

Zion Lutheran Church

"To be together growing in Christ, to be His message to others"

557 Perry Highway

Harmony, PA 16037

zion557@zoominternet.net

724-452-8886

www.zioninharmony.com

From the Desk of the Pastor ...

Some version of this has floated around Social Media for several years now. It was understood to have originally come out of a Catholic Community in Florida; however this is probably not the same version as it has been picked up by a lot of different congregations over the past few years. It speaks about a radical welcome into community together...

"We extend a special welcome to those who are single, married, divorced, gay, filthy rich, dirt poor, y no habla Ingles. We extend a special welcome to those who are crying newborns, skinny as a rail, or could afford to lose a few pounds.

We welcome you if you sing like Andrea Bocelli or are like your pastor, who can't carry a note in a bucket. You're welcome here if you're just browsing, just woke up, or just got out of jail. We don't care if you're more Catholic than the Pope, or haven't been in church since little Joey's baptism.

We extend a special welcome to those who are over 60 but not grown up yet, and to teenagers who are growing up far too fast. We welcome soccer moms and NASCAR dads, starving artists, tree-huggers, latte-sippers, vegetarians and junk food eaters. We welcome those who are addicted – whether in recovery or not.

We welcome you if you're having problems, you're down in the dumps, or are suffering in body, mind or spirit. We extend an especially warm welcome to those who don't like 'organized religion' (we've been there too!).

If you blew all your money at the race track, you're welcome here. We offer a welcome to those who think the earth is flat, work too hard, don't work or can't work, can't spell, or because grandma is in town and wanted to go to church.

We welcome those who are inked, pierced or both. We offer a special welcome to those who could use a prayer right now, had religion shoved down their throat as a kid, or got lost in traffic and ended up here by mistake. We welcome tourists and locals, seekers and doubters, bleeding hearts and hardened ones ...and you!

Is there a group of people that were missed that you would add? Is there a group of people that you would remove from this list? Why?

Sometimes it is easier to welcome complete strangers to our churches than it is to welcome those whom we know and don't care for. What makes us a welcoming church?

Something to think about...

Pastor Nathaneil

Serving Zion this month

Ushers



January 7: Sally Measel
January 14: Don Olson
January 21: Earl Goehring
January 28: Linda Armstrong

Greeters



January 7: Debbie Muders & Sally Davis
January 14: Jeff & Jodi Miller
January 21: Eric & Melissa Painter
January 28: Ed & Vicki Moyer

Money Counters



January 7: Chris Trimble & Pam Ferrainolo
January 14: Bill Gasior, Al Stephens, Tom Bickert
January 21: TBD
January 28: TBD

Bulletin Sponsors



January 7: Available
January 14: Available
January 21: Available
January 28: Available

- If you are unable to serve on your Sunday, please trade with someone.
- Bulletins may be sponsored with a donation of \$15 per week, to offset the cost of the bulletins, and can be given to the glory of God, in memory of someone, or in honor of someone. Note "Bulletins" in the memo section of your check, and please call Melissa in the office if you'd like to sponsor the bulletins.
- Flowers may be given on the altar any Sunday. There are forms on the bulletin board in the entryway. Ask Melissa if you have questions.



The Annual **Council Retreat** will take place on Tuesday, January 9th, at 6:15 p.m. This is a very important meeting for ALL council members to attend, as Team assignments will be made and the Council will determine the direction that Zion will take in the new year. A light dinner will be served.

On January 28th we will have our **Annual Congregational Meeting** here at Zion. This meeting will take place right after our service. **Annual Giving Statements** will be available sometime during January. Please look for yours on the table in the entryway so that we don't have to mail them.

New Offering Envelopes are now available. If you haven't picked yours up yet, they are in the fellowship hall.



January 7: Birthday/Anniversary Celebration with cake and ice cream

January 14: Fellowship hour

January 21: Fellowship hour

January 28: Congregational meeting after our worship service, bring your favorite dish to share for our POT LUCK DINNER



Have you noticed the beautiful red and gold bulbs on the tree in the social hall? Each of them was crocheted by Goldie Radar. Please thank Goldie for taking the time to make each of these ornaments so beautiful. Like the ornaments on the tree in the sanctuary these ornaments will last for years to come.

--Submitted by Chris Trimble

Once again the time came to reveal who our secret sister was. Nine women joined together for a night of fellowship. Each one brought part of the meal, from appetizers to dessert. After the wonderful meal, we revealed who we had been praying for in the past year. It is so nice to find out who that special person is. We would like more women to join this special group. It is not about gifts but about the special relationship between each of us.



--Submitted by Chris Trimble



Please remember, when coming to church activities, not to block the garage or parking space of the parsonage.

