

# ZION'S HEAVENLY

**Look for:**

- \*Worship Schedule
- \*Music Schedule
- \*Announcements
- \*Youth Group News



- \*Exciting Events
- \*Monthly Calendar of Events
- \*Birthday Calendar
- \*Synod & Conference News
- And Much More!**

## Happenings



2025

## NEWSLETTER



Picture taken by Gayle Mateyak

*235 Years of worshipping the  
Lord with each other....*

**ZION'S STONE CHURCH OF  
WEST PENN TOWNSHIP**  
A Federated ELCA & UCC Church

45 Cemetery Rd  
New Ringgold, PA 17960

570-386-5111

[www.zionstonechurch.org](http://www.zionstonechurch.org)

***Come Worship with Us!***  
***9:00am – Sunday Worship Service***  
***(1st Sunday of the month is Holy Communion)***

***Sunday School*** will resume on  
September 7<sup>th</sup>! Have a great Summer  
Vacation!

As of April 2005,  
Zion's Stone Church Lutheran Congregation and  
Zion's Stone Church  
United Church of Christ Congregation  
enter into a shared ministry. Keeping both  
heritages in the Sunday Worship Service each week.



# CHURCH STAFF...



## Pastoral Information:

\*\*\*In case of Pastoral Emergencies or for Baptisms, Weddings, etc. until a new pastor is found, please call the church office and leave a message for Amy (if she doesn't answers).

**Please Do Not leave a message on Pastor's Phone/prompt #2.**

## Church Administrator/Treasurer:

Charlotte Fritz Office Hours: Due to surgery in May Charlotte will be working from home. Please call and leave a message and she will get back to you.



Charlotte's Office Email: [zscofc@ptd.net](mailto:zscofc@ptd.net)  
(Please use this email for information for Charlotte.)

## Church Secretary

Amy Mogish **Summer** Office Hours:

Monday – 9:00am – 3:00pm

Email and phone messages will be checked thru-out the week.

**Please call ahead if planning to visit, hours may vary.**

Amy's Office Email: [ZSCSecretary@ptd.net](mailto:ZSCSecretary@ptd.net)

**Office is only opened on Monday's**



## Church Office Phone Number:

**570-386-5111 – When calling use:**

**prompt #3 for Amy  
prompt #4 for Charlotte**

## Check us out on Facebook!

Thanks to Sarah Martinez  
for being our Facebook Coordinator!

## Zion's Stone Website

[www.zionstonechurch.org](http://www.zionstonechurch.org)

## Music Director/Organist:

Erin Zelinski – 570-205-3511

## Card Care coordinator:

Nancy Meiser - 570-205-9267

## Sexton(s):

Fred (& Donna) Gimbi  
Home # 570-386-2888  
Fred's Cell #570-573-7642

## Genealogy Requests:

Todd Cheese Cell: 570-778-3641

Todd's email:

[CheeseT@icloud.com](mailto:CheeseT@icloud.com)

# **Zion's Stone Church Cemetery Information**

45 Cemetery Rd. New Ringgold, PA 17960.

## **List of Current Board Members**

Todd Cheese - President-570-778-3641  
Daniel Troxell - Vice President-570-527-0783  
Colleen McCall - Secretary-570-582-8330  
Holly Welker - Treasurer-570-527-4293  
Bob Knittle - Member-570-952-4102

## **Zion's Stone Church Cemetery - 2025 Price Sheet (Prices effective January 30, 2025)**

Prices for Members: \$300.00 - Per Grave Lot/Plot  
\$1500.00 For Opening/Closure of Grave  
\$350.00 For Cremation (Includes Open & Close)  
Footer By Cost, Labor, & Material Prices

For Non-Members: \$375.00 - Per Grave Lot/Plot  
\$1750.00 For Opening/Closure of Grave  
\$1000.00 Non-Member Burial Fee (whether buried or cremated)  
\$ 450.00 For Cremation (Includes Open & Close)

**\*\*Prices are subject to change for all above fees\*\***  
**\*\*Limit of 1 Urn per filled lot or 2 urns per lot total\*\***

If anyone is currently interested in purchasing a lot, please contact Holly Welker  
@ (570) 527-4923 or by email [hollywelker@icloud.com](mailto:hollywelker@icloud.com).

Checks made payable to **Zion Stone Church Cemetery**. Thanks.

