

Mt. Zion United Church of Christ
1054 Ridgewood Road, York, Pennsylvania 17406
Telephone: 717-755-6117
E-mail: office@mtzionucc.org
Website: www.mtzionucc.org

Rev. Amy E. Northridge, Pastor
Louis Allison, Tech Director

Travis Pinci, Accompanist, Children's Music Coordinator, & Church Administrator

January 18, 2026

9:45 AM

Welcoming of New Members

In My Feels: Joyful...but Scared to Trust It

Thank you for worshiping with us today. If you are a guest, we invite you to take a moment to complete a visitor's card located in the back of the pew in front of you and place it in the offering plate when it is passed. We also invite you to sign your name in our guest book located in the back entrance of the sanctuary.

We welcome infants and children and all their wiggles & voices in our worship! For your comfort, we also have a children's corner in the back narthex where your child can relax and play and you can still participate in the worship experience. We have children's books and activity bags for them to enjoy! Additionally, after the children's message, children from 3 years old—6th grade are invited to participate in Sunday school in our classroom downstairs. They can choose to attend Sunday school or return to their seats to sit with their parents. Please see a member of the welcoming team for assistance!

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

JOYS & CONCERNS

INTRODUCTION TO THE THEME

PRELUDE

CALL TO WORSHIP

L: Beloved of God, come as you are today.

C: We bring our joy and our worry, our gratitude and our hesitation.

L: God is here in our laughter and in our longing.

C: God is here in our strength and in our weariness.

L: Some of us feel steady; some of us feel fragile; some of us feel somewhere in between.

C: God meets us exactly where we are.

L: Nothing we feel is too small for God, and nothing we feel is too heavy for God.

C: God meets us exactly where we are.

L: So let us open our hearts, lift our voices, and enter this sacred space together.

*Those for whom it is comfortable, please rise.

Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee

Henry van Dyke, 1907

Ludwig von Beethoven, 1824

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Piano $\text{♩} = 80$

1. Joy-ful, joy - ful, we a - dore thee, God of glo - ry,
 2. All Thy works with joy sur-roundThee, earth and heaven re -
 3. Thou art giv - ing and for - giv - ing, ev - er bless-ing,
 4. Mortals, join the hap - py cho - rus which the morn-ing

4

Lord of love; Hearts un-fold like flowers be-fore Thee, open-ing to the
 - flect Thyrays, Stars and an-gels sing aroundThee, cen-ter of un -
 ev - er blest, Well-spring of the joy of liv - ing, o - cean depth of
 stars be-gan; Fa - ther love is reign-ing o'er us, broth-er love binds

8

sun a - bove. Melt the clouds of sin and sad-ness, drive the storms of
 - broken praise. Field and for-est, vale and mountain, flower-y meadow,
 hap-py rest! Thou our Fa-ther, Christ our Broth-er, all who live in
 man to man. Ev - er sing-ing, march we on - ward Vic-tors in the

12

doubt a - way; Giv - er of im - mor-tal glad-ness, fill us with the
 flash-ing sea, Chant-ing bird and flow-ing foun-tain, call us to re -
 love are Thine; Teach us how to love each-oth - er, Lift us to the
 midst of strife, Joy - ful mu - sic leads us on - ward in the tri-umph

16

light of day. light of day.

- joice in Thee. - joice in Thee.

Joy di-vine. Joy di-vine.

song of life. song of life.

*Those for whom it is comfortable, please rise.

REMEMBRANCE OF BAPTISM & WELCOME OF NEW MEMBERS

P: In the waters of baptism, God named each of us beloved, claimed us as God's own, and promised to meet us with grace in every feeling and every season of life.

C: We remember today that we belong to God.

P: Like the prodigal child in Jesus' parable, we know what it is to hesitate—to hope for welcome but fear disappointment. Yet God meets us first: running toward us with mercy, delighting in us with joy.

C: We remember that God welcomes us before we can fully welcome ourselves.

