

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

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

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

March 25, 2026

7:00 PM

**Valleys of Lent**  
**The Valley of Decision**

*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 have children's books and activity bags for them to enjoy in the side narthex! Please see a member of the welcoming team for assistance!*

**WORDS OF WELCOME**

**PRELUDE**

*I Have Decided to Follow Jesus*

Traditional

**CALL TO WORSHIP**

L: I lift up my eyes to the hills. From where will my help come?

**C: My help comes from the Lord, who made heaven and earth.**

L: He will not let your foot be moved; he who keeps you will not slumber.

**C: He who keeps Israel will neither slumber nor sleep.**

L: Even in the darkest valley, no evil need be feared. The Lord is your keeper; the Lord is your shade at your right hand.

**C: The sun shall not strike you by day nor the moon by night.**

L: The Lord will keep you from all evil; he will keep your life.

**C: The Lord will keep your going out and your coming in from this time on and forevermore.**

L: Even in the darkest valley, no evil need be feared. To you we lift up our eyes, O you who are enthroned in the heavens!

**C: As the eyes of servants look to the hand of their master, as the eyes of a maid to the hand of her mistress, so our eyes look to the Lord our God, until he has mercy on us.**

**WORSHIP CHOIR ANTHEM HYMN**

*Guide Me O My Great Redeemer*

by Wood

\*Those for whom it is comfortable, please rise.

## \*TIME OF CONFESSION

### INVITATION TO CONFESSION

L: Friends, God created us and we are God's, and yet often our hearts lose focus and our priorities become misaligned. Trusting in God's mercy and grace, I invite you to stand as comfortable and join in confessing our sins before God and one another,

### PRAYER OF CONFESSION

L: O, Lord, our God,

**C: we have many things in this world that vie for our attention: money, fame, fortune, smartphones, televisions, computers. But what should receive the most attention is you.**

**Forgive us for our divided loyalties and distracted hearts. Help us to focus on you in all that we say and do. May our words and actions be ways in which we serve you and not ourselves.**

**Show us how to make our devotion to you known in the world, and give us the ability to make our commitment to your Son, Jesus, our highest priority. Amen.**

### WORDS OF ABSOLUTION

L: Hear the good news, people of God. God's mercy is deeper than our mistakes, and God's love is stronger than our sin.

Just as God promised, though our sins are like scarlet, they are made white as snow. Through Jesus, our Savior, forgiveness is given freely, grace is poured out generously, and new life is always possible.

In Jesus Christ, you are forgiven --we all are forgiven. As such, remember this day that you are loved, and you are made new. Amen.

### SONG OF TURNING (to the tune of the Doxology)

*Valleys of Lent*

**ALL SING: Valleys of Lent before us loom, Broad vistas fraught with dread and gloom. Good Shepherd, be our help and guide; Safely we travel at your side.**

**Here in Lent's Valley, hear God's voice, Calling on all to make a choice:**

**"Though all the world forsake Thy word, I and my house will serve the Lord."**

\*Those for whom it is comfortable, please rise.

# TRAVELER'S CHECK IN: CHILDREN'S SERMON

ADULT PASSPORT QUESTION: *What choice is before me right now—and what does faithfulness look like in this moment?*

KID PASSPORT QUESTION: *What is a good choice I am trying to make right now?*

## FIRST READING

Joshua 24:1-15

## SECOND READING

Joel 3:14-18

## TIME OF REFLECTION

DRAMA

SERMON

## HYMN OF THE DAY NCH NO. 207 (see below)

*Once to Every Man & Nation*

# Once to Every Man and Nation

James Russell Lowell

Thomas J. Williams

\*Music reproduced and licensed under One License #A-725030.

Piano  $\text{♩} = 80$

1. Once to ev - ery man and na - tion comes the mo - ment to de - cide,  
2. Then to side with truth is no - ble, when we share her wre tched crust,  
3. By the light of burn - ing mar - tyrs, Christ, Thy bleed - ing feet we track;  
4. Though the cause of ev - il pros - per, yet the truth a - lone is strong;

5  
In the strife of truth with false hood, for the good or e - vil side;  
ere her cause bring fame and pro - fit, and 'tis pros - p' - rous to be just;  
Toi - ling up new Calv - ries ev - er with the cross that turns not back.  
though her por - tion be the scaf - fold, and u - pon the throne be wrong;

9  
Some great cause, some great de - ci - sion, off - ring each the bloom or blight,  
Then it is the brave man choos - es while the co - ward stands a - side,  
New o - cca - sions teach new du - ties; an - cient val - ues test our youth.  
Yet that scaf - fold sways the fu - ture, and, be - hind the dim un known,

13  
and the choice goes by for - ev - er 'twist that dark - ness and that light.  
till the mul - ti - tude make vir - tue of the faith they had de - nied.  
They must up - ward still and on - ward, who would keep a - breast of truth.  
stand - eth God with - in the shad - ow keep - ing watch a - bove His own.

\*Those for whom it is comfortable, please rise.

## PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

L: Lord God, in the Garden of Gethsemane, your obedient Son Jesus made a choice: “Not my will, but yours be done.” The cup of suffering would not be removed from him, but he chose instead to drink it for our sakes. We thank you this Lent for that blessed obedience, for the divine choice that leads to our redemption. In mercy, you have chosen us, O Lord.

