

THE JOURNEY

DECEMBER 2017



Dear Zion,

We begin our time together on Sunday mornings by simply slowing down, by inhaling deeper and exhaling farther than we typically do. These moments allow us to let go, to realize where we are and with Whom we breathe each and every second of our lives. When the gravity of that simple realization breaks through, there is nothing to do but succumb to and be overwhelmed by it. Can you imagine any other way for us to respond than with gratitude. We are children of the living God, and there is nothing we can do to change that or earn that. It simply is.

When we are present to our lives, not worrying about what we have or haven't done, or anguish over what we need to do or be in the future, but simply being aware of the "now" in front of us, then we can meet ourselves and God. The whole realization is so available, so close, that we are humiliated by it. We can't believe God is this close, this available. God is. Happy Thanksgiving.

Love,

Erik

Inside this issue:

Lectionary	2
Outreach Happenings	3
Consistory Highlights	4
Zion Happenings	5-7
KO Conference News	7
UCC News	8
Financial Reports	8
Birthdays & Anniversaries	10
Calendar	11



ZION
United Church of Christ

1811 McFarland Rd
Junction City, KS 66441
Sunday Worship 10:30 am
zionuccjc@yahoo.com

December Lectionary

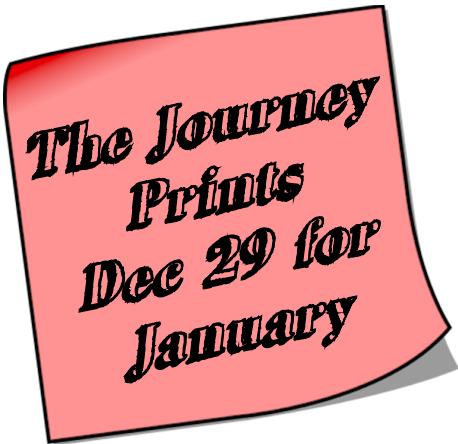
December 3 1st Sunday in Advent Isaiah 64:1-9 Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19 1 Corinthians 1:3-9 Mark 13:24-37 <i>Where Are You, God?</i>	December 10 2nd Sunday in Advent Isaiah 40:1-11 Psalms 85:1-2, 8-13 2 Peter 3:8-15 Mark 1:1-18 <i>Messengers of Hope</i>	December 17 3rd Sunday in Advent Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11 Psalms 126 1 Thessalonians 5:16-24 John 1:6-8, 19-28 <i>Shouts of Joy</i>
December 24 4th Sunday in Advent 2 Samuel 7:1-11, 16 Luke 1:46-55 Romans 16:25-27 Luke 1:26-38 <i>Birthing a Promise</i>	Christmas Eve Isaiah 62:6-12 Psalms 97 Titus 3:4-7 Luke 2:(1-7) 8-20	Christmas December 25 Isaiah 9:2-7 Psalms 96 Titus 2:11-14 Luke 2:1-14 (15-20)
December 31 Isaiah 61:10-62:3 Psalm 148 Galatians 4:4-7 Luke 2:22-40 <i>Long-awaited Gift</i>	New Year's Eve Ecclesiastes 3:1-13 Psalms 8 Revelation 21:1-6 Matthew 25:31-46	



Annual Caroling Party

Come one, come all and join the fun. Once again we will gather at the church on Dec. 17th at 4pm and go caroling to our shut ins and to Valley View and Chapman Valley Manor. After all the caroling fun we will meet at Wayne & Ruth's for Chili. Please bring an appetizer or a dessert. This is always a great time of fellowship.

Caroling Party Dec. 17th 4:00 pm meeting at Zion.



"But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid; for see-I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord."

Luke 2:10-11

Outreach



Heifer International

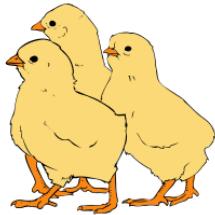
The second Sunday of the month we collect quarters for Heifer International. The Children of Zion collected \$54.75 in October. YTD \$660.49

December 10 is Heifer International Sunday.

