

WELCOME TO
Old Zionsville United Church of Christ
5981 Fountain Road, P.O. Box 215
Old Zionsville, PA 18068

Email: ozuccoffice@ptd.net Web page: www.oldzionsucc.org

Church Office: 610-966-3601

Pastor: 610-393-3522 or 610-966-3436

Rev. Lori Esslinger

Pastor

David Carlson

Organist

April 17, 2022

10:15 a.m.

**those who are able may stand*

Easter Sunday

Prelude

Welcome and Announcements

Lighting of the Altar Candles

Call to Worship

Leader: During the season of Lent, and this last week in Holy Week, we focused on growing gardens, tending the life that is right in front of us, rather than constantly climbing ladders of what this world defines as success. We have been embracing “good enough” lives and “good enough” selves that are worthy of love, no matter what. We have been acknowledging the suffering that is a natural part of life, and we have practiced compassion as we deal with the realities and limitations that invite us to let go of perfectionism and the incessant drive toward something other than our own real, holy, and “blessed-regardless” lives. And now we encounter Easter. It is a day we proclaim that while death is a part of life—even little “deaths” along the way of dreams, of love, of the way we thought life would go—even though this is a part of life, we are part of a faith that invites us to consider that the Good Gardener is *always* tending us, abiding with us, beyond any kind of death that faces us.

*Opening Hymn: “Christ Arose” (all verses) p.357

Prayer of Invocation (Based on Psalm 114)

Leader: Let us pray together:

**All: Holy One, You whose love endures forever,
you keep offering us new life and hope, no matter**

what. We praise you, for you are our strength and our salvation. We shall not die, but live, for you call us into the light—encouraging us to reach for the sun, unfurl our full colors, and know that we are held in the deep and rich soil of your garden—this is more than good enough for us! Amen.

Prayer of Confession

Leader: Easter is tricky when it comes to faith. We come for the happy ending—the “and then they lived happily ever after.” The resurrection story proclaims hope over despair and life over death, yet we know that life continued, and continues for us, as a story of spiking heartbreak moments that are not forever fixed. The nature of being created for love is that we will always hunger for more, that there is never enough life and love to satisfy. And endings are often too soon. But perhaps a good enough faith is one that moves through the chronic nature of being incurably human with an eye for resurrection moments that assure us that this good enough life is worthy of our amazement. Imagine the new life that God has in store for you as you give your troubles, worries, and sorrow to the *Lord right now*.

Silent Reflection

Assurance of Pardon

Leader: Hear this compassionate word from the prophet Isaiah: “I am about to create new heavens and a new earth; the former things shall not be remembered or come to mind. But be glad and rejoice forever in what I am creating; for I am about to create Jerusalem as a joy, and its people as a delight.”

Know that already, God is offering us freedom from the fear of isolation and anguish at endings, inviting us to community and creativity for birthing new life—unexpected life, unending love.

And know, that despite our sometimes faltering steps, in the name of Jesus Christ, you are being forgiven, even now.

All: In the name of Jesus Christ, you are forgiven. Glory to God! Amen.

Choir Anthem

Scripture Reading: John 20:1-18

20 Early on the first day of the week, while it was still dark, Mary Magdalene came to the tomb and saw that the stone had been removed from the tomb. **2** So she ran and went to Simon Peter and the other disciple, the one whom Jesus loved, and said to them, "They have taken the Lord out of the tomb, and we do not know where they have laid him." **3** Then Peter and the other disciple set out and went toward the tomb. **4** The two were running together, but the other disciple outran Peter and reached the tomb first. **5** He bent down to look in and saw the linen wrappings lying there, but he did not go in. **6** Then Simon Peter came, following him, and went into the tomb. He saw the linen wrappings lying there, **7** and the cloth that had been on Jesus' head, not lying with the linen wrappings but rolled up in a place by itself. **8** Then the other disciple, who reached the tomb first, also went in, and he saw and believed; **9** for as yet they did not understand the scripture, that he must rise from the dead. **10** Then the disciples returned to their homes. **11** But Mary stood weeping outside the tomb. As she wept, she bent over to look into the tomb; **12** and she saw two angels in white, sitting where the body of Jesus had been lying, one at the head and the other at the feet. **13** They said to her, "Woman, why are you weeping?" She said to them, "They have taken away my Lord, and I do not know where they have laid him." **14** When she had said this, she turned around and saw Jesus standing there, but she did not know that it was Jesus. **15** Jesus said to her, "Woman, why are you weeping? Whom are you looking for?" Supposing him to be the gardener, she said to him, "Sir, if you have carried him away, tell me where you have laid him, and I will take him away." **16** Jesus said to her, "Mary!" She turned and said to him in Hebrew, "Rabbouni!" (which means Teacher). **17** Jesus said to her, "Do not hold on to me, because I have not yet ascended to the Father. But go to my brothers and say to them, 'I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.'" **18** Mary Magdalene went and announced to the disciples, "I have seen the Lord"; and she told them that he had said these things to her.

