

OLD ZION'S TRUMPET

...Blow ye the trumpet in Zion...

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All plans listed in this newsletter are subject to change due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

OLD ZION OPENS FOR ANNIVERSARY SERVICE

After a long absence, Old Zion Church will open for the annual Anniversary Service on September 12th at 4 pm. This decision was recently made after careful consideration by the church's volunteer Board. (Note: Please see related Anniversary Service article.)

The Board wants to make certain that the building will be ready for this service. Caring for an early 19th century church and its visitors in a 21st century pandemic presents some unique challenges:

Old Zion Church does not have any paid staff, nor does it have a congregation. It does not have electricity to aid with event preparation. Everything is done by hand by dedicated volunteers. This includes cleaning and most routine indoor and exterior maintenance.

Because of the historic nature of the church, harsh cleaning products/solutions cannot be used.

The church has been closed to the public following the December 2019 Carol Sing.

Old Zion does not have a centralized ventilation system to assist with eliminating airborne pathogens. Instead, all church doors and windows need to be opened to circulate the air.

For the reasons previously listed, the wedding season normally held second weekend in April – second weekend in October will not take place in 2021. The volunteer Board continues to evaluate the COVID-19 pandemic to plan regarding wedding season 2022.

The Board is committed to following all State and local pandemic related guidelines to open the church during the service. Please check Old Zion's website, <https://oldzionchurch.org>, closer to Sept. 12th for updates. The service will be filmed and posted to our website.

It will be wonderful to again enjoy gathering in this special place to commemorate this church and its history and to, once again, interact with familiar and new visitors.



77th ANNIVERSARY SERVICE

“Don’t Join the Cloister” is the theme for the 2021 Old Zion Reformed Church Anniversary Service to be held on Sunday, September 12th at 4:00 p.m.

The theme is taken from the religious controversy in the 1730’s with the establishment of the Cloister in Ephrata. Peter Miller (John Peter Mueller) was a German Reformed minister who emigrated from Germany to Pennsylvania in 1730. After briefly serving congregations in southeastern Pennsylvania, Miller moved to the Conestoga Valley in Lancaster County. He served the churches of White Oak (later known as Reyers, then Old Zion), Seltenreich (East Earl) and Muddy Creek (where several baptisms by him are recorded in the Lutheran record).



Peter Miller

Miller showed an inclination to the Seventh Day Dunkers (Baptists) and soon was recruited by their leader, Conrad Beisel, to join their movement.

John Phillip Boehm, the founder and leader of the German Reformed church, warned the German Reformed folk about this “false spirit.” Boehm would write, “but the misguided and simple-minded people clung to him, until finally the deception... came to light and this Miller went over publicly to the evil sect of the Seventh Day Tumplers and was baptized in Tumbler fashion (by triune

immersion) at Conestoga in the month of April, 1735.”

When Miller left the Reformed Church, he took with him about ten families, Lutheran and Reformed, who followed his example. Adding insult to injury, to make his exit from the Reformed Church as dramatic as possible, Peter Miller, Conrad Weiser and two other men had a book burning. They burnt the Reformed Catechism, the Lutheran Catechism, in all thirty-six books, in derision and disparagement.

The Old Zion Anniversary Service will reenact how the churches might have responded to this controversy. Our guest preacher will be Rev. Bruce Farrell, pastor of Zion Goshert’s Reformed Church, United Church of Christ, in Mt. Zion, PA. Rev. Farrell will play the part of John Phillip Boehm, founder of the Reformed Church. His sermon title will be “Don’t Join the Cloister.”

Rev. William LaSalle, a member of Old Zion’s Board of Directors, will play the part of Conrad Tempelman, who took over the pastoral leadership at White Oak (Old Zion) after Miller’s departure. The premise for this historical presentation will be that Tempelman has invited Boehm to come and speak to the Reformed folk and members of other churches who were concerned about what was happening in their churches.

The worship service will include music and hymns from the time period accompanied by J. P. Welliver on Old Zion’s pump organ and readings of scripture in both English and German.

All are welcome to attend this meaningful September 12th service to learn more about the church’s history and worship customs,

and to socialize informally over lemonade and cookies following the service. Please join us!

The Anniversary Service this year will be the first event held at Old Zion since closing down because of Covid-19. Guests are encouraged to wear masks unless fully vaccinated.

[Old Zion German Reformed Church is located near Brickerville at 187 Reifsnnyder Rd, Lititz, PA.]

OLD ZION INFORMATION

There once was a time when you could pick up the phone and ask for information, please. Today, there's a smorgasbord to find information. The volunteer board of directors, stresses the word volunteer. Unlike a state museum, privately owned historical sites, or active churches today, Old Zion Church is without clerical staff or an office set up with multiple computers.

If you're looking for information about Old Zion or need to ask a question please use one of the two methods listed below. Old Zion Reformed Church, a 19th century church (1813), is very much a part of the 21st century. Information about the church and events can be found at www.oldzionchurch.org.

The website provides history, event info, newsletters, rental agreement, and wonderful photographs. It also includes directions and an easy way to contact the Board with questions, oldzionchurch@gmail.com.

CHURCH ENTRANCE IMPROVEMENTS

The three entrances to Old Zion Church are now safer and more user friendly. New railings have been installed at each entrance. Their design is both in keeping with the time period of the building and safer because of the addition of a railing below the handrail on both sides of steps going up to the church. Board member, Charlie Hartz, has primed all three railings and painting is slated to occur this summer.

In addition, the stone step at the bottom of the east entrance was replaced to match the steps at the location. The step extends to reach the handrails to prevent an open space next to the railing. Board member, David Hoffman, diligently searched for a stone that matched the needed dimensions and type. Ultimately, he found the perfect stone at a location in Cornwall. The stone was purchased from and



carefully installed by Tom Savoye, along with some assistance from Board members. This addition improves the safety of this entrance.

SHUTTERS REPAIRED

Over many years Old Zion's shutters have withstood numerous assaults from wind, rain, snow and ice, while protecting the windows and interior of the building.

Fortunately, carpenter and former board member, Gene Shaw, was able to repair the shutters using similar techniques that were true to their original construction. Old Zion previously benefitted from Mr. Shaw's craftsmanship. In the 1980's Mr. Shaw restored Old Zion's wine glass pulpit, an accurate reproduction of the church's original pulpit. The Board is most grateful and thankful for his assistance.



OLD ZION CAROL SING DECEMBER 11, 2021

For many Old Zion visitors and Board members, the Christmas holiday season begins with the church's annual Carol Sing. This year, this beloved service will be held on December 11th, the second Saturday of the month. Two sessions will be held including 2:00 PM and 4:30 PM.

Detailed information about how to obtain the FREE tickets, specific times, and the event

song leaders will be available in the fall newsletter and on the website.

Even though it's August, be joyful as the volunteer board is planning for Old Zion's candlelight Christmas celebration.



FOR THE FUTURE OF OLD ZION

Planning for the future of Old Zion Church that stands with a history dating back to 1747 is important. The volunteer board members are searching for new members to join in the preservation and maintenance of Old Zion Church. The board is also involved in a grant from PA Historical Museum Commission that has provided for an analysis of the church building to assist in the board's development of a preservation strategic plan.

Ortega Consulting, a heritage preservation company, is collecting data to share with the board. Information gleaned from their report will be used to design long term goals.

If you're interested in becoming a board member, please send email to oldzionchurch@gmail.com . Board meetings are held bi-monthly.