

**WELCOME TO**  
**Old Zionsville United Church of Christ**  
**5981 Fountain Road, P.O. Box 215**  
**Old Zionsville, PA 18068**

Email: [ozuccoffice@ptd.net](mailto: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 11, 2026</u>	<u>10:15am</u>

*\*those who are able may stand*

**Baptism of Christ**

Prelude: "Come Unto Me" (Stainer)

Welcome and Announcements

Lighting of the Candles

**Call to Worship**

Come, you who are weary,  
you who have been bruised by life,  
you whose flame has flickered in the winds of the world.

**All: We come, longing to be renewed.**

The Holy One who stretches out the heavens  
is stretching us now—  
stretching our hearts toward courage,  
our hands toward compassion,  
our lives toward gentle justice.

**All: We open ourselves to be stretched into new life.**

A voice from heaven says to us, as it said to Jesus:  
You are my beloved.  
This Spirit rests upon us, too.

**All: We are God's Beloved, called to bring gentle justice.**

Come, let us remember who we are.

**All: Let us worship God with joy.**

**Invocation**

Let us pray.

**All: Holy One,  
Breath of Creation,  
You stretched out the heavens and set the earth dancing with life.  
You whispered belovedness over Jesus rising from the Jordan,  
and your Spirit rested upon him like a gentle dove.  
Rest your Spirit upon us now.  
Stretch our hearts where they have grown tight.  
Soften the places that have been hardened by fear or disappointment.  
Wake the embers of joy that still glow beneath the ash.  
Remind us that we are your Beloved,  
not because of what we have done,  
but because of who You are  
and the love that holds us.  
As we gather at the water today,  
let us remember who we are,  
and who we are becoming together—  
your people of compassion, courage, and gentle justice.  
In the name of Christ,  
the One who shows us how to be human,  
we pray.  
Amen.**

Opening Hymn: "O Master, Let Me Walk with Thee"

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Scripture: Isaiah 42:1-9

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## **Reflection**

**The Service of Holy Baptism for Karl Kohler**

see insert

## **Invitation to Generosity**

Beloved of God,  
we remember today who we are—  
a people formed in water and Spirit,  
held in love,  
and called to bring gentle justice to the world.  
**We do not give out of guilt, or out of scarcity,  
or because the church needs to keep the lights on.**

We give because love takes form in us.

**We give because we belong to one another.**

We give because our lives are woven together with all creation.

Our offering is the way we say:

**Yes—**

we will live as God's Beloved.

**Yes—**

we will stretch our hands toward compassion.

**Yes—**

we will join Christ in the work of healing.

**Let us, then, bring our gifts—**

**our time, our treasure, our commitments, our lives—**

**with joy. We give because we are God's Beloved, and we belong to one another.**

Offertory: "Glorious Things of Thee are Spoken"

(Haydn)

\*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)**

Let us pray.

**All: Holy One,**

**Source of Living Water,**

**You have gathered us in,**

**washed us in grace,**

**and reminded us that we are your Beloved.**

**As water flows from its source**

**to nourish field and forest,**

**so let our giving flow outward—**

**to nourish hope,**

**to tend to healing,**

**to join the slow and sacred work of renewing the world.**

**Bless these gifts,**

**and bless the lives from which they come.**

**May they ripple outward**

**in acts of compassion,**

**in courage where it is needed,**

**in justice that is gentle and strong.**

**Just as the river does not hold itself,**

**teach us not to hold back our love.**

**We offer what we have and who we are,  
with joy and trust,  
for the sake of your dream of flourishing. Amen.**

Choir Anthem

### **Baptismal Renewal**

A basin or font of water is placed where all can come to it. Water is poured so the sound is heard.

#### **Invitation**

Beloved of God, today we remember that we are a people formed in water and Spirit.

We remember that Jesus stepped into the waters of the Jordan,  
not because he needed to be cleansed,  
but to show us what it means to be fully human—  
to say yes to God, yes to belovedness, yes to the work of gentle justice.

Today we step into that yes again.

#### **Acknowledging Our Need for Renewal**

We have known bruising.

We have known moments we wish we could live again.

We have known times when our flame burned low.

#### **All: We long to begin again.**

The One who stretches out the heavens is still stretching us—  
stretching our courage,  
stretching our compassion,  
stretching our capacity to love and to be loved.

#### **All: We open ourselves to be stretched into new life.**

Hear the good news:

Nothing is sealed.

Nothing is beyond mending.

The story is not over.

It has only just begun.