Message: "The Flowering Cross"

Written by Beth Ryan and read by Miss Jill

*Hymn: "Hymn of Promise" (all verses) see insert

Act of Letting Go

Leader: Our faith calls us to rekindle the fires of hope, and sometimes that means allowing some things to be transformed by a refining fire. We have focused this Lent on letting some things go: perfectionism being one, but also other things that rob us of the joy of living the reality of our lives, those things that pull us away from tending that which is the most important. I invite you to a ritual of letting go. In the lovely darkness of a womb and tomb, God held us close, created hope, taking time to fashion, craft, nurture, feed, and love us into liberation and new life. God imbued our stories with eternal light in the story of the resurrected Jesus. God has given us the light of day, the light of this world, and invites us to let this light shine forth as disciples of Jesus, aiding in the rekindling of the fire of the Spirit in all of creation.

The Service of Holy Communion

Leader: Christ looks upon each one with love and says,

People: "you are welcome at my table."

Leader: Christ looks upon each one with compassion and says,

People: "whatever troubles you, bring it here."

Leader: Christ looks upon each one with grace and says,

People: "whatever you'd like to leave behind, do it here."

Leader: Will you come? Will you bring your troubles?

Will you shed all that is unnecessary in your life?

This is the place where you need not be perfect, you need not be sure of yourself or your faith, you need not feel whole and right with the world. Jesus invited many to his tables and in doing so, he assured them of their place in the illogical reign of love and grace. He just wanted them to be hungry for relationship—hungry to look across a table into another's eyes, to break open their lives, and lift a cup in the midst of the hard times and hear, "this is for all, and so this is for you, beloved."

Leader: The Holy Living God be with you.

People: And also with you.

Leader: Lift up your hearts!

People: We lift them up to the Lord!

Leader: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

People: It is right to give our thanks and praise.

Leader: It is right, and a good and joyful thing, anytime and everywhere to give thanks to you. You created this world full of so much beauty and sorrow and called it Good. And called it Enough. Although we feel lost at times, you are ever present. We doubt, resist, turn away, and rage, insistent on our own power to pull us through, and yet sure that we are to blame, making life seem like a confusing paradox. But you are patient. You are here to meet us—reside with us in strange and alienating times, always faithful, always present in this Body ...in this Body ... And so, together we proclaim the praise-filled truth of your glory along with all the saints:

People: Holy, holy, God of Hosts! Heav'n and earth sing out your name! Blest are they who come today; and take their place.

Leader: Holy are you, and blessed is your Son Jesus Christ. He proclaimed freedom for the bound, justice for the oppressed, grace for the lost, love for the prodigal. Through the life and ministry of Jesus, we can imagine and live into a community where all who struggle are taken into loving arms and those who struggle to love are invited into greater compassion.

On the night in which he gave himself up for us, he took bread, gave thanks to you, broke the bread, gave it to his disciples, and said: "Take, eat; this is my body which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me."

When the supper was over, he took the cup, gave thanks to you, gave it to his disciples, and said: "Drink from this, all of you; this is my blood of the new covenant, poured out for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me."

And so, We remember... We offer ourselves ...
We proclaim God's time...

People: Christ has died, yet Christ is ris'n; Christ will come once again! We remember and proclaim redeeming love.

Leader: Pour out your Holy Spirit on us gathered here, and on these gifts of bread and fruit of the vine. Make them be for us sustenance for our days, love for simple and ordinary lives, fuel for justice in this world.

By your Spirit open us to each other. Open us to the world, making us one in you, through Christ, in the power of your amazing grace!

The Lord's Prayer (sung)

Our Father, who art in heaven, Hallowed be thy Name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen.

Sharing the Communion

A Blessing for Who Are Being Planted

(from Good Enough by Kate Bowler and Jessica Richie)

Blessed are you who are buried. You who feel stuck in the depths of grief and despair or who sit in the pit of unknowing. You who are learning to trust the timing of a tender Gardener.

Blessed are you who are growing, you who burst with new life, fresh creativity. Who understand the pain that sometimes comes with stretching and changing, pruning and being cut back.

And blessed are you in your season of fruitfulness. You who are learning to abide in the vine, and who taste the sweetness of God's loving-kindness. The God who was there all along—planting, waiting, watering, pruning, delighting. The God who pays careful attention to God's garden.

*Closing Hymn: "Jesus Christ Is Risen Today" p.360
(all verses)

*Benediction

And now, may the God who loves all of creation, especially the gardens we call our lives, and Jesus, our companion

along this crooked path called life, and the Holy Spirit, who loves to improvise in surprising ways, go with you, dwell among you, and give you joy. Amen.

*Extinguishing of the Candles

*Postlude



All liturgy and leader parts Marcia McFee

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TODAY'S ALTAR FLOWERS are sponsored by Henry and MaryAnn

Heil in honor of their daughter, Marianne Alliston's Birthday.

