

# ZION NEWS

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

## OFFICIAL CALL

Zion's UCC Annual Congregational Meeting, November 18, 2018  
Following the 10:30 AM worship service.

### Nominating Report

DEACON: Barry Miller

There are three Elder positions and one Trustee position still open.

Dear Christian Friends,



November has several 'High Holy Days' on the calendar. As a kid, I remember that in Michigan rifle deer season always opened on November 15<sup>th</sup>. Probably more than 90% of you don't find that holiday much more than repugnant.

Then there is Thanksgiving. It is a holiday when you have to put up with Uncle Jon's liberal perspective for one day. It is usually a feast day, meaning that all kinds of family food traditions are paraded out to the table after days of preparation. You may need to break out your 'eating pants.' There is so much going on in and around that day that it is easy to overlook the meaning of the celebration.

On October 3, 1863, President Abraham Lincoln wrote:

*...I recommend to them that while offering up the ascriptions justly due to Him (God) for such singular deliverances and blessings, they do also, with humble penitence for our national perverseness and disobedience, commend to His tender care all those who have become widows, orphans, mourners, or sufferers in the lamentable civil strife in which we are unavoidably engaged, and fervently implore the interposition of the Almighty Hand to heal the*

wounds of the nation and to restore it as soon as may be consistent with the divine purposes to the full enjoyment of peace, harmony, tranquility, and Union.

This part of Lincoln's proclamation serves as a remedy to the self-congratulation often serves as a cheap substitute for gratitude.

Author and theologian Diana Butler Bass insists that Gratitude goes beyond feeling thankful for stuff. It is social. It is about "presence, participation, and partnership." It is about being with one another, in life together. It is the thread of nature and neighbor, the seemingly fragile strands of gifts and goodness that weave our life together."

Gratitude, then may actually have some prerequisites as Lincoln suggests. Confession, reconciliation, and humility are three.

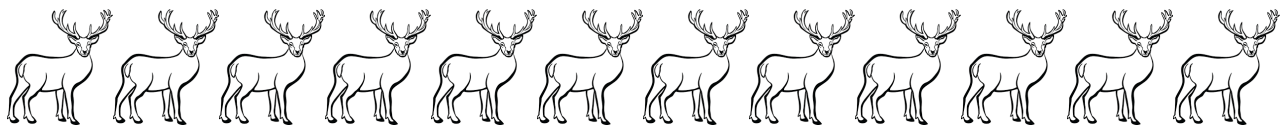
I suppose you can be thankful for something without community or without worship, but I am convinced that the kind of gratitude that God deserves needs more than that.

Some of that can be shared when we gather with our neighboring Lutheran churches on Thanksgiving eve. Every Sunday we rehearse this very movement: We gather in God's presence, we prepare to hear God's word (Confession and assurance), we hear God's word, and we respond with gratitude. Then we go out to serve God.

Enjoy your pie, your turkey and filling, please do. But pause long enough to remember that you don't deserve such riches, and at the same time God is more than willing and able to provide.

See ya in church,

Rev. Dr. Jon A. Fogle, Interim Pastor



### HUNTER'S HUMOR

The Wednesday-night church service coincided with the last day of hunting season. Our pastor asked who had bagged a deer. No one raised a hand. Puzzled, the pastor said, "I don't get it. Last Sunday many of you said you were missing because of hunting season. I had the whole congregation pray for your deer."

One hunter groaned, "*Well, it worked. They're all safe.*"

# Important Message From the Conference Ministers of PSEC and PNEC

October 8, 2018

Dear Pastor,

The Church is in transition and faces many challenges and opportunities. Recognizing that God is inviting us into something new, the PNE and PSE Conferences began working together over two and a half years ago to discern how God is calling us to be the Church in the 21st Century.

With study, discernment, and prayer led by a Joint Conference Vision and Development Team, we now present a vision of hope and possibility in the creation of a new Conference to serve Eastern Pennsylvania.

