

ZION UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
402 Main Street

P.O. Box 339

Lowden, IA 52255-0339

Rev. Stephen Stepp, Pastor

Church Phone (563) 941-7726

Parsonage Phone (563) 941-5476

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

JANUARY 2018



Nonprofit Org.
U.S. Postage Paid
Lowden, IA
Permit No. 3

Sunday, January 7th, 2018

Mission's Potluck

Will be held immediately following
the worship service.

The Mission committee members will fix the
meat dishes and we invite you to bring a
favorite dish of yours to share.

Hope to see you there.

If you are worried about the people outside, the most unreasonable thing you can do is remain outside yourself. Christians are Christ's body...every addition to that body enables Him to do more. If you want to help those outside you must add your own little cell to the body of Christ who along can help them. Cutting off a man's fingers would be an odd way of getting him to do more work.

C. S. Lewis

Zion United Church of Christ Annual Meeting

will be held on January 28th. We will discuss the 2017
Annual Report and ministry of our community.

Thank you
Zion Senior High Fellowship
for a wonderful Christmas Dinner on
Sunday, December 3rd.
Everything was FANTASTIC!

Greetings Sisters and Brothers,

What does it mean to be a part of something greater than ourselves? It means that we give more to the many than we do to ourselves.

According to Pew Research, 25% of members in the United Church of Christ are involved with their church.¹ I thought that was really low, so I ran our numbers and here is how it turned out. Currently we have approximately 250 members in our church and our average attendance through November of 2017 was 61.5 people per Sunday. That averages out to 24.6% worship involvement from members and friends of our church. Now we know that on any given Sunday we may have visitors who boost our numbers, but this is a very good rough guide to our church member's involvement. So, in our very imperfect world, we fall into the current averages for the United Church of Christ. We are an average church.

That is why I want to share a story about being "in the average." When I worked for Red Lobster, there were many goals set for restaurant performance. Those goals were set by the "average" sales, expenses and earnings. If you could raise your sales and keep the cost in line, you could easily exceed your earnings and receive a bonus. In this equation, the best way to increase your earnings was to increase the number of guests who walked through your door and increase add-on-sales (anything extra beyond the entrée; such as drinks, appetizers, and deserts). We did this by training our fellow workers to care about the guest and their experience while dining at our restaurant. If they enjoyed themselves, they would choose our restaurant over the other places they could possibly dine. Therefore, we had to be above average to grow.

Well, church is like that too. Every church has a core

¹ <http://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2015/11/16/church-involvement-varies-widely-among-u-s-christians/>

group, the people who do most of the work and give most of the money that supports the church. This core group are God's employees who learn from Jesus how to care for the infrequent members and guests, so they have a most excellent experience while gathering for our worship services. The hope is that they will choose church over the activities that they often choose over church. According to a survey by Baptist News Global, the top ten activities people choose over church are: 1. Athletic events. 2. Commitment. 3. Exhaustion. 4. Holidays. 5. Illness. 6. Children. 7. Parents. 8. Travel. 9. Vacations, timeshares, second homes. 10. Work.²

How do we, the church, compete with all those reasons? We don't compete, we instead set the bar of community. The community of Jesus Christ that conquers all things by sharing our peace, our love, our hope and our joy with each and every person who walks through our doors. But wait, what if they don't walk through our doors? We reach out to them, until they re-engage the church and find out that there is no better place to be on Sunday morning. Therefore, we must be above average to grow.

So, let us be the employees of God whose hospitality has no bounds. Let us be Christ's apprentices, living with two main purposes, to love God and to love one another. That is how the church is built, one brick at a time on the cornerstone of Jesus Christ.

May this New Year be an above average year for Zion United Church of Christ. May it be a year of revitalization and growth as we "...go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit..."³

Grace and peace, *Pastor Steve*

² <https://baptistnews.com/article/top-10-reasons-people-cite-for-not-attending-church-services/#.WkJgpkxFyM9>

³ Matthew 28:19

THIS MONTH USHERS

January 7, 2018	Church Council
January 14, 2018	Jared Bentrott & Brett Esbaum
January 21, 2018	Joby & Kyle Proesch
<u>January 28, 2018</u>	<u>Senior High Fellowship</u>
February 4, 2018	Church Council
February 11, 2018	Jay Hein & Jodie Snowbarger
February 18, 2018	Scott & Carmen Fields
February 25, 2018	Senior High Fellowship



VIDEOGRAPHERS 2018

January

January 7, Jody Yutesler
 January 14, Aaron Horman
 January 21, Tessa Holst
 January 28, Cheryl Boedeker

