

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

March 22, 2026

10:15am

**those who are able may stand*

Fifth Sunday in Lent
“Unbind”

Prelude: “The Old Rugged Cross”

Bennard

Welcome and Announcements

Lighting of the Candles

Call to Worship

Leader: This is not the time for platitudes,
for simple answers and tired clichés.

This is the time for breaking hearts and weary spirits.

**All: Let our worship be arms
that can hold all that grieves us.**

Leader: This is not the place for blame,
for pointing fingers and second guessing.

This is the time for angry tears and aching wails.

**All: Let our worship be a witness
to journey alongside us as we break.**

Leader: When we are standing at the edge of the tomb
staring into the truth of the death-dealing forces of our world,
when there is nothing left to do but to go and weep,

**All: Let our worship be the song
calling us forth from the grave
to the community that can unbind us and set us free.**

Invocation (unison)

In this hour, as we look death in the face,

stay with us, Weeping Jesus, stay with us.

In this hour, as we try to hold on,

try to believe,

try to hope,

stay with us, Tender Love, stay with us.

In this hour, as we risk the vulnerability of love,

the possibility of joy,

the dream of freedom,

stay with us, Sweet Spirit, stay with us. Amen.

*Hymn: "Sweet, Sweet Spirit" (sing 2 times through)

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Seeking Transformation and New Life

Call to Transformation

The story of Lazarus rising from the dead, our gospel reading for today, feels like it has grief written under every line. Under Lazarus' illness and Jesus' absence. Under the disciples' questions and the danger of returning to Judea. Under Martha's believing and Mary's weeping. Under the stone and the stench of death. And it is through this grieving that transformation becomes possible. So, today, let us seek transformation and new life, not through confession or accountability, but through our grieving of the death-dealing forces in our world, for all that binds us to the death machine. Let our love for what death will touch open us to vulnerability, open us to these rites of grief.

Time of Silent Reflection

Prayer for New Life

Leader: For the violence that brings death
and death-dealing that brings violence,
we grieve,

All: God, have mercy.

Leader: For the blood in the streets
and the blood on our hands,
we grieve,

All: Christ, have mercy.

Leader: For heartbreaking loss
and the loss of hearts soft enough to break,
we grieve,

All: God, have mercy.

Leader: From all that binds us and steals our breaths,

All: Turn us around, Holy One. Amen.

Words of Grace

Leader: Let your soul receive this rest:
on this road, there will be comfort,
in this grief, there will be companions,
when death seems to have the last word, there is still, Jesus.

**All: Praise God, who weeps with us,
and calls us by name back into life,
and into the community that unbinds and frees us. Amen.**

*Hymn: "Holy Ground"

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Scripture: John 11: 1 - 45

page 934-935

Reflection

*Apostles Creed

**I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth;
And in Jesus Christ his only begotten Son, our Lord; who was
conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under
Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead and buried; he descended into
hell; the third day he rose again from the dead; he ascended into
heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty;
from thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead. I
believe in the Holy Ghost, the holy catholic church, the communion
of saints; the forgiveness of sins; the resurrection of the body; and
the life everlasting. Amen.**

Invitation to Generosity

Resurrected life takes community. It takes all of us together to unbind ourselves from the ways of death and move toward the ways of life. How are you being called to awaken to, rise into an ethic of sharing rather than scarcity so that we all might have life and have it abundantly? What do our relationships and commitments to collective liberation ask of us and our resources so that we can experience freedom together? Let us offer our gifts in ways that unbind us all.

Offertory: "O Lamb of God"

Bizet

*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)

**From these offerings, Holy One, create freedom.
From these hearts, Holy One, raise up love.
From these hands, Holy One, bring life.**

**From every one of our gifts,
in the sharing of our resources,
may we be unbound,
and called forth into a new day together. Amen.**

Choir Anthem

Pastoral Prayer and The Lord's Prayer (seated, spoken)

**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**

***Closing Hymn: "How Great Thou Art"**

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*Benediction

May your grief be a blessing
of opening to vulnerability
of loving what death will touch

And in the weeping
always know,
you are not alone.

