

The 4th Sunday after Epiphany

February 1, 2026

9:00 a.m.

+ Indicates those times when all who are able may stand.

Bold indicates congregational response.

Ringling of the Bell

Welcome & Announcements

Prelude

“By Faith”

Frick

Call to Worship

Come, people of God—the dawn is breaking! A new day rises where sorrow had settled in.

The dawn is breaking—and we rise with it.

Where burdens have bent us low, the Holy One draws near, steadying our steps.

The Holy One draws near—and we gather our courage.

Where yokes have weighed on shoulders and spirits, God is loosening what has held us down.

What held us down is lifting—and we move toward freedom.

Come, all who yearn for justice; all who hope for healing; all who hunger for joy.

We come to the dawning way, we come to the hopeful way, we come to the way God makes glorious.

Gathering Prayer

Let us pray.

Holy One, your light dawns where our shadows are deepest. You are never far; your presence remains with us. Awaken us to the glimmers of your glory breaking into our world’s weariness. Shine upon the paths we walk—paths obstructed by fear, uncertainty, and the heavy burdens our

communities carry. Descend upon us, Spirit of the Living God. Remain with us. Awaken us. And guide our worship into the brightness of your new day. Amen.

First Reading of Scripture

Isaiah 9:1-4 CEB

Hear what the Spirit is saying to the Church...

Thanks be to God!

+ Opening Hymn No. 422

“Amazing Grace!”

Call to Confession

Prayer of Confession

Holy Companion of our difficult days, you call us toward what is new even when we feel worn or uncertain. We confess the weight we carry—worries we rehearse, the fears we nurture, the habits that hold us tight, patterns we cling to, the moments we turn from compassion, the truths we avoid.

Unbind what tightens around our hearts. Lift what has grown too heavy. Make room in us for generosity, justice, and the courage to begin again. Shape us for your healing work as this new day unfolds. Amen.

Words of Grace

Hear the good news of the Gospel: People who have walked under heavy burdens have been met by the One who lifts them. People who have carried what felt unshakeable have felt the yoke break from their shoulders. Into every place of strain or sorrow, God’s mercy draws near. God’s compassion reaches out. God’s grace opens a way forward. In this promise, receive your freedom. In this grace, begin again.

Praise be to God! Amen.

Giving from Our Hearts



It is the generosity of the friends and members of this church which supports this ministry.

While the ministry at Zion is sustained by more than dollars and cents, the monetary giving is vital to the work we do. We give thanks for all who have supported Zion over the years. For those contributing financially, there is an offering plate just outside the sanctuary or you can donate online through the online giving button at zionunion.org.

+ Doxology

**Praise God from whom all blessings flow; praise God, all creatures here below;
Praise God above, ye heavenly host: praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost. Amen.**

+ Prayer of Dedication

O Way-Making God, you are the source of every mercy and every new beginning. We give thanks for the gifts gathered here and for the hope you are stirring among us. Bless the giving and the givers, that generosity may widen your way and strengthen the communities we touch. With gratitude for all you are doing in us and through us, we dedicate these gifts to the work of compassion you entrust to our care. Amen.

Second Reading of Scripture

Matthew 4:1-11 CEB

Hear what the Spirit is saying to the Church...

Thanks be to God!

Anthem

“This Little Light of Mine”

Chancel Choir

Sermon

Pastoral Prayer

The Prayer of Our Savior

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.

Hymn of Preparation No. 689 “One Bread, One Body”

Holy Communion

Invitation

An Affirmation of Faith

(United Church of Christ Statement of Faith in the form of a doxology)

We believe in you, O God, Eternal Spirit, God of our Savior Jesus Christ and our God, and to your deeds we testify: You call the worlds into being, create persons in your own image, and set before each one the ways of life and death. You seek in holy love to save all people from aimlessness and sin. You judge people and nations by your righteous will declared through prophets and apostles.

In Jesus Christ, the man of Nazareth, our crucified and risen Savior, you have come to us and shared our common lot, conquering sin and death and reconciling the world to yourself.