All is forgiven. All is being made new.

Can we begin again?

#### **All: Yes. By the grace of God, we will begin again.**

Silence.

### **Blessing the Water**

Holy One, you moved over the waters at creation.

You carried your people through the sea and into freedom.

Your Spirit descended upon Jesus in the river.  
Bless this water now.  
Let it awaken memory.  
Let it carry mercy.  
Let it stir our hearts toward your dream.

**All: Amen.**

### **The Renewal**

Each person dips a hand into the water, touches their own forehead.  
When all have blessed themselves we say together:

**All: “Nothing separates us from the love of God.”**

### **Affirmation of Calling**

We are the Body of Christ—  
not alone, but together.

**All: We are God’s beloved.**

The Spirit that was in Christ is in us.

**All: We are called to bring gentle justice.**

We will not break the bruised reed.  
We will not extinguish the smoldering flame.

**All: We will walk in compassion, courage, and joy.**

This is our covenant.  
This is our life together.

**All: Amen.**

Hymn: “Just a Closer Walk with Thee” verse 1 and refrain only

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### **Benediction**

Beloved of God,  
we are the ones upon whom the Spirit rests.  
we are the ones God delights in.  
we are the ones called to bring gentle justice to the world.  
Go now as people who have passed again through the waters—  
washed in mercy,  
renewed in courage,  
and stretched wide in compassion.  
Do not fear the bruised reed.  
Do not turn away from the dimly burning flame.  
Let your tenderness be your strength,  
and your joy be your witness.  
For nothing—

nothing in life or in death,  
nothing in the heights or the depths,  
nothing in the world as it is  
or in the world as it is becoming—  
can separate you from the love of God.

Go in peace,  
to love and to live,  
in the name of the Creator,

\*Extinguishing of the Candles

Postlude: "Guide Me, O Thou Great Jehovah"

(Hughes)

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***Stretched Them Out: Service Prayers for The Baptism of Christ/Epiphany 1A*** was written by Rev. Michael Anthony Howard who serves as Minister of Faith in Action for Living Water Association, Ohio NorthEast. 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 Nancy Civitts.

**TODAY'S GREETERS** are John & Nancy Civitts.

**TODAY'S ALTAR FLOWERS** are sponsored by Mr. & Mrs. Charles Jacobs, Jr. in honor of our daughters, Charleen & Cheryl

**TODAY'S BULLETIN** is sponsored by Miriam Fisher & Family in memory of her parents, Mr. & Mrs. William M.E. Yeakel.

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.**

### **Lunch Bunch**

When: Friday January 30, 2026, 12 Noon

Where: East Penn Diner, 1418 Chestnut Street, Emmaus

RSVP by Sunday 1/25/2026

### **Supper Club**

When: Wednesday February 4, 2026, 5:30 PM **(Note the Earlier time)**

Where: Limeport Inn

1505 Limeport Pike, Limeport  
RSVP by Sunday 2/1/2026

### **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. **Pickup will be on Thursday, January 22 from 3:30-5:00pm.** 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.

**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 for your help with this giving ministry

**On Sunday, January 25,** we have the wonderful treat of hearing Tom Dilts bring his message regarding Life and Life after Death. Pastor Lori will be away at St. John's UCC in Lansdale, where she served back in 2003, to help them celebrate their 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary. We thank Tom for preaching on this Sunday and pray that all of you will come out to hear his compassionate and well-spoken message of Love.

**The Chosen is back!** We will begin showing the next season on January 21, Wednesday at 1pm in the lower social hall. All welcome!

Ellie, the church secretary, is very grateful for all the **wonderful volunteers who folded church bulletins in December 2025.** Thank you for shining your light!!

## **Week of January 12 through January 18:**

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: 4-6pm ATF Giveaway

6pm Scouts

7pm Property

Tuesday: 7pm FUN

7pm Cubs

Wednesday: 7pm Finance

Thursday: 7:30pm Choir

Saturday: 10am-12pm ATF Giveaway

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

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

9:00 am Confirmation Class

9:30 am Consistory Training & Refresher Event

10:15 am Worship, Install Consistory

## **Total Offerings from January 4, 2026:**

General Offerings: \$5350.00 (incl. late 2025)

Missions: \$85.00

Flowers: \$40.00

Pastor's Discretionary Fund: \$60.00

Communion: \$94.00

Building: \$20.00

Utilities: \$20.00

Sunday School: \$5.00

Christmas Env.: \$100.00

Attendance: 54