

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

<u>Rev. Lori Esslinger</u>	<u>Pastor</u>
<u>David Carlson</u>	<u>Organist</u>
<u>December 7, 2025</u>	<u>10:15am</u>

**those who are able may stand*

Second Sunday of Advent
The Silent Word

Gathering

Like the iconic figures gathered around the Christ Child in our nativity scenes, we gather together because we want to know Jesus more as we seek to bring his Reign of Hope, Peace, Joy, and Love on earth

Prelude: "O Little Town of Bethlehem" (Redner)

Welcome and Announcements

Lighting of the Altar Candles

We Gather at the Scene

Leader: We continue our Advent series inspired by the dear carol, "What Child is This?" However, we are asking it this way: "What Child IS This?" We are going "Beyond the Lullaby" to ask many more questions of who this child was, especially in the time that he was born which was not really a peaceful time for all people, even though it was called the "Pax Romana."

Lighting of the Advent Wreath: Mark Weaver, Retiring Consistory Member
assisted by Consistory Member, Amber Kriebel

Sung: **Page 281**

Why lies He in such mean estate,
Where ox and ass are feeding?
Good Christian, fear: for sinners here
The silent Word is pleading.

Leader: The poet of our theme carol, "What Child is This," penned the phrase "the silent Word is pleading." Our vision of the child in the manger may be the soothing lullaby and the silent night, but the reality of babies, and of

that time in history, is that of a “crying out.” It was a time when many were silenced, and the need for prophesying justice in the midst of trauma was great. Zechariah does this when his silence is lifted. The Word became Flesh for such a time.

Reader 1: We light this candle of Peace for those who need it most.

Reader 2: For all who are being silenced.

Reader 1: For all who are afraid to speak out.

Reader 2: For all who know that peace comes with justice.

Reader 1: Our question for today at the scene of the nativity is this: “How will we cry out for true peace for ALL people? How will we soothe the trauma of the world in our time?”

Reader 2: What child IS this? This, this, is the Prince of Peace who invites us to proclaim his reign forever.

Sung:

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**This, this is Christ, the King,
Whom shepherds guard and angels sing:
Haste, haste to bring Him laud,
The Babe, the Son of Mary!**

Prayer of Invocation (unison)

**Here, at the nativity of your birth,
give us the courage to face this moment
with new air in our lungs.
Open us to new understandings of
the unfolding story of your presence among us.
Show us the true meaning of peace on earth,
good will for all.
We pray in the name of the Child,
the Prince of Peace in our hearts and lives.
Amen.**

*Opening Hymn: “You are My All in All”

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Proclaiming

We open ourselves to the full story of Christ’s birth, knowing that his story is the ground of our faith and the light for our path.

We Hear the Story Luke 1:5-25

Sermon

Responding

Our faithful response is to praise God for this story of Emmanuel, God-With-Us, even and especially in the midst of difficulty, for God is indeed with us even still.

“We Keep Watch” – Prayers

"Great Holy One"

Brian Wren and Susan Heafield

Sung by congregation and/or choir:

**Great, Holy One, spreading time and space,
show us who You are in a human face.**

Leader: In this moment of silent contemplation, we lift up our hopes for the world, for its people, for the kind of kin-dom embodied by the child who became the Prince of Peace. [You have a sticky-note and we invite you to write a word or phrase of prayer for peace that will be added to our Nativity scene. Please place your sticky notes in the offering plate]

Time of Silent Contemplation

Sung by congregation and/or choir:

**Great, Holy One, spreading time and space,
show us who You are in a human face.**

Pastoral Prayer

Be with us as we seek to be the Body of Christ in the world.

We pray this in the way you taught us, saying...

*The Lord's Prayer

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**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.
Amen**

Sung by congregation and/or choir:

**Great, Holy One, spreading time and space,
show us who You are in a human face.**

"So Bring Him..."

(Offering)

Presentations of our White Gifts for Bethany Ministries

(David will play some of our favorite Christmas carols while we come forward.)

What gifts are adequate for the Silent Word, the Prince of Peace? Our theme song says "so bring him incense, gold, and myrrh; come peasant, king, to own him." Whether what we have to give is simply the gift of our presence and gratitude, or if we are privileged with coffers of precious resources, we give what we can. In this way we "take ownership" of our role in the scene, in the unfolding story of Peace.

Offertory: "Hark! The Herald Angels Sing"

(Mendelssohn)

*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

Hear our prayers and receive our gifts oh God.
May they be pleasing in your sight. Amen

Choir Anthem

Sending Forth

Just as our theme carol asks, "what child is this?" we, too, have come with our questions this day. We go into the world with answers of Good News, being the Body of Christ through our words and deeds.

We Ask, We Answer

As we prepare to go into the world,
let us ask and answer the question we came with.

What child IS this?

This is the one born in a time
when too many were silenced.

What child IS this?

This is the one whose voice would ring out,
reminding all that peace does not come through violence.

What child IS this?

This, this is the "Prince of Peace"
who shows us the kin-dom in which all have a voice, and no one is afraid.

*Closing Hymn: "Let There Be Peace on Earth" (see insert)

Benediction

May the Voice of the Divine,
the Child of Peace,
the Spirit of Resistance to Injustice
be with you now and as you go.

