

# ZION NEWS

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



Happy New Year! Can you believe that it is actually the year of our Lord, 2020? It just doesn't seem possible. But yet, here it is, as sure as the sun came up today, it is a new year. It is interesting how what seems like the routine can actually create and bring things that amaze us.

Every day we get up and go about our lives, many of those days, but sure not all, seem very much like the day before. Then, one day we are looking in a mirror and realize how much about our lives has changed without realizing that is was.

I believe the life of a church can be the same. Many folks are ready for new things and new people here at Zion Blue Mountain, and I believe that is a wonderful thing. Trust me, I love new ideas! However, I've learned the beauty in letting some things happen organically, as they say. Letting the Holy Spirit do its work among us, and also (for my part) planting and scattering just enough seed to know that it will grow among you. Even in ways I could not imagine.

I am intentionally spending my first few months here at ZBM just getting to know you all and your ministries. In just a few short, and busy, weeks I've already made some observations. I've already started to grow deeply connected to this place and people, and to the realization that we will have others join (and rejoin) us in time. I've tried not to have too many "new ideas" unfold quite yet because I've wanted to focus on just getting to know you all, and you getting to know me. Yet, a few of them have already started to happen.

I guess my point is this, if we above all focus on the purposes of Church, worshipping, welcoming, living our life at the body of Christ; doing the things we know Christ called us to do. One day, we will be looking at that "mirror" and wondering in amazement how it all happened without realizing it. Friends, trust me, we may not even see in the mirror what we were expecting to see years from now, but it will be good and serve God's purpose and long as we make our purpose God's.

On December 15<sup>th</sup> in worship those attending were asked to share ideas of how ZBM could do new things that “created hope” in the world. Folks were encouraged to share completely new ideas, but allowed to share ideas and activities from the past that still might create hope if renewed.

As best as I could, and please forgive where you see my errors, I broke these ideas into two categories. First, what I believed were genuinely new ideas, or at least things that have not been attempted here before. And the second group, ideas that I’m guessing were here before and folks would like to see here again. Some of these ideas worked in the past, others did not. That doesn’t mean they won’t work in the future, or that they will again.

I’m sharing these ideas in those categories. Again, please forgive me if you disagree with how I did that. I also believe that these ideas fall into other sets of concerns. I would say that almost every idea offered could be separated into what I would call either “mission” or “education.” Now, to be honest, mission isn’t always what people think it is, but that’s a whole other discussion. Also, I prefer the phrase “spiritual formation” over “education.” Again, that is another discussion that I’d love to have at the appropriate times. For now, I’ll just call them “mission” and “education.” Though, it is likely to change.

I also believe that three distinct types of folks rose to be chief concerns. First, the youth are certainly in the hearts and minds of this church. Also, the elderly are obviously cared for deeply. Also, there is another group that I believe is of great concern and along with the other two, should very much be. I will simply call this group “neighbors” (maybe even “not yet neighbors”). By “neighbors” I mean those that may not ever actually crack the doors of our church, may be passing through, or may one day come to be with us. Yet, they certainly are of concern to us as God’s children. These are all groups of people that Jesus taught and commanded us to love and care for.

I would invite you to consider just a few questions, but also offer your own:

- 1) What previous activities listed could be brought back to meet the same purpose, but in a new way?
- 2) What could those new ways look like?
- 3) What activities could be brought back exactly as they were?
- 4) How do we encourage and allow each other, and those not yet with us, to participate in these activities?
- 5) Which of these are supported by scripture?
- 6) Can we combine any of these into singular event, program, etc.?
- 7) Finally, how does it create hope for the world?

I would encourage you to read through the list considering these questions. Also, to continue to think of ideas. If you find something you are passionate about, don’t let that passion die without action. If you see someone passionate about something you are not; find the love to encourage them and support them.

In the coming weeks I will set aside some time on a Sunday to speak with folks about three ideas I am gathering from this list. I’d like to share them with you, get your thoughts, and see how we might take a first step forward on those. Please know though, this church can pursue any of these ideas without me being the one to take the first step to bring them forward.

World renowned theologian Fredrick Buechner is often quoted for saying, “The place God calls you to is the place where your deep gladness and the world’s deep hunger meet.”

I encourage you to find the place God is calling you. Thank you all so very much for participating in this activity! I assure you, this isn’t the last time you’ll hear about it.


