

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

February 8, 2026

10:15am

**those who are able may stand*

Scout Sunday

Prelude: "Bless This Earth"

(Calkins)

Welcome and Announcements

Lighting of the Candles

Call to Worship

Leader: Shout it out—no holding back!

People: There is truth that needs to be spoken.

Leader: Let the people rise and hear it.

People: We are listening. We stand ready.

Leader: Shout to the weary, the overlooked, the worn-thin:

People: With courage, we gather. With voices, we speak words of life.

Leader: Shout to the hearts carrying hidden weight,

People: The Holy One meets us here in our honesty.

Leader: Shout to the systems that press people down,

People: Their power is not the final word.

Leader: A new song is rising—

People: A song that frees, A rhythm that restores, A melody of reparation.

Leader: Shout to the builders, the dreamers, the stubbornly hopeful:

People: The time has come for burdens to lift, For the grip of harm to loosen, For the rebuilding what has been broken.

Leader: Come, Beloved Community, Come. bring your resolve, your compassion, your wide-awake faith.

All: Let us worship the God who calls us to remove every yoke.

Invocation (unison)

Calling Voice That Won't Be Silenced, we come into this moment carrying the weight of our days—the strain we feel in our bodies, the struggle we witness in our neighbors, the burdens that press on our shared life. Draw near to us now. Gather our scattered breath. Steady our trembling places. Kindle in us a courage that does not look away. You are the One who refuses empty rituals and meets us instead in acts of mercy, in the work of lifting burdens, in the rebuilding of what has been harmed. Let this time be honest, let this gathering be brave, and let your Spirit move among us with the power to uproot what harms and to plant what heals. Amen.

Hymn: "When Morning Gilds the Skies" (verses 1,2,4 only) page 215

Prayer for Transformation and New Life (unison)

Calling Presence who knows our hidden places, we admit that we have not always chosen the path that frees. We have stayed silent when truth asked for our voice; we have protected our comfort when compassion asked for our hands; we have waited for others to do the work you entrusted to us. Loosen our resistance, lift the habits that keep us from seeing one another clearly, and break the patterns that bind us to what harms. Teach us the courage to act with mercy. Teach us the discipline of repair. Teach us the way of releasing what we cling to so that others may breathe more easily. Let this moment mark a turning—a turning toward your justice, a turning toward your tenderness, a turning toward the shared life you imagine for us. In your grace, make us new. Amen.

Words of Grace

Hear the good news: The One who calls us out in truth, meets us not with shame, but with mercy that lifts what is heavy and compassion that steadies our steps. When we turn toward justice, God's healing begins working in us. When we loosen what harms, God loosens the weight within us. When we offer ourselves to repair, God says to us, "Here I am." In this promise, receive your freedom. In this grace, begin again. Amen.

Hymn: "He Giveth More Grace" page 707

Scripture: Matt. 5:13-20 page 838

Reflection

The Sacrament of Baptism

see insert

Invitation to Generosity

Faithful Friends of God,
The prophets tell us that devotion is revealed
in the way we lighten each other's load—

right here, in our streets and neighborhoods,
where strain is real and hope needs partners.

When we give,
we join the work of lifting burdens
and repairing the places we call home.

Let our offering be simple and true:
open hands, willing hearts,

and commitment to our shared life.
Let us give.

Offertory: "The Church's One Foundation"

(Wesley)

*Presentation of our Gifts 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 Thanksgiving and Dedication (unison)

**Calling Voice Who Leads Us Toward Freedom,
we give thanks for every gift offered today—
for open hands, willing hearts,
and the courage to imagine a shared life made whole.**

**Bless what we have brought.
Let it move where relief is needed,
where repair can begin,
where dignity can rise.**

**Make these gifts more than generosity—
make them instruments of justice,
seeds of compassion,
signs that your vision is taking root among us.**

**For every burden lifted,
for every neighbor tended,
for every act of mercy made possible,
we give you thanks.**

Carry us forward in this work

**with gratitude deep enough
to shape the world we are building together.**

Amen.

Choir Anthem

**Presentation and Celebration of our Scout Troop
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, forever.**

Hymn: "Blest Be the Tie that Binds"

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Benediction

May the Way, Truth and Life go with you,
the Presence that unsettles what must change
and steadies what must endure.

Let the weight on your shoulders grow lighter,
not by forgetting it,
but by letting others walk beside you.

Carry within you a courage that listens deeply,
an imagination wide enough to rebuild ruins,
and a tenderness fierce enough
to unlearn every habit of harm.

And as you go—
into streets that need mending
and neighborhoods aching for breath—
may you hear the Holy murmur "Here I am"
in every shared burden,
in every act of mercy,

in every small unraveling of the yoke.

Go in boldness.

Go in gentleness.

Go in the sacred work of making all things whole.

Amen.

*Extinguishing of the Candles



Remove the Yoke: Service Prayers for Epiphany 5A was written by Rev. Michael Anthony Howard, who serves as the Minister of Faith in Action for the Living Water Association, Ohio NorthEast, of the Heartland Conference, United Church of Christ. Michael's work supports congregations as they weave theology, justice, and place-based ministry into faithful action that bears prophetic witness to God's dwelling among us.

TODAY'S LITURGIST is Millie Kohler.

TODAY'S GREETERS are Gisela Thiel.

TODAY'S ALTAR FLOWERS are sponsored by The Boy Scouts.

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



Our church is equipped with an Assistive Listening System. You provide your own headphones which can be connected to the transmitter which will allow you to more clearly hear the Worship Service or any program being offered in the Sanctuary. See anyone at the sound booth to inquire.

