

**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

April 3, 2026

7:00 p.m.

*\*those who are able may stand*

**Good Friday**  
**"No King but Caesar"**

*There is an offering plate at the back of the sanctuary for your offering if you wish to give tonight.*

Prelude: "Day of Sorrow"

Verdi

Welcome and Announcements

Lighting of the Candles

**Call to Worship**

Leader: This is the day when our story asks us  
to place ourselves  
in the middle of the struggle  
between kingdom and kindom.

**All: Holy the ground. Holy the fight.**

Leader: This is the day when our tradition invites us  
to bear witness  
to the ways radical love  
brings out our best and our worst.

**All: Holy the beholding. Holy the lament.**

Leader: This is the day when our lineages want us  
to reckon with  
the unrelenting violence  
of the death machine.

**All: Holy the truth. Holy the rage.**

Leader: This is the day when our worship calls us

to weep and wail  
for each breath that is stolen  
when Love threatens to unseat the king.

**All: Holy the grief. Holy the revolution.**

Leader: So let this be the day  
when we watch and listen, vigil and pray.

**All: Holy the living. Holy the dying.**

***The First Word: "Who are you looking for?"***

Scripture Reading: John 18:1-11

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### **Prayer of Invocation (unison)**

**Let this prayer lead us  
into the night  
into the lanterns and torches and weapons  
into the tanks and guns and explosions  
into the cages and cells and shackles  
into the unmarked cars and undisclosed locations  
Let this prayer accompany us  
into the valley  
into the garden  
into the place known as love and holy and ground  
into the confrontations, the betrayals, the violence  
into the handing over and the standing by  
Let this prayer open us  
into the wound  
into the world  
into the breaking  
into the breathing  
into the rubble  
into the rending. Amen.**

**\*Hymn: "When I Survey the Wondrous Cross"** (verse 1 only)

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***The Second Word: "I am not."***

Scripture Reading: John 18:15-18, 25-27

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### **Prayer for Transformation**

Leader: For the times when we have stayed in protective silence  
abandoned the deepest loves of our hearts  
and let others bear the hurt and harm,

**All: Mercy. God, have mercy.**

Leader: For the days when defensiveness is our refuge  
from taking accountability  
when we can't or won't risk solidarity,

**All: Mercy. Christ, have mercy.**

Leader: For ways we avoid, escape, ignore  
our own complicity in the violences  
that cut us off from friend and enemy alike

**All: Mercy. God, have mercy.**

***The Third Word: "My kingdom is not from here."***

Scripture Reading: John 18:28-38

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**Prayer for Kindom Dreaming**

Where are you from? they demand.  
Give me your papers.

**Inhale: We are meant for love.**

**Exhale: Our freedom is not from here.**

What kind of accent is that? they taunt.  
I need to see some ID.

**Inhale: We are meant for belonging.**

**Exhale: Our power is not from here.**

You look like a criminal, they sneer.  
Show me your hands.

**Inhale: We are meant for tenderness.**

**Exhale: Our strength is not from here.**

***The Fourth Word: "He ought to die."***

Scripture Reading: John 19:1-7

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**Prayer for Human Dignity**

Leader: When we call you a criminal,  
like Jesus,  
and beat the humanity from your tender flesh,

**All: may these prayers reach behind the bars  
and whisper to you your true name:  
beloved, beloved, beloved.**

Leader: When we call you a terrorist,  
like Jesus,

to justify the annihilation of your land and lineages,

**All: may these prayers crawl into the rubble  
and show you your own enduring beauty:  
image of the divine.**

Leader: When we call you illegal,  
like Jesus,

and try to drain the dignity from your veins,

**All: may these prayers walk into the detention center  
and declare your inherent worth and value:  
sacred, sacred, sacred.**

Leader: When we call it a justified use of force,  
and we mock, and beat, and torture you  
like Jesus,

**All: may these prayers pour balm over your wounds  
and offer you a soft place to stay near to your own brilliance:  
holy, holy, holy. Amen.**

\***Hymn: "Why Should He Love Me So?"** (verse 2 only)

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***The Fifth Word: "We have no King but Caesar."***

Scripture Reading: John 19:8-16a

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### **Prayer for Decolonizing Our Hearts**

Leader: You are invited to put your hand over your heart  
and breathe deeply.

(Pause for three deep breaths)

The story of this night calls us to take stock and tell the truth  
about who and what holds our allegiances.

