

OLD ZION'S TRUMPET

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

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COLORS OF SUMMER START WITH THE STRAWBERRY SOCIAL



Old Zion Church, Reifsnyder Road, Brickerville will celebrate its 45th annual Strawberry Social on **Saturday, June 10 from 3:30-6:30 pm** (rain or shine) with all the brilliant colors of summer. Red ripe strawberries will join a delicious variety of cakes, with vanilla ice cream topped with whipped cream. This dessert includes a drink and is \$6.00.

Chicken corn soup for \$4.00 will also be served. All proceeds of the event support the maintenance and preservation of Old Zion Church, the cemetery, and the grounds for today and tomorrow.

Blankets and folding chairs not only add a rainbow of color to the green lawn, but they'll also make your visit more comfortable. Please bring them along and you might pack trays for your food.

A breeze can usually be found on Old Zion hill with clouds and the many blues of the sky over the lovely Brubaker Valley below. Take time to visit the cemetery, which dates to the time of the Revolutionary War, and take a walking tour through the church completed in 1813 to learn about Old Zion's colorful history from Old Zion Board members.

Start your summer with us and be part of a most peaceful, delicious, old-fashioned summer celebration. www.oldzionchurch.org

CEMETERY PLOTS

Old Zion's cemetery, which has been in existence since Revolutionary times, is not just a resting place for our predecessors. Contemporary burials continue to take place here. An Old Zion burial plot cost \$450.00. The cost will increase to \$500 on July 1, 2023.

Old Zion's Board guarantees perpetual care. Regular cemetery ground maintenance is arranged on a regular basis, and cemetery upkeep is a fixed line item at each Old Zion Board meeting.

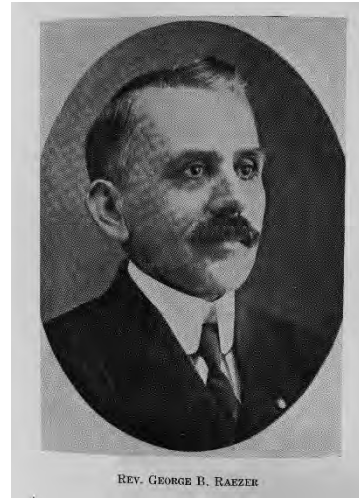
OLD ZION FLASHBACK FROM THE 1940S

By Mike Weber

The congregation of Old Zion disbanded and abandoned the church in 1947. Although many churches have navigated through similar shoals in the past, the collapse of Old Zion's congregation prompted my interest in what was occurring at Old Zion in the years before its demise. I recently acquired the book *Classis of Lancaster, 1852-1940*. A "classis" was the governing ecclesiastical body of the Reformed Church and consisted of clergy and lay members designated by the congregations represented in the classis. The book included a brief description of Zion's Reformed Church that was written shortly before Old Zion's congregation disbanded.

The Lancaster Classis of the Reformed Church in the United States was established in 1852 by separating from the Lebanon Classis and joining together a governing body that represented the Reformed Churches in Lancaster County and in Dauphin County east of the Blue Ridge. During the 88 years of the Lancaster Classis, the congregations in the Classis grew considerably – 9 to 33 pastors, 27 to 52 congregations, and 1,778 to 13,826 members. Clergy and lay leaders wrote the *Classis of Lancaster* to provide a permanent record of the "labor and sacrifices of loyal and consecrated clergy and laymen, who made large contributions to the life and development of the Church...and whose influence and labor of love is inextricably woven into the pattern of the Church's life and progress." The preparation of the book began soon after the establishment of the Evangelical and Reformed Church following the union of the Reformed Church of the

United States and the Evangelical Synod of North America.



Part II of the book consisted of histories of the congregations that comprised the Classis of Lancaster. The history of Zion's Reformed Church (Old Zion) in Brickerville was prepared by Rev. George B. Raezer,

who is shown on the left and was Pastor at Zion's Reformed Church in 1940. The initial record of Old Zion Church was prepared by Rev. John George Wittner, when he served as Pastor there from 1766 to 1770. Although it was not known how much earlier the Old Zion congregation had existed before the beginning of the church record, the dates on tombstones in the cemetery at Old Zion were as early as 1751. Consequently, Pastor Raezer recognized that Old Zion existed before the church record was started.

He reported that Peter Becker, Wendel Laber, Jacob Hagy, and Tillman Shitz purchased two to three acres from Sebastian Royer in 1747 to erect a church building and provide a burial ground. Pastor Raezer stated that 1747 is "generally regarded as the time of the organization of Zion's church," even though later research suggests that the congregation formed as early as 1740. Early records referred to Old Zion as "Royer's Church" or "Reyers Church," when churches were often named for the person who provided the property for the church. Three different names were used in the deed to designate the church: "German Reformed Church," "Dutch Reformed Church," and the "Reformation Presbyterians Meeting."