February

February 4, Donna Luepker
 February 11, Jane Drewelow
 February 18, Jean Stepp
 February 25, David Niermeyer



January 7, 2018	Nathan Nabb & Taylor Lohman
January 14, 2018	Milo Easterly & Jacob Gottschalk
January 21, 2018	Leighton Tjaden & Koby Stewart
January 28, 2018	Abby Balke & August Harms



February 4, 2018 Milo Easterly & Taylor Lohman
February 11, 2018 Jacob Gottschalk & Nathan Nabb
February 18, 2018 Koby Stewart & Abby Balke
February 25, 2018 August Harms & Taylor Lohman



January 6 Mel & Kelli Hamilton, 33 years
January 11 Angie & Dustin Peet, 9 years



January 3	Phyllis Boedeker,
January 4	Allen Behrens, Josh Hamdorf, Matt Drewelow,
January 5	Samantha Horman,
January 6	Lois Latare,
January 7	Kaelynn Kessler, Welma Krueger, Hunter Lohman
January 8	Caven Wiedenhoff
January 9	Angie Williams
January 13	Mandi Behrens, Shannon Hayton,
January 14	Allison Hamdorf, Ari Ehltz, Owen Kahl
January 16	*Sandy Esbaum
January 18	Chris Boedeker, Koby Stewart
January 26	Liz Norton
January 29	Ladon Griesbach
January 30	Mel Hamilton



Card... ...shower

JANUARY BIRTHDAY CARD SHOWER

- January 3 Phyllis Boedeker, 408 2nd Avenue #16,
Clarence, Iowa 52216
- January 6 Lois Latare, 69 Cornell Avenue,
Maquoketa, Iowa 52060
- January 7 Welma Krueger,
1929 155th Street,
Lowden, Iowa 52255
- January 18 Chris Boedeker,
408 2nd Avenue #16
Clarence, Iowa 52216



**ZION UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
CONGREGATIONAL MEETING (unofficial)
DECEMBER 17, 2017**

Zion United Church of Christ Congregational Meeting was held December 17, 2017, immediately following worship service. The meeting was called to order by President David Niermeyer. Pastor Steve opened with a prayer. Congregational Meeting minutes from October 29, 2017 were read by Secretary Sharon Elijah. Needing no amendments or corrections, Al Mohr moved to accept the minutes, Leroy Luepker second. Motion carried.

A motion to place the names of Al Mohr and Rick Balke in nomination for church council and Terry Lasack as

conference delegate was made by Merlin Conrad, 2nd by Janice Strackbein. Motion carried. On a voice vote, Al Mohr and Rick Balke as church council members and Terry Lasack as delegate were declared elected.

The 2018 budget was presented. President Niermeyer announced that Pastor's salary would increase \$1932 per year for the next four years to meet conference guidelines. All other items on the budget remained the same as last year with the exception of property insurance. Pete Johnson moved to accept the 2018 budget as printed, 2nd by Duane Lasack. Motion carried.

There being no further business, Joy Combs moved, 2nd by Sue Monson that the meeting adjourn. Motion carried. Pastor Steve closed with a prayer. Respectfully submitted, Sharon Elijah, Secretary



**ZION UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
CHURCH COUNCIL MEETING (Official)
NOVEMBER 9, 2017**

Zion United Church of Christ Council met at 7 p.m. on November 9, 2017. The meeting was called to order by President David Niermeyer. Pastor opened with a reading and a prayer. Those in attendance were Bonnie Kintzel, Joy Combs, Sharon Elijah, David Niermeyer, Merlin Conrad, Jamie Nabb and Pastor Steve. Linda Behrens was present through the treasurers' reports.

Joys and concerns were shared. News and happenings were announced.

Secretary's minutes were read and made official on a motion by Joy and 2nd by Bonnie. Carried. The financial reports were read. Jamie moved, 2nd by Merlin to approve the reports. Joy moved to accept Pastor's expense report, 2nd by Merlin. Carried.

Calendar Review:

- | | |
|-------------|--|
| November 19 | Mohr baptism |
| November 20 | Zion Evening Circle |
| November 22 | Thanksgiving Eve Service |
| November 24 | Evening Circle Christmas outing |
| December 3 | Cantata at Lowden; SHF dinner |
| December 10 | Cantata at Clarence |
| December 14 | Church Council meeting
& Christmas supper |
| December 17 | Congregational meeting |

Pastor reminded us of Christmas Decorating. There will be a pizza luncheon for those helping. Having a nursery during church and getting a committee, perhaps called a hospitality committee of four, was discussed.

