

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

December 18, 2022

10:15 a.m.

**those who are able may stand*

Fourth Sunday of Advent/Love
“Ask A Sign”

Prelude

Welcome and Announcements

Lighting of the Altar Candles

Lighting of the Advent Wreath

Call to Worship

One: We come seeking a sign from You, the One who sits upon the throne.

All: Restore us, O God; let your face shine, that we may be saved.

One: We come seeking to worship You, the One who dwells with us always.

All: Restore us, O God; let your face shine, that we may be saved.

One: We come seeking to witness your might, a child to be born in a coming night.

All: Restore us, O God; let your face shine, that we may be saved.

(Inspired by Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19)

Prayer of Invocation (unison)

God of love –Ferocious love, fierce love, unending love, everlasting love –We gather in place with gratitude for the ways your love has called us out of bleakest and into your marvelous. We know of your renown, and we stand in awe of your work. In our own time revive it; in our own time make it known. Give ear, O Shepherd of Israel. Stir up your might in this place. Give us life, and we will call on your name as we worship you in spirit and in truth. Amen.

(Inspired by Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19)

*Opening Hymn: “O Come, O Come, Emmanuel” (vs. 1 & 4) p.245

Invitation to Confession

One: We gather together in this season of Advent anticipating hope, praying for peace, attempting to cultivate joy and share love amidst commotion, grief, despair and uncertainty.

Moment of silence

God, our shepherd – Restorer of our souls,

All: In a world full of hopelessness, we have sometimes forgotten that you have shown your hope in endless ways. Restore us, O God; let your face shine, that we may know your hope.

One: In the mirey mess of the world,

All: We have sometimes neglected to lean into your peace that transcends comprehension. Restore us, O God; let your face shine, that we may know your peace.

One: In a culture shrouded in doom and despair, we have often forgotten how to fight for our joy.

All: Restore us, O God; let your face shine, that we may know your joy.

One: In a moment when it is easier to hate others because they believe differently, love differently, live differently, vote differently – we have forgotten how to love beyond the bounds of what separates us.

All: Restore us, O God; let your face shine, that we may know your love. Stimulate our memory, O divine Creator. Remind us that even in our weakness, you are mighty.

Words of Assurance

God has never left us nor forsaken us. God is Emmanuel in the face of crisis, Emmanuel, in the midst of calamity, Emmanuel, in the presence of tribulation. God with us, Helping our unbelief, Bringing us back to life, Reminding us that we are light. Let that be good news. Amen.

*Hymn: "Deck the Halls"

video on screen

Scripture Reading: Matthew 1:18-25

18 Now the birth of Jesus the Messiah took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been engaged to Joseph, but before they lived together, she was found to be pregnant from the Holy Spirit. **19** Her husband Joseph, being a righteous man and unwilling to expose her to public disgrace, planned to divorce her quietly. **20** But just when he had resolved to do this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, "Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife, for the child conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. **21** She will bear a son, and you are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins." **22** All this took place to fulfill what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet: **23** "Look, the virgin shall become pregnant and give birth to a son, and they shall name him Emmanuel," which means, "God is with us." **24** When Joseph awoke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him; he took her as his wife **25** but had no marital relations with her until she had given birth to a son, and he named him Jesus.

Special Music: "Silent Night" (English, German and Hebrew) by Caleb-Hunter Buck

Reflection

Choir Anthem

*The Pastoral Prayer....The Lord's Prayer

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

Offering

We believe in the God of justice and righteousness, and God believes in us to carry forth the mission of loving and caring for community. Let us now share our gifts and resources so that we may continue to walk humbly with God and with neighbors.

*Presentation of Our Offerings and The Doxology

**Praise God from whom all blessings flow;
Praise Him, all creatures here below;
Praise Him above, ye heavenly host;
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.**

*Prayer of Dedication (unison)

We dedicate these gifts that have been shared for the fortification of the beloved community. Let these gifts do justice in the world so that all may know they are loved by God. Amen.

*Closing Hymn: "Now bless the God of Israel" (verse 1 only) insert

*Benediction

Go forth knowing that you are loved by God. Go forth leading a life that is a sign of God's grace. Go forth with anticipation for the restoration that is to come. And in that going, May God bless and keep you, May God's face shine upon you, May God be gracious to you and give you peace. Amen.

Extinguishing of the Candles

Postlude



Ask a Sign: Service Prayers for the Fourth Sunday in Advent were written by Rev. Mia M. McClain is the Senior Pastor of Riverside Baptist Church in Washington D.C. She is an ordained UCC minister.

TODAY'S ALTAR FLOWERS are from Paula Lilly in memory of parents, Vincent and Emma Christman and Howard and Helen Lilly.

TODAY'S BULLETINS are sponsored by Mina Reinhard in loving memory of Gene and Timothy Reinhard.

TODAY'S LITURGIST is Nancy Civitts.

TODAY'S GREETER is Peter Yeakel.

RESTROOMS ARE AVAILABLE on the main floor of the Church and downstairs. Bulletin MAGNIFIER SHEETS can be found on the sound system.

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 - The 2022 Matching Gift Challenge was a success, raising over \$8,000 for the Windows Fund. The year ends with a fund balance that allows us to begin Phase 3 of the project, beginning with restoration of the nativity window stained glass. Work on the twin windows and protective glass on the three windows will be on hold until additional funds are raised. Please keep the continued success of the project in your prayers.

Need a last minute gift? Consider one of the quilts that are on display in our upper social hall. We are asking \$350 each but will entertain any reasonable offer. We even have a box for you to wrap and gift! See Pastor Lori, Ruth Stansfield, or Beth Massa for details. Proceeds go to our Windows to the Future fund.

Christmas Eve Worship – This year we will have a 3:00 p.m. Christmas Eve Service and a 7:30 p.m. Candlelight Worship Service. Our 3pm service will be candles and carols in a shortened service.

Week of December 18-24, 2022:

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

Other times by appointment

Church Secretary: Brenda Seitz will be on vacation this week

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

Scouts – Monday @ 6pm

Cub Scouts – Tuesday @ 7pm

Consistory – Tuesday @ 7pm

Choir – Thursday @ 7:30pm

Christmas Eve Services – Saturday, 3:00pm and 7:30pm

Next Sunday - No Sunday School or Confirmation
10:15am Worship

Total Offerings from December 11:

General Offerings: \$ 1,903.00
Mission: \$60.00
Windows to the Future: \$295.00
Communion: \$20.00
Ukraine Relief: \$20.00
Parking Lot Maintenance: \$20.00
Cemetery: \$2.00
Attendance: 62