

 Zion’s United Church of Christ

 209 Chestnut Street

 Pottstown, PA 19464

 (610) 323-3637

 Rev. Austin Chinault, II - Pastor

 Keith Clattenburg – Organist/Choir Director

 Laura Clattenburg – Music Coordinator

 Kimberly Kulesa - Office Administrator

 Frank Moser - Custodian

 **Those serving this month**

﻿Dear Congregation,

I share with you from my mission trip to Costa Rica on CREW XII. *CREW stands for “Costa Rican Ecumenical Work”*regarding the mission of Sally and Crosby Johnson.

Thank you for being prayer partners as we lifted one another spiritually before God each day.  This also improved our physical condition as we centered upon who we are and why we are here.

Jesse was our trip leader who is also a lay preacher in North Dakota.  He planned a tremendous trip covering many intricate details.  His unflappable personality was perfect as our leader.  Jesse taught the young adult Sunday School class, power washed the church roof, painted, and mixed concrete for the retaining wall.  Jesse is also a recognized bird-watching authority and took hundreds of pictures with his powerful camera.

Janel is Jesse’s mother who serves as a pastor in North Dakota.  She has a wonderful personality and is the one who first introduced Jesse to our mission CREW experience in 2001 through our UCC communications.

Anita is Janel’s office administrator with a loving and joyful persona.  She loves animals and was thrilled that she got to see several sloths 🦥 up close!

Janel and Anita taught preschool and kindergarten Sunday School.

Ken is a pastor in North Dakota who is a good worker and traveling companion.  He taught the younger elementary school children in Sunday School.

On Sunday, I also had opportunity to teach the Adult Sunday School Class.  We explored some of the meaning of powerful Psalm 139.  There was good class participation as folks were invited to draw images representing God’s eternal presence and care, God’s creative power, resistance from evil and everlasting promise.  The class expressed quite beautifully that we are forever “Leaning on the Everlasting Arms.”

Keith is a North Dakota truck driver from Ken’s church.  He added much to our group from the practical working person’s perspective.  Keith was willing to do and try new things as he liked to explore the world.  He helped lay the block over the re-bar in the retaining wall as he learned new ways of construction.  Keith and I spent time power washing and painting the church roof.

Don is a friend from the church I served in York.  He was the main planner for our first CREW experience in 2001.  Don is a hard worker who does what is needed.  Thus, he carried block, mixed concrete, and helped replace a portion of the metal porch roof at the church.

Continued on page 3

**Sunday Worship Hours**

**10:15 a.m. – Sanctuary**

**February 4 - Worship with Trinity at Zion’s, 10:15 a.m.**

**9:00 - Intergenerational Sunday School every Sunday except February 18**

**Special Services & Events**

**Souper Bowl of Caring Special Offering –**

**February 11**

**Consistory Meeting -**

February 12, 7:00 p.m.

**Ping Pong and Pizza –** Wednesdays at 5:30 p.m.

**Handbell Choir Rehearsal -**

Wednesdays, 6:30 p.m.

**Choir Rehearsal –** Wednesdays at 7:30 p.m.

**Community Meal at Emmanuel Lutheran -**

February 23 at 12:00 p.m.

***The Tymes* – February 2024**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Altar Guild:** **Mary Cresswell****Financial****Secretary:** **Joan Miller** | **February 4** Lectionary Readings:Isaiah 40: 21-311 Corinthians 9: 16-23Mark 1: 29-39Sermon:“Have You Not Heard?” | **February 11**Lectionary Readings:2 Kings 2: 1-122 Corinthians 4: 3-6Mark 9: 2-9Sermon:“Metamorphosis” | **February 14** **Ash Wednesday**Lectionary Readings:Joel 2: 1-2or Isaiah 58: 1-12Psalm 51: 1-172 Corinthians 5: 20b-6:10Matthew 6: 1-6, 16-21 | **February 18****Lent I**Lectionary Readings:Genesis 9: 8-171 Peter 3: 18-22Mark 1: 9-15Sermon:“A Time of Hope” | **February 26****Lent II**Lectionary Readings:Genesis 17: 1-7Romans 4: 13-25Mark 8: 31-38Sermon:“To Follow Christ” |
| **Financial Assistants** | Brenda Ross | Susan Embody |  | Audry Leister-Stengel | Craig Strunk |
| **Head Usher/ Ushers** | Susan Embody, Head Usher; Jim Whisler, Diane Andres, Joan Miller, Dusty Rhoads | Jim Miller |  | Craig Strunk | Jen Young |

 

 Happy Valentine’s Day!