## **ADDITIONAL CHARGES FOR ZION'S STONE CEMETERY**

All Cemetery Charges will be added extra. Any Funeral attended by Esterly on  
Saturdays Weekday Late Charges for Esterly After 4:00 PM After 5:00 PM Sunday and  
Holidays for Esterly Add \$300.00 Add \$100.00 Add \$100.00 per hour Add \$400.00

**Holidays:** Jan 1st, Easter, Memorial Day, July 4th, Labor Day, Thanksgiving, and  
Christmas. If holiday falls on a Sunday-the vault company has a paid holiday the  
following Monday. You must consider that a holiday. As many of you know, times/fees  
in the industry are changing. There are many families that now want a weekend burial  
so that people do not have to take off of work. When this occurs the vault company  
charges us the above fees. These fees can really add up and the cemetery is unable to  
absorb them. We must pass them on to you.

# WORSHIP SEPTEMBER 2025

**Sunday, September 7, 2025 – 13<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Pentecost**

**9:00am – Worship Service**

w/Pastor Ginny Himmer leading Worship

Deuteronomy 30:15-20    Philemon 1-21

Luke 14:25-33

**Sunday, September 14, 2025 – 14<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Pentecost**

**9:00am – Worship Service**

w/Linnea Meiser leading worship

**Sermon Title:** “Changed By Grace”

Numbers 21:4b-9    1 Corinthians 1:18-24

John 3:13-17

**Sunday, September 21, 2025 – 15<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Pentecost**

**9:00am – Worship Service w/Holy Baptism: Olivia Kistler**

w/Linnea Meiser leading worship

**Sermon Title:** “The Power Of Baptism”

Romans 6:1-7    Acts 2:36-40

John 3:22-30

**Sunday, September 28, 2025 – 16<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Pentecost**

**9:00am – Worship Service**

W/Nancy Meiser leading worship

Amos 6:1a, 4-7    1 Timothy 6:6-19

Luke 16:19-31



Come and Worship with us!

Bring a family member, friend, or  
neighbor and worship the Lord  
with us!



# Board Meeting

**Zion's Stone Church Board Meeting - Monday, June 9, 2025**

X Sam Schaefer	X Dan Metzger	X Dean Meiser
X Darlene Gruver	X Stacey Cheese	X L.C. Dean
X Gene Schaeffer	X Brady Miller	Erin Zeigler

(X)= Board Member Present

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**Congregation present:** Holly Welker, Linnea Meiser and Amy Mogish

**Call to Order:** President Sam Schaefer opened the meeting with a prayer. Sam read a thank you note from Pastor Russ, expressing his appreciation for his retirement dinner and the support he received in his time serving as Pastor of Zion's Church.

**Secretary's Report:** Last month's Board minutes were presented and reviewed. It was noted there was a mistake in the April financial report, but was corrected and discussed at the May meeting. Motion to accept: Stacey 2<sup>nd</sup> Brady.

**Treasurer's Report:** Presented and reviewed.

Per Erin, presented by Brady. Online Giving: The Tithe.ly account created and is active. Worked with Charlotte to connect bank accounts - account has been reviewed. Just waiting on PA tax exempt certificate to finalize our profile.

We will start with monthly deposits but will review effectiveness/ease of use and adjust as needed.

Next Steps: 1) Complete trial transaction (Erin) for ease of use and completion

2) Will need a volunteer(s) to attempt additional transactions

3) First monthly deposit --> Assess workflow changes and address any challenges

4) Soft Launch to the congregation (anticipate late July/August)

Regarding electronic giving: Dean discussed the QR code.

Also spoke with Gary as to the Lombard Securities.

Motion to accept: Dan 2<sup>nd</sup> Darlene

## **Committee Reports: (Board Representative in parentheses)**

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**Finance**(Erin Zeigler, Charlotte Fritz, Dean Meiser) - per Brady  
No report.

**Personnel**(Stacey Cheese, Erin Zeigler, Brady Miller) - No report. Per Stacey, working on Church handbook. Looking at end of year to complete.

**Property**(Dan Metzger, Scot Dietrich, Gary Clemson) - Per Dan, Fred's mower is in need of repair. Fred's son said he will work on the repair. In the interim, Dan will check with Mark from S&L Landscaping on the cost of mowing at the Sexton's house. The framing outside the stain glass windows of the Church and the bell tower louvers are showing signs of wear and need some maintenance.

**CE/Sunday School**(Darlene Gruver, Dean Meiser - No report.  
Continued planning for Vacation Bible School.

**Worship and Music**(Dean Meiser, Brady Miller) - Choir ending for summer, returning late August. Erin Zelinski will provide special music for the summer.

