

Great Is Thy



Faithfulness

1847-2022

I WILL SING OF THE LORD'S GREAT LOVE FOREVER;
WITH MY MOUTH I WILL MAKE YOUR FAITHFULNESS
KNOWN THROUGH ALL GENERATIONS.

PSALM 89:1

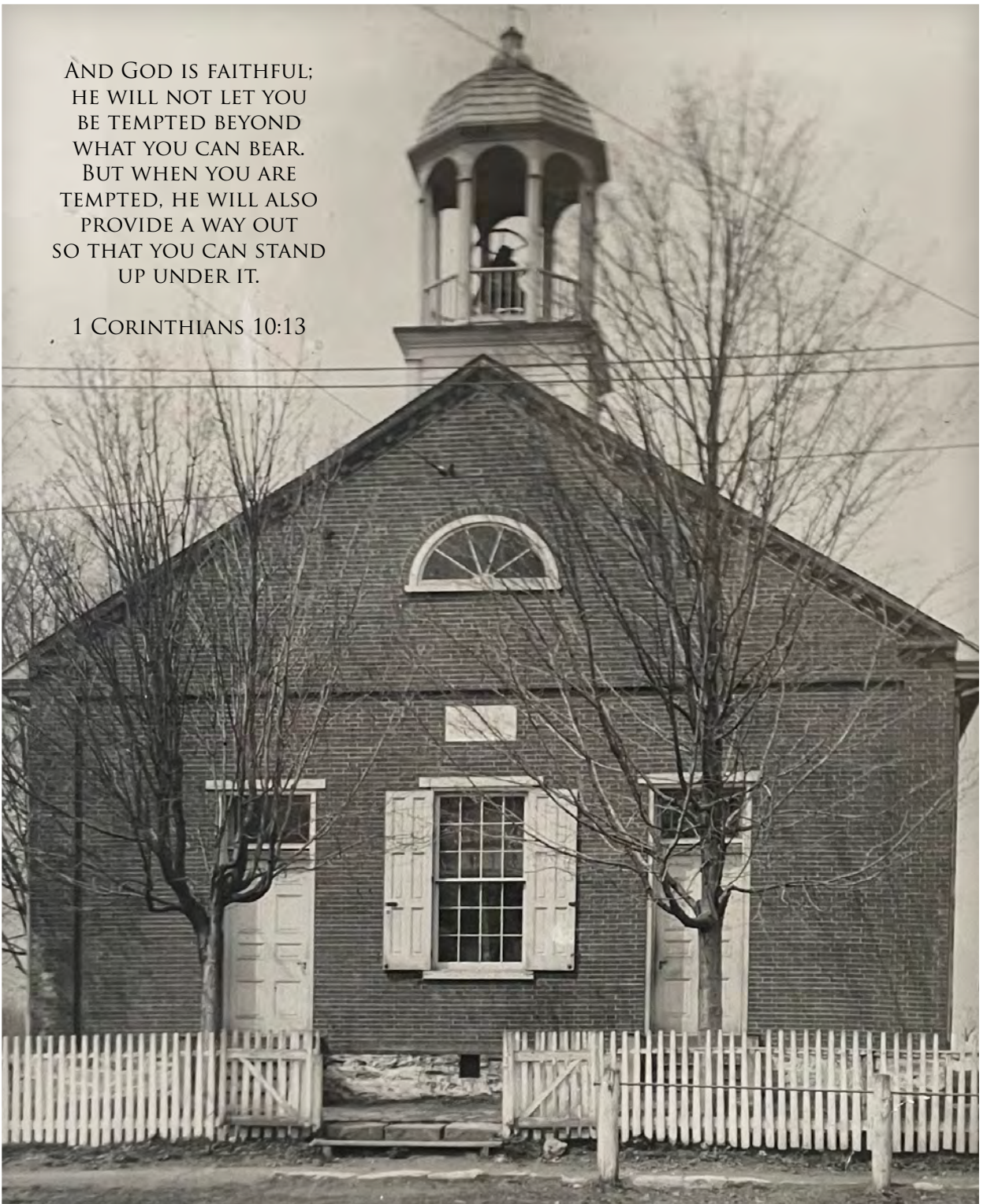


ZION EVANGELICAL
East Petersburg
LUTHERAN CHURCH

175
years

AND GOD IS FAITHFUL;
HE WILL NOT LET YOU
BE TEMPTED BEYOND
WHAT YOU CAN BEAR.
BUT WHEN YOU ARE
TEMPTED, HE WILL ALSO
PROVIDE A WAY OUT
SO THAT YOU CAN STAND
UP UNDER IT.

1 CORINTHIANS 10:13



Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church, East Petersburg, Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, was organized, March 1, 1847, by the Rev Reuben Schuler Wagner, a young Licentiate of the Ministerium of Pennsylvania, who had taken charge of St. Paul's Lutheran Church (Organized in 1843), Millerstown, now Millersville—until a church building was erected at Petersburg (later changed to East Petersburg),

Pastor Wagner conducted services in the local schoolhouse, preaching in German and in English. The first church building was erected as a Union Church by the Lutheran and German Reformed Congregations. The cornerstone was laid, July 18, 1847, with appropriate ceremonies. The speakers on this occasion were, the Rev. J. C. Baker, D.D., Pastor of Holy Trinity Lutheran Church, Lancaster, Pennsylvania, representing the Lutheran Congregation, and the Rev. Daniel Hertz, representing the German Reformed Congregation. The Dedication took place, December 5, 1847. The Lutheran speakers were the Rev. William Baetes, Senior of the Ministerium of Pennsylvania and Pastor of Zion Lutheran Church, Lancaster, Pennsylvania, and the Rev. C. G. Frederick, Pastor of Zion Lutheran Church, Manheim, Pennsylvania. The Reformed speaker was the Rev. Jacob Chapman, Professor of Mathematics at Franklin College, Lancaster, Pennsylvania.