THIS IS NO ORDINARY GIFT.

Chicks Bring Christmas Cheer

Wondering what to buy your child's favorite teacher this year? A flock of chicks is a unique, meaningful way of saying "thank you" for inspiring your own "chickadee" during the school year. Your gift of chicks helps a hungry family turn their lives around by enriching their diet with nourishing eggs—a life saving gift for a starving child. Chickens need very little space. So families with small plots of land can welcome them and plant bountiful crops. Chickens also help farm production by eating insects, removing weeds and fertilizing soil. A single hen can lay more than 200 eggs a year. And when families sell these eggs and poultry at market, they earn life-changing income that enables them to afford medicine and clothing so they can keep their children healthy and warm.



You can order a flock of Chicks for \$20 from <https://heifer.org>

Fill the Hunger Cart

On the first Sunday of November the Hunger Grocery cart was filled with **82 lbs.** of food for the Food Pantry. **YTD 548 lbs of food**

We will not beat 2016 food donations. So let's make a go for 2018 to beat what was given in 2017.



Please add a few items to your weekly shopping list. cereals, canned goods, macaroni and cheese, canned meat

Helper Sunday

On the 3rd Sunday of the month we collect Chicken and/or Tuna Helper with a can of chicken or tuna to help feed the hungry in our local community. Decembers date is the 17th. Thank you to all who helped supply Wheels of Hope with Helper meals in July. Reminder: 1 Tuna Helper requires 2 small cans or 1 large can of canned tuna. Chicken Helper requires a lot of chicken, so you may choose to purchase the Complete Chicken Meal instead.



Consistory Highlights

Minutes for Oct. 4, 2017

The regular monthly meeting for the Consistory was called to order by President Wayne Gfeller at 7:00 p.m. Members present were: Wayne Gfeller, Vern Steffens, Deniece Carlson, Jill Schmutz, Tau Osa, Steve Green and Pastor Erik Graefe

Erik opened the meeting with a prayer.

Memorial Fund: \$12,664.33

The minutes were approved by Vern, seconded by Jill.

Treasurer: Income of \$7258.07 for the month of Sept., expenses were \$6736.20 average attendance is 65.

Pastors Report: The office hours have changed with school starting.

New Business: Jill will be ordering more t-shirts, the information will be in the bulletin.
She will also order Advent devotionals.

Pastor Parrish: Oct. 16 meeting - 6 p.m.

Formation: Oct 16 meeting - 5 p.m.

Old Business: There has been good feedback from the congregation on the SWOT charts.
Vern has the questioners ready to be given out in Nov.

God Squad: Vern reported on the meeting he had with the youth. They have several ideas for the community and outreach projects. They will meet the first Sunday each month from 4p.m. - 5:30 p.m.

Meeting was adjourned with the Lord's Prayer.

Next meeting : Nov. 8 , 2017 at 7 p.m.

Are you interested in joining Zion?

One of the tenets of Zion's mission is to be a welcoming congregation for all people. If you would like to formalize your relationship with Zion through membership, please contact the church office at 785-238-5732

Consistory Seats

The end of the year is fast approaching. We have 2 empty seats and we will have people going off in January. Making 5 seats needing to be filled. Please prayerfully consider stepping up and serving the church.
If you are interested in serving Zion in this way, please contact Wayne Gfeller.

Zion News

Women's Fellowship

Nov 3, 2017

Women's Guild met on Nov. 3 with seven ladies in attendance. Jill served a delicious lunch of pork sliders, salad, and chocolate trifle.

Janette presided at the business meeting. Judy Gardner read a devotion from the book "Lighten Up & Live". The minutes were read and approved. Lane, treasure, reported a balance of \$659.29 as of Nov. 1. There were no communications.

Committee Reports: Hospitality – The Halloween potluck was reported to be a big success. Lane, cards, reported sending out twelve Halloween cards to Zion members and friends. Jill reported a new signup sheet for coffee hour is available.

Old Business: Sally passed out a sample of decals with the Zion logo. It was decided a larger logo would be easier to read.

