

# Zion News

11609 Frankstown Rd  
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412-242-2626

November, 2024

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

<https://www.facebook.com/zionpennhills/>

*The church in the heart of Penn Hills that is the heart of Penn Hills*



“Live in the present, not in the past and not in the future.”

It’s a saying that we are all familiar with. To live in today. To not burden ourselves or daydream about what once was or what could have been in our lives. To not become too preoccupied with what we hope will happen in the future. Instead, to live today for the sake of today.

Yet, here we are, entering the month of November and the tail end of the Fall season. It’s a challenge to keep hope going as the last leaf falls off the tree, as the first crunch of the ground swallows life beneath us – as nature moves this time of the year in Pittsburgh, in the U.S., and around the world.

It’s a struggle to keep faithful or even to keep your spirits up as night takes over the day, as darkness creeps more and more into the light, as the temperatures continue to drop, and eventually snow accumulates by the feet everywhere from our driveways and sidewalks, to our lawns and flowerbeds, and on our streets. I don’t know about all of you, but it takes me a few days to adjust to the fact that it’s becoming darker and darker in the morning hours and that it’s becoming darker and darker at night, especially the time right before we adjust our clocks back for Daylight Savings Time.

Let’s be honest, depending on your current reality, it can be very easy to dwell on the past or to spend too much time worrying about or daydreaming about the future. It’s much more of a challenge to only stay in the present, especially depending on the day when that present provides its own series of challenges or worries to occupy the busy days and anxious nights.

Instead, to let today’s worries and troubles be enough for today. And to leave tomorrow’s concerns for tomorrow. Which, even I will admit is very hard to do. With anxiety in the economy from high fuel and grocery costs, the upcoming elections at the local, state, and federal levels, the divisiveness in our society as a whole, and all of the other personal matters which weigh on our hearts and minds on any given day, it can be easy to want to wish things were at the abracadabra point of everything being “ok” again.

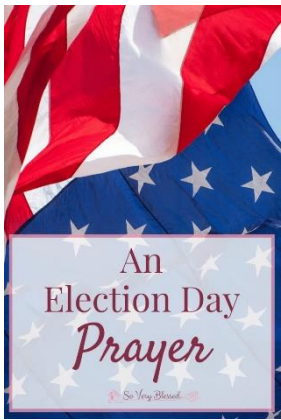
As the Holy Spirit would have it, our texts this month are all about the present, namely the promise of hope and resurrection and life and blessings which are given and bestowed in the present tense. The texts that we will have this month will all point to a hope and a promise which is given and bestowed to you and I, today. In the present. Not in the past and not in the future, but today.

The texts that we will hear in worship on Sunday mornings this month will beckon us to hear, in no uncertain terms, that it is in just this time that the faithful (you and me and all believers in Christ) are called to be what they and we are: namely, faithful. Having already been grasped by the One who will never ever let us go, we cling to faith that not only sustains us but which raises the dead.

We are called to remember the dead in hope, just as we will on All Saints Sunday on November 3<sup>rd</sup>. We are called to not be alarmed when faced with trials and temptations in the world, which we will hear about on November 10<sup>th</sup>. We will be called to worship at the feet of Christ who is King and Lord over all, as we will on November 24<sup>th</sup> for Christ the King Sunday. And then we will begin to prepare Him room in our hearts and minds as we enter into the Advent season on December 1<sup>st</sup>.

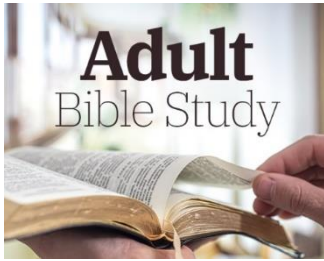
We are to give thanks for all that is life in the very heart and breath and soul of the month of November, just as the abundance of the season of Fall passes through our fingertips and we are ushered into the season of winter. We are to hope. And to have joy. And to trust. In the present tense and, yes, even in the month of November.

