



ORDINARY TIME



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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July 19, 2026 – Freeing Jesus Series: Jesus as Way

Prelude

Gathering

One: Jesus said, *“I am the way and the truth and the life.”*

Many: The way of Jesus is the way of love—love that welcomes, serves, forgives, and transforms.

One: Jesus also calls us, *“Follow me.”*

Many: To follow Christ is not always easy. It means letting go of ourselves so that we may discover the fullness of life God intends.

One: As we gather in worship, may we encounter the living Christ, who walks with us and leads us in the way of love.

Many: Come, let us worship God and follow Jesus, the Way of life and love.

*Hymn

When Morning Gilds the Skies, 111

Prayer—Loving One, help us to stop focusing on the destination and to begin being fully present to the possibilities of each step on our journey. May we be agents of love in ways beyond our own expectations and with people we’ve grown to like and those we seek to avoid. And, may our time together be blessed with more questions than answers.~

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—To know Jesus as “way” is to enter into a life-long journey. Since you discovered Jesus as “way” what metaphor would you use to describe your faith journey so far? Why?

Scripture

John 14:1-6a (NRSVUE)

14 “Do not let your hearts be troubled. Believe in God; believe also in me. ² In my Father’s house there are many dwelling places. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? ³ And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, so that where I am, there you may be also. ⁴ And you know the way to the place where I am going.” ⁵ Thomas said to him, “Lord, we do not know where you are going. How can we know the way?” ⁶ Jesus said to him, “I am the way and the truth and the life.

John 10:7-10 (NRSVUE)

⁷ So again Jesus said to them, “Very truly, I tell you, I am the gate for the sheep. ⁸ All who came before me are thieves and bandits, but the sheep did not listen to them. ⁹ I am the gate. Whoever enters by me will be saved and will come in and go out and find pasture. ¹⁰ The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life and have it abundantly.

Matthew 16:24-25 (NRSVUE)

²⁴ Then Jesus told his disciples, “If any wish to come after me, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. ²⁵ For those who want to save their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake will find it.

Hymn

Here, O Lord, Your Servants Gather, 597

Reflection

Jesus as Way

What does it mean to you to be part of the “way” if the way is defined as “The way is the way of love, as Jesus himself said, ‘Everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another (John 13:35)’” (p. 201). How have you experienced the way of love in Jesus? How have you experienced the way of love through Zion?~

Hymn

Christ Be My Leader, 453

We Respond to God's Word with Our Giving

forming a task force for each of these areas. A big thank you to everyone who volunteered to be on the task forces for these areas. God is up to some exciting things as we enter the fifth and final year of this plan. If you have any questions about this work, please see a council member.

- **COMMUNITY CENTER TASK FORCE**—Based on your feedback, we are scaling back our work on the Community Center to focus on updating two specific areas to prepare for greater community use, the Fellowship Hall and the Conference Room. The task force will help determine updates needed in these rooms and will offer clarity for our rental process. The task force includes Kaylee Gephart-Kile, Kristen Gephart, Michael Law, and Greg Miller.
- **OPEN AND AFFIRMING TASK FORCE**—At our retreat, we listened carefully to the young adults in our church as they shared with us what is vital to connecting with new generations. We listened to everyone as folks shared from their heart about how important it is for Zion to be a safe place that truly welcomes all. The big takeaway was that Zion needs to be clear in our welcome. Conversation at the retreat focused on what it would take for Zion to become Open and Affirming (ONA) as we widen our welcome and embrace of God's beloved. What does it mean to be ONA? It means that a church has made a public covenant of welcome into their full life and ministry to persons of all sexual orientations, gender identities, and gender expressions. The ONA Task Force will help lead us through a discernment process as together we listen for God's call for our ministry and what it would take to ensure the LGBTQAI+ community is welcome here. The task force includes Kaylee Gephart-Kile, Kristen Gephart, Barb Huffman, Michael Law, Nathan Law, and Becky Osher.
- **CELEBRATE**—Rev. Beverly Kahle is retiring, and you're invited to celebrate with her. Please sign the card from the Care Team on the side table in the sanctuary. If you'd like to send your own card, you may send it to Pastor Bev's church at St. Paul UCC, 330 N. Buhrman St., Nashville, IL 62263. The church asks that cards arrive by August 13. A celebration will be held at St. Paul UCC on Sunday, August 16, with worship at 9 am and a meal at 11 am. Please RSVP for the meal by August 1 to 618-327-4326 or welcome.stpauluccnashville@gmail.com.

SERVE

- **JULY BENEVOLENCE: Indiana Kentucky Conference Pastoral Emergency Fund**—Our church leaders are always there for us. The Indiana Kentucky Conference Pastoral Emergency Fund ensures we are there for them when crisis strikes. This vital fund provides urgent financial aid, salary continuation, and an emergency guest pastor for active and retired clergy, lay staff, and their families during unexpected hardships.

Please consider making a financial gift to lift up those who serve our congregations.

- **BLOOD DRIVE**—Save the date for our next Red Cross Blood Drive, scheduled for July 23 from 12-6 pm. Registration is now open for donors. Help us spread the word as we join this community partner to help save lives.

ENRICH

- **SUMMER WORSHIP SERIES**—Join us for our summer worship series. Worship will be a bit more conversation this summer as we explore themes from *Freeing Jesus: Rediscovering Jesus as Friend, Teacher, Savior, Lord, Way, and Presence* by Diana Butler Bass. You do not need to read the book to be part of this worship series or our conversations.
- **3rd SUNDAY LUNCH**—Join us at Tian Fu this Sunday. RSVP to Becky Osher if you plan to attend. The restaurant opens at 12 pm, so no rush to get over there after worship. Tian Fu offers a wide variety of Asian cuisine, so there's something for everyone.
- **BACK TO SCHOOL BLESSING**—It might feel like summer just started, but folks are heading back to school starting the end of July. Join us on Sunday, July 26, as we offer a special blessing to all those returning to school.
- **UNITED CHURCH FUNDS**—On Sunday, August 2, you're invited to join us for a post-worship fellowship and discussion on financial stewardship and sustainability, presented by Matt Wagner, VP Institutional Relationships at United Church Funds (UCF). UCF is a partner to institutions of the United Church of Christ, providing professionally managed investment funds, educational resources, and other services to help churches and other ministry organization invest for the future in ways that align with sustainability and values. Cumulatively, UCF partners with over 1,200 institutional investors and is responsible for assets under management of \$1.5 billion. You can learn more about UCF at ucfunds.org. Our Zion UCC investments are through UCF. During our discussion, Matt will share about the sustainable and responsible investing strategies that United Church Funds uses in our investments with United Church Funds, as well as information and resources about planned giving and future sustainability for our congregation. We invite you to be a part of this time with our investment partner, United Church Funds.
- **BLUEGRASS AND GOSPEL CONCERT**—We are excited to welcome the Elkins Jamly to Zion! They are a father-daughter duo from Brown County and relatives of Becky Osher. They will offer a free concert on Saturday, September 12, from 12-2 pm in our shelter. Please RSVP to our Facebook Event and share it with your friends to help start spreading the word.