

FEBRUARY

ZION UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST NEWSLETTER

FROM THE OFFICE ADMIN'S DESK

“Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened.” – Matthew 7:7-8

The last few months of 2023 leading into 2024 seemed bleak. A lot of negative things happened that left people wondering, “what else can go wrong?” I asked myself the same question, wondering what God’s plan was going into 2024. What would God provide for us in the new year? I reflected and prayed, asking for well wishes and for a positive start to the new year.

God heard my prayers. He heard our prayers. In January, our church was blessed with numerous opportunities and connections that would help benefit us and give us a wonderful start to the new year.

Firstly, we were able to make a connection with a local business in New Baden, named “The Red Porch Café,” who works with the community and people with disabilities to provide goods and services. I was approached by the owner, who offered to work with us to provide food for our sharing table we have available in our Fellowship Hall. I know everyone was disappointed that our Bread Runs ended abruptly. I shared my frustrations with everyone and knew how significant that was to lose. But, the owner of The Red Porch Café offered to bring bakery items, like the kind we would receive on our previous bread runs to our church through a family member who works at Costco. The owner will also be working with Market Center, another local New Baden business, to see if they are able to donate any goods as well.

Secondly, we received a substantial donation from the New Baden American Legion, both in canned goods and in monetary donations for our food pantry. The Legion expressed their interest in helping our church more, and so I provided them with information regarding our Kids Collection Corner and our need for volunteers for dinners. There was a very good discussion about what could be done, and we look forward to what the future will bring with the church’s relationship with the Legion.

Lastly, a connection has been made regarding a potential musician for our Sunday services. They play the guitar and have musical experience from being in a band. More information will be hopefully shared soon!

The Matthew scripture speaks to the events that transpired. We asked God to provide, and he did so. We sought an answer to our troubles, and God helped us find it. We knocked on the door of opportunity, and it opened.

God has begun to pave a path for us for 2024. We may not know where that path goes, but God knows the way. And He has a plan for us; for all of us, to provide when asked, to help us find what we seek, and to open the door when we knock.

Blessings,

Sean Cox

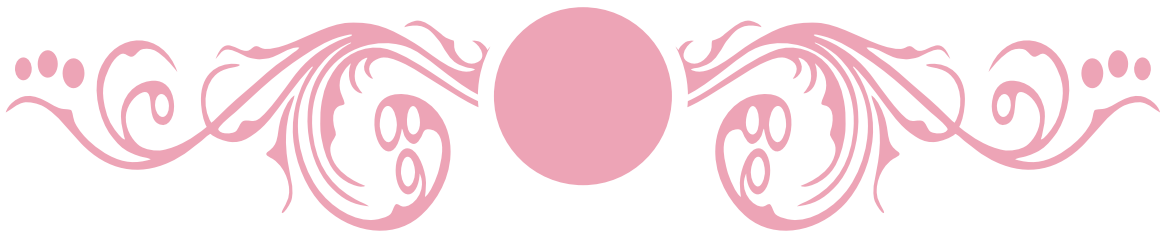
FEBRUARY

Birthdays

1- Benjamin Herndon
2- Nicholas Bowman
5- Scott Billhartz
7- Sharol Guerin
8- Dorothy Holtmann
9- Grace Schooley
Kaitlin Hoeflein
10- Paul Sterrett
13- Emily Billhartz



14- Madelynn Reed
15- Jennifer Griffin
18- Eric Albers
20- Donovan Walthes
21- Laverne Laux
23- Marlene Goldsmith
25- Bradley Griesbaum
Meyer Mensing
28- Lola Reed
Nick Thoele



FEBRUARY

Anniversaries

11 - Mary Sterrett & Joe Bloodworth

I'm back! It's my privilege to once again serve as Council President. The January Council Meeting saw the arrival of three new members and the departure of three members whose dedicated service is beyond reproach. However, even though your term on the Council ends, you never really stop serving. Our great thanks goes out to Rodney Washburn, Charissa Thorpe and Vicki Walthes for their dedicated time on Council. We welcomed new Council Members Candy Beard, Shirlee Heatherly and Tiffany Sommers. The Council elected officers and they are listed below:



- President - Scott Billhartz**
- Vice-President - Linda Bowman**
- Recording Secretary - Shirlee Heatherly**
- Financial Secretary - Beverly Adams**
- Board of Trustees Chair - Chris Bassler**
- Stewardship Chair - Tiffany Sommers**
- Member at Large - Candy Beard**
- Member at Large - Angela Sinkey**
- Member at Large - Jim Sterrett**



As I mentioned earlier, even though your term officially ends on the Council, you don't really leave. And that is the case with Vicki Walthes. She will continue as Treasurer and has been appointed to that position for another year.

