

MAY

ZION UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST NEWSLETTER

FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK



I have found myself for the last 4 weeks dealing with a lot of grief personally and professionally. Personally, dealing with the memorial service for my stepmother and the loss of two church members. Professionally the loss of those two beloved church members and the loss of a community member who is also important to our church family. As a profession I am trained and educated in how to lead in those times of grief but personally we all grieve, even for those we don't know well.

I see the hurt. I see it in a whole lot of people, they may not realize what it is, but I recognize that sort of pain. It's the sort of pain that makes you mad at the world. Usually, that sort of pain is caused by loss. A profound grief that we struggle to name. In struggling to name that grief, we fail to give it room at the table. When we ignore that grief, it grows louder. It tries to gain our attention. It just wants to be heard. That sort of pain is difficult to contain. It eats away at the individual, and then—slowly but surely—at anyone either unfortunate or bold enough to enter that pain's trajectory.

When I come to those moments with others in their grief, I think about a God who heads toward our hurt. A God who has always been familiar with our pain and felt compelled to show it to us so that we'd stop imagining a God who is insensitive to what we're going through. We've inherited a world that is largely known by a hurt we don't know what to do with. We just know we don't want to experience it. But eventually, hurt comes for us all. We all experience loss. We know what grief is.

Maybe you're like me and you can spot the hurt from a mile away. You don't want to subject yourself to that, because you've already felt it (at least) one too many times. But the crazy thing about God, is that God knowingly enters that hurt with us. God sits in the middle of our hurt with us. God weeps with us. And, in so doing, God lifts the weary head. And in those moments I remember that I am still in the process of being transformed and healed from that hurt, myself. And it just might be that God is calling me to enter someone else's pain with them, so that they can know about the God who heads toward their hurt too.

Blessings,
Rev. Stephen Stark

Rev. Stephen Stark

MAY

Birthdays

**2 - Alexandra Billhartz
7 - Brea Cox
9 - Debi Lilley
10 - Gary Adams
13 - Kayne Reed
19 - Brandon Hoeflein**



**19 - Brooke McDonald
20 - Evelyn Frerking
23 - Sid Hougland
24 - Bev Adams
30 - Jerry Aker**

MAY

Anniversaries

**1 - Brian & Chrissy Krausz
3 - Jim & Judy Korte
16 - Chris & Jenny Bassler
17 - Gary & Bev Adams
19 - Sean & Nancy Cox
23 - Michael & Tedi Zotz**

Hello Zion friends!



Welcome to the month of May! The church yard sale was very successful. We had a steady flow of customers throughout the day and we tried to find new homes for the various treasures. Thanks to Sean Cox, chairperson for the yard sale, for organizing this event, along with the volunteers who helped setup, work throughout the day and finished by straightening up the goods to get ready for the Clothing Pantry on Tuesday. Which by the way, the new Clothing Pantry Day is going well. Keep in mind, it is now open on Tuesdays from 12:00 to 1:30 and from 5:00 to 7:00.

Here's the update on the new shed. Chris Bassler finished the last of the electrical work and Rodney Washburn put his woodworking skills to good use by building the shelving we will be using to keep our storage tubs. We have one wall figured out and are now sorting through all of our potential inventory to see what we need to keep and what needs to be thrown away. Just to keep you updated, the heating and cooling unit in the Fellowship Hall is still awaiting the parts from Baer Heating and Cooling. Hopefully the repairs will begin soon.

The Congregational Life Committee was pleased with the first Community Dinner. We served 18 people and we are looking forward to the next one on Wednesday, May 8th from 5:00 pm to 6:30 pm. See how you can help or just come out to eat!

Keep in mind of the change of the summer church schedule that will run from June 2nd to September 1st. Church will begin at 9 o'clock. There will also be Sunday School happening during this time. Our Sunday School kids will start in church and then depart for their Sunday School lesson following the Children's Time and then return for communion. Our normal two services will resume on September 8.

