

LOCAL CHURCH PROFILE



Zion United Church of Christ
Lehighton, Pa 18235

Full Time Pastor

Keystone Conference
Mountain Valley Association

January 8, 2026

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Consent and Validation

*"God is able to provide you with every blessing, so that
having all sufficiency in all things at all times,
you may abound in every good work."*

(2 Corinthians 9:8)

POSITION POSTING

LISTING INFORMATION

Church name: Zion United Church of Christ
Street address: 225 Iron Street
Supplemental web links:

Additional ecumenical affiliations:
N/A

Conference: Keystone Conference – Mountain Valley
Association

UCC Conference or Association Staff Contact Person

Name: Rev. Dr. Nora Foust

Title: Conference Minister

Phone: 717-652-1560

Email: nora@Keystoneucc.org

Staff Contact: Doug Lander – 610-704-1532 – dlander@ptd.net

Summary Ministry Description:

Our Church membership and active participation is on a decline, along with monetary offerings. Our active members are predominantly seniors. Young parents bring their children to Sunday School but have not found a place to participate in the life of the church themselves. This may appear bleak, but the Holy Spirit is alive in a core group of committed people who find joy in service to our Lord. In that same spirit, we the people are acting on a bold decision to revitalize! While we are seeking a full-time strong, confident and compassionate pastor who is willing to take on the challenge of leadership in this effort, we also realize our part in the process. Our vision for the future is a church family where all people feel safe, share love and find joy in serving our Lord.

Photographs:









What we value:

We are a small community with access to recreational activities – biking and hiking trails, rafting, state parks – and historical sites and areas. The area has excellent school programs and facilities and is close to colleges and universities.

Current size of membership:

Roles from 2023/2024 is 355 members. The approximate number meeting active member criteria is 200.

Languages used in ministry (*other than English*): None

Position Title: Pastor

Position Duration

Settled – a called position intended for longer-term ministry in which the minister moves church membership to the congregation and moves standing to related association

Compensation Level

Full Time

Does the total support package meet conference compensation guidelines?

Yes, for some compensation items but not for all

SCOPE OF WORK

(Full Job Description can be provided)

- Preparation and leadership of Sunday worship, crafting of Liturgy and bulletin in coordination with office manager. Planning of music in coordination with music director. Preaching, offering prayers, etc. Prepare “time for children” worship segment and deliver as needed. Administer the Sacraments of the Church.
- Teach and/or coordinate Confirmation class. Work with and support church teachers, lay liturgists, and church lay leaders as needed. Faith formation and vitality through prayer, Bible study and service, identifying helpful resources and opportunities and helping lay persons take advantage of them.
- Pastoral care in collaboration with lay visitation team. Conduct home, hospital, and institutional visitations. Perform crisis, grief, family, marital, and personal counseling with appropriate referrals as needed, while maintaining strict confidentiality. Support and develop new members of the congregation.
- Perform pre-baptismal and pre-marital counseling. Plan, write, and lead services for weddings, funerals, confirmations, baptisms, etc.
- Community engagement in leading the way for the church to be an ambassador of God’s love.
- Strategic planning for current and new directions in ministry.
- Attend meetings and give leadership as needed to church programs, in collaboration with lay leaders. For example, consistory, personnel, spiritual council.
- Responsible for supervision of staff. Work with and support paid staff.
- Participate in wider church activities; advocate and interpret for the local community and members of Zion including the work of the mission of the UCC & Keystone Conference.
- Participate in various ecumenical and community times of worship.

Core Competencies:

- Is Christ-centered person who is effective in planning, preaching, and leading worship.
- Is compassionate and caring person that is effective working with children/ youth and is willing to make pastoral calls to hospitals and homebound.
- Helps people develop their spiritual life and encourage people to relate their faith to their daily lives.

COMPENSATION AND SUPPORT

Salary Basis: \$60,000.00 includes housing allowance.

Benefits: Salary plus Benefits including Health, Dental and Vision Insurance.
Salary is negotiable with insurance choices.

What is the expected living situation for your next minister?

Living nearby with a housing allowance.

Comment on the residential/commuting expectations for your next minister.

Housing of his/her own choice. It should be within a reasonable distance of the Church, allowing timely and efficient access to the building, members, and activities.

State any incentives: N/A

Describe peer and professional supports available for ministers in your association/conference:

Assistance is available from Keystone Conference including Communities of Practice, Area Mission Councils and the Association.

Is there a local ministerium?

No, but there are Communities of Practice within the Conference.

If applicable, describe how your church will adopt part-time adjustments in the pastoral schedule to support a minister's bi-vocational employment: N/A

WHO IS GOD CALLING TO MINISTER WITH US?

Describe the ministry goals you envision your next minister co-collaborating with the congregation to achieve as well as other churches and community organizations.

Strengthen our spiritual programs and provide guidance, ideas, and inspiration to committees and Consistory to help achieve more involvement of active and non-active members and increase our Sunday morning attendance. We would like our Pastor to lead the confirmation class and serve on the Board of Christian Ed to achieve and maintain an active youth group

Describe how your vision of the minister you are now seeking will assist the congregation in making an impact beyond its walls.

