

**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 17, 2023

10:15 a.m.

*\*those who are able may stand*

**Third Sunday of Advent (Joy)**  
**"Ancient Ruins...Everlasting Covenant"**

Prelude: "Thou Didst Leave Thy Throne"

Matthews

Welcome and Announcements

Lighting of the Candles

Call to Worship (Psalm 34 in conversation with the Magnificat)

Leader: O magnify our God with me and let us exalt God's name together.

**All: Our souls magnify the Lord. Our spirits rejoice in God our Savior!**

Leader: We will bless the Lord at all times; God's praise shall continually be in our mouths.

**All: Our souls magnify the Lord. God's mercy endures from generation to generation.**

Leader: Let our souls makes their boasts in the Lord; Let the humble hear and be glad.

**All: Our souls magnify the Lord for the Mighty One has done great things.**

\*Opening Hymn: "Come, thou Long-Expected Jesus"

p.244

Lighting of the Joy Candle

Hope is assertive, and peace is subversive. But joy? Joy is rebelliously provocative. How dare joy make its way into our dreary, despairing world? How dare joy show up in all its flashiness—it even gets a pink candle for crying out loud! How dare we, in the midst of war and hate and despair, deep division and grief and violence, come together and rejoice? How dare some shepherds start speaking of good news and the heavenly host declaring peace on earth in the midst of a violent Roman occupation? But if they did it, why can't we? Why can't we sing for joy that God is breaking open into our world again? Why can't we be rebellious against the politicians and news

anchors and doomsday sayers that there is joy for the world—no—joy to the world! We light this candle because God is provoking us to sing for joy, to sing and dance and laugh so hard we have tears, because there is peace and hope in this world.

*Light the third candle*

Prayer (unison)

**God of joy, call us to sing, remind us to dance, tickle us into fits of laughter, because You are in our world and in our lives and doing something new, right now. Death and despair have nothing on You, and we rejoice in You, our Savior. Amen.**

\*Hymn: "God Christian Men, Rejoice" p.273

Prayer of Transformation

Let us pray: **Womb of Creation, we often get caught up in what we do not have –The material things we lack, the access and privilege we may lack, The answers, even, that seem to escape us in crucial moments. Forgive us for the times we forgot to remember you. Hold us accountable for the moments we failed to see you in The blessings of ages past. Help us reconnect with our joy and our gratitude. Remind us to name our joys, our miracles, our deliverances, our redemptions One by one by one, for you are there in them all.**

Words of Grace

God hears what is named aloud, what is named within, and what is yet to be named. Go forth knowing that the Spirit of the Lord is upon you, and this joy you have – the world didn't give it and the world can't take it.  
Amen.

\*Hymn: "Joyful, Joyful, We Adore You" p.271

Scripture: Psalm 126 p.537

Reflection

Music: "The Magnificat"

Invitation to Generosity

We come in the name of the One who filled the hungry, who lifted up the lowly, and brought the powerful ones down from their thrones. We aim to share our gifts and resources so that we may continue the mission of God and become the Good News we wish to see.

Offertory: "Hark! The Herald Angels Sing" Mendelssohn

\* 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 Dedication (unison)  
**We dedicate these gifts that have been shared for the fortification  
of the beloved community. Let these gifts usher joy into this world  
and signal to the people that God is still setting captives free.  
Amen.**

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 heaven. Give us this day our  
daily bread, and forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.  
Lead us not into temptation and deliver us from evil. For Thine is  
the Kingdom and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.**

\*Closing Hymn: "Rejoice, Ye Pure in Heart" p.169

\*Benediction (Inspired by 1 Thessalonians 5:16-24)  
May the God of peace sanctify you entirely; May your spirit and soul and  
body be kept sound. May you go forth knowing you are held by The One  
who calls you faithful. Amen.

\*Extinguishing of the Candles

\*Postlude: "Shout the Glad Tidings" Avison

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**Ancient Ruins...Everlasting Covenant: Service Prayers for the Third Sunday of Advent Year B**  
was written by The Rev. Mia M. McClain, Senior Pastor of Riverside Baptist Church in Washington D.C.  
She is an ordained UCC minister.

**We thank Millie Kohler, retiring Consistory Member, for lighting our Advent  
Candle today.**

**TODAY'S ALTAR FLOWERS** are sponsored by 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 GREETER** is Diane Berger.

**TODAY'S LITURGIST** is Nancy Weitzel.

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.

**Advent Bible Study** - 9 a.m. to 9:45 a.m. next Sunday morning, Dec. 24 and Epiphany lesson on Jan. 7! Bring your Bible. We will meet in the Lower Social Hall. All Welcome. No previous Bible Study experience necessary!

Our **Christmas Eve Services** will be 10:15 a.m. Candles, Carols, Choir and Communion Worship; 7:30 p.m. will begin with the Bell Choir at 7 p.m., Candles, Carols, Choir and Candlelight Worship. Fire Police will be with us at 6:45 p.m. to help guest cross the street from the parking lot. Please join us!

**ATF** is still looking for a sturdy clothing rack. Thank you! If you know anyone that could use a Wedding Gown, ATF has a very pretty one, brand new with tags still on, size 14. See Millie. The next ATF Giveaway will be on Monday, January 8 from 4-6pm and Saturday, January 13<sup>th</sup> from 10am-12pm.

**ATF is asking for everyone to please hold your donations till February. Thank you!**

**January Soup of the Month** – Social and Aid will be making Chili in January. Order forms can be found at the entrances of the Church. Chili is \$8.00/quart and Ham and Cheese Sandwiches are \$5.00. Orders must be placed by January 7, 2024 and pick up will be on Thursday, January 18, 2024 between 4-6 p.m.

December 25, 2023 until January 2, 2024...

If you need Pastoral Assistance please call the church office or Kathy Latshaw

This Christmas season, **the Food Panty** provided \$25 gift cards for the children of our client families. In prior years we asked for gift cards to be donated by civic groups and local churches but, due to timing and logistics, we needed to purchase the cards upfront this year. We are asking for anyone interested to make a donation, of any dollar amount to help defray the costs. Donations so far have covered about 15% of our outlay for what has turned out to be a record number of children. If you are interested in contributing, please consider any of the following options:

- Add it as a special item on your offering envelope
- Provide a check or cash to Robin
- Send a check to

Zionsville Area Food Pantry  
PO Box 56  
Old Zionsville PA 18068

As all cards have already been purchased, no additional cards are needed.  
Thank you in advance for any contribution you may make.

### **Week of December 17-23, 2023:**

Pastor Lori will have office hours on Wednesday from  
10am-3pm. Other times by appointment.

Church Office will be closed through Wednesday, December 27, 2023.

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

Scouts – Monday @ 6pm  
Consistory – Tuesday @ 7pm  
Bell Choir – Thursday @ 6:30pm  
Choir Practice – Thursday @ 7:30pm  
Youth Group - Friday from 6-8pm

### **Next Sunday – No Sunday School**

9:00am Bible Study  
10:15am Worship  
7:30pm Worship with Bells playing at 7:00pm

### **Total Offerings from December 10, 2023:**

General Offerings: \$1,388.00  
Window Fund: \$55.00  
Mission: \$5.00  
Parking Lot: \$0  
Cemetery: \$5.00  
Attendance: 51