

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**

﻿ ***And a Happy New Year!***  Season’s greetings to one and all.  It is a wonder to begin a new year as we experience another revolution around the sun.  2024 is upon us as I trust we realize that most important of all is to walk humbly with our God, following Christ, loving mercy and seeking justice,…as Jesus blesses us “hungering and thirsting for righteousness” in this new year.

I am excited this month to welcome Rev. John Folk who will preach his first sermon as Trinity’s new pastor during our Joint Communion Worship at Trinity on January 7, 2024.

Pastor John has agreed to include my commissioning for a mission trip to Costa Rica (January 9-21).  This will be my seventh mission trip to worship and work in Limon, CR, with Sally Jane and Crosby Johnson, whom you have met.  They conduct a wonderful ministry there filled with spiritual worship where they experience conversion to Christ.  Crosby and Sally Jane also support education for their congregation to better their lives.  They provide a food ministry with crops grown on their farm.  These missionaries assist with health care and housing needs among their poorest members.

Our mission teams have touched on all of these areas over the years.  We have taken doctors and provided construction materials to assist with a variety of needs.  Additionally, we help with the upkeep of their place of worship, Harvest Tabernacle Church.  Upgrading of electrical issues, painting of the building exposed to tropical conditions, sea salt air and much rain (!)—and roof work are ongoing priorities.  Our teams are called CREW (Costa Rican Ecumenical Work) and this will be CREW XII.

We always have prayer partners.  Sally Jane has requested you to pray for us; our safety in travel and work, our witness and spiritual worship experiences, the sharing of Christ’s love with the poorest of the poor in Limon.  We pray to extend this spirit and love to all people in Costa Rica.  We will form a prayer circle and pray at 12 noon each day.  We ask that Zion’s does the same thing here.  We will be thinking of and praying for you—Zion’s mission and ministry in Pottstown and around the world.  We will be praying for peace and harmony and God’s will, God’s Kindom, to be realized everywhere on earth.

Please mark your calendars and join us in prayer at 12 noon each day January 9-21, 2024.

This has been a powerful experience in the past…just knowing we are lifting one another in prayer at the same time is quite moving as things always go better after we pause.  I believe this can be a boost for all of our communities—and for the whole world! “Let there be peace on earth, and let it begin with me.”

Grace and peace,

🕊️ Pastor Austin

**Sunday Worship Hours**

**10:15 a.m. – Sanctuary**

**January 7 - Worship with Trinity at Trinity, 10:15 a.m.**

**9:00 - Intergenerational Sunday School every Sunday except January 21**

**Special Services & Events**

**Bible Study – January 10 & 24 at Zion’s, 12:00 to 1:00 p.m.**

**Consistory Meeting -**

January 15, 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 -**

January 26 at 12:00 p.m.

***The Tymes* – January 2024**

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| **Altar Guild:**  **Julie Rhoads**  **Financial**  **Secretary:**  **Louise Griffiths** | **January 6**  **(Epiphany, Three Kings Day—End of 12 days of Christmas—**  **NO SERVICE)**  Isaiah  60: 1-6;   Ephesians  3: 1-12;  Matthew 2: 1-12 | **January 7**  Baptism of Christ)  *Joint Communion at Trinity*—Pastor John Folk preaching  Lectionary Readings:  Genesis  1: 1-5;  Acts 19: 1-7;  Mark 1: 4-11  Pastor Austin commissioned for mission trip to Costa Rica. | **January 14**  (Installation of Consistory)  Lectionary Readings:  Psalm 139  (reader: Joan Miller);   I Corinthians  6: 12-20 (Joan);  John 1: 43-51  Theme:   “Known and Loved” (Pastor Kris) | **January 21**  Lectionary Readings:  Jonah 3: 1-5, 10 (reader: Bambi Eschbach);   I Corinthians  7: 29-31 (Bambi);   Mark 1: 14-20  Theme:  “Follow Me” (Pastor Kris) | **January 28**  Lectionary Readings:  Deuteronomy  18: 15-20  (reader: Sharon Moser);   I Corinthians 8: 1-13 (Sharon);   Mark 1: 21-28  Sermon:   “The Great Healer” |
| **Financial Assistants** |  | Joan Miller | Julie Rhoads | Diane Andres | Dusty Rhoads |
| **Head Usher/ Ushers** |  | Service at Trinity | Jen Young | Jim Miller | Craig Strunk |



**Consistory Highlights**

Consistory met on Monday, December 11 at 7 pm. Topics discussed included Pastor Chinault’s upcoming mission trip in January. Pastor Kris will cover the two Sunday Services and the new pastor at Trinity, Reverend John Folk has also agreed to cover any pastoral duties that may come up during Pastor Austin’s absence. Joan has been working on updating the Special Offerings list. There are some tiles coming up in the dining room. Dusty will have Chesmont Carpet look and see what it may cost to replace these. Installation of Consistory will take place on Sunday, January 14, 2024 and our next meeting will be on January 15, 2024.