Christmas Poems

A Mother's Love

As Mary looked down on her baby with love,
She knew He was truly a gift from above.

As she cradled His head and counted each finger and toe,
The question has always been, did she know?

A mother's love knows no bounds,
It started in a stable in Bethlehem town.

She was with Him through each stage of His life,
Through the love and joys and sorrow and strife.

She was a young girl when He was born,
And she was still a young woman when she had to mourn.

She watch Him die upon the cross,
His gift to us was her great loss.

When you spend CHRISTmas morning opening your PRESENTS,
Remember the best gift of all is in his PRESENCE.

--Marsha Davis

Love Came Down at Christmas

Love came down at Christmas in the form of a baby boy.

And over the years has given us great joy.

Soft and cuddly as can be, a bundle of joy for you and me.

Yet this baby—God in human form—

Will give his life to save us from all harm.

Thank you, God, for this precious gift of love.

May we share this with our neighbor

As we praise you from above.

--Tom & Sally Davis



Minutes of Council Meeting, Sunday, December 12, 2017

Attendees: Chris Trimble, Shirley Fichter, Tom Bickert, Pam Ferrainolo, Marsha Davis, Al Stephens, Linda Armstrong and local interim Pastor Nathaneil Christman.

Absent: Evelyn Stephens.

Guests: Incoming council members Sally Measel, George Measel, Pat Pflug, Bill Gasior and Debbie Muders.

Devotions: Chris opened the meeting with devotions.

Secretary's Report: The minutes of the Nov. 13, 2017, council meeting were approved on a motion by Marsha and second by Al.

The minutes of the Nov. 19, 2017, congregational meeting were approved on a motion by Pam and second by Linda.

Treasurer's Report: NOVEMBER 2017:

	As of 11/30/17	As of 10/31/17
Checking	\$ 70,139.30	\$ 63,607.40
Petty Cash	25.00	25.00
Cash Balance	\$ 70,164.30	\$ 63,632.40
Less: Capital Improvements	14,865.57	14,865.57
Less: Designated Funds	27,798.71	25,608.06
Less: Payroll Tax Withholding	337.04	219.37
Current Budgeted Funds Available	\$ 27,162.98	\$ 22,939.40

Contributions by envelope and plate for November (4 Sundays) were \$10,108.00. Compared to our budgeted amount of \$7,867.52 giving was \$2,240.48 more than was needed to meet monthly budget. Receipts exceeded our budgeted amount on two Sundays last month. Envelope giving to date in 2017 totals \$110,334.00 (48 Sundays), and we are \$15,923.76 over budget.

It is important to understand that although our checking account shows \$70,139.30 most of that money is in designated accounts and can only be used for that specific account. The amount that we actually have to pay our bills is \$27,162.98.

Our average weekly attendance for November was 52.

Rex Energy – Miscellaneous (Account #980)

Opening Balance was \$3,232.51. November receipts were \$292.65. November disbursements were \$97.55 (Cemetery Association) and \$50.00 (Lutheran Church Extension Society). Ending balance for November was \$3,377.61.

Shirley spent a few minutes explaining the monthly financial report to the incoming council members and answering questions regarding the report.

The treasurer's report was approved on a motion by Marsha and second by Pam.

Pastor's Report: Pastor Christman presented his report for November, which showed 158.6 miles driven for visitations and Zion matters, and 20.5 hours committed.

He also included a reminder that if someone is in need of pastoral care or if we know of someone who would appreciate a visit, please let him know by call/text/email at 651-328-1072 or pastorchristman@gmail.com.

OLD BUSINESS

Constitution: Tom had provided copies of the proposed updated constitution to all council members prior to the meeting. He explained that once approved by council for review by the synod committee, he would email it to the chair of that committee. Once the review committee approves it, we can present it to the congregation for approval. It would then go to the Synod Council for final approval.

Marsha made a motion to approve the proposed constitution for review by the synod committee, and Linda provided a second. The motion was approved by council.

Tom will email copies of the proposed constitution to the incoming council members.

Tom also reported that Evelyn had passed along a copy of the bylaws she found, although Tom said it appears to be the same ones he has had for many years. There is no date on the bylaws, so it is nearly impossible to say for sure when they were prepared and approved.

Holy Cow update: Marsha spent some time explaining the program to the incoming council members. Pastor Christman noted that Oak Grove went through the program and he felt it provided valuable insight and data. He explained that the program is a process leading to a plan for moving the congregation into the future.

Two key points, he said, were: 1. the data gathered gives insight to nationwide comparisons; and 2. Michelle Snyder from Crows Feet Consulting “is incredible and well worth the money” in helping set up the program and analyze the data.

