

Hi-Lites

December 2025
Vol. LXVI No. 12

The monthly newsletter of
Zion Reformed United Church of Christ
259 S. Main Street
Chambersburg, PA 17201
www.zionucc-chambersburgpa.org.
Email: Zion1778@comcast.net
Office phone: 717-264-2854

Sunday Worship 10:45 a.m.
Church School 9:30 a.m.

Contact information:

Minister: Pastor Tom Dunkle
Cell: 330-663-1496

Secretary: Peggy Barnhart home 717-263-5952
barny4@comcast.net

Organist/Music Director: J.J. Johnson

December



John 1:14 ^{“14} *The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.”*

Jesus Christ is born today! Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia! And what a beautiful and joyous Christmas Eve we will share at Zion. Thank you to the many people who helped make these worship services possible, including our bells, choir, altar guild, music team, and many individuals who pitched in with gifts of time and talent. Together, we celebrate the world-changing events of Christ’s birth.

And then, the day after Christmas rolls around. I don’t know about you, but, sometimes, the days after a big holiday can feel like a let down. There was all that preparation, all that excitement and anticipation...and then it’s over. But here’s the thing: Christmas isn’t over! Christmas is a long season in our church during which we celebrate the Good News that Christ is Born!

When you and I get discouraged by all the bad news we hear happening in our world, community, and even family, it’s easy to be discouraged, disheartened, and disappointed. When all appears dark and hopeless, we return to the Good News of Christmas, and find hope in the promise of new life.

But for our neighbors, family members, and co-workers who aren’t part of a faith community, or don’t know the Good News of Christmas, hope isn’t as easy to recall. The darkness can indeed seem overwhelming and all powerful. You and I have an important, grace-and-hope filled message to share with the world: Christ is born! And because He lives, we, too, live, and we live in hope. We are called by God in our baptism to “trust God [and] proclaim Christ through word and deed”. We are

gifted and empowered by the Holy Spirit to do this work, that others may know the hope, joy, and peace we share in Christ.

I invite you to join me this Christmas season in looking for places and opportunities to share our faith in Christ with other people, with whom we are already in relationship; often, sharing our faith is an important first step toward inviting another to experience Christian worship. In sharing our story, we don't need to pressure, or lecture; we can simply tell of the difference faith in Christ has made in our life. If that idea terrifies you, then I invite you to spend the Christmas season praying intentionally for courage to speak, and wisdom to discern the right opportunity. Christ's birth has made a difference in our lives; if that wasn't the case, none of us would be a part of this faith community. I hope you will join me in sharing your story this Christmas, so that others may experience a similar transformation as they come to know God's unconditional, unmerited, amazing love and grace. Jesus Christ is born today!

In hope, Pastor Tom





Upcoming Dates. There are many special events and activities scheduled for the coming holidays. Please mark these events on your calendars.

November 30—Decorate church at 9:30am and Communion Sunday during worship at 10:45

December 6, Saturday
Bowling at Nellie Fox 1-3 pm. everyone welcome

December 7, Sunday
10:45 a.m. 2nd Sunday of Advent

December 9—Tuesday Night, Family Night at 6:00; bring 2 dishes
To share—1 hot and 1 cold

December 14, Sunday
10:45 a.m. third Sunday of Advent worship
4-6:30 caroling

December 21 Sunday
10:45 am. Fourth Sunday of Advent worship

December 24, Wednesday
Christmas Eve service at 7:00pm
Lighting of the Chandelier

December 25, Thursday
No Worship Service

December 28, Sunday
First Sunday after Christmas

December 31, Wednesday, New Year's Eve
No choir

Be careful if you are going out to a party

January 4 starting the New Year—Communion at 10:45



Quarterly Improvement Fund

This Holiday season and the end of the year are great times for a generous donation to the Improvement Fund; and your financial help is needed for future projects.

Donate today using the special envelope included in your Hi Lites. Please include your name or envelope number if you wish your gift recorded on your financial statement.

Food Pantry Update

Remember you can bring in food donations anytime. Collection boxes are located at the bottom of the ramp in the Sunday school room, and at the elevator entrance. There is always a need at this holiday season. The food is used in the Blessing Box.

Thank you

To begin the New Year, we will celebrate Epiphany communion on Sunday, January 4, 10:45 a.m. in the sanctuary.



*Focus on Christ
this Season*



January HiLites deadline is December 22.





Chalk Art by Elva Hurst









Bowling with the Sunday School—December 6 at Nellie Fox



Join in a holiday tradition

A centuries old custom is to join your voice with others to sing the great carols of the season. You can share in this holiday practice with us on Sunday, December 14. We will stroll through the a nursing home or walk the streets either way we will have fun. .After singing we return to the church for barbeque sandwiches, cookies, and hot chocolate. When we return to the church, there will be a few special games and a gift exchange. Those wishing to participate in the gift exchange should bring a gift valued at \$5. All ages are welcome. Be at the church at 4 p.m. We finish about 7 p.m.



