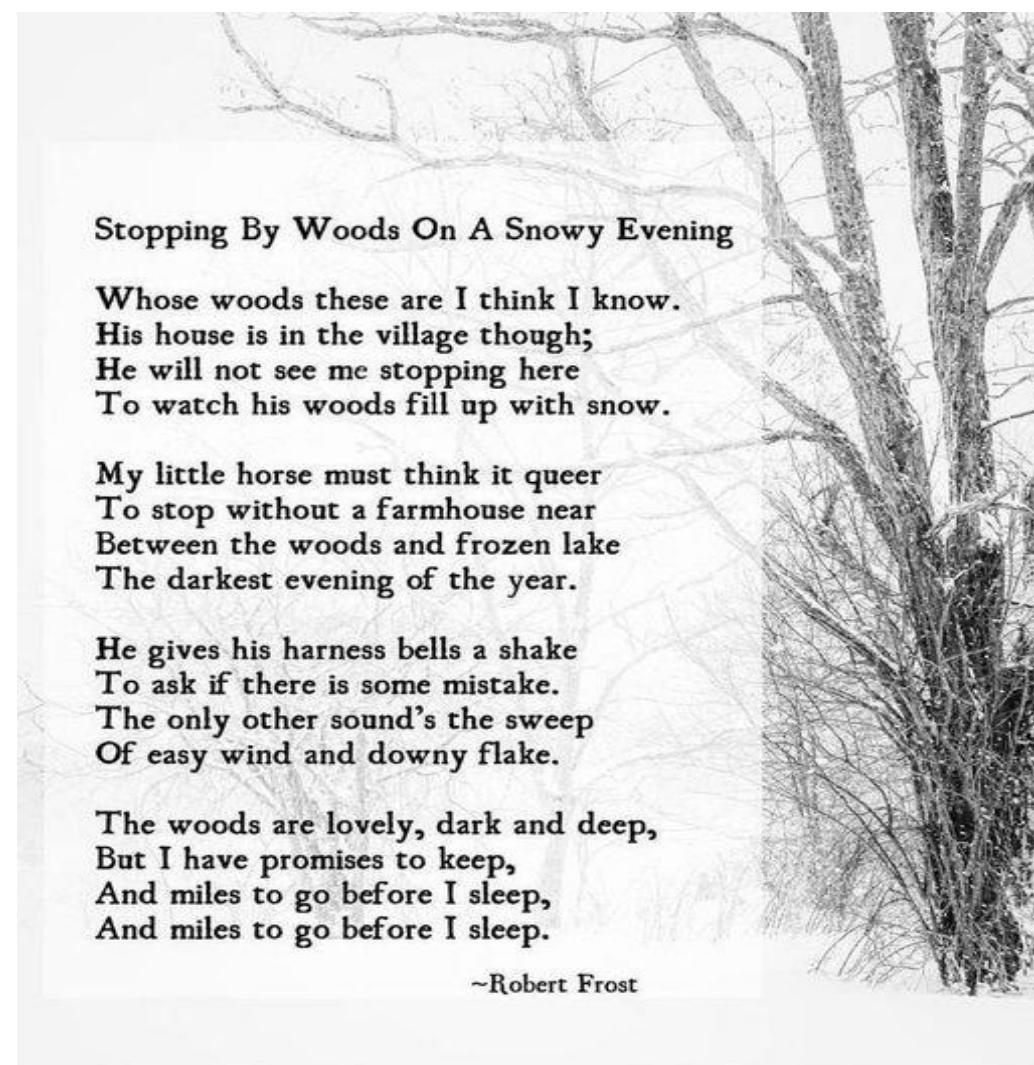


And you shall teach them diligently to your sons and daughters shall talk of them when you sit in your house and when you walk by the way and when you lie down and when you rise up (Deuteronomy 6:7).

Keep in mind, moms, and dads, you don't have forever. Negligence will catch you from behind and beat you in the stretch if you let up. You can't fake this relay either. You can't play catch up by dumping a truckload of truth once or twice a year. **THE SECRET OF GOOD LIVING, OF GOOD PARENTING, AND OF GOOD CHARACTER STARTS WITH YOUR GOOD CHARACTER!** The secret is consistency. Got the game plan now? Make sure your hand offs are crisp; and sharp throughout this race against time. It is a new day and a new year. A new beginning. Relays are won or lost at that critical moment when a young hand reaches back to grab the baton. Don't believe me? Just as George Jaeger.

Keep in the race this New Year,

Rev. Walter Coy



Joyful Noiz

January 2024 Newsletter

A New Year's Blessing

May God make your year a happy one.
Not by shielding you from all sorrows and pain,
But by strengthening you to bear it, as it comes;
Not by making your path easy,
But by making you sturdy to travel any path;
Not by taking hardships from you,
But by taking fear from your heart;
Not by granting you unbroken sunshine,
But by keeping your face bright, even in the shadows;
Not by making your life always pleasant,
But by showing you when people and their causes need you most,
and by making you anxious to be there to help.
Gods love, peace, hope and joy to you for the year ahead.

- Unknown

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Ramblings of the Clairy
✻

Zion United Church of Christ

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Rev. Walter Coy, Pastor

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Web address: www.zionuccsteubenville.com

No matter where you are on life's journey, you are welcome here.