P: Today, as we remember our baptism, we also welcome new members into our fellowship. Just as God meets each of us on the road home, we meet you on your journey today—with gratitude, with joy, and with the promise that you do not walk alone.

P: Siblings in Christ, as you join this community of faith at Mt. Zion, do you remember that you, too, are named in love, washed in grace, and welcomed home by God? Do you affirm your desire to grow in faith, to seek God in all seasons, and to walk with this congregation as God calls you forward?

New Members: We do, with God's help.

P: People of Mt. Zion, will you welcome these siblings, support them with prayer, encourage them in faith, and walk with them through joy, hardship, and every sacred emotional space between?

C: We will, with God's help.

L: May this water remind us that God's grace flows freely, that welcome is wide, and that home is found in God and in one another.

C: We give thanks for the gift of baptism and for the new members joining us today.

L: Beloved of God—newcomers and longtime members alike—you are named, you are known, you are bathed in grace, you are forgiven, and you are never alone. Remember who you are.

C: Thanks be to God.

L: Team Mt. Zion, let us now show a sign of welcome to our new members.

ACT OF PRAISE NO. 449 (black hymnal, vs. 1 & chorus)

Softly and Tenderly

ALL SING: Softly and tenderly Jesus is calling, calling for you and for me; See at the portals Christ waiting and watching, watching for you and for me. Come home, come home, All you are weary, come home; Earnestly, tenderly Jesus is calling—calling, "O sinner, come home!"

*Those for whom it is comfortable, please rise.

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

SCRIPTURE

Luke 15:11-32 (The Message)

SERMON

HYMN OF THE DAY NCH NO. 23 (see below)

There's a Wideness in God's Mercy

There's a Wideness in God's Mercy

Frederick W. Faber, 1814-186

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Piano  = 120

1. There's a wide-ness in God's mer-cy, like the wide-ness of the sea;
2. For the love of God is broader than the mea-sures of our minds;

5
there's a kind-ness in God's jus-tice, which is more than lib - er - ty.
and the heart of the E - ter - nal is mostwon - der - ful - ly kind.

9
There's no place where earth-ly sor-rows are more felt than in God's heaven;
If our love were but more faith-ful, we would glad - ly trust God's word;

13
there's no place where earth - ly failings have such kind - ly judgment given.
and our lives would show thanksgiv-ing for the good-ness of our God.

*Those for whom it is comfortable, please rise.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE & THE LORD'S PRAYER

ALL: 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 sins, as we forgive those who sin against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