We are envisioning a Pastor who will support and stimulate expansion of our mission outreach, provide ideas to improve our accessibility to all people thereby expanding our membership, and one who will build relationships with our neighbors including sister churches and other community organizations.

Specify language requirements or culturally-specific capacities preferred in a next ministerial leader, and why those matter to the congregation's sense of calling.

N/A

Based on what you have learned about who your church is, who your church's neighbor is, and who God is calling the church to become, describe four areas of excellence from *The Marks of Faithful & Effective Authorized Ministry* that your next minister will display to further equip the congregation's ministry in these areas.

- Understanding the power of the Holy Spirit at work through the elements of Christian worship to nurture faith.
- Strategically creating the future of God's Church; leading to a faith formation effectively across generations.
- Engaging in missions and outreach.
- Exhibiting strong moral character and personal integrity while building relationships of mutual trust.

WHO IS GOD CALLING US TO BECOME?

Who is God calling you to become as a congregation?

We want to be a church where all are loved, purpose is found, and lives are changed. Our goal is to bring people, both young and old, to Jesus and equip them for their ministry in the church and for life missions in the world. Zion UCC wants to provide the best environment possible for the Kingdom of our Lord. We feel this is best achieved by placing value on youth, community, loving and caring, glory to God, and fellowship.

Describe how God is calling you to reach out to address the emerging challenges and opportunities of your community and congregation.

Mission Statement: To bring people to Jesus and equip them for their ministry in the church and for life missions in our world. Our church undertook a period of discernment and long-range planning in 2023/24. Planning was used to develop new mission, vision, and value statements for our congregation. Short-term, mid-term, and long-term goals up to 8 years were developed. Planning also resulted in contemporary services being included in our ministry throughout the year. Intentional long-range planning will continue with pastoral guidance.

WHO ARE WE NOW?

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11-YEAR REPORT

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CONGREGATIONAL REFLECTIONS

Describe your congregation's life of faith.

We strive to be a friendly Christian community. We welcome others to join us in our worship and service to God. Our emphasis is on learning and understanding the Bible and following the example of Jesus and his followers.

Describe several strengths or positive qualities of your congregation.

Zion UCC is actively involved in local mission outreach. We have a small core of dedicated volunteers and staff willing to share their talents. We have become more acceptable to change.

Describe what worship is like when your congregation gathers.

We have two weekly services. A worship express service at 8:15 am Sunday morning which lasts about 30 minutes and communes weekly, followed by our 10:15 worship service. Communion is served the first Sunday of each month at the 10:15 service. All services are conducted in English. Special services throughout the year include Children's Remembrance Service, Maundy Thursday, All Saints Day, Healing Services, Christmas Eve Service, Christmas Cantata, Ash Wednesday, and Music Sunday.

Our baptisms and communion services have not returned to a more meaningful, spiritual sacrament since they were shortened during the COVID pandemic. We feel baptism is a Sacrament that connects the spiritual lives of the child being baptized and their family with the congregation. We become one community of faith through baptism and communion and look for creative ways to once again deepen this connection. Meaningful worship experiences around the Sacraments are important to us.

Varied styles of preaching are appreciated, including presenting messages using humor, that are down to earth, that relate to daily life, and that are rooted in Scripture.

Describe the educational program and/or faith formation vision of your church.

We offer classes for children aged 2 through 6th grade and a two-year confirmation class for 7th and 8th grade. We use a different curriculum for each class. Last year we used 'A-Z Through the Bible' for kindergarten and 'All in One Sunday School' for grades 1-3 & 4-6. Confirmation focused on the Old Testament and followed with the New Testament the 2nd year. They also utilized a curriculum called 'Answers in Genesis' and supplemented it with many more contemporary themes. This was well received by the youth of the confirmation class. We have a few adults that participate in meaningful messages conversations. We would like to see this class grow. Periodically, confirmands are assigned to acolyte during worship. Our vision is to have the confirmands participate more often in this capacity and beyond, such as greeters, ushers, liturgists, and even to help with food distributions and bus stop mission, so that when they are confirmed they are already involved in the church and will remain involved.

Describe how your congregation is organized for ministry and mission.

There is a Nominating Committee who approaches members to serve on Consistory and the standing committees. The nominations are then approved by the Congregation at the annual meeting. The standing committees generate minutes which are provided to Consistory for review. The Consistory approves these minutes at which point they are placed in the sanctuary for the congregation to review. The weekly church bulletin and the monthly newsletter are used to communicate, as well as announcements during worship.