The first Trustees were, Joseph Kinsch, Peter Godshall and David Kiehl, who were elected at the time of the purchase of the lot, and served until, January 1, 1853. The first Treasurer was Philip Brehm, who was elected at the beginning of building operations, and resigned, January 1, 1853. The first Elders were, Jacob Kinsch and George Biemesderfer; and the first Deacons were, Alexander Klefecker and Henry Diffenderfer; all of who were elected, July 4, 1847. The Lutheran members on the Building Committee were, Philip Brehm and Philip Hottenstein. The first Communion Service was held, January 2, 1848, with sixteen persons participating. The following Easter, twenty four members were admitted, and sixty-five persons received Holy Communion.

Pastor Wagner preached his farewell sermon, August 12, 1849, thus ending his work here to take charge, August 27, 1850, of a Pastorate at Norristown, Pennsylvania.

The second pastor was the Rev. John Hershey Menges, who served churches also at Millersville, Manheim and Mount Joy. He entered upon his labors, August 19, 1849. He

resided for a time at Mount Joy, and later at Columbia, where with the sanction of the Ministerium of Pennsylvania, he took charge of the First Lutheran Church, and resigning the Churches at Mount Joy and Manheim. He preached his farewell sermon here, February 1, 1852.

The Rev. Adelbert Charles Roderico Rueter became the third pastor, taking charge, November 1, 1852. Earlier this same year, he was Licensed by the West Pennsylvania Synod. The following year he was Ordained by the Ministerium of Pennsylvania. He served churches at East Petersburg, Millersville, and Rohrerstown, and had his residence at East Petersburg. He resigned in 1853, going to Orwigsburg, Pennsylvania.

The fourth pastor to serve this church was the Rev. John Jacob Albert, who came in 1853. He served also the Lutheran Churches in Millersville and Rohrerstown and resided at Millersville. His preaching was mostly in English. He ended his labors in 1855.

The Rev. George Haines was the fifth pastor, who came from Hummelstown, Pennsylvania in 1857, and served one year. In addition to this church, he served churches at Manheim and Millersville.

BUT THE FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT IS LOVE, JOY, PEACE,
PATIENCE, KINDNESS, GOODNESS, FAITHFULNESS,
GENTLENESS AND SELF-CONTROL.
AGAINST SUCH THINGS THERE IS NO LAW.

GALATIANS 5:22-23

The sixth one to serve in the capacity of a pastor of this church was the Rev. John Hershey Menges, who had served during an earlier period. He took up the work in 1859 and served one year.

The seventh pastor was the Rev. John William Early who, as Pastor of the Lutheran Church at Leacock "took charge as a temporary supply in the beginning of January 1861 and served until January 1864."

The Rev. Joseph R. Focht was elected the eighth pastor at a Congregational Meeting held, January 10, 1864, and served until 1868. During the same period, he was Pastor of Zion Church, Manheim, and Salem Church, Kissel Hill. It was during his Pastorate, January 1, 1867, that Zion Congregation severed its relationship with the Ministerium of Pennsylvania and was received into the East Pennsylvania Synod. In this new Synodical relationship, a new Charge was formed, known as the East Petersburg Charge. This

was composed of this Church, Zion Church, Manheim; Bethany Church, Millersville; and Trinity Church, Rohrerstown.

The ninth pastor was the Rev. Jacob Kaempfer, who came in 1868, and served until the following year. He also served the Churches at Manheim and Millersville. At the close of his Pastorate, Zion Church, Manheim, withdrew from the Charge.

The tenth pastor to serve Zion Church was the Rev. Samuel S. Engle, a Licentiate of the East Pennsylvania Synod, who as Pastor of the Churches at Brickerville and Kissel Hill, obtained the consent of Synod to serve some near-by vacant congregations. In this way he began serving Zion Church, East Petersburg, in 1870. He ended his labors in 1874. The eleventh Pastor was the Rev. Jacob Peter, who as Pastor of Zion church, Manheim (1871-1880), took charge of Zion Church, East Petersburg, August 1, 1874, and served until September 1890. Within this period, he served also, Trinity Church, Colebrook (September 22, 1872-1890); Salem Church, Kissel Hill (1874-1890); St. Peter's Church, Neffsville (1880-1881); St. Paul's Church, Lititz (1885-1886). Pastor Peter severed his relationship with the Congregations he was serving at the time on September 1, 1890.

A Union Christian Endeavor Society was organized, February 11, 1891.

After a lapse of less than a year, the Rev. Jacob Peter, came to be the twelfth pastor in point of numbers. He was called to take charge of a new association of Churches to be known as the East Petersburg Charge. This was composed of Zion Church, East Petersburg; Trinity Church, Colebrook; and Grace Church, Manheim, a new Congregation organized on April 4, 1891. He entered upon his duties June 1, 1891. His preaching was usually in English, occasionally in German. He resigned the Charge on September 3, 1894.

The thirteenth pastor was the Rev. L. H. W. Kline, who came from the Allegheny Synod. He began his work in the East Petersburg Charge on January 15, 1895, and served until February 1, 1896.

The fourteenth pastor was the Rev. Luther Lindsey Lohr, a graduate of the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Gettysburg earlier the same year. He took up his work as Pastor of Zion Church, Manheim, June 1, 1894. He took on Zion Church, East Petersburg, as a supply on April 26, 1896, and served until November 22, 1896.

The Rev. Samuel Grimm Helfelbower, a Theological Seminary classmate of the former Pastor Lohr, became the fifteenth pastor. He was called as Pastor of Zion church, Manheim, and entered upon his duties there, December 1, 1896. He took charge of the East Petersburg Church as a supply on December 20, 1896, and later as a permanent supply.

A Ladies' Aid Society was organized in January 1898, with the following officers: President, Miss Anna Oswald; Vice President, Mrs. Jacob S. Zerphy; Secretary, Miss Agnes Gerfin; and Treasurer, Mrs. Abram S. Groff. Pastor Helfelbower was resigned in May 1899, on account of the ill health of his wife, who died eight weeks later.