May you hear the voice of the Holy One
calling you by name
singing you into life
where there will be companions waiting
to bless you
unbind you
and set you free.

Amen.

*Extinguishing of the Candles

*Postlude: "He's Everything to Me"

Carmichael



***Unbind: Service Prayers for the Fifth Sunday in Lent** was written by Dr. Sharon R. Fennema who serves as a free-range facilitator, ritualist, activist, teacher, and writer whose work lives at the intersections of race, gender, sexuality, disability, and embodied spiritual practices. She is a founding member of the Liberating Lineages Collective.*

TODAY'S LITURGIST is Jane Bedell.

TODAY'S GREETERS are Randy & Sharon Trexler.

TODAY'S BULLETINS are sponsored by Mr. & Mrs. Henry Heil in honor of their grandson Sylis Alliston's Birthday.

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.

Holy Week Schedule:

Palm Sunday, March 29 – 9:00 a.m. Sunday School
10:15 a.m. Worship, Dedicate One Great Hour of Sharing (OGHS) offering

Maundy Thursday, April 2 – 7:00 p.m. Communion Worship

Good Friday, April 3 – 7:00 p.m. Worship, Service of Darkness

Easter Sunday, April 5 – 7:30 a.m. Communion Worship

9:00 a.m. Sunday School

9:30 a.m. Egg Hunt for Children up to 6th Grade

10:15 a.m. Communion Worship

(Donuts and Coffee will be served between the Services)

Egg Hunt! Egg Hunt on Easter Sunday, April 5 at 9:30 a.m. for all children up to 6th Grade. Lower Social Hall at 9:30 a.m. Bring your own bag or basket for hunting. Coins in every egg! Share the fun with your church friends.

One Great Hour of Sharing (OGHS) – This Lenten Offering supports the disaster, refugee, and development ministries of the United Church of Christ within Wider Church Ministries. Through OGHS you engage in holistic development programs including health care, education, agriculture, food sustainability, micro-financing and women's empowerment. Because the UCC relates in mutual partnership to churches and organizations through Global Ministries and worldwide response and recovery networks, your contributions to One Great Hour of Sharing puts you in the right place at the right time for the relief, accompaniment and recovery of the most vulnerable. You meet immediate needs and you address the underlying causes that create those needs in the first place. Envelopes can be found at the end of your pew and at the entrance to the Church for those wishing to give. **This collection begins on February 22 – 1st Sunday of Lent and concludes on Palm Sunday, March 29.** The United Church of Christ is always responsive to disasters both here and globally. If you

wish to donate money to any global disasters, 100% of your donation will go to aid relief. Make your check payable to Old Zionsville UCC and clearly mark it for Disaster Relief. Thank you

The next **All Things Free Sort & Store** will be held on Monday, March 23 at 10am. Stop by to check it out. We can always use extra hands! Thanks in advance for serving the Lord. For further information, please contact Pastor Lori Esslinger at 610-393-3522.

Beef Vegetable Soup and Ham and Cheese Sandwiches will be offered to purchase in April by our Social and Aid Committee. Beef Vegetable soup is \$8.00 each and sandwiches are \$5.00 each. Order forms may be found in your bulletin and in the Narthex. Please make checks payable to Old Zionsville UCC. Order forms may be dropped in the offering plate any Sunday during worship service; call or email the Church office (610-966-3601), ozuccoffice@ptd.net; or call Annie Souder to place your orders. Proceeds will be split between the Church and Cemetery Association. **Orders must be received by Sunday, April 12, 2026. The pick-up will be Thursday, April 23, 2026, in our downstairs Social Hall between 3:00-5:00pm.**

