

# ZION UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST OF TREMONT

February 11th, 2024

Last Sunday after Epiphany – Transfiguration Sunday

Mardi Gras Sunday

A Service of the Word



## Mardi Gras art: Jester Mask

Stushie Art, 2015

Church bulletin covers and other art by artist Stushie. Unique crayon and digital worship art  
a Scottish pastor, ministering in East Tennessee.

<https://stushieart.com/tag/mardi-gras-art-for-bulletins/>



**February 11th, 2024**  
**Last Sunday after Epiphany - Transfiguration Sunday**  
**Mardi Gras Sunday**  
**A Service of the Word**

## **WE GATHER IN COMMUNITY**

**“God places us in the world as his fellow workers-agents of transfiguration.  
We work with God so that injustice is transfigured into justice,  
so there will be more compassion and caring,  
that there will be more laughter and joy,  
that there will be more togetherness in God's world”  
- Desmond Tutu-**

### **Welcome and Announcements**

**Prelude – *Adam Petrosino***

#### **\*Call to Worship**

One: From the rising of the sun to its setting

**All: God speaks to us and summons us.**

One: God gathers us in covenant,

**All: God's glory shines forth.**

**All: Let us worship God!**

#### **\* Invocation Prayer**

**Mighty God,  
you call to us.  
You call to the heavens  
and to the earth in covenant.  
And so we call to you  
be present as we worship.  
Gather us,  
that we may hear your voice  
and respond to your ways  
of righteousness.**

We pray in the power  
of your Holy Spirit.  
Amen.

\*Gathering Hymn- "When the Saints Go Marching In"

595 When The Saints Go Marching In

1. O when the saints go march-ing in, O when the  
2. O when the sun re - fused to shine, O when the  
3. O when they crown Him Lord of all, O when they

3

saints go march-ing in,  
sun re - fused to shine, O Lord, I want to be in that  
crown Him Lord of all,

6

num-ber when the saints go march - ing in.  
when the sun re - fused to shine.  
when they crown Him Lord of all.

*African American Heritage Hymnal* 595  
Text: Negro spiritual  
Tune (WHEN THE SAINTS, 88 10 7): Negro spiritual; arr. by Stephen Key, © 2000, GIA Publications, Inc.

## A READING OF THE WORD

### First Reading: Nehemiah 8:2-3, 5-6, 8-12

*The phrase “Mardi Gras” is French for “Fat Tuesday.” The name is derived from a Christian tradition of eating fatty food on the Tuesday before Lent, in preparation for the Lenten fast from rich, sweet cuisine. Is it ever appropriate for God’s people to enjoy lavish celebrations with rich food? Or are we always to live in frugality and self-denial? Nehemiah 8 provides a surprising answer. The chapter begins after the wall in Jerusalem had been rebuilt, thus guaranteeing the safety and flourishing of the city. The people gathered together in order to celebrate what they had accomplished by God’s power. On that day, Ezra the scribe stood on a tall platform so that he might read the Jewish law to all who had gathered. As he read, learned Levites helped the people understand the meaning of the text . . . an early example of small-group Bible study. When the people heard the law and grasped its meaning, they were struck to the heart and began to weep. But then their leaders did a most surprising thing. They urged the people to stop crying and start partying! Nehemiah told the people to “go now and enjoy rich food and sweet wine, and be certain that you send a share to those who cannot provide for themselves, for this day is holy to YHWH. Let no one be sad, for YHWH’s joy is your strength.” (8:10). The Hebrew phrase translated here as “enjoy rich food” literally reads, “eat the fat” (‘ikhlu mashmannim). Nehemiah was, in a sense, urging the people to have a “Fat Tuesday” celebration.*