Respectfully Submitted,

Brenda Ross, Secretary

**ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING**

**ZION’S UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST**

**NOVEMBER 19, 2023**

President Keith Clattenburg opened the meeting with a prayer and established we had quorum.

Brenda Ross read last year’s minutes. Connie Griesemer motioned to approve and Jim Eschbach seconded. Approved.

Keith spoke about the dedication of our staff, Frank, and Kim. He thanked Laura, his wife, for her support of him and Pastor Chinault for being such a wonderful pastor. He thanked all the organizations dedicated to helping our church and the community. He also had a thank you to consistory for all we do. He announced that all consistory members except for Connie Griesemer and Dorcas Kiefer have agreed to serve another year. Those staying are Dusty Rhoads, Jim Whisler, Joan Miller, Brian Miller, Elaine Richards, Diane Andres, Sharon Moser, and Brenda Ross. Louise Griffiths has also agreed to serve next year. Keith thanked Connie Griesemer for the many years she has served as Treasurer for Zion’s.

Jim Griesemer motioned and Adrienne Bartolini seconded to approve the members of Consistory. Approved.

Joan Miller presented the budget for 2024.

Continued - Under Expenses, Joan mentioned the Conference recommends a 3% increase for pastors and we have applied the same increase to all our employees. There is a little set aside to cover any extra hours Frank or Kim need to work.

Two paid holidays have been approved by consistory for both employees at four hours each. They must be used in the current year. Supply pastor and organist pay will remain the same. The budget committee worked hard to estimate for next year. Under Income, a change includes the income we receive from CCLU which is $500 a month and included a line for potato filling monies. UCF line (ASK JOAN to give me this info) Joan informed us that no money has been taken from our investment accounts to cover any expenses. It has been twelve years since we have taken any out of our investments.

After asking if anyone had any questions regard next year’s budget, she explained the idea of establishing Electronic Church Giving (she attended an online workshop for this topic). There are fees to use this. She found a company willing to wave their monthly fees. After explaining everything she asked if anyone would be interested in going to Electronic Giving and asked for a show of hands. None shown. We will let this go.

Joan thanked Connie for all her work alongside her for so many years. Dusty Rhoads thanked Joan for her hard work. A motion was made by Bambi Eschbach to approve the 2024 budget and Dusty Rhoads seconded. Approved.

Pastor Austin thanked Keith, Brenda, and Joan for their reports. He expressed his gratitude to Connie and consistory. He stated the CCLU ministry is going well. Toys for Tots will be collecting in the Chapel building. Our partnership with Trinity is going very well. Emmanuel Lutheran is considering joining our joint worship. Pastor expressed excitement that we received some new members. He and Diane were so grateful for our support during his father’s care and passing.

He then said a word of prayer for the meal next door honoring Sue Hendricks joining

our church.

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted,

Brenda Ross

**NEWSLETTER DEADLINE**

The deadline for the February issue of the Tymes is January 20th. Please send articles to: [zionsuccoffice@comcast.net](mailto:zionsuccoffice@comcast.net)

**SUNDAY SCHOOL NEWS**

Sunday School for youth and adults is held 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

**2023 Offering Information**

Please note that all 2023 donation envelopes received in the office by Tuesday, January 2, 2024. All donations after this date will be recorded as 2024 donations.

**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.

**HAPPY BIRTHDAY!**

January 5 – Lois Oister

6 – Lynda Wagner

Chris Ross

9 – Jim Eschbach

17 – Dorcas Kieffer

18 – Michael Kehler

21 – Gary Novack

22 – Ken Shellenberger

24 – Connie Griesemer

**Happy Anniversary !**

January 1 – Mr. & Mrs. Kyle Muth

Married 19 years

**17th Annual Community**

**Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.**

**All Faith Celebration**

On January 14 at 4:00 p.m. this event will be hosted by the Hill School and is being held at their Center for the Arts, 766 Beech Street. Featuring The Pottstown Interfaith Choir, The Hill School Choir, The Pottstown High School Concert Choir, and State Representative Joe Ciresi. Proceeds to Benefit Pottstown Salvation Army.

**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.

**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.

**Food Security**

Every Monday at 4:00 p.m. balanced meals food boxes are distributed free to anyone in need.  The location is Bethel Community Church of Pottstown, 575 N. Keim St. Pottstown. This ministry is supported through the Pottstown Ministerium.  Please pass the word to anyone with a need for food.

