

JULY 2025 NEWSLETTER

PUBLISHED BY: ZION UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST, PERU ALEX GARNCARZ, PASTOR
Phone:815-223-2671 Email:office@zionperu.org www.zionperu.org
FOLLOW US ON FACEBOOK: ZION UCC, PERU, IL

Dear Friends in Christ,

We had a successful Ice Cream Social thanks to everyone's help. Now it's July and our other big summer event is coming up - Vacation Bible School, aka VBS. This too is an event that requires help from lots of people in order to be successful. Some of you may be thinking, "Well, Vacation Bible School is an event for kids and I'm too old to help with that." So I want to encourage all of you to think about VBS this year differently and I'll tell you why.

Many people think that church is about belief and personal salvation, but not about care for the welfare of community as a whole. The Bible though, both in the Old Testament and the New Testament, is filled with God's call to engage in justice and mercy, and to love neighbor as self. Throughout its history, the people of Zion have taken that call seriously, in many ways. For instance...

In the past members of Zion have been instrumental in establishing the hospital in Peru and serving on its board. The hospital has been through some rough times in recent years, (as have hospitals in many smaller communities) but it has survived (been resurrected?) and is now part of a larger faith based health care system. But without the vision and stewardship of those people who started and maintained the hospital for all those years there would have been nothing to build up today. Zion helped make it possible.

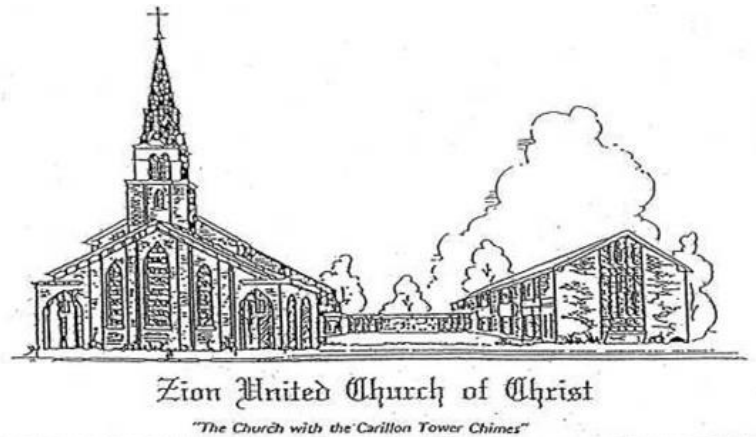
People from Zion were instrumental in establishing the Illinois Valley Food Pantry and continue to be involved in its leadership. Jim Greening was on the board for years and now Pastor Alex is on the board. The food pantry today serves an average of 1500 people a month and is now preparing to move from rented space that was too small into a permanent home which is large enough to do the job efficiently.

When PADS (Public Action to Deliver Shelter) was a new program in our area Zion was one of the seven churches in on the ground floor. We continue to support the shelter and Lilypads, the resale shop which raises money for the shelter. Some of our members have volunteered there. Other individual members volunteer at animal shelters, with scout troops, and in other community organizations.

Think about VBS as a community outreach event. This year our theme is being Stewards of Creation. The health of the environment is of importance to every person. Everything that the kids will learn will, we hope, will help them understand that God wants us to care for the earth, our mutual home. **We are also hosting an event that is open to the public as part of VBS. The evening of Tuesday July 29 the NORTHERN ILLINOS RAPTOR CENTER will be giving a presentation which will involve live birds and numerous displays.** This event is a great opportunity to introduce people to Zion as a church

that takes carrying for the wider community seriously. I urge you to invite you friends and neighbors to attend. I ask that you please sign up to help with hospitality for that event. We'll need greeters at the doors and people to prepare and serve cookies and lemonade. Jesus says we should let our light shine as a way of leading people to its source. Let's make this opportunity shine brightly!

Yours in Christ's service, Pastor Kay



In Need of Ongoing Prayer:

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE: VBS, Mary Opsal, Bill Ellena family, Rusty Thies Family, Dick & Alice Tostovarsnik, Rene, Theresa Grove, Pete Sampo, Shelly, Kimberly, Kylin, Cora, Ted Davenport, Kevin Orval, Shirley Lopeman, The Fuplers, Terry Dean, Arnie & Jan Watkins, Christine Butler family, Jimmy Springer family, Dixie, Jacob Bremann, Lexanne Jarosz & family, Elizabeth, Rich Rynke family, Hugh Williams, Jack Hauser, Ray Kollar Family, Anthony, Hopkins family, Dawn & Ron Narczewski, Jim Brown, Austin, Maxine, Shirley, Jackie, Brianna, Zimmer family, Tim P., Eric & Tina, Dale Jacobson, Paul Nave, Jeff Rietgraf, Jean Mikus, Deb Cooper, Ryan, Josie, Steve & Audrey, Tom & Gretchen Kaszynski, Jean Spayer, Cindy Harzheim, Paul Lewis, Marilyn Haslam, Bob & Holly Antkowiak.