The PNEC Board of Directors and PSEC Consistory have approved a resolution combining conferences that will come to a vote at our 2018 Fall meetings.

As a part of our covenant together, we share this information with you, and ask that you share this good news with your conference delegates, lay leaders, and congregation members in preparation for our respective meetings in November 2018. Members of the JCVDT would be happy to visit with your congregation to share this information in more detail and answer any questions you may have.

If both Conferences approve the Fall Annual Meeting resolution, we will begin the long, hard work of completing the structure that will support the East Pennsylvania i Conference; a restructuring that will require General Synod approval in June 2019.

We believe coming together is what God is calling us to do.

We hope you and your congregation will recognize the benefits of this, trust the Holy Spirit in moving us forward, and support the creation of the East Pennsylvania i Conference.

With great anticipation,



Rev. Dr. Bonnie Bates  
Conference Minister, PNEC



Rev. William P. Worley  
Conference Minister, PSEC

# POINSETTIAS FOR SALE

6 INCH POT WITH 4-6 BLOOMS; \$9.00 EACH

RED ONLY

PLEASE RETURN ORDER FORMS WITH PAYMENT NO LATER THAN 12/9

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ PHONE: \_\_\_\_\_

TOTAL # OF PLANTS \_\_\_\_\_

IN LOVING MEMORY OF

\_\_\_\_\_

IN HONOR OF

\_\_\_\_\_

IN THANKSGIVING OF \_\_\_\_\_

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FOR OFFICE USE ONLY

\_\_\_\_\_ AMOUNT PAID \_\_\_\_\_ # OF PLANTS Pd \_\_\_\_\_



## PUMPKIN ROLLS

Pick up November 11

*Whole roll \$12*

*Half roll \$6*

*Call the church to order your roll for the holiday!*

## NOVEMBER 4





**Boxed Stuffing Mix (like Stovetop)**  
**Instant Mashed Potatoes**  
**Turkey Gravy (Canned or Gravy Mix Packets)**  
**Canned Yams**  
**Canned Veggies (green beans, corn, peas)**  
**Cornbread Mix**  
**Pumpkin Pie Filling or Fruit Pie Filling**  
**Boxed Pie Crust Mix**

Deadline to bring in above items is November 11th  
It doesn't matter if you can fill a bag with everything or just one item,  
we appreciate your kind heart and generosity!

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## THE DEACON'S COIN PURSE

As Pastor Jon has told us, our money isn't really ours, but is instead God's money. This being said, most likely we can say we are just holding it for God. So in other words, we should be good stewards and give back a portion fitting for God. Also our stewardship should extend to volunteering with fundraising events planned in the next few weeks. The making of pumpkin rolls is planned for November 10, which is one week earlier than previous years. Our annual nut sale is planned for November 28th. Help is needed for both these events to be successful. Donations are also needed for the annual Chinese auction. Please contact the church office for any information needed for these events.

Sincerely, The Deacons.



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When we open our hands — figuratively speaking — to allow something to pass through our fingers, rather than holding it with tightly clenched fists, God can give us new blessings.

“God cannot pour more into hands that are already clinging tightly to what they hold,” says Wellman. Whether material goods or time, ideas or talents, money or energy, the gifts God has given us so generously are to be shared just as freely with others. With our hands continually open to receive, give and receive again, God’s genius cycle of generosity goes on and on.

# Nut Sale

**Kettle cooked nuts available in 1 lb. boxes on Wednesday, November 28.**

Completed order forms along with payments may be placed in the box in the Narthex  
**ORDERS DUE BY NOV 18**

Pick up between 10-12 AM Wednesday November 28 or after church on December 2nd

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

|  | Boxes/Salt | Boxes/No Salt | Dollar Amount |
|--|------------|---------------|---------------|
| Peanuts (\$6/box)  | _____      | _____         | _____         |
| Almonds (\$13/box)   | _____      | _____         | _____         |
| Cashews (\$13/box)   | _____      | _____         | _____         |
| Zion's Nutty Trail Mix (\$8/lb)  | _____      | _____         | _____         |
| Salted Peanuts, Almonds, Cashews; dried fruit mix (raisins, papaya, pineapple, cranberries); M&Ms. |            |               |               |
| Total Due: _____   |            |               |               |