**Pastor’s Mission Trip Continued -**

All of the group helped to paint the sanctuary walls and varnish the pews and woodwork to ward off termites.

My biggest highlight was working with Graven, a 15-year-old great-great-great grandson of Sister Elizabeth.  Sister Elizabeth is an original Nicaraguan from the refugee camp when the church was founded some 40 years ago.  She is 105 years old!

Her great……..grandson Graven is a fine, quiet, willing, hard-working young man.  He mixed mortar, carried block, joined us for prayer and lunch when he was invited.  Such a good young person whom we are enabling to go to public school through our spiritual ministry.

He embodies eternal hope.

We were able to also visit the farm where Sally and Crosby live.  There we harvested some of the crops they use for a food pantry to feed those in need in Limon.

All in all, it was a very enlightening trip in which I learned new things, had my faith deepened, and was able to expand my sense of the body of Christ with believers from North Dakota, Limon, and hundreds of prayer partners from all over the United States.

Thanks be to you and God for this opportunity!

🙏🏼

Pastor Austin

++++++++++

\* PS:  An additional highlight was missed when I wrote this message on the way to San Jose (a three-hour bus ride).

We organized and distributed 170 school bags and back packs necessary for members of the church and Limon children to attend school.  This is a crucial ministry and mission of Sally and Crosby Johnson and Harvest Tabernacle Church-partly through *Hearts and Hands for Jesus*.

Without this educational emphasis over the years, hundreds of children in poverty in Limon would not be able to attend school to receive an education and have the skills to improve their lives.

In addition to the spiritual care and nurture, this is one of the most important dimensions of this mission.

**Consistory Highlights**

Consistory met on Monday, January 15th with the first order of business being the election of officers for the 2024 year. They are as follows:

 President – Keith Clattenburg

 Vice President – Dusty Rhoads

 Treasurer – Brian Miller

 Secretary – Brenda Ross

The list for Special Offerings was presented and approved. This list will be included in the mailing sent with the giving letters for 2023. Joan Miller thanked everyone on Consistory who gives their time to keep Zion’s going. She also wanted to thank Julie Rhoads for the time she puts in to collecting and delivering the Redner’s receipts. We raised $480.91 last year. Dusty informed us there is quite a bit of flooring that needs to be replaced downstairs but there are a few water problems that need to be addressed before we can replace any flooring. Our next meeting is scheduled for February 12th.

Respectfully Submitted,

Brenda Ross, Secretary

 **NEWSLETTER DEADLINE**

The deadline for the March issue of the Tymes is February 20th. Please send articles to: zionsuccoffice@comcast.net

**SUNDAY SCHOOL NEWS**

Sunday School for youth and adults is at 9 am. The third week of the month is Confirmation Class for the youth and there is no Sunday School that week. We are an intergenerational class and meet in the classroom next to the office in the Chapel building. Lessons are usually based on the weekly lectionary with discussions. All are welcome!

Joan L Miller, Superintendent

**Cancellations**

We are in the season of snow and ice. If church has been cancelled you can check by calling the church number (610-323-3637) and listening to the message. Cancellations will also be posted on WFMZ Channel 69 TV. Please remember, it is often impossible to properly clear snow and ice from the sidewalks and the parking lot in time for Sunday morning service.

 **2024 Special Offerings**

February 11 Souper Bowl of Caring

February/March Easter Lily Donations

March 10 OGHS Offering

 (One Great Hour of Sharing)

March 31 Easter Envelope

May 12 Blanket Sunday

May 19 Strengthen the Church

 (Pentecost)

June 16 Heifer Project

July Summer Ingathering

September 8 Phoebe Home Offering

October 6 Fall Ingathering

November 3 All Saints Offering

December Poinsettia Donations

December Christmas Fund

 (Veterans of the Cross)

December Advent Envelope

 **Pottstown Happenings**

What is happening in the borough and a Pottstown newsletter can be accessed at [www.Pottstown.org](http://www.Pottstown.org)

 **HAPPY BIRTHDAY!**

 February 2 - Andrea Porter

 3 - Jim Griesemer

 7 - Lee Steiner

 10 - Adrienne Andres

 14 - Rebecca Podolsky

 17 - Scott Steffey

 20 - Stan Schollenberger

 26 – Susie Hayden

 27 - Zachary Richards

 **Happy Anniversary !**

 Feb. 14 - Stan & Sandy Schollenberger

 Married 32 years

 Feb. 15 - Jim & April Yenser

 Married 21 years

 Feb. 23 - Howard & Elizabeth Miller

 Married 51 years

 Feb. 27 - Ray & Tricia Heydt

 Married 27 years



This year we will be receiving donations to the Souper Bowl of Caring on February 11th.