- Consistory – meets monthly and has 8 members including the President and Vice President. Meetings average 1.5 to 2 hours. Consistory oversees the Pastor. Our vision is to find dedicated, vibrant people to help in the decision making of the church.
 - Spiritual Council – Meets as needed and has 3 members.
 - Altar Guild – Has 5 members that have short meetings as needed.
 - Board of Christian Ed. – Currently trying to rebuild this program and recruit new members. They currently meet as needed with 5 members.
 - Finance Committee – Meets quarterly.
 - Mission Outreach – Meets monthly, except for July and has 7 members. Meetings last about an hour, however, members rotate spending an additional half hour packing bus stop snack bags prior to the meeting.
 - Property Committee – Meets monthly with 6 members.
 - Scholarship Committee – Meets as needed with 3 members.
 - The Music Department – A team of volunteers.
-
- When it comes to decision-making, how many hours are spent in meetings per month? Most meetings last at least an hour.
 - Think of a time when action had to be taken quickly, for example when a crisis or disaster occurred. How was that accomplished? We have a group of very loyal and hardworking members, including paid staff, who represent our congregation. If something urgent needs to be addressed outside normal meeting or office hours, an emergency meeting will be scheduled or there is communication via emails.

- Can you provide the next minister with a copy of an organization structure, bylaws and/or annual report to further explain the patterns of the church's activity and governance? Yes.

11-YEAR REPORT



United Church of Christ ELEVEN YEAR CHURCH PROFILE BASED ON DATA REPORTED IN UCC YEARBOOKS

Church: 0220 - Zion United Church of Christ - Lehighton, PA

Assoc/Conf: Mountain Valley (Keystone) in Keystone
Schedule: 0 - UCC Church

Year	Members	Avg Weekly Attendance	CHRED / Faith Form	Confirmation	Confession	Transfer Or Reaffirm	Death Or Trans Out	Other Losses	Net Membs Adds-Removed
2014	501	128	62	5	4	0	6	29	-26
2015	500	84	41	4	0	3	8	0	-1
2016	510	84	40	7	0	13	10	0	10
2017	502	82	34	5	0	2	15	0	-8
2018	494	89	40	7	0	0	15	0	-8
2019	492	88	34	4	0	7	13	0	-2
2020	487	73	29	4	0	1	10	0	-5
2021	483	66	25	3	0	6	7	0	-4
2022	482	64	30	4	0	6	11	0	-1
2023	477	65	34	4	0	0	9	0	-5
2024	469	65	20	4	0	2	14	0	0

Year	Current Expenses	Capital Payments	Basic Support	Additional UCC Giving	Total OCWM	Other Support	Wider Mission	Death Or Trans Out	Basic Supp % Curr Local	Total Expend	Pledges And Offerings
2014	\$213,287.00	\$0.00	\$8,280.00	\$724.00	\$9,004.00	\$6,167.00	\$15,171.00	0	4%	\$219,454.00	\$220,028.00
2015	\$206,230.00	\$0.00	\$8,900.00	\$792.00	\$9,692.00	\$10,556.00	\$20,248.00	3	4%	\$216,786.00	\$176,632.00
2016	\$249,581.00	\$85,000.00	\$8,700.00	\$211.00	\$8,911.00	\$9,036.00	\$17,947.00	13	3%	\$343,617.00	\$167,785.00
2017	\$227,629.00	\$0.00	\$8,700.00	\$3,278.00	\$11,978.00	\$0.00	\$11,978.00	2	4%	\$228,644.00	\$143,464.00
2018	\$197,625.00	\$0.00	\$4,500.00	\$0.00	\$4,500.00	\$8,860.00	\$13,360.00	0	2%	\$206,485.00	\$142,230.00
2019	\$204,774.00	\$0.00	\$3,250.00	\$0.00	\$3,250.00	\$7,325.00	\$10,575.00	7	2%	\$212,099.00	\$140,239.00
2020	\$182,334.00	\$0.00	\$3,000.00	\$857.00	\$3,857.00	\$8,417.00	\$12,274.00	0	2%	\$190,751.00	\$148,860.00
2021	\$188,706.00	\$0.00	\$3,500.00	\$2,200.00	\$5,700.00	\$7,500.00	\$13,200.00	0	2%	\$197,531.00	\$153,084.00
2022	\$205,697.00	\$0.00	\$3,500.00	\$3,385.00	\$6,885.00	\$4,705.00	\$11,590.00	6	2%	\$213,122.00	\$139,383.00
2023	\$218,843.00	\$0.00	\$3,500.00	\$575.00	\$4,075.00	\$7,500.00	\$11,575.00	0	2%	\$226,343.00	\$139,783.00
2024	\$203,523.00	\$0.00	\$750.00	\$1,050.00	\$1,800.00	\$5,400.00	\$7,200.00	2	0%	\$209,448.00	\$140,000.00

% Change	Members	Avg Weekly Attendance	CHRED / Faith Form	Total Additions	Total Removals	CURR Local Expenses	Total OCWM	Total Expenditures
2019-2024	-4.67	-26.14	-41.18	-100.00	-100.00	-0.61	-44.62	-1.25
2014-2024	-6.39	-49.22	-67.74	-100.00	-100.00	-4.58	-80.01	-4.56

For more information about report data, please visit [Data-Hub-Church-Field-Guide.pdf](#)

CONGREGATIONAL DEMOGRAPHICS

Describe those who participate in your church.

