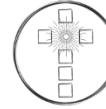




# THE SEASON OF EASTER



*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 Law

**Custodians:** Anita and Greg Law

**Scripture Reader:** Paula Prange

**Tech Steward:** Michael Law



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**May 17, 2026 – The 7<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Easter, Celebrating the Ascension**

## Prelude

**Gathering**—The ascension of Christ forces us to contemplate powers of the Spirit that our minds cannot comprehend. But what the mind struggles to understand, the soul receives with joy.~

## \*Hymn

*Shine, Jesus, Shine, 319*

**Prayer**—God, Most High, as Christ ascended into the heavens, may our hearts ascend to you. Open our eyes to the power of your Spirit, and open our lives to the fullness of your power, that we may be clothed with power on high. Help us wait patiently for the baptism of your Spirit, that we may be found worthy of your great gifts.~

**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.**

## Celebrating Our Graduates

## Exploring Together

*When has joy surprised you?*

## Scripture

*Ephesians 1:15-23 (CEB)*

<sup>15</sup> Since I heard about your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love for all God's people, this is the reason that <sup>16</sup> I don't stop giving thanks to God for you when I remember you in my prayers. <sup>17</sup> I pray that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, will give you a spirit of wisdom and revelation that makes God known to you. <sup>18</sup> I pray that the eyes of your heart will have enough light to see what is the hope of God's call, what is the richness of God's glorious inheritance among believers, <sup>19</sup> and what is the overwhelming greatness of God's power that is working among us believers. This power is conferred by the energy of God's powerful strength. <sup>20</sup> God's power was at work in Christ when God raised him from the dead and sat him at God's right side in the heavens, <sup>21</sup> far above every ruler and authority and power and angelic power, any power that might be named not only now but in the future. <sup>22</sup> God put everything under Christ's feet and made him head of everything in the church, <sup>23</sup> which is his body. His body, the church, is the fullness of Christ, who fills everything in every way.

*Luke 24:33-53 (CEB)*

<sup>33</sup> They got up right then and returned to Jerusalem. They found the eleven and their companions gathered together. <sup>34</sup> They were saying to each other, "The Lord really has risen! He appeared to Simon!" <sup>35</sup> Then the two disciples described what had happened along the road and how Jesus was made known to them as he broke the bread.

<sup>36</sup> While they were saying these things, Jesus himself stood among them and said, "Peace be with you!" <sup>37</sup> They were terrified and afraid. They thought they were seeing a ghost.

<sup>38</sup> He said to them, "Why are you startled? Why are doubts arising in your hearts? <sup>39</sup> Look at my hands and my feet. It's really me! Touch me and see, for a ghost doesn't have flesh and bones like you see I have." <sup>40</sup> As he said this, he showed them his hands and feet. <sup>41</sup> Because they were wondering and questioning in the midst of their happiness, he said to them, "Do you have anything to eat?" <sup>42</sup> They gave him a piece of baked fish. <sup>43</sup> Taking it, he ate it in front of them.

<sup>44</sup> Jesus said to them, "These are my words that I spoke to you while I was still with you—that everything written about me in the Law from Moses, the Prophets, and the Psalms must be fulfilled." <sup>45</sup> Then he opened their minds to understand the scriptures. <sup>46</sup> He said to them, "This is what is written: the Christ will suffer and rise from the dead on the third day, <sup>47</sup> and a change of heart and life for the forgiveness of sins must be preached in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem. <sup>48</sup> You are witnesses of these things. <sup>49</sup> Look, I'm sending to you what my Father promised, but you are to stay in the city until you have been furnished with heavenly power."

<sup>50</sup> He led them out as far as Bethany, where he lifted his hands and blessed them. <sup>51</sup> As he blessed them, he left them and was taken up to heaven. <sup>52</sup> They worshipped

him and returned to Jerusalem overwhelmed with joy.<sup>53</sup> And they were continuously in the temple praising God.

## Reflection

*Surprised by Joy*

*“Show how love and joy, beauty and goodness shine out amongst the rubble.”*

Wendell Berry, *Sabbaths* 2006

## Affirmation of Faith (Luke 24)

by Leigh Ann Shaw

One: We are entrusted with God’s Kin-dom. Just as Jesus led the disciples as far as Bethany, Jesus leads us to the edge and then sends us on. We are a community, not abandoned, but commissioned by God. We are a community, not broken by the world, but empowered for our time. Let us state what we believe.

One: We believe in God, the creator of the universe:

**Many: The one who began the dawn of all time, the one who sets the time and keeps time, the one who meets us in our time now.**

One: We believe that all of God’s creation is good:

**Many: All things that creep and crawl and wander and roam, God made for good. All things that croak and moo and chirp and even whisper, God made for good. All things that lay dormant or spring up or rest, God made each one good.**

One: We believe in Jesus, God’s flesh on earth:

**Many: Our brother who taught us faith. Our savior who leads us on right paths when we go astray. Our Way, who aligns our life for goodness’ sake.**

One: We believe in the Spirit, God’s energy alive with us in this precious moment:

**Many: Source for all freedom, the fiery power within and beyond us. Power that stirs us from complacency. Conviction of truth that cries for justice.**

One: We believe that every beginning and every ending is fortified with God’s grace.