**Altar Guild News**

The Altar Guild consists of women and men who volunteer to maintain and care for the sanctuary for each church service.

Duties include flower placement each Saturday and distribution after Sunday services, Communion preparation, and clean-up all holiday decorations done with the help of everyone on the guild.

Many volunteers are needed to beautify the church. If interested, contact Julie Rhoads.

**A Time to Meditate**

The heart must have its wintertime,

A time to meditate…when peace,

Like snow, descends with calming grace

And all the fruitless worries cease.

The heart must have its wintertime,

A time when dreams, like roots, can sleep

And gather strength until the day

They have a rendezvous to keep.

The heart must have its wintertime,

An interlude when hope sprouts wings

As bright as any cardinal’s,

And newborn courage softly sings.

The heart must have its time to snow…

To rest in silence and to grow.

Submitted by Louise Griffiths

***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.

**For Christmas Year Round**

**Lord Jesus, we thank you for the spirit shed abroad in human hearts on Christmas. Even as**

**we invited you on Christmas to be born again in our hearts, so will you go with us throughout the days ahead, to be our companion in all that we do. Will you help each of us to keep Christmas alive in our hearts, that it may continue to glow, to shed warmth and to speak its message during all the bleak days of winter.**

**May we hold on to that spirit, may it be we can go into another week, and then be encouraged to discover that Christmas can last the year round.**

**So give us joyful, cheerful hearts, to the glory of Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.**

**Adapted from a prayer by Peter Marshall**

**Paraments and Liturgical Colors for Worship**

**Parament: Derived from the Latin word paramentum which means adornment. In the early church it referred to hangings in a room to add sophistication and beauty. Colors signified a particular liturgical season. In the 12th century, Pope Innocent III, described the use of the five colors as written by the Crusaders for the church in Jerusalem. The five colors were white, red, black, violet, and green.**

**White or Gold: signifies Purity, Glory, Joy.**

**Used during Easter, Christmas, Epiphany, Transfiguration.**

**Violet: Signifies Penitence, Sacrifice, Pain and Suffering.**

**Used during the season of Lent.**

**Red: Symbolizes the sacrificial blood of Christ and celebration of Martyrs. Used during Holy Week, Palm Sunday, Pentecost.**

**Blue: Symbolizes the sky or heaven, where heralds proclaimed Jesus’ birth. Used during Advent. Violet/Blue also used during Advent.**

**Green: “Ordinary Time”, used after Pentecost and through out the year to symbolize growth and new life.**

**Black: Signifies Death and Mourning. Used Good Friday.**

**Altar Cloth: In the early church, altar cloths were made of gold or silver and inlaid with precious stones. Today the altar cloth is made of hemp or linen for cleanliness, whiteness and firmness. The altar cloth is always white and should be left on the altar at all times.**

|  | **January 2024** | | | | |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Sun** | **Mon** | **Tue** | **Wed** | **Thu** | **Fri** | **Sat** |
|  | 1 New Year's Day | 2 | 3  Wednesday Crew  Quilters  Ping Pong and Pizza, 5:30 pm  Handbell Rehearsal,  6:30 pm  Choir Rehearsal, 7:00 pm | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 7  Joint Service at Trinity  Communion | 8 | 9 | 10  Wednesday Crew  Quilters  Bible Study, 12:00 pm  Ping Pong and Pizza, 5:30 pm  Handbell Rehearsal,  6:30 pm  Choir Rehearsal, 7:00 pm | 11 | 12 | 13 |
| 14 | 15 Martin Luther King Jr.  Consistory Meeting, 7:00 pm | 16 | 17  Wednesday Crew  Quilters  Ping Pong and Pizza, 5:30 pm  Handbell Rehearsal,  6:30 pm  Choir Rehearsal, 7:00 pm | 18 | 19 | 20  February newsletter deadline |
| 21  Confirmation Class | 22 | 23 | 24  Wednesday Crew  Quilters  Bible Study, 12:00 pm  Ping Pong and Pizza, 5:30 pm  Handbell Rehearsal,  6:30 pm  Choir Rehearsal, 7:00 pm | 25 | 26  Community Meal at Emmanuel, 12:00 pm | 27 |
| 28 | 29 | 30 | 31  Wednesday Crew  Quilters  Ping Pong and Pizza, 5:30 pm  Handbell Rehearsal,  6:30 pm  Choir Rehearsal, 7:00 pm |  | | |

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**Newsletter**

I will recount the gracious deeds of the Lord,

the praiseworthy acts of the Lord, because of all that the Lord has done for us.

Isaiah 63: 7