You bestow upon us your Holy Spirit, creating and renewing the church of Jesus Christ, binding in covenant faithful people of all ages, tongues, and races.

You call us into your church to accept the cost and joy of discipleship, to be your servants in the service of others, to proclaim the gospel to all the world and resist the powers of evil, to share in Christ’s baptism and eat at his table, to join him in his passion and victory.

You promise to all who trust you forgiveness of sins and fullness of grace, courage in the struggle for justice and peace, your presence in trial and rejoicing, and eternal life in your realm which has no end. Blessing and honor, glory and power be unto you. Amen.

Communion Prayer

Holy God, our loving Creator, close to us as breathing and distant as the farthest star, we thank you for your constant love for all you have made. We thank You for all that sustains life, for all people of faith in every generation who have given themselves to your will, and especially for Jesus Christ, whom you have sent from your own being as our Savior. We praise you for Christ's birth, life, death, and resurrection, and for the calling forth of your church for its mission in the world. Gifted by the presence of your Holy Spirit, we offer ourselves to you as we unite our voices with the entire family of your faithful people everywhere:

Holy, holy, holy, God of love and majesty, the whole universe speaks of your glory, O God Most High. Blessed is the one who comes in the name of our God! Hosanna in the highest! Amen.

Remembrance

Invocation

So, we pray once more.

Gracious God, we ask you to bless this bread and cup and all of us with the outpouring of your Holy Spirit. Through this meal, make us the body of Christ, the church, your servant people, that we may be salt, and light, and leaven for the furtherance of your will in all the world. Amen.

Breaking of the Bread and the Pouring of the Cup

+ Sharing of the Elements

The Lord's Table is open to all. Today, we will come forward, through the center aisle, where Rev Nicholas will place a piece of bread in your hand. (All Bread is Gluten-Free) Communion stewards next to the pastor will be holding trays containing both white grape juice and red wine. You may return to your seat by the side aisle. Additionally, communion stewards will make their way through the sanctuary offering communion for those unable to come forward.

Prayer of Thanksgiving following Communion

Let us pray,

O Loving God, we give you thanks for inviting us to your table. We praise you for this meal and for all of the ways you nourish us. Grow in us that we may nourish others. Sustain us as we press toward the goal of your call in Christ Jesus. Amen.

+ Closing Hymn No. 68 "Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing"

The closing hymn is sung in loving memory of **Betty Zumwalt** and **Anne Parker**.

+ Benediction

+ Postlude

"Living for Jesus"

Peterson

Make Glorious the Way: Service Prayers for the Third Sunday after Epiphany was written by Rev. Michael Anthony Howard, who serves as the Minister of Faith in Action for the Living Water Association, Ohio NorthEast, of the Heartland Conference, United Church of Christ. <https://www.ucc.org/worship-way/epiphany-3a-january-25/>

Zion United Church of Christ, 115 S. Washington Ave., Union, MO 63084-1849
Home Page address is: www.zionunion.org
Office Hours: Monday-Friday-8:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m. (closed Tuesdays)
Church Office: (636/583-2814)

Pastor: Rev. Nicholas Knoblauch

Minister to Youth & Families: Alysha Petry

Organist: Brenda Herring

Music Director: Dr. Karen Stafford

Administrative Assistant: Connie Thompson

Coordinator of Elementary Youth: Mandy Frick

Council President: Fern Dewert

Church Custodian: Joy Bradley

We commit ourselves...

to worship God

to form faithful followers of Jesus

and to care for our wider community.

We care as Christ cares.



Then the Spirit led Jesus up into the wilderness

Matthew 4:1 a

+ The 4th Sunday after Epiphany +

February 1, 2026 + 9:00 a.m.

Zion United Church of Christ

Union, Missouri

Please take the Sunday News home with you for information and happenings during the week at Zion Church.

SUNDAY NEWS

FEBRUARY 1, 2026

Communion Sunday - We practice Open Communion here at Zion UCC. Jesus didn't turn anyone away; neither will we. Everyone is invited to come and share in the receiving of the bread and the cup.

