



Zionite Newsletter

Newsletter of Zion United Church of Christ

Hello Church!

Well, we made it through another year!

I've noticed a theme as we enter this new year—people aren't necessarily resolving to do new things, but they're thankful that they've survived another year. And sometimes we don't give ourselves enough credit for surviving. And surviving in this world is a pretty remarkable thing.

My daughter said to me in the car the other day: "Mom, I could never do what you do." I asked what she meant. And she clarified, "I would never be able to lead a funeral." So I talked to her about the different kinds of funerals: Many people are able to live long, healthy lives and enter the Kingdom of God when they're ready after a long life here on earth — and those funerals can be a beautiful celebration of life. While others are taken too soon, and even though they get to rejoice in the Kingdom of Heaven, we're left missing them here on Earth — those funerals are hard.

Kids of pastors hear the words, "I have a funeral" more than the kids of any other profession outside of Funeral Directors. So my kids know that "surviving" is something to celebrate, because not everyone makes it to a new year. Of course, we, as people of faith, know that those who don't "survive" make it to the Kingdom of Heaven, and that deserves its own rejoicing. But "surviving" another year is pretty impressive too.

Maybe you didn't do everything you wanted to in 2022. Or maybe you have dreams you hope to reach in 2023. But all of us should take a moment of gratitude as we think about how we survived another year. Are we stronger than we thought we were? Have we endured more than we thought we could endure? Do we have more to do here on this Earth before we make it to the Kingdom of Heaven? If so, let's take a moment and appreciate all we had to do to survive another lap around the sun and simply take a deep breath as we welcome this new year.

In Christ,

Pastor Elizabeth

Church Events

What's going on at Zion?

- Worship ► Sundays at 9am & 10:45am
- Sunday School ► Sundays at 9am
- Bible Study ► Tues. at 1pm on Facebook Live
- Nursery ► Open and staffed on Sundays
- Food Pantry ► Open Every Mon 10am-12pm
- AA ► Saturdays at 10am
- AA: Rigorously Honest ► Thurs. at 5:30pm
- Youth Group ► 1st and 3rd Fridays of the month from 7-10pm.

1st Friday: Zion UCC

3rd Friday: Nativity UCC

- ♦ Bell Choir Practice ► Wed @6:30pm
- ♦ Chancel Choir Practice ► Wed @7:30pm
- ♦ January 6, 7-10pm ► Youth Group @Zion
- ♦ January 10, 6pm ► Exercise with Dawn
- ♦ January 10, 7pm ► Consistory
- ♦ January 16, 6pm ► Trustees
- ♦ January 20, 7-10pm ► Youth Group @Nativity
- ♦ January 24, 6pm ► Exercise with Dawn
- ♦ January 28, 5pm ► Drive Through Community Dinner

For more, check out www.zionuccton.com

Church Envelopes:

We're still awaiting the arrival of our church envelopes. We're told they'll arrive by the end of the month.

We will keep envelope numbers the same as last year, so you can continue to use last year's envelopes until the new ones arrive.

Also, remember you can give online. Log into your Breeze account and you can update your recurring giving online!

Welcome to our newest Church members!

Janet Wockasen
Charlie Knowlton
Bill & Elaine Sparks
Tom Pittler

Sunday School Forms

Parents, take a moment to fill out this Sunday School form if you haven't already.

www.zionuccton.com/sunday-school/

Wedding Forms

Have an upcoming wedding to schedule?

www.zionuccton.com/weddings/

Rental Forms

Need to rent Kuck Hall or a classroom?

The Rental form is now online:

www.zionuccton.com/rental-agreement/

Funeral Planning Forms

Have you taken time to fill out your Funeral Planning form? You can do so at any time on our website.

www.zionuccton.com/funeral-plans/

Getting to know you!

The Kraska Family



We'd love to hear from you!

Email your bio to

ucczion@gmail.com

We are the Kraska Family- Mandy, Jeff, Abrielle (6), Addison (4), and Christian (1.5). I (Mandy) am originally from Jamestown, NY but have been up in the Buffalo area since attending Niagara University in 2002. Jeff was born and raised in North Tonawanda. We moved into our forever home in Wheatfield a little over three years ago.

I have been teaching for 15 years. I am currently teaching students who speak a language other than English in grades 9-12 at Math, Science, Technology Preparatory School on the Eastside of Buffalo. In addition to teaching students, my colleague/friend and I have a consulting company, TELL Consulting. We work with school districts in NYS to educate school staff on how to successfully teach English Language Learners as well as how to become more culturally conscious.

