

MAY 2024 NEWSLETTER

PUBLISHED BY: ZION UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST, PERU ALEX GARNCARZ, PASTOR

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Dear Zion Family and Friends,

What an exciting time at Zion Church! As we look back on our rich heritage and long history of faith in this community, we also look ahead with great hope and anticipation for all that God has in store for us.

Our church is truly blessed with an abundance of young children. The sound of their joyful voices and endless energy fills our halls and sanctuary on Sunday morning. Seeing their smiling faces reminds us of the joys of this life and of the bright future for Zion. We look forward to Vacation Bible School in July when we can sow seeds of love into their young hearts and minds.

We also deeply cherish our elderly members who have remained steadfastly devoted to the Lord and this church family through the years. Your wisdom, perseverance and example pave the way for future generations. We thank you and we honor you faithful saints who have walked with God for so many years.

This May will be a truly celebratory month! On Mother's Day, May 12, we will honor the special women who have loved us nurtured us in faith. The following Sunday, May 19, will be our wonderful Pentecost Celebration combined with Music Sunday - a festive rejoicing in the Holy Spirit and holy gift of music.

Then on May 26, we will gather at Pilgrim Park for our worship service followed by a delicious lunch. What an awesome way to experience God's creation and fellowship together as a church family!

May this amazing season of spring fill your hearts with joy, gratitude and renewed energy to serve the Lord and God's people. We are blessed to be part of this family we call Zion UCC.

My love to each of you!

To God be the glory,
Pastor Alex



WHY DO WE NEED CONGREGATIONS?

By: Rev. Dr. Anna Hall

With so many issues facing our world, and such great needs facing our neighbors locally and globally, some might ask: **Why should we even worry about helping congregations thrive?**

It is a fair question. Congregations can be stalwart and indispensable sources of help and transformation for their communities, or they can be sites of conflict and turmoil that harms their participants. Congregations can play a vital role in connecting people in caring relationships, or they can become cliquish and internally focused. Congregations can multiply the giving and energy of their members and use it for impact in the community, or they can use up all their assets with institutional maintenance until there is nothing left.

So why bother?

As a researcher and consultant, I firmly believe that every congregation has the potential to transform our world. In some communities, the congregations we work with are the only outposts of loving and generous values. In others, they are essential parts of a network of congregations that is lifting up those most in need. In many places, congregations are the only places where people interact across generations and political differences. Congregational spaces have been shown to benefit the surrounding community beyond their congregational life, including creating over \$140,000 a year in economic value of volunteer time, space-sharing, and funding external organizations.

Without congregations, many in need would lose their sources of material assistance, from food pantries to meals to housing. Advocates for a better world would lose blocks of people who can speak out for policies that could create transformation and nurture creation in our cities, states, and nation. Communities would lose dozens to hundreds of jobs and thousands to millions of dollars in social services subsidized by the congregation. Local non-profits and groups would lose affordable meeting spaces. Elections boards would have to find new voting sites. Numerous early childhood education programs would vanish. All those involved with a congregation would lose one of the few places in their lives that transcends capitalism and an emphasis on monetary value as the highest priority.

Beyond their current value, each congregation is a potential site for powerful transformation in people and communities. To make this potential into reality, congregations must be healthy, aligned, and energized. Personally, I spend hours every day getting to know congregations and discerning with them how they might find the health, alignment, and energy to transform our world. In this work, even with the most conflicted and struggling congregations, I hear stories of speaking out against book bans, standing up for LGBTQ+ folks in their local community, growing food to share with those in need, housing those living outside, and so much more. I do not believe one minute of this work is wasted.



ZION UCC
Loving God, Loving People



Zion UCC Church Council Meeting

April 15, 2024 7:00pm

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

Larry Grosenbach called meeting to order.
Pastor Alex led opening prayer.

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

Treasurer's report: Motion to approve by Marty J., seconded by Lauren K. Motion carried.

Christian Education: Sunday School attendance is fair. Shelly G. working on VBS. Any helpers appreciated.

Evangelism: Dinelle F. to take over sending out children's cards for Bonnie B.

Pastoral Care: Alice T. made visits to children- also made crosses with cards to send out.

Missions: Continuing PADS meals through May. Revision from March minutes: PADS donations received through online giving and at church. Still looking for a new place for the Food Pantry.

Building and Grounds: Need new signs for church entrance doors/ handicap signs. Jim G. will make a cardboard thermometer for the Roof Fund. Jerry K. received quote of \$3200 for repairing monitors from Pearl Technology. With new monitors: \$4000. OSF is going to budget next year for repair of parking lot.

Women's Guild: Met 4/11. Next meeting 5/2. Projects: Tea Party on 5/18 and Ice Cream Social on 6/20. Working on Taco Fundraiser for roof.