Peace,  
Pastor Martha



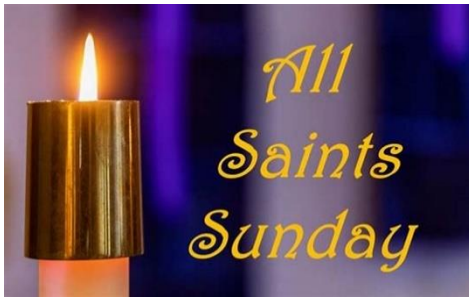
**ELECTION PRAYER:** As we move forward to November's election let us remember that, regardless of our political perspectives, we are all children of God. Please consider making the following part of your prayer life.

- 1) The safety and health of all who are running for office, as well as their families.
- 2) The importance of voting and making sure that our polling places / workers are safe.
- 3) That the outcome of November's election will be clear / decisive.
- 4) That November's election results will be honored.
- 5) That after the election we, as Americans, will unite to work for the good of all.



#### **Adult Bible Study:**

We are meeting again as a group on Wednesday afternoons at 1pm in person in the Gerhard Lounge and over Zoom. For this session, we will be studying Dietrich Bonhoeffer, using a study that was recently published by Dr. Lori Brandt Hale and LAMPa. Pastor will have printed copies of the study guide for those in person and will send out via email to those who wish to attend over Zoom. Pastor Dennis Orsen is also joining us as a participant for some of our sessions. If you have questions, please see Pastor Martha.



**All Saints Sunday – November 3<sup>rd</sup>:** We will be remembering all those Zion saints who have joined the Church Triumphant since All Saints last year during our worship together.

This year, we will be remembering the following Zion saints:

James Snider                      Maxine Sommerer  
Bob Beresky  
Jean Meyer

In addition to that remembrance, you are invited to bring a photo of your loved one(s) who have joined the Church Triumphant at any point in time and we will display them up front during worship.



Thank you to all who helped to prepare for and serve at the Food Pantry last month! We ended up serving over 150 household clients through drive-through and it was thanks to all of your efforts setting up, serving, and cleaning up that it all happened!

Our next pantry meets on **Saturday, November 9<sup>th</sup>**. **As many of you know, November is our busiest distribution time as we hand out the Giant Eagle gift cards for the holiday season.** Therefore, and if you are able to help with set-up on Friday, November 8th from 9am-12pm in the Community Room or during the

pantry on the 12th from 8:30am-12:00pm, that would be most appreciated!

Thank you again for all of your time, efforts, prayers and support towards making a difference in our local community and beyond!

The Greater Pittsburgh Food Bank has given the pantry 150 Giant Eagle cards to be distributed at the November pantry. In addition to this, we are also collecting monetary donations in an effort to buy an additional 25 Giant Eagle cards (\$20/card) to ensure that we have enough for everyone. **These donations will be collected through November 3<sup>rd</sup>**. Thank you in advance for your generosity!



**Christmas Stockings for Military Personnel Servant Project:** In partnership with Military Connections Corp of Pittsburgh, we will be filling Christmas stockings for service personnel after worship on Sunday November 10<sup>th</sup> in the Gathering Space. We have requested 15 stockings from the organization (which will be picked up prior to November 10<sup>th</sup>) and brought to church. Requested items to fill these stockings are any of the following:

- |                     |                                |                             |
|---------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Granola Bars        | Individual Bags of Trail Mix   | Individual Bags of Cookies  |
| 5 Hour Energy       | Cheez Its                      | Individual Bags of Crackers |
| Candy Canes         | Fruit Snacks                   | Chocolate Candy             |
| Mints And Gum       | Individual Bags of Nuts        | Pretzels                    |
| Pop-Tarts           | Power Bars                     | Christmas Candy and Snacks  |
| Lollipops           | Single Serve Powdered Gatorade |                             |
| Skittles            | Slim Jims                      |                             |
| Starburst           | Individual Bags of Snacks      |                             |
| Rice Krispie Treats |                                |                             |

**We will begin accepting donations towards this beginning Sunday October 27<sup>th</sup> and going through November 10<sup>th</sup>.** Donations may be dropped off at the office or the Gathering Space. Volunteers are also needed for filling of these stockings after worship on November 10<sup>th</sup>. Thank you in advance!