Consistory

January 2026 Consistory meeting will be on Wednesday, January 14, 2025 at 7 p.m. . This first meeting of the year will be held in the church fellowship room. A change in the Consistory schedule will begin January 2026, we will have our meetings every other month and emergency meetings if needed.

Don't forget to pick up your Stewardship envelopes

Offering envelopes for 2026 are available near the elevator. If we missed your name, please let Peggy Barnhart or call the church office. I wanted to let you all know the impact our support has on the children.



Donations of Walmart, Target or Amazon gift cards or checks are still accepted until Family Night. It is suggested a donation of \$40.00 but if that's not in your budget any amount will be accepted. Thanks to all who have generously given to the 2024 Holiday Gift giving program. Checks should be made out to "Hoffman Homes" and given to Jane Johnson..

And questions see or call Jane.
church office and leave a message.



Legend of the Christmas Spider

A long time ago in Germany, a mother was cleaning for Christmas. Spiders fled up to the attic to escape the broom. On Quiet Christmas Eve, the spiders slowly came down for a peek. “Oh what a beautiful tree!”

In excitement, they scurried up and out along each branch. They were full with happiness as they climbed amongst the glittering beauty. But alas! By the time they were done, the tree was shrouded in their dusty grey web.

When Santa came with gifts for the children and saw the tree covered with spider webs, he smiled because he saw how happy the spiders were but knew how heartbroken the mother would be if she saw it covered in dusty webs. So he turned the webs to strands of silver and the tree was even more beautiful than before.

That’s the story of tinsel on trees and why every tree should have a Christmas Spider in its branches.

Family Page

December Birthdays

December

10 - Madison Duke

19— Sherri Arrowood

28— Miles Barnhart

Youth Of Zion (YOZ)

Come join us on December 14 for the annual caroling and gift exchange. \$5 limit.



Family Christmas Party

Nativity Creche

Annual tradition of setting up the Creche for the Advent season.

Did you ever wonder how long the Creche has been apart of Zion's tradition? Did you ever wonder who provided the creche pieces?

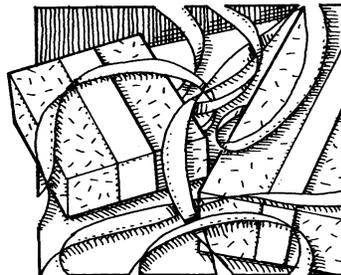
These questions were thought about when the figurines were having some botox and make up reapplied to them. The figurines were starting to chip paint in several areas and small cracks were starting to show on several. Local artist, Gail Cox, was very willing to fix, paint and repair all 22 figurines. She did this as a free will offering to the church. Her mother, Polly Heck, grew up as a member of Zion. We are very excited to display the touched up figurines this Advent season.

By the way, the answers to the questions. We were only able to find in the historical archives this information. Figurines were given by Mr and Mrs C. Slaugenhaupt during the tenure of Rev Joseph Miller which was reported in the December 1985 Hi-Lites. In 1984, Dennis Metcalfe created the display case to replace the older one. This was indicated in the 1984 Hi-Lites.

Please take the time to see a folder that shows the figurines prior to being repainted and then the new updated ones.

Once again a HUGE Thank you to Gail Cox for working on Zion's beloved Creche pieces.

Sherri Arrowood



Females 50 Years Old and Up

Most of us are ageing through the next phase of our lives. We're at the age where we see wrinkles, grey hair and extra pounds. We see cute 25 year olds and reminisce. But we were also 25, just as they will one day be our age. We aren't those "girls in their summer clothes" anymore. What they bring to the table with their youth and zest, we bring our wisdom and experience. We have raised families, run households, paid the bills dealt with diseases, sadness and everything else life has assigned us. Some of us have lost those that we're nearest and dearest to us. We are survivors. We are warriors in the quiet. We are women, like a fine wine or classic car. Even if our bodies aren't what they once were, they carry our souls, courage and our strength. We shall enter this chapter in our lives with humility, grace, and pride over everything we have been through and we should never feel bad about getting older. It's a privilege that is denied to so many.

Unknown Author

We are a Generation that will never come back

A generation that walked to school and then walked back.

A generation that did their homework alone to get out asap to play in the street.

A generation that spent all their free time in the streets with their friends.

A generation that played hide and seek when dark.

A generation that made mud cakes.

A generation that collected sports cards.

A generation that found, collected washed & returned empty coke bottles to the local grocery store for 5 cents each, then bought a Mountain Dew and candy bar with the money.

A generation that made paper toys with their bare hands.

A generation that collected photos and albums of clippings of their life experiences as a kid.

A generation that played board games and cards on rainy day.

A generation that had parents who were there.

A generation that laughed under covers in bed so parents didn't know we were still awake.

A generation that is passing and unfortunately it will never return no matter how hard we try.

I loved growing up when I did. It was the best of times.