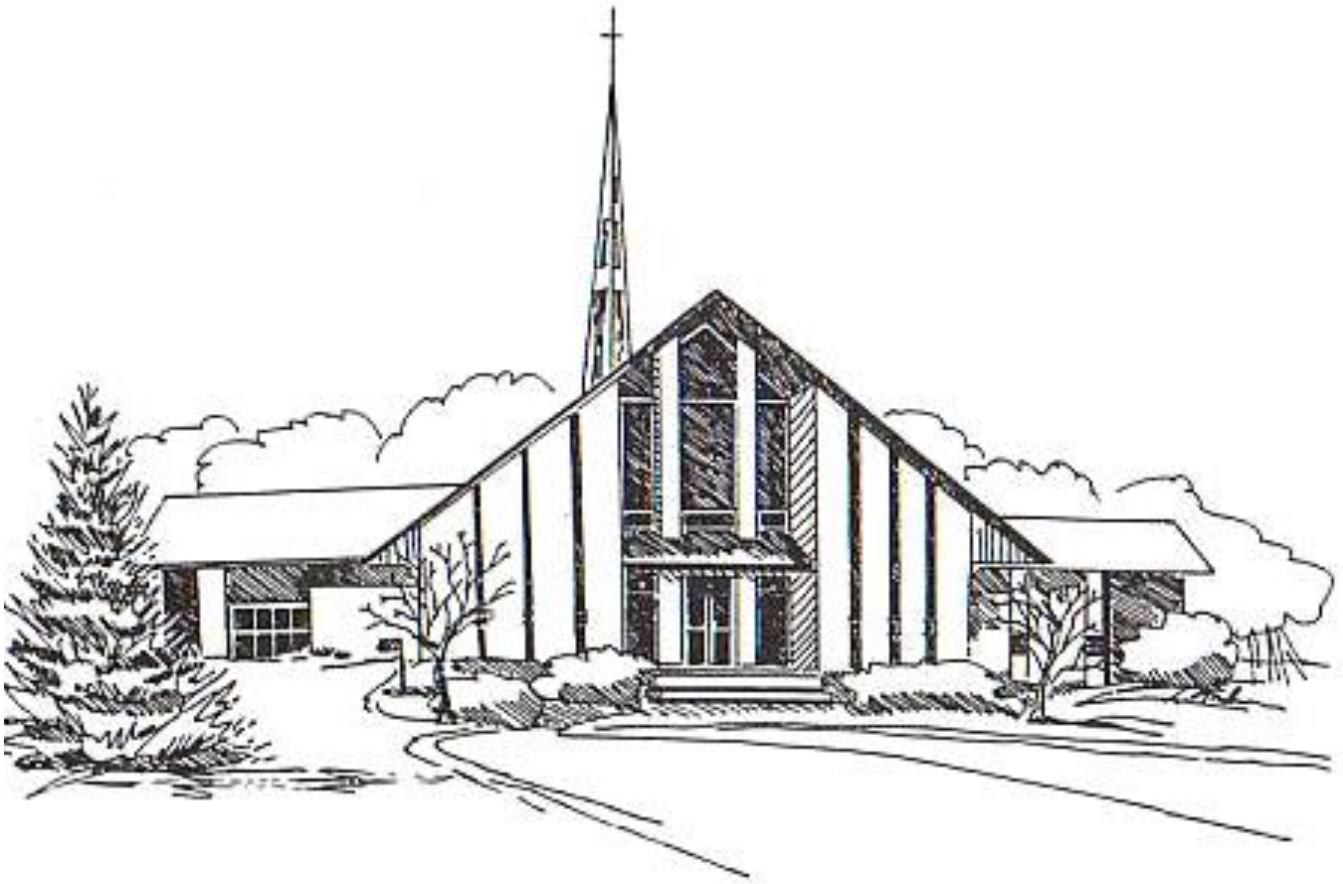


# **FAITH**

## **UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST**



**5992 Route 378**  
**Center Valley, Pennsylvania 18034**  
**610.282.3939**

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



**SERVICE OF WORSHIP  
FIFTEENTH SUNDAY IN PENTECOST  
SEPTEMBER 10, 2023**

**ASSEMBLE IN GOD'S NAME**

**PRELUDE**

**A PRAYER UPON ENTERING GOD'S HOUSE**

*God who journeys with us, we give thanks to be gathered in your presence. May we acknowledge you in the brightness of the day and in the stillness of the night. Provide us a vision of your reign on earth and in our lives. Make us your witnesses to a world in need of hope and peace. Infuse us with your love, and may this time gathered as your people transform us to reflect your goodness in the world. Amen.*