*Of course God’s people should also set aside time for repentance and self-denial. We see an example of this in the last verse of Nehemiah 8, as well as in the whole of Nehemiah 9. It would be wrong to conclude from Nehemiah 8:10 that godly life should always be a party. But there is a time to celebrate, to enjoy the good things of life. Notice that the celebration in Nehemiah 8 took into account those “those who cannot provide for themselves” (8:10). The people who were blessed with the resources to throw a big party were to share with those who lacked such resources. As God’s people, we are always called to be generous with those who are poor, even and especially in our celebrations. Notice also the rationale for the party: “For this day is holy to YHWH. Let no one be sad, for YHWH’s joy is your strength.” (8:10). In our tradition, holiness is usually associated with somberness and seriousness. This isn’t wrong, but it can lead to a lack of balance in our experience of God. Sometimes on a sacred day, it is absolutely right to celebrate and to experience the joy of God.*

**8** 2 When the seventh month came and the Israelites had settled in their various towns, 8:1 all the people came together in the broad expanse before the Water Gate. They asked Ezra the scribe to bring the Book of the Law of Moses which God had given to Israel.

2 On the first day of the seventh month, Ezra the scribe brought out the Book of the Law 3 before all the assembled people, women and men, and children old enough to understand the reading. 3 Ezra read the book aloud from early morning till noon while facing the broad expanse before the Water Gate, in the presence of the women and men and children. All listened attentively to the Book of the Law

5 Ezra, standing on the raised platform, opened the book in the presence of all the people. When he opened the book all stood up. 6 When Ezra blessed the Most High, the great God, all the people raised their hands with the response, “Amen, Amen”; then they bowed their heads and worshipped YHWH lying face down on the ground.

8 Reading from the Book of the Law, the Levites interpreted it and gave it meaning so that the people understood it.

9 Then Nehemiah the governor and Ezra the priest and scribe, along with the Levites, instructed the people, saying to all of them, “This day is holy to the Most High, your God. Do not mourn. Do not weep”—for the people all had been weeping as they listened to the words of the Law.

10 Nehemiah continued, “Go now and enjoy rich food and sweet wine, and be certain that you send a share to those who cannot provide for themselves, for this day is holy to YHWH. Let no one be sad, for YHWH’s joy is your strength.” 11 The Levites continued to quiet the crowd, saying, “Be calm. Today is holy; let there be no sorrow.” 12 So every one of them went to eat and drink, and to send a portion of their food to the hungry, and to rejoice. For they understood the words that had been given to them.

### **Gospel Reading: Mark 9:2-9**

*Transfiguration Sunday is the last Sunday in this season after Epiphany, preparing us for Lent which begins on Ash Wednesday (this year, February 14th). The Transfiguration marks a pivotal point in the Gospel of Mark and is the lesson for both the Revised Common Lectionary and the Narrative Lectionary. The Narrative Lectionary gives some further context: before Mark 8:27, Jesus’ ministry was preaching, teaching, healing, and proclaiming the realm of God on earth as it is in heaven. In 8:27, Jesus asked the disciples, “Who do you say that I am?” and following Peter’s bold declaration that Jesus was the Messiah, Jesus’ message turned toward the cross. Jesus first tells of his upcoming suffering, death, and resurrection. Jesus said this openly to all who could hear, but Peter took him aside and rebuked him. Jesus, in turn, rebuked Peter, by calling him Satan, a stumbling block fixed on human things and not on the divine. Jesus further instructed the crowd how to be his disciples: to deny themselves, take up their cross and follow him. It became clear in this moment what it really meant to follow Jesus, and it was also clear the disciples did not fully understand.*

9 2 Six days after that, Jesus took Peter and James and John and led them up a high mountain where they could be alone.

And there Jesus was transfigured before their eyes; 3 the clothes Jesus wore became dazzlingly white—whiter than any earthly bleach could make them. 4 Elijah appeared to them, as did Moses, and the two were talking with Jesus. 5 Then Peter spoke to Jesus. “Rabbi,” he said, “how wonderful it is for us to be here! Let us make three shelters—one for you, one for Moses and one for Elijah!” 6 Peter did not know what he was saying, so overcome were they all with awe.

7 Then a cloud formed, overshadowing them; and there came a voice from out of the cloud: “This is my Beloved, my Own; listen to this One.” 8 Then suddenly, when they looked around, they saw no one with them anymore—only Jesus.