Last year, more than 4,175 participants donated over $3.9 million that was given locally to 2,626 charities to help relieve hunger. This mission began in 1990 and has received over $175 million donations to help soup kitchens, food banks, meal programs and other hunger-relief charities in local communities across the country. It all began with a simple prayer from a single youth group:

“Lord, even as we enjoy the Super Bowl football game, help us be mindful of those who are without a bowl of soup to eat.”

This mission has transformed the time around the “Big Game” into the nation’s largest celebration of giving and serving. The young people who started this project have learned what it is like to make a positive difference in the world as they show compassion to provide basic needs to others.

Enclosed in this newsletter is an envelope for you to help share in this project. Please bring your contributions on February 11th or send them to the church office. Cans of Chunky Soup will also be accepted in church.

We invite you to participate in sharing God’s love with those in need!

**Annual Reports Due**

All reports for the Yearbook must be in the church office by March 1, 2024. Thank you for our cooperation.

**Redner’s Receipts!**

Please place your **Redner’s Save-a-Tape** **receipts** in the box in the lobby of the Sunday School building. We need the entire register tape in order to get credit. Also’ it has to have the words Save-a-Tape on it. Redner’s will donate 1% of sales to our church.

Placing your grocery receipts in the box is an easy way to help Zion’s!!

**Redner’s and Giant Market**

 **Gift Cards Sales**

Members and friends may purchase a Giant and/or Redner’s Gift card to use for groceries or gas. Denominations of cards come in $25, $50, or $100. There is no charge to you but our church receives 5% of the grocery card purchase price.

Gift cards to Redner’s or Giant are available Sundays in the Christian Education building or during the week through the church office.

**Ash Wednesday and Valentine’s Day**

**This year, Ash Wednesday and Valentine’s Day fall on the same day. Ash Wednesday is a very important day in the Christian Church. It marks the beginning of the 40 days Jesus spent in the desert fasting and resisting temptation. Ash Wednesday marks the first day of Lent, which is 40 weekdays until Easter. As the pastor or priest marks the ash cross of your forehead, he may say these words from Genesis ”[Remember that] you are dust, sand to dust you shall return” (3: 19). On this day we contemplate what’s temporary and what lives beyond us-God’s love and sacrifice.**

**Ashes: Ashes are created by burning palms from the previous Palm Sunday. Palm Sunday is the last Sunday in Lent and leads into Holy Week.**

**Beacon of Hope Homeless**

**Shelter 2023-2024 Donations**

Pottstown Beacon of Hope, in collaboration with borough leadership, St. Paul’s UCC, St. James Lutheran, Bethel Community Church, Congregation Hesed Shel Emet, First Baptist Church, Christ’s Episcopal Church, and First Presbyterian Church, will be opening an overnight warming center for the winter season. From November 1, 2023, to May 1, 2024, the center will operate daily from 7 pm to 7 am, providing a warm refuge for individuals experiencing homelessness, rotating between houses of faith and churches each month.

Once open, we will need volunteers to assist with meals, cleaning, driving guests, and organizing of donations.  If you interested in supporting our efforts this winter season, please call 424-625-1818 or visit the website: [www.pottstownbeaconofhope.org](http://www.pottstownbeaconofhope.org) for more information and to sign up to help.

To make a monetary donation you can send your gifts to Zion’s (marked homeless donation), made payable to Zion’s UCC. We will send the donations received to Beacon of Hope to help with this important ministry to our neighbors.