The sixteenth pastor was the Rev. M. Luther Snyder, a graduate of the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Susquehanna University, Selinsgrove, Pennsylvania, in June 1899. He entered upon his duties as Pastor of Zion Church, Manheim, September 6, 1899, and at East Petersburg, October 8, 1899. His Pastorate was marked by a large increase in membership and by the payment of the Church debt. He served until July 1900.

The seventeenth in line of pastors was the Rev. O. O. Leidich, who came from Palmyra, Pennsylvania. He took charge of Zion Church, Manheim, and Zion Church, East Petersburg on December 4, 1900. Among the outstanding accomplishments during his Pastorate were: a Charter for the Church was sworn and subscribed, April 2, 1901, and recorded, April 18, 1901, and around the same time, the interest of the Reformed Congregation bought out; in 1904, the remodeling of the church building, involving the building of the tower, changing the entrance, placing the pulpit from the north to the west side of the auditorium, and new furniture, also the building of a Sunday School Room, at a cost of \$4,700; the Rededication took place, January 1, 1905; bought the Janitor's House and built the horse sheds. After Pastor Leidich's resignation of Zion Church, Manheim, November 5, 1905, he continued to serve this Congregation until June 1906.

The Rev. A. E. Cooper was the eighteenth pastor, who was called as Pastor of Zion Church, Manheim, and entered upon his duties there on January 1, 1906. Zion Church East Petersburg was taken on as a supply beginning July 1, 1906. Some of the noted accomplishments during his Pastorate were: the present Sunday School Constitution was drawn up and adopted March 7, 1907; the Committee for revision of the Constitution consisting of, Mrs. Aaron H. Hurst, Mrs. Adam E. Zerphy, Miss Mary O. Andes, and Pastor Cooper; a Church Constitution was drawn up in 1908, by Daniel E. Rohrer and the Rev. O. O. Leidich; the organization of the Inner Circle Bible Class, December 27, 1908; in 1909, the Sunday School Room was papered and carpeted; a piano and Individual Communion Service were purchased, and a library was established; in 1910, the Janitor's House was raised to two stories at a cost of \$942; the Brotherhood was organized on September 15, 1910, with the following officers: President, Daniel E. Rohrer; Vice President, John G. Bigler; Recording Secretary, Roy B. Sheetz; Financial Secretary, A C. Sheetz; and Treasurer, Paris M. Gerfin; a monthly parish paper, "Zion Herald," was launched April 1911; and the cement walk on the west side of the Church and Cemetery was put down in October of 1911. Pastor Cooper's services terminated October 15, 1911.

BUT THE LORD IS FAITHFUL,
AND HE WILL STRENGTHEN YOU
AND PROTECT YOU FROM THE EVIL ONE.

2 THESSALONIANS 3:3



The nineteenth pastor was the Rev. John F. Knittle, who was called as Pastor by Zion Church, Manheim, from Williamsport, Pennsylvania. He took charge of the two Congregations, December 20, 1911. Electric lights were installed in 1912, the bi-pocket envelope system introduced in January 1914; the interior of the church auditorium frescoed and the floor carpeted during August, 1915, and a Rededication Service was held on September 5. Pastor Knittle served acceptably until the formation of the Neffsville-East Petersburg Charge, consisting of St. Peter's Lutheran Church, Neffsville, and Zion Lutheran Church, East Petersburg, voted by Zion Church, March 31, 1918. During the period between this and the time when a Pastor was procured, the pulpit was supplied by visiting Ministers.

The Rev. Clay Edward Rice became the twentieth pastor. He was called from the Lionville Charge in Chester County, Pennsylvania, and began his services as Pastor of the Neffsville-East Petersburg Charge February 1, 1919. This singular Pastorate, in point of time, has been marked by a number of accomplishments: the Parish paper, "Zion Herald," was continued as "The Lutheran Herald," a joint monthly publication for the two Churches of the Charge. This began in July 1919 and continued until August 1935. Then in November of the same year, a weekly mimeographed folder for both Churches was started, which has been continued to the present for Zion Church, under the name, "The Zion Herald"; the Church basement was excavated, and cement retaining walls constructed and a cement floor laid, during the Spring and Summer of 1921, at a cost of \$1,303; the organization of the Women's Missionary Society, September 29, 1921. During the early part of 1923, steps were taken toward the procuring of a Pipe Organ, which was purchased and installed at a cost of \$3,180, and dedicated June 1, 1924. The Christian and American Flags were furnished in 1926.

Action was taken at a Congregational Meeting July 22, 1928, to enlarge the Sunday School Room and to renovate the Church and Sunday School interior. The interior walls were covered with sanitus, the woodwork and furnishings painted, carpet was installed in the Sunday School room, the ceiling in the Church replastered, new light fixtures and furnace installed, at a total cost of \$7,367.

The Rededication took place February 3, 1929. The outside bulletin board was erected in November 1931. Also, during the same year, the horse sheds were torn away, and a building erected in back of the Janitor's House. The pavement and curb in front of the Church and Janitor's House was laid in 1936. The altar and pulpit hangings were contributed in 1941. Robes for the Pastor and members of the Church Choir were procured and used for the first time during services on November 18, 1945. On the same date a Rededication Service was held, following improvements within the Church building, including the installation of a new ceiling throughout, painting of the side walls, replacing the stairs in the Sunday School vestibule and replastering of the walls and constructing

the robe cabinet, at the cost of over one thousand dollars.

The Confirmed Membership of the Church has grown to a total of 300. The beginning of the Sunday School in our Church is not definitely known. A Union Sunday School is known to have existed, although the time of its organization is not known. But it is known that out of the Union Sunday School, our present flourishing Sunday School has grown.

The One Hundredth Anniversary Year improvements were done during the months of August and September. It was confined to the front of the Church Auditorium, where more churchly appointments were made in keeping with what was to be found in Lutheran Churches at that time.