		<i>Is this number an estimate? (check if yes)</i>
Number of active members:	60	✓
Number of active non-members:	10	✓
Total of church participants (sum of the numbers above):	70	✓

Percentage of total participants who have been in the church:

		<i>Is this percentage an estimate? (check if yes)</i>
More than 10 years:	50%	✓
Less than 10, more than 5 years:	25%	✓
Less than 5 years:	25%	✓

Number of total participants by age:

0-11	12-17	18-24	25-34	45-54	55-64	65-74	75+	<i>Are these numbers an estimate? (check if yes)</i>
	3	10	6	7	6	20	13	✓

Percentage of adults in various household types:

		<i>Is this percentage an estimate? (check if yes)</i>
Single adults under 35:		unknown
Joint household with minors:	10%	✓
Single adults age 35-65:		unknown
Joint household with no minors:	40%	✓
Single adults over 65:	25%	✓

Education level of adult participants by percentage:

		<i>Is this percentage an estimate? (check if yes)</i>
High school:	14%	✓
College:	29%	✓
Graduate School:	12%	✓
Specialty Training:		unknown
Other (please specify):	45%	✓ (some college/ vocational school)

Percentage of adults in various employment types:

		<i>Is this number an estimate? (check if yes)</i>
Adults who are employed:	27%	✓
Adults who are retired:	68%	✓
Adults who are not fully employed:	0%	✓

Describe the range of occupations of working adults in the congregation:

Occupations include business, clerical, professional, laborer/manufacturing, and tradesperson. 36% of surveyed members chose other for their occupation.

Describe the mix of ethnic heritages in your congregation, and the overall racial make-up. Most UCC congregations tend to describe themselves as “diverse.” Yet, the vast majority of UCC congregations are mono-cultural. What does diversity mean in your context?

Most of our congregation is Caucasian and primarily of German descent.

List the date your congregation has had or will have a conversation using a resource such as the Welcoming Diversity Inventory. Comment on the results. Our church has not engaged in conversations of this type but are willing to do so in the future.

PARTICIPATION AND STAFFING

Ways of Gathering	Estimated number of people involved in attendance	Who plans each of the listed gatherings?
Adult Groups or Classes	3-5	1 non-member who attends every week
Baptisms (<i>number last year</i>)	5	Pastor
Children's Groups or Classes	2	Board of Christian Ed
Christmas Eve/Easter Worship attendance	225/ 168	Pastor and Music Director
Church-wide Meals (Easter Breakfast/ Fish Dinner) volunteers.	10 / 8	Men's Group/ Kitchen Committee
Meals served	60/200	
Choirs and Music Groups (Chancel Choir/ Bell Choir)	15 / 10	Music Director
Church-based Bible Study	N/A	Pastor - in the past
Communion (<i>served how often?</i>)	Once per month and Holidays	Pastor
Community Meal Volunteers	10	Kitchen Committee
Meals Served	200+	
Confirmation (<i>number confirmed last year</i>)	4 in 2024 2 in 2025	Board of Christian Ed
Drama or Dance Program (ZOW/ ZOW Jr)	50 / 40	Music Director and ZOW Group
Funerals (<i>number last year</i>)	4	Pastor
Intergenerational Groups	N/A	

Outdoor Worship	20	Mission Outreach
Prayer or Meditation Groups	N/A	
Public Advocacy Work	N/A	
Retreats	N/A	
Theology or Bible Programs in the Community	N/A	
Weddings (<i>number last year</i>)	0	
Worship (time slot: 8:15)	8-10	Pastor, Office Manager
Worship (time slot: 10:15)	35-45	Pastor, Office Manager, Music Director
Young Adult Groups or Classes	N/A	
Youth Groups or Classes	N/A	
Other: Food Pantry Distribution	15	Lay Leaders
Household Distribution	60-80	

Additional groups/comments:

Daughters of Zion Quilting Group made up of about 10 church members/ladies.

Country Fair Group - 10 lay leaders.

Summer Music Academy - Led by Music Director. 6-8 volunteers.

List all members or regular participants in your congregation who are ordained, licensed, or commissioned ministers. Indicate those with current United Church of Christ Three-Way Covenants (i.e. serving in a congregation) or Four-Way Covenants (i.e. serving in a ministry beyond a congregation).

Name	Three-Way or Four-Way Covenant? (3 or 4 or No)	Ministry Setting	Type of Ministry Role	Retired? (Y or N)
Brad Cressley Paid Staff/ Member	No - ordained through Universal Life Church		Wedding officiant only	No

Martha Cox Non-Member/ Active Church Participant	No - Commissioned by the Presbytery		Serves communion outside UCC. Conducts Sunday services mostly at Presbyterian Churches	No

If one or more previous pastors or retired ministers currently hold membership in the church, describe their role(s) in the life of the congregation: None.

List all current staff, including ministers. Exclude the position you are seeking to fill. Indicate which staff person serves as head of staff.