### ZION GARDEN NEWS CREATION CARE

Do you know that Zion is one of the few churches in our Synod with multiple gardens? Those of you who helped advocate for Regenerative Agriculture know what an important role plants play in keeping our planet cool and in sequestering large amounts of carbon in their flowers, stems and roots! As a parishioner you can be proud that Zion is living out the words of our ELCA Social Statement, Caring for Creation; Vision, Hope and Justice, “Christian concern for the environment is shaped by the Word of God spoken in creation and the Breath of God daily renewing the face of the earth.” The Zion gardens were originally planted to provide vegetables for our Food Bank, with Zion members from the Penn Hills area faithfully tending and watering them throughout the summer months. Four years ago it was decided to rent the gardens out to Zion and community members individually, with the proceeds earmarked for the Food Bank. Because no one opted for this arrangement, the past three years have seen the gardens voluntarily financed, fertilized, planted, watered and maintained by several Zion members. They have been mostly planted with lovely deer resistant (kinda) State Fair zinnias and marigolds, as well as tasty herbs and garlic! While most congregations place cut flowers on the altar, when Zion members worship outdoors with the “Land and Seasons” service, we have a truly “living altar” in our own gardens! This year, in preparation for winter, three gardens have been planted with the “cover crops” of red and white clover, one with delicious garlic and one with the native pollinator plants wing stem, bee balm, goldenrod, milkweed, false indigo, spiderwort and aster. To know exactly how environmentally important our Zion gardens are, join us for viewing the documentary “Common Ground,” to be shown after church on **Sunday, November 10<sup>th</sup>**



### SUNDAY NOVEMBER 24<sup>th</sup>

Pumpkin vs. Sweet Potato vs. Apple vs. Shoefly vs. Pecan vs Meringue vs...Everyone loves pie, so let’s all enjoy a piece (or two or three!) together before the holidays. Have an awesome pie recipe that you can’t wait until Thanksgiving to use? Bake it up and bring pie to church with you on Sunday November 24<sup>th</sup> for Hospitality Time and let’s see what kind of bakers Zion has!  
(Or pick up one from Eat n’ Park or Giant Eagle and no one will tell!)



You are invited to join Pastor Martha and other pastors and laypeople from around the Pittsburgh area on **Wednesday, November 20th at 6:30pm in the John Knox Room at Pittsburgh Theological Seminary** for the next program in the series: "Reckoning with Antisemitism: Listening to

Jewish Voices." You'll hear from a panel of Jewish leaders to share how antisemitism has affected their lives and community and what they hope their Christian neighbors will come to understand about the Jewish experience. Interested in carpooling from Zion? Reach out to Pastor Martha to coordinate a ride! For more information about the panelists, you may check out: [https://www.casp.org/reckoning?mc\\_cid=8ba5e4a5d9&mc\\_eid=cf57a417fd#listening](https://www.casp.org/reckoning?mc_cid=8ba5e4a5d9&mc_eid=cf57a417fd#listening)



**Thanksgiving Lunch at Zion – Friday November 29<sup>th</sup>:** We would like to invite you to join us and other community members for a Thanksgiving Lunch. This is a free gift to anyone and everyone.

We are also in need of volunteers to help set up, serve or cleanup afterwards. For those interested in helping in any capacity, you may contact Zion Lutheran Church at 412-242-2626. Thanks in advance!