9 As they were coming down from the mountain, Jesus gave them orders not to tell anyone what they had seen until after the Promised One had risen from the dead.

**Reflection – “Mardi Gras on the Mountain of Transfiguration” - Rev. Scott Rosenstein**

## WE RESPOND

### \*Prayer of Response

Blessed are you, God of all creation,  
for it is from your goodness that we have this day  
to celebrate on the threshold of the season of Lent.  
Soon we will be solemn and abstain.  
Today we feast.  
We thank you for the abundance of gifts you shower upon us.  
We thank you especially for one another.  
As we give you thanks,  
we are mindful of those who have so much less than we do.  
As we share these wonderful gifts together,  
we commit ourselves to greater generosity toward those  
who need our support.

Prepare us for Lent.  
Tasting the fullness of what we have today,  
let us experience some abstinence in the season ahead.  
May our solemn reflection make us more alert  
and may it heighten our consciousness  
so that we might be ready to hear your Word  
and respond to your call.

As our feasting fills us with gratitude  
so may our solemnity and abstinence hollow out in us  
a place for deeper desires  
and an attentiveness to hear the cry of those who are poor.  
May our self-denial turn our hearts to you  
and give us a new freedom for  
generous service to others.

We ask you these graces  
with our hearts full of delight  
and stirring with readiness for the journey ahead.  
We ask them with confidence  
in the name of Jesus our Savior and Lord.  
Amen.

\*Hymn of Response: "Swing Low Sweet Chariot"

# 469 Swing Low, Sweet Chariot

Optional 

*Refrain*



Swing low, sweet char-i-ot, coming for to carry me home.

5 *Refrain*

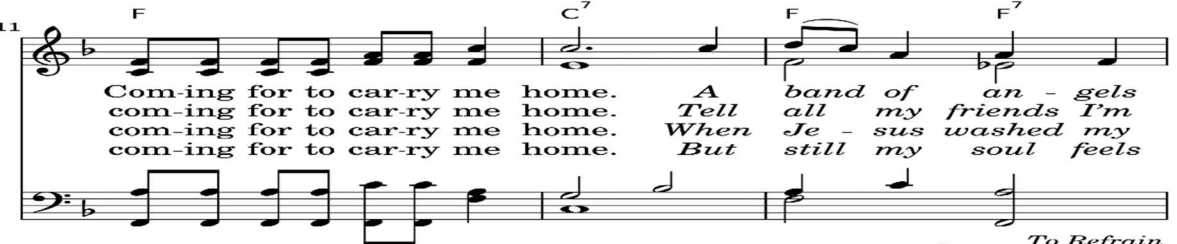


Swing low, sweet char-i-ot, coming for to carry me home.

1 I looked o-ver Jor-dan, and what did I see?  
 2 If you get there be fore I do,  
 3 The bright-est day that ev-er I saw:  
 4 I'm some-times up and some-times down,


*Lift Up Your Hearts 469*  
 Words and Music (SWING LOW 6.8.6.8 stanzas irregular): African American spiritual, P.D.

469 Swing Low, Sweet Chariot



Com-ing for to car-ry me home. A band of an-gels  
 com-ing for to car-ry me home. Tell all my friends I'm  
 com-ing for to car-ry me home. When Je-sus washed my  
 com-ing for to car-ry me home. But still my soul feels

14 *To Refrain*



com-ing af-ter me, com-ing for to car-ry me home.  
 com-ing there too, com-ing for to car-ry me home.  
 sins a-way, com-ing for to car-ry me home.  
 heaven-ly bound, com-ing for to car-ry me home.

## Invitation to Share Our Tithes and Offerings

One: God's gifts to creation and to us are abundant and ever-new. Entrusted with creation's care and with care for one another, we share our gifts out of our own abundance.

## The Offertory – Adam Petrosino

**\*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.

**\*Blessing of the Gifts**

Mighty God, you live, and you do not leave us. With these gifts, we do not leave each other, but use them in mutual support. Bless those who receive and benefit from these gifts. May they know your presence with them. With these gifts, our prayers rise up to you. Amen.

