

ZION UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

Third and Jackson Streets

Decatur, Indiana

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(*) Please stand either in body or in spirit.

Fifth Sunday of Lent

March 22, 2026

John 11:1—45

“Lazarus’s death raises the question: Where is Jesus when things go wrong?”

Gathering Music: “Jesus Messiah” Shelly Nussbaum

The Welcome and Announcements: Liturgist: Bill Carpenter

(Visitors, please sign the Friendship folder)

The Prelude: “Blessed Be The Name”

The Prelude calls us together. It is a time of quiet reflection to focus ourselves in preparation for worshipping God.

The Light appears: The Acolytes serve

The Church Bell rings:

*Call to Worship: Liturgist

This is not the time for platitudes, for simple answers and tired clichés.
This is the time for breaking hearts and weary spirits.

Let our worship be arms that can hold all that grieves us.

This is not the place for blame, for pointing fingers and second guessing. This is the time for angry tears and aching wails.

Let our worship be a witness to journey alongside us as we break.

When we are standing at the edge of the tomb staring into the truth of the death-dealing forces of our world, when there is nothing left to do but to go and weep,

Let our worship be the song calling us forth from the grave to the community that can unbind us and set us free.

*Hymn of Praise: “He The Pearly Gates Will Open” No. 541

*Invocation: (Unison)

Liturgist

(drawn from Open Unto Me, a prayer by Howard Thurman)

In this hour, as we look death in the face, stay with us, Weeping Jesus, stay with us. In this hour, as we try to hold on, try to believe, try to hope, stay with us, Tender Love, stay with us. In this hour, as we risk the vulnerability of love, the possibility of joy, the dream of freedom, stay with us, Sweet Spirit, stay with us. Amen.

*Passing the Peace of Christ:

Liturgist

God has greeted us with his peace. Let us now pass the peace of Christ to each other.

The peace of the Lord be with you.

And also with you.

The Call To Transformation:

Rev. Kahler

Time of silent reflection:

Prayer for New Life: (Responsively)

For the violence that brings death and death-dealing that brings violence, we grieve,

God, have mercy.

For the blood in the streets and the blood on our hands, we grieve,

Christ, have mercy.

For heartbreaking loss and the loss of hearts soft enough to break, we grieve,

God, have mercy.

From all that binds us and steals our breaths,

turn us around, Holy One. Amen.

**Once more we bless Thee ere our worship cease;
With eager hearts we wait Thy word of peace. Amen.**

- *The Light is carried forth Acolytes serve
- *The Worship Leaders exit
- *The Moment for Silent Prayers Chimes
- *The Postlude: “Wonderful Grace of Jesus”

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| Each of Us | Minister of Christ |
| Rev. Allen Kahler | Minister |
| Barb Engle | Congregation President |
| Jan Miller | Board Secretary |
| Maggie Bolinger | Office Secretary |
| Stacey Smith | Church Treasurer |
| Makayla Smith | Financial Secretary |
| Shelly Nussbaum | Music Director/Church Organist |
| Kacie Shaffer | Custodian |
| Justin Shaffer | Building Manager |

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| Bob Hildebrand, Bob Noack | Door Greeters |
| Brenda Strickler, Kacie Shaffer | Ushers |
| Ushers | Acolytes |
| Terra Roop | Money Counter |

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We welcome all members, visitors, and guests to our worship service this morning. Visitors are asked to take a few moments to sign the Friendship Folder located in each pew and place in the offering plate.

Please join us in the dining room after worship for a time of fellowship and cookies, coffee, and punch.

Our Midweek Lenten services continue this Wednesday evening. We gather at 6 p.m. for a light meal, followed by worship services at 6:45 p.m. Next week is Holy Week, with our Maundy Thursday service beginning at 6 p.m. The meal will be part of the worship and communion service, so both will begin at 6 p.m.

Today’s altar flowers are presented by Neil and Sue Keller. Jan Miller sponsors the bulletins in honor of family birthdays.

The Youth Group will meet at Villa Lanes on Friday, March 27th for Cosmic Bowling from 7-9 p.m. Bowling and shoe rental will be paid by the Youth Council. Wear your fluorescent colors to make it more fun and invite your friends to join us. Contact Janet Smith to sign up.

The Christian Education Committee is sponsoring a “Christmas In July” garage sale on Saturday, July 25th from 9am-noon. Only Christmas items will be sold, such as Christmas tins, candles, ornaments, greenery, dishes, pictures, cookie cutters, trees, lights, outdoor statues, inflatables and Nativity scenes. Watch for updates as July approaches. Proceeds will go to church upkeep.

Several updates to our sound system are in progress to help project and record sound necessary to enjoy in person or online. To help raise the needed \$7874.35, Stewardship Committee is holding a fundraiser. Envelopes with a dollar amount on them can be found on the bulletin board in the lower hall by the lounge. As you are able, you are asked to take an envelope and donate that amount to the fundraiser. Of course, you may always donate more if you are able. Amounts range from \$1-\$100 and we hope all who are able will help. You may also mail a check to the office or use the PayPal scan code.

LOOKING AHEAD

Today, March 22: Music & Worship Committee 11:30 am

Wednesday, March 25: Midweek Lenten Service

Meal 6 p.m.

Worship 6:45 p.m.

Thursday, March 26: Bell Choir Practice 6 p.m.

Chancel Choir Practice 7 p.m.

Friday, March 27: Youth Group Cosmic Bowling Villa Lanes 7-9

website: www.zionuccdeatur.org

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pastor: arkinpastor59@gmail.com

Last week's Worship Attendance: 52

Offering: \$9805.00

Needed each week: \$4045.87

Scan here to make your donation via Paypal

