

WHAT CHILD IS THIS?



Serve & Enrich
Zion United Church
of Christ

Our Mission: United by Christ's loving embrace, a welcoming light in an unsure world, we serve and enrich the community and provide a safe gathering space for fellowship, spiritual growth, and self-exploration.

Our Vision: Transforming and caring for our community through Christ's love.

Pastor: Sarah Frische-Mouri Hannigan

Organist: Martha Main

Bell Choir Director: Vivian Thomas

Office Manager: Michael Brown

Custodians: Anita and Greg Law

Scripture Reader: Vivian Thomas

Tech Steward: Greg Miller



8916 East Troy Avenue
Indianapolis, Indiana 46239
(317) 862-4136
zionsecretary@sbcglobal.net
www.zionuccindy.net

December 7, 2025 – The 2nd Sunday of Advent

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

Advent Wreath Lighting

Kim Hadley

Please join us in singing the “What Child Is This” when prompted (lyrics on screen).

*Gathering Song

Hark! The Herald Angels Sing, 185

Prayer of Invocation—Here, at the nativity of your birth, give us the courage to face this moment with new air in our lungs. Open us to new understandings of the unfolding story of your presence among us. Show us the true meaning of peace on earth, good will for all. This Advent we remember your people all around the world and pray that everyone in everyone in every land might know your peace. We pray in the name of the Child, the Prince of Peace in our hearts and lives.

The Lord’s Prayer (unison)—**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.

Exploring Together

Gather at the Nativity

Scripture

Luke 1:67-80

“Blessed are you, the Most High God of Israel—for you have visited and redeemed your people.

You have raised up a mighty savior for us of the house of David, as you promised through the mouths of your holy ones, the prophets of ancient times: salvation from our enemies and from the hands of all our foes.

You have shown mercy to our ancestors by remembering the holy Covenant you made with them, the oath you swore to Sarah and Abraham, granting that we,

delivered from the hands of our enemies, might serve you without fear, in holiness and justice, in your presence all our days.

And you, my child, will be called the prophet of the Most High,

for you’ll go before our God
to prepare the way for the Promised One, giving the people the knowledge of salvation through forgiveness of their sins. Such is the tender mercy of our God, who from on high

will bring the Rising Sun to visit us,
to give light to those who live
in darkness and the shadow of death
and to guide our feet
into the way of peace.”

In the meantime, the child grew up and became strong in spirit. He lived out in the desert until the day he appeared openly in Israel.

Reflection

The Way of Peace

Prayers of Peace—*Please write on your star a word or phrase of peace. We will collect them before the prayer, name them aloud, and add to our prayer wall.*

Holy Living One, Child of Peace, Spirit of Justice, we come to you today weary of ongoing unrest, weary of greedy forces claiming what’s “right” for the many based on what benefits the few. 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?” As the manger waits for your arrival, we again plead for your presence to break into our lives and show us the light of peace. And we ask for the courage to step into the scene, and raise our voices for those who cannot. Amen.

Hymn

It Came Upon a Midnight Clear, 191

We Gather at the Table

Set Your Place at the Table—*For those worshipping with us at home, please use whatever you have on hand to represent the bread and the cup. For those worshipping with us in-person, communion cups are available on the table in the back of the sanctuary, along with goldfish crackers for children.*

Our Invitation

A Prayer for Transformation—Merciful God, there are days when we lose our way. We forget, or simply don't trust, your vision of peace. We ignore the cries of those seeking justice. We fail to bear good fruit in our lives. Forgive us. Remind us that we are yours. Teach us how to make peace with ourselves and with our neighbors. Help us proclaim your message of hope and continue our journey to Bethlehem—a journey of faith to a cradle of love. In the name of Emmanuel, we pray. Amen.~

Assurance of Grace—Siblings in Christ, the God of steadfast love encourages us to continue in the faith. Rejoice, for God brings forgiveness and healing. Thanks be to God!~

The Words of Institution—We remember that on the night of betrayal and desertion, and on the eve of death, Jesus gathered the disciples for the feast of Passover. Jesus took the bread, and after giving thanks..., broke it, and give it to the disciples, saying: "This is my body which is for you. Do this in remembrance of me." In the same way also the cup, after supper, saying: "This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me." Therefore we proclaim the mystery of our faith.'

Blessing Our Meal—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. 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.

We Share the Bread and the Cup

We Give Thanks—Almighty God, we give you thanks for the gift of our Savior's presence in the simplicity and splendor of this holy meal. Unite us with all who are fed by Christ's body and blood that we may faithfully proclaim the good news of your love and that your universal church may be a rainbow of hope in an uncertain world; through Jesus Christ our Redeemer. Amen.'

We Respond to God's Word with Our Giving

Invitation—What gifts are adequate for the Silent Word, the Prince of Peace? 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 precious resources, we give what we can. In this way we “take ownership” of our role in the scene, in the unfolding story of Peace.

