

APRIL

ZION UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST NEWSLETTER

FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK

““This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you.”
John 15:12

Christ is risen! Christ is risen indeed! This saying has kept my spirit lifted throughout Holy Week and will continue during the Eastertide season. I think of it, and it makes me rejoice and celebrate as we get to read about and celebrate the empty tomb and the empty cross. As we get to read about the stories of Jesus resurrection and visits with disciples and followers. It makes me want to sing with joy that God and Jesus do not leave us with a sense of unknowing. What I mean by that is, as Jesus visits his disciples and his followers he begins to tell them and remind them of their mission to reach out to others in the world. To spread his message of grace and mercy and love.

In celebrating Christ resurrection, it makes me think of a group in our church that does not often get recognized as spreading God's grace, mercy and love to us. I'm thinking about Hearts In Service or H.I.S. ministry group. This is the group who sends out birthday, anniversary and thinking of you cards on a regular basis. They not only send out the cards to wish you a happy birthday or happy anniversary, but they also meet regularly to go over our extensive list of prayers.

These people have volunteered to pray for all of us. To pray for those prayer requests that have been given to the church. And not just the ones we list in the Sunday bulletin, but all the prayers we receive throughout the year. This group of dedicated volunteers brings joy to my life, when I know they are praying for someone specifically because they care about them. So, I celebrate this ministry, this group of volunteers, who choose to pray as God has called them to pray.

If there is something that you would like prayer for please do not hesitate to send it to Pastor Stephen or talk to him on Sundays. Not every prayer request received is published, but every prayer request we receive is prayed for because that is what God has called us all to do. To pray for those who need God's care.

Blessings,
Rev. Stephen Stark

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APRIL
Birthdays

2 – Michael Zotz
4 – Miles Grathwohl
6 – Mallory Sommers
7 – Justin Groennert
8 – Jean Fowler
9 – Mary Volkmar



10 – Hannah Schooley
Tim Hodges
22 – Kevin Ogden Sr.
Kevin Ogden Jr.
24 – Eleanor Lehde
25 – Julie Brown

APRIL
Anniversaries

16 – David & Joyce Krausz
22 – Tim & Kathleen Hodges
25 – Beau Marlow & Whitney Thorpe Klinsky

I pray you have had a Blessed Easter as we rejoice in our Risen Savior!

Let me begin by saying 'thank you' to each and everyone of you for doing what you can to help fulfill the needs of the church. The support at the two fish dinners and the chicken dinner was greatly appreciated. It is so fulfilling when our church members come together to serve the community and have fun at the same time. Thanks for sharing your talents with the cooking, serving and eating. Eating is always the best!



We have good news to report! The new storage shed in the back of the church has been completed! There are a few small details that need to be worked out, but the structure is up and it looks great! This will provide an area of storage for our seasonal supplies and other church items as we are a bit storage challenged. A big 'thank you' goes out to Rodney Washburn for spearheading this endeavor and providing the project management for this success. Thank you also to Chris Bassler for installing the electricity to the building. Now we have to work on sorting and organizing all of the items that need to be stored in this welcome addition.

As you recall back in February we held a special congregational meeting to approve the repair of the west heating and cooling unit of the Fellowship Hall. Repairs are still forthcoming. Baer Heating and Cooling from Trenton will be doing the work and we are just waiting for the parts to arrive.

The schedule change for the Clothing Pantry kicked off in March. The Clothing Pantry is now open on Tuesdays from 12:00 to 1:30 and from 5:00 to 7:00. Thank you to the extra band of volunteers who are helping with the additional hours of this vital mission to our community.

The Congregational Life Committee is still planning to offer a monthly Community Meal at the church. The plan is to host this meal on the second Wednesday of the month. This committee is targeting April 10th as the first gathering. Please stay tuned as there will be more information to follow as we try to provide a great time for fellowship with friends and the opportunity to meet new folks who may be looking for a church home.

A big change will be occurring this summer with our worship times. The Council and Pastor Stephen discussed options and it was decided to have one service during the summer months that will be at 9 o'clock on Sunday mornings from June 2nd to September 1st. There will also be Sunday School happening during this time. Our Sunday School kids will start in church and then depart for their Sunday School lesson following the Children's Time. They will return for communion. Our normal two services will resume on September 8th.

A couple additional items to remember for your calendars. Our Meal and Mingle will occur on Sunday, April 21st and it will be held at the Urban Farmhouse in Highland. Please sign up in the Gathering Space so we know how many will be joining the group. Also, much planning and work is already underway for the city wide yard sale in which the church will be participating on Saturday, April 27th. Think about volunteering to help. Lastly, we will once again work on some spring cleaning opportunities. Be on the lookout for more information on this as we work to keep our church and outside grounds looking great!

Enjoy our spring time weather!

Scott Billhartz
Council President

Reminder

On Friday, **April 5th and May 3rd**, 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!



