

**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

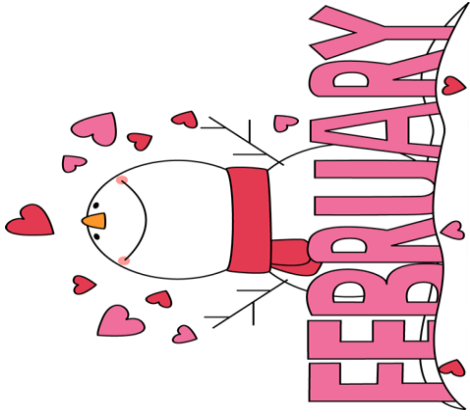
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Zion Herald February 2017 Volume 90 No. 2

# Community Wednesday Lenten Services

Day	Location	Preacher
March 8	Zion UCC/ Lowden	Pastor Boeder
March 15	Peace UCC/ Bennett	Pastor Stepp
March 22	St. John's UCC Clarence	Pastor Lorenzen
March 29	St. Paul's UCC Wheatland	Pastor Meyer
April 5	Tipton	Pastor Buck
<b>Worship – 7:00 p.m.</b>	<b>Evening Meal 5:00 – 6:30 p.m.</b>  <b>*see the article about our meal on March 8th!</b>	

## Additional Lenten Services

### **March 1, Ash Wednesday**

St. John, Clarence 7:00 p.m.

### **April 13 Maundy Thursday**

Zion UCC, Lowden 7:00 p.m.

### **April 14, Good Friday**

St. Paul's / Wheatland 7:00 p.m.

# Pastor's Annual Report



Greetings Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

The Zion Annual Report is an accumulation of snapshots. They are snapshots of events, changes, occurrences and facts which took place in our church over the past year. Now within these pages, we do our best to record what happened and hopefully what we felt as God moved through our community bringing hope and joy as well as helping us in times of trouble and sorrow. To express our feelings is something we often skate around in hopes of skipping the detail and simply stating the facts.

As your pastor, my hope is to teach you and make you aware of the feelings God has for you, the feelings God gives you, and the feelings we share as a community in and with Jesus Christ. God works in each and every one of us through the power of the Holy Spirit. This intent of God is certainly revealed by the words of Jesus, "My prayer is not for them alone. I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message, that all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you. May they also be in us so that the world may believe that you have sent me" (John 17:20-21).

In Christ Jesus, we are one with each other, and no matter what happens on our journey together, whether we agree or disagree, whether we get mad or glad, whether we laugh or cry, we will know that God is here with us, and that we are to share love with one another as Jesus loves us. That means we will forgive and begin anew. We will put the needs of others ahead of our needs. We will be an active part of the body of Christ in every way possible so that we can continue the mission of God and the ministry of Jesus Christ. Therefore, we can say in full confidence, we are branches from the vine of Christ that produces good fruit, the fruit of the Spirit. We are a beacon that brings hope to those who are sick,

suffering or mourning. We chose to be last because Jesus teaches us, "Anyone who wants to be first must be the very last, and the servant of all" (Mark 9:35). We always forgive those who hurt us because Jesus forgave those who condemned him, those who beat him, those who crucified him saying, "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing." (Luke 23:34).

These are the words of Jesus Christ that should invoke the feelings of God in each one of us. So, before you begin to read these pages, I encourage you. Pray for God's guidance and love so that the feelings of 2016 become interwoven with the facts and reports of 2016 so God might help you experience this historical document to its fullest. Pray for God's comfort for our members whose loved ones have left us and now shine in glory with Jesus. Pray for guidance as we all begin a new year together so that our 2017 report will continue to be filled with God's love as we strive to share all things in community as God does, and may we all be stronger in our faith so that we may live the faithful life and strengthen our bond with God and with each other.

During the year 2016, Zion experienced the joy of 7 baptisms and heard comments on how wonderful it is to hear babies in church again. We confirmed 5 youth, received 3 new members by transfer and affirmation of faith, and we gave our blessing to 2 members who have found a church to worship God in the place they now live. We supported the families and friends of 7 members who passed into eternal life with Jesus.

As a community, we averaged 73 Christians each Sunday for our worship services as we sang favorite hymns, prayed, and learned how we can continue to be faithful apprentices in Christ. We saw lilies and poinsettias, stalactites and stalagmites, caves and plungers as well as balloons, rocks, ribbons, paintings, balls, fences, snakes, string, signs, cake, cookies, candy and anything else that might help us to understand our God—The Father, Jesus,

and Holy Spirit, our faith, and how we are can live the faithful life in Christ.

