

ZION UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST OF TREMONT

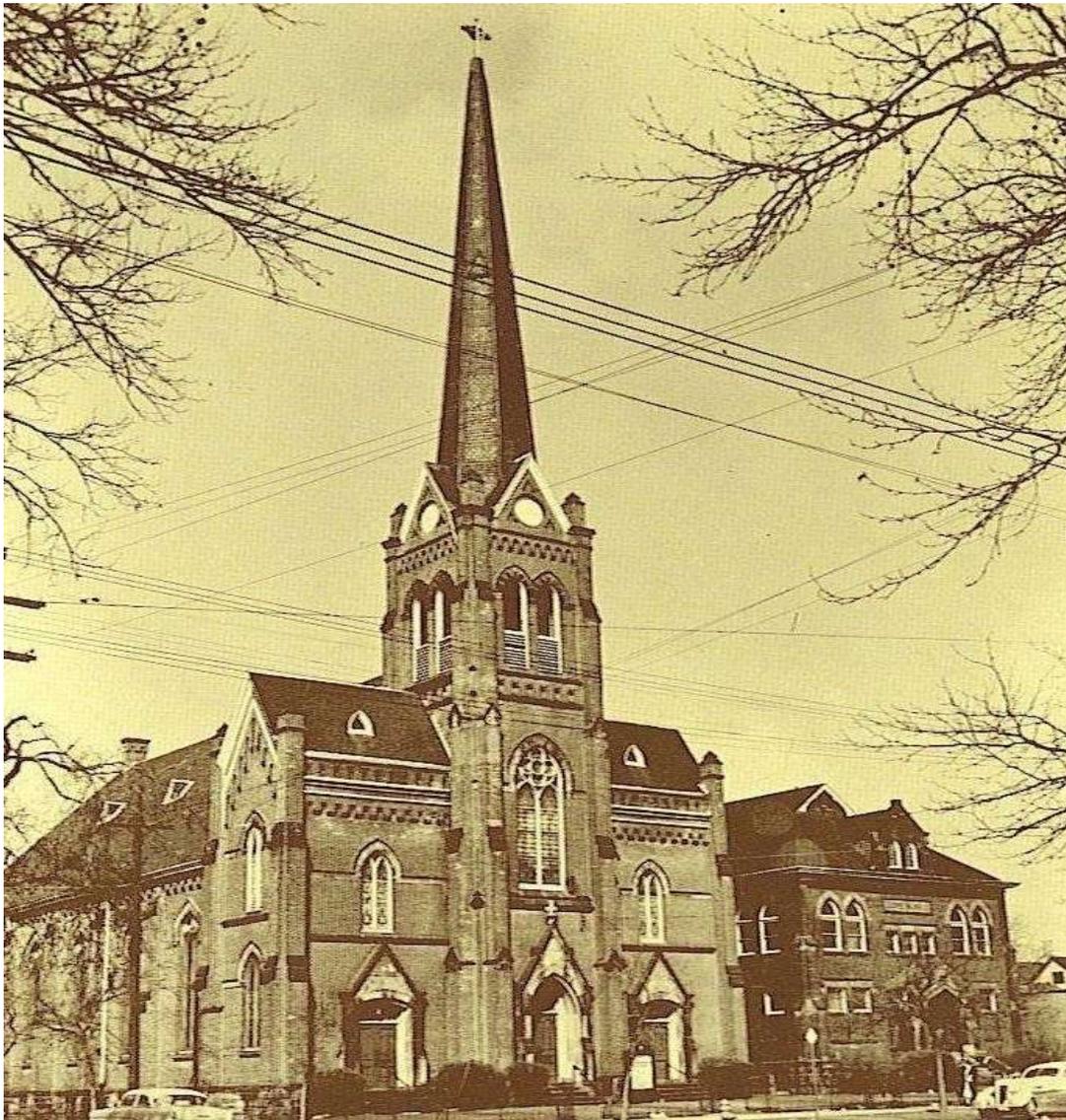
June 12, 2022

First Sunday after Pentecost - Trinity Sunday

Heritage Sunday of the

Evangelical and Reformed Church

A Service of the Word



Zion's Evangelical Church

Cleveland, Ohio

The consummation of the merger of the Reformed Church in the U.S. and the Evangelical Synod of North America was declared during an impressive communion service held at Zion's Evangelical Church in Cleveland, Ohio on June 26, 1934

Zion Church was known as Zion Evangelical and Reformed Church from 1934 to 1957.

The church became known as Zion United Church of Christ in 1957 when the United Church of Christ (UCC) was formed by the merger of the Congregational Christian Church and the Evangelical and Reformed Church in Cleveland, Ohio – a name by which it is known to this day.



UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

a just world for all

June 12, 2022

First Sunday after Pentecost - Trinity Sunday

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A Service of the Word

“Circling around’ is all we can do. Our speaking of God is a search for similes, analogies, and metaphors. All theological language is an approximation, offered tentatively in holy awe. That’s the best human language can achieve. We can say, “It’s like—it’s similar to...,” but we can never say, “It is...” because we are in the realm of beyond, of transcendence, of mystery. And we must—absolutely must—maintain a fundamental humility before the Great Mystery. If we do not, religion always worships itself and its formulations and never God.”
~Richard Rohr, "The Divine Dance: The Trinity and Your Transformation"

WE GATHER IN COMMUNITY

**please stand as you are able*

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

PRELUDE – *Betty Funk*

(Portions of today’s Liturgy on Heritage Sunday are adapted from the Evangelical Book of Worship, published by the German Evangelical Synod of North America, Eden Publishing House, St. Louis, MO. and Chicago, IL. 1916; alt. 2022 by Rev. Scott Rosenstein)

*OPENING SENTENCES

One: Bless God, my soul; and all that is within me, bless God’s holy Name.

Many: Bless God, my soul, and forget not all God’s benefits: who forgives all our iniquities; who heals all our diseases; who redeems our life from destruction; who crowns us with lovingkindness and tender mercies. Amen. (Ps. 103:1-4)

One: Make a joyful noise to God, all you lands. Serve God with gladness: come before God’s presence with singing.

Many: Know that God is God: it is God that has made us, and we are God’s; we are God’s people, and the sheep of God’s pasture.

One: Enter into God’s gates with thanksgiving, and into God’s courts with praise: give thanks to God, and bless God’s Name.

Many: For God is good; God’s lovingkindness endures for ever, and God’s faithfulness to all generations. Amen.

***INVOCATION**

ALMIGHTY and everlasting God, who has granted to your Church to know and to confess you, the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, and to worship you as the only God in your mysterious majesty, we beseech you, grant that through this holy faith we may be united in living communion with you to our soul's salvation. To you, the Triune God, be adoration, praise and glory for ever and ever, world without end. Amen.

***HYMN – – 275 NCH – Come Now, Almighty God**

Come Now, Almighty God

Author: Anon. English, c. 1757; alt.

Tune: ITALIAN HYMN 6.6.5.6.6.6.5

Composer: Felice de Giardini, 1769

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**1 Come now, Almighty God,
help us your name to laud;
our songs we raise:
Ruler all glorious,
o'er all victorious,
come and reign over us,
Ancient of Days!**

**2 Come now, Incarnate Word,
by heaven and earth adored;
our prayer attend;
Come, and your people bless,
and give your word success;
grant us your holiness,
Savior and Friend!**

**3 Come, holy Comforter,
your sacred witness bear
in this glad hour.
Your grace to us impart,
now rule in every heart,
never from us depart,
Spirit of power!**

**4 To you, great One in Three,
eternal praises be
for evermore.
Your sovereign majesty
may we in glory see,
and to eternity
love and adore**

A READING OF THE WORD

A Note about Trinity Sunday and Language about God

On Trinity Sunday we remember with solemnity and praise the foundation in which we live and worship throughout the year. Trinity Sunday is the Sunday after Pentecost. We are invited to encounter God as Three in One. The use of the Triune formula connects the church today with the historic church, born in the struggle of Christians throughout generations to express their beliefs about God in God's Very Being. The language ties together the churches of this generation in our ecumenical life, especially in the Sacrament of Baptism. The traditional language for the Trinity is Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

For many, however, the traditional language is a hindrance to the intimacy of their relationship with God. They note in particular that the tradition incorporates only male language for God, and seek to incorporate other images, which point to broader understandings of the substance and characteristics of the Holy Mystery, which is our Triune God. "Giver, Gift, and Holy Spirit"; "Maker, Lover, Keeper"; "Creator, Christ, and Holy Spirit"; "Father, Son and Holy Spirit, One God, Mother of All"; are some other Trinitarian images drawn from prayerful, scriptural reflection.

The Trinity is a mystery, as is the work of the Holy Spirit, Wisdom among us. "The fear of God is the beginning of understanding," Psalm 110:10 teaches us, but fear is better translated here as "awe." It is that trembling sense of awe at the might and wonder of God. This is the beginning of wisdom. This is the beginning of our understanding of God as three-in-one, Triune. It is a mystery how God created the universe, how God became known to us in the person of Jesus Christ, and how God moves in and within us in the work of the Spirit. It is a mystery that we can come to know God through history and teaching and Scripture, but also through nature, and our own experience that leads us to understanding.

FIRST READING: Proverbs 8:1-4, 22-31

Our first selection are verses from Proverbs 8.. Wisdom, personified as feminine in the Hebrew Scriptures, calls out to us like a woman at a crossroads crying out to listen to her voice. Verses 22-31 is another account of creation, in which Wisdom is the first creation of God, from before anything else was formed. When the heavens were established, the waters given boundaries, the hills brought forth—when all of creation was made, Wisdom was there, and rejoiced as God inhabited the world with people. Wisdom delighted in the creation of humanity.