**Many: God is ours and we strain to seek God. We are the family of the earth, the kin-dom of creation. In God, we are redeemed and brought home.**

One: Let it be known in us, and in our living, this day and for every gifted day to come.

**Many: Amen.~**

## Hymn

*Christ Is Alive!* 312

## We Respond to God’s Word with Our Giving

**Invitation**—We are blessed by God’s word. Let us respond boldly to God’s grace with abundant giving for the mission and ministry of this church.~

**May Benevolence Strengthen the Church and Our Church’s Wider Mission (OCWM)**

## \*Doxology

**We Give Thanks**—Endless source of life, pour your blessing upon the gifts we bring before you. Bless our giving in your abundance for the restoration of all people. Through our offering, may those who are weary be energized; may those who feel forgotten find a home. With the joy of your grace filling our hearts, we pray. Amen.~

## Hymn

*Because He Lives, 447*

## Benediction (responsive)

One: Lift your eyes to the heavens.

**Many: We lift them to the one who ascended in glory.**

One: Trust the power of God's Holy Spirit.

**Many: We embrace the one who clothe us with power.**

One: Go as witnesses of the risen Lord.

**Many: We celebrate the one who bring us eternal life.~**

## Postlude

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## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### THIS WEEK AT ZION

- **Sunday, 10 am** – Graduation Sunday
- **Sunday, after worship** – 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday Lunch at Friend's Diner
- **Monday, 6 pm** – Council Finance (Zoom)
- **Tuesday, 1 pm** – Matthew Small Group Study (Paula's House)
- **Wednesday, 6:30 pm** – Council (Zoom)
- **Thursday, 11 am** – Golden Friends at The Depot
- **Sunday, May 24** – Pentecost (In celebration of this special day, feel free to wear red)

### SERVE

- **MAY BENEVOLENCE: Strengthen the Church and Our Church's Wider Mission**—How can we follow the Spirit to bless emerging ministries in the United Church of Christ? Through the Strengthen the Church Offering you support the formation of new congregations and the renewal of existing ones, fund new programs for youth and young adults and sponsor leadership development for the whole church. Thank you for your gifts to Strengthen the Church! Gifts to OCWM make it possible for the UCC and our Indiana-Kentucky Conference to help spread God's love to more people in more places than any one of us can do alone.

## ENRICH

- **MATTHEW SMALL GROUPS**—You're invited to join our in-person Gospel of Matthew Small Group on Tuesdays from 1-2:30 pm at Paula's house. Thank you to Paula for hosting us and leading us!
- **3<sup>rd</sup> SUNDAY LUNCH**—We are venturing to a new place for our 3rd Sunday Lunch this Sunday. Join us for some comfort food at the Friend's Diner (3915 Madison Ave.) after worship.
- **GOLDEN FRIENDS**—Join the Golden Friends at The Depot (240 W Mill St, Greenfield, IN) on May 21 at 11 am for a wonderful lunch and even better company. RSVP to Becky Osher if you plan to attend so that we can make sure we have enough seats reserved. A reminder that doors to the restaurant do not open until 11 am.

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

- **NEW OFFICE HOURS**—Church office hours will now be Wednesdays and Fridays from 9 am – 12 pm. Thank you for your flexibility in this adjustment.
- **ON CALL**—Pastor Sarah is on vacation May 21-June 7. Ted Schory will be on-call for pastoral care emergencies. Thank you to Ted for also leading worship on May 24 and to Peter Fry for leading worship May 31 and June 7. If you have prayers you'd like included in the email, share them with our office manager by Friday morning through a phone message, email, or text to the church phone number.
- **GRADUATION SUNDAY**—Graduation season is here! This Sunday in worship we will celebrate the graduates in our congregation and in your lives. We will present gifts to our Zion graduates, and you'll be invited to name the graduates in your lives as we offer a blessing for them and all that's ahead.
- **GOOD TIME SINGERS CONCERT**—Join us Saturday, June 13, at 3 pm in the gym for a Good Time Singers Concert. Doors will open at 2:30, and refreshments will be provided following the concert.
- **ALL CHURCH RETREAT**—On Sunday, June 14, following a shortened worship service in the Fellowship Hall, council will be hosting a celebration of the things we have accomplished so far in our Strategic Plan. Afterwards we will have a time of discussion about the items that still need our attention. Our Kitchen Team will provide lunch during the discussion portion of our event. Please stay to help us celebrate and discuss how we want to shape our future.