Dean noted there were 98 surveys returned to the Church regarding the "Call "in search of a Pastor.

A committee meeting was held Saturday June 7th and plans for a 2<sup>nd</sup> meeting to further discuss the "Call" will be Saturday, June 21<sup>st</sup>.

Dean distributed chart summaries of the surveys to the Board members.

**Outreach**(L.C.Dean, Nancy Meiser) - Per L.C. Dean:

Plan for a Beach Party at the Adult Day Care Center June 20<sup>th</sup>.

Valor to Honor Veterans in August will be held in Coaldale.

Volunteers will be helping with clothing, toiletries, etc.

**Fundraising**(Charlotte Fritz, Erin Zeigler, Stacey Cheese) - Per Brady, preparation for the "Baskets and Berries" Bonanza to be held July 27<sup>th</sup>.

**Youth Group**(Charlotte Fritz, Gene Schaeffer) - Per Brady - No report.  
Next meeting is in September.

**Safety/Security**(Gene Schaeffer, Sam Schaefer, Blair Miller) - No report.  
**Other committees/Misc** - nothing presented.

### **Old Business:**

An update is needed for a more modernized computer system. Discussed who would fill in for Charlotte when she's not available. Holly Welker volunteered to help Amy with office duties.

### **New Business:**

Father's Day picnic is a concern. Need help to transport supplies and equipment to the park.

Sam Schaefer is thinking about attending Smart Recovery meetings with the idea of perhaps becoming certified to lead meetings in our Church.

Linnea Meiser asked for the Board's support in her quest to be a member in discernment. (A lay member of a United Church of Christ Congregation who experiences the call to ministry and desires to prepare for Authorized Ministry.

As a temporary fill in for services she asks for \$200 a week per service. Pastor Darlene Blocker will consecrate the elements for communion July 1<sup>st</sup> and Aug. 1<sup>st</sup>. Motion to accept: Brady 2<sup>nd</sup> L.C. Dean  
Seven unanimous votes, one abstained.

Regarding the cemetery, Holly Welker would like some space in the newsletter. She would like to arrange a bus trip to a Phillies game. More information to follow.

Amy Mogish needs confirmation on auditorium rental information. (non-member vs member).

Next Church Board Meeting is Monday, July 14<sup>th</sup> at 6:30pm.  
The meeting was closed with The Lord's Prayer.  
Motion was made to adjourn the meeting by Brady 2<sup>nd</sup> Sam.

Respectfully submitted by Board Secretary, Darlene Gruver



## **NEWSLETTER SUBMITTALS...**

Please help the office staff be efficient by having all newsletter submittals emailed to the church office (or placed in the newsletter submittal boxes) by the newsletter deadline, the **Third Sunday** of each month.

If you would like your wedding announcement or if you have a loved one who has entered into eternal life, thank you messages, etc., please contact the office by the newsletter deadline or we may not be able to publish your information until the next month. *Thank You!*

## **NEWSLETTER SPONSORSHIPS... \$20.00 per month**

If you are interested in sponsoring the newsletter, Email Charlotte, [zscofc@ptd.net](mailto:zscofc@ptd.net), your wording for the newsletter or place your envelope in your packet marked Newsletter Sponsor. The newsletter is printed one time per month except for the July/August newsletter which is a combined newsletter.

**ALTAR FLOWER SPONSORSHIPS...** We are have a new Florist! Forget-Me-Not Florist in Orwigsburg. The new cost of Altar Flowers are \$55.00 & Rosebuds are \$13.00-\$28.00 (depends on if you order Altar Flowers with it) All Flower Orders must be received at least **1 week in advance**. If you are interest in sponsoring altar flowers please call the office at (570) 386-5111 prompt #3, **before 12 pm on Monday. Leave a message** with your telephone number and the exact wording you would like to see it printed on the slides.

## **Lectors are needed for every Sunday.**

Please sign up in the Narthex. If you or someone you know would like to be a LECTOR ... New volunteers are always welcome.

**Acolytes...** Last year's class and current confirmation classes please sign up on the calendar in the Narthex. Two acolytes are needed for each Sunday. Please arrive by 8:50am to prepare.

## **Do you have a new Address or Telephone &/or Cell Phone Number?**

Please notify the office either through email ([zscofc@ptd.net](mailto:zscofc@ptd.net)) or phone (570-386-5111) with your new information. This way we can keep in touch with you and provide you with important information regarding the church. Thank you!