- Pastor Stump

# What new thing can the church do to create hope in the world?

## New Things

- 1) "Hope for Hikers"- Trail magic along the Appalachian Trail.
- 2) A class for those who are grieving
- 3) Be like Mr. Rogers!
- 4) Deliver toiletry bags/baskets to a different community and welcome them to our church.
- 5) Support and educate local organizations
- 6) Very good idea to help a family in the area (Bringing Hope Home?)
- 7) More social media outreach. Instagram (if not already)
- 8) More involved with the community. Free music lessons for children
- 9) Bringing Hope Home
- 10) Pride Flag
- 11) Approach mothers and father with children in preschool at Zion to get involved with Sunday School for their children
- 12) Be transparent to our community and offer an outreach program
- 13) Have a collection box for Toy for Tots
- 14) Become an Open and Affirming Congregation





**Chili Sale**

Skip the cooking  
enjoy the game

**\$8 per quart**

Pick up **SUNDAY FEBRUARY 2nd**  
after worship

**Name** \_\_\_\_\_

**Phone** \_\_\_\_\_

**# of quarts** \_\_\_\_\_

**Total \$** \_\_\_\_\_

### WORSHIP DUTIES

Please check the Narthex for new sign-up sheets for flower sponsors! Sign-ups for readers and greeters is in the back of the Sanctuary

*If you have not yet received 2020 offering envelopes and would like them please call the church office – 610-488-7361*

First 2020 Consistory Meeting – Sunday January 19<sup>th</sup>  
following worship!

**JOIN US**

**Super Bowl Sunday for a  
SOUP-A-FET**

**ALL YOU CAN EAT**

**\$5 SOUP BUFFET**

**includes drink**  
**proceeds donated to charity**

**Sunday February 2, 2020 in the social hall after worship**

Volunteer to bring ANY soup to raise money for charity!  
*Sign up in the Narthex*  
 so we know how many soups we can count on.

01/01 Bruce Wagner  
 01/02 Michael Eaton  
 01/05 Barry Bentz  
 01/07 Janet Wilhelm  
 01/08 Karen Miller  
 01/10 Elmer Breidigan  
 01/11 Jeff Newhouse  
 01/11 Cindy Emore  
 01/14 Melissa Miller  
 01/15 Lainie Bowers  
 01/18 Kelly Holzman  
 01/19 Beverly Schrack  
 01/22 Mildred Long  
 01/23 Cindy Berger  
 01/23 Amy Shanaman  
 01/24 Wilbur Bentz

01/25 Ross Baver  
 01/26 Brian Kominsky  
 01/28 Rose Freed  
 01/28 Joyce Deisemann  
 01/29 Barry Miller  
 01/29 Mark Wessner  
 01/30 Ronald Emerich

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**JANUARY**  
 Birthdays & Anniversaries

**ANNIVERSARIES**

01/04 Sandy & John Gilmer – 6 years  
 01/25 Barry & Karen Miller - 56 years

Thank you to everyone in the congregation who donated items for our Chinese Auction. It was another successful fundraiser! All the baskets were beautifully done and we had a great response in the bidding. If you won a basket congratulations and enjoy! The fundraising committee looks forward to another successful year and we all wish you a Happy New Year!



*Thank You*

Thank you to EVERYONE who helped with the Live Nativity, it was our 36<sup>th</sup> year for the presentation. We hope it will continue for many years.  
~ The Worship Committee

We would like to make sure all members' names, phone numbers and addresses are accurate, if a change has occurred during 2019 please notify the church office. Email [lshupp@zionbluemountainucc.org](mailto:lshupp@zionbluemountainucc.org)



## **Blood Drive!**

**Sunday January 19th  
9 am - 1 pm**

Contact Audrey Kirkhoff to sign up 610-451-4521

## Agency Feature: Zion Blue Mountain UCC Food Pantry

Since 2009, Zion Blue Mountain United Church of Christ in Strausstown has been opening its doors to serve neighbors in need. Headed by Robin Faust, this monthly pantry regularly serves 75-80 families living in Tulpehocken Township.

The third Thursday of each month, volunteers spend their morning unpacking and organizing food in preparation for the evening distribution. When asked why Zion distributes in the evening, Robin replied, "We do get senior citizens, but it's mostly families. These people work full time every day and still can't afford food along with their other bills. We have it later so that they can get here."

In the past year, Zion has distributed 33,000 pounds of food supplied by Helping Harvest. When placing an order, a lot of thought goes into each selection. "We try to order things in 'meals,'" Robin says. "But people have a way of using every single thing they get. They love the canned pork. Some add it to the frozen meat we give out, to make it stretch, others use it for pork BBQ."

The church is fortunate to have an ally in one of their parishioners. Lally Leshner of Way-Har Farms (also a Helping Harvest Board member), who contributes two of the most popular items each month: milk and yogurt.

The week before Thanksgiving, even more shoppers were anticipated to attend the monthly pantry. The volunteers assembled a special additional bag of groceries to distribute for the holiday. "We put in everything they might need for a Thanksgiving dinner, except the turkey," Robin explains. Among other items, each reusable bag contained: stuffing, cornbread mix, instant mashed potatoes, gravy, yams, pie crust mix and pumpkin pie filling. Thanks to one parishioner (employed by Bell & Evans), there was also a chicken available for each family.

In addition to their bustling monthly food pantry, Zion houses an emergency food pantry for those whose need for food is urgent. The stockroom contains everything from toilet paper to pasta to frozen meat. "Everyone contributes. Bethel Elementary had a food drive and brought us about 400 pounds of donations! We try to keep a good system. That way, it's easy for the church secretary to bring people in here when volunteers aren't present."