New Business: Lane moved that the Guild order 24 poinsettias from Dillons and that they be delivered on Dec. 1 so that we can get them unpackaged and displayed in the sanctuary. Jill will make up sheets that the congregation can purchase the flowers in honor of memory of loved ones.

Announcements: The church will be decorated on Nov. 26 following worship service.

Dec. 17 will be the annual Christmas Program during the worship service. Our annual caroling party will be held on Dec. 17 at 4:00 and will conclude with a chili supper at Wayne & Ruth's. Everyone is invited to attend. Our shut-ins really appreciate being remembered!

Lane will host our Christmas meeting on Dec. 1 in Fellowship Hall at noon.

Sally unexpectedly entertained the group with her special hidden talent of joke telling. It was decided to keep her hilarious talent "undercover" for fear we would have such a big run of folks joining the Guild and Fellowship Hall unable to hold the crowd!!

Leona had a hard act to follow but shared a very interesting monthly newsletter that had belonged to her mother, Lilly Manz. It was "Chimes of St. John" dated Nov. 1924.

The meeting closed by praying the Lord's Prayer.

Zion at Work in the World: December Giving Opportunities

Zion participates in several mission opportunities throughout each month. Here are the ways you can make a difference during the upcoming weeks.

December 3: Food donations for the Food Pantry

December 10: Quarter collection for Heifer International

December 17: "Helper" Sunday for Wheels of HOPE

Zion News

Office Hours

Pastor Erik's office hours will be changing here in Nov through High School Basketball season. He will not have set office hours unless needed. He will be available by email at erikgraefe@mac.com or cell phone at 785-280-0852. If you need to speak with him call or text him. If he cannot answer at the moment he will get back with you as soon as possible.

Youth Christmas Program

The youth's Christmas program will be performed during our regular worship time on December 17th, at 10:30. The Christmas story will be retold with music, scripture, and a reenactment of the Nativity. All Sunday School children will have a part. Practices will be held during Sunday School time at 9:30 a.m. beginning the Sunday after Thanksgiving. Parents, please be sure your kiddo is there. We will discuss a dress rehearsal time on Saturday, December 16 as the time draws nearer.



Wheels of Hope is looking for a new board member. If anyone please contact WOH board member Marvin Hormbostel and he can provide additional information.

"Now to God who is able to strengthen you according to my gospel and the proclamation of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery that was kept secret for long ages but is now disclosed, and through the prophetic writings is made known to all the Gentiles, according to the command of the eternal God, to bring about the obedience of faith— to the only wise God, through Jesus Christ, to whom be the glory forever! Amen."

Romans:16:25-27

Zion News

Kids Helping Kids

Zion is sponsoring three family's this year for Christmas. The "Kids Helping Kids" board will be up in the narthex starting on Sunday, November 27th with cards you can take with gifts ideas for each of the family members. The Youth of our church will do all the wrapping of the presents for the families. All gifts need to be delivered to church no later than Sunday, December 17th. The gifts will be taken to the families the week before Christmas. If you have any questions please talk to Deb Heiman.



Also, Zion will be adopting 2 families for Christmas food baskets this year from the Junction City area.

News from the Kansas-Oklahoma Conference of the UCC

Regional Youth Event, Save the Dates!

June 19-22, 2018

(For those who have completed grades 6 though graduated seniors)

Every four years, there is a National Youth Event and between the years of National Youth Events, Regions of the UCC sponsor a **Regional Youth Event**. The Kansas-Oklahoma Conference is part of the West Central Region of the UCC and **in 2018, the West Central Regional Youth Event will be at Grinnell College in Grinnell, Iowa**.

This is a great opportunity for youth to have an experience beyond their local church; reports form youth who attended the last RYE were great; those youth then went to the National Youth Event and also had experiences that are now part of their spiritual development. It's a great opportunity, so let you youth know about the event, mark the calendars, and begin to promote it! Each congregation does not HAVE to have a youth group to participate; this is the perfect opportunity for congregations with two or three youth to join with others and have youth participate. More details will follow in the months ahead. For now, visit the [Regional Youth Event website](#), sign up for more information and keep in the loop!

