

EPIPHANY 2026 BY ANOTHER ROAD



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



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February 1, 2026 – The 4th Sunday After the Epiphany

Prelude

Gathering (based on Micah 6:8 and Matthew 5)

One: God has told us what is good. And what does the Lord require?

Many: To do justice: for all, for the meek, the poor, the hungry.

One: God has told us what is good. And what does the Lord require?

Many: To love kindness: to be merciful, to seek God's peace.

One: God has told us what is good. And what does the Lord require?

Many: To walk humbly with God: to seek God's Kingdom, not ours.

All: God is good, shows us the way, let us follow, let us worship.

*Gathering Song

God, You Spin the Whirling Planets, 24

Prayer— Come, Holy Wisdom, and show us your ways. In our confusing world, many voices demand our attention. Teach us to look with your eyes. Help us walk humbly beside you— doing what is right, speaking your truth. You alone are our guide and guardian on paths of peace and reconciliation.~

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.

Scripture

Matthew 5:1-12 (NRSVUE)

5 When Jesus saw the crowds, he went up the mountain, and after he sat down, his disciples came to him. ² And he began to speak and taught them, saying:

³ “Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

⁴ “Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.

⁵ “Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth.

⁶ “Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.

⁷ “Blessed are the merciful, for they will receive mercy.

⁸ “Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.

⁹ “Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.

¹⁰ “Blessed are those who are persecuted for the sake of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

¹¹ “Blessed are you when people revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. ¹² Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

Reflection

Flipping the Script with the Word's Wisdom, Rev. Peter Frye

Hymn

A Place at the Table, 617 (v. 1, 2, 3, 5)

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—God of compassion, we are overwhelmed by the struggles of life. We hunger and thirst for righteousness, but find ourselves feeling empty. We grieve in seasons of loss, feeling hopeless and lost. We want to show mercy, but we hold on to old resentments. We want to make peace, but we don't even know where to begin. Come with your wisdom and guide us in your ways. Renew us and inspire us to live faithfully, as you walk beside us. Amen.~

Assurance of Grace— Jesus speaks words of blessing to those who struggle, offering joy and gladness each and every day.~

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—God, you meet us in this bread and cup, welcoming all who hunger and thirst to your table. Pour out your Spirit into this meal that we might be nourished by your love and forgiveness. May it strengthen us so that we are ready to go out into the world to ready to do justice, love kindness, and walk humbly. 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—God does not want extravagant gifts. God wants people who value justice and faithful love, people who walk with God. Let us give freely today so that others may experience justice and love. Give so that others may walk beside God.~

February Benevolence

Chicago, United, and Eden Seminaries (CUE)

Ministry Moment

Greg Miller, Greeter

***Doxology**

We Give Thanks—Generous God, you give us all we need. You ask only for faithful living in return. We bring these gifts to you today, that they may support your work of justice. Through this offering, we commit ourselves to do justice, embrace faithful love, and walk humbly with you. Amen.~

Hymn

Now Let Us from This Table Rise, 715

Benediction—No matter where life takes you, God is with you. Go from this place filled with joy, trusting the blessings promised by our God, the bestower of faithful love.~

Postlude

~ Scifres, Mary; Beu, B.J.. Abingdon Worship Annual 2026. Abingdon Press. +UCC Worship Ways. `UCC Book of Worship.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

THIS WEEK AT ZION

- Sunday, after worship – First Sunday Fellowship
- Thursday, 12-6 pm – Blood Drive (Gym)
- Sunday, February 8, 9 am – Chor Practice
- Sunday, February 8, 3 pm – Association Ecclesiastical Council (Zoom)

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- **ANNUAL REPORTS**—Thank you to everyone who submitted their annual reports! Reports will be distributed on February 8 ahead of our February 22 Congregational Meeting.
- **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 is January 21-February 2, and Pastor Sarah will be off February 3-5 for a few recovery days. Ted Schory will be on call while Pastor Sarah is away.
- **LIFE LINE SCREENINGS**—February is National Heart Month, and we are hosting another Life Line Screening to serve people on their health journey. Life Line Screening uses ultrasound technology to view the plaque build-up in your carotid arteries, the main arteries that carry blood to the brain. Blockages in these arteries are a leading cause of stroke. We are pleased to host this Life Line Screening event on Friday, February 13. All screenings take 60-90 minutes to complete. Your Health is in Your Hands, so call **1-844-591-7160** or go to <https://www.llsa.social/hasca> or **text** the word **circle** to **216-279-1607** for more information or to pre-register.

SERVE

- **BLOOD DRIVE**—Our first Red Cross Blood Drive of the year is scheduled for Thursday, February 5, from 12-6 pm, in the community center gym. Go to zionuccindy.net/blooddrive to sign up. We are also looking for volunteers to help check-in donors. Sign up today if you're available to help.
- **FEBRUARY BENEVOLENCE: Chicago, United, and Eden Seminaries (CUE)**—The CUE regional seminary support program brings together over 2,000 United Church of Christ churches in mid-America in support of our three UCC seminaries of the region. The goal of this offering is to support our seminaries in equipping prophetic and compassionate leaders for ministry and providing financial support for theological education.

ENRICH

- **FIRST FELLOWSHIP**—The Care Team invites you to stay after worship this Sunday for fellowship and donuts.
- **3RD SUNDAY LUNCH**—We are hoping to have a 3rd Sunday Lunch in February. Be on the lookout for more details soon.
- **MATTHEW SMALL GROUPS**—The Faith Formation Team invites everyone in the church to join one of the small groups that will be reading through the Gospel of Matthew. The Young Adult Group will begin their small group on February 10 at 6:30 pm on Zoom and will meet on Tuesdays during Lent. Another Zoom small group will be offered on Thursdays during Lent, starting on February 19 at 7 pm. An in-person group will be offered on Tuesdays from 1-2:30 pm starting in April at Paula's house. We hope this will be a nurturing practice that not only strengthens our spirits but deepens our relationships with each other.
- **LENT**—Lent begins February 18. Join us for Ash Wednesday Worship at 7 pm, either in-person or online. Our Lenten Worship Series this year is based on the book *Gifts of the Dark Wood: Seven Blessings for Soulful Skeptics (and Other Wanderers)* by Eric Elnes. The series is about “seeing life through new” eyes, recognizing that experiences of failure, emptiness, and uncertainty are as critical for finding our way through life as they are unavoidable.” We will see how experiences of life through the “dark wood” are actually clues to our “calling” or “life path.” How can the struggles of life be the seedbed of spiritual awakening to the fulness of life?