Zion had over 70 youth and adults participate in Vacation Bible School and we had 35 people walk, ride, bake or serve to help stomp our hunger for our annual "CROP WALK." 204 members, family, and visitors witnessed our youth retell the story of Jesus' birth and we held candles in the darkness as we sang and prayed with great thanksgiving on Christmas Eve. Before Confirmation in Spring, our class went down to the Ronald McDonald House to prepare a meal and to offer gifts in support of this mission of hope for patients and their families. In Fall, with the support of our Mission Committee, our new Confirmation Class built a house out of cardboard as a place to gather our gifts to support the Willis Dady Homeless Shelter in Cedar Rapids.

We saw 66 books of the Bible stacked up in church as a reminder to find time to read God's Word and we saw wagons going to and from the grocery store as our teachers taught us about giving to God by giving to others as they supported the Zion Food Pantry. We enjoyed "Grease," "Orphan Train" and "Mission in Liberia." We cooked food, served food, ate food and cleaned up. We tried some new things and we relied on some old. And this is just a brief recap of 2016 because there were many other things that we did with God's help, as a community of Jesus Christ at Zion United Church of Christ in Lowden, Iowa, USA, Earth.

What is so amazing is that God wants us to not only continue our journey faith in 2017, God wants us to take it up a notch and grow in both Word and Action as Christians. So, Sisters and Brothers in Christ, as we venture out, as we gather for worship, as we create new memories, let us pray that God will help us to feel God's presence and feel our presence together as we boldly go forth and proclaim our faith and live faithfully in the name of Jesus Christ.

Thank you to everyone who participated in the life of Zion, in the mission of God and in the ministry of Jesus Christ.

Grace and peace,  
Pastor Steve

**“Then Jesus said to them all: “Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross daily and follow me” (Luke 9:23).**

Now we should ask ourselves, what does Jesus mean by this proclamation? The cross Jesus is talking about is the life he teaches us to live. The Christian life is not a life of always being right, or always getting what you want, or ever getting even. The Christian life, the cross we are to pick up includes these words from Jesus,

**“You have heard that it was said, ‘Eye for eye, and tooth for tooth.’ But I tell you, do not resist an evil person. If anyone slaps you on the right cheek, turn to them the other cheek also. And if anyone wants to sue you and take your shirt, hand over your coat as well. If anyone forces you to go one mile, go with them two miles. Give to the one who asks you, and do not turn away from the one who wants to borrow from you. You have heard that it was said, ‘Love your neighbor and hate your enemy.’ But I tell you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you,”**

These are hard words to hear in the “earthly world” that often teaches us the opposite. Therefore, Sisters and Brothers, we come to church to be a part of God’s wonderful community. We come to learn the life of Jesus. We come to enjoy the life of Christ in a community that supports this cross we are to bear because we cannot bear it alone. We need God’s help and the help of our community. Let us make 2017 a year of growth and renewal as we take up our cross and follow in the footsteps of Jesus. Amen.

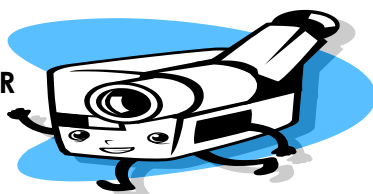
# THIS MONTH USHERS

February 5, 2017	Church Council
February 12, 2017	Marcine Miller & Jody Yutesler
February 19, 2017	Brian & Carolee Lohman
February 26, 2017	Senior High Fellowship
March 5, 2017	Church Council
March 12, 2017	Diane Esbaum & Carol Engel
March 19, 2017	Kevin & Beth Kahl
March 26, 2017	Senior High Fellowship



February 5, 2017	Leighton Tjaden & Taylor Lohman
February 12, 2017	Koby Stewart & August Harms
February 19, 2017	Nathan Nabb & Abigail Balke
February 26	Milo Easterly & Leighton Tjaden
March 6, 2016	Kaci Gottschalk & Kelly Proesch
March 13, 2016	Mackenzie Poppe & Kelly Proesch
March 16, 2016	Mackenzie Poppe & Addie Luepker
March 20, 2016	Mariah Behrens & Kaci Gottschalk
March 27, 2016	Addie Luepker & Mackenzie Poppe

## VIDEOGRAPHER



February 5	Cheryl Boedeker
February 12	Donna Luepker
February 19	David Niermeyer
February 26	Aaron Horman
March 5	Cheryl Boedeker
March 12	Donna Luepker
March 19	Jody Yutesler
March 26	Jean Stepp