The Altar Flowers June 8 were In Memory of Francis Ford, from Candie, Karen, Kim, and Families.

The Altar Flowers June 15 were In Memory of Jerry and Naomi Siebert, from Dennis Siebert.

The Altar Flowers June 22 were In Memory of George and Ruth Hammerich, from Dennis Siebert.

The Altar Flowers June 29 were In Memory of Lyle and Edith Dietrick, from Dennis Siebert.



Flower Charts There are many open dates for Altar flowers. The dates are hung on the bulletin board outside of the Fellowship Hall. We have 4 months hanging at a time. If you would like to reserve flowers you may sign up on the chart or contact the church office to ask about availability. Altar Flowers will be seen on YouTube services, the weekly bulletin, monthly newsletter, and on the church website in the posted bulletin. The cost for flowers is \$25.00. Please be sure to include all names, first and last, and any information you would like added to announcement.



Thank You

While Pastor Alex is on sabbatical, Rev. Kay Harding will preach and administer Holy Communion on the first Sunday in July and August. She will also be available for emergencies and have office hours on Fridays from 10:00am- 12:00pm. Her phone number is: (815)993-9220. Please note office hours this week: * July 3: 9:00am -5:00pm. **The office will be closed Friday, July 4th*

Rev. Dennis Siebert was our guest speaker and preached four Sundays in June.

A big thanks to both for your willingness to minister here. You're both greatly appreciated.



Thank you to everyone who helped make Zion's Annual Ice Cream Social very successful!



We were blessed with a good crowd and great music.

SPECIAL THANKS TO: The Peru Municipal Band, the "KITCHEN CREW," the set up crew, the servers who provided TLC for the customers, all who donated B-B-Q, cakes, and monetary donations, all who advertised the Social, all of our loyal customers.

It is always a joy to see everyone working together and having fun.

The Guild will use the profit for church and Mission projects. The proceeds from the ice cream social are helping 7 kids from church attend Pilgrim Park this summer and enable us to make contributions to community service organizations such as the Illinois Valley Food Pantry, Pads, and Horizon House, as well as help with projects around the church.



Listen to Pastor Alex at 8:25 every Sunday morning on 103.9 **WLPO**.

Tell your friends!

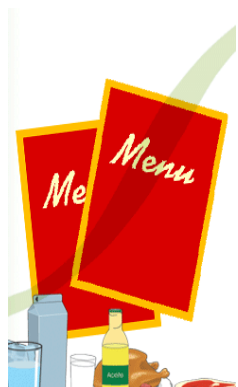
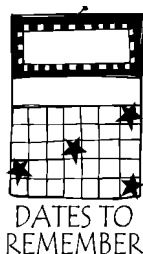


Join us for coffee fellowship after worship! If you would like to sign up to provide coffee fellowship (most Sundays) after worship there is a sign up sheet in fellowship hall, or contact the church office. *If you would like to sign up to provide refreshments there is a sign up sheet in fellowship hall for July & August.* *There are many open dates.*



shutterstock.com · 2398160231

Watch the fireworks at Zion: The Peru fireworks are at dusk on July 3rd. We will get together in the quad area. Bring your own chairs and drinks as well as a snack or dessert to share. We will start around 7pm. All are welcome!



Zion Diners met June 26 with Pastor Alex and Shelly as hosts. The place was JoJo's Pub & Grub in Cherry. We have such a nice group and always have a great time. The next Diners event will be Thursday, July 17 at 6:00pm. Your host will be Mary Thies and the restaurant will be announced soon. You might want to check it out to see what you are missing. All are Welcome!



Anyone who would like to do special music on Sundays in July and August should contact Jim Greening at (815) 228-0459. Let's celebrate God's gift of music and share it with others!



VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL 2025 CREATOR'S CREW

SHARE IN THE ADVENTURE OF CARING
FOR GOD'S EARTH
July 28 - August 1 ZION UCC 1521 6TH ST. PERU

Our VBS program will begin at 5:30 on Monday through Thursday. Friday we will begin at 2:00 so we will have plenty of time to enjoy the waterslide and picnic.

TUESDAY: A PROGRAM ON RAPTORS WITH LIVE BIRDS AND DISPLAYS WITH THE NORTHERN ILLINOIS RAPTOR CENTER.

Your whole family is invited to attend. We hope you will come - and bring friends!

FRIDAY: WATER SLIDE AND PICNIC.

Your whole family is invited to join us for a picnic from 5:30 to 6:30. You can join in on the waterslide, too!



TO REGISTER SCAN THE QR CODE

If you would like a paper copy of the Vacation Bible School 2025 registration form, they are available on the community table in fellowship hall, or contact the church office. We hope to see you at VBS!



"The heavens declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the work of his hands." Psalm 19:1



Ushers



Evangelism

Ushers: We are building a new Ushers List. If you previously served as usher and would like to serve again, we would like to add you to the new ushers list. Previously ushers served for an entire month. Ushers now will serve when they are available to serve even for a single Sunday. You can let Larry Grosenbach know you will serve as usher or email ushers@zionperu.org to be added to the ushers list.

Evangelism: We are updating our visitor information about Zion church and will be creating a visitor packet that will contain our new updated information about Zion Church and a thank you gift or two for them visiting. If you would like to help the Evangelism Team with the visitor project you can let Pastor Alex, Jerry Koehler or email evangelism@zionperu.org.



ILLINOIS VALLEY PUBLIC ACTION TO
DELIVER SHELTER
Established 1991

PADS Meals: Thank you for opening your heart to this mission of compassion and care. PADS will reopen in August. You may continue to contribute. Our mission will continue when the shelter reopens.

How You Can Help:

- **Donate:** Every gift—big or small—ensures that we continue providing hearty, healthy meals.
- **Ways to Give:**
 - Write a check to the church with “PADS Meals” in the memo
 - Donate online through the Giving page on our website

THE CHURCH IS OPEN FOR SUNDAY MORNING WORSHIP

Please follow all safety guidelines when in attendance. We understand if you are not comfortable coming in person and invite you to watch services on YouTube.

JOIN US LIVE ON YOUTUBE SUNDAYS AT 10:15

HOW DO YOU GET THERE? EASY.....

- 1) Go to Youtube.com
- 2) Click on “Search” box at top of the page.
- 3) Type in “Zion UCC Peru Illinois”
- 4) Click on the big purple circle with a “Z” in it.
- 5) Click on the video that says “LIVE”

THAT’S IT! SEE YOU SUNDAY!

*Bulletins available to view on our website!



You can donate to Zion Church with a credit card or by bank transfer from your bank account.

All you need to do is go to our web page and click “Donate” located on the right-hand side.

Also, here's the link to give to our church: <https://zionuccperu.breezechms.com/>

You can also donate to Zion Church by Text to (815)-393-1954 : Enter the amount you want to give to Zion in the Text box and send. If it the first time you are giving by text you will be prompted to set up your giving method. *Thank you for giving during these difficult times*

Support Needed for Food Pantry Expansion!

The Illinois Valley Food Pantry is seeking donations to purchase their new facility to better serve those in need. The larger space will allow for the storage of additional perishable and non-perishable food items, ensuring that we can meet the increasing demand in our community.

Your financial support can make a real difference! Contributions can be sent to: *Illinois Valley Food Pantry 122 Wright St. LaSalle, IL 61301*

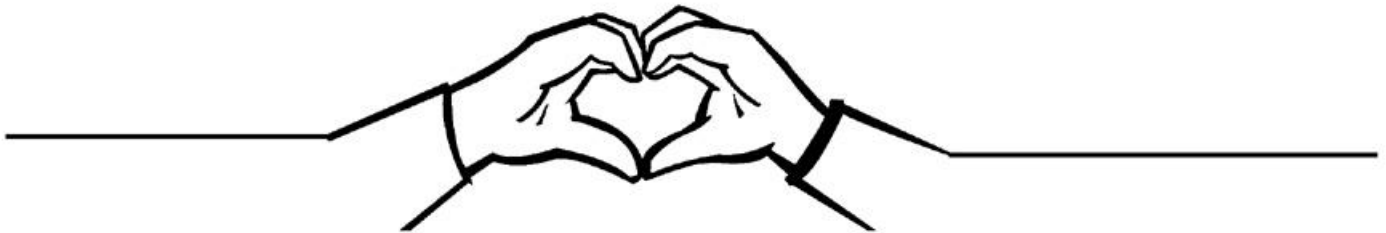
Together, we can work to end hunger in our community. Thank you for your generosity!