**Choir Hymn: NCH 505 - "Sweet Hour of Prayer "**

*Choir: Barbara Rossington, Bob Bucklew, and Keith Konet  
Accompanist: Adam Petrosino*

**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,  
forever.  
Amen.

**GOING FORTH**

**\*Parting Hymn: "Just a Closer Walk with Thee"**



455

## Just a Closer Walk with Thee

1. I am weak but Thou art strong;  
 2. Through this world of toil and snares,  
 3. When my fee - ble life is o'er,

3  
 Je - sus, keep me from all wrong; I'll be sat - is - fied as  
 If I fal - ter, Lord, who cares? Who with me my burden  
 Time for me will be no more; Guide me gently, safe - ly

6  
 long As I walk, let me walk close to Thee.  
 shares? None but Thee, dear Lord, none but Thee.  
 o'er To Thy king - dom shore, to Thy shore.

African American Heritage Hymnal 455  
 Text: Anonymous  
 Tune (CLOSER WALK 777 B): Anonymous

455

## Just a Closer Walk with Thee

*Refrain*

9  
 Just a closer walk with Thee, Grant it, Jesus, if You please?

13  
 Dai - ly walking close to Thee, Let it be, dear Lord, let it be.

### **\*Commissioning**

One: God sends us from this sacred space.

**All: We will go to share the good news of grace,  
to offer healing to those who are broken.**

One: Jesus would not have us stay here forever.

**All: We will go to find our sisters and brothers  
in the valleys of injustice and the neighborhoods of addiction.**

One: The Spirit fills us with the gifts we need as we leave.

**All: We will go to help rebuild the lives of those around us,  
to share feasts of hope and peace with everyone.**

### **\*Benediction**

**May we go renewed in spirit,  
May we go, rising to new life,  
May we go with God's mantle of mercy  
And blessing of peace upon us,  
Now and forever.  
Amen!**

**Postlude - Adam Petrosino** (please be seated for the Postlude)

\* \* \* \* \*

### **Credits**

- (1) The Call to Worship, Invocation, Invitation to Share our Tithes and Offerings, and the Blessing of the Gifts, and the Benediction are adapted from: *The Rising: Service Prayers for Transfiguration Sunday Year B*, written by The Rev. Stephanie Perdeu, PhD, Director, The Damascus Project, Shared Theological Education Ministry of the Wisconsin & Minnesota Conferences of the United Church of Christ. Permission granted to reproduce or adapt this material for use in services of worship or church education. All publishing rights reserved. UCC Worship Ways. <https://www.ucc.org/worship-way/transfiguration-sunday-b-february-11/>.
- (2) The Prayer of Response is adapted from *A Mardi Gras Prayer*, posted on the website of *Online Ministries, Creighton University*. <https://onlineministries.creighton.edu/CollaborativeMinistry/Lent/mardigras.html>
- (3) The Commissioning is adapted from *Liturgy and Communion from February 11th, 2024*, written by Thom M. Shuman, and posted February 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2024, on the blog, *Lectionary Liturgies*. <http://lectionaryliturgies.blogspot.com/>
- (4) Permission to stream the music in this service obtained from ONE License #A-736636. All rights reserved

**Ministers, All of Us**  
**Scott Rosenstein, Pastor**  
**Adam Petrosino, Music Director and Pianist**  
**,Keith Konet, Council President**  
**Beverly Wurm, Administrative Assistant**



## 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!

**Zion United Church of Christ of Tremont** is committed to reaching out to all people with the saving "Good News" of God's Love. To do this, we strive to attain a covenant relationship with people of all races, colors, ethnic origins, ages, sexual orientations and identity. We are also committed to grace-filled inclusivity in our worship, programs, membership, mission and social activities. We very strongly believe in outreach and community involvement, as well as ecumenical spiritual involvement within the surrounding community. We are committed to listening to history while joining with the future.

