

MARCH 2024 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

Greetings Zion Family and Friends,

Well, it's Lent already. As I write these words, we have already had two Ecumenical Lenten services. We've enjoyed some great fellowship with siblings of the faith from other churches. We've enjoyed good music, excellent preaching and opportunities to pray together as we journey these 40 days leading up to Easter Sunday. I hope that you can come and be a part of these very meaningful gatherings.

And speaking of Easter...He has Risen! If the Easter message could be summed up in three words, these would be the words that would come to mind...He is risen!

One of the reasons, of course, is that these words are found in the Bible, as we can see in Matthew 28:6 "He is not here; for He is risen, as He said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay."

When we read about the birth of Christ, it is clear that the Shepherds came to a place where the Savior was laid in a feeding trough as a child. He was there for them to see, and the fact they could see Him brought tremendous assurance of the birth of the Messiah. After seeing the baby, they got excited. They got so excited that they wanted to go and tell the whole world!

Yet, as the Angel led Mary Magdalene and the other Mary into the tomb, it was the emptiness of the tomb and the fact they didn't see Him that caused them to be filled with some fear and some joy! Then, of course, as they left the empty tomb, Jesus showed Himself to them, very much alive! What a moment that must have been!

We are looking forward to Easter Sunday and I wanted to be sure to encourage you to be with us on that beautiful day! Our world has been and continues to be challenged in ways that are difficult to understand. That's why we need a fresh encounter with the risen Savior, and we need each other.

Do you have friends and family that might consider joining you? Maybe just a simple invitation might be the thing they need to join you for Easter Sunday 2024!

Please be thinking and praying about who you can invite, then go for it!

Spring is just around the corner. Soon the trees will be budding and the flowers blooming! This is such an exciting time of year with all the anticipation of what's coming soon. I'm looking forward to Easter worship with our Zion family. I'm also looking forward to once again watching nature come alive.

Most of all, I'm excited to see what God is up to and has in store for us as we look to Jesus for guidance. Remember to pray, give of your time, talents and resources, and just keep doing what you do so well...loving God and loving people. See you soon!

To God be the glory,

Pastor Alex





Zion UCC Church Council Meeting

February 19, 2024

7:00pm

Members present: Pastor Alex, Larry Grosenbach, Arnie Watkins, Marty Johnson, Alice Tostovarsnik, Jyll Janz, Lori Rynke, Jerry Koehler, Lauren Knutson, Dinelle Freschi, Elecia Lindemier.

Larry Grosenbach called meeting to order.

January 2024 meeting minutes were reviewed. Motion to approve by Jerry K., seconded by Arnie W.. Motion carried.

Treasurer's report: N/A

President's Report: Larry G. read thank you note received from Erin (Secretary) on appreciation of raise.

Christian Education: Sunday School going well. Attendance not as good as in the past. Per Lauren K. and Elecia L.

Stewardship: Larry G. will take on Leadership role. Pastor Alex would like to see financials YTD.

Pastoral Care: Alice T. working on sending Easter cards.

Missions: Continuing PADS meals. Approx. 200 cans of soup collected from Souper Bowl to take to IV Food Pantry.

Building and Grounds: Per Jerry K.- railing has been ordered @ cost of \$1625. Boiler inspection for the state found two repairs needed- Chapman's has fixed them. Quote from Mayou for \$21,500. Consensus not to start roof repair until we have at least half of the funds.

Women's Guild: Will meet again in March.

Minister's Report: Two IV Food Pantry Board of Directors meetings. The search goes on for search for a new larger building. Need continues to grow in our community. Met with ministers group twice. Recorded five radio shows that aired on WLPO. Still receiving positive feedback. Attended Committee on Ministry meeting February 1. Lent is underway. We had a nice service on Ash Wednesday. Initiated and led planning of Ecumenical Lenten Services. Services will again be on Wednesdays through Lent as well as Good Friday service at Depue UCC. Attended TPIRC (Thriving Pastors in Revitalizing Congregations) 1st Quarter Cohort Meeting. Very good information was shared regarding budget planning and how to present church budget in a more meaningful way. I'm very excited about our Lenten services and Easter coming! Come on, spring! Respectfully submitted, Pastor Alex

New Business: Emergency phone calls: Each council member to call next person on phone chain. Also assigned dates for prayer at each meeting.