The following new furnishings had been provided, with the names of the respective donors:

Altar

Mr. and Mrs. H. Melvin Binkley

Altar Panels

Mrs. Fred A. Achey

Altar Desk

The Wagaman Family

Cross

Mr. and Mrs. Irvin W. Lupold

Candlesticks and Candle Lighter

Miss Mary O. Andes

Altar Vases

The Wayne Stauffer Children

Pulpit

Mr. and Mrs. David H. Erb

Pulpit Bible

Mr. and Mrs. Carl B. Myers

Lectern

Mr. and Mrs. Roy S. Gamber, Ladies' Aid Society, Inner Circle Bible Class, Men's Bible Class, and Brotherhood

Communion Rail

Mr. and Mrs. Harry B. Ober

Offering Plates and Receiving Basin

Mr. and Mrs. Walter M. Ernst

Service Book

Young Women's Bible Class

Pastor's Hymn Book

Mr. and Mrs. Adam E. Zerphy

Labor

Victor A. Maurer

George T. Huston

Frank A. Kipp

Carl B. Myers

The Committee in charge of the undertaking consisted of Fred S. Landis, Victor A. Maurer, and H. Melvin Binkley. The installation work was done by Victor A. Maurer, assisted by George T. Huston and Frank A. Kipp. The total cost amounted to \$2,220.00

Following the One Hundredth Anniversary, Clay E. Rice's Pastorate continued until his death on November 9, 1954.

On December 12, 1954, at a special congregational meeting action was taken to dissolve the Zion, East Petersburg - St. Peter's, Neffsville charge. On December 15, 1954, a joint church council meeting of Zion, East Petersburg, and St. Peter's, Neffsville, was held for discussion, and action was taken to discontinue the joint charge. Participating at that meeting were D. Dwight Putman, Synod President and Pastor Warren Heinley, President of the Lancaster Conference.

A call was extended to the twenty-first pastor, the Rev. Garnet L. Zimmerman from the Jerome-Boswell charge in Somerset County. His trial sermon and election were conducted February 20, 1955. The installation of Rev. Garnet Zimmerman took place on April 17, 1955. At a congregational meeting following the installation service, action was taken to build a parsonage at 1849 Stevens Street in East Petersburg.

On May 20, 1957, Charles M. Heaps, Zion's first son to enter the ministry, graduated from Lutheran Theological Seminary in Gettysburg, Pennsylvania.

In 1958, a new Constitution was approved. All members of the Church council would now be known as Deacons, and the terms of service would be limited to two three year terms. Also, the Service Book and Hymnal (the red book) was put into service. During Pastor Zimmerman's Pastorate, the Sunday Church School continued to grow rapidly, and it became necessary to use the Sexton's house for additional Sunday Church School space.

May 11, 1960, marked the purchase of a Conn Electronic Organ for use in the sanctuary. Also, in this year, action was taken to purchase the lot at the northeast corner of the cemetery from Jonas Nissly on September 25, 1960.

On October 14, 1962, action was taken to build a new Education Building to comply with Zion's pledge to "Provide for Christian growth". Dedication of this addition took place on January 26, 1964.

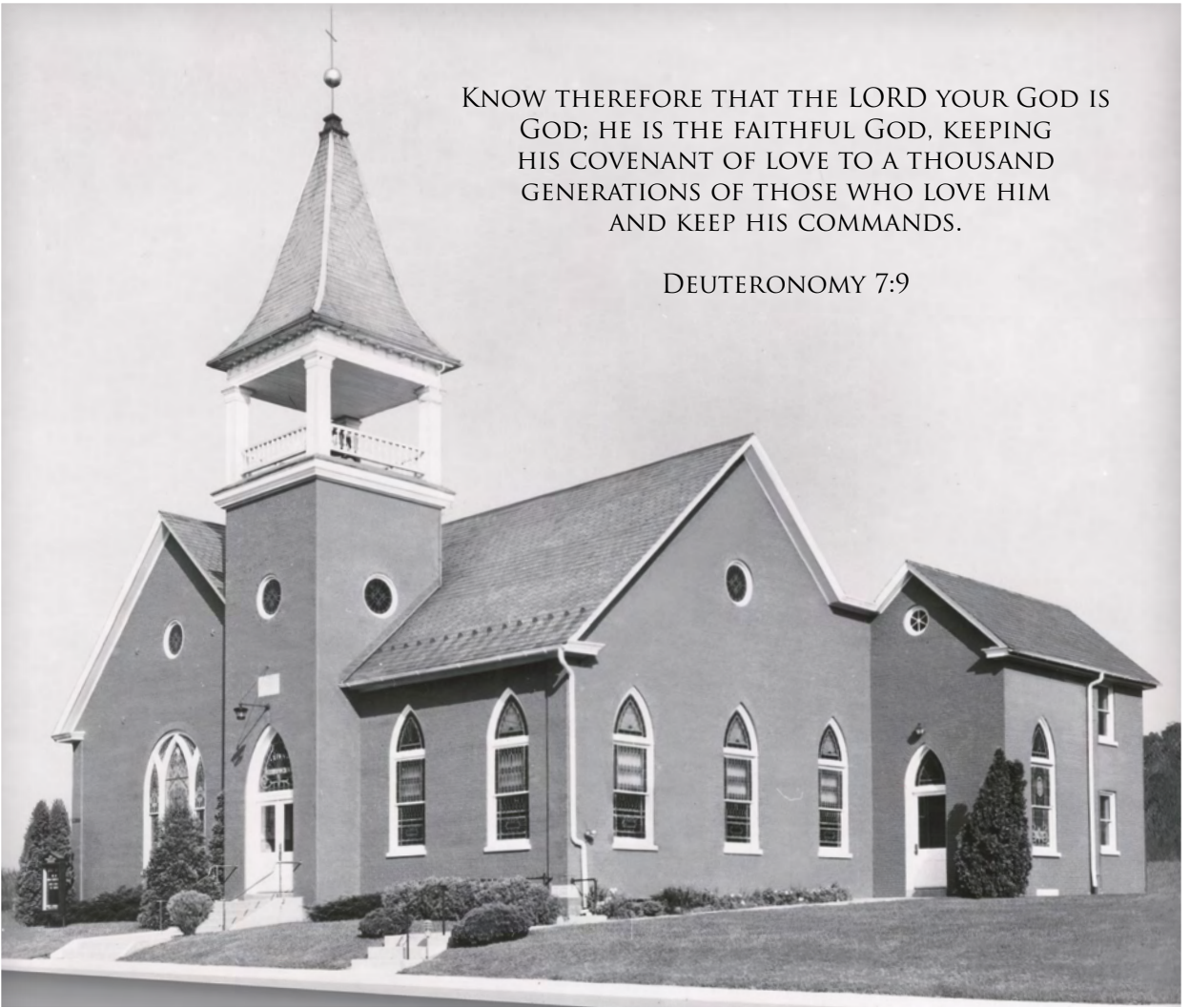
Pastor Zimmerman resigned in April of 1964, to accept a call at Abbottstown, Pennsylvania.