*Set up: 10:30-Noon; Serving: 1-3pm or 3-5pm; Clean up: 5-6pm*

### **Update from the Long-Range Planning Team**

Dear Fellow Zion Members:

Did you know the Church Council has a constitutional mandate to do long-range planning? To help fulfill this, the council moved to hire Pastor Graham Standish. He has helped many churches in the area, after membership tripled and attendance doubled at his church in Zelienople, PA. His method is to form a group representing the congregation and including the pastor. They then do the legwork and study to create a proposal as the final output. The process is in-depth and takes 8 -12 months to complete. We have provided updates on our work every month. Now we are moving on to the last phase, the proposal development. Graham suggested we offer this summary of what we have done and what is up next.

After Graham was brought on, he asked Pastor Martha to assemble a group of members that was both representative of the church's past, its present, and its future. We began our work in earnest in January of this year.

We started by reviewing several books and a film. These books and the DVD are all available in our library. They all pertain to strategic thinking, rebirth, and/or following the lead of the Holy Spirit. We discussed our views, memories, and hopes for Zion in relation to these thought-provoking works:

*Think Again* - Grant

*Start with Why* - Sinek

*The Grace Outpouring* - Godwin and Davis

*Switch* - Heath & Heath

*The Jesus Revolution* (2023)

After this phase, we began exploring strong local churches that have experienced success and growth. The goal was never to impose their style on Zion. Yet they are doing some things very well, and there are things we can learn and use here. We visited two churches whose worship style was inviting, especially toward people who had walked away from more typical churches. We also visited a historically black church on the North Side to help us better understand being a church in a changing area. Finally, we had a video visit with a Lutheran pastor from the area who is growing his church.

Now we ask for your prayers as we enter this closing step. We will synthesize all our work into a document that we will share with the Church Council and then with the congregation. It will contain suggestions for improving our church life and growing our congregation. This document will challenge us all to move into the future so that Zion will be a vibrant church now and into the future.

*Yours in Christ,*

The Graham Standish Task Force: Sue Clydesdale, Tom Felmley, Alex Fitzroy, Kathy Gaberson, Andrew Sabol, Reid Wolfe, and Pastor Martha

New



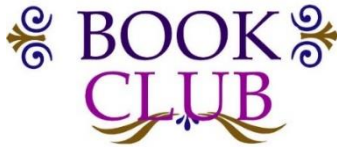
## Choir Members Welcome!

**Come Join the Choir!:** We practice at 7:30 pm in the Chapel. Come learn, pray, and sing together with us. All skill and experience levels are welcome, and we're flexible about rehearsals. It's a great time and a wonderful way to get involved in the musical life of our congregation. See Andrew or email him at [andrew@zionpennhills.org](mailto:andrew@zionpennhills.org) with any questions!



### Zion Book Club

Zion Book Club continues to meet approximately 10 years after its inception, reading and discussing a wide range of books. This year's selections include:



- November 18: "The Heaven and Earth Grocery Store" by James McBride
- December 16: Book selection potluck

We meet the third Monday of the month at 1 PM. The remainder of the year we have a hybrid meeting via Zoom or in-person in the Gerhard Lounge. We invite you to join us, either on a regular or occasional basis. If you, and maybe even a friend, are interested, please speak with Rhonda Pope.



**Newsletter Deadline:** Do you have an idea for an article, update on a project, or a photo from a Zion event or a shout-out or thank you? We would love to have it! All articles are due by the 20<sup>th</sup> of each month. Please send them via e-mail to: [julie@zionpennhills.org](mailto:julie@zionpennhills.org).



**Daylight Savings:** Just a reminder to turn your clocks back **Saturday, November 2!** Enjoy that extra hour of sleep.



We will celebrate monthly birthdays on the following Sundays:

- Sunday, November 3<sup>rd</sup>
- Sunday, December 1<sup>st</sup>

The remainder of the Sundays in a given month will be covered by council members. As always, we're grateful for those who participate by bringing both sweet & savory goodies to share. If you would like to bring something, simply just add your name to the calendar in the Gathering Space. Any and all snacks & treats are welcome, and it helps the Parish Life folks know what we need from one week to the next! Should you have any questions, please feel free to reach out.