Jerry K. made a motion to adjourn meeting.

Meeting ended with The Lord's Prayer.

Respectfully submitted by Martin Johnson



ZION UCC
Loving God, Loving People

In Need of Ongoing Prayer:

Gary Splittstoesser Family, Tammy Franklin Family, Bonnie, Gretchen Kaszynski, Mary Zimmer, Dixie Tonozi, Jenna, Kevin B., The family of Aubrey's great-grandfather, Linda, Pastor Dan Richardson, Doug Jakse, Karen Cericola & Family, Immigrants, PADS, Cindy Harzheim, Lopeman & Pargo Families, Turner, Victims of war, Joshua Nardulli family, Jim's neighbor's daughter, Taylor, Hunter Gerard, Marcus & Cody Wymm, Laura, Jonathon Burgoni, Roger Harbeck, Becky Jacobson, Marilyn Haslam, Dennis Miller, Marilyn, Gloria, Neil Tipton family, Mary Enstrenchi, Floyd, Caroline, Joe Smith, Kathy Radtke, Glenn Damer, Sara, Rusty & Mary Thies, Leslie, Marsha Reed, Cheryl Johnston, Tom Kaszynski, Paul Lewis, Clinton Crouch, Carol, Evie, Mary, Healthcare/Hospital, Quinn & family, Johanna Arkels family, Deb Cooper, Marsha Dodd, Jeanie, Cathy Rose, Jack Yager, Lucille Smith family, Tim Engel family, Ron Narczewski, Jason, Debbie, Mary Fiedler, Jim L., Keisha Smith, Bob & Holly Antkowiak, Darrell, Bill Vlastnik, Jean Spayer, Ron Hudkins, Mrs. Lucas.



Our deepest condolences go out to the Family of Gary Splittstoesser. Gary passed away February 18th. Private graveside services will be held in Peru City Cemetery at a later date.

The Altar Flowers and Bulletin Sponsorship Memorials February 4th were in honor of Ellyn's Mother, Elizabeth Kivett & Brother, Jim Kivett. Given by Ellyn & Gary Hylla.

The Altar Flowers February 11th were in Memory of Terri Jacobson on her birthday, from Dave & Matt.

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.

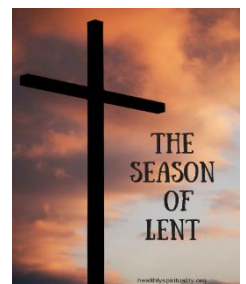


Thank you to everyone who donated soup for "Souper Bowl Sunday." Zion donated approximately 200 cans to the Illinois Valley Food Pantry!



"When you know deep within yourself what God has revealed to you and called you to do, no one else can take that away from you. The call of God is lodged deep in the human spirit and mind."

—Vashti McKenzie,





Ecumenical Lenten Services

Worship will be Wednesdays at 7:00pm during Lent.

March 6th - Trinity UCC with Pastor Joel Stevenor from Waltham Presbyterian preaching.

March 13th - Spring Valley UCC with Pastor Betty Delgado from Trinity UCC preaching.

March 20th - Waltham Presbyterian with Pastor Jon Graham from Spring Valley UCC preaching.

Good Friday – Noon at Depue UCC with Pastor Alex preaching.