## **Auditorium Bookings:**

The Auditorium is open for events. Please contact the church office use prompt #3 (Amy) or #4 (Charlotte) if you would like to book the Auditorium for your birthday parties, wedding rehearsal dinners, anniversary parties, etc. You will need to sign a contact and return it with the event rental fee 2 weeks prior your event date.

(All the clip art printed in this newsletter was taken from google clip art.)



## ***Welcome Back Choirs!***

*Anyone interested in joining any of the choirs,  
please see Erin Zelinski, Choir director & Organist.*



***No experience necessary!***

***Come join the Fun! Learn something new!  
Share your talents! Make new friends!***

## ***Choir Rehearsal:***



**Handbell Practices  
at 6:15pm  
Thursday Nights.**

**Choir  
Practices  
at 6:45pm  
Thursday  
Nights.**



**The Youth Group will be meeting on  
Sunday, September 14, 2025 at 7:00pm.**

**Anyone in 6<sup>th</sup> grade – 12<sup>th</sup> grade is encouraged and welcome to join!**

(Do not need to be members of the Church.)

Our meetings run from 7:00pm – 9:00pm the second Sunday of every Month  
(unless there is a scheduling conflict).

During our monthly meeting we play games, have snacks, fellowship with one another, & have activities/events outside the meetings. We have a lot of fun and look forward to see you there!


**“Encourage not Discourage.”**

# 2025 WORSHIP ATTENDANCE FIGURES...

June 2 - 124  
June 8 - 145  
June 15 - 78  
June 22 - 75  
June 29 - 112


July 6 - 97  
July 13 - 145  
July 20 - 85  
July 27 - 85

August 3 - 96  
August 10 - 104  
August 17 - 67  
August 24 - 92  
August 31 -



# FINANCIAL REPORT

## 2025 June & July



Current Giving:

Total Income Budgeted for 2024-----	\$ 234,908.37
Total Benevolence income for 2024 -----	\$ 11,500.00
Total Income plus Benevolence -----	\$ 246,408.37

(In order to meet our needs, we need to receive these amounts,)

Monthly	Gain/ (-Loss)	Weekly Budgeted
Income & Benevolence		Income & Benevolence
		(\$ 4,517.46 - per week)
		(\$19,575.70 - per month)
June - \$19,515.36	\$-60.34	
July - \$10,836.40	\$-8,739.30	

**Thank you for  
your continued  
support of  
Zion's Stone  
Church!**

## What is Tithe.ly?

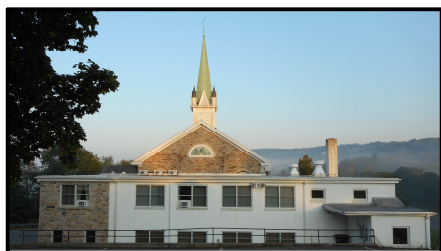
Tithe.ly is a church-giving solution that is completely integrated with church management tools. As an innovative platform, Tithe.ly is designed to inspire church members to provide benefaction and to improve engagement using mobile-giving functions. Churches and ministers are given a custom-made app, allowing them to upgrade their pledging and donation procedures. Zion's Board members have decided to offer Tithe.ly as another way for you to give to Zion's Stone Church.

There are 4 easy ways to give:

- 1) **Find our giving Link** – Direct URL is posted on our Facebook page and the QR code will also be printed in the newsletters. choose Your Gift - Enter your donation amount, select your fund (weekly offering, etc.), & Decide on one-time or recurring.
- 2) **Enter Payment Details** – Use credit/debit cards to link your bank account, option to cover transaction fees.
- 3) **confirm and Complete** – Review and Confirm Donation, click "give" to finalize, & you'll receive an email confirmation.



Scan Me!



## SPECIAL THANK YOU...

*(The church receives thank you letters from other organizations that we support through Benevolence giving throughout the year.)*

**Speical Thanks** to Pastors Darlene Blocker & Ginny Heimer for filling in for us on our Communion Sundays. It is gratefully appreciated by Zion's Board Members and Congregational Members. Thank you to Linnea Meiser and Nancy Meiser for also filling as Supply Minister.

