



THE JOURNEY

DECEMBER 2018



Dear Zion,

Advent is a time of preparation. Not merely preparing for holidays and family, but readying ourselves intellectually and spiritually to process the ineffable truth behind the Living God's Gift to humanity: Jesus came to us as a vulnerable naked infant, the shepherds were visited by angels, wisdom teachers somehow knew of His birth and were moved to come and see, and all of the rest of the beautiful narrative pales in comparison to the meaning behind the Incarnation. We've heard versions of the story so often and for so long that the gravity of what the story means is lost on us. You, me, every human being alive belongs to God, and what's more, we are invited to access that divine part of our DNA and move through the world being guided by and informed by this truth. Answering and living out this invitation, if it occurs to us at all, occurs impossible. I say "if it occurs to us at all" because what guides nearly every aspect of our lives is the lie that we are not God's children. Our need to measure ourselves against others' and our own opinion, our need to be right and in charge, and our need to align ourselves with success and power are all testament to our inability or unwillingness to live as if God's invitation on our lives is true. Anxiety, a constant pressing need to achieve, plan, work, leave our mark, protect our turf, appear good, etc., is how we move through the world, and we only further hide God's Gift when we act surprised by how lost the world appears to be.

I would like to offer two quotes from Father Richard Rohr as a beginning for our Advent season this year. Hopefully, they will serve to pause, if only momentarily, our inner waves of anxiety, pseudo-achievement, worry about opinions, blah, blah, blah that keep us from accepting the Gift from the Living God. *God does not love you if and when you change. God loves you so that you can change! And, you cannot get there, you can only BE there.* Please take some time and allow these truths to sink in about the nature of God's Gift. We cannot achieve it, earn it, or will it to be. Accepting is simultaneously humiliating and liberating. This is a good place to begin Advent this year.

Love,

Erik



We welcome all people on a lifelong journey of faith with a still-speaking God.
We are many minds in spiritual beliefs, but one body in loving service to our community.

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ZION
United Church of Christ

1811 McFarland Rd
Junction City, KS 66441

Sunday Worship 10:30 am
zionuccj@yahoo.com

December Lectionary

<p>December 2 <i>First Sunday of Advent</i> Jeremiah 33:14-16 Psalms 225:10-10 1 Thessalonians 3:9-13 Luke 21:25-36 <i>Sign of Things to Come</i></p>	<p>December 9 <i>Second Sunday of Advent</i> Malachi 3:1-4 Luke 1:68-79 Philippians 1:3-11 Luke 3:1-6 <i>Make Ready</i></p>	<p>December 16 <i>Third Sunday of Advent</i> Zephaniah 3:14-20 Isaiah 12:2-6 Philippians 4:4-7 Luke 3:7-18 <i>Look Forward</i></p>
<p>December 23 <i>Fourth Sunday of Advent</i> Micah 5:2-5 Luke 1:47-55 Hebrews 10:5-10 Luke 1:39-45, (46-55) <i>Moving With Mary's Song</i></p>	<p>December 24 <i>Christmas Eve</i> Isaiah 62:6-12 Psalms 97 Titus 3:4-7 Luke 2:(1-7), 8-20</p>	<p>December 25 <i>Christmas Day</i> Isaiah 9:2-7 Psalms 96 Titus 2:11-14 Luke 2:1-14, (15-20)</p>
<p>December 30 <i>First Sunday after Christmas</i> 1 Samuel 2:18-20, 26 Psalms 148 Colossians 3:12-17 Luke 2:41-52 <i>Who is This Child</i></p>	<p>December 31 Ecclesiastes 3:1-13 Psalms 8 Revelation 21:31-46 Matthew 25:31-46</p>	<p>May the warmth and joy of the Christmas Season remain with you throughout the coming year.</p>

The Journey Prints December 28

<p>Attendance 2018 YTD 2935 2017—2830</p>
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Consistory Seats

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

Women's Fellowship

November 2, 2018

Women's Guild met at noon in Fellowship Hall on November 2 with six ladies in attendance. Jill served a delicious soup luncheon. Each lady chose a yarn pumpkin that Jill had created.

Judy Heintz shared a devotion, "The Fern and The Bamboo".

The secretary's minutes were read and approved. Treasure's report was read with the current balance of \$668.96. There were no communications.

Outreach: Judy reported sending Halloween cards to our adopted children.

There was no old business. New Business: The Guild will order 24 poinsettias that the congregation will have the opportunity to purchase in honor or memory of loved ones for the price of \$10. The Guild will serve coffee hour on December 16. Please contribute cookies for this event.

December 4 will be the next meeting with Lane hosting. Please note change of day for this meeting.

The meeting concluded by repeating The Lord's Prayer.

Ruth Gfeller, secretary

Consistory Highlights

Consistory Minutes– Oct. 3, 2018

The monthly meeting was called to order by President Wayne Gfeller at 7:00 p.m.