WHAT'S GOING ON AT ZION?

www.zionuccsteubenville.com

God is still speaking,
**UNITED CHURCH
OF CHRIST**



IN OUR CIRCLE OF PRAYER

Bill Bertram, Marlene Rhueff, Steve Panyi, Doug Lewis, Judy Neiderhiser (John Diekmann's sister-in-law), Toots Ross, Shirley Valuska, Tom Kaufmann

➤If you would like to be remembered in prayer or know of someone who would appreciate being included in this list, please contact the church office.

PASTOR COY

If you would like to meet with Pastor Coy, please make an appointment with the church office at **740-282-1793**. If you would like to get a hold of Pastor Coy directly, his cell number is **330-301-0551**.

NOW LIVESTREAMING!

We're now livestreaming our church services on you tube. Check us out! Zion UCC Steubenville <https://youtube.com/@zionucc6794?si=EnSIkaIECMiOmarE>

CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

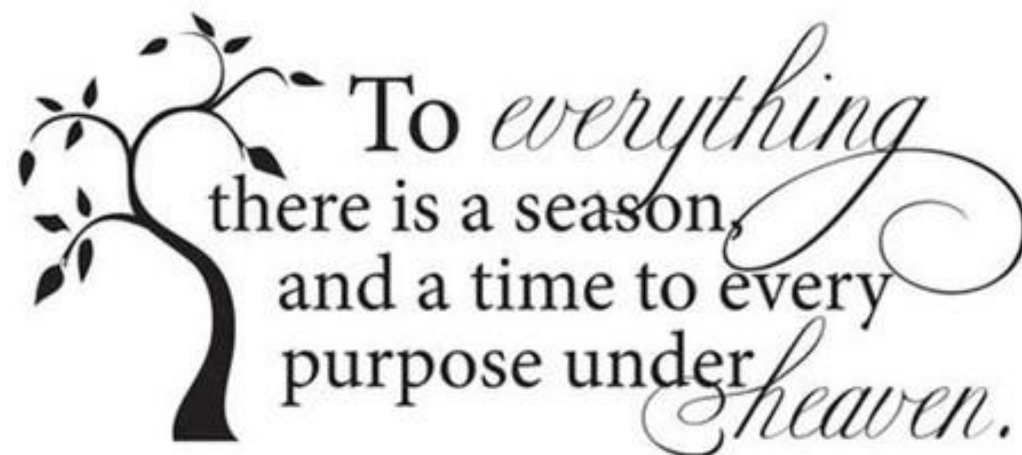
We will have our annual congregational meeting **February 11, 2024** after worship.

ASH WEDNESDAY & MAUNDY THURSDAY

February 14 at 12:00 Noon we will have a service in the sanctuary. We will receive ashes and have a brief worship. Afterwards we will have a light luncheon in the social hall. John Diekmann and Joyce Coy are preparing soup, sandwich, and dessert. There will be a free will offering to cover cost of the food.

If you are planning on coming, please call the church office at 740-282-1793 or John Diekmann at 304-312-6622. We appreciate your letting us know of your intentions.

Looking ahead, we will have a similar service and luncheon on **Maundy Thursday, March 28**. Please mark these dates on your calendar.



Pastor's Pen

Life is a Relay Race

It was late afternoon when a fishing trip with family turned into a tale of horror. A boat engine stalls and refused to start. Gallons of water engulf the small boat from six feet swells. The Jaegar family has done all they know to do, but it all fails. As George Jaeger, his three sons, and his elderly father tightened the straps on their life jackets and tied each other together with a rope. They are going under. George Jaeger looked at his watch as the boat went under. It was 6:30 PM. First one boy then the other swallowed to much sea water after many hours in the water. The helpless father heard his sons, one by one choke and drown, then his father. But George couldn't give up. After eight nightmarish hours he staggered ashore still pulling the rope that was tied to him to the bodies of the other four. George stated "I realized they were all dead .. but I could not accept it so I kept swimming all night". He later told reporters. "My youngest Clifford was the first to go. I have always told my children never to fear death because it was being with Jesus Christ". Before Cliff died, I heard him say, "I would rather be with Jesus than go on fighting." In such a horrible Atlantic memory, George Jaeger had a chance to witness the impact of his fifteen years being a father. The boys died quietly, with courage and dignity. Up to the very last minute one by one they modeled the truth passed on by their father. When under pressure stay calm and think, even if death is near, keep under control.. They did and so they die. When the ultimate test was administered in a angry sea they passed with perfect scores. (Story in Charles Swindoll, Seasons of life).

In Edith Scheffer best selling book: What is a family? she devotes her longest chapter to the idea that a family is a perpetual relay of truth. A place where principles are hammered and honed on the facts of everyday living. Where character traits are sculptured under the watchful eye of moms and dads.

Determination, Honesty, Responsibility, Thoughtfulness, Confidentiality, Self-control, Patience, Purity, Compassion, and Diligence is passed on like a hundred batons in this relay that takes place in life. It does not happen overnight. This race is not a sprint it is a marathon. There are no fifty-yard dash courses on character building. Relays require right timing and smooth hand-offs practiced around the track, around the clock hour and after hour even **WHEN NO ONE IS LOOKING**. Where is this training facility? Inside your own front door. The home is God's built in training facility.