**Thank you** to everyone who came out and support the Fundraising's Baskets & Berries Bonanza on July 27, 2025!!! Thank you to everyone who helped set up, serve Ice Cream, waffles, & drinks. Thank you to everyone who help work on the baskets and wrapped them and thank you to everyone who helped clean up afterwards. Without your support these fun events would not be possible. Next up coming events are the Fall Bingo on Sunday, October 12<sup>th</sup> and the Fall Festival & Trunk or Treat on Saturday, October 25<sup>th</sup>. Look for more info in this newsletter and the October newsletter. Our profit was over \$3,800.00

**Special thanks** to Pearl Christman for taking care of the Sexton's House. Pearl volunteers her time and help keeps the flowers growing, painting the porch, & cleans the outside & inside. Pearl has been doing this for a couple of years now. Due to some health issues, she will be no longer be able to volunteer her time. She will finish out the remainder of the year taking care of the Sexton's House. If anyone would like to take this important endeavor on, please see Board President Sam Schaefer. Thank You Pearl for your years of dedication.

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### Upcoming Staff Vacations & Office Closed:

Amy Mogish will be taking vacation on Sunday, October 12<sup>th</sup> – October 18<sup>th</sup>.  
Charlotte Fritz will be taking vacation on Monday, October 13<sup>th</sup>.

The office will be closed on Labor Day, September 1; Columbus Day October 13; & Thanksgiving Day, November 28. It will also be closed from Christmas Eve, December 24, 2025 - New Year's Day, January 1, 2026.



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### New Members:

We welcome Travis, Mia, Mason, Jaxon, & Olivia Kistler into the household of faith here at Zion's Stone Church. Olivia will be baptized at Zion's on Sunday, September 21, 2025.

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### September Newsletter Sponsorship:

In honor of all the volunteers that work hard "behind the scenes" at Zion's Stone Church! Without their time, talents and dedication Zion's would not grow.

# Sunday School News...

**Sunday school starts again SEPTEMBER 7 @ 10:15 AM**

Join us as we explore God's word together

**Classes for all ages**

Here is our Main Street Team (Zion's Sunday school)...

NurZOOry  
Toddlers to Kindergarten

Fruit of the Spirit Café  
Grades 1 - 5

S.W.A.T.  
STUDENTS WITH A TESTIMONY  
Grades 6 - 12

SONshine Circle  
Adults - young and old

Treasurer  
Audio/Technical  
Director/Secretary



Karen Wood  
Adele Snyder  
David Snyder

Becky Hepler  
Carol Leiby

Darryl & Charlotte  
Fritz  
Bob & Jane Miller  
Ruth Raymond

Jim & Eileen Coombe  
Gayle Mateyak  
Linnea Meiser  
Darryl Fritz

Karissa Brothers

Kyle Snyder

Eileen Coombe

**Sunday school starts again SEPTEMBER 7 @ 10:15 AM**

Join us as we explore God's word together

**Classes for all ages**

October 5 - Special Offering Down Syndrome Awareness Month

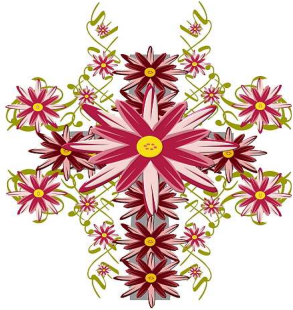
October 26 - SS Meeting @ 11:15 am





## Christian Sympathies go to...

Jim, Eileen, Michael & Kim Coombe and Family & Friends on the Death of Jim's Mother, **Elizabeth Coombe**, who entered into Eternal life on July 14, 2025.



Doug Houser and Family & Friends on the death of Doug's wife, **Linda Houser**, who eternal into eternal life on July 14, 2025.

William, Jamie, Heather, & Jeremy Schock and Family & Friends on the Death of William's wife, **Mary R. Schock**, who entered into eternal life on August 23, 2025.

*God didn't promise days  
without pain, laughter without  
sorrow, nor sun without rain.  
But he promised strength for  
the day, comfort the tears and  
light for the way*



## *Wedding Congratulations go to...*

Nathan Shellhamer & Embar Starr who were married on August 16, 2025 at Bellagio Fields in Sybertsville, PA. Nathan is the son of Daniel & Lisa Shellhamer and Embar is the daughter of Coleen Stidham.





# It's B - I - N - G - O



## Time!



Zion's Stone Church of West Penn Township  
45 Cemetery Rd, New Ringgold, PA 17960

### **DESIGNER PURSE & CASH FALL BINGO**

**on Sunday, October 12, 2025.**

**(20 Reg. "Purse" games w/a "Tie" Breaker Purse &  
5 Cash "Special" games)**

**Doors & Kitchen will open at 12:00pm**

**Bingo starts at 1:00pm.**

Tickets on Sale starting on Sept 14th - \$25.00 in advance & \$30.00 at the door. All ticket sales include a specials packet. Can purchase additional packets on day of the bingo. Please contact Charlotte Fritz at 570-386-5111 (leave a message), or 570-952-4689 (texting is preferred) or on Facebook messenger.