## Coffee Fellowship

Respectfully – Parish Life Committee



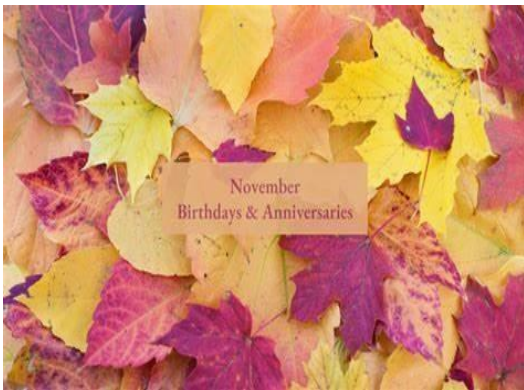
**OREMUS**

**Rehab Facility:**

Evelyn Lamm (Concordia, Monroeville, Room 110)  
Nancy Fabel (Rosebrook Living Facility, Sarver, PA, Room 116)  
Paul and Mary Lou Feathers (Presbyterian Homes, Oakmont, Room 204)

**Prayers Requested for:** Donna Federoff, Paul Gaberson, John Carter, Jenny Fabrizi, Sandra Short, Marion Ertel, Maggie Watson (daughter of

Kathy Kraf), Michael Gerdich (friend of Rhonda Pope), Arela Mascaro (friend of Sallie Lazar), Richard Sabol (father of Andrew Sabol), Josh Cummings (nephew of Tony Lamorte), Theresa Miller (Godmother of Kara Albrecht), Patti Wunderley (sister of Linda Neumann), Jerri Jacob (friend of Sallie Lazar), John Hayes (friend of Tom & Annette Felmley), Gary Bunch (husband of Cheryl Bunch), Wayne Stumpf, Pari Bailey (friend of Pastor Martha), Mike Walsh (friend of Kathy Gaberson), Mary Rex (friend of Kathy Gaberson), Katie Ritenour (cousin of Debbie Marks), Sandy Hutchins (friend of Diane Santoriello), Darnell Pope (brother of Sandra Short), Ron Jeroski (friend of Charlotte Murray), Steve Bell (brother of Rhonda Pope), Chris Vuocolo (nephew of Mary Lou D’Ambrosio), Beth Rall, Sarah, Tom & Carolyn Schuler, Marsha Balaban, Betsy Heston, Marylene Gingras-Roi (friends of Barbara Stolp), Denise Capobianco (friend of Sandra Short), Patrick Taylor, Bonnie Hanssen (mother-in-law of Pastor Martha).

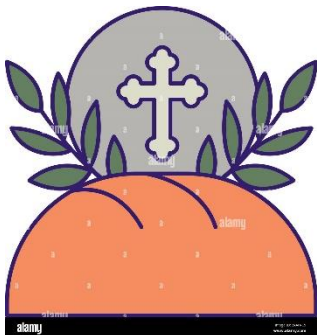


**HAPPY NOVEMBER BIRTHDAY**

11/2	Nathan Clydesdale	11/29	Kristen Williams
11/11	Kristi Thompson	11/30	Rhonda Pope
11/12	Susan Baumann		
11/13	Kay Clydesdale		
11/21	Fred Ross		
11/24	Callie Bostwick		
11/28	Linda Mitnik		
11/28	Breanna Smith		