"There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to the one hope of your calling, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all and through all and in all. But each of us was given grace according to the measure of Christ's gift."

Ephesians 4:4-7

The Work of the Church: Articles of Note

Help for most vulnerable in Houston (TX), Sonoma (CA) after disasters

If you're a new immigrant, perhaps undocumented, already struggling to make ends meet, and disaster pushes you beyond your ability to cope, where do you turn for help?

For many of these especially vulnerable Hurricane Harvey survivors in Houston, TX the "go-to" is ECHOS (Epiphany Community Health Outreach Service). For many Sonoma, CA wildfire survivors, it's First Congregational Church UCC.

And grants from UCC Disaster Ministries are helping these two social service ministries meet a dramatic increase in need due to the recent disasters.

Both ministries serve mostly low-income, majority Spanish-speaking immigrant communities, including many undocumented. Both already have the trust of their communities as "safe spaces" to turn to for necessary resources in times of need.

"There are resources available to support people with lost wages, rent and medical aid, but those resources can be difficult to navigate without help," said the Rev. Dr. Curran Reichert, Pastor of First Congregational.

With support from UCC Disaster Ministries and the UCC's Northern California-Nevada Conference, the church has hired a "navigator" to be available each day in Sonoma's Springs neighborhood during community meal distribution and at other gatherings to help direct affected people to available resources - from safe sources.

Pastor Reichert said that when she and navigator/community organizer Mario Castillo visited their local Disaster Relief Center, they learned that "all information collected from FEMA is potentially shared with ICE, hence, even if there is a citizen in the family able to register for help, there is also great risk involved for our undocumented brothers and sisters."

The navigator will work part time for three months "to make sure that these very vulnerable community members are able to access resources, despite fear and language barriers," Pastor Reichert said.

At ECHOS, an Episcopal social services ministry in Houston, staff now start every conversation with clients this way:

"Did you flood due to Hurricane Harvey?" More often than not, the clients answer, "Yes."

"ECHOS is located next to a church, and has the reputation of being an open and safe place over the years," said director Cathy Moore. "Our mission is to connect people in need with health, social and educational resources that can improve their lives. People know we help in their most critical times in life when things are toughest for them."

After Hurricane Harvey had passed, "as soon as people could get out of their homes, there were lines outside our door," Moore said. "That Thursday and Friday, we served 100 families a day. That Saturday, we had a 'disaster food fair,' and 450 families showed up. We've never seen that many families on a Saturday.

"And they kept coming. People had run out of their homes with just the clothes on their back. They needed toothpaste, soap, cleaning supplies, food, diapers. We've distributed CWS Emergency Cleanup Buckets, personal hygiene supplies, incontinence supplies for adults and diapers for children, truckloads of food."

In the two months since Harvey, ECHOS has served more than 4,200 individuals. In all of 2016, the agency served just under 9,000 individuals. These numbers are unduplicated and do not reflect total numbers of times a client is seen. Neither do they include the thousands served at food fairs.

Funding from UCC Disaster Ministries is enabling ECHOS to pay extra staff hours to meet increased caseload due to Hurricane Harvey. The Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) Week of Compassion and Church World Service also are contributing.

"Eventually we'll get back to our normal services, addressing poverty, access to health care and benefits, unemployment and domestic violence, to name a few," Moore said. "We offer ESL, health screenings and computer literacy classes. For now, the agency must also address the stress Hurricane Harvey has added to an already economically and socially stressed population."

ECHOS staff have a low-key, conversational way of identifying clients' needs, she continued. "Did you flood? Did you miss work? How were you affected? Lose your car? We have bus passes. Lose your job? We can get you some financial support. Are you back in your apartment but sleeping on the floor? We can get you some bedding, and a voucher for a mattress.

"Many families don't have a clue about what services are available to them. Often, they are afraid to ask," Moore said. "For example, a woman with an autistic child came in asking only for food. She was flooded. She was so grateful to get a \$150 voucher and metrocards so she and her son could get around.