Staff Position	Head of Staff?	Compensation (full time, part time, volunteer)	Supervised by	Length of Tenure for current person in this position
Office Coordinator		Full-Time	Consistory	16 years
Custodian		Part-Time	Consistory	6 years
Financial Secretary		Part-Time	Consistory	2 years
Pastor		Part-Time	Consistory	6 years
Music Director		Part-Time	Consistory	17 years
Organist		Part-Time	Music Director	11 years

- Note on above – The senior pastor would serve as liaison between staff and Consistory.
Currently our Consistory is considered the Supervisor. However, the new Pastor will be respected as the head of staff with Consistory acting as liaison during challenging situations that may arise with staff.

- REFLECTION

Reflection: After reviewing the congregational demographics and activities above, what does this information reflect about your congregation’s overall ministry?

Our strength lies in a core of dedicated members that strive to keep the church alive and active within the community. We have strong music and mission programs as well as many other standing committees. Our concern lies in filling pews with both current members and new members. Our Sunday School and Confirmation programs are good, but we struggle to bring the youth and their families into the fold of our worship time. We lack programs to keep our confirmands involved once confirmed.

CHURCH FINANCES

Current annual income (dollars used during most recent fiscal year)

Source	Amount
Annual Offerings and Pledged Giving	\$132,783
Endowment Proceeds (<i>as permitted within spending policy, such as a cap of typically 4.5%-5% on total return</i>)	\$18200
Endowment Draw (<i>beyond what is permitted by spending policy, “drawing down the principal”</i>)	
Fundraising Events	\$26350
Gifts Designated for a Specific Purpose (Mission Outreach)	\$9,640
Grants	
*Rentals of Church Building	\$6,446
Rentals of Church Parsonage	\$14,400

Support from Related Organizations (e.g. Women's Group)	
Transfers from Special Accounts	
*Other (specify):	\$4319
Other (specify): Bingo	\$40,000
TOTAL	\$252,138

*Rentals of the church building includes garage and parking rental.

*Not sure the source of this income.

Current annual expenses (dollars budgeted for most recent fiscal year):
\$237706

Considering total budgeted expenses for the year, compare total ministerial support. What is the percentage? 30%

Has the church ever failed to pay its financial obligations to a minister of the church?

No.

Is your church 5-for-5, i.e. does it include each of the following contributions during the church year?

- Our Church's Wider Mission (OCWM - Basic Support)
- One Great Hour of Sharing
- Strengthen the Church
- Neighbors in Need
- Christmas Fund

In what way is OCWM (Basic Support) gathered? If calculated as a percentage of operating budget, what is that percentage?

This is received through special offerings and not included as a regular budget item.

What is the church's current indebtedness?

Total amount of loan debt: \$0.00

Reason for debt: n/a

Are capital and other payments current?

If a building program is projected or underway, describe it, including the projected start/end date of the building project and the total project budget.
N/A

If the church has had capital campaigns in the last ten years, describe:

Year(s)	Purpose	Goal	Result	Impact
	Replacement of Narthex doors	\$3500	\$6490	Improved appearance and energy efficiency

If a capital campaign is underway or anticipated, describe:

Year(s)	Purpose	Goal	Result	Impact

Describe the prominent mission component(s) involved in the most recent (or current) capital campaign.

Does your church have an endowment? Yes.

What is the market value of the assets? \$1,058,979

Are funds drawn as needed, regularly, or under certain circumstances?
We draw \$1500 per month into our General Operating Budget from our Main Trust Fund. We also draw dividends (amount varies) into our Mission Outreach budget from our Mission Trust Fund.

What is the percentage rate of draw (last year, compared to 5 years ago)?
We only take a flat fee of \$1500 per month each year.

Describe draw on endowment, if any, to meet operating budget expenses for the most recent year and the past five years: See above.

At the current rate of draw, how long might the endowment last?
Indefinitely as the accounts earn more than is pulled on a yearly basis.

Please comment on the above calculations or estimates:

Other Assets:

Reserves (savings): *A money market was established for the pastoral salary and benefits totaling \$123,973.75.

Investments (other than endowment):

- Mission Trust - \$82,000
- 2050 Fund - \$252,000
- Reinheimer Scholarship Fund - \$13,000
- Money Market Emergency Fund - \$11,000
- Major Repair Fund - \$9,000
- Reigel Scholarship Fund - \$6300
- Feed A Neighbor - \$13,000

Does your church have a parsonage? Yes. Currently rented as an apartment.

Fair market rental value of the parsonage:

How is the parsonage used? Rental Property with no plans to use as a parsonage in the future.