Old Business:

Joy and her committee are working on a complete membership list. Jamie reported on the kitchen drain situation. Joy moved that Jamie contact Roto Rooter to come and water jet the kitchen sink drain. 2nd by Bonnie. Motion carried. Jamie will also contact Jason Conrad to get the parsonage/garage roof on his schedule. The appreciation dinner was discussed. The Lowden Christmas parade was another topic of discussion. The entire congregation should be involved in our church's participation.

New Business:

The council talked about Pastor's salary. The church received a letter from the Pension Board informing us of a

7% increase in premium for medical and dental insurance. Sharon moved, 2nd by Joy that the council will commit to meeting the 2018 conference guidelines of \$45,003 in four years. In order to do this, the annual raise will be \$1932. per year for 4 years. Motion carried.

The next council meeting will be December 14th at 6:00 with a Christmas meal. Merlin moved to adjourn, 2nd by Jamie. Carried. Pastor closed with a prayer.

Respectfully submitted, Sharon Elijah, Secretary

MISSIONS COMMITTEE MEETING NOVEMBER 19, 2017

Present: Linda Behrens, Sharon Elijah, Carmen Fields,
Jess Coppess, Mary Campbell, and Pastor Steve
Absent: Megan Horman Marlene Wiedenhoff

Call to order:

The meeting was called to order and Linda led the group in prayer.

Approval of Minutes:

The September 27, 2017, meeting minutes were distributed and reviewed. Carmen moved, Sharon seconded, and the minutes were approved.

Financial Report:

Linda bought stamps for \$49 and Mary bought birthday cards for \$22.50. Pastor Steve requested reimbursement of supplies for the Trunk or Treat project the Confirmation Class did as part of mission outreach. Costs were \$28.24 for the candy and \$13 for bags. Sharon moved, Carmen seconded and payment of stamps, birthday cards and Trunk or Treat supplies were approved.

Old Business:

The committee gave out approximately \$3,250 throughout 2017. The committee's goal is to give out approximately \$7,000 per year. The committee discussed donating the remaining \$4,000 to the following items:

- \$1,000 to the Deacon's Fund

- \$1,000 to the North Cedar Clergy
- \$1,000 to Haiti for Flood Relief
- \$500 to the 5 Conference Special Offerings
- \$500 to the Zion Food Pantry

Linda commented that we should take \$7,000 from the committee's CD and transfer it into checking to cover 2018 costs and donations.

Mary moved, Jess seconded, and donations were approved to be given as outlined above and \$7,000 was approved to be taken out of the CD and transferred into checking.

New Business:

Committee members discussed their next project. They will hold a New Year's Potluck on January 7 following church. The committee will provide the meat and drinks and will ask others attending the potluck to bring a side dish or dessert to share if they are able.

- Mary offered to donate the plates and cups and she will make the ham for the potluck.
- Sharon will make Maidrites.
- Carmen will bring goulash.
- Jess will bring meatloaf and milk.
- Linda will bring a meat dish of choice.
- Megan will bring a meat dish of choice.

Next Meeting:

The next meeting will take place immediately following the potluck.

Adjournment:

Linda adjourned the meeting and Pastor Steve led the group in a closing prayer.

Respectfully submitted by,
Jessica Coppess



Christian Education

First, thank you to the volunteer teachers who dedicate their time, talents, and faith to our youth in the classrooms and beyond! Thank you Jessica Coppess, Makayla Schluter, and Tanya Stewart. Thank you to Pastor Steve for your support and guidance. A special thank you goes out to Johny Amina and Carter Horman for playing piano for us. Thank you, parents, grandparents, and caregivers, for making great efforts to have the youth here on Sunday mornings to gather for Sunday School lessons, practices and more! AND, to the YOUTH of ZION United Church of Christ, I thank you for your time and talents shared with all of us! Let us remember their stories shared tonight; let us gather around the Christmas tree and share the blessings of each other and the most important birth of our savior; Jesus Christ. His everlasting love for us is meant for us to share that love and joy with one another! I want to thank God for his many blessings he bestows upon us. May God bless each and every one of you this Christmas Season!

Merry Christmas and May God Bless us all!

Kelly Nabb Christian Education Coordinator

***Reminder: NO CLASSES on Sunday, December 31
Annual Christmas Breakfast January 7th at 9AM.**

“The perfect church service would be one we were almost unaware of; our attention would have been on God.”

C.S. Lewis