

ZIONNEWS

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

How is your prayer life? I hope you are taking seriously our call to pray for others. Regardless of where you are in this world, prayer is a spiritual practice that transcends geographical, cultural, and religious boundaries. It is a universal expression of faith, hope, and a means to connect with a higher power. The act of praying holds a significant place in the lives of millions around the world and has done so for centuries.

Prayer is often seen as a bridge between the human and the divine. It is a sacred dialogue that allows individuals to communicate with their deity, seeking guidance, forgiveness, and blessings. Many religious traditions, including Christianity, Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism, and Judaism, emphasize the importance of prayer as a fundamental practice.

With these things in mind, I have set as one of my goals for the New Year to create a new ministry here at Zion Blue Mountain, the establishment of a Prayer Team. It is "new" in the sense that it is not a prayer chain. It is a small group of people who are committed to praying for others.

Lisa and I are currently establishing a Prayer Chapel on the first floor of the church near the Fellowship Hall. It will be a Holy place open to all members and friends of the church who seek a secluded place to pray. The Prayer Team will meet there monthly. The list of names that we will be praying for will be available to all who would like to pray for those on the list.

I have asked Steve and Susan Shollenberger, Randy and Barb Hoffman, and Randy Sebastin to join me in this ministry. I believe prayer brings people together, fostering a sense of community and shared purpose. Group prayers provide opportunities for social interaction and mutual support. Prayers help believers feel a sense of closeness to God. This connection provides comfort and assurance, especially during times of distress or uncertainty. My hope is that those who make prayer requests will find comfort in knowing that there are those who are serious about praying for them. Knowing that they are not alone and that a higher power is listening can be profoundly reassuring. This connection often leads to a deeper sense of purpose and meaning in life.

We will be accepting memorial gifts through the month of February to help defray the cost of furniture for the Prayer Chapel. Names of those memorialized will be displayed on a plaque in the chapel.

The importance of prayer cannot be overstated. It is a profound and transformative practice that touches every aspect of a person's life. From fostering a deep spiritual connection and providing emotional solace to enhancing physical well-being and building stronger communities, prayer is a powerful tool for growth and healing. As individuals and communities continue to navigate the complexities of modern life, the timeless practice of prayer remains a source of guidance, comfort, and strength.

Blessings Pastor Pat

"We love because God loved us." ~ 1 John 4:19

GHANA DONATIONS

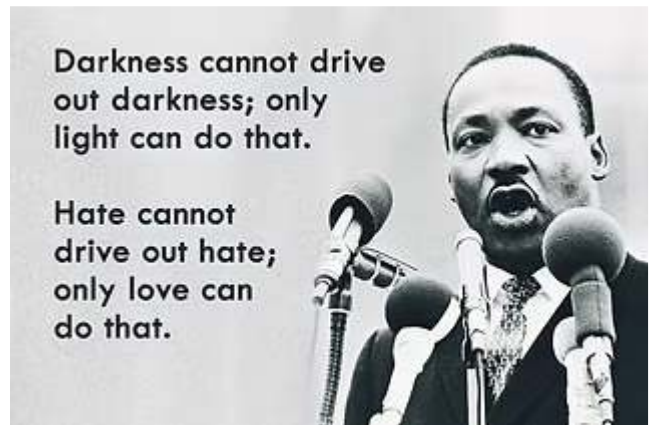
In July Pastor Pat will be travelling to Ghana. The supplies listed below will be given to hospitals, clinics, and pharmacies in Ghana. They will be given free to those unable to pay.

Ask your family doctor and dentist if they have medical supplies they would like to donate.

Band-Aids
Gauze
Tape
Disinfectant
Neosporin
Tylenol
Aspirin
Any over the Counter Drugs
Children's Tylenol
Children's Cold and Flu
Children's Decongestant
Antiseptic Wipes, lotions or liquid
Cotton Balls
Toothbrushes/toothpaste

Food Pantry Item of the Month

CEREAL



BIRTHDAYS

- 2/1 Alex Bentz
- 2/5 Olivia Leshar
- 2/9 Doris Moyer
- 2/11 Barbara Spohn
- 2/14 Jim Schutt
- 2/19 George Stankiewitch
Alyssa Dietrich
- 2/20 Steve Shollenberger
Pam Guinther
- 2/21 Scott Sechler Jr.
- 2/23 Mike Kamp
- 2/26 Ivy Bentz
- 2/28 Barbara Grimes



ANNIVERSARIES

Terry & Sharon Kominsky married 38 years on February 14

Monthly Bingo February 14

February
3:30 – 7:30 pm
Joyce Deisemann
Sandy Behm
Amber Brown

February
4:30 – 8:15 pm
Amy Yeager/Alice Hartman
Sandy Readinger
Candie Riehl

Hot Pot	Hot Pot	Hot Pot	Baker	Baker	Baker	Baker
Barry Driesbach	Candie Riehl	Beth Machmer	Barb Hoffman	Sandy Readinger	Alice Hartman	Robin Faust