In addition to officer elections a couple other business items were discussed. As mentioned in the previous Council Corner, we are no longer using Savers for our Clothing Pantry overflow. A suggestion was given to Pastor Stephen and Rodney for an organization called Remains, LLC in St. Louis and an initial delivery was made in mid-January. A delivery of 550 lbs of excess netted \$55.00. Thank you to both of you for finding this opportunity!

The new shed project is still on target to be completed by the end of March.

As we found out when we had to cancel church because of inclement weather, it is critical that we have updated emails and phone numbers for everyone. Please let us know if your contact information has changed.

Our next meeting will be February 12th. The beginning of the Lenten Season begins on Ash Wednesday, February 14th. See you in church!

~**Scott**

Reminder →

On Friday, **February 2nd & March 1st**, Zion UCC will once again have Operation Food Search, our monthly drive thru where we hand out boxes of food, no application necessary. First come, first served. All are welcome! Spread the word!



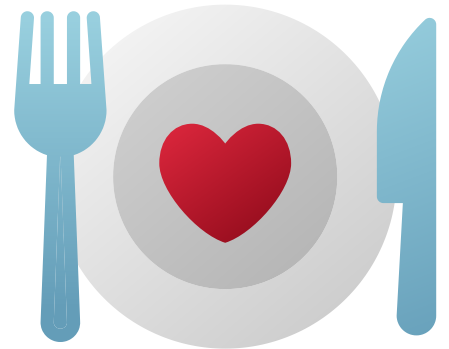
INCLEMENT WEATHER INFORMATION



In the event that inclement weather causes the cancellation of church services on Sundays, the cancellation will be listed on local channels 2, 4 & 5. An e-mail will be sent to all who have provided an e-mail address, & those without e-mail addresses will be called at the phone number listed in the Directory. A post will also be made to the Zion UCC Facebook page for those who are on social media. Please make sure that your e-mail & phone number are up to date if you wish to receive these notifications. If you have any questions, or would like to make sure the information we have for you & your family in the directory is correct, please contact the Church Office. Thank you!

Congregational Life

Several things have been changing at Zion recently and at times we've had to pause, re-evaluate, and decide if we abandon some current missions or make changes and continue in a new way. We feel we are being called to refocus, or maybe shift our focus toward a new, different (but not so different) mission. We need to take to heart Jesus' words to his disciples after a long day of speaking to a large crowd of people. The disciples told Jesus to send the people home so they could get something to eat. Jesus said, 'No. You feed them.' Now nobody does a church meal better than Zion; we are known for food! So, why not turn our strength and know-how into a new mission, following Jesus' words and start...



'Everyone's Table, A Community Meal.'

Our plan is to host a free meal with fellowship once a month, the same time each month, to anyone and everyone that wants to come. We already have a plan, but with a few holes that need some input, and we need your advice and creativity to make this a reality. If you would like to be a part of developing and starting this mission, we would love to have you join us! Please reach out to Leanne by February 12th if you have questions, suggestions, or you'd like to join us in the planning and getting Everyone's Table off the ground. We're excited to hear your ideas!



Board of Christian Education



The BCE thanks everyone for their January donations. In February, we will be collecting dental supplies including toothbrushes and toothpaste. Thanks for your continuous support.

We will be sending Valentine treat boxes to our college and military members away from home. There are five young adults who will receive these goodies. Individually wrapped candy, cupcakes, granola bars, chips etc. are some of the items that would be good or donate the items of your choice.

The BCE will meet on February 27 at 7 pm. If you are a Sunday School teacher or BCE member, please try to attend. Hope to see all of you in Sunday School.

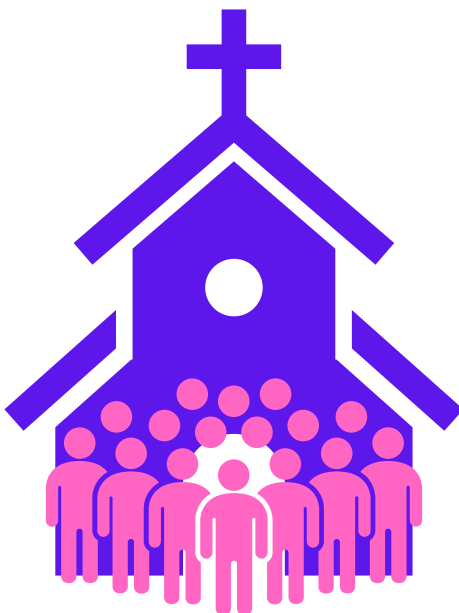


Our Frostbite BBQ truly was a “frostbite bbq” as temperatures that day started off below zero. With the help of our grill masters and kitchen volunteers, we were able to serve a lot of meals and keep many people fed and warm. Thank you all who helped!



The Giving Tree would like to extend our heartfelt gratitude to the wonderful Sons of the American Legion for organizing a fantastic food drive and generously donating the goods to our Food Pantry. Many people from the 8:00am service and other volunteers went the extra mile by assisting us in organizing everything during the delivery. We are truly grateful for their kind gesture, which has not only strengthened our bond but also forged a lasting relationship with the amazing American Legion of New Baden.