Lastly, we look forward to Confirmation on Sunday, May 19th at the 10:30am service where Adrian, Lucy, Mallory, Seth and Brody will share a sample of the work they have done over the past year. Please make sure you come and support these young people as they continue another step in their faith journey.

Be on the lookout for more information on this as we work to keep our church and outside grounds looking great!

I wish you all peace as we continue the Easter Season!

Scott Billhartz
Council President

Reminder

On Friday, **May 3rd and June 7th**, Zion UCC will once again have Operation Food Search, our monthly drive thru where we hand out boxes of food, no application necessary. If you would like to volunteer for this event, please contact the office for details. First come, first served. All are welcome! Spread the word!

The Giving Tree

Thank you to everyone who came and helped out with the Church Yard Sale in April. The total amount from the yard sale earned was \$2140.05. All of the money will go to The Giving Tree fund to help with our future projects.


The next project that The Giving Tree will be focused on is the Backpack Project starting in July. More information will be shared with everyone soon. If you have questions, please contact Pat Albers, Angela Sinkey, or Sean Cox.

We continue to thank everyone who has been making donations to The Giving Tree, whether it be monetary or for the food/clothing pantry.



WE PRAY WITH AND FOR...

- ◆ Larry Cox ◆ Rebecca Catlin ◆ Jim & Judy Korte ◆
- ◆ Logan & Zoey Vallee ◆
- ◆ Jody Cox - Bria of Mascoutah ◆
- June Mitchell ◆ Dorothy Bridgeforth - Trenton Village
- Bill Malina - Aviston Countryside Manor



All those in the military, at home and abroad.
The victims, families, and those fighting in any global conflict.



Board of Christian Education



The regular Sunday School year is wrapping up, but May will be an active month. On May 5th, some of the children will sing at the 10:30 service. On May 12, Mother's Day, the Sunday School will give out flowers to the ladies of the church. Confirmation for our 5 confirmands will occur on May 19th.

We thank all of you for your donation of spices for our food pantry. In May we will be collecting summer needs such as first aid supplies, sunscreen, and bug spray.

Our lives are busy with many activities, but please try to find time for Sunday School for your children. Children need to know Jesus. Hope to see all of you in Sunday School!



Class of 2024



Zion will observe Graduation Sunday on June 2. We would like to recognize our members who are graduating from high school, junior college, college, trade school or a graduate program. Members who will be present will receive a flower in school colors. Please inform the church office by May 26th, if you are graduating. Please include your degree, school and school colors. Also please inform the office if you or a family member will be in attendance. We also wish to recognize other church extended family relatives who are graduating, so please contact the church office with their names and degrees and their accomplishments as well!



SCHEDULE

May 2024

Date	Time	Liturgist	Tech	Acolyte
May 5th	8am 1030am	Julie Edwards Bev Adams	Vicki Walthes Scott Billhartz	Lucy Adrian
May 12th	8am 1030am	Charissa Thorpe Molly Stark	Rodney Washburn Bev Adams	Carly Jonah
May 19th	8am 1030am	Linda Bowman Kathy Sinkey	Vicki Walthes Bev Adams	Jonah Silas
May 26th	8am 1030am	Confirmation Students	Rodney Washburn Scott Billhartz	Brody Seth



Treasurer's Report for the month of March 2024

	General Account	Pastor Discretionary Fund	Memorial Account	Building Fund
Balance, 3/1/2024	\$5,305.95	\$265.00	\$25,798.61	\$289,836.08
Income	21,222.83	0.00	36.80	245.89
Expenses	(19,186.92)	0.00	0.00	(18,499.00)
Transfer	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Subtotal	7,341.86	265.00	25,835.41	271,582.97
UCF Account	860,146.74			
CD - First Federal	150,000.00			
Emergency Fund	65,518.02			
Balance, 3/31/2024	<u>\$1,083,006.62</u>	<u>\$265.00</u>	<u>\$25,835.41</u>	<u>\$271,582.97</u>

Vicki Walthes, Treasurer