

FAITH UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST



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Center Valley, Pennsylvania 18034
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**Rev. Dr. Bruce C. Stevenson, Lead Pastor
Mr. Dennis J. Duda, Organist-Director of Music**

**SERVICE OF WORSHIP
THIRD SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST
OPEN AND AFFIRMING SUNDAY
JUNE 26, 2022**

ASSEMBLE IN GOD'S NAME

PRELUDE

A PRAYER UPON ENTERING GOD'S HOUSE

Holy One of Blessing, eternally we co-create ourselves in your love. All companionship orientations; All gender identities and expressions; All ways of having family. We celebrate LGBTQ+ peoples everywhere knowing that many are still not safe to come out; To be free; To live life abundantly. Heal all who are ill in body, mind, heart or spirit. Bind up all wounds and provide adequate care. Extinguish any stigma people are enduring. We celebrate because everyone should be celebrated. We are your body on earth. May our love and hope be sent on the wings of this prayer to all who need refreshing, affirmation, and love's embrace. May it be so. Amen.

WORDS OF WELCOME

CENTERING OUR HEARTS ON WORSHIP

* **OPENING HYMN: *FOR THE BEAUTY OF THE EARTH*** 28

* **CALL TO WORSHIP:**

Pastor: Some Pharisees wanted to test Jesus. So they came up to him and asked if it was right for a man to divorce his wife. Jesus asked them, "What does the Law of Moses say about that?" They answered, "Moses allows a man to write out divorce papers and send his wife away."

People: **We will send no one away.**

Pastor: Some people brought their children to Jesus so that he could bless them by place his hands on them. But his disciples told the people to stop bothering him.

People: We will send no one away.

Pastor: In those days, when there was a very great multitude, and they had nothing to eat, Jesus called his disciples to himself, and said to them. “I have compassion on the multitude, because they have stayed with me now three days, and nothing to eat. If I send them away fasting to their home, they will faint on the way, for some of them have a long way.”

People: We will send no one away

Pastor: And a Canaanite woman from the region came out and began to cry out, saying, “Have mercy on me, Lord, Son of David; my daughter is cruelly demon-possessed.” But he did not answer her a word. And His disciples came and implored Him saying, “Send her away, because she keeps shouting at us.”

People: We will send no one away.

Pastor: Gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender brothers and sisters are walking with us on the path of the disciple. They have chosen to be there because they feel God’s call to them. Some have struggled throughout their lives with questions and uncertainties about their identity, their acceptability, their status as children of God. Some have dared to tell their story, resulting at times in warm acceptance and other times in cold rejection. Some have come to understand that God loves them unconditionally and embraces them as valued members of the human family; others are not so sure.

People: We as a community of faith value diversity and celebrate those differences as intentional acts of God’s creation. In that the realm of God includes all persons, we welcome and include all persons including persons of all sexual orientations, gender identities,

**and family units in the full life of the congregation.
We will send no one away.**

REJOICING IN GOD'S GRACE

*** CALL TO AND CONFESSION OF SIN:**

Pastor: We are a pilgrim people, accompanied by our God, who journeys beside us, accepting who we are; yet goes before us, beckoning us toward who we might become.

People: **So we enter into silence, to discern again the nearness of God, who is our hope and guide.**

(Moments of silent prayer.)

Pastor: Sisters and brothers, we can trust God at all times, for the Holy One is our refuge and our salvation! So with confidence, let us pour out a shared confession of our hearts.

People: **We confess to you, steadfast God, that we wander from the path of love upon which we are meant to walk. Fears divide us, prejudice hardens us, violence destroys us.**

Pastor: But God eternally beckons.

People: **We turn our hearts again to you, God of grace and mercy. Forgive us love that is self-satisfied and teach us love that is self – and other-affirming and give us faith that fills us with compassion. Forgive us faith that makes us rush to judgment and give us faith that fills us with compassion. Forgive us peace that we have made with our divisions and unite us in peace that passes understanding. We pray with thanksgiving, in the name of Christ. Amen.**

*** THE KYRIE**

750

Leader: Lord, have mercy upon us.

Congregation: Lord, have mercy upon us.

Leader: Christ, have mercy upon us.