**Money must be paid prior to the bingo**  
unless other arrangements are made.

*Due to limited space, please, no one under the age of 14. Thank You!*

***We have great prizes, door prizes, raffles,  
& Chinese Auction! Yummy food to purchase.***

Featuring: Dooney & Bourke, Kate Spade, Michael Kors,  
& Coach Purses



# ***Fundraising Committee Needs Your Help***

***It's that time of year again when everyone is busy getting back into the swing of things after summer. Kids are back in school, Teachers are back in school, summer vacations are finished. The Fundraising Committee is busy planning another Bingo.***



***The Designer Purse & Cash Bingo will be held on October 12<sup>th</sup> and all of the prizes have been purchased. What we need from you all is to sponsor the prizes. Any amount greatly helps offset the cost of the bingo and the proceeds will go to help pay for the painting of the windows on the outside of the building along with the louvers and the steeple. The more donations we get, the more money we can donate. We can't do it without your help!***

***If you would like to donate please make checks payable to Zion's Stone Church. Thank You!***

***All donations are greatly appreciated!!***

# Zion's Stone Church



## Fall Festival w/Trunk or Treat



to be held on Saturday, October 25, 2025. At West Penn Park from 12:00pm – 5:00pm - 655 Zion's Stone Church Rd, New Ringgold, PA 17960.

Come out in your Halloween Costumes and trick or treat at 1:00pm with the Outreach & Fundraising Committees! The children can trunk or treat between



1:00pm - 3:00pm. The local Fire and Police Departments will also be there!



There will be Pumpkin Decorating, cupcake decorating and you can take pictures with our fall display with the kids. If you want to participate in the Trunk or treat cars, you can register with

Nancy Meiser at 570-205-9267. The Cars need to be decorated by 12:30pm.

There will be Food to purchase such as, **Hot Dogs** and **homemade sauerkraut**, **Homemade Soups**: Ham & Bean, Chicken Noodle & Chili, **Homemade Mac & Cheese**, **Homemade Apple Butter**, **Homemade Pumpkin Rolls**, & **Ice Cream**. There will also be  **cider, water, coffee & soda** to drink. We will have "Make your own" **Caramel Apple** station.

### Take a ride on a horse drawn wagon!

Kyle Hoppes, owner of Crystal View Farms will have his beautiful horses and wagon there for anyone who wants to take a ride.



In addition to the food, games, Horse drawn wagon rides & Trunk or Treat There will be guessing chances and a 50/50 drawing. Proceeds from the Fall Festival will go towards building improvements, like painting of the outside windows, Louvers & Steeple.

Open to the Public! Everyone is Welcome!  
Bring a Friend!



# Zion's Stone Coloring Sheet



Love one another  
John 13:34



Thank you, God, for  
listening to my prayers!





## **PNEC Vision Statement:**

### **"United in Faith...Committed to Love...Created to Serve"**

Penn Northeast Conference UCC, 431 Delaware Ave., Palmerton, PA 18071

[www.pnec.org](http://www.pnec.org) 610-826-3113

Conference Minister, Rev. Dr. Bonnie Bates [bonnieb@pnec.org](mailto:bonnieb@pnec.org) Barbara Jennings [barbaraj@pnec.org](mailto:barbaraj@pnec.org)

Patty Rehrig [pattyr@pnec.org](mailto:pattyr@pnec.org) **SEND ARTICLES TO BE INCLUDED TO** [pattyr@pnec.org](mailto:pattyr@pnec.org)

#### **Bonnie's Letter**

*"Immediately he (Jesus) made his disciples get into the boat and go on ahead to the other side, to Bethsaida, while he dismissed the crowd. After saying farewell to them, he went up on the mountain to pray." Mark 6:45-46 NRSVUE*

Dear Friends,

I must admit to you that I am tired: physically, emotionally, and spiritually tired. Some of the tiredness is traversing the chaos that is in our nation and the world. Some of the tiredness is from traveling and meeting with some intensity about middle judicatory staff (like me) and how we can be more effective. Some of the tiredness is in my spirit – my spirit which sings and reads and preaches and listens for the voice of God. It is possible sometimes for the voice of God to get pushed aside, overcome by the busyness of life and the ongoing cacophony of voices pulling me in multiple directions.