Holy Week Services

Maundy Thursday...7:00pm... Zion UCC

Good Friday.....Noon.....DePue UCC

Easter Sundy.....10:15am.. Zion UCC



Easter Lily Order - \$10.00 per Lily
Please turn in your order by March 24th

In Memory of: _____

In Honor of: _____

From: _____



Order forms are available in your church bulletins. If you would like to mail an order to the church, you may print out this form or write your order on a piece of paper to mail in with your check. Please write "In Memory" for a memorial or "In Honor" of someone or a group who is living. If you have any questions, please contact the church office.

PLEASE JOIN US FOR WORSHIP ON EASTER

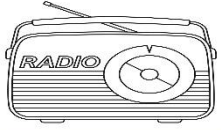
SUNDAY AT 10:15 AM

We will celebrate the Resurrection of Christ on March 31st
with in-person worship or on YouTube live





Pastors Jon and Sue Graham have started a **Bible study group** at the Spring Valley UCC, from 1:00 pm to (approximately) 2:30 pm. We will meet every Thursday through Lent (except for on Maundy Thursday), and will continue beyond, if those participating want to continue. We can also add an evening gathering, if enough interest is shown.

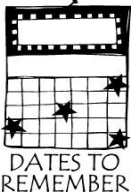


Listen to Pastor Alex at 8:25 every Sunday morning on 103.9 **WLPO**. Tell your friends!



CREW (Creative Rejoicing in Early Worship)

Calling All CREW Members! Get ready for adventure, fun, and faith! Join us every Sunday at 9:00AM if you're in kindergarten through 6th grade. We'll have games, stories, crafts, and more that will help you grow in your faith and friendships! Mark your calendars and don't miss the boat. Bring your energy and excitement as we learn how God is at work in our lives and world. Parents and grandparents - bring your kids and grandkids to CREW this Sunday!

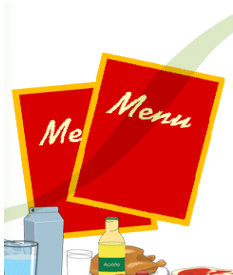


The next Zion Women's Guild meeting will be Thursday, March 7th at 1:00pm in Fellowship Hall.

The Guild will also meet in April on Thursday, April 4th at 1:00pm.



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.



Zion Diners met Thursday February 15th at Country Kitchen in Lasalle with Larry and Cheryl Grosenbach as hosts. Our next Diners will be hosted by Mary Thies with the place to be announced. It will be Thursday March 21st at 6:00pm. All are welcome!



Please note: Pastor Alex will be on vacation beginning Monday, April 1st. He will return the following Monday, April 8th. Rev. Kay Harding will preach on April 7th and will be available for emergencies. Her phone number is : (815)993-9220

Mark your calendars! Rev. Kathy Lawes, our UCC Prairie Association Conference Minister, will be visiting us on April 21. Kathy will be bringing the morning message.

We will be publishing a new Church Directory later this spring. Please check your current entry in the Directory provided in Fellowship Hall. Contact the church office with any changes, or write your changes in the provided Directory.

**Directories cannot be posted online or sent in email due to privacy laws. If you would like a copy mailed to you or a relative, please contact the church office.*

Publication date TBA.



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*



ILLINOIS VALLEY PUBLIC ACTION TO
DELIVER SHELTER
Established 1991

****HELP FEED THE HUNGRY!**** Zion UCC is providing a delicious hot meal delivered to the Peru PADS homeless shelter each month. Please open your hearts and wallets to support this important cause. Every little bit helps us provide a nutritious meal each month through May. Write a check to the church and note "PADS Meals." Or go online and donate through the Giving page on our website. Together we can make a difference for the less fortunate in our community! Your donation helps provide a healthy, hearty meal to those who need it most. Thank you for your generosity and support in feeding the hungry!

The Outdoor Ministries Fundraiser. Your gift is not "just" a donation, it is a prayerful statement to help change someone's life. You can donate directly : <https://outdoorministries.campbraingiving.com>

The I.V. Food Pantry needs monetary donations

The Pantry is looking for a larger space to store more perishable and non-perishable foods to help the community.