Board of Christian Education



The BCE thanks the congregation for their donations of cleaning supplies. For April we will collect seasonings-spices,etc. On April 14th, we will be collecting donations for Eden Seminary. Any help you are able to give with these donations is appreciated.

The Sunday School will be working on a song to hopefully sing in church in April. If you have questions, please contact Candy Beard or Meg Billhartz. We hope everyone enjoyed the egg hunt on Easter. Due to the number of eggs available, it was decided to open this hunt up to the community. Please try to take time to send your children to Sunday School. We miss them when they can't attend! So, hope to see all of you in Sunday School soon!

WE PRAY WITH AND FOR...

◆ Larry Cox ◆ Rebecca Catlin ◆ Jim & Judy Korte ◆

◆ Logan & Zoey Vallee ◆ Paul Sterrett ◆

Sharol Guerin - Clinton Manor ◆ Jody Cox - Bria of Mascoutah

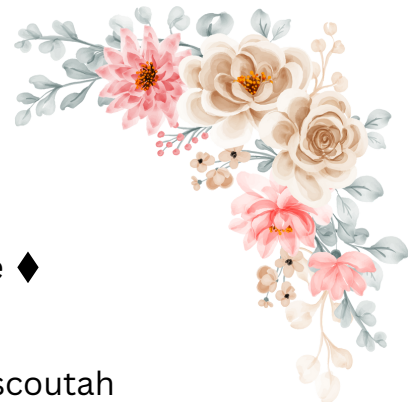
June Mitchell ◆ Dorothy Bridgeforth - Trenton Village

Bill Malina - Aviston Countryside Manor

Janice Kolmer - Highland Facility

All those in the military, at home and abroad.

The victims, families, and those fighting in any global conflict.





As we celebrate the empty tomb, let us consider Jesus' commandment to the disciples during the Last Supper. We invite you to read the following devotional written by Sherry Shepherd.

When Jesus was with His disciples at the Last Supper, He told them, "By this, all people will know that you are My disciples; if you have love for one another."

I believe that Jesus instructed His disciples to love others and one another. When we are instructed to love others well, we often think that it means we are to love the lost or those we don't know well. And it does.

But it also means we are to love those in our lives who know us best—our family, friends, coworkers, and spouse. And sometimes, it is harder to love those who know us better—who know our shortcomings and failings.

And yet, God instructed His disciples to rally around one another in love.

As believers, Christ calls us to be there for one another, help in times of crisis, and comfort in times of pain.

By doing so, we are God's hands and feet on earth. So as you begin your day, who is someone in your life that you could focus on and care for today? Can you concern yourself with their concerns and love them through those?

Prayer: Dear Jesus, help me love others well so they might experience your love through me. Amen.

With Love,
Sherry Shepherd

<https://papersunday.com/blogs/dailydevotionals/daily-devotional-john-15-12>

VacATION BIBLE SCHOOL

We know it's only April, but we wanted to ask if you're available the week of July 22nd from 9-11am? It's Vacation Bible School week, and it's a really special time for many kids in town. Some of them only have access to church during this event, so it's important to make it happen. Could you spare an hour or two, either for a day or for the whole week? We have all the lesson plans ready, we just need volunteers like you to bring it to life. The sign-up sheet is in the gathering space, and we welcome everyone to join us. Every little bit of help is appreciated. In the future, we may also need assistance with supplies, so keep that in mind as well. Thank you so much for any help you're able to provide!



SCHEDULE

April 2024

Date	Time	Liturgist	Tech	Acolyte
Apr. 7th	8am 1030am	Linda Bowman Kathy Sinkey	Vicki Walthes Bev Adams	Mallory Jonah
Apr. 14th	8am 1030am	Michelle Washburn Bev Adams	Rodney Washburn Scott Billhartz	Carly Adrian
Apr. 21st	8am 1030am	Charissa Thorpe Molly Stark	Vicki Walthes Bev Adams	Mallory Silas
Apr. 28th	8am 1030am	Laverne Laux Kathy Sinkey	Rodney Washburn Scott Billhartz	Brody Seth



Treasurer's Report for the month of February 2024

	General Account	Pastor Discretionary Fund	Memorial Account	Building Fund
Balance, 2/1/2024	\$6,973.49	\$265.00	\$25,755.54	\$305,278.02
Income	16,017.94	0.00	43.07	458.06
Expenses	(17,685.48)	0.00	0.00	(15,900.00)
Transfer	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Subtotal	<u>5,305.95</u>	<u>265.00</u>	<u>25,798.61</u>	<u>289,836.08</u>
UCF Account	860,146.74			
CD - First Federal	150,000.00			
Emergency Fund	65,424.95			
Balance, 2/29/2024	<u>\$1,080,877.64</u>	<u>\$265.00</u>	<u>\$25,798.61</u>	<u>\$289,836.08</u>

Vicki Walthes, Treasurer