- 8** 1 Doesn't Wisdom call?
Doesn't Understanding raise her voice?
2 On the hills along the road,
at the crossroads, she takes her stand;
3 beside the city gates of the town,
in the gates themselves, she cries out,
4 "Women and men, people everywhere,
I'm calling out to you!
I cry out to all of humankind!
- 22 "YHWH gave birth to me at the beginning,
before the first acts of creation.
23 I have been from everlasting,

in the beginning, before the world began.
24 Before the deep seas, I was brought forth,
before there were fountains or springs of water;
25 before the mountains erupted up into place,
before the hills, I was born—
26 before God created the earth or its fields,
or even the first clods of dirt.
27 I was there when the Almighty created the heavens,
and set the horizon just above the ocean,
28 set the clouds in the sky,
and established the springs of the deep,
29 gave the seas their boundaries
and set their limits at the shoreline.
When the foundation of the earth was laid out,
30 I was the skilled artisan standing next to the
Almighty.
I was God's delight day after day,
rejoicing at being in God's presence continually,
31 rejoicing in the whole world
and delighting in humankind.

A READING FROM THE PSALMS: Psalm 8 (Responsively)

Psalm 8 is a song of wonder and awe at God's creation, a song of wisdom, for the beginning of wisdom is the awe of God. God has built a foundation from the voices of children and infants, for their voices bring praise to God and silence enemies. When the psalmist looks at all of creation and the universe, the singer wonders why God made human beings and why God cares about us at all? Yet we were made a little lower than divine beings, and given the responsibility to care for the earth and all of creation.

8 1 God, our Sovereign,
how majestic is your Name in all the earth!
You have placed your glory above the heavens!
**2 From the lips of infants and children
you bring forth words of power and praise,
to answer your adversaries
and to silence those who are hostile and vengeful.**
3 When I behold your heavens,
the work of your fingers,
the moon and the stars which you set in place—
**4 what is humanity that you should be mindful of us?
Who are we that you should care for us?**
5 You have made us barely less than God,
and crowned us with glory and honor.
**6 You have made us responsible
for the works of your hands,
putting all things at our feet—**

7 all sheep and oxen, yes, even the beasts of the field,
8 the birds of the air, the fish of the sea
and whatever swims the paths of the seas.

**9 God, our Sovereign,
how majestic is your Name in all the earth!**

SECOND READING – Romans 5:1-5

The apostle Paul declares in these verses of Romans 5 that it is our faith that justifies us in knowing Christ as our Savior, not by our works. God's love has been poured out to us through the Holy Spirit, and despite all our sufferings, all we have been through, we know that hope remains because of God's love. We endure because we know God's love is with us.

5 Now since we have been made right in God's sight by our faith, we are at peace with God through our Savior Jesus Christ. **2** Because of our faith, Christ has brought us to the grace in which we now stand, and we confidently and joyfully look forward to the day on which we will become all that God has intended. **3** But not only that—we even rejoice in our afflictions! We know that affliction produces perseverance; **4** and perseverance, proven character; and character, hope. **5** And such a hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out in our hearts through the Holy Spirit, who has been given to us.

GOSPEL READING – John 16:12-15

In these verses of John 16, Jesus prepares the disciples before his death and resurrection for the arrival of the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of Truth. Everything would be made known to them through the Spirit, even though they did not understand it all at that time, because everything of Christ belongs to God and everything of God belongs to Christ; they are one.

16 **12** I have much more to tell you,
but you can't bear to hear it now.
13 When the Spirit of truth comes,
she will guide you into all truth.
She won't speak on her own initiative;
rather, she'll speak only what she hears,
and she'll announce to you
things that are yet to come.
14 In doing this, the Spirit will give glory to me,
for she will take what is mine
and reveal it to you.
15 Everything that Abba God has
belongs to me.
This is why I said that
the Spirit will take what is mine
and reveal it to you.

AFTER SCRIPTURE READING

One: To the Triune God be adoration, praise and glory, throughout all ages, world without end.
Amen.

Many: **Worthy are you, our Lord and our God, to receive the glory and the honor and the power: for you did create all things, and because of your will they were created. Amen. (Rev. 4: 11)**

CHORAL RESPONSE – 283 NCH – Spirit of the Living God

*Choir: Bob Bucklew, Keith Konet, & Barbara Rossington
Accompanist: Betty Funk*

**REFLECTION – Children of a Mysterious, Fluid, Diverse, Communal, Hospitable, and Loving God -
The Rev. Scott Rosenstein**

WE RESPOND

*ANNIVERSARY PRAYER



WE COME into your presence with gladness, our heavenly Father, to acknowledge you as the Author of every blessing and the Giver of every good and perfect gift. With grateful hearts we praise you for the manifestation of your power and wisdom, your providence and care. Above all do we humbly and sincerely thank you that you have crowned the revelation of yourself in the sending of your only begotten Son, Christ Jesus our Savior. In particular do we rejoice this day and give thanks to you for your manifold favors

and rich blessings toward Zion Church, which by grace is now permitted to celebrate the 88th anniversary of the merger which created the Evangelical and Reformed Church. Oh give thanks to God; for God is good; for God's lovingkindness endures for ever! Amen.