"Another mother, whose son has cerebral palsy and is in a wheelchair, reported that they had lost everything to Harvey-related flooding. They moved in with a daughter, who had also suffered flood damage. Get got them vouchers and beds. Imagine having a disabled child and losing everything, including things needed to care for him."

Moore added, "We have 30 immediate partners that provide their services at our site. If someone needs something we don't have here, we refer them out."

Monthly Financial ReportsFinancial SecretaryTreasurer's



- 12/6 Wayne & Ruth Gfeller
12/23 Vern & Doris Steffens
12/26 Steve & Joyce Woodard
12/31 Rod & Brenda Gfeller



- 12/3 Karla Butler
12/5 Angela Kruse
12/7 Carl Ehlers
12/18 Amanda Steffens Beasley
12/22 Caleb Snider
12/23 Sally Altwegg
12/24 Hillary Martin

*If we have missed a birthday or anniversary we are sorry. The reason for that would be that we do not have that birthday or anniversary in our information. If you would like it included please give the information to the office.

Online Giving at Zion UCC

Members of the congregation have the ability to donate online through a secure portal. Donating online eliminates the need to write a check to the church. Online giving is an easy process to establish, and gifts December be changed as desired. Online giving can be accomplished in single payments or as repeat scheduled payments. Below is the link

<https://smartpay.profitstars.com/express/zionuccpp>

If you have any questions or need the additional instructions, please contact the church office at 785-238-5732.
Thank you for your ongoing support of Zion United Church of Christ!

"Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more. And I saw the holy city, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "See, the home of God is among mortals. He will dwell with them; they will be his peoples, and god himself will be with them; he will wipe every tear from their eyes. Death will be no more; mourning and crying and pain will be no more, for the first things have passed away." And the one who was seated on the throne said, "See, I am making all things new." Also he said, "Write this, for these words are trustworthy and true." then he said to me, "It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. To the thirsty I will give water as a gift from the spring of the water of life. Those who conquer will inherit these things, and I will be their God and they will be my children."

Revelation 21:1-7

It's the most
DECEMBER
 wonderful time of the year

2017

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1 Women's Fellowship 12:00 pm	2
3 <i>Celebration of Holy Communion</i> <i>Food Pantry Sunday</i> Sunday School 9:30 am Worship 10:30 am Fellowship 11:30 am #GodSquad 4:00 pm	4	5	6 Choir 6:00 pm Consistory 7:00 pm	7	8	9
10 <i>Heifer International Sunday</i> Sunday School 9:30 am Worship 10:30 am Fellowship 11:30 am	11	12	13 Choir 6:00 pm	14	15	16
17 "Helper" Sunday for Wheels of HOPE Sunday School 9:30 am Christmas Program 10:30 am Fellowship 11:30 am Caroling Party 4:00 pm	18	19	20 Choir 6:00 pm	21 	22	23
24 Sunday School 9:30 am Worship 10:30 am Fellowship 11:30 am Christmas Eve Candlelight Service	25  	26	27 Newsletter prints be sure to have items into the office by the 27th.	28	29 Newsletter prints	30
31 Sunday School 9:30 am Worship 10:30 am Fellowship 11:30 am <i>New Year's Eve</i>						

Serving Zion

	<u>Greeters</u>	<u>Ushers</u>	<u>Coffee Fellowship</u>
Dec 3	Selesa & Panisia Valoaga	Steve & Susanne Altwegg	Debby Gfeller
Dec 10	Henrietta Withee & Judy Gardner	Kenny & Josh Gfeller	Sheri Graefe & Rudi Graefe
Dec 17	Kevin & Deb Heiman	Harlan & Lane Bitterlin	Denise Tabb & Janette Vogelsang
Dec 24	Vern & Doris Steffens	Scott & Tammy Altwegg	Christmas eve
Dec 31	Wayne & Ruth Gfeller	Richard Hobaugh & Marvin Hornbostel	



1811 McFarland Rd
Junction City, KS 66441-8846
785-238-5732



«AddressBlock»