Renewal Team: Met 3/25. Productive meeting. Many ideas/discussed church's strengths and weaknesses.

Minister's Report: One IV Food Pantry Board of Directors meetings. Still looking for a new building. We're hopeful. Met with ministers group twice. Met with the Women's Guild and had a nice time. Recorded four radio shows that aired on WLPO. Attended Committee on Ministry meeting. 7 hospital visits. Ecumenical Lenten Services were well attended. We worshipped at Waltham Presbyterian on March 20 with Pastor Jon Graham preaching. We had a blessed Holy Week which included a Palm Sunday celebration with our young people taking a big part, followed by a very meaningful Maundy Thursday service, then Good Friday was at Depue UCC. I had the privilege of preaching that service. It was a great day, the church was packed. What a sight! Then we had a good time together on Easter Sunday celebrating our Lord's resurrection. Attendance was very good. Our Renewal Leadership Team had a very productive meeting on March 25th. Still forming an Ordination Discernment Team. I enjoyed a week off after Easter. Thanks again to Rev. Kay for filling in for me. Preparations continue for VBS 2024! Looking forward to some busy weeks ahead. Rev. Kathy Lawes, our Association Minister, will be with us on April 21. She will be bringing the morning message and spending some time with us. May is shaping up to be a busy month with a Ladies Tea, Pentecost and Music Sunday, Mother's Day and Worship at Pilgrim Park. God is good! Respectfully submitted, Pastor Alex

Arnie W. made a motion to adjourn meeting.

Meeting ended with The Lord's Prayer.

Respectfully submitted by Martin Johnson

**HELP
WANTED**

Ushers

**HELP
WANTED**

**Building
and
Grounds**

**HELP
WANTED**

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.

Building & Grounds: We have several places around the church and the parsonage that need to have mulch added. Should you be willing to help please let Jerry Koehler know or email buildinggrounds@zionperu.org to let us know you are willing to help.

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.

In Need of Ongoing Prayer:

Joe Smith, Cheryl Grosenbach, Jean Spayer, Eleanor Johnson Family, Mike Carter Family, Dinelle Freschi and Family, Darrell White, Emily, Leslie Grigsby family & friends, Beth Coutre', Bonnie Bird family, Deb Cooper, Rusty & Mary Thies, Karen Cericola family, Melissa, Renewal Team & Congregation, Terri's Son in Law, Mary Fiedler Family, Marissa, Victims of war, Joan Hammitt, Cindy Harzheim, Estrella, Gary Splittstoesser family, Gretchen Kaszynski, Dixie Tonozzi, Doug Jakse, Marilyn Haslam, Paul Lewis, Ron Narczewski, Bob & Holly Antkowiak, Bill Vlastnik.



Our deepest condolences go out to the family of Bonnie Bird. Bonnie passed away Friday, April 12. Funeral services were Tuesday, April 16 with Pastor Alex Garnarcz officiating.

Our deepest condolences go out to Marty Johnson and family on the loss of Marty's mother, Eleanor Johnson.

Our deepest condolences go out to Lori Rynke and family on the loss of Lori's stepfather, Mike Carter.

Our deepest condolences go out to Dinelle Freschi and family on the loss of Dinelle's grandfather.

The Altar Flowers April 7th were in Memory of Marie Ford, from The Kradle, Zelenak, and Grant families.

The Altar Flowers April 21st were in Memory of Andrew Kelly on his birthday, April 23rd, from Mom, Dad, Bettianne, John, Duncan, and Josephine.

The Altar Flowers April 28th were in Celebration of Kim Grant's Birthday, from Candis Zelenak and family.

A Memorial for Mary Fiedler was given by Barry & Leian Breuning.

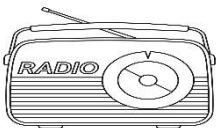
A Memorial was given for Jean, from Jim.

A Memorial was given for Bonnie Bird, from Rich Bird and family.

A Memorial was given for Rev. Philip Krause, Peggy Krause, Sue Krause, Irma Gallagher, Debbie Noonan, Mike Schoening, and Marian Benedict, from Carol Krause.



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.



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!



If you would like to help out at Vacation Bible School this summer, please contact Shelly Garncarz and watch for exciting news about VBS 2024!



We have started a Roof Fund. Our Sunday School needs a new roof. We are kicking off a "Raise the Roof!" fundraising campaign. We need \$8,000 to order. The total for the project will be \$17,000. Have a great fundraiser idea? Contact the church office or Pastor Alex!



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.



Graduates to announce? Contact the church office!



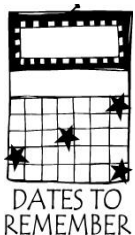
Sunday, May 12th is a special day...

Motherhood is a million little moments that God weaves together with grace, redemption, laughter, tears, and most of all, love.