Lunch Bunch – RSVP by Sunday 3/22/2026 - TODAY

When: Friday March 27, 2026, 12 Noon

Where: Trivet Restaurant

4102 Chestnut St, Emmaus

Supper Club – RSVP by Sunday 3/29/2026

When: Wednesday April 1, 2026, 6:00pm

Where: Main Street Pub (Seafood Night)

505 Main St., Bally

Sunday Brunchers – RSVP by Wednesday 4/15/2026

Sunday April 19, 2026, ~ 12 Noon

Mercantile Club

427 Railroad St., Emmaus

CASH ONLY

Lunch Bunch – RSVP by Sunday 4/19/2026

Friday April 24, 2026, 12 Noon

Bally Family Diner

1605 PA-100, Barto (Main St., Bally)

Our annual **OZUCC Night at the Iron Pigs** will be on Saturday May 23, 2026, with first pitch at 6:35PM.

- We will again be seated in the Picnic Pavillion and have the buffet dinner (included in price). This is also a Fireworks show after the game.

- Tickets are still the same price at \$28.00 per person
- The signup is by Sunday March 29, and we will need your payment at time of signup.

The next round of **GriefCare** is scheduled to start on Wednesday, June 3 and run until July 29. There are nine sessions and will be held on Wednesday evenings from 6-8 pm. Please speak to Pastor Lori with any questions. This group is open to all and is Free.

New Member Classes will be happening soon. Want to learn more about our Church? Just join in the discussions on two Sunday mornings on either of two sets of dates: April 12 and 19 or May 17 and 24 at 9:00 a.m. each Sunday in the lower social hall. You are under no obligation to join, but if you wish to join the church, we will receive new members on the Second Sunday Class date in worship that week. Please register in advance with Pastor Lori by calling, emailing or texting her at least a week before the first session. Topics for discussion include: What IS the United Church of Christ? What IS Old Zionsville UCC? And How do we work together as a congregation? A tour of the Church building happens on the second class session of each pair of classes.

Jewelry Fundraiser (3/15/26-4/12/26) - Beginning March 15 there will be a designated locked container in the Narthex to collect any old, unwanted jewelry you may have. Our proceeds will be determined by the fair market value of the items collected less 15%. Some items may ultimately be donated to organizations such as The YMCA Perfect Fit Professional Clothing Boutique, YMCA Bethlehem Pop Up Prom Shop, and more. The proceeds from this fundraiser will be included as part of our end of year distribution. Flyer posted on bulletin boards for more information.

Sticky Bun Fundraiser - Our Outlook Committee is selling Sticky Buns as a fundraiser for Church repairs. The Sticky Buns are made by Shady Mountain Market and are approximately 8" round yielding 7 individual pieces. The Sticky Buns are \$8.00 each. Order forms may be found in the bulletins or on the table in the Narthex. Orders are due by Sunday, May 10 and Pick-up date is Thursday, May 21 from 3pm to 5pm in the lower Social Hall of the Church. Orders may be placed in the collection plate on Sunday mornings or by calling the church office at 610-966-3601 or by emailing the church at ozuccoffice@ptd.net.

Week of March 23 through March 29:

Pastor Lori will have office hours on Wednesday, 10am-3pm.
(other times by appointment)

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

Monday: 10am ATF Sort & Store
6pm Scouts

Tuesday: 7pm Cubs

Wednesday: 7pm Cemetery

Thursday: 7:30pm Choir

Friday: 12 noon Lunch Bunch, Trivet, Emmaus

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

Next Sunday, March 29, Palm Sunday

9:00 am Sunday School

10:15 am Worship, Dedicate One Great Hour of
Sharing (OGHS) offering

Total Offerings from March 15, 2026:

General Offerings: \$2429.00

Missions: \$155.00

Flowers: \$40.00

Bulletin: \$10.00

Pastor's Discretionary: \$48.00

Heat/Electric: \$20.00

Sunday School: \$7.00

Fun/Hygiene: \$120.00

OGHS: \$66.00

Cemetery: \$20.00

Attendance: 59