Serving This Morning

Liturgist: Karen Tucker
Ushers: Daryl Hartley & Harvey Mefford Greeter: Maxine Harrison
Communion Stewards: Bill & Fern Dewert, Sue Leicht & Connie Thompson
Sound Tech: Dan Mossoney
(Hearing devices are available if needed. Please ask an usher for one.)

Usher Dismissal - An usher will dismiss you by row at the conclusion of the service. They will begin at the front.

Souper Bowl of Caring - Youth will be collecting monetary donations for the Annual Souper Bowl of Caring for the Union Food Pantry and the Little Free Food Pantry this morning and next Sunday, February 8th.

2025 Annual Reports & Bylaw Changes are available on the table in the upper commons. Please take ONE copy of each per family.

On Our List For Prayers

Health and Healing:

Jim Doehring	Phyllis Olson	Carolyn Donoho	Charlotte Ellison
Brenda Viehland	Kim Yenser	Kevin Vorderbruegge	Myrt Dunigan
Hettie Becker	Sarah Berghorn	Bruce Crane (at New Haven Care Center)	
Barb Harvey (at Cedarhurst Senior Living in Wentzville)		Chris Branch (niece of Gerry Hoelscher)	
Sharon Waldrop (friend of Jim Doehring)		Darlene Farrell (sister of Charlotte Ellison)	
Mitch Angell (friend of Charlotte Ellison)		Bill Stolle (friend of Jim Doehring)	
Tammy Wettling (friend of Charlotte Ellison)		Eric Heitman (nephew of Jim Doehring)	
Heather Gooch (great niece of Charlotte Ellison)		S (Karen Stafford's CASA buddy)	
Carol Mossoney (mother of Dan Mossoney)		Bob Truel (husband of Shirley Truel)	
Heather Frederick (niece of Marilyn Freiermuth)		Nancy McKenzie (sister of Vicki Hooper)	
Josh & Tricia Pardee-Jacka (friends of Charlotte Ellison)		Mike Bailey (husband of Leslie Bailey)	
Cindy Roach (friend of Charlotte Ellison)		Glenda Foster (friend of Charlotte Ellison)	
Vanessa Dobsch (niece of Charlotte Ellison)		Mary Dobsch (sister of Charlotte Ellison)	
Aubrey Reed (granddaughter of Charlotte Ellison)		Pat Pappas (sister of Jim Doehring)	
Jamie Koch (friend of Hettie Becker)		Hallie Sammett (friend of Brenda Viehland)	

Church Family Undergoing Cancer Treatment:

Linda Kroeter	Jake McNeil (member of Zion & son of Sarah Davenport)
Susie Andell	Sarah Reed (daughter-in-law of Charlotte Ellison)
Cynthia Johnson (friend of Karen Stafford)	Don Frankenberg (uncle of Phyllis Fink)
Kim Gallagher (friend of Chris & Dawn Robinson)	Trish Kennedy (friend of Charlotte Ellison)
Allen Coffman (friend of Shawn Pehle)	Marissa Schollenberger (friend of Tom & Gayle Williams)
Aaron Dixon (nephew of Dan Mossoney)	Mike Meyer (friend of Mandy Frick)
Brenda (friend of Hettie Becker)	Britt Fassler (daughter of Nancy Kossmann)
Willie Beckett (nephew of Vicki Hooper)	Dasha Musante (granddaughter of Marilyn Stahlman)
Erica Sterling (friend of Amy Dewert)	Sammie Baker (friend of Brenda Viehland)
Sharon Birke (sister of Ron Griffin)	

Sympathy Is Extended to:

Charlotte Ellison & family on the death of her nephew Ronald Dobsch.
The family of Betty Zumwalt who died on January 18.
Ruth & Brad Parker & families on the death of their sister-in-law and aunt Anne Parker who died on January 27.