In his historical sketch, Pastor Raezer listed 21 pastors who served at Zion's Church:

Pastor	Dates of Service
Rev. John George Wittner	1766-1770
Rev. John Christopher Gobrecht	1770-1779
Rev. John Waldschmidt	1779-1786
Rev. Anthony Hautz	1786-1790
Rev. John Christian Wilms	1790-1802
Rev. Charles Helfenstein	1803-1807
Rev. John Theobald Faber	1807-1819
Rev. F. A. Herman	1819-1823
Rev. Daniel Hertz	1823-1831
Rev. Jacob Leymeister	1831-1833
Rev. Samuel Seibert	1833-1837
Rev. Christian Weiler	1837-1849
Rev. I.E. Graeff	1849-1851
Rev. Isaac Gerhart	1852-1859
Rev. W.T. Gerhard	1859-1870
Rev. D.C. Tobias	1870-1891
Rev. F. Pilgram	1891-1896
Rev. F.C. Hullhorst	1896-1904
Rev. H.H. Spahn	1904-1910
Rev. James B. Musser (supply)	1910-1911
Rev. George B. Raezer	1912-

Old Zion's first church building was a wooden structure built in 1748. Pastor Raezer reported that this structure stood in the southeast corner of the burial ground [This location would have been unusual because it

was downhill from the cemetery plots; churches were generally constructed uphill from adjoining cemeteries]. The original building was used to care for Revolutionary War soldiers. A number of these soldiers are buried in unmarked graves in the cemetery. The old church building was used until October 2, 1813, when it was replaced by a new (and present) church building. The old structure was torn down and the lumber was used to construct a house in Warwick (the town for non-Moravians just outside of the Moravian community of Lititz).



Pastor Raezer described the current brick building of Zion's Church and highlighted the use of dressed sandstone blocks in the foundation, including stones that are six to eight feet in length (quite large for the time). He also described how the original sanctuary had a wine-glass pulpit with a sounding board, which had since been removed and replaced with a different pulpit [The wine-glass pulpit was restored at Old Zion in 1982]. When Old Zion Church was incorporated on June 3, 1869, John Eitnier and George Rock served as Elders; Isaac Enck, Solomon Steffey, and Henry Z. Enck were Deacons; and George Enck and Henry Appel served as Trustees. The first Sunday School at Old Zion was organized on May 9, 1875. For years the Sunday School was only open during the summer months and then was discontinued. Sunday School was reorganized in 1913 and operated for a few years. After 1917, there was no Sunday School because of the scarcity of leaders. Pastor Raezer noted that membership at Zion's church was never very large. The

largest number of communing members in the history of the congregation was 70 in 1825. During the four decades that followed peak membership, the number of communing members dropped to as low as ten. As of 1940, when Pastor Raezer wrote the history of Zion's Church, membership was 22. At that time, Rev. Raezer served as Pastor for the charge that included St. Luke's Reformed Church in Lititz, Jerusalem Reformed Church in Penryn, and Zion's Reformed Church in Brickerville.



Pastor Raezer wrote his history of Old Zion several years before the demise of the congregation. His description documented the small size of the congregation. Although the Classis of Lancaster reported significant growth from 1852 through 1940, membership at Old Zion remained low during this period. If the membership continued to dwindle after 1940, the total number of members and their contributions could have reached levels that no longer sustained the church by 1947. Thank goodness that the members of St. Luke's UCC Church in Lititz began maintaining the property, cemetery, and church building in 1952. We owe a debt of

gratitude to the founders and members of Old Zion, to St. Luke's UCC Church, to the Board of Directors of Old Zion, and many others who have contributed to preserving Old Zion during the last 76 years.

ANNIVERSARY SERVICE – HISTORY IS HAPPENING

The Annual Anniversary Service will be held at Old Zion Church on Sunday, September 10 at 3 pm. The service will highlight elements of a church service with hymns and scripture with a history woven into every aspect of the gathering. This year's service will feature the historical interaction of local German Reformed and Moravian churches. The Ephrata Cloister Chorus will also be a part of the service. Mark your calendar.

CAROL SING

Saturday, December 9, 2 and 4:30 pm, the Old Zion Church Carol Sing will be held. Free tickets are required, ticket information will be available in November. Peggy and Don Grabowski, will perform music and lead carols with Old Zion board member, Mike Weber. Peggy and Don led the singing at several early Carol Sings back in the 1980s and are both retired music teachers who perform on a wide array of instruments. It's a don't miss tradition to get us in the holiday spirit.

BENEFITS OF STRAWBERRIES

Strawberries are jammed packed with vitamin C. Boost your brain power and immune system while enjoying this superstar fruit at the Old Zion Annual Strawberry Social, on June 10, from 3:30 – 6:30 pm.