Street / City / State / Zip:

Finished square footage:

Number of Bedrooms, Number of Bathrooms:

Assessed real estate value:

Available for minister residence: N

Expected minister residence: N

Condition of structure, systems and appliances

Entity in the church responsible for review and needed repairs

Describe all buildings owned by the church:

Zion United Church of Christ is located on the corner of Second and Iron Streets in Lehigh, Pennsylvania. It is constructed of granite and is designed in a gothic architectural style. There are three (3) buildings: Derr Hall, the Sanctuary, and the parsonage. The three buildings are all joined together to form a larger unit, fully accessible via a three-story elevator. The original building, Derr Hall, is about 150 years old. The two floors of this building serve

as a center for many church activities. The first floor contains meeting rooms and Sunday school areas, the Church Office, the Pastor's Office, newly renovated bathrooms, and the handicapped entrance for the building. The gymnasium is used for community activities. The second floor includes Smith Auditorium which can seat nearly 400 people. Adjacent to this is Fatzinger Gallery which showcases artifacts from Zion's history. The second floor is also home to a newly renovated Sunday school area called Dylan and Gavin Krum Faith Exploration Center. The Center contains multiple classrooms, a craft room, a Sunday school office, restrooms, and a parental room. The Center is Wi-Fi friendly and contains a new flat screen television and new furniture.

The Sanctuary was built next to Derr Hall around 110 years ago. The Sanctuary is an architectural marvel and is both majestic and inspiring. The Sanctuary can seat nearly 1000 people. The lower level of the Sanctuary is the home of Fellowship Hall, our dining room with a modern kitchen. There is also a conference room, choir room, restrooms, custodial area, and boiler room.

Zion UCC's beautiful sights and sounds are a tremendous asset to our congregation. Whether from the beauty of the stained-glass windows or the sounds of the majestic pipe organ, much pride has been taken by the congregation to upkeep the building.

Describe non-owned buildings or space used or rented by the church: N/A.

Which spaces are accessible to wheelchairs?

Only the pulpit is inaccessible to wheelchairs. Most other areas of the church are wheelchair accessible.

Reflection: After reviewing the church's finances and assets described above, what does this information reflect about your congregation's mission and ministry?

Currently a major budget change has been made to set aside funds to support a full-time Pastor position. The annual budget is normally prepared by the Finance Committee, then approved by our Consistory, which in turn recommends the budget to the Congregation at the annual meeting. The Congregation then votes on the acceptance of the budget.

Mission goals are established by the Mission Outreach Committee and approved by Consistory on an annual basis. New initiatives are entertained at that time including local and global outreach.

Mission initiatives are supported through contributions in special envelopes.

HISTORICAL INFORMATION

Name one to three significant happenings in the history of your church that have shaped the identity of your congregation. Add the most important event in the life of your church in the past 10 years.

- The initial formation of the Dylan and Gavin Rainbow Ministry (which continues as its own non-profit entity).
- Faith Lift Campaign made the building accessible.
- Restoration of town and clock tower.
- Strengthening and Maintaining our Missions and the creation of the Second Harvest Food Pantry and Community Meal – This is ongoing.

Describe a specific change your church has managed in the recent past.

We have updated our Narthex to make it more modern and inviting. We also introduced a Contemporary Service into our Ministry.

Every church has conflict, some minor, some larger. “Where two or three are gathered, there will be disagreement...” Describe your congregation’s values and practices when it comes to conflict.

Conflict is not a stranger at Zion Church. We have dealt with congregational members undermining our pastor, members with hidden agendas, leadership with control issues, and pain that resulted in fractured membership. Through this, coordinated efforts to openly and honestly deal with conflict have been undertaken. This is not easy and is an ongoing learning process. The good in all of this has been a more open and affirming approach to conflict management.

Ministerial History

Staff member’s name	Years of service	UCC Standing (Y/No)
Rev. Dean Frey (Current)	7	Y
Rev. Jennifer Bannerman	3	Y
Rev. Allen L. Heckman	7	Y

Comment on what your church has learned about itself and its relationship with persons who provided ministerial leadership:

Pastor Frey is very good at hospital visitations. He is also very generous with monetary contributions to help with missions and other programs of the church. His messages are well received by our older members. Our younger members are not as engaged and receptive.

Reverend Bannerman's sermons were mostly relatable; however, she was unable to fulfill her contracted full-time obligations, therefore the Consistory made the decision to move to a part-time Pastor role. Reverend Bannerman decided she could not support herself on a part time salary.

Pastor Heckman worked with Consistory and the Personnel Committee to both change and update the staff and staff management. He was honest and open about his suggested changes that were for the better of the church. He was also a strong leader with a confident personality. His messages were varied and widely accepted by most of the church. He was awesome at getting to know our youth and community.

We have found we appreciate leaders who are friendly, outgoing and animated in preaching. Each of the prior pastors noted above have provided us with strengths that we seek moving forward. Those strengths include someone who is relatable, engaging to all ages, a good preacher, leader and communicator. We want a new pastor to know they have the complete support and backing of Consistory and the newly formed Pastor Parish Relations Committee.

We want a new Pastor to know that they will have the complete support and backing of Consistory and a newly formed Pastoral Relations Committee.

Has any past leader left under pressure or by involuntary termination?

No.

Has your church been involved in a Situational Support Consultation?

No.