The twenty-second pastor called was the Rev. John E. Stambaugh from Allenville-Belleville Lutheran Parish in Mifflin County. Pastor Stambaugh's installation took place on December 6, 1964.

During Pastor Stambaugh's Pastorate, a revised Constitution was approved in January 1965, and approved by Synod a month later, in February 1965.

KNOW THEREFORE THAT THE LORD YOUR GOD IS
GOD; HE IS THE FAITHFUL GOD, KEEPING
HIS COVENANT OF LOVE TO A THOUSAND
GENERATIONS OF THOSE WHO LOVE HIM
AND KEEP HIS COMMANDS.

DEUTERONOMY 7:9



In 1966, renovations to the Sanctuary were made. Additional pews were secured, and a center isle was constructed in the sanctuary; red carpet was installed down the center isle to the pulpit; and asphalt tile replaced other carpeting in the Sanctuary. Also in 1966, the lot on the southeast side of Broad Street was purchased for parking during Church services.

In 1968, a pre-school Nursery School was established as a project of the Education Committee, who was responsible for its operations. It was open to the community and met three times a week. It was discontinued in 1985, due to lack of enrollment. Action was taken on February 10, 1971, to purchase the Huston Property on the east side of Orange Street for the purposes of expanding our parking facilities.

The Church purchased and began using the green Lutheran Book of Worship in 1973. In 1974, restrooms were installed in the Old Fellowship Hall located under the Sanctuary, and the exterior of the Church building was sandblasted and waterproofed. Due to the rebuilding of Lemon Street by the Borough in 1975, the Church was required to replace the sidewalk and install curbing. At the same time, the cemetery wall along Lemon Street was replaced.

Eleven years after he accepted the post of Pastor at Zion Lutheran Church, the Rev. Stambaugh retired, effective December 31, 1975.

A call was extended to the twenty-third pastor, the Rev. Kent J. Krause, on June 15, 1976. His Pastorate began on July 1, 1976, and his installation took place on September 26, 1976 and Pastor Krause served Zion until he retired December 31st 1997.

Also, in September 1976, the parsonage was sold. A propane powered emergency lighting system was installed in 1978. In 1980, Zion Lutheran sponsored and resettled a family from Laos; Thongla, Nang and their children, Saysona and Phowmmaia Inthavongia. Members from the congregation of Zion donated household goods and small appliances to get the family started. An apartment in Manheim was procured for the Laotian family and Thongla soon found employment to support his family.

The Building Committee consisted of:

Co-Chairman	Kent Krause
Glen Bachman	Lee Ober
Co-Chairman	Joan Siegrist
Richard Shaub	James Sillaman
	Arlene Wilhelm
Merrill Fultz	William Zerby
Mel Harry	Chester Maurer

At this time, Church Council consisted of the following persons:

Daniel Bohler	Kathryn Fahringer
Ernest Huston	Frank Kipp
Lee Manifold	William Sell
Richard Shaub	Warren Taylor
William Zerby	

On May 18, 1981, action was taken, by Zion members, to undertake a major remodeling of the Church building. The remodeling included a new Narthex; a complete renovation of the Sanctuary; construction of a new, lower ceiling; and the purchase of a new furnace and Allen Electric Organ. During these renovations, Zion's worship services were held in the New Fellowship Hall, located under the Sunday Church School building. Rededication of the new Sanctuary took place on April 25, 1982.

March 10, 1982, saw the adoption of Zion Lutheran Church's mission statement: "We are God's family of redeemed people, and we affirm that Zion's mission is to receive,

understand and believe God's word through worship and study; to share the good news of God's love with each other and the world, by reaching out in service, witness and benevolence."

On February 13, 1983, Congregational Council honored Ruth E. Myers, Zion's Financial Secretary, and Franklin A. Kipp, treasurer, for their services to the Church for 26 years and 25 years respectively.

In 1988, Zion again accepted responsibility to sponsor and resettle a refugee family. The Kaniasty family was originally from Poland. The Church family, once again, donated household goods and small appliances to get the family started. Jobs were secured for Mr. and Mrs. Kaniasty, and their daughter was enrolled in the public school system.

During Pastor Krause's pastorate, the standing committees were encouraged to establish and be responsible for each of their own committee programs and strategies. Their recommendations were presented to Zion's Congregational Council for approval, and if approved, they then were responsible for its implementation.

LET US HOLD UNSWERVINGLY TO THE HOPE WE
PROFESS, FOR HE WHO PROMISED IS FAITHFUL.

HEBREWS 10:23

Two ad-hoc committees were formed. One was organized to study and recommend a Church Christian Marriage Policy. The other was organized to study and recommend a policy of Baptism. Both committees' policies were accepted and initiated.

In 1988-1989, the congregation, in conjunction with East Petersburg Borough Council established a youth center in the basement of Zion. This Center was established for youths of various ages and was open to the residents of East Petersburg and neighboring townships. Although they still gather in the basement, the operation and leadership of the youth center was eventually transferred to the East Hempfield Recreation Area

The summer of 1992, saw the acquisition and installation of an air conditioner for the Sanctuary. This was made possible through a Memorial Gift.

August 1993, Zion served as headquarters for "Gift of the Heart" for Mid-West Flood Relief. This project was headed by Brother Edward Crafts and staffed by volunteers from the congregation. During this relief effort, Health Kits and Clean-Up Kits were donated

by members of our congregation, as well as the community. A tractor trailer from an area business was donated in which to transport the goods to the areas most in need in the mid-west.