Triune God, we gratefully proclaim: Up till now God has helped us! We pray that you, graciously continue to bless and protect, enlighten and save, comfort and guide this congregation, our Evangelical Church and your kingdom at large. And though we feel unworthy of all your benefits toward us and know that we have often faltered and failed, we pray, let your lovingkindness abound richly, forgive us our sins and make us perfect in every good work to do your will. Grant that this day and all its services unite us closer with you, creating in us both the will and the desire to serve you more sincerely. We pray that you, our God, prosper this congregation until all its members shall become living stones of your kingdom, firm in faith, steadfast in godliness, and joyful in the hope of everlasting life. With all the redeemed we praise you: Holy, Holy, Holy, are you, God of hosts; all the earth is full of your glory! Amen.

*** HYMN 11 NCH - Bring Many Names vv. 1, 2, 3, & 6**

Bring Many Names

Author: Brian Wren, 1989.

Tune: WESTCHASE 9.10.11.9

Composer: Carlton Young, 1989

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**1 Bring many names, beautiful and good,
celebrate, in parable and story,
holiness in glory, living, loving God.
Hail and Hosanna! bring many names!**

**2 Strong mother God, working night and day,
planning all the wonders of creation,
setting each equation, genius at play:
Hail and Hosanna, strong mother God!**

**3 Warm father God, hugging every child,
feeling all the strains of human living,
caring and forgiving till we're reconciled:
Hail and Hosanna, warm father God!**

**6 Great, living God, never fully known,
joyful darkness far beyond our seeing,
closer yet than breathing, everlasting home:
Hail and Hosanna, great, living God!**



The Trinity by Kelly Latimore, 2017, from Art in the Christian Tradition, a project of the Vanderbilt Divinity Library, Nashville, TN.

<http://diglib.library.vanderbilt.edu/act-imagelink.pl?RC=57123> [retrieved June 6, 2020].

Original source: <https://kellylatimoreicons.com/contact/>. Commissioned by Mark Bozzuti-Jones



Andrei Rublev: Hospitality of Abraham, 1400; Andrei Rublev's famous icon of the Trinity

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SCRIPTURE SELECTIONS PRECEDING THE OFFERING

Give, and it shall be given to you; good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, shall they give into your arms. For with what measure you give it shall be measured to you again. (Lk. 6: 38)

But this I say, the one that sows sparingly shall also reap sparingly; and the one that sows bountifully shall also reap bountifully. Let each one do according as they have purposed in their heart: not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loves a cheerful giver. (2 Co. 9: 6, 7)

THE OFFERTORY – Betty Funk

***PRESENTATION OF OFFERINGS – DOXOLOGY**

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

***PRAYER FOR THE CONSECRATION OF OFFERINGS**

O most merciful God, of whose bounty we have received; we beseech you to accept this offering of your people. Remember in your love those who have brought it, and those for whom it is given; and so follow it with your blessing that it may promote peace and goodwill among people, and advance the kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Amen.

CHORAL HYMN – Praise Ye the Father

*Choir: Bob Bucklew, Keith Konet, & Barbara Rossington
Accompanist: Betty Funk*

THE PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

THE LORD'S PRAYER – using “debts” and “debtors”

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,
for ever and ever. Amen.

GOING FORTH

***PARTING HYMN – 277 NCH – Holy, Holy, Holy**

Holy, Holy, Holy

Author: Reginald Heber, 1826; alt.

Word alterations © 1993 The Pilgrim Press

Tune: NICAEA 11.12.12.10

Composer: John B. Dykes, 1861

Composer (Descant): David McK. Williams, 1948

Descant © Belwin Mills Publishing c/o CPP/Belwin, Inc.

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**1 Holy, holy, holy! Lord God Almighty!
Early in the morning our song shall rise to thee.
Holy, holy, holy, merciful and mighty!
God in three persons, blessed Trinity!**

**2 Holy, holy, holy! All the saints adore thee,
casting down their golden crowns around the glassy sea;
cherubim and seraphim falling down before thee,
which wert and art and evermore shalt be.**

**3 Holy, holy, holy! Though the darkness hide thee,
though the eye of sinful man thy glory may not see,
only thou art holy; there is none beside thee,
perfect in pow'r, in love, and purity.**

**4 Holy, holy, holy! Lord God Almighty!
All thy works shall praise thy name in earth, and sky and sea.
Holy, holy, holy! merciful and mighty!
God in three persons, blessed Trinity!**

***BENEDICTION**

One: The peace of God, which passes all understanding, keep your hearts and minds in the knowledge and love of God, and of God's Son Jesus Christ;

Many: and the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be upon you, and remain with you always

POSTLUDE – Betty Funk

* * * * *

Credits

- (1) The worship service is in conjunction with *Evangelical and Reformed Historical Society Heritage Sunday 2022*.
- (2) The Opening Sentences and Anniversary Prayer are adapted from *The Order for the Anniversary of a Congregation*, pp. 291-293 in the *Evangelical Book of Worship*, by the Evangelical Synod of North America, 1916; alt. 2022, by Rev. Scott Rosenstein.
- (3) The Invocation and After Scripture Readings are adapted from *The Festival of the Trinity*, pp. 107-108 from the *Evangelical Book of Worship*, by the Evangelical Synod of North America, 1916; alt. 2022, by Rev. Scott Rosenstein.
- (4) The Scripture Selections Preceding the Offering and the Prayer for the Consecration of Offerings, are adapted from *The Worship of God by Offerings – The Order of Public Worship*, pp. 5-6 from the *Evangelical Book of Worship*, by the Evangelical Synod of North America, 1916; alt. 2022, by Rev. Scott Rosenstein.
- (5) The Benediction is adapted from *Benedictions – Order of Public Worship*, p. 8 from the *Evangelical Book of Worship*, by the Evangelical Synod of North America, 1916; alt. 2022, by Rev. Scott Rosenstein.
- (6) Permission to stream the music in this service obtained from ONE LICENSE, License #A-736636. All rights reserved.