Has a past pastor been the subject of a Fitness Review while at your church?

No.

WHO IS OUR NEIGHBOR?

COMMUNITY VISION

MISSION INSITE

COMMUNITY VISION

How do the relationships and activities of your congregation extend outward in service and advocacy?

We distribute daffodils at Easter and poinsettia plants at Christmas to Zion shut ins. During the school year, on the second Friday of the month, a team packs snack bags for the children who depart the buses at 2nd and Iron Streets.

A meal and distribution of groceries are provided to the local community monthly.

We support Family Promise, an organization which helps the homeless in Carbon County, with monetary donations. We have also held food drives for them at the local grocery store.

We support Bethany Children's Home with a yearly monetary donation. We also deliver Christmas gifts to the children which are donated by our church members.

In 2024 we sponsored the Family Village Farm and Kings Matriculation School in India.

Other organizations we support with monetary donations include Big Brothers/ Big Sisters, Dylan & Gavin Rainbow Fund, Peaceful Knights, St. Peter's Community Center, Valor, and Habit for Humanity. This year we delivered dental kits to our local elementary center. We host a local Girl Scout Troup.

Describe your congregation's participation in meetings, relationships and activities connecting the wider United Church of Christ (association / conference / national setting).

Recently we have not sent delegates to conference meetings. We would expect our new Pastor to participate in various activities offered by the Keystone Conference that they deem necessary.

Check all of the following "statements of witness" that apply to your UCC faith community. (Find more information on these statements at ucc.org.)

- Accessible to All (A2A)
- Creation Justice
- Economic Justice
- Faithful and Welcoming
- God Is Still Speaking (GISS)
- Immigrant Welcoming
- Inter-cultural/Multi-racial (I'M)
- Just Peace
- Global Mission Church

- Open and Affirming (ONA)
- WISE Congregation for Mental Health
- Other UCC designations:
- Other similar designations in affiliated denominations
- None

Reflect on what the above statement(s) mean(s) to your community. Is your congregation interested in working toward any of the above statements of witness in the near future?

We strive to have God communicate through us and want to strengthen the means to do this by encouraging our congregation to remain open to the messages of God. We want our faith family to listen and apply God's voice to their everyday lives and invite others into our fold. More time needs to be spent on reaching out in the name of God to include people's joys and sorrows. Our global missions are limited to Family Village Farms and special offerings during times of natural disasters.

Describe your congregation's participation in ecumenical and interfaith activities (with other denominations and religious groups, local and regional).

Zion UCC:

- o Hosts the high school Baccalaureate on a yearly basis.
- o holds an annual Ecumenical Christmas Cantata with more than 10 churches represented.
- o holds an annual Children's remembrance service.
- o has recently participated in joint Vacation Bible School programs.
- o has participated in Tenebrae Maundy Thursday services.
- o Zion Opera Workshop and Zion Opera Workshop Jr. hold their community theater programs at Zion UCC annually.

If your congregation has a mission statement, how does that mission statement compare to the actual time spent engaging in different activities? Think of the range of activities from time spent gathering, to governance, to time spent going out.

Zion UCC'S Mission is to bring people to Jesus, equip them for ministry in the church, life missions and the world.

We gather as a church family for Easter Breakfast, chili contests, clambake, and outdoor services. The congregation gathers for an annual meeting where a covered dish meal is shared, committees and Consistory are formed, and work of the various groups of the church is celebrated and

members are thanked. Annual reports from the committees are reviewed and approved.

Community organizations like the Girl Scouts use the building.

Also, various committees participate in various community outreach programs, such as community meals, food distributions, and bus stop snack bags.

We strive to make an impact for God here in Lehigh, and we invite people to come just as they are.

Reflect on the scope of work assigned to your pastor(s). How is their community ministry and their ministry in and on behalf of the wider church accounted for in the congregation's expectations on their time?

We seek guidance to work together with a Pastor to inspire us to participate in wider church activities and to advocate for the community, the members of Zion, the work of the mission of the UCC and Keystone Conference.

MissionInSite

Comment on your congregation's MissionInSite report with data for your neighborhood(s) or area. What trends and opportunities are shown?

The MissionInSite report includes Carbon, Lehigh, and Northampton Counties. Between 2017 and 2022 the total population for this area has changed by -0.4% (51,715 to 51,500). If current population trends continue, the projected population for 2027 would be 51,900.

The most common homes – 33.6% - are valued at \$200,000 to \$299,000 and are made up of mainly single families – 61.5%.

The most common renters – 45.0% - pay \$400 to \$799 per month.

As of 2022, the average household income is \$86,337. Based on household size and community cost of living, 9.8% of households were classified as living in poverty.

As of 2022, the most common workers – 49.8% - had occupations classified as white collar. The typical commuter had a commute time of 30 to 44 minutes.

The most prevalent age grouping was 55 to 64 at 15.2%, while 50.2% of residents were male.