To mail contributions: Illinois Valley Food Pantry- 122 Wright St. LaSalle, IL 61301

Can you help? Tonica Church is collecting personal hygiene products to give away. Items needed include: *Bar soap *Shower gel *Shampoo * Razors *Deodorant *Toothbrushes *Toothpaste *Combs or Brushes *Also- they are collecting men's pants.
Please bring items to donate to church and place them on the designated table in fellowship hall.
Contact Diane Gebhardt with any questions.



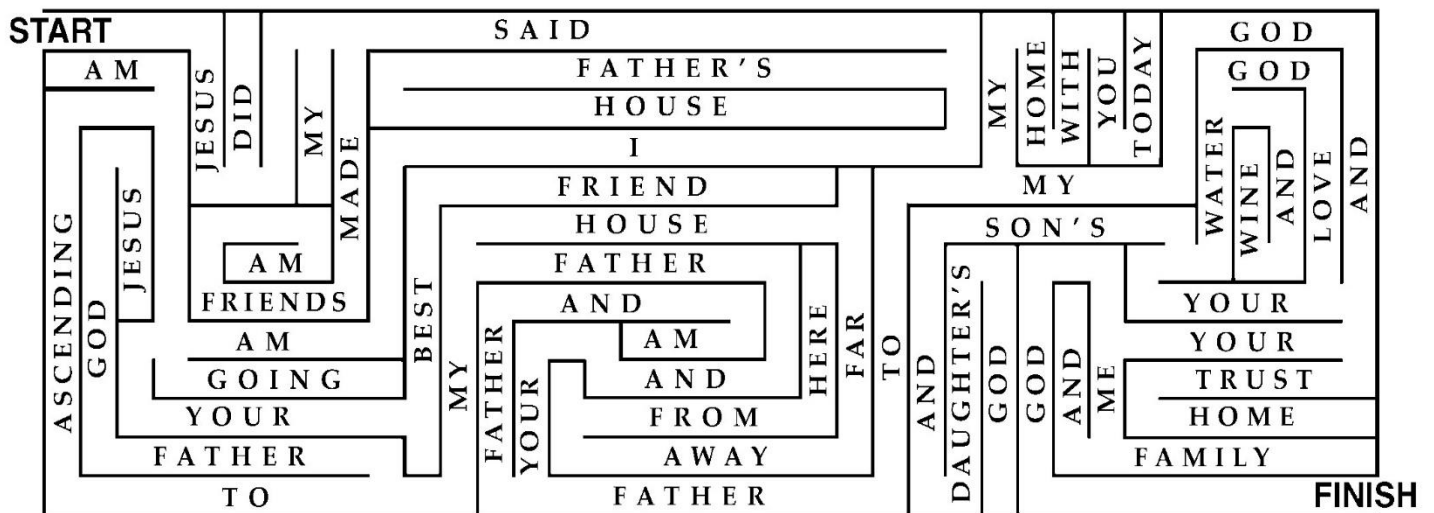
Live Life (Pre and Post Transplant Support Group) meets the second Monday of each month at 6:30pm at Zion UCC.

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. Please contact the church office for information.

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

Maze

Collect the words as you make your way through the maze. Write the words in the blanks below.



_____ , " _____

_____ , _____

_____ . " John 20:17b

Answer: Jesus said, "I am ascending to my father and your father, to my God and your God."



March Birthdays

2. Tim Breuning
3. Garrett Fouth
Dave Jacobson
5. Janis Watkins
6. Gracelyn Watkins
7. Jesse Watkins
Tom Kaszynski
8. Evan Sprong
9. Bill Johnson
Kelsey Grosenbach
Madyson Zimmer
16. Ed Lopeman
18. Bettianne Kelly Casper
Roman Freschi
19. Gary Hylla
20. Amanda Coutre'
Isabelle Knutson
21. Duncan Casper
22. Elyse Boroski
Elecia Lindenmier
24. Paul Witczak
29. David Brown



March Anniversaries

14. Rich & Bonnie Bird
20. Leonard and Renee Lundeen

REVERENDFUN.COM COPYRIGHT GCI, INC.