What "Caesars" have you given your loyalty to,  
mistaking them for the way to safety, freedom and flourishing?  
You are invited to reflect on them in the silence of your heart.

(Time for silent reflection)

Leader: The story of this night calls us to take stock and tell the truth  
about in whose and what power we place our trust.

What "Caesars" have we as a community, as a society, given our trust to,  
mistaking them for the way to safety, freedom and flourishing?  
You are invited to name them in the presence of the community.

**(Quietly under your breath name them)**

Leader: With our hands on our hearts, let us pray:

**All: Earth-maker, Pain-bearer, Life-giver,  
you know the powers and principalities  
that have taken root in our bodies, minds, and spirits.  
You know the ways they shape  
our desires, our loyalties, our imagination.  
Unpledge us, Earth-maker, from these breath-stealing allegiances.  
Release us, Pain-bearer, from these heart-breaking lies.  
Reclaim us, Live-giver, from these death-dealing dreams.  
Teach us again the ways of your kindom.  
For you reign in the glory of the power that is love, now and  
forever. Amen.**

***The Sixth Word: "Woman here is your son. Beloved, here is your mother."***

Scripture Reading: John 19:16b-27

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**\*Prayer of Thanksgiving and Dedication**

Leader: For the gift of presence in troubled times,  
and the ones who stay near to suffering,

**Assembly: thanks be to God.**

Leader: For the gift of kinship emerging in the worst of days,  
and the ones who say yes to love,

**Assembly: thanks be to God.**

Leader: For the gift of care from those most impacted by oppression  
and the ones whose vision reaches beyond present horrors,

**Assembly: thanks be to God.**

Leader: We dedicate our lives to becoming these gifts.  
We dedicate our gifts to becoming these kin.

**Assembly: In the name of all that is Holy, Just and Compassionate,  
we would pray and live. Amen.**

**\*Hymn: "Alas! and Did My Savior Bleed?"**

(verse 1 only)

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***The Seventh Word: "It is finished."***

Scripture Reading: John 19:28-30

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Solo: "Were You There ..." Neil Harrison

**Benediction**

When Jesus said  
it is finished  
what if he was saying  
there will be an end  
to the powers and principalities  
that steal our very breath  
there will be an end

to the culture of fear  
to all the ways we die to ourselves and each other  
if resurrection begins  
when we are no longer invested in the power of death  
begins with the women who will not let him die alone  
who will not let the murder be unseen  
who will remain close by his wounds  
and say his name  
until the sky is torn in two  
then this the blessing that comes when  
it is finished.

(Leave in silence and darkness to come back on Easter Morning.)



***No King But Caesar: Service Prayers for Good Friday** 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 Mark Weaver.

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

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.

### **Easter Sunday Schedule:**

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.

**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.

**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.**

**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).

**Confirmation Class Dates:** (Classes are on Sundays)

April 12: class after worship until 2 p.m. We are making tacos for lunch.

April 26: class at 9 a.m.

May 10: class at 9 a.m.

May 31: class from 12 - 2 after worship.

June 21: class Noon to 2 p.m. after worship

This is the end of our 2 classes per month.

**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.

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.

**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)

**50 Days of Easter Food Challenge:** A People of the Table Mission Project for Keystone Conference's 1st Annual Meeting

**The Challenge:** Churches across the Conference are challenged to donate non-perishable food to a local food bank between **Easter (04/05/2026)** and **Pentecost (05/24/2026)** and to report the quantities of their donations.

Each church will report its totals (by category) via a web link, and the Conference-wide total will be revealed at the 1st Annual Meeting, June 5–7, 2026. Using categories such as canned fruits and vegetables, cereal, pasta and rice, toiletries, and more will provide an easy-to-visualize picture of the breadth of donations. Having churches donate locally will allow you to serve the communities in which you live, work, and minister. We want to avoid hauling donations across the commonwealth to a single location when we know the need exists everywhere. We are also asking delegates to bring a one-pound bag of rice or beans to the Annual Meeting as a representation of their local donation. These items will be donated to the Lancaster Food Hub.

**Old Zionsville UCC will be participating in this mission project.** But we already do, you say? Yes, we do. But now, the confirmation class will count the items you bring in between Easter and Pentecost so we can make a tally and participate in the Keystone Conference Challenge! Have fun. Bring as much as you can and all kinds of things count. We thank you in advance as we celebrate the joy of sharing. Questions? Ask Lori Esslinger - 610-393-3522