During the years of 1993 to 1996, various areas of the Education Building underwent re-decorating by the Property Committee, which was Chaired by Lee Manifold. This included the Sunday Church School rooms, hallways, and Church Library. The Church Nursery was also redecorated. Also, in 1993, a new roof was installed on the Education Building.

In 1995, the Congregation took action to repave the parking lot across Broad Street, and to enlarge the parking lot adjacent to the Education Building. Additional handicap parking spaces were also provided for members and visitors.

As we enter 1997 - our One Hundred Fiftieth Year Anniversary - a new roof has been installed on the Sanctuary Building, replacing the slate tile roof.

Also, in the Spring of 1997, families located in Mississippi and the Red River Valley need assistance due to extensive flooding. Our Brother Edward Crafts has once again organized a Flood Relief for the victims of these floods. Volunteers from the church assembled Health Kits and Clean-Up Kits for transport to the stricken areas.



HE WILL COVER YOU WITH HIS FEATHERS, AND UNDER HIS WINGS YOU WILL FIND REFUGE; HIS FAITHFULNESS WILL BE YOUR SHIELD AND RAMPART.

PSALM 91: 4

YOUR LOVE, O LORD, REACHES TO THE HEAVENS, YOUR FAITHFULNESS TO THE SKIES.

PSALM 36:5

One Hundred Fiftieth Anniversary Committee

Convener

William Sell

Photography

George Parrish

Co-Chairpersons

Mary Ann Hess
Heidi M. Gumbert

Banquet

Barbara Ross

Secretary, Public Relations

Joan Siegrist

Artifacts/History

Glenn Bachman

Commemoratives

M. Sue Tubay

Anniversary Booklet / History

Frank Kipp

Committee Liaison

Gloria Ober

Commemorative Quilt

Frances Munday

Worship Services

Frances Munday

Service Committee

Madeline Hartenstine

Mailings/Invitations

Betty Semmentelli

Congregational Council

Glenn Gockley

Leo Tubay

Todd Sillaman

Kathleen Zeamer

Michael Leidy

Lisa Androconis

Steven Farkas

William Grim

Mary Ann Hess

Secretary

Lynda Young

Staff

Pastor

Rev. Kent J. Krause

Parish Secretary

Joan Siegrist

Financial Secretary

Kathryn Fahringer

Treasurer

Shawn Serfass

Director of Music

Merle Baer

Sextons

Janet Hoover

Linda Stoner

Newsletter Staff

Shirley Eshleman

Ernest Huston

Church School Superintendents

Tom Campbell

Clyde Hartenstine

O LORD GOD ALMIGHTY, WHO IS LIKE YOU?
YOU ARE MIGHTY, O LORD, AND YOUR FAITHFULNESS SURROUNDS YOU.

PSALM 89:8

Great Is Thy Faithfulness

175
years

After Pastor Robert Kurz served as interim pastor from January 1, 1998 until June 1999, the twenty-fourth pastor was Mark C. Chavez, who was born in Denver, Colorado. He is a graduate of the U.S. Air Force Academy and attended Luther Northwestern Theological Seminary in St. Paul, Minnesota, where he earned a Master of Divinity. Pastor Chavez served as Pastor at Peace Lutheran Church in Glen Burnie, Maryland until he accepted the call from Zion Lutheran. He began his ministry in June 16, 1999, serving until August 31, 2000.

Ordained May 19, 1937, Pastor Ernest Huston served Zion Lutheran as the interim pastor for more than a year—August 2000 until December 31, 2001. Pastor Huston was a graduate of the Lutheran Theological Seminary in Gettysburg, Pennsylvania and earned a Master of Sacred Theology degree from the Lutheran Theologian Seminary of Philadelphia—near Mt. Airy. He served a number of churches as an interim pastor when he retired (1977). It is important to note that Pastor Huston did not fully retire until the age of 90.

The twenty-fifth pastor, John Smaligo, grew up in Irwin, Pennsylvania and attended Seton Hill University-St. Vincent College. Pastor Smaligo received a Bachelor's Degree of

Voice and Music Education, attended the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Gettysburg and received a Master of Divinity. He also attended post-graduate classes in ecumenical studies at St. Mary's Seminary in Baltimore, Maryland. Pastor Smaligo served a few local churches and also served as the Lancaster County Council of Churches Executive Director before accepting the January 2002 call at Zion Lutheran. He was pastor until October 12, 2008.

Pastor Smaligo was instrumental in initiating a Zion Community Meals program with the help of other local churches. In 2004, he traveled to visit Forest Lutheran Church in Mbeya, Tanzania, which is part of the Konde Diocese—Zion Lutheran's sister congregation. Pastor Smaligo stayed several weeks and was able to experience the culture as well as discover how blessed Zion is as a congregation to enjoy our freedoms and conveniences.

In 2002, in remembrance of St. Francis, Zion Lutheran offered a Sunday Pet Blessing for any animals brought to the church lawn.

In 2004, Zion Lutheran formed a Sunday School class for young adults with mental disabilities. Pastor Smaligo knew that the lessons of Confirmation would not be as overwhelming for the students if they could study at their own pace.

FOR THE WORD OF THE LORD IS RIGHT AND TRUE; HE IS FAITHFUL IN ALL HE DOES.

PSALM 33:4

Pastor Smaligo had organized the Festival of Hope fundraiser for many years prior to coming to Zion Lutheran. He suggested that members of Zion's congregation join the yearly event, which took place at a different church each Advent season. Money raised from the event was given to many outreach programs in Lancaster.

A team of creative congregation members were encouraged by Pastor Smaligo to decorate the church for its major church seasonal festivals. Festive aisle candles, banners, draping & flowers filled the Sanctuary during these times of celebration.

