

Mt. Zion United Church of Christ
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Rev. Amy E. Northridge, Pastor
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October 11, 2026

9:45 AM

Home Coming: Wherever You Go, You're Home

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

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

PRELUDE

Jesus Name Above All Names

by Hearn

CALL TO WORSHIP

L: Come, friends. Come, neighbors. Come, family of God.

C: Welcome home.

L: Whether this place is filled with memories, or you are making memories here for the first time,

C: welcome home.

L: Whether you have been here every Sunday, or your journey has taken you far from familiar places,

C: welcome home.

L: For homecoming is more than returning to a building, more than coming back to a familiar place.

C: Homecoming is discovering where God has been with us all along.

L: So come as you are. Come and discover where God is dwelling. Come and worship the God who welcomes us home.

C: God is here. We are home. Let us praise our God here and now!

*Those for whom it is comfortable, please rise.

MT. ZION'S AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

L: As we gather in this homecoming, we remember that part of what makes our church a home is the covenant we share with God and with one another. So let us remember our "house rules," as together we affirm the faith that shapes our life at Mt. Zion United Church of Christ.

C: We believe God works through us as a family of faith. We believe God speaks to us through the power of individual and communal prayer. We believe God accepts everyone as a child of God. We believe God provides for us, strengthens us and is present with us in times of joy and sorrow. We believe God forgives us and in forgiveness for one another.

We believe God promises eternal life for those who confess Jesus Christ as Lord. We celebrate God's presence with us, which calls us to love and accept one another, to serve others through mission, and deepens our spiritual relationship with one another. Therefore, we look to the future, with hope and in faith that God provides vision to us as God's people and equips us with the leadership to carry out God's will.

***OPENING HYMN UM HYMNAL NO. 344** (see next page)

Lord You Have Come to the Lakeshore



*Those for whom it is comfortable, please rise.

Lord, You Have Come to the Lakeshore

Cesareo Gabarain, 1979

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Piano $\text{♩} = 80$

1. Lord, you have come to the lake-shore look - ing nei - ther
 2. You know so well my pos - ses - sions; my boat car - ries
 3. You need my hands, full of car - ing through my lab - ors
 4. You, who have fished oth - er o - ceans, ev - er longed for

6

for wealth - y or wise ones; you on - ly asked me to fol - low humbly. O
 no gold and no weap - ons; you will find there my nets and la - bor.
 to give oth - ers rest, and constant love that keeps on lov - ing.
 by souls who are wait - ing, my lov - ing friend, as thus you call me.

13

Lord, with your eyes you have searched me, and while smil - ing have spoken my

19

name; now my boat's left on the shore - line be - hind me; by your side

26

I will seek other seas.

*Those for whom it is comfortable, please rise.

***CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS¹**

INVITATION TO CONFESSION

L: While we gather this day to celebrate our homecoming, we know that sometimes we wander far from the people God has called us to be.

Sometimes we stay close, but allow resentment, fear, or pride to keep our hearts far away. Sometimes we cling so tightly to what has been that we cannot see the new thing God is doing among us. Still, God comes to meet us with mercy and welcomes us with grace. Trusting in the love of the One who has been with us all along, let us confess our sins together.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

C: Welcoming God, we confess that we do not always make our home in your love. We wander after things that cannot give us life. We hold tightly to what we believe belongs to us. We draw lines between those we call family and those we call stranger. We remember the past with gratitude, but sometimes cling to it so tightly that we struggle to follow where you are leading us next. We long to receive your grace, yet sometimes struggle to offer that same grace to others.

Forgive us, O God. Meet us on the roads where we wander. Open our hearts to your abundant mercy. Give us gratitude for where we have been, courage for where you are leading, and grace to welcome others along the way. Amen.

WORDS OF FORGIVENESS

P: Friends, while we are still a long way off, God sees us. God comes to meet us. God embraces us with mercy and surrounds us with grace. In Jesus Christ, you are forgiven. We all are forgiven.

Our past is held in God's faithfulness. Our future is held in God's promise. And here and now, we are held in God's grace. You have a place in the family of God. There is grace enough for you. There is joy in your homecoming.

C: Thanks be to God! Amen.

*ACT OF PRAISE NCH NO. 449 (black hymnal, v.1 & refrain see next page)

Softly and Tenderly

*Those for whom it is comfortable, please rise.

Softly and Tenderly (verse 1)

Will L. Thompson, 1880

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♩ = 80

Piano

1. Soft-ly and tender-ly Jesus is calling, calling for you and for me; See at the portals Christ

wait-ing and watch-ing, watch-ing for you and for me. Come home, come home, come home, all who are weary, come

home

Earn-estly, tender-ly Jesus is calling calling, "O sin-ner, come home!"

*Those for whom it is comfortable, please rise.