Congregation: Christ, have mercy upon us.

Leader: Lord, have mercy upon us.

Congregation: Lord, have mercy upon us.

* **ASSURANCE OF PARDON**

Pastor: By God's mercy, our feet are set again upon the path of faithfulness; our hearts are set again upon the coming of God's realm.

People: Thanks be to God, our hope and our guide forever!

Pastor: O Lord, open our lips.

People: And our mouths shall show forth your praise.

* **THE GLORIA PATRI**

759

Glory to the Creator, the Christ, the Holy Spirit, Three-in-One; as it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be, world without end. Amen. Amen.

* **WE SHARE PEACE**

LEARNING ABOUT GOD

MISSION MOMENT: SLA SAMARITANS FUND

PRAYER OF ILLUMINATION

THE SCRIPTURE LESSON:

Old Testament: II Kings 2:1 – 2, 6 – 14

New Testament: Luke 8:26 – 39

THE CHILDREN'S SERMON

HYMN: *JUST AS I AM*

207

SERMON: *A New Reign*

DEDICATING OURSELVES TO GOD'S WILL

* **AFFIRMATION OF FAITH:**

Pastor: Because injustice can break the most eager spirit and force the abandonment of dreams...

People: We hold tenderly our sisters and brothers and grieve the loss of vibrancy and faith.

Pastor: Because fear can overwhelm goodness and silence those whom God has called...

People: We decry the betrayal of God's own and announce our resolve to speak the truth of our lives.

Pastor: Because hate destroys the human heart and limits the wonders of love...

People: We open ourselves to compassion and offer our lives as witnesses to the healing presence of God.

Pastor: Because complacency gives consent to systems that oppress and harm...

People: We refuse to cede our world to hurtful powers and principalities and dare to dream new creations into being.

Pastor: Because courage in the face of fear and injustice is a holy deed...

People: We celebrate the passion that chooses life in the midst of violence and claims the goodness of human dignity with power and grace.

Pastor: Because hope in a world of complacency and hate is a sacred act of resistance...

People: We stand among this incredible cloud of witnesses and today proclaim:

Where hatred roars, we will sing of love.

Where fear stalks, we will stand with courage.

Where bigotry rages, we will call for justice.

Where pain overwhelms, we will extend kind comfort.

Where systems oppress, we will work for change.

Now and ever, now and ever, now and evermore.

Amen.

THE PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE AND INTERCESSION

Pastor: Blessed God, we give thanks for our many gifts: for the gifts of our race, gender and sexual orientation, and for the sacraments of relationship and community that grow from these gifts.

People: Holy God, we rejoice for the healing power of salvation.

Pastor: Sanctify our hearts that our lives may glorify and show forth Your power of salvation.

People: We thank You for healing our ears to hear how racism attempts to silence a people by consensus. Open our ears to hear the silence and the language of our own racism.

Pastor: God, we give You thanks because You give us the wisdom to discern injustice and the courage to stand for peace.

People: Give us the strength of a mountain to stand against the ignorance of sexism, the promotion of racism, and the condemnation and defamation of gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender people.

Pastor: Blessed God, thank You for delivering us out of the mire of injustice that pollutes, disrespects, and dismisses the needs and concerns of women throughout the world.

People: Holy God, we rejoice because You are healing the blindness of sexism. Open our eyes to see how we can support women in their struggles.

Pastor: Holy Spirit, our teacher, teach us to be aware of when our own freedoms infringe on the freedoms of others.

People: Blessed God, forgive us for participating in attitudes and behaviors that cause repression and grief for others. Make us aware and give us the power to change.

Pastor: Holy Spirit of life, thank You for the gift of those who give their hearts of empathy, who reach out with support

and understanding to gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender people, to those healing the injuries of racism, and to those who nurture the rights of women.

People: Be with us all in our struggles.

(The names of specific people, places, and circumstances may be lifted up at this time)

Pastor: Gracious God, as you have promised, may it come to pass. We pray in Christ's name and offer the prayer He offered;

Unison: 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.

GIVE THANKS TO GOD

THE FELLOWSHIP OF SHARING

* OFFERTORY RESPONSE – THE DOXOLOGY 780

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.

* PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING:

We are all one human family. In your love you created us. Through your grace you reach out to us. You are great enough to hold us all in your arms at the same time. Help us to open our hearts to the world that you love. Teach us to weave our lives together. We yield to Spirit, offering what we have to the greater good. In this way, each day, we begin again in love. Amen

GO IN GOD'S NAME

* **CLOSING HYMN: WHAT A COVENANT**

471

* **SUNG BENEDICTION: WE ARE MARCHING IN THE LIGHT OF GOD**

We Are Marching In The Light Of God,
We Are Marching In The Light Of God.
We Are Marching In The Light Of God,
We Are Marching In The Light Of God.
We Are Marching, Marching, We Are Marching Oh Ohhh!
We Are Marching In The Light Of God.
We Are Marching, Marching, We Are Marching Oh Ohhh!
We Are Marching In The Light Of God.

We Are Living In The Love Of God,
We Are Living In The Love Of God.
We Are Living In The Love Of God,
We Are Living In The Love Of God.
We Are Living, Living, We Are Living Oh Ohhh!
We Are Living In The Love Of God.
We Are Living, Living, We Are Living Oh Ohhh!
We Are Living In The Love Of God.

We Are Moving In The Power Of God,
We Are Moving In The Power Of God.
We Are Moving In The Power Of God,
We Are Moving In The Power Of God.
We Are Moving, Moving, We Are Moving Oh Ohhh
We Are Moving In The Power Of God.
We Are Moving, Moving. We Are Moving Oh Ohhh!
We Are Moving In The Power Of God.

We Are Marching Marching, We Are Marching Oh Ohhh!
We Are Marching In The Light Of God.
We Are Marching Marching, We Are Marching Oh Ohhh!
We Are Marching In The Light Of God.

* MEDITATION

Almighty God, grant that the words we have heard this day with our ears may be grafted into our hearts through your grace, that they may produce in us the fruits of a good life, to the praise and honor of your name; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

* POSTLUDE

*Would those who are able please stand.

Welcome to Faith Church this Third Sunday after Pentecost. We are glad to have you worshiping with us. May our time together serve as an inspiration for the days and weeks ahead. Please sign and pass the Friendship Pads provided for you in the pews.

The altar flowers are presented by Jerry & Elaine Trexler in honor of their Grandchildren.

It is time to elect Elders and Deacons for Consistory's 2022-23 term. There are 2 different options for voting –

1. **Vote online** - the link is included in our weekly email or go to <https://forms.gle/UkCnj4TY82EWePvH7> (by **June 30th**)
2. **Vote by paper ballot** and drop it in the ballot box in the narthex **TODAY** (ballots are available in the narthex).

Thanks for your participation.

Please keep Kim Ritter and family in your thoughts and prayers. Ken passed away on June 15th at the age of 69. Visitation will be held here at Faith on **Tuesday, June 26th from 5 – 7 pm and **Wednesday, June 27th from 9 – 11 am** with a service to follow.**

A memorial service will be held for Marv Neely on Sunday, July 10th at 2 pm here at Faith. Marv passed away on February 18th at the age of 93.

CALENDAR

Regular Office Hours: Monday – Thursday 9 am – 4 pm; Closed on Fridays

TODAY	-10:15 Worship
MONDAY	-Sandy works from home -7:00 Consistory Meeting (Zoom)
TUESDAY	-1:30 Faith in Stitches -5-7:00 Ritter Visitation
WEDNESDAY	-9:00 –11:00 Ritter Visitation with Service to follow
FRIDAY	-Office Closed/Pastor's Day Off
SUNDAY	-10:15 Worship

Those Who Will Serve:

	June 26	July 3
Head Usher:	Justin Koser	Jerry Trexler
Usher(s):	George Rau	Diane Neidermeier
Lay Reader:	Donna Schoenberger	Donna Barone-Schudel
Flowers:	Trexler	Trexler
Fin. Sec.:	Scott Christman	Bruce Torrence
Lawn Crew:	NEED VOLUNTEERS	Brett Dill Jack Maginn

OFFICE HOURS: Monday - Thursday, 9 am - 4 pm - Closed Fridays

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