The information gathered will also be of great value to the Call Committee as the members move forward with the search for a new pastor.

Marsha is hoping we might be able to launch the program sometime in late January, although there is no deadline, so the time frame could change somewhat.

Annual Reports: Chris reminded everyone that annual reports are due to Melissa by Dec. 17.

Discussions with St. Paul's: There was a question on where things stand with the discussion about sharing a pastor with the St. Paul's congregation. Pastor Christman suggested that since we have a new council taking office in January, as does St. Paul's, that congregation presidents of the two churches set up a meeting for early next year to discuss where things stand and where we go next.

NEW BUSINESS

Melissa's vacation: Chris reported that the executive committee met with Melissa for her annual review, at which time we discovered she was still receiving only one week vacation. Melissa had not asked for more, but the committee felt strongly that she was entitled to more than one week.

Tom moved, and Marsha provided a second, that Melissa receives two weeks paid vacation in 2018. The motion was approved by council.

Job Descriptions: There was discussion about the lack of job descriptions and written vacation benefits for the three staff members: secretary, organist/music director and custodian. The new council will make that a priority for the coming year.

Distribution of Funds: There are four accounts for which the funds accumulated during the year are disbursed to charitable organizations or those in need at year end: Ash Wednesday (902), Maundy Thursday (903), Good Friday (904) and Christmas Eve (935). There is currently about \$1,647 in the four accounts.

Chris suggested that Butler-based Grace Youth and Family Foundation, which provides shelter for the homeless, would be a worthwhile recipient because they have a desperate need at this time. She provided a letter from the organization explaining the need.

Tom moved, with a second by Marsha, that we donate \$500 to the group from the Ash Wednesday account. The motion was approved.

The incoming council will decide on other recipients, with the understanding that Grace Youth and Family Foundation could receive more funding from Zion in the new year.

Christmas Gifts for Staff: Pam moved, with a second by Marsha, that we give \$50 gift cards to the Log Cabin to the Zion staff members. The motion was approved.

Social Statement on Women and Justice: Synod presented a proposed statement and asked for review and feedback by Sept. 30, 2018.

Council Retreat: The council retreat was set for 6:15 p.m. Jan. 9, 2018.

Lancaster Township Brochure: Chris passed around the Lancaster Township new-resident brochure in which we purchased a display ad promoting Zion.

Correspondence: Council received a thank-you card from Tom and Edie Brain thanking the council members for their hard work and efforts over the past year to keep Zion moving forward.

Recognition: Council members thanked Shirley for her diligence and hard work as Zion's treasurer.

Gifts for Pastors: Council agreed, on a motion by Marsha and second by Al, to provide a gift of \$500 to Pastor Christman in recognition of the many extra hours he committed to Zion this year, and a \$50 gift card to Pastor Susie for her ongoing commitment to lead worship on communion Sundays.

TEAM REPORTS

Property: Al received two bids for replacing the parsonage roof. Sam's Home Service bid \$8,950 for a shingle roof; J.B. Construction bid \$9,800 for a metal roof. Al will get at least one other bid for a metal roof to make a better comparison.

Al made a motion to purchase a snow blower with an electric start for \$349 at Home Depot. Tom offered a second on the motion and council approved the purchase. It will be used to clear the sidewalk at the church.

Fellowship: no report

Meeting Human Needs: We rang the bell at BiLo for the Salvation Army on Dec. 1. Thanks to all who participated, not just in that, but in all the efforts of Meeting Human Needs this year.

Submitted by Marsha Davis

Worship: Worship committee meets on Wednesday, Dec. 13, at 8 p.m. Although Pastor Christman had offered to attend, committee members thought it would not be a good use of his time because all we will likely do is assign worship assistants for January.

Christian Education: no report

Stewardship: For the coming year we will be returning to using boxed envelopes for our giving. The new envelopes have arrived and will be distributed before the end of the year. Please try to pick yours up before the start of the new year. After the first of the year a statement will be given to everyone that contributed money to Zion in the past year. These will be available during the Sundays in January. Please try to pick yours up so that we save the postage sending to you. Melissa and Chris will prepare the end of the year financial statements for members in January.

Every Member Involvement: no report

Executive Team: no report

Next Council Meeting: Retreat on Jan. 9, 2018, from 6:15 p.m. to 10 p.m.

Money Counters: Money counters for January:

Jan 7: Pam and Chris

Jan. 14: Bill and Al (Tom will assist)

Jan. 21: To be determined

Jan. 28: To be determined

Devotions: Debbie will handle devotions for January.

Adjourn: The meeting was adjourned at approximately 9:40 p.m. Council members prayed the Lord's Prayer.

Submitted,

Tom Bickert

Council Secretary

Called to *Serve*