Members present: Wayne Gfeller, Vern Steffens, Jill Schmutz, Ray Kruse, Deniece Carlson, Keith Henry, Tau Osa and Pastor Erik Graefe. Lyn Green were unable to attend.

Erik opened the meeting with a prayer.

Memorial Fund: The balance is \$17,549.23 as of Sept 2018.

Secretary: Minutes were approved by Vern and seconded by Tau.

Communication: None

Treasurer: Sept. income was \$8547.33, expenses were \$8099.32

Pastor Report: Visited several laundry mats. They are very appreciative of the quarters. Helped with the preparation of White Sunday. Registered for annual meeting in Wichita.

Financial Secretary: approved as presented

Formation: Will meet later in Oct.

Old business: The disaster relief cleaning buckets will be assembled Sat. Oct. 5. Leona has set it up with the Sunday school class to assemble. Erik and Keith will deliver the buckets when attending the annual meeting in Wichita. Marvel Dalton gave her Bible to the church. Deniece will send a thank you card to her. A suggestion to send Christmas cards to former pastors.

New Business: The call agreement was discussed with Erik, for the rest of the calendar year, effective Oct. 1, 2018. It will be completed at a later date, concerning his health insurance.

Next meeting Nov. 7, 2018

Meeting was adjourned with the Lord's Prayer.

Deniece Carlson, Secretary

Christmas Program

The Zion Christmas Program will be Sunday, Dec 16th during worship service at 10:30 am. This will be a Sunday of great rejoicing and fun. Be sure not to miss it this year.



Happenings at Zion

Make sure you are in the know. Check out the Zion Website <https://zionuccjc.org/calendar/> for the monthly calendar as to what is happening. If you have something for the calendar please let the office know as soon as possible so that it can be listed. Email is the easiest: zionuccjc@yahoo.com. There will be additional people that will have access to the calendar to add events also here in the near future and it will be announced.

Annual Caroling Party

Come one, come all and join the fun. Once again we will gather at the church on Dec. 16th 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.



Joy to the World!



UCC News

UCC in the News

[Ecumenical statement on current U.S. policy and Israel/Palestine](#)

[Faiths unite for Thanksgiving service at Ohio synagogue](#)

[Diverse churches come together for Thanksgiving night of worship in Illinois](#)

[Florida interfaith conversation sheds light on how to foster friendships across religious groups](#)

[Camp fire destroys California pastor's home](#)

[More News >>](#)

Highlight the one you want to read and right click on the drop down, click on open hyperlink.
You can check more UCC News at www.ucc.org

News from K-O Conference

Giving Thanks in the Randomness of Life

Written by Edith Guffey, Conference Minister

As we prepare to gather around our various tables for Thanksgiving, it's pretty easy for me to think of so much that I have to be thankful for. My husband Jerry and my sons, Bryan and Michael, are healthy and happy. We want for nothing, we have an embarrassment of riches. The immediate question I hear is "Will your sons be home for the Thanksgiving?". No, but we will see Michael in California in December. We have the economic resources to make those decisions; something else to be grateful for. Jerry and I will host Thanksgiving at our home for Jerry's family; while his mother had not been able to host Thanksgiving for many years, this is still the first Thanksgiving since her death this summer. She will be missed.

And so as we prepare for Thanksgiving in the Guffey household with so much to give thanks for, I can't help but think of those facing and preparing for Thanksgiving whose lives are much more challenging and difficult than ours. I think of those whose lives have been destroyed by the fires in California or the families grieving as a result of mass shootings; family members lost through no actions of their own. I woke up at 4:00 the morning of the shooting in Thousand Oaks. Michael doesn't live in thousand Oaks, but it could have just as easily been a shooting in Santa Monica, or Columbus, Ohio. We don't have fires in Kansas like we see in California, but we have tornadoes and there are so many this Thanksgiving whose lives are in turmoil because of the devastation from hurricanes or typhoons. I think of those we see pictures of this Thanksgiving who were born in a country where political unrest and instability is the norm.

So much of life is truly random. None of us is in control of all of the circumstances of our lives; circumstances that either work in our favor or that create significant challenges. God doesn't pick and choose among us and dole out special gifts and graces according to what we have earned or deserve; God loves us all equally. None of us "deserve" anything more or less than anyone else; none of us are better or worse than anyone else. Families of origin, the economic and educational circumstances we were born into, the generational wealth or poverty of families, race and ethnicity, the country of birth, and the list goes on and on; all things none of us had any control over but all contribute in some way to our lives today. Sure, we all make some decisions that impact the course of our lives, but so many of the fundamentals are truly random.

If we are fortunate enough to have tables to gather around this Thanksgiving, it is really good to give thanks, but I hope we do so knowing that all that we have, whether it is a lot or a little, is a gift. And what others don't have is not because of their short comings in life, it's not because they haven't worked hard enough or lack some internal worth or value. It's not because we are better than they are or God loves us more. And we can not only give thanks, but we can live our thanks by our actions, by having open generous spirits and hearts to all of God's children. May God's richest blessings of love, grace and peace abide with us all this Thanksgiving.