**Tithes and Offerings** - Checks and Money Orders can be made payable to: "Zion United Church of Christ" and placed in the offering basket or 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

### **Adam D. Petrosino, Our Music Director/Pianist**

We are so pleased to welcome Adam, and his partner, Kiel, to our community of faith here at Zion United Church of Christ of Tremont, Cleveland, Ohio. We're grateful to you sharing your presence, faith, and musical gifts with us. Adam can be reached by e-mail at [A.D.Petrosino@gmail.com](mailto:A.D.Petrosino@gmail.com) and by phone at 234-205-9397.

## **Administrative Assistant, Beverly Wurm**

Beverly is keeping some limited Office Hours at church (2700 W. 14<sup>th</sup>)/home. The days and hours are:

### **Winter Schedule:**

Tuesday– 9am – 1pm

Wednesday – 10am-2 pm

Thursday – 9am – 1pm

Beverly can be reached at: [zionchurchtremont@gmail.com](mailto:zionchurchtremont@gmail.com) or by phone at: 216-273-7561 (church) or 216-310-6810 (mobile)



### **Sunday, February 11th - Mardi Gras Sunday –**

You don't have to travel to New Orleans to join in the pre-Lenten season celebration. Come worship with the community of Zion Chapel, UCC, and share in wonderful, Jazz-inspired worship...New Orleans style.

#### **Mardi Gras Sunday**

**Zion Chapel, United Church of Christ, 2700 W. 14th Street**

**Sunday, February 11, 2024**

**11 A.M. Worship**

Following the worship service, all will be invited to continue the celebration in The Library - Community Room, sharing in a Fat Tuesday-inspired Potluck Brunch.

Wear your purple, green and gold. Beads will be provided.

### **Upcoming Events:**

#### **OWLS Cleveland (Older, Wiser, Livelier, Seniors)**



**Wednesday, February 14<sup>th</sup>, 2024, 11:30 a.m.- 1:30 p.m.** at Zion UCC Church, 2700 W. 14<sup>th</sup>, join us for a Valentine Day gathering with speaker John Mahoney, Consumer Affairs Manager, Valentine Day crafts, door prizes, and valentine favors. RSVP for free lunch by phoning 216-310-6810, Beverly.



## **Ash Wednesday** **February 14, 2024, Worship, 6:30pm**

Ash Wednesday begins the Christian season of Lent. We will spend the coming days journeying with Jesus toward the cross; toward the death that ultimately brings resurrection life. Many of us will spend these coming days practicing a new spiritual discipline or giving up something that seems to be getting in the way of the life we long to live. Ash Wednesday marks the beginning of this Lenten journey.

We will come together to acknowledge our sin, to acknowledge our mortality. We come to glimpse the Christ who offers forgiveness, who offers everlasting life.

The imposition of ashes will be offered. This practice may not be familiar to everyone. Ashes have been used in Christian churches to mark the beginning of Lent since at least the 10th Century, and ashes are mentioned in scripture as a symbol of purification and repentance. We will offer the imposition of ashes as a physical reminder of our mortality and sin; an assurance of God's forgiveness and salvation.

**NOTE:** Traditionally the ashes are created from burning the palms used in the church on Palm Sunday. Ashes can be sent to you at your homes or apartments prior to Ash Wednesday if you wish to mark yourself or your family with the sign of the ashen cross. Please let the Pastor know if delivery is requested – 216.577.1514.

### **Ash Wednesday marks the start of Lent in the Western church**

and takes place 46 days before Easter. As the date of Easter is calculated on the cycles of the moon, the date of Ash Wednesday will vary from year to year. The earliest possible date for Ash Wednesday is February 4th and the latest day is March 10.

Ash Wednesday is observed mainly by the Roman Catholic Church and also by some Protestant denominations such as the United Church of Christ, Methodists, Episcopalians, Presbyterians and Lutherans.