November 4 - All Saints Sunday



November 21 -  
 Thanksgiving Eve -  
 Joint Service at Frieden's  
 Bernville  
 December 9 - Blue Christmas

December 24 - Christmas Eve 4 & 7 pm

December 30 - 9 am service only



November 11<sup>th</sup>  
**PRETZEL DIPPING**  
 At 9 am in the social hall

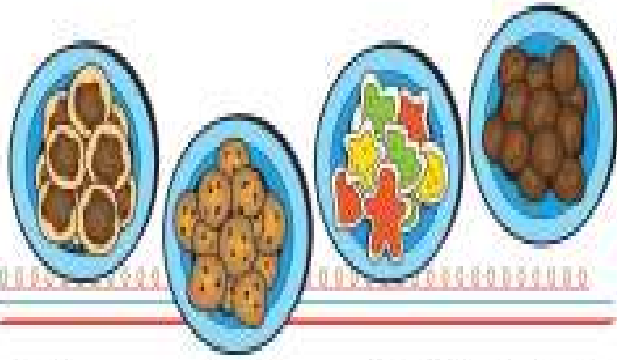
## ***Bingo Kitchen Nov. 9***

| 4 – 7 pm        | 7- close                  |
|-----------------|---------------------------|
| Sharon Eaton    | <b><i>Help Needed</i></b> |
| Sandy Readinger | <b><i>Help Needed</i></b> |
| Anne Binner     | Keith Hamm                |
| Karen Miller    | Karen Miller              |

5-8 Wendy Schutt

Hot Pot – Kelly Himmelberger  
 Keith Hamm

Bakers – Amy Yeager  
 Melinda Schaeffer  
 Doris Wagner  
 Joan Hartman



# Cookie SALE

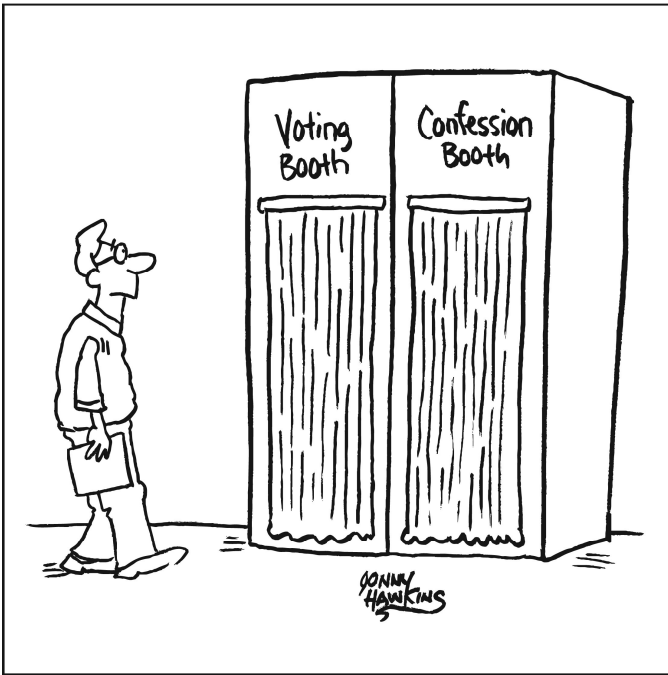
December 9<sup>th</sup> & 16<sup>th</sup>



- 11/7 Betty Symanowicz
- 11/8 David Behm
- 11/12 Judy Lando
- 11/13 Lori Rentschler
- 11/14 Jacob Shollenberger
- 11/15 Dennis Baver  
Travis Ruth
- 11/16 Corinne Bentz
- 11/17 George Brown
- 11/20 Byrd Wagner
- 11/22 Robin Wessner
- 11/24 Gail Hamm
- 11/26 Judy Stafford  
Michael Miller
- 11/27 Irene Birkenbine
- 11/28 Susan Harbonic
- 11/29 Lynda Himmelberger
- 11/30 Ralph Sweigart

Mike & Sharon George married 37 yrs. 11/21  
Debbie & Allen Leshar married 24 yrs. 11/26

**If you want your children to turn out well, spend twice as much time with them, and half as much money.**



## Who will lead?

After the people of Shechem made a poor decision about who would rule as their king, Gideon's son Jotham told them a parable.

