

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 28, 2025

10:15am

**those who are able may stand*

“This, This”

Sunday After Christmas

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: “Infant’s Prayer”

(Mansfield)

Welcome and Announcements

Lighting of the Altar Candles

We Gather at the Scene

Leader: We have been on a journey of discovery this Advent and Christmas. As our series comes to a close, we ask one more time, “What Child IS This?” One thing is sure, “this, this...” reverberates into our time, our lives, our world as we continue to work for the protection of every child, everywhere.

Sung:

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What Child is this, who, laid to rest,

On Mary's lap is sleeping?

Whom angels greet with anthems sweet,

While shepherds watch are keeping?

Leader: The Magi see the reverberation of Light and are drawn to it. They, too, were looking for a new world order—one of true peace and compassion. The subsequent story of the flight of the Holy Family as refugees, running from threat of extinction by an insecure tyrant, is much too real in all of human history. Even in the return home, the child of Mary and Joseph would know the heartache of oppression that would shape his ministry—a ministry of

proclaiming that God continues to be with us, that we are called to be with one another, even and especially in the midst of hard times.

Reader 1: We light these candles for those who need it most.

[light each candle with each line, including the white Christ Candle]

Reader 2: For all who need more Hope.

Reader 1: For all who yearn for Peace.

Reader 2: For all whose Joy lays dormant.

Reader 1: For all who need the salve of Love.

Reader 2: For all of who need this Child of Possibility.

Reader 1: Our question for today at the scene of the nativity is this: "How do the messages of this child reverberate into our time, our lives, our world?"

Reader 2: What child IS this? This, this, is Christ the King who reigns with hope, peace, joy, and love 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!

Watch the nativities of our congregation on screen

Prayer of Invocation (unison)

Here, at the nativity of your birth,

give us the courage to face this moment

with the desire for justice.

Open us to new understandings of

the unfolding story of your presence among us.

Show us the true gifts we must bring to our moment,

as we seek a better kin-dom on this earth.

We pray in the name of the Child,

the One Who Reigns in our hearts and lives.

Amen.

Bring Him Laud

*Opening Hymn: "The First Noel"

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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.

Sing a Hymn

Refugee song on screen

Reflection

Sing a Hymn

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:

**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 Christ. **[You have a sticky-note and we invite you to write a word or phrase of hope that will go to baby Jesus.]**

Time of Silent Contemplation

Pray

One: Hide and seek: learn to trust,
no-one’s really ever lost,
hide and seek: when we’re found,
we’ll be safe on holy ground.

Sung:

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

Leader:

Holy Living One,
Child of Wanderings,
Spirit of Refuge,
we come to you today weary of the repetitious history of oppression,
weary of a too-long arc of justice,
yearning for the day when humanity will be humane.
We know you are with us,
for you came to our human story when we needed your message so much.
We still do.

Prayer continues....

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

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:

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

So Bring Him...

(Offering)

What gifts are adequate for a Holy Family on the run? 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 coffered precious resources, we give what we can. In this way we "take ownership" of our role in the scene, in the unfolding story of Justice.

Offertory: "O Come, All Ye Faithful"

(Wade)

*Presentation of the Offering 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.**

Blessing of the Offering

Sing a Hymn

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.

All: We Ask, We Answer

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

All: What child IS this?

This is the Truth, the Way, and the Life.

All: What child IS this?

This is the one whose love is the measure
of true companionship.

All: What child IS this?

This, this is the "King of Kings"
whose grace is the measure of real leadership.

*Closing Hymn: "Go Tell It on The Mountain"

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Benediction

May the Sovereign of Love,
the Child of Grace,

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

Postlude: "Break Forth into Joy"

(Bach)

Please stay after the service for a brief Celebration of Life.

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<http://www.worshipdesignstudio.com/whatchild>

**TODAY'S GREETERS** are Consistory members.

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

**TODAY'S ALTAR FLOWERS & BULLETINS** are sponsored by Rick, Melissa, & Matthew Yenser, in hopes of a good New Year.

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.

**Supper Club**

When: Wednesday January 7, 2026, 6:00 PM

Where: Delizioso Italian Grill  
1985 Brookside Rd., Macungie  
RSVP by Sunday 1/4/2026

**Sunday Brunchers**

When: Sunday January 18, 2026, ~ 12 Noon

Where: Mercantile Club  
Railroad St., Emmaus  
RSVP by Wednesday 1/14/2026, CASH ONLY

## **Lunch Bunch**

When: Friday January 30, 2026, 12 Noon

Where: East Penn Diner

1418 Chestnut Street, Emmaus

RSVP by Sunday 1/25/2026

## **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.

From 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.

**January Soup & Sandwich** – Social and Aid Committee will be making Chicken Corn Soup with homemade egg noodles for the month of January to order along with their Ham & Cheese Sandwiches. Orders forms can be found at the entrances to the Church. Orders must be received by Sunday, January 4. Pickup will be on Thursday, January 22 from 3:30-5:00pm.

**January (ATF) All Things Free Giveaway** - Monday, January 12, 2026 from 4:00pm-6:00pm Or Saturday, January 17, 2026 from 10:00am-12 noon

**We will have:** Valentine's Day Items, Housewares, Winter Clothing, and More. If you are able to help, please let Millie Kohler know. Thank you.

## **Week of December 29 through January 3:**

Church Secretary Hours: Mon. & Tues. 9am-2pm,  
(please call before coming to make sure she is in the office)

**Wed. 12/31: New Year's Eve**

**Thurs. 1/1: New Year's Day**

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

**Next Sunday** —9:00 am Sunday School

10:15 am Worship, Communion

12 noon Confirmation Class

**Offering information not available due to staff vacation schedules.**