Various Concerns:

Prayer for our country and those actively serving:
Aviation Structural Mechanic 3rd Class Hunter Grafrath (son of Lindsay & Greg Traffas, grandson of Mike & Lynne Elliott)
Ross Groenke (son of Cindy & Dale Groenke)

Christian Education/Faith Quest/Youth News

This Sunday - All Sunday School classes will meet from 10-11 a.m.; **Faith Quest** - preschool through 6th grade will meet in the Bible Max Theatre; grades 7-12 will meet in the high school room.

UCC Climate Hope Contest – The 2026 UCC Climate Hope Poster Contest theme is "A Future with Hope". The theme comes from Jeremiah 29:11. Kids and youth can submit their art from February 6 through March 20. Pick up the art form from the church office. There will be winners from each age category and the final winning art will serve as the logo for UCC Climate Hope advocacy work through 2026.

Next Sun., Feb. 8 - Intergenerational Sunday School - all classes meet in the fellowship hall at 10:00 a.m.

Adult Education

This Morning – JOY Adult Class meets from 10-11 a.m. in the lower level classroom.

Church Calendar – February 1, 2026 to February 8, 2026

Today -	The 4th Sunday after Epiphany/Communion 9:00 a.m. Worship 10:00 a.m. Fellowship Hour/Christian Education
Mon., Feb. 2 -	7:00 p.m. Lower Commons in Use
Wed., Feb. 4 -	12:00 noon Loops of Love (lower commons) 5:00 p.m. LOGOS 7:30 p.m. Chancel Choir rehearsal (chapel)
Thurs., Feb. 5 -	9:00 a.m. Help Thyself Meal Team Meeting (conference room) 6:00 p.m. Fellowship Hall in use
Fri., Feb. 6 -	7:00 p.m. Fellowship Hall in use
Next Sun., Feb. 8 -	The 5th Sunday after Epiphany 9:00 a.m. Worship 10:00 a.m. Fellowship Hour 10:00 a.m. Intergenerational Sunday School (fellowship hall)

Congregational Meeting – Sun., Feb. 15 – The February Congregational Meeting will be on Sunday, February 15th following the worship service in the sanctuary.

Zion Book Club – Tues., Feb. 17 – Zion Book Club will be meeting on Tuesday afternoon, February 17th at 1:30 p.m. The book the group will be discussing is "A Single Thread" by Marie Bostwick.

Lenten Book Study - During Lent, Rev Nick will be focusing on the days of Holy Week. Each week, we will explore a different day of the week leading up to Jesus' crucifixion and resurrection. For those who wish to go deeper, there will be a weekly book study on Thursdays at 1 p.m. in the Lower Commons. It will be a book study on "The Last Week: A Day by day account of Jesus' Final Week in Jerusalem" by John D. Corssan and Marcus Borg. If you are interested but the time doesn't work, please email Rev Nick, and we can set up a Zoom meeting in the evenings.

Legacy Fund Committee - The Church Council is looking to select five members to form the Legacy Fund Committee. They are looking for volunteers who will:

- Discern the use of the fund.
- Establish a handbook/guideline for the committee.
- Develop an investment strategy and a spending policy for the fund.
- Communicate regularly with the council and congregation.

In due course, the committee will establish term limits for the membership and determine the function of the committee going forward. Please contact the church office if you are interested in being a part of the Legacy Fund Committee.

For Sale by Quilters! – In the lower commons the Zion Quilters have a full size afghan for sale for \$75. If you are interested in purchasing this afghan please contact Gail Mefford at 636-584-5932. Thank you!

A Request from the Quilters – Zion Quilters are asking if you or anyone you know has quilts that need to be quilted to please contact the church office or one of the quilters. Thank you!

Little Food Pantry – Thank you for the great support in keeping the Little Food Pantry going! A list of the most needed items is posted on the bulletin board in the lower commons. Monetary donations can also be given – contact the church office.

Little Free Library – Just a reminder that Zion has a Little Free Library located close to the corner of Washington and Springfield Avenue. If you have any gently used adult/children's books please feel free to drop them in the free library or drop them off in the church office. Thank you!

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