Ministers, *All of Us*
Scott Rosenstein, *Pastor*
Betty Funk, *Pianist and Music Director*
Keith Konet, *Council President*



NEWS AND UPCOMING EVENTS

God is Still Speaking...

No matter who you are, or where you are on life's journey, you will find a spiritual home in this United Church of Christ congregation. WELCOME!

Tithes and Offerings - Checks and Money Orders can be made payable to: "Zion United Church of Christ" and mailed to:

**Zion United Church of Christ
c/o Keith Konet
1039 Bridlewood Drive
Copley, OH 44321**

Questions: Contact Keith Konet at 330.604.6939

Help for Ukraine

Gifts made to UCC **Ukraine Emergency Appeal** will provide shelter, food, and other care to war refugees and internally displaced people.

Donate online with the link below:

<https://support.ucc.org/global-h-o-p-e/ukraine-emergency-appeal>

Or designate a check for Ukraine Relief and mail to:

United Church of Christ,
P.O. Box 71957
Cleveland, OH 44194.

Gifts made to **Sharing America's Resources Abroad (S.A.R.A)** provide food, clothing, and sanitary items for refugees fleeing to Hungary.

Donate online with the link:

https://www.paypal.com/donate/?hosted_button_id=QC5P9F6Z9LT32

Or designate a check for **S.A.R.A. - Donations for Ukraine Emergency Fund** and mail to:

SARA
c/o Heartland Conference UCC
P.O. Box 1230
Worthington, OH 43085.

Please know that your gifts of any size make a difference in this critical time.





UCC churches receive June call to stand with transgender, nonbinary people

GENDER IDENTITY AND EXPRESSION what Open and Affirming (ONA) churches can do

<https://openandaffirming.org/resources/transgender/>

Created in God's image

Transgender and nonbinary Christians are searching for the same things other believers want: a connection to God in a loving community gathered in the spirit of Jesus Christ.

But transgender/nonbinary seekers are often without a place to call their "church home" because most congregations aren't ready to welcome them as companions in faith. Open and Affirming congregations can be that home for their transgender/nonbinary family and neighbors if they take the time to listen to their stories and understand their experiences.

Use this page to learn more. If your Open and Affirming congregation has not yet updated its ONA covenant to include a clear and confident welcome to the transgender/nonbinary community, now is the time to consider amending your covenant after a time of prayer, study and dialogue. The resources on this page can help, including **the 2003 resolution by General Synod "Affirming the Participation and Ministry of Transgender People within the United Church of Christ and Supporting Their Civil and Human Rights"** - <https://tinyurl.com/2s2876y6>

If your congregation is already a safe place for your transgender/nonbinary members, this might be the time to move from welcome to advocacy. Transgender/nonbinary Americans face legal obstacles in their quest to live with the same freedoms and opportunities most of us take for granted. Laws to ban transgender students in school sports and to define gender-affirming medical treatment for transgender youth have been proposed or enacted in several states. There may be opportunities in your community and state to advocate for laws that fully protect the basic rights of transgender/nonbinary residents, and to learn from them other ways your congregation can help.