Ted Dawson, Artist

2018
THE CHRISTMAS FUND
for the Veterans of the Cross and the Emergency Fund



UNITED CHURCH
OF CHRIST

www.christmasfund.org



The Pension Boards
United Church of Christ, Inc.
WHERE FAITH AND FINANCE INTERSECT

Financial Reminders

In order to “close the books” and make a timely Annual Report, final deposits for 2018 will include monies up to and including the offering plate Sunday, Dec 30. Monies received after that time will be welcomed and included in the 2019 reports.

The end of year is fast approaching, and the financial records will close on Dec 31. If you have receipts for budgeted or approved expenses, and you’d like to be reimbursed, please have your receipts to the office as soon as possible - no later than Dec. 28. Thanks for your help.

-Jill Schmutz, Secretary/Bookkeeper

Monthly Financial Reports

Financial Secretary

2018 Gen. Budget

Needed Weekly

Needed YTD

Gen. Fund YTD

Budget Balance/(shortfall)

Date	Att.	Giving
Oct. 7	70	
Oct. 14	115	
Oct. 21	63	
Oct. 28	67	
Online		
Total	315	

	July	Cum. YTD
Rent		
BOB		
Building		
Total Specials		
Dillons rebates		



Treasurer's

Oct. Bank Balance

	<u>Beginning Balance</u>	<u>Ending Balance</u>
9/30/18		10/31/18

Oct. 2018 Profit & Loss

Outreach/Heifer Int. Income

General Fund

S.F.

Online Deposits

Total Income

EXPENSES

Bank Service Charge

Benevolence

Groups & Orgs

Insurance

Outreach

Payroll Exp.

All Supplies

Utilities

Total Expenses

NET INCOME

<u>PMM</u>	<u>Income</u>	<u>Expense</u>	<u>Balance</u>
Interest 10/9/18			9

<u>Memorial</u>	<u>Income</u>	<u>Expenses</u>	<u>Balance</u>
10/31/18			

<u>Heifer Int.</u>	<u>Income</u>	<u>Expenses</u>	<u>Balance</u>
10/31/18			

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!



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 Panisia Valoaga

12/5 Angela Kruse

12/7 Carl Ehlers

12/18 Amanda Steffens/Beasley

12/20 Gerry Dempsey

12/22 Caleb Snider

12/23 Rudi Graefe

12/23 Sally Altwegg

12/24 Hillery Martin

“The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who lived in a land of deep darkness— on them light has shined. You have multiplied the nation, you have increased its joy; they rejoice before you as with joy at the harvest, as people exult when dividing plunder. For the yoke of their burden, and the bar across their shoulders, the rod of their oppressor, you have broken as on the day of Midian. For all the boots of the tramping warriors and all the garments rolled in blood shall be burned as fuel for the fire. For a child has been born for us, a son given to us; authority rest upon his shoulders; and he is named Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. His authority shall grow continually, and there shall be endless peace for the throne of David and his kingdom. He will establish and uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time onward and forevermore. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this.”

Isaiah 9:2-7

**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.*

DECEMBER

2018

<i>Sunday</i>	<i>Monday</i>	<i>Tuesday</i>	<i>Wednesday</i>	<i>Thursday</i>	<i>Friday</i>	<i>Saturday</i>
						1
2 Celebration of Holy Communion Food Pantry Sunday Adult Sunday School 9:30 am Worship 10:30 am Fellowship 11:30 am	3	4 Women's Fellowship 12:00 pm	5 Choir 6:00 pm Consistory 7:00 pm	6	7 JCRSP 10:30 am	8
9 Heifer International Sunday Sunday School 9:30 am Worship 10:30 am Fellowship 11:30 am	10	11 Pilot Club 5 pm	12 Choir 6:00 pm	13	14	15
16 Sunday School 9:30 am Christmas Program 10:30 am Fellowship 11:30 am	17	18	19 Choir 6:00 pm	20	21	22
23 Sunday School 9:30 am Worship 10:30 am Christmas Fund offering Fellowship 11:30 am	24 Office closed Christmas Eve Candlelight Service 6:00 pm	25 	26	27	28	29
30	31					

Serving Zion

	<u>Greeters</u>	<u>Ushers</u>	<u>Coffee Fellowship</u>
Dec 2	Steve & Lyn Green	Wayne Gfeller & Doug Vogelsang	Hillery Martin
Dec 9	Mike & Karen Malec	Caleb Snider & Casey Fielder	Open
Dec 16	Gary & Jill Schmutz	Vern Steffens & Steve Green	Women's Guild
Dec 23	Graefe Family	Marvin Hornbostel & Keith Henry	Open
Dec 30	Tim & Renee Jury	Scott & Tammy Altwegg	Open



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