– Lysa TerKeurst



Zion Diners met April 17th at Angelo's in Spring Valley with Jim Greening as our host. Next Diners will be 6:00pm Thursday, May 16th with Lois Wilmot as our host. Please call Lois to confirm your reservation. The restaurant will be The Right Spice and all are welcome!



The Women's Guild met Thursday May 2nd.
The next Zion Women's Guild meeting will be
Thursday, June 6th at noon. This will be a luncheon at
Liberty Restaurant. Please call Lois Wilmot to confirm
your reservation.



All Ladies are welcome to attend.

Ladies, save the date for:

"When Ladies Wore Hats"
***A Tea Party For Ladies Of All Ages**



Saturday, May 18, 2:00-4:00 at Zion UCC

Bring your daughters, granddaughters, mothers and friends for refreshments, fun and entertainment. Hosted by Dixie Tonozzi and Kay Harding *If you have a hat you would like to wear, wear it, but hats will be provided for you to have fun with!

Musical Entertainment by Kevin Kramer

Reservation information:

Ladies over 12-\$5.00

Ladies 12 and under- \$3.00

To reserve your place, email Pastor Kay: pkh51@juno.com or call her at (815)993-9221 or sign up at church

Pentecost is Sunday, May 19th. Wear red to church!



Music Sunday, when Zion celebrates God's gift of music to us, will be May 19th. This is the worship service that praises God through all types of music and all levels of ability. In addition to the choir, we celebrate the gifts of music given to all who perform music at any level. Anyone who wants to participate should contact Jim Greening. Let's celebrate God's gift of music and share it with others!



The **Annual Spring Flute Fling** will be Sunday, May 19th at 2:00pm at Zion UCC presented by the Music Suite 408 flute ensembles. The event is free and open to the public.

We will have worship and lunch at Pilgrim Park on Sunday, May 26th. Worship will begin at 11:15am. A sign-up sheet is located in the Narthex. All are welcome!



Please remember our veterans, troops, and their families this Memorial Day, Monday, May 27th.



Mark your calendars! The Annual Ice Cream Social will be Thursday, June 20th 4-7pm.

The Peru Municipal Band will play 5-6pm weather permitting. A sign-up sheet is available in fellowship hall for helpers, cake bakers, and BBQ chefs.



Prayer Request List: If you have given a name for a prayer request, please update the office on how they are doing. If an update is not received within four weeks of a prayer request, we will assume they are doing better and will be removed from the list. You may always request that the person be placed back on the list. Thank you!

We will be publishing a new Church Directory soon!

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*

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



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 through May. Please open your hearts and wallets to support this important cause. Every little bit helps us provide a nutritious meal. 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!



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.

COMMUNITY PROGRAMS

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



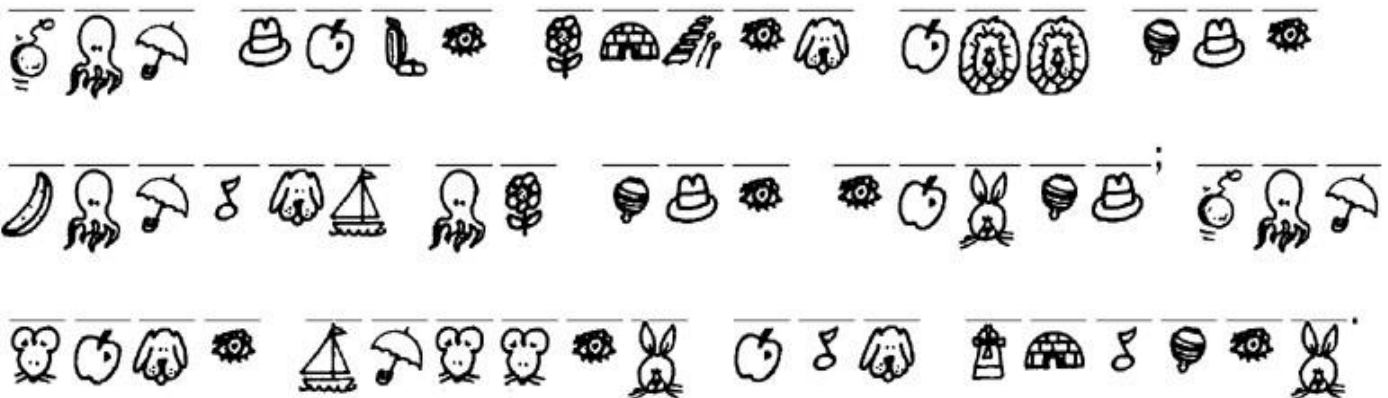
The Outdoor Ministries Fundraiser: Your gift is not "just" a donation, it is a prayerful statement to help change someone's life. You can donate directly

: <https://outdoorministries.campbraingiving.com>

2024 Registration is open online: <https://outdoorministries.campbrainregistration.com/>

What's the Word?