All: Amen.

Sung Response:

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**This, this is Christ, the King,
Whom shepherds guard and angels sing:
Haste, haste to bring Him laud,
The Babe, the Son of Mary!**

*Extinguishing of the Candles

Please stay in the sanctuary for the Cemetery Association meeting and the Annual Congregational meeting.

TODAY'S GREETERS are Roger & Mishelle Miller.

TODAY'S LITURGIST is Robin Yoder.

TODAY'S ALTAR FLOWERS are given by Richard Yeakel in loving memory of his husband, Dick.

TODAY'S CHANCEL FLOWERS are given by Larry & Angela Stahler in loving memory of Bernie Stahler commemorating her Birthday.

TODAY'S BULLETIN is sponsored by Mr. & Mrs. Robert Souder in memory of loved ones.

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.

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.

December Soup and Sandwich Orders are due Today. Chili along with Ham and Cheese Sandwiches is offered for purchase by our Social and Aid Committee. Chili is sold by the quart for \$8.00 each and sandwiches are \$5.00 each. Order Forms can be found next to the bulletins as you enter the church. Please make checks payable to Old Zionsville UCC. Order forms may be dropped in the offering plate this Sunday during worship service. Keep the bottom of this form for your records if you sell to others. Proceeds will be split between the Church and Cemetery Association.

Orders must be received by Today, December 7, 2025.

Pick up will be Thursday, December 18, 2025 in our downstairs Social Hall between 3:30-5:30 p.m.

Sunday Brunchers

When: Sunday December 21, 2025, After Church (Cash Only)

Where: The Mercantile Club

427 Railroad St. Emmaus

RSVP by Tuesday 12/16/2025

Annual Congregation Meeting will be held Today, December 7, 2025 immediately following worship. At this time, we will discuss and approve the 2026 budget, elect new Consistory members, and consider any other business

that may come before the congregation. We also have to change our Constitution because of the change from PNEC to Keystone Conference and Mountain Valley Association. Our Consistory is looking to fill two spots this year. If you would like more information, please speak with Cheryl Martucci, Kathy Latshaw, or Pastor Lori. Terms are 2 years and on the job training is provided. Previous experience is not necessary however if you would like to sign on to serve again, that is terrific. Each member of the church may serve after not having been on Consistory for one year. Thanks in advance for your prayerful consideration.

The **Cemetery Association Annual Meeting** will also be held Today, December 7.

All Things Free Room (ATF) next Sort and Store will be Monday, December 8 at 10:00am. If you can help or have any questions, call or text Millie Kohler. Thank you for your help with this giving ministry.

Christmas Eve services are scheduled for 3 p.m. and 7 p.m. this year. 3 p.m. will be a little shorter for those who can't sit so long and those who don't like to drive at night - candles, carols, communion. The 7 p.m. service will be a more traditional service; however, the Choir will be presenting a wonderful Cantata for our enjoyment. There will be candles and carols too. O Come one and all!

Again, this year, for the **Angel Tree** we will be collecting SOCKS for the Warming Station in the Allentown YMCA. The Warming Station provides shelter, food, and a safe place for those experiencing homelessness in our community. It is open from November 15 through April 15 to individuals 18 and older. You will not need an actual angel. You can donate any size NEW socks for men and/or women.... a collection box will be located outside Pastor Lori's office from until December 7.

Share the Warmth

Again, this year we will be collecting items to warm someone from the inside. All items will be donated to support the Zionsville Area Food Pantry. Beginning in December 2025 and through January 2026 we will be collecting the following items: Tea bags, Coffee (regular and/or decaf --- NOT coffee beans, which need to be ground; NOT K-cups), Soup, Hot chocolate. Please note: Tea and Coffee are especially needed.

Join the Lehigh Valley Chorale for A Crowded Table, a heartwarming winter concert inspired by the Highwomen's song. With themes of connection, compassion, and chosen family, this program offers hope, joy, and community through music. The concert features works by Rosephanye Powell, Sara Bareilles, Celine Dion, and more—plus local instrumentalists and guest conductor Liz Olson.

Concert Dates: Thursday, Dec. 12 at 7:30 p.m. and Friday, Dec. 13 at 2:00 p.m.
Location: First Presbyterian Church, Allentown. Tickets: eventbrite.com/o/lehigh-valley-chorale-71797870453

Week of December 8 through December 14:

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

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

Monday: 10am ATF
 6pm Scouts
 7pm Property
Tuesday: 7pm Cubs
 7pm FUN Group
Wednesday: 7pm Finance
Thursday: 7:30pm Choir

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

Next Sunday—9:00 am Confirmation Class
 9:00 am Sunday School
 9:45 am Second Sunday Treats
 10:15 am Worship, 3rd Sunday of Advent

Total Offerings from November 30, 2025:

General Offerings: \$1504.00	Flowers: \$40.00
Missions: \$30.00	Sunday School: \$4.00
Communion: \$35.00	Memorial Contribution
Pastor’s Discretionary Fund: \$20.00	for Boiler: \$250.00
Bulletin: \$20.00	Cemetery: \$50.00

Attendance: 54