Please Remember in Prayer

- The Universal Church, its members and mission,
- The nation and all in authority, the leaders of our nation - federal, state, and local.
- For democracy and our democratic institutions and norms in the United States.
- The welfare of the world and the concerns of the local community,
- The interrelationship of Gospel values and civic engagement
- Our 155th Anniversary as a community of faith of Zion Church on May 15th, 2022.
- Ministries of the United Church of Christ and of Zion Church.
- The leaders of our church: local, regional, and national, including our Living Water Association UCC, Association General Minister, The Rev. Nayiri Karjian, and Association Faith in Action Minister, The Rev. Michael Howard.
- The ministers and missionaries of the world.
- Those who are refugees and immigrants.
- For children separated from their parents at detention camps along our southern border.
- The families of Ruth Whitfield, 86; Roberta Drury, 32; Aaron Salter, 55; Heyward Patterson, 67; Pearl Young, 77; Geraldine Talley, 62; Celestine Chaney, 65; Katherine Massey, 72; Margus Morrison, 52; and Andre Mackneil, 53 killed last week in a racist-inspired mass shooting at a supermarket in Buffalo, New York.
- The family and friends of John Cheng, 52, killed in a mass shooting at a church reception in Laguna Woods, California on May 15th.
- The families and friends of the 19 children (3rd & 4th graders) and two teachers murdered in the massacre at Robb Elementary School in Uvalde, Texas: Alexandria Aniyah Rubio, 10; Alithia Ramirez, 10; Amerie Jo Garza, 10; Annabell Guadalupe Rodriguez, 10; Eliahana Cruz Torres, 10; Eliana "Ellie" Garcia, 9; Eva Mireles, 44 (fourth grade teacher); Irma Garcia (fourth grade teacher); Jackie Cazares, 10; Jailah Nicole Silguero, 10; Jayce Luevanos, 10; Jose Flores, 10; Layla Salazar, 10; Makenna Lee Elrod, 10; Maite Rodriguez; Miranda Mathis, 11; Nevaeh Bravo; Rojelio Torres, 10; Tess Marie Mata; Uziyah Garcia, 10; and Xavier Lopez, 10.
- The families and friends of the those killed in the mass shooting at a medical center in Tulsa, Oklahoma on June 1st: two doctors, Preston Phillips, 59 and Stephanie Husen, 48; a receptionist, Amanda Glenn, 40; and a visitor/patient, William Love, 73.
- **May God be revealed in their stories and the tears of all who mourn. May their memory be a blessing and their life in God's good care last forever.**
- For racial and religious justice and reconciliation in the United States and around the world.
- Mother Earth and the global reflection on climate disruption.
- For peace, justice, and freedom throughout the world and particularly for the peoples of Ukraine, Afghanistan, Iraq, Iran, and the United States.
- The people of Afghanistan, Venezuela, Syria, Yemen, Armenia and Azerbaijan, the Kurdish people and the Christians of northern Syria - for peace, nutrition, and justice.
- The people of Tonga affected by the eruption of an undersea volcano and tsunami flooding.
- According to data from the Gun Violence Archive, a total of 256 mass shooting incidents have occurred in the US as of June 11th, 2022. In 2021 a total of 693 mass shooting incidents occurred across the US, in 2020 a total of 611, in 2019 a total of 417, with 337 incidents in 2018. While we pray for the families and friends of those whose lives have been taken in violent acts – and we pray for those injured in body, mind, soul, and spirit – and for their neighborhoods and communities across the United States - We know that our words and prayers

are not enough. We must repent for our collective inaction and commit to tirelessly working toward meaningful gun violence prevention.

- For those affected by the coronavirus COVID-19 pandemic and the omicron variant surge: for all those who are infected and/or sick, and those who are grieving, for all who are affected, all around the world, for essential workers and frontline workers...we pray for comfort, for safety, for health, and for wholeness.
- For those affected by recent wildfires around Boulder, Colorado, in California, and in the panhandle of Florida.
- The residents and management of the San Sofia Apartments who share a campus with us.
- Those anticipating surgery, recovering from surgery, or undergoing medical procedures, tests, or treatments
- Those living in assisted living or in a nursing home
- Those who are homebound and those who are caregivers
- Those who suffer or are in any trouble, and the departed.
- Those on our church prayer list:
 - Patti Augustine and family
 - Robert O. Bucklew (*Bob Bucklew's Dad*) in Alliance, Ohio
 - Betty Funk (*our Minister of Music*)
 - Marian Heffernan (*neighbor to Scott and Bob; friend of Elaine – health concerns*)
 - Ken Kauffman & friends: Nim Bryant, Isadora Almaro, Joe & Janelle Reardon, Barbara, and Michael Reed.
 - Jocelyn Paulette and her parents, Kevin & Jacqui Konet
 - Keith Konet
 - Marcia Leslie (*neighbor and friend – health concerns*)
 - Elaine Lukacs (*fell at home and injured her knee and leg, presently at O'Neill Healthcare, Room 103, 7250 Old Oak Blvd., Middleburg Heights, Ohio 44130 – 440.863.5624*)
 - Linda and James Mortach (*Elaine Lukacs' sister & brother-in-law*) & Linda's daughter
 - Patricia Matheny (prayers also for her Cousin Paul Kevin McCray)
 - Lee Matsos and family
 - Barbara Rossington (*move to a new senior housing community*)
 - Henry Senyak (*resident community leader – cancer*)
 - The family of Michael O'Brien particularly his wife, Debbie Webb (*following Michael's death last Fall. Our love and sympathy to Debbie and Michael's family*).
 - Beverly Wurm (*recovering*)
 - Kim (*friend of Bev Wurm – cancer*)

ABOUT THE EVANGELICAL AND REFORMED CHURCH – HERITAGE SUNDAY

Evangelical and Reformed Historical Society – website: <https://erhistoricalsociety.org/>



The Evangelical and Reformed Church (E&R) was a Protestant Christian denomination in the United States. It was formed in 1934 by the merger of the Reformed Church in the United States (RCUS) with the Evangelical Synod of North America (ESNA) here in Cleveland, Ohio. **The merger service was held here at Zion Church.**

The Merger Conference of the Reformed Church in the United States and the Evangelical Synod of North America held on June 26-27, 1934 at Zion's Evangelical Church, W. 14th and Branch Streets, Cleveland, Ohio. In this video, you will see Paul Press, President of the Evangelical Synod of North America, shaking hands with Henry J. Christman, President of the Reformed Church in the United States, at the historic merger of these two churches:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0n3nyPT1XOw>

or type into your browser: <https://tinyurl.com/5dd4rszr>

A minority within the RCUS remained out of the merger in order to continue the name Reformed Church in the United States. In 1957, the Evangelical and Reformed Church merged with the majority of the Congregational Christian Churches (CC) to form the United Church of Christ (UCC).