At Pastor Smaligo's urging, Zion Lutheran youth became involved in Work Camps to help the underprivileged. He organized weekend retreats for social gatherings as well as chaperoning them to the Lutheran Youth Conference held every three years at various places in the U.S. The pastor started a monthly Sunday Family Night and an annual Vacation Bible School (VBS) program for children ages 3 to 10.

VBS, a four-evening summer event, was open to the community. The children played games, did crafts, participated in a Bible Study, ate snacks and learned fun songs. The VBS program was run by volunteers from the congregation. The week usually ended with a small carnival and a short program for the parents to enjoy.

In 2004, a group appointed by the Congregational Council began an exploratory process to purchase the neighboring property—1945 Broad Street. Funding for the \$225,000 purchase was achieved through private donations and a short capital campaign. The property expansion allowed Zion Lutheran to move its offices and additional classroom space. Dedication took place—October 29, 2006.

A second Sunday morning worship service—8:00 a.m.—was added to accommodate more people. Sunday School remained at 9:00 a.m. during the school year. Summer worship had one 9:00 a.m. service. Bi-annual, shut-in Communion services (Christmas & Easter)—followed by a luncheon—were started. This service gave Worship and Communion access to members of the congregation who were not able to attend Worship.

In 2006, Pastor Smaligo was instrumental in hiring Pastor Mary Margaret Ruth as the first Zion Lutheran Associate Pastor and the twenty-sixth pastor to serve Zion. The church was growing and help was needed in many areas to keep up with the demands of a larger congregation. After many years as a public school teacher, Pastor Ruth retired

BUT YOU, O LORD, ARE A COMPASSIONATE AND GRACIOUS GOD,
SLOW TO ANGER AND ABOUNDING IN LOVE AND FAITHFULNESS.

PSALM 86:15

from teaching in 2000, while attending the Lutheran Theological Seminary in Gettysburg, Pennsylvania. Being called as the Zion Lutheran Associate Pastor in October of 2006, Pastor Ruth served Zion by preaching and visiting with the congregation's elderly and shut-in members until her October 21, 2018 retirement.

In 2007, members of Zion Lutheran purchased the new red Lutheran hymnals and "With One Voice" hymnals—a collection of slightly more contemporary hymns. New off-white choir robes were also procured with funds from the Memorial Committee.

In 2008, the members of Zion Lutheran East Petersburg approved a capital campaign of \$981,740 to build a two-story addition with an elevator that would provide access to all the major parts of the church building for all members. The theme of this campaign was "Don't be frightened by the size of the task," Chronicles 28.20.

Groundbreaking took place on April 20, 2008. De Vitry Architects designed the addition and Larry Gerlach was contracted to build the project. Dedication was February 8, 2009. The campaign lasted three years and debt was paid off completely in record time. Some church services were held at the East Petersburg Fire Company Fire Hall until the renovations were completed.

Pastor Smaligo decided to relocate to the Pittsburgh area to be closer to family and accepted a call at Harrold Zion Lutheran Church in Greensburg, Pennsylvania. Pastor Smaligo's wife, Mary, was Zion's Music Director; Zion Lutheran had two positions to fill with their departure.

In 2008, the Worship and Music Committee hired Eldonna Filardi as Music Director. Director Filardi was instrumental in starting a Music & Arts program at the church. These concerts featured many outside musical groups and took place a few times a year. Simultaneously, a featured artist would display his/her work in the Narthex. Exposure to these artistic groups was received well by the community. She stayed in this position until April 2021.

When Pastor Smaligo resigned, Pastor Ruth continued as Zion Lutheran's only minister. She remained in her original Associate Pastor position after the twenty-seventh pastor, Daniel Long, was called to Zion in November 2009. As a former Lancaster Trinity Lutheran Associate Pastor and former Inner City Group of Lancaster Executive Director, Pastor Long served Zion Lutheran from November 1, 2009 until June 20, 2018.

Pastor Long continued with many of the active programs at Zion—including Community Meals, the Clothing Bank, the Prayer Shawl Ministry, the Quilter Guild and the Donation Garden that helps to provide fresh vegetables to those who are in need. Along with these programs, Zion Lutheran started a Stephen Ministry which trains parishioners to be Stephen ministers who can help those who are facing crisis in life.

Pastor Long involved the youth of the congregation by continuing to organize Work Camp trips, offering luncheons for the college students when they were on school break and participating in the Lutheran Youth Conference held every three years around the country.

He also brought together young adults from the congregation to add a Memorial Garden to the Zion Lutheran cemetery. The proposed location was part of the property purchased with the Parish House. Several plans and estimates by various landscapers were put together. The project was awarded to Tomlinson Bomberger for about \$20,000. The garden was completed and dedicated on the May 3, 2015.

During this period, several church building improvements and maintenance procedures were completed. The heating system was replaced in 2010 for \$8,000. In 2015, new air conditioning units were installed for \$15,000. The kitchen received upgraded counters.

In 2017, Zion Lutheran installed a new sound system for the Nave to improve the quality of the music as well as featuring a boosted sound for attendees of the worship services; this project cost \$23,550. The exterior of the church also received many improvements. In 2016, the bricks were repainted and sealed. Approximately \$54,000 was raised by the congregation to complete most of the brick exterior.

During 2016-2020, many areas of the building were painted—including the Bell Tower, which is mostly wood. Roof repairs have been on-going.

As the history previously reported, in 1957 Charles M. Heaps was Zion's first son to enter the ministry. During this time, Angela Sementelli Hammer became Zion's first daughter to enter the ministry.

During fall of 2018, Music Director Eldonna Filardi & Betty Sementelli were instrumental (no pun intended) in the purchase planning of a used church organ that was offered by Susquehanna Organ Company. Manufactured by the Allen Company, the organ cost was \$85,000. Money from the Memorial fund, a \$20,000 capital campaign that did not

MAY GOD HIMSELF, THE GOD OF PEACE, SANCTIFY YOU THROUGH
AND THROUGH. MAY YOUR WHOLE SPIRIT, SOUL AND BODY BE KEPT
BLAMELESS AT THE COMING OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST.
THE ONE WHO CALLS YOU IS FAITHFUL, AND HE WILL DO IT.