DAD, I NEED YOUR HELP TO FIND OUT WHERE
IT TALKS ABOUT THE EASTER BUNNY IN THE
BIBLE

April Birthdays

3. Tyler Martinez
4. Nate Trumpinski
6. Joel Bejster
- Shirley Lopeman
- Kenny Lindenmier
8. Gary Grosenbach
9. Rhonda Essl
11. Rich Ploch
13. Rev. Kay Harding
15. Heather Becker
David Wilmot
16. Michael Breuning
18. Dean Wilmot
20. Kim Grant
21. Larry Butkus
Doug Jakse
Jessica Rogel
22. Claire Baltikauski
23. Hunter Thurman
24. Tony Coutre'
Leesa Tipton
25. Lori Rynke
George Garncarz
26. Shelly Garncarz
27. Bill Vlastnik
27. Andrew Watkins
Cody Essl
28. Brant Baltikauski
29. Pam Beck
Nora Trumpinski



April Anniversaries

6. Rich & Jodee Ploch
14. Mark & Julie Zimmer
19. Doug & Cyndi Thurman
19. Russ & Maureen Lemmer
20. Gary & Ellyn Hylla
23. Gary Fouth & Kimberly Tracy
30. Charles & Elinor Lindenmeyer



MARCH 2024

| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
|--|--|--|--|---|---|---|
| | | | | | 1 World Day of Prayer | 2 8:00am Weight Watchers meeting |
| 3. 8:25 Pastor Alex WLPO 9:00 CREW 9:30 Choir practice 10:15 Worship- Also available on You Tube & Coffee Fellowship | 4 | 5 6:30 Choir Practice | 6 7:00pm Ecumenical Service Trinity UCC | 7 1:00pm Zion Women's Guild meeting | 8 | 9 8:00am Weight Watchers meeting |
| 10. 8:25 Pastor Alex WLPO 9:00 CREW 9:30 Choir practice 10:15 Worship- Also available on You Tube & Coffee Fellowship <i>Spring Ahead!</i> | 11 6:30pm Live Life Group meeting | 12 6:30 Choir Practice | 13 7:00pm Ecumenical Service Spring Valley UCC | 14 | 15 | 16 8:00am Weight Watchers meeting |
| 17. 8:25 Pastor Alex WLPO 9:00 CREW 9:30 Choir practice 10:15 Worship- Also available on You Tube & Coffee Fellowship <i>St. Patrick's Day</i> | 18 7:00 Church Council Meeting | 19 6:30 Choir Practice Election Day Polling Place | 20 7:00pm Ecumenical Service Waltham Presbyterian | 21 6:00 Zion Diners | 22 Newsletter info Due | 23 8:00am Weight Watchers meeting |
| 24. <i>Palm Sunday</i> 8:25 Pastor Alex WLPO 9:00 CREW 9:30 Choir practice 10:15 Worship- Also available on You Tube & Coffee Fellowship | 25 | 26 5:15 PADS Meal 6:30 Choir Practice | 27 | 28 6:30pm Compassionate Friends Group meeting Maundy Thursday 7:00pm Service | 29 Good Friday 12:00pm Ecumenical Service at DePue UCC | 30 8:00am Weight Watchers meeting Holy Saturday |
| 31 <i>Easter Sunday</i> 8:25 Pastor Alex WLPO 9:30 Choir practice 10:15 Worship- Also available on You Tube | April 1 <i>Pastor Alex on vacation</i>  | April 2 | April 3 | April 4 1:00pm Zion Women's Guild meeting | April 5 | April 6 8:00am Weight Watchers meeting |