Origins

Both the Reformed Church and Evangelical Synod originated in the Protestant Reformation in Europe. Almost all their churches in America were established by immigrants from Germany and Switzerland. In 1934, both bodies united to form the Evangelical and Reformed Church.

Reformed Church in the United States

The Reformed Church in the United States, long known as the German Reformed Church, organized its first synod in 1747 and adopted a constitution in 1793. Later, in the 1910s, a small group of immigrant Hungarian Reformed congregations joined the RCUS as a separate judicatory, the Magyar Synod.

The Reformed tradition centered in the state of Pennsylvania, particularly the eastern and central counties of that state, and extended westward toward Ohio and Indiana and southward toward Maryland, Virginia, and North Carolina in the first generation of immigration. Early Reformed adherents settled alongside Lutheran, Schwarzenau Brethren/German Baptists, and sometimes Anabaptist/Mennonite neighbors. Some Reformed congregations in Pennsylvania and North Carolina formed union churches with Lutherans, sharing the same building but operating as separate entities, although they frequently shared Sunday Schools and occasionally ministers.

Up until the early 19th century, the Reformed churches ministered to German immigrants with a broadly Calvinist theology and plain liturgy. However, revivals, inspired by Anglo-Saxon Protestant churches during the Great Awakenings of the late 18th and early 19th centuries, influenced the

development of the Reformed churches, especially in frontier regions. Some of the more radical practitioners of revivalism and/or pietism defected to Brethren bodies; still others formed the Churches of God, General Conference, a conservative, doctrinally Arminian group.

A backlash set in, however, against revivals in the form of the Mercersburg Theology movement. Named for the Pennsylvania town where the Reformed seminary was located in the mid-19th century, scholarly and ministerial advocates of this position sought to reclaim an older, European sense of the church as a holy society that understood itself as organically related to Christ. This implied a recovery of early Protestant liturgies and a renewed emphasis upon the rite of Holy Communion, somewhat akin to the Tractarian or Anglo-Catholic movement in Anglicanism but within a Reformation vein. Some leaders, however, saw this platform as an attempt to impose heretical Catholic practice and understandings in a Protestant setting. This group, centered in southeastern Pennsylvania in close proximity to a large Catholic population in Philadelphia and thus motivated by Anti-Catholicism, objected strenuously to the Mercersburg reforms, going so far as to establish a separate seminary now known as Ursinus College. After temporarily causing the Ohio Synod to withdraw from the church, tensions mounted until compromises were worked out and parishes of either low or high church persuasion were allowed to practice their preferences peacefully.

A later group of Germans who had come from the Russian empire, settling in the late 19th century, took root in Wisconsin and spread westward across the Great Plains region; this group spoke German for several generations after the Pennsylvania Dutch had thoroughly Americanized themselves, theologically as well as linguistically. These immigrants did not participate in the Mercersburg/Ursinus struggle; their theological persuasion was decidedly confessionalist, holding to a fairly strict interpretation of the Heidelberg Catechism. So strong were the convictions of some that a few churches in that group, most of which were in South Dakota, defected immediately prior to the 1934 merger, influenced by such strict confessionalism, a belief in biblical inerrancy, and a fear of losing their Reformed roots. That group retained the name Reformed Church in the United States.

This schism aside, by the time of the merger talks, the RCUS had mostly joined the American Protestant mainline, sending missionaries overseas and operating health and welfare institutions (i.e., hospitals, orphanages, nursing homes) throughout much of the United States. Further, the Reformed did some work among Native Americans in Wisconsin. The RCUS' constituency composed slightly over half of the membership of the new denomination in 1934.

Evangelical Synod of North America

The Evangelical Synod of North America (not to be confused with the Evangelical Church, later part of the Evangelical United Brethren Church) was founded in 1840 at Gravois Settlement, Missouri, by a union of Reformed and Lutheran Christians in a manner similar to the creation of the Prussian Union in the early 19th century. In its early years, this union was known as the German Evangelical Church Association of the West.