THESSALONIANS 5:23-24

meet its goal, was used as partial payment. The balance was paid from a generous bequeath by Dick and Bonnie Glatfelter, who were active members of the congregation for many years.

When Pastor Long retired, Zion Lutheran was served by interim Pastor H. James Tanner—October 2018 until July 2019.

Pastor Ben Erzkus accepted Zion Lutheran's call—July 27, 2019—as the twenty-eighth pastor, serving until August 2021. During in-person church services, Pastor Erzkus never preached from the pulpit. He chose to be closer to the congregation and always spoke without notes. This style was well received.

Pastor Erzkus had only a few months of normal, in-person church services until the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic. The pandemic forced Zion Lutheran to worship in a way that no one had ever imagined. The COVID-19 period was a difficult time for all organized churches.

As COVID-19 continued in March of 2020, Pennsylvania Governor Tom Wolf issued an emergency order preventing large groups from meeting indoors. Pastor Erzkus and his wife, Courtney, who was serving as a pastor at Grace Lutheran Church in Red Lion, started what was the beginning of online church—using online chat/conference platforms and the Internet. This joint effort between churches & pastors was successful and well attended.

The early days of online church began in the Erzkus family's living room with the pastors providing the service & music. During most Sundays, both churches had more than 100 people attending online, collectively.

Pastor Erzkus started a weekly in-person Bible Study that was located outside the Parish House. In addition to the in-person study, an online option was offered. The program was greatly appreciated by a number of people.

After a few months, both churches started their own separate online worship services. For a short time, Zion Lutheran was permitted to have a limited in-person church service, but also continued online services for those who could not attend or for those who were uncomfortable being in large groups of people.

During the pandemic, hospital and home visits were difficult or impossible; many retirement homes had restricted visitation. Funerals were delayed or restricted to family members. Weddings were postponed. The weekly Monday night free dinner that would host 25-30 people was restructured as a grab-and-go packed lunch program, now requiring 50 meals to be prepared each week.

Late summer of 2020 allowed Zion Lutheran to return to limited, in-person church services. Beginning in November 2020, Pastor Erzkus took parental leave for six weeks to help with the birth of his second child—returning December 2020. When Pastor Erzkus was on leave, Pastor Jackie Roderick served as the substitute pastor.

The COVID-19 pandemic may be considered the most difficult time in Zion Lutheran's history. During this time, worship was only available online, but with a live stream broadcast from the church.

In August 2021, following a call to chaplaincy at West Virginia University, Pastor Erzkus

resigned. He and his wife became co-pastors at this post.

In September 2021, Paster Pamela Carnes became Zion Lutheran's interim pastor and continued to serve Zion during the 175th Anniversary year.

James Riggs became the Director of Music in September 2021—coming out of retirement to serve Zion Lutheran. He is an accomplished musician with published works and a long career in serving several large churches in the region.

The talents of Director Riggs and his wife, Saralee, have been warmly welcomed by the Zion Lutheran congregation. For almost two years, Zion Lutheran had no choir because of COVID-19. Director Riggs rebuilt and honed the Zion Lutheran choir. The choir's return was a welcomed return to the church.

The Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church of East Petersburg Constitution was re-written per ELCA guidelines in 2022.

YOUR FAITHFULNESS CONTINUES THROUGH TO ALL GENERATIONS;
YOU ESTABLISHED THE EARTH, AND IT ENDURES.

PSALM 119:90

A weekly live stream church service has become a normal complement to the current in-person worship. The average in-person attendance is 50-60 and 6-8 online. Using free online video storage services, church live stream worship videos are packaged for online archives and for follow-up viewing. The church averages about 10 additional weekly viewers from the archives.

With the many trials of the COVID-19 pandemic and the perseverance of generous, dedicated church members, Zion Lutheran adapted and adopted modern thinking in order to stay connected to the congregation—sharing the word of God through multi-media and social media. It is the congregation's hope that the video archives will serve future church members as a visible and interactive historical reminder of community & shared innovation. Any trial may be overcome as long as we keep our faith and believe in each other.

Great Is Thy Faithfulness.

GOD, WHO HAS CALLED YOU INTO FELLOWSHIP
WITH HIS SON, JESUS CHRIST OUR LORD, IS FAITHFUL.

1 CORINTHIANS 1:9



One Hundred Seventy-Fifth Anniversary Committee

Ann Fitzgerald Ober
Mary Chesters
Bonnie Stebbins
Jessie Long
Kim Gable
Lindsey Wagner
Lisa Flood
Marci Mondock
Charlie Houck
Pastor Pamela J. Carnes
Sam Maurer

Staff

Pastor

Pamela J. Carnes

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Cindy Miley
Sherry Barnhill

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Pat Crawford

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Barb Breneman

Director of Music

James Riggs

Sextons

Linda Stoner
Doug Stoner

Congregational Council

President

Lindsey Wagner

Vice President

Charlie Houck

John Chesters

Mary Chesters

Lisa Flood

Janet Hoover

Donald Long

Sam Maurer

Barbara Ross

Council Secretary

Jennifer Sterner

IF WE CONFESS OUR SINS, HE IS FAITHFUL AND JUST
AND WILL FORGIVE US OUR SINS
AND PURIFY US FROM ALL UNRIGHTEOUSNESS.

1 JOHN 1:9

175
years



For the 175th Anniversary
of Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church
East Petersburg, PA

By James Riggs & Saralee Riggs



In anthems, hymns, and spirit songs we raise a jubilee.
Let all creation join with us in brilliant harmony.
Praise our Creator with one voice; may all our songs agree.
For who is like the One True God who reigns eternally?

Let mercy roll across the land, and peace rule at its side.
Let justice roar where tyrants stand, and freedom is denied.
May discord and oppression cease, may God be glorified.
For who is like the One True God, our Savior and our Guide?

So let the jubilee begin, and seeds of joy be sown.
Let earth rejoice, let heaven ring with music 'round the throne.
May three times "Holy" be the song forever heaven's own,
For who is like the One True God? No one but God alone!

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