In Judges 9:8-15, the trees had difficulty finding a willing leader. The olive tree, fig tree and grape vine all declined, saying they didn't want to leave their important production jobs. Finally out of options, the trees asked the wretched, thorny bramble bush to be king. Although this wild shrub wasn't welcome on anyone's land, still it was a plant. And it was willing to rule if the trees announced their allegiance. The trees opted for the worst of the worst.

When the most worthy, qualified people neglect to step up and lead, results – and morale – suffer. Where can your expertise and passion best be put to use in God's kingdom?



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.

Thank you to everyone in the congregation that purchased or sold sandwiches for our first sub sale. We have heard a lot of good feedback, if you have any suggestions or comments on how to improve please email Clint Faust at [crfaust22@gmail.com](mailto:crfaust22@gmail.com). Also thank you to our dedicated workers who helped make the sandwiches, we could not have done it without you. We made over 200 sandwiches, we hope to improve that number at our next sale. If you haven't tried one of the sandwiches please consider supporting the church and purchase one to try, you won't be disappointed!

## HELPING HANDS MINISTRY

*1 Peter 4:10--Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms.*

We always have a need for meals when a family within our church is struggling because of illness or grief, we are hoping to add to our list of volunteers for the Helping Hands Ministry. We also need **help serving in the event there is a funeral and providing baked goods at funerals and other events** (this is not for Bingo bakers) Therefore, if you are interested in helping out and would like to be included on a list of people who could help with this vital ministry, please fill out the form below and place it in the offering plate or mail it in to PO BOX 98 STRAUSSTOWN PA 19559 . You can also email [shupp@zionbluemountainucc.org](mailto:shupp@zionbluemountainucc.org) with Helping Hands in the subject line and where you are willing to help.

**Thanks so much for your willingness to help.**

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_ Circle all that apply    **MAKE**    **BAKE**    **SERVE**





Many of us are acquainted with the paradox of the Advent and Christmas seasons – a time when we feel we are supposed to celebrate hope, love, joy and peace, and yet a time that can also be full of sadness and grief. In response to that, we are offering a Blue Christmas service on **Sunday December 9<sup>th</sup>** at both Sunday services emphasizing special recognition of the struggles that many people face during this season. Its somber tone also testifies to the struggles of Mary, Joseph and Jesus that are often overlooked. By offering this service of worship we hope to acknowledge the struggles that we all face while providing a safe place of rest, comfort and healing.

### **From the Treasurer- September Financials**

|                     | <b>Month</b>    | <b>Actual YTD</b> | <b>Budget YTD</b> |
|---------------------|-----------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| <b>Receipts</b>     | <b>\$26,372</b> | <b>\$198,188</b>  | <b>\$208,100</b>  |
| <b>Expenditures</b> | <b>\$20,596</b> | <b>\$212,777</b>  | <b>\$214,505</b>  |
|                     | <b>\$5776</b>   | <b>(\$14,589)</b> | <b>(\$6405)</b>   |

Keep an eye out for our Angel Tree in the Narthex.  
 Gifts will be due back at the church December 2, 2018





Zion (Blue Mountain) Church  
PO Box 98 (6573 Old Rt. 22)  
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, Bryan Houpt*

*Contact Information*

*Pastor: 484-269-9624*

*Office Phone: 610-488-7361*

*Website: [www.zionbluemountainucc.org](http://www.zionbluemountainucc.org)*

*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.*