THANK
YOU



Beginning in February we will have three meals pretty close together and could use any help you can give. Congregational Life will be hosting two fish fries during Lent. They will be held on Feb 23 and Mar 15. We will also have the Spring chicken dinner on March 2. Please keep your eyes open for the sign up sheet and help if you are able. Any help is appreciated!



SCHEDULE

February 2024

Date	Time	Liturgist	Tech	Acolyte
Feb. 4th	8am 1030am	Laverne Laux Bev Adams	Rodney Washburn Scott Billhartz	Brody Seth
Feb. 11th	8am 1030am	Linda Bowman Molly Stark	Vicki Walthes Bev Adams	Mallory Adrian
Feb. 18th	8am 1030am	Linda Bowman Linda Bowman	Rodney Washburn Scott Billhartz	Carly Jonah
Feb. 25th	8am 1030am	Charissa Thorpe Kathy Sinkey	Vicki Walthes Bev Adams	Lucy Silas



Treasurer's Report for the month of December 2023

	General Account	Pastor Discretionary Fund	Memorial Account	Building Fund
Balance, 12/1/2023	\$4,879.29	\$265.00	\$25,757.23	\$173,584.36
Income	15,540.95	0.00	73.31	1,261.30
Expenses	(16,369.26)	0.00	0.00	0.00
Transfer	6,094.06	0.00	0.00	129,426.13
Subtotal	<u>10,145.04</u>	<u>265.00</u>	<u>25,830.54</u>	<u>304,271.79</u>
Capital Campaign Acct.				0.00
UCF Account	860,146.74			
CD - First Federal	150,000.00			
Emergency Fund	65,315.95			
Balance, 12/31/2023	<u>\$1,085,607.73</u>	<u>\$265.00</u>	<u>\$25,830.54</u>	<u>\$304,271.79</u>

Vicki Walthes, Treasurer

KIDS COLLECTION CORNER

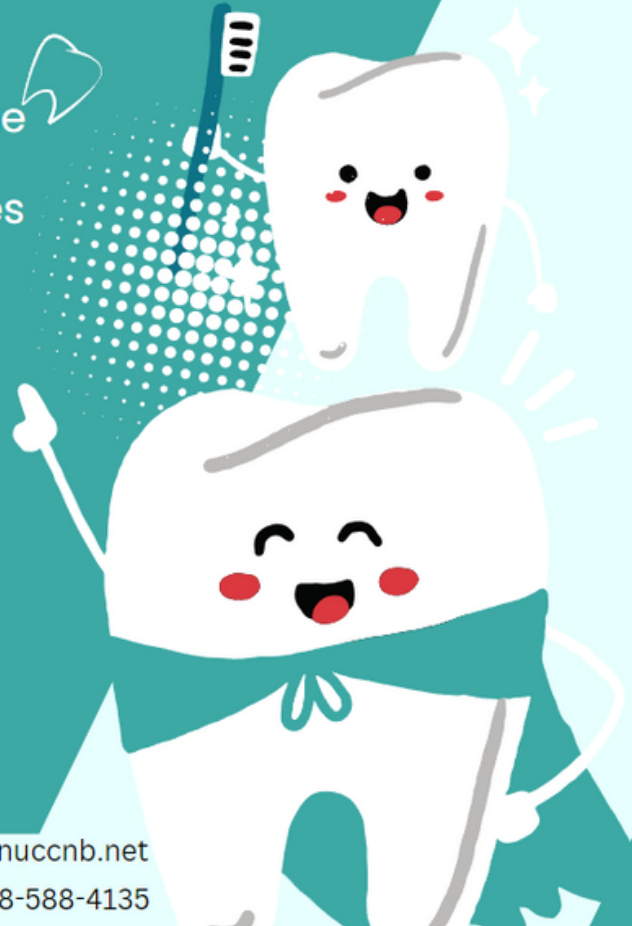


For the month of February, we are collecting dental hygiene products, such as toothpaste, toothbrushes and floss!

All donations will benefit our food pantry.

Please bring your donations to the church office M-F, 8:30am - 5pm.

Help us fill up the baskets!



Questions? Contact us. www.zionuccnb.net
www.facebook.com/NBZUCC 618-588-4135



WE PRAY WITH AND FOR...

Larry Cox ♦ Rebecca Catlin ♦ Jim & Judy Korte ♦ Logan Vallee
Simon Romoser-Claunch ♦ Sherrie Patterson ♦ Marc Govier
Sharol Guerin - Clinton Manor ♦ Jody Cox - Bria of Mascoutah
June Mitchell ♦ Dorothy Bridgeforth - Trenton Village
Bill Malina - Aviston Countryside Manor

All those in the military, at home and abroad.
The victims, families, and those fighting in any global conflict.