Church Closed? In case of inclement weather or ice in the parking lot at the church that you don't have at home: please look at WFMZ on your computer or on TV for any cancellation or delay information.

Greeters and Liturgists Needed. If you would like to get on our schedule to help in our Worship Services by being a Greeter or Liturgist, please contact the church office. Email and phone number are on front page or put a note in the Secretary's mailbox. Thank you.

Confirmation Class:

Let me know if you want to sit in on a class with us. We are learning how to chat with adults as well as learning about our congregation. Here are three of the upcoming classes and topics. All are welcome.

Feb. 15: Sunday 9 a.m. in the lower social hall: Topic: More history of the UCC

March 1: Sunday, Class noon to 2 p.m. Lower social hall, Time with mentors, making and sharing lunch together, Let's talk about Lent

March 15: Sunday, 9 a.m. in the lower social hall: What does the Bible say about Lent? (Using our Bibles)

Sunday Brunchers

When: Sunday February 15, 2026, ~ 12 Noon

Where: Mercantile Club

Railroad St., Emmaus

CASH ONLY

RSVP by Wednesday 2/11/2026

Lunch Bunch

When: Friday February 27, 2026, 12 Noon

Where: Superior Restaurant

102 Main Street, Emmaus

RSVP by Wednesday 2/22/2026

Lehigh Valley Phantoms – The Phantoms Ice Hockey Team is hosting a Faith Night on Sunday, March 15, 2026 with game starting at 3:05 p.m. Ticket cost will be either \$22 or \$28 per person depending on seating level. Pregame and during intermission our concourse will have live music. Following the game Phantoms player Cooper Marody will host a live testimonial talking about his upbringing and faith to the congregations in attendance. Please see Jane Bedell, email or call her if you are interested in more details.

Our annual **OZUCC Night at the Iron Pigs** will be on Saturday May 23, 2026, with first pitch at 6:35PM.

- We will again be seated in the Picnic Pavillion and have the buffet dinner (included in price). This is also a Fireworks show after the game.
- Tickets are still the same price at \$28.00 per person
- The signup is by Sunday March 29, and we will need your payment at time of signup.

February Soup & Sandwich Orders are due today, Sunday, Feb 8. Soup & Sandwich pickup will be on Thursday, February 19 from 3:30-5:00pm.

The order forms can be found on the tables in the Narthex. Please note that soup and sandwich **pick up will conclude at 5pm from now onward**. Thanks for your help to get there on time or let them know if you can't make it by 5pm. Thank you.

All Things Free Room (ATF) next Sort and Store will be tomorrow, Monday, February 9 at 10:00am. Thank you for your help with this giving ministry. If you can help or have any questions, please call or text Pastor Lori at 610-393-3522.

January 21, Wednesday at 1 p.m. in the lower social hall, **we once again resumed watching the next season of The Chosen**. All are welcome. We are finished with our time together around 2:15 p.m. or so and you are not obligated to stay after the showing for the discussion. We always have snacks, beverages, and a clearer learning of how the disciples responded to Jesus and their daily routines. The sessions will continue for about 8 weeks and if the weather is not good, we will postpone the showing by a week.

February is the start of Lent with Ash Wednesday, Feb. 18, worship to be held at Zion's Evangelical Lutheran Church up the hill from us. The service begins at 7 p.m. in the upstairs sanctuary. There is an elevator and stairs. You

enter the church at the awning from the parking lot. There will be NO service at OZUCC for Ash Wednesday this year.

The next round of **GriefCare** is scheduled to start on Wednesday, June 3 and run until July 29. There are nine sessions and will be held on Wednesday evenings from 6-8 pm. Please speak to Pastor Lori with any questions. This group is open to all and is Free.

2026 Easter Flower Orders - To place your order for Lilies or Tulips please find the order forms in the Narthex. Drop the order form in the offering plate any Sunday or call / email the church office. Orders with payment must be received on or before Sunday March 15, 2026. Cost per 6" pot of Tulips or Lily is \$11.50. Please make any checks payable to "Old Zionsville UCC". *Thank you!*

Jewelry Fundraiser (3/15/26-4/12/26) - Beginning March 15 there will be a designated locked container in the Narthex to collect any old, unwanted jewelry you may have. Our proceeds will be determined by the fair market value of the items collected less 15%. Some items may ultimately be donated to organizations such as The YMCA Perfect Fit Professional Clothing Boutique, YMCA Bethlehem Pop Up Prom Shop, and more. The proceeds from this fundraiser will be included as part of our end of year distribution. Flyer posted on bulletin boards for more information.

Week of February 9 through February 15:

Pastor Lori will have office hours on Wednesday, 10am-3pm.
(other times by appointment)

Church Hours: Tues. 11:30am-1:30pm, Wed & Thurs. 10am-2pm.
(please call before coming to make sure she is in the office)

Many thanks to Robin and Brenda for covering the office while Ellie was out.

Monday: 10am ATF Sort & Store
6pm Scouts

Tuesday: 7pm Cubs
7pm FUN Group

Wednesday: 1pm Chosen
7pm Finance

Thursday: 7:30pm Choir

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

Next Sunday, Feb 15 9:00am Confirmation Class
9:00 am Sunday School
10:15 am Worship
12 noon Sunday Brunchers, Mercantile

Total Offerings from February 1, 2026:

General Offerings: \$2006.00

Missions: \$60.00

Flowers: \$100.00

Bulletin: \$20.00

Heat/Electric: \$40.00

Bldg. Repair: \$20.00

Sunday School: \$4.00

Parking Lot: \$30.00

Furnace: \$25.00

Cemetery: \$10.00

Attendance: 75