**Birthdays  
& Anniversaries**  
**FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS**

- February 1 Kaci Gottschalk  
 February 2 Brenda Esbaum  
 February 3 David Horman  
 February 5 Elmer Krueger  
 February 7 Duane Lasack, Easton Drewelow,  
 Hunter Lohman, Drew Behrens  
 February 8 Darren Esbaum  
 February 9 Laettner Esbaum  
 February 10 Sharon Elijah  
 February 11 Carl Pasley  
 February 12 Millie Muhs  
 February 13 Kevin Kahl, Renate Port  
 February 14 Blake Proesch, Rose Horman  
 February 15 McKenna Luepker  
 February 16 Makayla Schluter, Aidan Kirk Jacobs  
 February 18 Koby Stewart  
 February 23 Kip Esbaum  
 February 24 Curt Conrad  
 February 25 Gunner Klahn  
 February 26 Sig Schluter  
 February 27 Madeleine Rose Combs

**FEBRUARY BIRTHDAY CARD SHOWER**

Elmer Krueger, 1929 155<sup>th</sup> Street, Lowden, Iowa 52255

**FEBRUARY ANNIVERSARIES**

- February 4, 1951 Elmer & Welma Krueger  
 February 4, 1956 Harold & Mary Louise Horman  
 February 5, 1977 Randy & Sandra Horman  
 February 7, 1998 Richard & Sigrun Schluter





# Spring Dinner

Hello Zion!

The Spring Dinner Committee has met in preparation for our annual event and we are planning to again serve our Swiss Steak Dinner. For many years, this event has served as a gathering and reconnecting event for our members. We hope that this year all our members will participate in some way so that our community will be strengthened for the work of Jesus Christ.

As we have done for many years, a sign-up sheet will be posted in the narthex for you to choose one or more ways to participate and sponsor this event. Perhaps you will make a food item for the meal, pick a job you will enjoy, offer a monetary donation, and come enjoy a delicious meal with your family and friends. What's important is that you will have chosen to do Christ's work for our community and to continue God's mission on earth because it is in the spirit of Jesus' love and fellowship that brings us together as one body in Him.



## Lenten Dinner at Zion

Zion Evening Circle will provide a delicious meal before the Lenten

Service at our church on Wednesday, March 1<sup>st</sup>.

The meal will be served from 5:00 to 6:30 p.m. Come and enjoy our Beef Lasagna or Chicken Lasagna with a Tossed Salad, Garlic Bread, Beverage and Dessert.

The Lenten Service will begin at 7:00 p.m.



**Zion United Church of Christ  
Church Council Budget Meeting Minutes  
November 6, 2016**

Church Council members met after worship service to discuss the 2017 Church Budget and Pastoral Compensation Iowa Conference UCC 2017 Compensation Guidelines reviewed. Comparison to local area Pastors done. President David to research a possible education allowance. Jamie motioned to pay Pastor's budgeted disability income plan, \$692.25, Pete second. Motion Carried. Meeting Adjourned by President David Niermeyer.

Respectfully submitted by  
Tanya Stewart

**Zion United Church of Christ  
Congregational Meeting Minutes  
December 11, 2016**

Zion United Church of Christ Congregational meeting was held December 11, 2016, immediately following worship service. The meeting was called to order by President David Niermeyer. Pastor Steve opened with a prayer. Congregational Meeting minutes from September 11, 2016 were read by Secretary Tanya Stewart. Needing no amendments or corrections, Jody Yutesler motioned to approve the minutes, Kevin Kahl second. Motion carried.

The 2017 budget was presented, reviewed and approved, without any changes. Vicki Mohr made a motion to accept the 2017 Budget, LeRoy Luepker second. Motion passed.

Joy Combs and Sharon Elijah were nominated for 2017-19 Church Council members. Sue Monson motioned to approve the new council members and Cheryl Boedeker second. Motion passed.

Conference delegates nominated for 2017 are Terry Lasack and Marlene Wiedenhoff. Jody Yutesler motioned to approve the conference delegates, Sue Monson second. Motion Passed.

With no further business, Julie Hoffmeier made a motion to adjourn the meeting, second by Joy Combs. Meeting adjourned. Pastor Steve closed with a prayer.

Respectfully submitted by  
Tanya Stewart, Secretary

**Zion United Church of Christ**  
**Church Council Meeting Minutes**  
**December 13, 2016**

Zion United Church of Christ Council met at 6:00 p.m. on December 13, 2016. President David Niermeyer called the meeting to order. Pastor Steve opened with a prayer. Those in attendance were Jamie Nabb, Bonnie Kintzel, Pete Johnson, Tanya Stewart, David Niermeyer, and Merlin Conrad. Linda Behrens was present thru the treasurers' reports.

