

**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

Rev. Lori Esslinger

Pastor

David Carlson

Organist

March 29, 2026

10:15am

*\*those who are able may stand*

**Palm Sunday**  
**"Cut Branches"**

Prelude: "Hosanna, Christ is King!"

Livingston

Welcome and Announcements

Lighting of the Candles

**Call to Worship**

Leader: Into the belly of the beast, on the back of a beast of burden...

This is no parade of the powerful,  
no extravaganza for empire.

**All: Hosanna! Blessed is the one who comes in the name of  
Resistance.**

**Hosanna in the highest heaven!**

Leader: Into occupied streets, on stolen land...

This is no marvel of military might,  
no crusade of cruelty.

**All: Hosanna! Blessed is the one who comes in the name of Refuge.  
Hosanna in the highest heaven!**

Leader: Into histories of harm, surrounded by lineages of liberation...

This is no acquiescence in advance,  
no complicity through conformity.

**All: Hosanna! Blessed is the one who comes in the name of Solidarity.  
Hosanna in the highest heaven!**

Leader: May our worship this day prepare the way for the Prince of Peace,  
cut branches for the King of Compassion,

line the path for the Lord of Liberation,  
soften the road for the Sovereign of Solidarity.

**All: May our worship this day prepare us  
for where this way will lead.**

**Invocation (unison)**

**Lay it down,  
here,  
now,  
whatever covers your vulnerability  
cloaks your openness.**

**Let it become part of the way of courage.**

**Lay it down,  
here,  
now,  
whatever shades your brilliance  
branches over your belovedness.  
Let it become part of the way of grace.**

**Spread the cloaks.**

**Cut the branches.**

**Line this road, this journey, this way  
with your cries for freedom  
until all our hearts and voices  
move toward, "Hosanna."**

**\*Hymn: "Hosanna, Loud Hosanna"**

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**Seeking Transformation and New Life**

**Call to Transformation**

When Jesus set the stage for his entrance into Jerusalem, he knew he would be competing with outward and visible displays of the dominating power of the Roman Empire. But he also knew that Empire didn't just live in parades of the powerful and shows of force. Empire also lives in our bodies, minds, spirits, relationships, and communities. So he set out with a donkey and a colt and a band of outcasts and freedom-fighters to help them and us imagine a different kind of power – the power of love and justice.

So on this day of palms and hosannas, let us open ourselves to the transformation that comes from naming the ways Empire lives within us, and shapes the world around us with a story of dominance, division, and violence.

Time of Silent Reflection

## **Prayer for New Life**

Leader: For the ways Empire has taught us to fear difference and believe that strength and safety require dominance and violence,

**All: God, have mercy.**

Leader: For the ways Empire makes hierarchy the air we breathe and shapes who and what has worth and dignity,

**All: Christ, have mercy.**

Leader: For the ways Empire separates us

and convinces us that we don't belong to the land or each other.

**All: God have mercy.**

Leader: Open us to notice the tension, longing, and dissonance in our bodies revealing where Empire has tangled itself around us.

**All: Turn us around, Holy One. Amen.**

## **Words of Grace**

Leader: Let your soul receive this rest:

You and we are not what Empire imagines.

There is resistance, liberation, and wisdom beyond Empire.

**All: Praise God who forgives us and frees us**

**inviting us to a belonging**

**where dignity isn't earned, bought, or proven,**

**but received as grace.**

**\*Hymn: "In the Name of the Lord"** (sing last line 2 x as written) page 299

Scripture: Matthew 21:1-11

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Reflection

Video - Jesus Riding on a Donkey into Jerusalem FROM The Chosen

**\*Hymn: "The Palms"**

See insert

**\*The Palm Parade – shouting: HOSANNA IN THE HIGHEST! BLESSED IS HE WHO COMES IN THE NAME OF THE LORD! HOSANNA TO THE SON OF DAVID!**

We will gather around the altar when directed to take a picture of our joyful Congregation around the altar with the white pillar candle, shouting Joy!

## **Invitation to Generosity**

When Jesus sent his disciples ahead of him into Jerusalem to find a donkey and colt for the protest he was planning, he was already showing them a way beyond Empire, where goods are shared in common and the worth of any being isn't only what they can do or produce. He reassures the disciples who might be questioning their task, saying, "If anyone says anything to you, just say this, 'The Lord needs them.'" What resources might Jesus be

asking you to share in common today? What might the Lord need from you to support our collective life and flourishing beyond scarcity? Let us give our offering today as a practice of resisting empire and moving toward God's vision of abundant love.

Offertory: "Lift Up Your Heads"

Williams

**\*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)**

**With our offerings we say, "thank you" and practice a new economy.  
With our practices we say, "yes, God," and resist Empire's hold.  
With our resistance we say, "Hosanna," and bless all the ones, who  
journey in the ways of courage and grace.  
With these gifts to One Great hour of Sharing we spread the joy of  
Love and Peace around the world and to all of those who work for  
justice, peace, and equity. Amen.**

Choir Anthem

**Pastoral Prayer and The Lord's Prayer (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: "All Glory, Laud and Honor"**

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\*Benediction

**Hosanna!**

Blessed are the ones who cut branches to honor the power of Love moving among us.

**Hosanna!**

Blessed are the ones who go forth in the name of abundant life.

**Hosanna!**

Blessed are the ones who choose the path of learning and unlearning, doing and undoing.

**Hosanna!**

Blessed are the ones who journey toward liberation together.

May the One who had traveled this way before,

guide your hearts and minds in the ways of peace and justice, love and freedom, beyond anything Empire can imagine. Amen.

\*Extinguishing of the Candles

\*Postlude: "Hosanna, Loud Hosanna"

Smith



**Cut Branches: Service Prayers for Palm Sunday Year A** 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 Cheryl Martucci.

**TODAY'S GREETER** is Chris Schell.

**TODAY'S ALTAR FLOWERS** are given by Mr. & Mrs. Dan Strobel in honor of their 41<sup>st</sup> Wedding Anniversary.

**TODAY'S BULLETINS** are sponsored by Mr. & Mrs. Donald Ritter in honor of our children.

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:**

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 6<sup>th</sup> 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.

The next **All Things Free Sort & Store** will be held on Monday, March 30 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 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](mailto: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.**

**Supper Club – RSVP by Today, 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 this 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 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](mailto:ozuccoffice@ptd.net).

## **Week of March 30 through April 5:**

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

Church Hours: Tues. 11:30am-1:30pm, Wed 9:30am-1pm &  
Thurs 9:30am-2pm  
(please call before coming to make sure secretary is in the office)

Monday: 10am ATF Sort & Store  
6pm Scouts

Tuesday: 7pm Cubs

Wednesday: 6pm Supper Club, Main St. Pub, 505 Main St., Bally

Thursday: 7:00pm Maundy Thursday Communion Worship

Friday: 7:00pm Good Friday Worship

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

## **Next Sunday, April 5, Easter Sunday**

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)

## **Total Offerings from March 22, 2026:**

General Offerings: \$1773.00

Missions: \$130.00

Flowers: \$80.00

Bulletin: \$30.00

Pastor's Discretionary: \$20.00

Bldg. Repair: \$535.00

Sunday School: \$12.00

Fun/Hygiene: \$30.00

OGHS: \$520.00

Cemetery: \$1040.00

Attendance: 59