

# OLD ZION'S TRUMPET

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

Volume 40 Number 1      Brickerville, PA      May 2022

## OLD ZION'S STRAWBERRY SOCIAL RETURNS



**The Strawberry Social is back!!** After a 2-year hiatus because of COVID-19, this much-loved, traditional event will be held on **Saturday, June 11 from 3:30 – 6:30 PM** on Old Zion's lovely grounds.

The dessert menu hasn't changed. A HUGE strawberry dessert consists of cake, a generous serving of Fox Meadow's homemade ice cream, luscious local strawberries, whipped cream, and iced tea. Dessert with drink is \$6.00 and chicken corn soup for \$4.00 which helps to maintain the historic church, cemetery, and property for current and future generations.

The Social is a delightful way to spend a summer afternoon--eating a summertime treat while relaxing on Old Zion's grounds,

socializing, and enjoying the beautiful view of the Brubaker Valley. Bringing along folding chairs, blankets, and food trays is suggested.

The church will be open so that guests can visit this historic 1813 building and learn more about it, the 18<sup>th</sup>-century cemetery, and the surrounding property.

## VOLUNTEER BOARD MEMBER UPDATES

This year marks several changes to Old Zion's Board. Longtime Board member, Ginny Gillespie, will be leaving the organization as of June 1<sup>st</sup>. The generous contributions of her time and talents to Old Zion have been notable and numerous. **Thank you, Ginny!** (See related article.)

Three new members have joined the Board to help to continue maintaining this property for the Lancaster County community. Welcome to Roberta Hartz, Mike Weber, and Karen Hartz. The following articles provide more information about these new volunteers and their respective backgrounds and interests.

Old Zion's Board is always looking to welcome new volunteers. Interested persons are invited to check out the website, [oldzionchurch.org](http://oldzionchurch.org), or talk with Board members. The time commitment is

reasonable and the satisfaction of continuing this property's legacy is enormous.

## **THANK YOU, GINNY**

Dedicated Old Zion Board volunteer and retired teacher, Ginny Gillespie will be leaving the Board as of June 1<sup>st</sup>. She and her husband, Tony, plan to spend more of their free time with their out-of-state children and family members.

Ginny's interest in Old Zion began when she attended an Old Zion sunrise Easter service in the 1960s. She knew former Board members, Dick Boyer and Marie Maugans.

Subsequently, Ginny and her husband, Tony, were married at Old Zion on June 20, 1976. Their wedding vows were exchanged in front of the Victorian platform altar, as the reproduction wineglass pulpit had not yet been replaced.

After joining the Board, former Board Member, Lynn Rossi, mentored Ginny to assist with weddings and mailings. Eventually, she became the Board Corresponding Secretary and always ended the minutes with a description of the day's weather.

In 2001 Ginny took a leave of absence for health reasons. Upon her return to the Board, she initiated the launching of Old Zion's website and moved the 1813 church into the new age with an email address. Since that time, she has been the "switchboard operator" behind the board's email account, forwarding emails to board members and answering questions about weddings, Christmas Carol Sing tickets, Strawberry Socials, the cemetery, the church's history, and all things Old Zion. Ginny established a working relationship with Ocko Graphics to assist with

maintaining the website. In addition to these tasks, Ginny wrote many press releases, updated the rental agreements, and served on the gravestone Preservation Workshop Committee.

Ginny's tireless efforts ventured into other areas. She was the moving force behind tax-exempt status for Old Zion Board as an organization whose legal name is Old Zion German Reformed Church. Currently, she has been the manager and author of the awarded Pennsylvania Keystone Grant with the Pennsylvania Historical Museum Commission. The results and assessments from this grant, which evaluated Old Zion's structural status, will provide guidance to preserve this special place for future generations. (See related Newsletter article.) Ginny Gillespie's numerous contributions to Old Zion and its cemetery have been invaluable. Her final words about Old Zion are, "So when the sun sets, we have a grave plot in Old Zion's Cemetery overlooking Brubaker Valley". She will be missed! Well done, Ginny!

## **WELCOME BOARD MEMBERS**

From Mike -

Greetings, Old Zion community! I recently joined the Board of Directors for Old Zion Church in January 2022. I appreciate the opportunity to support Old Zion and look forward to meeting you and working with you in the future. During the first half of the year, I participated in two Board meetings, as well as the Old Zion Cleanup Day on April 2<sup>nd</sup>. It is a thrill and honor for me to serve on the Board and contribute my services as part of the rich history and heritage of Old Zion. As a Geosciences graduate from Penn State, I worked for over 36 years for the Federal government just outside Washington, DC. After several years working for the U.S.

Geologic Survey, I worked most of my career at the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) ensuring the safety and security of civilian nuclear facilities and radioactive materials.

After my wife, Jane, and I retired in 2018, we moved back to our family home in Ephrata. I currently serve as a historical guide and researcher at Cornwall Iron Furnace, Cornwall, Pennsylvania. Before we moved south and since we have returned, Jane and I actively attended Bethany United Church of Christ in Ephrata. Jane and I also sing in the Cloister Chorus and volunteer at the Cloister.