How about you? Is there tiredness in your body, your mind, and/or your spirit?

Take a moment right now and breathe! No, I mean it. Take a moment while you are reading this letter and breathe!

Sometimes we can get so distracted by the "To-Do" list, by those calling out to us for help, by our own chores and environment that we forget to breathe. I am reminded often, as I look at my Smart Watch that my stress level is moderate to high. I knew it before I looked but the watch confirms my need to breathe, to pause, to pray, to reflect. A friend publishes a Facebook prayer every morning. I wait for the wisdom that is shared by religious leaders in those posts. I have another Facebook friend who publishes what she calls "shoot and share" pictures and quotations every day. I love the pictures and the quotes and sometimes I sink into my chair and just see myself at the lake, in the mountains, in the garden, anywhere the phone isn't chiming and the door bell isn't ringing and the computer isn't reminding me of the hundreds of email messages to be answered and the work waiting for me.

Even Jesus took time away to pray, my friends. Even Jesus, in his divinity and humanness, took the quiet time to speak to God, to rest in nature, to sleep and to be renewed. We are surely not Jesus, but that divinity and humanity is in all of us. We, too, need moments of rest and renewal. So, take a moment right now and breathe! I mean it, breathe! Ease into a comfortable position and share your deepest need and your deepest challenge with God. Do it now. Not later when you think you have time, but right now. Ease into God's embrace. Calm your mind. Rest your body. Engage your spirit and just BE – for you are a human being and simply "being" is a part of our role in the world. You are BE-loved. May it be so.

~ Blessings, Bonnie



## Spirit-Led Summers at Bear Creek Camp

*Written by: Stacey Burke, Communications and BCC NEPA Synod Representative*

"I'm always struck by the simple but profound technologies that camp employs to build healthy, loving, Christ-centered community: silly songs and deep conversations, skits and games, shared meals and rituals." These words from Pastor Inge Williams of Friedens Lutheran in Shartlesville, a 2025 summer chaplain at Bear Creek Camp, reflect the deep joy and quiet transformation that unfold in the woods each season.

*All Together* was the theme this summer, focusing on growing stronger through love and service, grace-filled faith, and belonging and community. Pastor Inge witnessed this connection firsthand early in the summer when she served as one of the camp chaplains during Family Camp. Pastor Inge shared, "On one of the first nights, I saw one of the former youth Synod Council representatives, now serving as a counselor this summer, give a high five to a toddler from Ireland who was running all over the field during a kickball game. The kindness and connection across ages, and even international borders, really exemplified what Family Camp is about."



While chapel time and worship services are typically led by the young adult summer staff, camp chaplains provide spiritual support throughout the week, leading devotions and Bible studies for campers and staff. They offer encouragement, listening ears, and join in the fun that camp has to offer. Throughout the summer, three Northeastern PA Synod pastors brought their time, energy, and Spirit-led presence to Bear Creek Camp as chaplains. Pastor Inge Williams and Pastor Jennifer Heavner of Star of Bethlehem Lutheran Church served during Family Camp, while Pastor Liz Koerner of St. John Lutheran in Stroudsburg closed out the season as chaplain during the final week.

The partnership with Bear Creek Camp, shared with the Southeastern PA Synod, is especially meaningful to our synod, as the values of camp and synod closely align. Both are deeply committed to building relationships and belonging across congregations, generations, and diverse communities. As synod, we continue to search for ways to raise leaders who serve with compassion, creativity, and courage in the church and the world, which is why our partnership with Bear Creek Camp is so important. It is prioritizing youth and allowing them space to search for ways to serve others as a natural response to God's love.



Serving others was the theme of one of Pastor Liz's Bible studies during her week as chaplain. When she met with the Junior campers (grades 2-4), she asked how they might take the ways they serve others at camp and apply them at home and in their school communities. Helping others at camp can seem second nature, especially after a full week of being together. However, campers are not only learning how to be kind to one another. They are learning life skills that will stay with them long after the week ends.

Throughout the week, they are learning how to be confident and independent through overnight tent camping experiences. They are learning about teamwork and communication as they encourage each other on high rope activities. They grow spiritually through the guidance of our chaplains, who are a daily presence within the camp schedule and help shape campers' understanding of faith and their connection to God.