The epicenter of the component Evangelical tradition was (and is to this day, within the UCC) St. Louis, Missouri, with a particularly heavy concentration of parishes within a 75-mile radius, in Missouri and Illinois. Elsewhere, Evangelicals tended to settle in large cities of the Midwest, including Cincinnati, Louisville, Detroit, Milwaukee, and Chicago. Rural Evangelical strongholds

included southwestern Indiana, southern Michigan and Iowa. In the Southern United States, the ESNA was found primarily in central Texas and New Orleans. These concentrations of German settlement also witnessed a large influx of more confessionally-oriented Lutherans, who formed the current-day Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod in opposition to the syncretism they believed the Evangelicals represented. Almost all other of the contemporaneous Germans were Roman Catholic. Although their faith was chiefly the product of a forced union by the government in Prussia, the Evangelicals by conviction wished to minimize the centuries-old points of contention between Lutheran and Reformed doctrine and practice. This attitude of moderation was enabled in large measure by the rise of pietism, which stressed a more emotional, less rationalistic approach to the teachings of the Bible, thus disinclining scholars and pastors toward technicalities or polemics. Many Evangelical parishes were founded by pastors trained in interdenominational missionary societies such as the St. Chrischona Pilgrim Mission in Basel, Switzerland, in the early 19th century; they immigrated to the United States to assist settlers fleeing Prussian militarism.

Even to a greater degree than the Reformed, the Evangelicals became most noted among American Protestants for their establishment and staunch support of hospitals (such as Deaconess Hospital in Cleveland), orphanages, and homes for the elderly. Probably most similar in ethos (among English-speaking Protestant groups) to the Methodists, pastors emphasized pietist preaching and catechizing young people for the rite of confirmation, a rite still cherished highly to this day by congregations deriving from ESNA roots. Reflecting a later generation of immigration, the German language persisted for several generations in most congregations before such services were gradually phased out in the era between the World Wars, due in part to anti-German sentiment among some Americans. In 1919, they began missionary efforts in Honduras, establishing what is now called the Evangelical and Reformed Church in Honduras.

In terms of governance, the Evangelicals most resembled American Lutheranism of the time, with high regard for the pastor's authority but essentially congregational in structure, with a lay council handling temporal matters such as property and benevolences.

Merger with Congregational Christian Churches

In 1957, the Evangelical and Reformed Church joined with the General Council of Congregational Christian Churches to form the United Church of Christ (UCC). The Rev. James Wagner was the last president of the denomination. Upon the union on June 25 of that year, he became, along with former Congregational Christian general minister Fred Hoskins, a co-president of the UCC. He and Hoskins held these positions until 1961, when the UCC constitution was ratified by the Evangelical and Reformed synods and the requisite percentage of CC congregations. About 40 percent of the members in the new denomination were members of the E&R Church.

Organization and theology

The Evangelical and Reformed Church was generally presbyterian in organization, although it allowed for a great deal of local congregational decision-making than more typical Reformed bodies such as Presbyterianism or the Reformed Church in America did. The church organized into some 30 or so regional synods, culminating in a national General Synod that met annually.

The church used several creeds: the Heidelberg Catechism, Martin Luther's catechisms, and the early

Lutheran Augsburg Confession; Evangelical and Reformed leaders allowed great latitude in interpretation. In the main, Evangelical and Reformed congregations emphasized piety and service rather than legalistic soteriology or orthodox dogma. Styles of worship ranged from revivalism (especially in Ohio and North Carolina) to a Lutheran-like liturgics (the Mercersburg Movement found primarily in central Pennsylvania parishes). Generally speaking, the theological outlook of most ministers was largely accepting of liberal trends in Protestant doctrine and higher biblical criticism, although some pockets of conservative revivalistic pietism and confessionalist Calvinism could be found.

Educational institutions

As with most Protestant denominations, the Evangelical and Reformed church maintained educational institutions and foreign missions. Affiliated educational institutions included the Lancaster Theological Seminary, Franklin and Marshall College, Cedar Crest College, and Ursinus College in Pennsylvania, Elmhurst College in Illinois, Hood College in Maryland, Catawba College in North Carolina, Eden Theological Seminary in Missouri, and **Heidelberg College in Ohio**. An Evangelical and Reformed seminary, Mission House, previously located in Sheboygan, Wisconsin, joined with the school of theology of South Dakota's Yankton College (a Congregational Christian institution) to form the United Theological Seminary of the Twin Cities in the early 1960s. The seminary set up operations in New Brighton, Minnesota, outside St. Paul. In the early 1930s Central Seminary in Dayton, Ohio, a previous merger of Ursinus and Heidelberg Seminaries, was merged with Eden Seminary.

In 1946, in cooperation with three other denominations, it formed the United Andean Indian Mission, an agency that sent missionaries to Ecuador.

Famous members

The list includes members of United Church of Christ congregations of Evangelical and Reformed heritage:

- Donald Bloesch
- Walter Brueggemann
- Leon Jaworski
- John Williamson Nevin
- Reinhold Niebuhr
- Richard Niebuhr
- Philip Schaff
- Richard Schweiker
- Bud Shuster
- Paul Tillich
- Friedrich Wilhelm von Steuben
- John Winebrenner
- Victor Paul Wierwille (originally a member before founding The Way International)

United States President Theodore Roosevelt attended Washington D.C.'s Grace Reformed Church, an Evangelical and Reformed congregation. Roosevelt originally belonged to the Reformed Church in America (RCA), a Dutch-American group. Since there were no RCA congregations in Washington, he chose Grace Reformed as perhaps the church most similar liturgically and theologically to Dutch Calvinism.