By this point, you may be wondering about my connection with Old Zion. Old Zion and Bethany Churches were once part of the same pastoral charge in northern Lancaster County. I first attended Old Zion to participate in special services during the 1980s as a celebration of our common German Reformed heritage. My sister and her husband, Peggy and Don Grabowski, led some of the early Carol Sings at Old Zion. Now that we have returned to Ephrata, Jane and I have resumed attending special services at Old Zion, such as the Anniversary Service last September. I have been admiring the history and beauty of Old Zion over the last forty years. Through my service on the Board, I plan to help protect and preserve this treasure for the benefit of current and future generations.

From Roberta –  
I'm a new member of the Old Zion German Reformed Church Board joining during the pandemic with virtual board meetings. I feel fortunate to join the other members who do such a great job of keeping the history of Old Zion alive.

My husband and I are members of the 300-year-old Donegal Presbyterian Church in Mount Joy. My interests at Donegal include the Flower Team, Fellowship Committee, and the Outreach Team. After retiring several years ago from the Lancaster County Conservation District it gave me more time to spend with my family and friends. My hobbies include camping, and flower and vegetable gardening, and I love to be in the kitchen trying new recipes.

This year we will be celebrating 18 years on our seven-acre farm in Manheim in beautiful Lancaster County. Previously our family lived in Berks County for 33 years.

We were introduced to Old Zion by a friend. When our family would come to the Carol Sing, Strawberry Festival, and Anniversary Service it was nice to see so many dedicated people working together and we knew we wanted to be a small part of the Old Zion Family.

From Karen –  
Hello, I am a new member of the board. I also serve as the newly elected treasurer. My family was involved with the board and I could be found helping out with events and projects, so the next logical step was to join the board. I'm honored to help preserve such a beautiful church. I feel at home on the grounds and in the church.

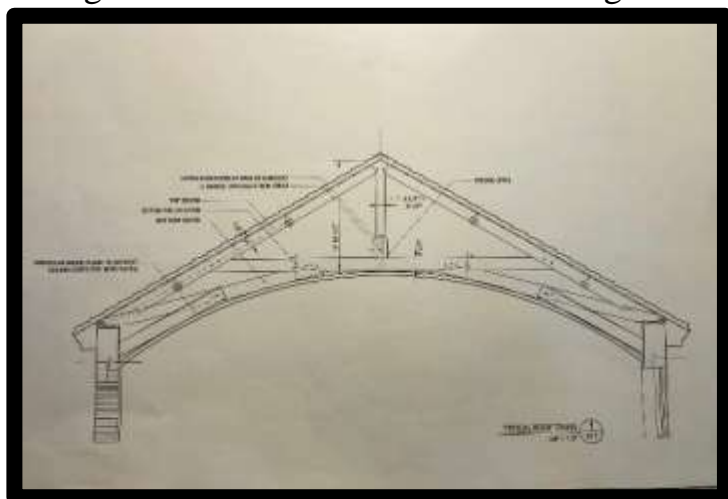
When not involved with Old Zion, I can be found working as a nurse. Aside from work, I enjoy volunteering on multiple committees and spending time with friends and family. Other pastimes I enjoy are reading, listening to music, and baking.



# ARCHITECTURAL ASSESSMENT OF OLD ZION

On Saturday, April 2<sup>nd</sup>, historical architect Richard Ortega of Ortega Consulting briefed the Board of Directors on the preliminary results of his assessment of the condition of Old Zion, along with recommendations for restoration and use. The briefing was scheduled in conjunction with the Old Zion Work Day. The assessment is being conducted under a grant from the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission and Old Zion funds. Mr. Ortega began his presentation by complimenting the Board and the friends of Old Zion for keeping the building and grounds in such fine condition.

His primary long-term concern is the buildup of “unresolved lateral stress” in the wooden trusses that support the roof. A diagram of one of the trusses is presented in the picture on the left. To accommodate the concave ceiling of the church sanctuary, the builders of Old Zion Church used several boards to make an arch at the bottom of the truss rather than constructing a straight bottom. As a result, stress has built up within the trusses and is causing the brick north and south walls to begin to bow a small amount. Although it



is difficult to see this bowing, detailed photogrammetry and analysis as part of the project revealed that bowing is occurring and will likely continue unless action is taken sometime over the next several years. You can see the bowing reflected by the yellow color in the diagram of the south wall of Old Zion on the right. Mr. Ortega recommended that Old Zion consider remedying the stress the next time that the roof is replaced.

Mr. Ortega also evaluated the foundations of the church building and found them generally sound. His assessment identified some old foundations beneath the church that may have supported the earlier log church building on the site. When the dirt basement was constructed underneath the current building to accommodate the coal-fired furnace, dirt was scraped away from underneath some of the foundation walls. He recommended that these foundations be shored up at some point in the future.

Mr. Ortega plans to complete his assessment and submit the report to the board by June 2022. At the presentation, Board members expressed appreciation for Mr. Ortega’s thorough and expert assessment and recommendations and looked forward to receiving his final report. The Board plans to use this report to help guide the future restoration and use of Old Zion Church.

