repairs. The social hall roof has continually been losing shingles and Jon Schaffer has been replacing and fixing as necessary. Thank you Jon! It was suggested that we replace the social hall roof with a better shingle. It was our hope that by replacing the shingle we would be able to prevent any

deterioration of wood & future leaks. We have been gathering quotes on the social hall roof. While all of that was happening the wet spring turned into an even wetter summer and we were faced with two new problems. First, there are bubbles forming in the sanctuary ceiling where water is leaking through the slate tiles. Second, a portion of the ceiling fell down in the overflow area. We have now turned our focus to the slate roof and are working with several companies to come up with a solution. The roof above the area that collapsed is in the process of being repaired. It is an area that was noted to have water pooling during the roof inspection. There are many peaks and valleys on the sanctuary roof that make this a challenge for any roofing company. Also, as it has been raining almost every day it makes it difficult to tackle repairs.

All this information has put us in a very unsure position as to whether repairs to the slate roof will be sufficient or if the condition of the slate will warrant having to tear off the slate roof and replace it. When we have the recommendations from the roofers we will give the congregation an update. Several people have already given donations towards the roof and we **thank you very much for your generosity. Anyone who would like to donate specifically to the roof, please indicate on your envelope or check that it is for the roof repairs.** If you have any question please feel free to speak to one of the trustees.

Thank you, - Jon, Bryan, Brad and Keith.

HAVE YOU HEARD?

Yes, we have begun the process of searching for a new Pastor! This is an exciting time for the church it determines the direction we will take in our future and don't you want to be a part of that?

Please join the conversation and attend one of the "Looking Forward" meetings hosted by the Transition Team. They personally invite each and every member to be heard and be part of this process. MEETING DATES & TIMES: SUN. 8/26 - 10 am, THURS. 9/20 - 4 pm or 6 pm. JOIN US IN THE PARLOR!

They will be asking questions and this will also be an opportunity for you to ask questions and discuss your thoughts on the needs of the church.





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Staff

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

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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, Bryan Houpt

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