**C: Help us ever to choose you, saying, “We will serve the Lord.”**

L: We thank you as well for the examples of faithful saints throughout the centuries who have been moved to choose your will, O God, by whom the faith was passed on at length to our generation, to us. In mercy, you have chosen us, O Lord.

**C: Help us ever to choose you, saying, “We will serve the Lord.”**

L: Lead us by your Holy Spirit to serve those whom you love, Lord God, especially those in any kind of need. Let us bring healing to the sick, comfort to the grieving, sustenance to the hungry, relief to the oppressed, hope to the hopeless, the Gospel to those who know it not or who have not yet come to believe it. In mercy, you have chosen us, O Lord.

**C: Help us ever to choose you, saying, “We will serve the Lord.”**

L: You open your hand and satisfy the desire of every living thing. It is with full awareness of your providence that we dare to pray: “Give us this day our daily bread,” and open our hearts and our hands to share our daily bread with those who hunger in this world, that they may join us thankfully in following you. In mercy, you have chosen us, O Lord.

**C: Help us ever to choose you, saying, “We will serve the Lord.”**

L: Let strife and selfishness be removed from among us, and grant to the nations of this earth and their leaders a passion for peace, that all may share your bounty with glad and generous hearts. Make us instruments of your peace. In mercy, you have chosen us, O Lord.

**C: Help us ever to choose you, saying, “We will serve the Lord.”**

L: Now give us grace to follow Christ in faith through the solemn days ahead, that we may behold his holy suffering with true repentance and firm trust, and be led at last to that joyful gathering of all the faithful, where you have chosen to welcome us, where you live and reign as God forever and ever. We center ourselves for the journey ahead, sharing together in the prayer our Savior, Jesus Christ has taught us,

\*Those for whom it is comfortable, please rise.

## THE LORD'S PRAYER

**C: 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

*He Leadeth Me*

by Gilmore

*The Lenten offering for both Mt. Zion congregations is Our Daily Bread Soup Kitchen, which supports the ministry that we share in Chop and Peel.*

\*OFFERTORY PRAYER

L: God of mercy, **C: we offer these gifts as signs of our gratitude and our need. Receive them, and receive us, breathing life into what feels small or worn. Use all that we bring to serve your world with love. Amen.**

\*CLOSING HYMN (see below)

*Journey to Gethsemane*

# Journey to Gethsemane (Valley Verses Week 5)

James Montgomery, 1820

Richard Redhead, 1853

\*Music reproduced and licensed under One License #A-725030.

Piano  $\text{♩} = 80$

The musical score is written for piano in a 4/4 time signature with a key signature of two flats (B-flat and E-flat). It consists of three staves of music. The first staff begins with a treble clef and a key signature of two flats. The tempo is marked as quarter note = 80. The lyrics are: '1. In the steps our Sav - ior trod Let us fol - low' and '2. In the val - ley choose this day, Whom your heart will'. The second staff continues the melody with lyrics: 'faith - ful - ly, where the sin - less Son of God went to set us sin - ners free.' and 'fear and serve; Cast a - side di - vid - ed will, Stand in faith and do not swere.'. The third staff concludes the piece with lyrics: 'Mar each foot - step in the strife Of the Way, the Truth, the Life.' and 'As for us, the Lord a - lone, He shall claim us as His own.'. The score ends with a double bar line.

1. In the steps our Sav - ior trod Let us fol - low  
2. In the val - ley choose this day, Whom your heart will

4  
faith - ful - ly, where the sin - less Son of God went to set us sin - ners free.  
fear and serve; Cast a - side di - vid - ed will, Stand in faith and do not swere.

9  
Mar each foot - step in the strife Of the Way, the Truth, the Life.  
As for us, the Lord a - lone, He shall claim us as His own.

\*Those for whom it is comfortable, please rise.

**\*BENEDICTION** (Isaiah 40:28-31)

L: The Lord is the everlasting God, the Creator of the ends of the earth.

**C: He does not faint or grow weary; his understanding is unsearchable.**

L: He gives power to the faint and to him who has no might he increases strength.

**C: Even youths shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall fall exhausted;**

L: But those who wait for the Lord shall renew their strength,

**C: They shall mount up with wings like eagles,**

L: They shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint.

L2: Go in peace, you do not walk alone.

**C: Thanks be to God.**

**POSTLUDE**

*Gospel Homecoming*

arr. Tate

© 2005, 2026 Creative Communications for the Parish, a division of Bayard, 1564 Fencorp Dr., Fenton, MO 63026. 800-325-9414. [www.creativecommunications.com](http://www.creativecommunications.com). All rights reserved.

Thank you to the worship choir for enhancing our worship service with their time and talents!

**Welcome Team Members** Tori Everhart & Cindy Hogentogler

**Liturgist**—Deb Herlocker

**Presiding Minister**—Rev. Debbie Mahady

**Scripture Reader**—Eloise Rhinehart

**Drama Readers**— Ellen Gibb (Mt. Zion Lutheran), Michael Maletz (Mt. Zion UCC)

**Tech Team**—Eloise Rhinehart, John Schriver, & Joe Vacante

\*Those for whom it is comfortable, please rise.