Ministry Moment

Serving Our Unhoused Neighbors, Melissa Burgess

December Benevolence

The Christmas Fund

***Doxology**

We Give Thanks—Emmanuel, hear our prayer! We bring these gifts before you to spread peace throughout our homes, our communities, and our world. On every street corner, beside rivers, lakes, oceans, at the top of your tallest mountains, and dwelling below the cliffs, your people are in need. Take these gifts to strengthen our church and bring relief to your beloved children. Amen.+

Hymn

Comfort, Comfort Now My People, 155

Benediction with Sung Response (lyrics on screen)— May the Sovereign of All, the Child of Hope, the Spirit of Resistance to Injustice be with you now and as you go. Amen.

Postlude

Liturgy from © worshipdesignstudio.com/whatchild unless otherwise noted. Beu, B.J.; Scifres, Mary. The Abingdon Worship Annual 2025: Worship Resources for Every Sunday of the Year (p. 281). Abingdon Press. ‘UCC Book of Worship. +Worship Ways.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

THIS WEEK AT ZION

- Sunday, 12 pm – Christmas Luncheon at Hollyhock Hill
- Monday, 6 pm – Blue Christmas Worship
- Tuesday, 6:30 pm – Care Team (Zoom)
- Wednesday, 5:30 pm – Worship Team (Zoom)
- Sunday, December 14, 9 am – Choir Practice
- Sunday, December 14, 3 pm – Good Time Singers Concert

ADVENT AT ZION

- **ADVENT WORSHIP AND JOURNAL**—This season we will find hope in hard times as we gather around the nativity and contemplate “What Child IS This?” Our worship theme is based on the classic carol that asks that question. A daily journal is

available for you to take home with you as you contemplate who Christ is for you.

- **CHRISTMAS IN WANAMAKER**—A big thank you to the Fundraising Team for all of their hard work on our booth at Christmas in Wanamaker. We are grateful for all the love and care they've shown. Thank you to all those who walked with us in the parade and to Paul Hilton for being the parade organizer again this year!
- **CHRISTMAS CARDS FOR JAPAN**—Following the 2011 Fukushima triple disaster of the earthquake, tsunami, and nuclear catastrophe, Global Ministries began a ministry of partnership with our partner churches in Japan, matching them with congregations in the US so we could hold one another in prayer and offer encouragement and support in the Christmas season. We've been paired with two congregations, Sendai Nishi Church and Shinjo Church. Christmas cards are now available for you to sign. Please pray for these churches throughout the season.
- **CHRISTMAS LUNCHEON**—For those who RSVPed, please join us this Sunday at 12 pm at Hollyhock Hill (8110 N. College Ave.) for our Christmas Luncheon.
- **BLUE CHRISTMAS WORSHIP**—The Advent and Christmas seasons can be challenging for those who know loss and grief. While others celebrate, you may find yourself feeling blue. Gather in community to bring your losses before God and find comfort in God's care. The service begins at 6 pm on Monday, December 8.
- **CHRISTMAS CONCERT**—The Good Time Singers are back and are preparing a wonderful Christmas Concert for us and the wider community. Join us Sunday, December 14 at 3 pm in the gym. Refreshments will be provided. Please sign up if you can help set up or take down tables and chairs.
- **GOLDEN FRIENDS**—Come join the Golden Friends for a day of fun, food and music. We will be gathering Thursday, December 18, at 2:00, in the Fellowship Hall. Please bring a White Elephant Gift Item and be sure to either "gift wrap" it, or put it in a gift bag, where no one can see what it is. We will be playing a game with them, and we want to keep your White Elephant Gift a "surprise"! Also, please bring one of your favorite appetizer or dessert items, that is from another country, or that begins with the initial of your First or Last name. Drinks will be provided. If you have any questions, contact Becky Osher.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- **SRI LANKA PARTNERSHIP TRIP**—As the chair of the Indiana-Kentucky Conference Sri Lanka Partnership Team, Pastor Sarah will help lead a delegation to visit our partners in Sri Lanka in the Church of the American Ceylon Mission. The trip will focus on renewing our partnership, showing up in solidarity and hope as we engage in mutual ministry, and documenting the history of this important relationship. Pastor Sarah and her husband, Sean, will be doing interviews and putting together

video resources for our churches to use. The trip is January 21-February 2. Our conference is looking to raise \$15,000 for this trip. Hold our partnership team in your prayers as they set out to do this important ministry.

- **FAITH FORMATION SURVEY**—The Faith Formation Team has been busy with plans for 2026. We hope everyone will be able to participate in small groups that read through the Gospel of Matthew. In order to plan these small groups, we ask that you please fill out this survey to help with our planning. Hardcopies have been shared in the bulletins and can be dropped in the box in the back of the sanctuary. A digital copy is also available. Complete your survey by December 21.
- **STAY SCAM SAFE**—Scam emails were sent to several members of our congregation using an email address that looks similar to Pastor Sarah's. If you receive an email that seems odd, please do not respond. Pastor Sarah will never ask you to purchase giftcards for her.

SERVE

- **ANGEL TREE**—Thank you to everyone who has been able to participate in the Angel Tree this year. Gifts were delivered to the Department of Child Services this past week for foster families to pick up. Thank you to the Service Team for organizing this effort once again.
- **DECEMBER BENEVOLENCE**—For over 100 years, The Christmas Fund has been providing and caring for active and retired UCC pastors, church workers, and their families. This year, help *Be the Light* that brings joy to those that are and have faithfully served. This is one of the five special offerings of the United Church of Christ. Please consider support those who have served so faithfully.