TIME FOR SHARING

INVITATION TO GENEROSITY & DISCIPLESHIP

OFFERTORY

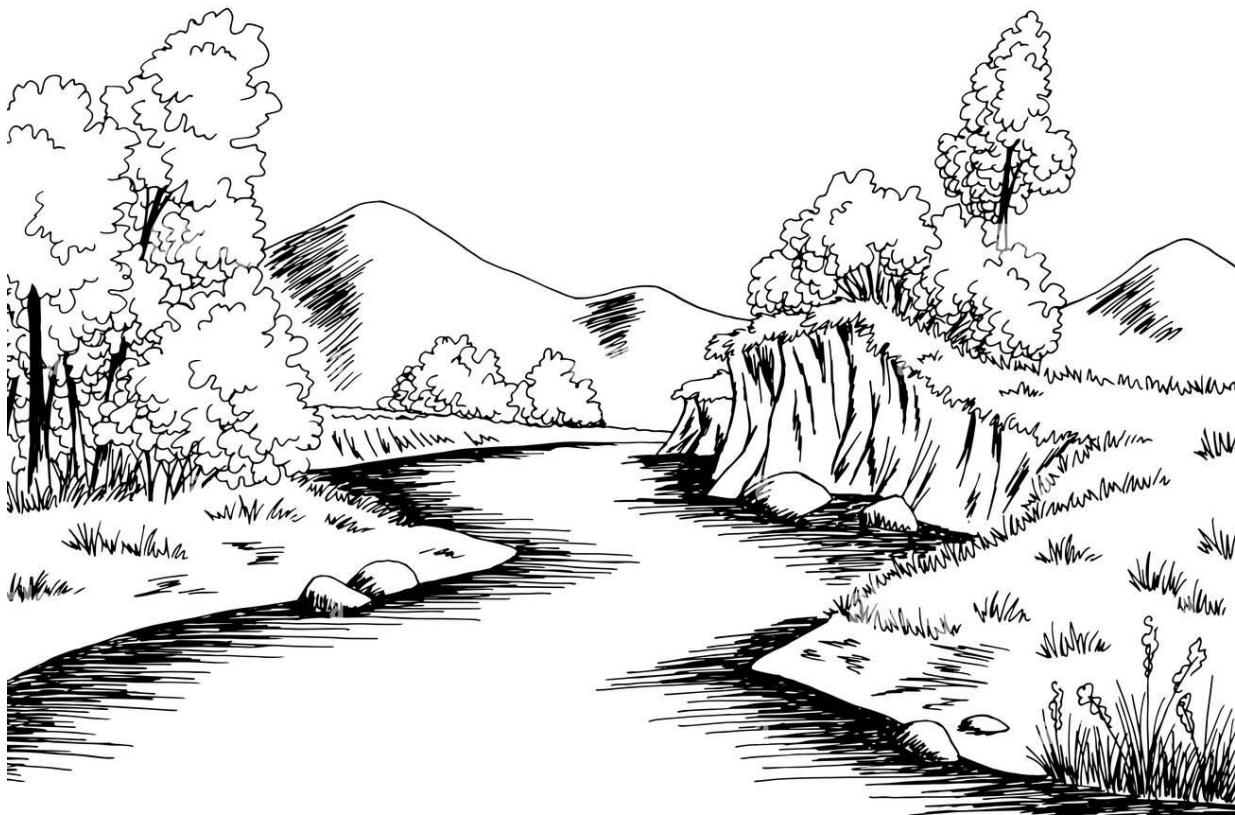
*PRAYER OF DEDICATION

L: Let us pray. Merciful God,

C: You welcome us with grace and meet us with joy long before we expect it. Receive these gifts, offered in gratitude for Your love. Use them to bless, to heal, and to widen the reach of Your compassion. In Christ's name we pray, Amen.

*CLOSING HYMN NO. 284 NCH (black hymnal, see next page)

Blessed Quietness



*Those for whom it is comfortable, please rise.

Blessed Quietness

Manie P. Ferguson

W. S. Marshall

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Piano $\text{♩} = 80$

1. Joys are flow - ing like a riv - er, since the
 2. Bringing life and health and glad - ness all a -
 3. Like the rain that falls from heav - en, like the
 4. See, a fruit - ful field is grow - ing, bless-ed
 5. What a won - der ful sal - va - tion, when we

4

Com - fort - er has come; Christ a - bides with us for -
 - round, this heaven - ly Guest banished un - be - lief and
 sun - light from the sky, so the Spir - it, too, is
 fruit of righ-teous - ness; and the streams of life are
 al - ways see Christ's face, what a per - fect hab - i -

7

- ev - er, makes the trusting heart a home. Blessed quietness, holy
 sad-ness, changed our wea - ri - ness to rest.
 giv - en, com - ing on us from on high.
 flow-ing in the lone - ly wil - der - ness.
 - ta - tion, what a qui - et rest - ing place.

11

quietness, what as - sur - ance in my soul. On the stormy sea, Jesus

15

speaks to me, and the bil - lows cease to roll.

*Those for whom it is comfortable, please rise.

***BENEDICTION**

POSTLUDE

Thank you to the worship choir for enhancing the worship service with their talents this morning!

Thank you to Cody Eckenrode for serving as guest organist this morning!

Welcome Team Members— Jennifer Damon & Barb Stebbins

Liturgist— Brenda Beyer

Tech Team— Elaine Bevivino, Jack Herlocker, Ron Miles

*Those for whom it is comfortable, please rise.



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