

**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](http://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>January 4, 2026</u>	<u>10:15am</u>

*\*those who are able may stand*

**“This, This”  
Epiphany Sunday**

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: “Sages from Afar” (Blake)

Welcome and Announcements

Lighting of the Candles

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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Prayer of Confession

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.

**All: We know you are with us,  
for you came to our human story when we needed your message so  
much.**

**We still do.**

**We ask, "what child is this that we follow, and who are we in the  
scene of this unfolding story?"**

**We gather at the manger one last time this year, where we know  
the lullaby and lament are sung side-by-side and year-after-year.**

**Again, we plead for your presence to break into our lives  
and show us the light of hope, peace, joy, and love.**

**And we ask for the courage to stay in the scene of unfolding justice,  
preparing the way for your reign of right relationships.**

**Hear our prayer oh Lord. Amen.**

A video presentation: Refugee (see insert page of words)

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.

Scripture: Matthew 2:1-12

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"

by Brian Wren and Susan Haefield

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 give to baby Jesus.]**

Time of Silent Contemplation

Spoken in unison:

**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.

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in the scene of this unfolding story?"

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where we know the lullaby and lament are sung side-by-side and year-  
after-year.

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and show us the light of hope, peace, joy, and love.

And we ask for the courage to stay in the scene of unfolding justice,  
preparing the way for your reign of right relationships.

Pastor's 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 (sung)

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**Our Father, which 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**

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 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 Justice.

Offertory: "March of the Kings"

(Simone)

\*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.**

Blessing of our Gifts

Choir Anthem

The service of Holy Communion

Great Thanksgiving

The Lord be with you.

**And also with you.**

Lift up your hearts.

**We lift them up to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

It is good, Holy One, to give thanks to you,  
always and everywhere.

You created us, you loved us into being,  
you delivered us, and you spoke to us through prophets.  
And then the time came for you to be with us, Emmanuel.

**Sung to the tune of In the Bleak Midwinter:**

**In a time of trouble, poverty, and pain,  
Living was a struggle. Hoping was a strain.  
Fear and desperation robbed the world of joy.  
In a weary nation, Mary had a boy.**

And so,  
with your people on earth  
and all the company of heaven  
we praise your name and join their unending words:

**Spoken together:**

**Holy, Holy, Holy, God of pow'r and might.**  
**Raise we now, "Hosanna," to the highest height.**  
**Heav'n and earth proclaim it, in all time and space.**  
**Blest are we to meet you, in this holy place.**

Mary's boy became a man, compassionate and kind.  
He invited all to follow the way of the kin-dom,  
the commonwealth of God.

Wherever he went, he tended to those who suffered.

**Sung to the tune of In the Bleak Midwinter:**

**Teaching, feeding, healing, Jesus showed the way,**  
**Sacred love revealing day by day by day,**  
**Practicing resistance, cultivating care,**  
**Centered in persistence, every act a prayer.**

His own suffering at the hands of the elite  
gave birth to a movement of your Spirit, O God,  
that would forge a new covenant of [hope/peace/joy/love/light].  
Jesus promised to be with us always,  
in the power of your Word and Holy Spirit.

On the night in which he gave himself up for us,  
he took bread, gave thanks to you, broke the bread,  
gave it to his disciples, and said:  
"Take, eat; this is my body which is given for you.  
Do this in remembrance of me."

When the supper was over, he took the cup,  
gave thanks to you, gave it to his disciples, and said:  
"Drink from this, all of you;  
this is my blood of the new covenant,  
poured out for you and for many  
for the forgiveness of sins.  
Do this, as often as you drink it,  
in remembrance of me."

And so,  
in remembrance of your mighty acts in Jesus Christ,  
we offer ourselves as a holy and living sacrifice,  
in union with Christ's offering for us,  
as we proclaim the mystery of faith.

**Sung to the tune of In the Bleak Midwinter:**

**Christ came to uplift us, by his life we give.**

**Christ gave up his lifeblood, by his death we live.**

**Christ comes to us now, still, as we gather here.**

**Christ will come again, so, nothing shall we fear.**

Pour out your Holy Spirit on us gathered here,  
and on these gifts of bread and wine.

Make them be for us the body and blood of Christ,  
so that we may be for the world the body of Christ,  
redeemed by his blood.

*We share the elements of bread or gluten free wafers, white grape juice or grape wine - we hold the elements to partake together.*

Prayer of Thanksgiving

By your Spirit, make us one with Christ,  
one with each other,  
and one in ministry to all the world,  
until Christ comes in final victory  
and we feast at his heavenly banquet.

Amen.

**Sung to the tune of In the Bleak Midwinter:**

**So, my friends and neighbors, now it's up to us.**

**May we welcome strangers, building faith and trust.**

**May we live like Jesus in our time and place.**

**'Til this weary nation knows amazing grace.**

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:**

**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: "As with Gladness, Men of Old"

(Kocher)

**Happy Epiphany to All!**

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

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

**TODAY'S ALTAR FLOWERS & BULLETIN** 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

CASH ONLY

RSVP by Wednesday 1/14/2026

### **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.

During 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 Today, 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.

**Setup will be Sunday, January 11 after worship.** If you are able to help, please let Millie Kohler know. Thank you for your help with this giving ministry

**Week of January 5 through January 10:**

Pastor Lori will have office hours on Wednesday, 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  
Tuesday: 7pm M&W, Christian Ed.  
7pm Cubs  
Wednesday: 6pm Supper Club  
7pm C&M  
Thursday: 7:30pm Choir

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

**Next Sunday** —9:00 am Sunday School  
9:45 am Second Sunday Treats  
10:15 am Worship

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