This area has a total of 13,291 families and 20751 households. As of 2022, the highest percentage – 36.0%- of residents were non-families. Married couples with no children make up 29.1%. Other families increased by 30.9% from 2015 to 2022.

As of 2022, 2.2% of residents were foreign-born. After English only (91.2%), the second most common language is Spanish (2.5%). The majority of respondents are white (non-Hispanic 92.8%), with the next most common racial/ ethnic group being Hispanic (4.3%).

Neighborhood trends include an increase in tourism into the area, continued growth of commercial properties, and a more diversified population.

How do your congregation's internal demographics compare or contrast to a) the neighborhoods adjacent to your church, and b) other neighborhoods with which your church connects?

There are approximately 60 churches of various denominations within the 3 counties around our neighborhood. These surrounding congregations have similar demographics to our neighborhood.

How are the demographics of the community currently shaping ministry, or not?

Because we have an aging population and more non-family residents, we are seeing a decrease in youth and families attending our church. There are families in the community we just need to make the changes and find the ways to bring them into our church.

What do you hear when you talk to community leaders and ask them what your church is known for?

We are known for our strong missions and our amazing church building both inside and outside including the historical clock tower. Additionally, our kitchen crew and amazing food is an attraction. Annually, we host special musical programs and a Country Fair.

What do new people in the church say when asked what got them involved?

People get involved because they like our missions, our music program and because of the beauty of the Church building.

These quotes from members prove that:

- "My husband and I were visiting churches and looking for a family that was active in the community. When we came here, the Pastor came and spoke to us, provided a visitor packet that helped us understand the

scope of mission, and then in a day or two we got a handwritten note from the Pastor thanking us for visiting and welcoming us back. We were impressed.”

- “I love music. The programs here are wonderful. I was approached by the Music Director and he invited me to join the choir. I became a member after that.”
- “Zion Opera Workshop got me involved as a member here.”
- “I am new to the area and drove by this beautiful building. It made me want to visit and learn more about the place and the people.”

REFERENCES

REFERENCE 1

Cliff Eckhart – Executive Pastor at Blue Mountain Community Church – 484-866-6739

REFERENCE 2

Todd Kriner – Local Funeral Director – 610-377-0520

REFERENCE 3

Keith House – Pastor, Living Hope Lighthouse Church – 484-464-8307

PROMPTS FOR REFERENCES

Describe some areas of strength in this church’s ministry.

Describe some areas for improvement in this church’s ministry.

Describe a significant experience you have had of this church’s ministry.

Anything else you wish to share.

CLOSING THOUGHTS

CLOSING PRAYER

STATEMENT OF CONSENT

CONFERENCE/ASSOCIATION VALIDATION

CLOSING PRAYER

Our prayer moving forward is that together we as Pastor and family of faith hear God speaking. As we learn, develop, and grow together in our faith, may we ignite in others a reason to join. With love at the center,

may we creatively provide a safe and welcoming environment for all people. As God speaks, may we have the strength to listen and respond in ways that transform our experiences in worship and outreach. We pray for strength, patience, understanding and a vision that is ever changing with the times. Together, Pastor and people, bringing God's love to life at Zion UCC is what we ask in Jesus name, Amen.

STATEMENT OF CONSENT

The covenantal relationship between a church and those called by that church to serve as pastors and teachers and in other ministerial positions is strengthened when vital information is openly shared by covenantal partners. To that end, we attest that, to the best of our abilities, we have provided information in this profile that accurately represents our church. We have not knowingly withheld any information that would be helpful to candidates.

As the committee charged with the responsibility for identifying and recommending suitable new minister for our church, we have been authorized to share the information herein with potential candidates. We understand that a candidate may wish to secure further knowledge, information, and opinions about our church. We encourage a candidate to do so, recognizing that an open exchange of relevant information builds the foundation for continuing and healthy relationships between calling bodies and persons seeking a ministry position.

1. Which individuals and groups in the church contributed to the contents of this Local Church Profile?

Nancy Koch and Search Committee Members

Tim Hunsicker – Vice President, Consistory and Consistory Members

Church Office Manager

Church Congregation through surveys

2. Additional comments for interpreting the profile:

Signed:

Nancy Koch

Chairperson, Search Committee

Zion United Church of Christ, Lehighton, PA 18235

1/6/2026

VALIDATION BY CONFERENCE/ASSOCIATION

The congregation is currently in good standing with the association / conference named.

Staff Comment: Mountain Valley Association of the Keystone Conference

To the best of my knowledge, ministerial history information is complete.

Staff Comment: Yes

To the best of my knowledge, available church financial information is presented thoroughly.

Staff Comment: Yes and compensation is based on 2025 guidelines

My signature below attests to the above three items.

Signature: *Nora D. Foust*

Name / Title: Regional Conference Minister

Email: Nora@keystoneucc.org

Phone: 717-652-1560

Date: 1-8-2026

This document is created through support to Our Church's Wider Mission (OCWM) and is only possible through the covenantal relationships of all settings of the United Church of Christ.

"Jesus answered them, 'Have faith in God!'" - Mark 11:22