Live Life (Pre and Post Transplant Support Group) meets the second Monday of each month at 6:30pm at Zion UCC.

The Compassionate Friends Group meets at Zion every fourth Thursday at 6:30pm. This meeting is open to any parent who has lost a child.

Weight Watchers meets every Saturday morning at 8:00. We're happy to provide space for this worthwhile service to our community.



Loving Ways

Read each word in Group A. Then look for a word in Group B that is the exact opposite attitude.

1. Draw a line to connect these two words.
2. Circle the word that describes the attitude that is most loving.
3. Cross out the word that is not loving. (The first one is done for you.)

Group A

~~rude~~
selfish
humble
bored
kind
forgiving
deceitful
lazy
cheerful
annoyed
stubborn

Group B

mean
patient
honest
resentful
grumpy
flexible
generous
respectful
prideful
helpful
interested

Answers:
rude - respectful
selfish - generous
humble - prideful
bored - interested
kind - mean
forgiving - resentful
deceitful - honest
lazy - helpful
cheerful - grumpy
annoyed - patient
stubborn - flexible



July Birthdays

3. Lauren Trumpinski
4. Kalli Ware
6. Bob Holsinger
7. Michelle Fupler
8. Miranda Grosenbach
9. Nicholas Grosenbach
10. Jack Kuzma
11. Paul Gillmann
Austin Ploch
12. Martin Johnson
Lilley Nicole Boroski
24. Wes Baltikauski
Makenna Zimmer
25. Bill Becker
28. Addison Opsal
29. Ryan Lindemier
30. Richard Ploch



July Anniversaries

14. Martin & Laurie Johnson
15. Bob & Holly Antkowiak



August Birthdays

1. Kayla Daugherty-Kern
6. Kari Ann Baker
Terry Hoelle
7. Cassidy Elizabeth Baker
Marjorie Huetteman
8. Charles Schmollinger
10. Aubrey Goff
12. Jennifer Berkley
Terri Campagna
Camri Garncarz
13. Marcia Brown
18. Isla Kilday
Evan Grove
22. Bill Bender
23. Debra Jacobson
Francis Paul Baker
24. Parker Cronk
27. Randy Fouth
Michael Hoelle
Lauren Knutson
29. Leian Breuning
Abigail Watkins
Mary Garncarz-Opsal

August Anniversaries

2. Nathan & Lauren Trumpinski
6. Barry & Leian Breuning
17. Richard & Beth Vlastnik
18. Tony & Beth Coutre'
24. Bruce & Kelly Merkel
Bill & Phyllis Bender
28. Larry & Cheryl Grosenbach

JULY 2025

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Reminder: Pastor Alex on Sabbatical: June 1-September 1						
		1.	2.	3. 7:00pm Watch the fireworks at Zion!	4. <i>Office Closed</i> 	5. 8:00am Weight Watchers meeting
6. 8:25 Pastor Alex WLPO 10:15 Worship- Also available on You Tube	7.	8.	9.	10.	11.	12. 8:00am Weight Watchers meeting
13. 8:25 Pastor Alex WLPO 10:15 Worship- Also available on You Tube & Coffee Fellowship	14. 6:30pm Live Life Group meeting	15.	16.	17. 6:00 Zion Diners	18.	19. 8:00am Weight Watchers meeting
20. 8:25 Pastor Alex WLPO 10:15 Worship- Also available on You Tube & Coffee Fellowship	21. 7:00pm Church Council meeting	22.	23.	24. 6:30pm Compassionate Friends Group meeting	25. Newsletter info Due	26. 8:00am Weight Watchers meeting
27. 8:25 Pastor Alex WLPO 10:15 Worship- Also available on You Tube & Coffee Fellowship	28. VBS 5:30-7:45	29. VBS 5:30-7:45 <i>Northern Illinois Raptor Center Program</i>	30. VBS 5:30-7:45	31. VBS 5:30-7:45	August 1 VBS 2:00-7:00 Family Picnic & Waterslide Day!	August 2 8:00am Weight Watchers meeting
Join us for VBS! July 28- August 1						