**Valentine’s Day/Cupid/ Hearts**

**Valentine’s Day did not become a celebrated day of romance until about the 14th century. There were several Christian martyrs named Valentine, however, the day may have taken its name from a priest who was martyred by the emperor Gelasius II in 469 AD.**

**Cupid, from Roman mythology, means “to desire”. Cupid was a god born to Mercury, the messenger of the gods, and Venus the goddess of love. Cupid is known to have a bow from which he shoots arrows. His arrows have the power to make people fall in love. The Connection between Cupid and Valentine’s Day became more popular in the 18th and 19th centuries.**

**In the 1840’s Valentines Day became a commercial holiday. Richard Cadbury created fancy boxes of chocolate to increase sales. It was in 1861 that he created the first heart shaped box of chocolates for Valentine’s Day.**

**Pennsylvania UCC Noontime Lenten Prayer Gatherings**

The 4 PA UCC Conference Ministers and UCC Staff Members will lead weekly prayer gatherings during Lent on Wednesdays from 12:00-12:30 p.m. The first prayer time is Wednesday, Feb. 21 and will follow each Wednesday until March 20. Register at [www.psec.org](http://www.psec.org).

Leaders will be:

Feb. 21: David Ackerman

Feb. 28: Nora Foust

March 6: Carrie Call

March 13: Bill Worley

March 20: Bonnie Bates

**Weekly virtual Lenten study from PA conferences**

The Penn West, Penn Central, Penn Northeast, and Pennsylvania Southeast conferences of the United Church of Christ invite you to join in this virtual Lenten opportunity! Meeting each Wednesday in Lent at 7:00 p.m., this Bible Study explores the foundations of our identity as Christians and members of the UCC as we explore what the future may hold. Each week is unique so if you cannot attend every date you can still participate in as many as you are able. If you have questions, or you would like to participate in this study, email pattyr@pnec.org to receive the link.

Topics will be:

Feb. 21: Unity and Foundation

Feb. 28: United Church of Christ

March 6: Lent in Context

March 13: The Priesthood of All Believers

March 20: Communion

***CareBag List for Pottstown Infusion Center***

Church folks are crocheting, sewing, kitting and diamond painting items for the Pottstown Infusion Cancer Center. There is a display in the narthex of the sanctuary of a sample CareBag. Some of the items included are prayer shawls or lap blankets, knitted hats, scarves, word searches, journal books, coloring books, colored pencils, nail clippers, angel key chains, travel size hand lotion, travel size Biotine mouthwash, chapstick, and inspirational notes.

Monetary contributions are also welcome to purchase supplies. There is a bin in the narthex as well as one in the entryway ofthe Chapel Building for contributions.

**Chocolate/Peanut Butter Candy**

**1 cup chocolate chips**

**1 cup peanut butter chips**

**2 tbsp. shortening – do not substitute**

**Heart or other candy molds**

**Combine chocolate chips and 1 tbsp. shortening**

**Microwave till smooth and melted – stir**

**Pour into molds ½ full – tap for bubbles**

**Chill to set**

**Combine peanut butter chips and 1 tbsp. shortening**

**Microwave as above**

**Spoon into cooled chocolate – tap for bubbles**

**Chill several hours till set**

**Invert molds to release candies**

|  |
| --- |
|  |

|  |
| --- |
|  |

|  | **February 2024** |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Sun** | **Mon** | **Tue** | **Wed** | **Thu** | **Fri** | **Sat** |
|  |  |  |  | 1  | 2 Groundhog Day | 3  |
| 4 Worship with Trinity at Zion’s | 5  | 6  | 7 Wednesday CrewQuiltersPing Pong and Pizza, 5:30 pmBell Choir Rehearsal, 6:30 pmChoir Rehearsal, 7:00 pm | 8  | 9  | 10  |
| 11 Super BowlSouper Bowl of Caring Special Offering | 12 Consistory Meeting, 7:00 pm | 13  | 14 Ash WednesdayWednesday CrewQuiltersPing Pong and Pizza, 5:30 pmBell Choir Rehearsal, 6:30 pmChoir Rehearsal, 7:00 pm | 15  | 16  | 17  |
| 18  | 19 Washington's Birthday | 20 March Newsletter Deadline | 21 Wednesday CrewQuiltersCCLU Board Meeting, 5:30 pmPing Pong and Pizza, 5:30 pmBell Choir Rehearsal, 6:30 pmChoir Rehearsal, 7:00 pm | 22  | 23 Community Meal at Emmanuel, 12:00 p.m. | 24  |
| 25  | 26  | 27  | 28 Wednesday CrewQuiltersPing Pong and Pizza, 5:30 pmBell Choir Rehearsal, 6:30 pmChoir Rehearsal, 7:00 pm | 29  |  |

**Zion’s United Church of Christ**

**209 Chestnut Street**

**Pottstown, PA 19464**

![month-of-february-snowman-love[1]]()

 **Newsletter**

This is my commandment,

that you love one another as I have loved you.

John 15: 12