Internet Safety

"Your Amazon Prime Membership is Renewing on Monday December 16th, but your payment method is no longer valid." That's the headline of the email from this morning. It's a scam. How do you know? It looks legitimate. It seems to come from Amazon. You have purchased things from Amazon. Well, in my case, the first thing I know is that December 16th is NOT the anniversary of when I signed up for Amazon Prime for my business. It is not when my Amazon Prime renews. The next thing I did was look at the sender's email address. This email did not come from an Amazon.com email. That's a give-away right there. Unfortunately, this is not always the case. Scammers can easily fake an email addresses to appear more legitimate. There are ways to look further into the email information and see more details, but that's more advanced than we will get into here. The next step is to "hover" your cursor over the button in the email (DON'T actually click it) and look at the link. In this case it points to a Google Document. Amazon is one of the leading internet providers in the world. Their servers run a large percentage of the web sites out there. They don't need to use Google Docs to send out information. This particular email is actually a pretty "low effort" example of a scam email. "Good" scammers will actually copy an entirely legitimate email and modify it, so that it looks exactly like emails you commonly receive. Frequently these links will take you to entirely legitimate looking websites. One recent case related was an email sending the receiver to an entirely legitimate looking Xfinity (Comcast) billing page. Only when asked for a social security number, did the recipient realize the email and web page was a scam. The other issue is the scammer may not even be after your financial information. The links may install programs on your computer (or phone) to take it over. They can steal information, or even turn your device into a "zombie" to attack other computers. So what can you do to make sure you are not scammed? Well in this case, DO NOT click on any links in the email. Never ever trust any links in an email such as this. Go directly to www.Amazon.com (or Comcast.com, your bank or whoever you think may have contacted you) and log in. Check for any messages. Get the customer service phone number from this web site, or from a printed statement, or some source you know is legitimate, call and ask. Never trust the information in an unsolicited email. One final note. The IRS or any legal or police agency will RARELY send you unexpected emails. They will nearly always use the US mail, personal visits or telephone calls – and they will NEVER EVER EVER accept payment in gift cards.



When Bad Weather Arrives and a decision is made to cancel Sunday services, the congregation shall be notified immediately. An announcement will be placed on the answering machine, Zion's Facebook page and a message will be sent out to all those on the church's E-mail list.

Thank you for all of the Christmas Cards. I enjoyed opening and reading ALL of them. It was wonderful seeing everyone's name again. ~Doris Moyer



GREETERS

February 2	Janice Blatt
February 9	Candie Riehl
February 16	Pat Moyer
February 23	Joyce Deisemann
Downstairs	Jon Schaeffer

Soup & Bread Lunch
COMMUNITY
Lenten
SERVICES
 Thurs. March 6
 11:30 am @ Zion Blue Mountain




"See? The church is full now, but after you shake it and make it snow, the church is empty."

Zion Blue Mountain UCC

TURKEY & WAFFLE LUNCH

\$12.00

Proceeds benefit:
Zion Blue Mountain Food Pantry and
Lunch Bunch for New Journey Cafe



What's on the Menu?

- ✓ Turkey gravy over homemade waffle
- ✓ Choice of Corn or Green Beans
- ✓ Cole Slaw or Pepper Cabbage
- ✓ Homemade Desserts
- ✓ Drinks

Pre Order Takeouts **ONLY**



610-488-7361

11 am - 2 pm
Sunday February 2nd

6573 Old Route 22, Strausstown

(at the blinker light of 183 & Old Route 22)



A PRAYER FOR PRESIDENT'S DAY – FEBRUARY 17

Lord of heaven and earth, we offer you our deepest gratitude for this country and the freedom to worship you. Stir up a sense of stewardship so we all may care for our nation and each inhabitant of it.

We pray especially for our leaders, that you will bless them with wisdom and humility. Prompt everyone in positions of authority to pursue righteousness, justice and the welfare of all.

Remind us of the psalmist's teaching: "Happy is the nation whose God is the Lord" (Psalm 33:12, NRSV). May that promise be fulfilled "from sea to shining sea." Amen.

Consistory meets the third Monday of the month at 7 pm in the parlor. Anyone interested in what is happening in the church is invited and encouraged to attend. If you have something you would like to speak about, please let Lisa know to put you on the agenda.

"Time"

Time is
too slow for those who wait,
too swift for those who fear,
too long for those who grieve,
too short for those who rejoice.
But for those who love,
time is eternity.

—Henry Van Dyke



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Staff

Pastor: Rev. Patrick Morris (revpmorris55@gmail.com)

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Consistory

Elders: Susan Etchberger, Bryan Houpt, Brad Faust, Pat Moyer

Deacons: Candie Riehl (Vice President), Barry Driesbach, Robin Faust

Trustees: Kerry Holzman, Jon Schaeffer, Dan Brown (President)

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ZIONEWS 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.