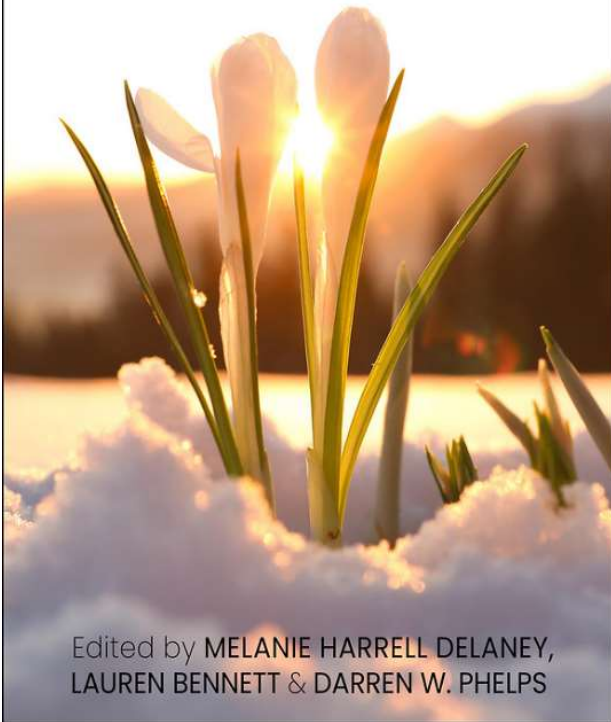
### **Did you know?**

Lent is longer than the 40 days as Sunday was seen as a special feast day to commemorate the resurrection of Jesus on Easter Sunday, so it is excluded from the calculation of Lent. Lent is the Monday to Saturday in the six weeks before Easter Sunday (6 days x 6 weeks = 36 days) and adding the Wednesday to Saturday in the week before brings us to the 40 days.

The Orthodox Christian church has no tradition of ashes and Holy Week (the week before Easter) is excluded from the calculation of Lent, though Sundays are included. This all means that Lent begins instead on Orthodox Shrove Monday, also known as Clean Monday.

# Rest & Resilience

Following the Way of Jesus through Lent



Edited by MELANIE HARRELL DELANEY,  
LAUREN BENNETT & DARREN W. PHELPS

## Rest and Resilience

### Following the Way of Jesus through Lent

A daily devotional spanning Ash Wednesday through Easter guides readers through Lent with weekly themes of retreat, prayer, honest, compassion, creativity, and community

When Jesus was preparing for a new phase of his ministry — or experiencing the final week — he went to Bethany, his holy retreat. Following that tradition, The Bethany Fellowships, a ministry of support for young clergy and congregations, have cultivated an intentional rhythm of life and ministry that empowers community, creativity, prayer, and resilience. This six-week-long Lenten daily devotional follows practices and relationships Jesus models for us throughout his ministry, bringing us to the biblical town of Bethany to encourage retreat, prayer, honesty, compassion, creativity, and community. The diverse contributor based is comprised of ordained ministers in a variety of denominations and ministry settings, many of whom are in their first few years of congregational leadership.

### 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.
- Ministries of the United Church of Christ and of Zion Church.
- The leaders of our church: local, regional, and national, including The Rev. Karen Georgia Thompson, General Minister and President of the United Church of Christ. We also pray for 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.
- 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.
- An armed conflict between Israel and Hamas-led Palestinian militant groups has been taking place chiefly in and around the Gaza Strip since October 7, 2023, with clashes also taking place in the West Bank and on the Israel–Lebanon border. On that day, militant groups launched a



surprise attack on southern Israel from the Gaza Strip, marking the start of the most significant military escalation in the region since the Yom Kippur War exactly fifty years prior. After clearing Hamas militants from its territory, the Israeli military embarked on an extensive aerial bombardment of the Gaza Strip followed by a large-scale ground invasion. The current hostilities constitute the fifth war of the Gaza–Israel conflict, which is part of the broader Israeli–Palestinian conflict and Iran–Israel proxy conflict.