It would appear that Zion Blue Mountain UCC has its hands full serving their community, since the church is also a distribution center for Meals on Wheels. However, Robin speaks of doing even more. "I'd like to distribute the Senior Totals boxes here, if possible" she says. "Maybe in the New Year."



## Bingo Kitchen January 10

4 - 7 pm	7- close
Ruth Himmelberger	Lisa Shupp
Sharon Eaton	Volunteer Needed
Joyce Deisemann	Volunteer Needed
Karen Miller	Karen Miller

5-8 pm  
Wendy Schutt

HOT POT – Shirley Breininger  
Robin Faust  
BAKERS - Susan Deisemann  
Susan Harbonic  
Sue Ehrets  
Doris Wagner



**Our trip to the Kennedy House is January 25<sup>th</sup>. Volunteers and monetary donations are needed (please speak to Lisa Shupp). As well as, brownie bakers (if you can provide a pan of brownies please sign up in the Narthex) and the following food items:**

**Elbow Macaroni  
#10 cans of peaches or pears  
Butter (place in the kitchen refrigerator)  
Juice boxes**

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January 6	Epiphany – Holy Communion
January 19	Blood Drive
January 25	Kennedy House
February 3	“Soup-a-fet” Sunday – All you can eat soup buffet Chili Sale
February 22 <sup>nd</sup>	Alice Training (Active Shooter training @ Zion)
February 26	Ash Wednesday
March 7	Pot Pie Quart Sale
March 27	Turtle Candy Sale
April 9	Maundy Thursday Service 7 pm
April 10	Good Friday Service 7 pm
April 12	Easter Sunday

**\*Third Thursday of the month is the Food Pantry Distribution 6:00 pm**

**\* Second Friday of the month is Bingo doors open at 5 pm (*April Bingo is 4/17/2020 because of Holy Week*)**



## Northern Berks Ministerium – “Faith at the Movies” – movies for 2020 Hamburg Strand

January 28 – **Second Hand Lions** (2003) (PG) – 1:49 (A coming-of-age story about a shy, young boy sent by his irresponsible mother to spend the summer with his wealthy, eccentric uncles in Texas.)

February 25 – **My Fair Lady** (1964) (G) – 2:50 (A snobbish phonetics professor agrees to a wager that he can take a flower girl and make her presentable in high society.)

March 24 – **Kings of Kings** (1961) (PG-13) – 2:48 (The story of the life of Jesus Christ from his birth in Bethlehem to his crucifixion and subsequent resurrection. Filmed on a relatively grand scale, the film includes all of the major events referred to in the New Testament; his baptism by John the Baptist; the miracles - cripples walking, blind men seeing; the fishes and the loaves; and so on. The film actually begins with the Roman invasion by Pompey in 65 B.C., the appointment of King Herod the Great by the Romans and finally the crowning of Herod Antipas after he murders his father. The revolt led by Barrabas is also included and John the Baptist's beheading as Salome's price for dancing for Herod.)

April 28 – **I Can Only Imagine** (2018) (PG) – 1:50 – (The inspiring and unknown true story behind Mercy Me's beloved, chart topping song that brings ultimate hope to so many is a gripping reminder of the power of true forgiveness.)

May 26 – **Hoosiers** (1986) (PG) – 1:54 (A coach with a checkered past and a local drunk train a small town high school basketball team to become a top contender for the championship.)

June 23 – **Same Kind of Different As Me** (2017) (PG-13) (International art dealer Ron Hall must befriend a dangerous homeless man in order to save his struggling marriage to his wife, a woman whose dreams will lead all three of them on the journey of their lives.)

July 28 – **Overcomer** (2019) (PG) – 1:59 (A high-school basketball coach volunteers to coach a troubled teen in long-distance running.)

August 25 – **The Blind Side** (2009) (PG-13) – 2:09 (The story of Michael Oher, a homeless and traumatized boy who became an All American football player and first round NFL draft pick with the help of a caring woman and her family.)

September 22 – **Joyful Noise** (2012) (PG-13) (G.G. Sparrow faces off with her choir's newly appointed director, Vi Rose Hill, over the group's direction as they head into a national competition.)

October 27 – **Mask** (1985) (PG-13) – 2:00 (A teenager with a massive facial skull deformity and biker gang mother attempt to live as normal a life as possible under the circumstances.)

November 24 – **Unplanned** (2019) (R) – 1:49 (All Abby Johnson ever wanted to do was help women. As one of the youngest Planned Parenthood clinic directors in the nation, she believed in a woman's right to choose. Until the day she saw something that changed everything.)

December 22 – **The Christmas Candle** (2013) (PG) – 1:40 (A pastor who's suffered a personal loss accepts a position in a town that believes in a Christmas miracle candle, which he strives to abolish.)



Zion (Blue Mountain) Church  
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*Staff*

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

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*Consistory*

*Elders: Ruth Himmelberger, Wendy Schutt, Karen Miller*

*Deacons: Clint Faust, Barry Miller, Susan Harbonic, Melissa Miller*

*Trustees: Jon Schaeffer, Keith Hamm, Bryan Houpt*

*Contact Information*

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