TODAY'S BULLETIN is sponsored by Mr. and Mrs. Charles Brown

in honor of their 36th Wedding Anniversary.

TODAY'S LITURGIST is Millie Kohler.

TODAY'S GREETERS are members of our Consistory.

RESTROOMS ARE AVAILABLE on the main floor of the Church and downstairs.

We have Bulletin Magnifier Sheets if needed. They can be found on the sound system.

Loose Offering today will go into our Pastor's Discretionary Fund.

Mask Wearing - Consistory has agreed that individuals can make their own decision as to the wearing of masks during church services. If you find yourself testing positive for COVID, **please contact the church office** so we can alert others who may have been in contact with you during time spent at church. Thank you.

Windows To The Future - Running low on windows note cards? You're in luck because we are having a half-price Spring Sale. Five cards are now just \$5. They are available in the Upper Social Hall where you will also find the quilt auction entry box. Be sure to drop off your sealed bid for the quilt during April.

Are you considering joining Old Zionsville UCC? We will be having a **New Members' Class** on Sundays, May 8 and May 15 from 9-10 a.m. each day. On May 15, you will be received into membership at the 10:15 a.m. worship service. You can certainly sit in on the class just to review your knowledge of our church. Please speak with Pastor Lori for further details. We already have two folks signed up. Join in!

GriefShare – Join us on Wednesdays for our GriefShare sessions in the lower social hall at **6:30 p.m.** This group is open to anyone who wishes to explore the program and/or work to heal. You may join in

anytime. We meet each Wednesday from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. until June 1. There is no cost for the program but a suggested donation of \$15.00 (or whatever you can afford to pay) for the workbook. Please register with Pastor Lori, call or text at 610-393-3522.

Join us for April's **Lunch Bunch** on Friday, April 22nd at 12 noon at The Brass Rail, 3015 Lehigh Street, Allentown. Please RSVP no later than Monday, April 18th. Everyone is invited attend this fun social. Please let Linda or Mark Weaver know if you are able to attend by email at catofpa@ptd.net or weavermj@ptd.net, call at 215-679-7599 or let them know when you see them in church.

The next **Supper Club** social for all will be on Friday, May 6 at 6 p.m. at Hops Fogelsville Hotel. Please RSVP to Linda or Mark Weaver by Monday, May 2.

We are so fortunate to have beautiful **Altar Flowers** either silk or real each week. Thank you to everyone who contributes that gift to our worship experience. Each week after worship someone needs to remove the flowers from the altar and make sure they get to their sponsors or to another location based on the wishes of the giver. We have missed Darlene Schmeltzle in coordinating this part of our Altar Guild's ministry. Would you be willing to stay after worship for the Sundays of one month to help in this ministry? The instructions are easy to follow and you can certainly ask someone else to help if you need to be away. Thank you for prayerfully considering this ministry. Here is the list of current helpers we have. If you see an empty space, will you help us? Also, if you are on this list and would prefer to be removed, please let me know. Thanks in advance for your help in BEING THE CHURCH. Pastor Lori

January:	Open	July:	Open
February:	Cheryl Martucci	August:	Open
March:	Susan Jacobs	September:	Diane Berger
April:	Open	October:	Patti Mittl
May:	Brenda Shoemaker	November:	Jane Bedell
June:	Brenda Shoemaker	December:	Carolyn Rhoads

Prayer List

Christoph Shirley Barbara & Leon Holly Rob Chris Jim
Monica Casey Joe Connor Keith Shirley & Kelly Stephen
Ukrainian People & all affected by the conflict Linda Molter Family
Shaw Family Gehring Family Diane Martucci Family Bob
Sylvester Davis Family Phyllis Arlene Ann Michael Donna
Troy Greg Debbie Jeffrey Family of Hal Strobel Family
Curtis Whitcomb Family Harrison Family

Military

Drew Stahler Chad Kichline Nate Yeakel Chanellor Yenser
All Military Personnel Worldwide

Week of April 17-April 23, 2022:

Pastor Lori will have office hours on Wednesday from 10am-3pm.

Other times by appointment

Church Secretary: Brenda Seitz, hours Mon-Thurs 10am-3pm

Sexton: Richard Shoemaker (with Thanks to his wife, Brenda)

Boy Scouts – Monday @ 6pm

Sound Committee – Monday @ 7pm

Consistory – Tuesday @ 7pm

GriefShare – Wednesday @ 6:30pm

Choir – Thursday @ 7:30pm

Lunch Bunch – Friday @ 12 noon @ The Brass Rail

Next Sunday – 9:00am Sunday School

10:15am Worship

Total Offerings from April 10:

General Offerings: \$2,435.00

Mission: \$35.00

Windows to the Future: \$120.00

Cemetery: \$120.00

Parking Lot: \$15.00

Attendance: 58