The war began when Hamas-led Palestinian militant groups targeted Israel in an operation they called "Al-Aqsa Flood" with a barrage of rockets, while around 3,000 militants breached the Gaza–Israel barrier and attacked neighboring Israeli communities and military bases. 1,139 people—695 Israeli civilians, 373 soldiers and 71 foreigner nationals —were killed, including an unknown number from friendly fire. Hamas said its attack was in response to "desecration" of the Al-Aqsa Mosque, as well as the growth of Israeli settlements in the West Bank and recent violence and clashes there, the blockade of the Gaza Strip, and the plight of Palestinian refugees and prisoners, the latter of whom it sought to free by taking an estimated 250 Israeli and foreign nationals as captives into Gaza as leverage. In response, Israel tightened its blockade, ordered the evacuation of the northern Gaza Strip, and fired over 29,000 munitions at targets in Gaza before and during its ground offensive, with the stated goal of dismantling Hamas's "military and governance capabilities", freeing the hostages, and establishing security control over Gaza. Over 24,000 Palestinians have been killed, a majority of them civilians, and thousands more are considered missing under the rubble of destroyed buildings. The scale, extent, and pace of this destruction ranks among the most severe in the history of modern warfare. A severe humanitarian crisis has resulted, with the most hospitals out of service, shortages of food and medicine, communications blackouts, and people forced to drink contaminated water. It was widely reported that there was "no safe place in Gaza" as Israel struck areas which it had previously suggested were safer. Israel contends that Hamas, operating in tunnels dug beneath Gaza, uses the civilian population as human shields and diverts humanitarian supplies for military purposes. The widespread civilian deaths have led to both Israel and Hamas being accused of war crimes. Nearly all of Gaza's 2.3 million population and around 500,000 Israelis have been internally displaced, while thousands of Palestinians have been detained by Israel.

- On January 1 2024, an earthquake of magnitude 7.6 on the Richter scale on the Noto Peninsula, Ishikawa Prefecture, Japan, caused an intensity 7 (JMA) in Shiga Town, and intensity 6+ and 6- in many municipalities in the Noto Peninsula. Also, a tsunami of almost 4' was observed. There have been numerous aftershocks. The earthquake caused many deaths, injuries, collapsed houses, spreading fires and landslides.

- According to data from the Gun Violence Archive a total of 26 mass shooting incidents occurred in the US in 2024 as of January 24<sup>th</sup>.

**Mass shooting incidents in the past 10 years in the US:**

2023 – 656 (*While mass shooting incidents increased slightly since 2022, 2023 has shown an 8-10% overall DECREASE in deaths and injuries from gun violence. Some cities saw 20%+ decreases.*)

2022 - 646  
 2021 - 689  
 2020 - 610  
 2019 - 414  
 2018 - 335  
 2017 - 247  
 2016 - 383  
 2015 - 332  
 2014 - 272

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 various variant surges: 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 their comfort, for safety, for health, and for wholeness.
- 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 (*health concerns*) and family. *Patti's brother Dave is recovering from recent open-heart surgery.*
- Robert O. Bucklew (*Bob Bucklew's Dad*) is residing at Mapleridge Senior Living Willoughby, OH. Robert recently celebrated his 91st Birthday.
- The family, loved ones, and friends of Betty Funk.
- Marian Heffernan (*neighbor to Scott and Bob – health concerns*)
- Ken Kauffman & friends: Nim Bryant, Isadora Almaro, Joe & Janelle Reardon, Barbara Reed, Nancy Moore's sister has passed away and prayer for Nancy's neighbor for healing.
- Jocelyn Paulette and her parents, Kevin & Jacqui Konet - prayers for recovery.
- Keith Konet and family, and brother -in-law Bob diagnosed and has undergone surgery from Crohn's disease .
- The family, loved ones, and friends of Elaine Lukacs.



- Patricia Matheny Kellogg and family (*including prayers for her Cousin Paul Kevin McCray*). Also Patricia's friend, Sue Renovitz (*undergoing cancer treatments*). Also prayer for the family of Steve Linkenauger (*following Steve's recent death – Steve was a friend of Zion's Saturday Hot Meals program*).
- Our Music Director & Pianist, Adam Petrosino, and his partner, Kiel.
- Our Pastor Scott Rosenstein (*recovering from coronary care procedures*)
- Barbara Rossington (*Prayers for Barb - & Prayers for Barb's cousin, Robert*)
- Debbie Webb (*continued prayers*)
- Beverly Wurm (*prayers for family*)