In the spaces provided, fill in the first letter of each picture clue.



Psalm 74:17*



*In the northern hemisphere winter has ended and it is spring.
In the southern hemisphere it is fall and winter will be coming soon.

Answers: You have fixed all the bounds of the earth; you made summer and winter.



May Birthdays

1. Kaitlyn Ogden
4. Laurie Johnson
Russ Lemmer
5. Connor Mickelson
6. Alison Coutre'
7. Nathan Morrell
Megan Baltikauski
8. Matt Sprong
Grace Knutson
13. Allison Miller
15. Tim Harzheim
19. Richard Vlastnik
John Vlastnik
21. David Bejster
22. Edna Daugherty
Lennix Freschi
Jaxen Freschi
24. Noah Rietgraf
Tyler Marie Grosenbach
25. Dane Wicinski
26. Ellie Breuning
Kora Kupperschmid
27. Larry Grosenbach
30. Frank Vlastnik
31. Rose Mary Redeen
Reid Rynke

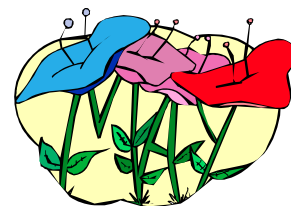


May Anniversaries

4. Martin & Laurie Johnson
19. Justin and Elyse Boroski
19. Tom & Lois Edgcomb
22. Ryan and Elecia Lindenmier
27. Gary & Shug
Grosenbach

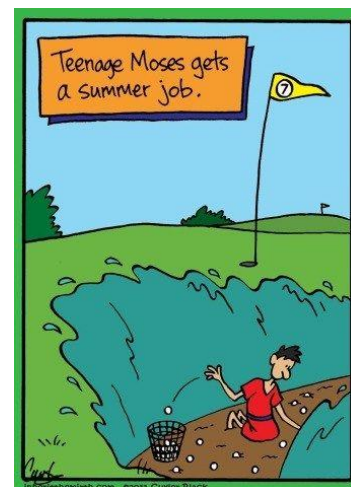
June Birthdays

2. Karen Bejster
5. Julie Breuning
7. Rev. Ted Engelsdorfer
Gretchen Kaszynski
Marilyn Haslam
Adam Mize
8. Torie Ploch
11. Lois Edgecomb
15. Alan Fupler
16. Lisa Hoelle
Ella Ware
17. Carol Harris
Mark Bingheim
Julie Goff-Rietgraf Zimmer
19. Bob Noonan
Art Morrell
21. Brittany Bejster
Sue Riordan
26. Steve Shetterly
27. Jayne Brown
27. Shirley Janz
29. Renee Lundeen
30. Kim Becker
Dinelle Freschi




June Anniversaries

12. Tim & Julie
Breuning
14. Zach & Dinelle
Freschi
27. Bill & Kim Becker
28. Tom & Gretchen
Kaszynski



MAY 2024

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1 6:30 Choir Practice	2 1:00pm Zion Women's Guild meeting	3	4 8:00am Weight Watchers meeting
5. 8:25 Pastor Alex WLPO 9:00 CREW 9:30 Choir practice 10:15 Worship- Also available on You Tube & Coffee Fellowship	6	7	8 6:30 Choir Practice	9	10	11 8:00am Weight Watchers meeting
12. 8:25 Pastor Alex WLPO 9:00 CREW 9:30 Choir practice 10:15 Worship- Also available on You Tube & Coffee Fellowship <i>Mother's Day</i>	13 6:30pm Live Life Group meeting	14	15 6:30 Choir Practice	16 6:00 Zion Diners	17	18 8:00am Weight Watchers meeting 2:00-4:00pm Ladies Tea
19. <i>Music Sunday Pentecost</i> 8:25 Pastor Alex WLPO 9:00 CREW 9:30 Choir practice 10:15 Worship- Also available on You Tube & Coffee Fellowship <i>2:00 Spring Flute Fling</i>	20 7:00 Church Council Meeting	21	22 6:30 Choir Practice	23 6:30pm Compassionate Friends Group meeting	24 Newsletter info Due	25 8:00am Weight Watchers meeting
26. 8:25 Pastor Alex WLPO 11:15am Worship & Lunch at Pilgrim Park	27 Memorial Day	28 5:15 PADS Meal 6:00pm Renewal Team meeting	29 6:30 Choir Practice	30	31	June 1 8:00am Weight Watchers meeting
June 2 8:25 Pastor Alex WLPO 10:15 Worship- Also available on You Tube & Coffee Fellowship	June 3	June 4	June 5 6:30 Choir Practice	June 6 12:00pm Zion Women's Guild luncheon at Liberty Restaurant	June 7	June 8 8:00am Weight Watchers meeting