Jeff has been working for General Motors in Lockport for 16 years. For about 8 years now, Jeff has been a Production Team Leader, overseeing around 6-7 people in his department. Jeff is also an avid gym-goer and Buffalo Bills fan.

Abrielle is our extrovert and in 1st grade. Abrielle is an amazing artist and big sister. She also loves gymnastics, books, and singing. Addison is our introvert and is doing super well in preschool. She loves dressing up, animals, and everything chocolate. Christian is our wild one and all boy! He climbs, jumps, runs, wrestles and everything in between. He is talking so much and loves his mama.

As a family, we enjoy watching new movies and the Bills together, building forts, and baking. In the warm weather, we spend a lot of time in the pool and visiting both my parents in Jamestown and my brother's family (4 kids and a dog) in PA.

I am so happy to have found a home at Zion. I am even more thrilled about my kids' excitement to go to and be a part of our church as well.

Consistory Meeting Minutes

Want to know what the church leadership is up to lately? Check out the Consistory minutes on our website at www.zionuccton.com/meeting-minutes

Note: there were no Consistory or Trustee meetings in December, and the November meeting minutes were in the last Zionite.

Committee Chairs and Members:

It's that time of year again! Annual Reports are due to the church office by email by Sunday, February 5th. *Please email your report so we don't need to retype it.*

Email your reports to: ucczion@gmail.com

Annual Meeting is March 12, with worship at 10am and the meeting at 11am. Annual Reports will be emailed to you and available in the church at least 2 weeks in advance.

Giving Statements

All Giving Statements will be emailed directly to you mid-January. If there is a correction that needs to be made, just reply to the email containing the statement. If you need a paper copy of your giving statement, let Pastor Elizabeth know.

Proverbs 22:17

"A merry heart does good like medicine"

*"What does the Lord require of you but to do Justice, love kindness, and walk humbly with your God."
Micah 6:8*

Zion UCC Tonawanda Health Ministry Medical Equipment Loan Closet



Zion has medical equipment available to loan.
For information, please contact
Debby Williams at
DW1416@aol.com or
call 716-563-2450.

988
SUICIDE
& CRISIS
LIFELINE

"Remember, Christmas isn't just a day or solitary moment. It's an entire "season" where we are invited to rejoice and reflect in the good news of the birth of Christ, our Savior.

Similarly, church isn't an event.

Discipleship isn't an accessory.
It's a whole life pursuit of Christ. Amen."

Pastor Eugene Cho



CLIMATE HOPE CARDS ART CONTEST

Together with 339 churches across the UCC, Zion kids participated in the "Climate Hope Cards Art Contest".

We don't know if any of our kiddos won an award, but we'll find out on January 14, 2023 at 3pm during a Zoom Webinar.

If you would like to sign up to watch the webinar, click [this link](#) to [register](#).



AWARD CEREMONY

Saturday January 14th
3pm Eastern
on Zoom



UCC.org/ClimateHopeCards

BREEZE SOFTWARE

Have you used Breeze lately?
Download the *CHMS Breeze* app on your phone, or go to www.breezechms.com

To login, type in ZionUCC to access our church's Breeze site. Then you can login with your information. If you can't remember your login, or need help with your login, contact Pastor Elizabeth.

Check to make sure your information is up-to-date. You can also search for any other church member in the directory. You'll find their latest contact information. And you can set up online giving with Breeze.

Thank you for using Breeze!



Our Mission

To assist congregational members and our community in times of need for temporary financial assistance.

Instructions

Complete the following request form for consideration by our committee.

Name _____

Address _____

Amount Requested \$ _____

Purpose _____

For Internal Purposes Only

Source:

_____ Missions Fund _____ Pastor's Discretionary Fund _____ Consistory Approval

Funds Needed by ____/____/____ Request Received ____/____/____ Response Date ____/____/____

Funded: Y/N Date ____/____/____ Check No _____

Disclaimer: Any monies allocated will be at the discretion of the C.A.M. Committee, based on committee and church guidelines.

Lectors & Coffee Hour Volunteers Needed!

Sign up to lector for Sunday services and sign up to help with coffee hour with this link:

<http://bit.ly/zionlector>

Thank you!



YOU'RE INVITED!

WORSHIP WITH US!
SUNDAYS 9 & 10:45

Zion United Church of Christ

www.zionuccton.com

15 Koenig Circle

Tonawanda, NY 14150