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

Secretary's minutes from Church Council Meeting November 15, 2016 were read, corrected and approved. Budget Meeting Minutes from December 4, 2016 and Congregational Meeting minutes from December 11, 2016 were read and accepted as submitted. Pete motioned to approve all 3 minutes, Jamie second. Motion carried.

The General Fund was reviewed and passed. Merlin motioned, Bonnie second. Motion Carried. Remaining treasurer's reports approved, on a motion made by Pete, second by Merlin. Motion carried.

**Calendar Review:**

December 18<sup>th</sup> Mission & Spring Dinner Committee Meetings and New Member Reception Following worship.

December 20<sup>th</sup> Bible Study at 7:00 p.m.

December 24<sup>th</sup> Christmas Eve Worship at 6:30 p.m.

December 25<sup>th</sup> Worship Service at 9:00 a.m. **No Sunday School**

January 1 Worship Service at 10:15 am

January 29 Annual Meeting following service

Pastor's report reviewed and approved, on a motion made by Jamie, second by Merlin. Motion Passed. We have six new members joining the church this Sunday: Jenny Norton, Ann Harms, Lisa Gottschalk, Melissa Gottschalk, Sarah and Ryan Sawyer. Confirmation has added a new student, August Harms. Motion made by Merlin, second by Pete to move \$5,400.00 from Pastor's cash salary to parsonage allowance. Motion carried.

**OLD BUSINESS:**

Discussed using a rotor- rotter on the kitchen sink. Christian Ed window replacement and sponsors update.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

Discussed malfunctioning furnace. David is in contact with Lowden Plumbing and Heating.

**Annual reports are due January 9, 2017.**

**Next Meeting Tuesday, January 17 at 7:00 p.m.** Meeting adjourned with a motion made by Bonnie, second by Jaime. Motion passed. Pastor Steve closed with a prayer. A very delicious church council Christmas

Dinner and a game of Holiday bingo conclude the evening.

Respectfully submitted

Tanya Stewart

**Zion United Church of Christ**  
**Church Council Special Meeting Minutes**  
**January 12, 2017**

Zion United Church of Christ Council met at 7:00 p.m. on January 12, 2017. President David Niermeyer called the meeting to order. Pastor Steve opened with a prayer. Those in attendance were Jamie Nabb, Bonnie Kintzel, Pete Johnson, Tanya Stewart, David Niermeyer, Merlin Conrad, Joy Combs, Sharon Elijah, Aaron Horman, and Pastor Steve.

Pastor Call Agreement was revisited. Pastor noted annual reviews not being performed. Pastor expressed he would like to be involved in negotiating his salary, specifically receive a written offer and attend budget meetings. Pastor's 2017 salary #37, 275 is far below the UCC Compensation Guidelines discussed, noting significant changes and updates occurred in 2014. A suggestion was received for church council to have two monthly meetings, one for business and one for ministry

Meeting adjourned. Pastor Steve closed with a prayer.

Respectfully submitted

Tanya Stewart, Secretary



January 16, 2016

Their meeting was cancelled because of bad weather.



## **Birthday Sunday**

Sunday, February 26,  
2017

Please join us in celebrating our birthdays by bringing in pennies that represent your years on Earth! We will be donating the pennies to Ronald McDonald House.

# SUNDAY SCHOOL NEWS!!

## Bake Sale!



Sunday, February 5th



Wear your favorite sports apparel for “Souper” Bowl Sunday! Join us by donating food to our Church’s Food Pantry! The youth will be collecting your donations during worship along with sharing some fun with you !

*Thank you for your help!*

## Flowers for the Altar in Church

Enclosed in the Herald is a form to designate flowers in honor of or in memory of someone you love. If you would like to give flowers, please fill out the form and drop it in the offering plate, drop it by the office, or mail it to church. On that Sunday, we will have an announcement printed in the worship service bulletin. You may purchase the flowers and bring them to church yourself, or you may call Linda in the office and arrange delivery. Thank you.

## Dates to Remember

**February 5<sup>th</sup>** “Souper Bowl”

Wear your favorite sports apparel

**Bake Sale**

**February 26<sup>th</sup>** **Our Birthday**

Bring your age in pennies.

March 1 Lenten Begins

Service @ 7:00 at

St. John's in Clarence

February 12 Mission Committee

Meeting following worship

6:30 p.m. Evening Circle

Meeting