**Anniversaries**

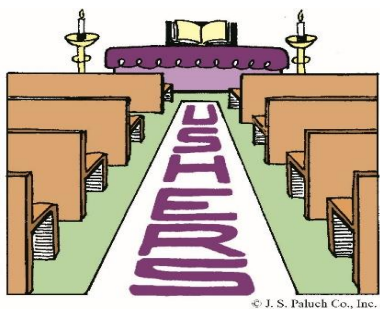
11/20/1999	Megan & Bob Houghtelin
11/17/2007	Christine & Robert Clydesdale, Jr.
11/29/2008	Kristi & Darren Thompson
11/03/2018	Kristen & Aaron Williams



**BREAD SCHEDULE:**

**November 3: Lori Smith**  
**November 10: Jeannette Christensen**  
**November 17: Sallie Lazar**  
**November 24: Chrissa Clark**

**We are in need of Ushers!** If you are interested in helping to collect and present the offering, doing a head count for record keeping, dismiss rows for communion, please let Tony Lamorte know at: [tlamorte@steelcityproducts.com](mailto:tlamorte@steelcityproducts.com). Thank you



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## USHER SCHEDULE

Sunday, November 03, 2024	Mark Mauro	Janet Mauro
Sunday, November 10, 2024	Janet Mauro	Mark Mauro
Sunday, November 17, 2024	Tony Lamorte	Mike Patchen
Sunday, November 24, 2024	Mark Mauro	Janet Mauro
Sunday, December 01, 2024	Mike Patchen	Youth
Sunday, December 08, 2024	Mike Patchen	Mark Mauro
Sunday, December 15, 2024	Mark Mauro	Janet Mauro
Sunday, December 22, 2024	Tony Lamorte	Mike Patchen
Sunday, December 29, 2024	Tony Lamorte	Youth

### **Please encourage the kids to assist:**

Ask their parents if their kids want to hand out Bulletins or assist with the Offering.



## WHO'S WHO OF ZION LEADERSHIP

### Church Council 2024-2025:

Pastor Martha McCreight (President)  
 Brenda Wolfe (Vice President)  
 (Music & Worship Liaison)  
 Diane Santoriello (Secretary)  
 Mike Patchen (Treasurer)  
 Sue Clydesdale (Financial Secretary)  
 Debbie Rall (Stewardship Secretary)  
 Tom Felmley (Communications Chair)  
 Tony Lamorte (Parish Life & Facilities Liaison)  
 Vacant (Property Chair)  
 Mark Mauro (Budget & Finance Chair)  
 (Food Pantry Liaison)  
 Jeannette Christensen (Health Ministry Liaison)  
 Pat Pope  
 Kathy Gaberson

### Property Committee:

Tony Lamorte  
 Ray Rall  
 Tom Felmley  
 Pat Pope  
 Curt Baumann  
 Reid Wolfe

### Music and Worship Committee:

Andrew Sabol (Chair)  
 Pastor Martha (Liaison)  
 Brenda Wolfe (Liaison)  
 Gail Snyder  
 Cindy Pierce  
 Pat Hauser

Budget and Finance Committee

Mark Mauro (Chair)  
Sue Clydesdale  
Gail Snyder  
Mike Patchen  
Pat Pope  
Debbie Rall  
Brenda Wolfe (ex-officio)

Christian Education Committee:

Deb Rall (Liaison)  
Janet Mauro (Chair)  
Chris Dippold  
Brenda Wolfe (ex-officio)

Health Ministry:

Rhonda Pope  
Jeannette Christensen (Liaison)  
Rachel Dolney  
Sandra Short  
Shirley McClure  
Laura Patchen  
Brenda Wolfe (ex-officio)  
Sue Baumann  
Kara Albrecht

Parish Life:

Tammy Belohlavek  
Rachel Dolney  
Brenda Wolfe (ex-officio)

Stewardship:

Pastor Martha (Chair)  
Debbie Rall (Stewardship Secretary)  
Jeannette Christensen  
Brenda Wolfe (ex-officio)

Mission Endowment

Pastor Martha (Chair)  
Brenda Wolfe (ex-officio)  
Mike Patchen (Treasurer)  
Mark Mauro  
Vacant  
Vacant