SCRIPTURE READING

Matthew 6:19-21 (NRSVUE)

SERMON

Melody Stine

*HYMN OF THE DAY NCH NO. 395 (black hymnal, see below)

In Christ There is No East or West

In Christ There is No East or West (St. Peter) SATB

John Oxenham, 1908

Alexander R. Reinagle, 1836

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Piano

$\text{♩} = 80$

1. In Christ there is no East or West, in Christ no South or
 2. In Christ shall true hearts ev-ery-where their high com-mun-ion
 3. In Christ is nei-ther Jew nor Greek, and nei-ther slave nor
 4. In Christ now meet both East and West, in Christ meet South and

5

North; But one com-mu-ni-ty of love through-out the whole wide earth.
 find; God's ser-vice is the gold-en cord close-binding hu-man-kind.
 free; For men and wom-en live in God, and all are kin to me.
 North; One joy-ous, true com-mu-ni-ty through-out the whole wide earth.

*Those for whom it is comfortable, please rise.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE & THE LORD'S PRAYER

L: God who makes your home among us, you gather us from different places, different stories, and different journeys, and you remind us that in you, we belong. For the gift of places where we are welcomed, for people who know our names and make room for us, for communities where we can bring our whole selves,

C: We give you thanks, O God.

L: For your church, in this place and throughout the world, that we might be more than a place people come, but a people among whom others find welcome, grace, and belonging,

C: Make your home among us, O God.

L: For those searching for a place to belong, for those who are lonely or isolated, for those beginning again in unfamiliar places, for those who have been told they do not belong, and for all who wonder whether there is room for them,

C: Make your home among us, O God.

L: For a world divided by fear, violence, and distrust, for places torn apart by war, for communities facing hunger, disaster, and uncertainty, and for all who have been forced to leave the places they call home,

C: Bring your peace among us, O God.

L: For those carrying burdens we may never see, for those who are sick or awaiting answers, for those who are grieving, for those who are anxious about what comes next, for caregivers and all who are weary, and for those whose needs are known only to you,

C: Draw near to them, O God.

L: For the people who have helped make a home for us, for those whose love continues to shape our lives, for generations who came before us, and for those who will come after us,

C: We give you thanks, O God.

L: God of every road and every returning, wherever our journeys carry us this week, help us remember that we belong to you. Teach us to make room for one another, to welcome those we have not yet met, and to carry your love beyond the places we already know.

C: Wherever we go, make us at home in your love.

Those for whom it is comfortable, please rise.

L: We offer these prayers, and all that remains unspoken within us, in the name of Jesus Christ, who makes his home among us.

C: Amen.

L: Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us:

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.

WORSHIP CHOIR ANTHEM

Just a Closer Walk With Thee

by Price/Besig

TIME FOR SHARING¹

INVITATION TO GENEROSITY & DISCIPLESHIP

OFFERTORY

What a Friend We Have in Jesus

by Converse

OFFERTORY PRAYER

L: Let us pray. Generous God,

C: you have given us a place to belong and people with whom to share the journey. Receive these gifts as signs of our gratitude for all that has been, our commitment to the work you have given us today, and our hope for all that is still to come. Use what we offer to share your love, widen your welcome, and build a community where all your children may find a place to belong. Amen.

***CLOSING HYMN FWS NO. 2241** (see next page)

The Spirit Sends Us Forth to Serve

*Those for whom it is comfortable, please rise.

The Spirit Sends Us Forth to Serve SATB

Delores Dufner

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Piano

$\text{♩} = 80$

1. The Spir - it sends us forth to serve; we go in Je - sus'
 2. We go to com - fort those who mourn and set the bur - dened
 3. We go to be the hands of Christ, to scat - ter joy like
 4. Then let us go to serve in peace, the gos - pel to pro -

5

name to bring glad tid - ings to the poor, God's fa - vor to pro - claim.
 free; where hope is dim, to share a dream and help the blind to see.
 seed and, all our days, to cher - ish life, to do the lov ing deed.
 - claim. God's Spir - it has em - powered us; we go in Je sus' name.

*Those for whom it is comfortable, please rise.

*BENEDICTION

P: May the God who welcomes you home surround you with grace. May Christ meet you on every road you travel. And may the Holy Spirit remind you, wherever the journey leads, that God has been with you all along and God is with you still.

C: Amen.

*SENDING (see below)

Go Now in Peace

by Price/Besig

Go Now in Peace

Don Besig & Nancy Price

Don Besig

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♩ = 80

Piano

mf Go now in peace. Never be a-fraid. God will go with you each hour of ev'ry day. *mf* Go now in

faith, steadfast, strong and true. Know He will guide you in all you do. Go now in love, and show you be-

-lieve. Reach out to others so all the world can see. *rall. a tempo* God will be there watching from a-bove. Go now in

peace, in faith, and in love. *dim.*

*Those for whom it is comfortable, please rise.

Service Participants

Thank you to Melody Stine for serving as guest preacher and thank you to the worship choir for enhancing the service with their talents this morning.

Welcome Team Members— Jim Beyer, Barb Stebbins

Guest Preacher— Melody Stine

Liturgist— Brenda Beyer

Tech Team— Mason Damon, Ron Miles, Joe Vacante



*Those for whom it is comfortable, please rise.

*wherever you go,
you're Home*



*Those for whom it is comfortable, please rise.