We are extremely grateful for the passion and dedication of Pastor Inge, Pastor Jennifer, and Pastor Liz, who devoted their time this past summer, and for the ongoing work of Bear Creek Camp as it builds inclusive community, nurtures faith, and develops leaders who carry their experiences into the world with empathy, joy, and purpose. This certainly could not be accomplished without the hardworking, compassionate summer staff and the leadership of Executive Director Collin Grooms, Program Director Kallie Handlong, and all the other camp leaders who contribute and put youth first.



Camp doesn't end when the summer does. In addition to summer camp, Bear Creek Camp offers retreats and camps outside of the summer timeframe including the upcoming Labor Day Family Camp, Fall Women's Retreat, and Winter Camp. The camp is also open to hosting congregations, committees, or organizational retreats through their facility rentals. All this information and more can be found at [bearcreekcamp.org](https://bearcreekcamp.org). All together, Bear Creek Camp and our synod continue to walk hand in hand, creating space for love, service, and faith to flourish in every season.

**DID YOU KNOW** that your Mission Support helps fund areas of the synod like this one and many other important initiatives? Your contributions are making a significant impact and helping others grow in faith, supporting the synod's lanes of Growing Young, Gaining Strength, and Going Beyond Death to Life, along with the directions of loving like Jesus, healing like Jesus, and engaging like Jesus. To learn more, visit [godslove.org/missionsupport](https://godslove.org/missionsupport). Looking to give to Bear Creek Camp directly? Visit [bearcreekcamp.org](https://bearcreekcamp.org)

## REGISTRATION IS OPEN



**5K TRAIL RUN  
& WALK**  
@ BEAR CREEK CAMP  
9/27/25

**BECOME A SPONSOR!**

[bearcreekcamp.org/5k](https://bearcreekcamp.org/5k)

This family-friendly BCC event is open to all ages, and every step you take helps support our amazing campers.

**Make an Even BIGGER Difference  
by Becoming a 5K Sponsor!**




Whether you're a business, family, or individual, your tax-exempt gift directly supports our camp programming and resources.

# Zion's Stone Church of West Penn Township

## September 2025 Birthday Calendar

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1	2	3	4	5	6
	Randy Clemson		Jennifer Clinton	Corey Hamm Allan Knowlan Diane Shock	Gary Clemson Denise Dietrich Karen Everett Kevin Kistler, Jr. Bobbi Sabbath Teagan Steigerwalt	
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
Aimee Crowley		Marie Zehner	Audra Schlecht	Abigail Troxell	Kyle Hoppes Daniel Troxell	Lori Steigerwalt
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
Mark Christ Molly Clemson Brad Clemson Emma Rago	Joann Dunkleberger	Michael Hunsicker DJ McLaughlin Lauren Valente	Bowdie Vickery		Lucas Kamant	Timmy Lehman
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
Pastor Russ Campbell Mark Haas	Diane Heckman	Cadence Davis Katie Kressley Sherry Oswald	Hannah Reed David Tyson	Stacey Clemson Nancy Meiser	Kelly Frederickson George Hegedus IV	Emeline Meiser Harry Ulrich
28	29	30				
Tyler Buchman Bryn Miller Madison Schock Kyle Snyder	Peggy Frace					

# ZION'S STONE CHURCH - SEPTEMBER 2025 CALENDAR OF EVENTS

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
	1	2	3	4	5	6
	Office Closed Labor Day <b>HAPPY LABOR DAY</b>			Choir Rehearsals: 6:15pm - Handbell 6:45pm - Sr Choir		
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
9:00am-Worship Service w/Holy Communion (Pew) w/Pastor Ginny Heimer leading worship 10:15am - Sunday School	6:30pm - Board Meeting			Choir Rehearsals: 6:15pm - Handbell 6:45pm - Sr Choir 		
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
9:00am - Wor. Service w/Linnea Meiser lead. Wor. w/Young People's Time & Installation of Sunday School Officers & Teachers 10:15am - Sunday School 7:00pm - Youth Group Mtg.				Choir Rehearsals: 6:15pm - Handbell 6:45pm - Sr Choir		
<b>Baptism: Olivia Kistler 21</b>	22	23	24	25	26	27
9:00am - Worship Service w/Linnea Meiser leading Worship & Baptism 10:15am - Sunday School	1st day of Fall 			Choir Rehearsals: 6:15pm - Handbell 6:45pm - Sr Choir		
28	29	30				
9:00am - Worship Service w/Nancy Meiser leading worship 10:15am - Sunday School  <b>Harvest Home Sunday</b>			