**WORDS OF WELCOME**

**CENTERING OUR HEARTS ON WORSHIP**

\* **OPENING HYMN: *LET US WITH A JOYFUL MIND*** 16

\* **CALL TO WORSHIP:**

**Pastor:** Let our praise today be made new.

**People:** **May we sing a new song, pray a new prayer, dance a new dance, and speak and hear a new word.**

**Pastor:** Let the faithful delight in the Holy One's marvelous acts

**People:** **From the seats in the sanctuary to the couches in our homes.**

**Pastor:** Let us glorify God with our voices, the work of our lives, and the joy of our souls.

**People:** **Glory to God! Praise the Holy One!**

**REJOICING IN GOD'S GRACE**

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

**Holy One, we confess that accountability can be discomfoting, and we avoid discomfort. We seek the good**

enough, convenient, and easy over the good, possible, and hard. Hold us accountable to the gospel. Hold us accountable to our claim and commitment to follow you. Hold us accountable to your will. Help us to receive your grace and liberate us from shame in order to embrace accountability as a loving act of community. 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: 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: I'VE GOT PEACE LIKE A RIVER** **478**

**I've got peace like a river, I've got peace like a river,**

**I've got peace like a river, in my soul.**

**I've got peace like a river, I've got peace like a river,**

**I've got peace like a river, in my soul.**

**THE SACRAMENT OF HOLY BAPTISM**

*Today we welcome Elena Lena Greger into the company of God's people.*

**INVITATION**

**WELCOME**

## **ADDRESS**

## **QUESTIONS OF THE CANDIDATES**

## **CONGREGATIONAL ASSENT**

Pastor: Jesus Christ calls us to make disciples of all nations and to offer them the gift of grace in baptism. Do you, who witness and celebrate this sacrament, promise your love, support, and care to the one about to be baptized, as he lives and grows in Christ?

**People: We promise our love, support, and care.**

## **AFFIRMATION OF FAITH**

Pastor: Let us unite with the church in all times and places in confessing our faith in the triune God. Do you believe in God?

**People: I believe in God.**

Pastor: Do you believe in Jesus Christ?

**People: I believe in Jesus Christ.**

Pastor: Do you believe in the Holy Spirit?

**People: I believe in the Holy Spirit.**

## **PRAYER OF BAPTISM**

## **ACT OF BAPTISM**

## **BAPTISMAL HYMN: *CHILD OF BLESSING, CHILD OF PROMISE***

325

## **PRAYER FOR THE BAPTIZED**

## **BENEDICTION**

## **LEARNING ABOUT GOD**

## **PRAYER OF ILLUMINATION**

## **THE SCRIPTURE LESSON:**

Old Testament: Exodus 12:1 – 14

New Testament: Matthew 18:15 – 20

## **THE CHILDREN'S SERMON**

**SERMON: *Smooth Sailing***

## **DEDICATING OURSELVES TO GOD'S WILL**

### **\* AFFIRMATION OF FAITH:**

**We believe in God the Father,  
who has revealed his love  
and kindness to us,  
and in his mercy saved us,  
not for any good deed of our own.  
but because he is merciful.**

**We believe in Jesus Christ,  
who gave himself up for us  
to free us from our sin,  
and set us apart for himself -  
a people eager to do good.**

**We believe in the Holy Spirit,  
whom God poured out on us generously  
through Christ our Saviour,  
so that justified by grace  
we might become heirs  
with the hope of eternal life. Amen.**

### **THE PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE AND INTERCESSION**

**Pastor: People of God, as we come to prayer  
let us remember that we do not  
have to twist the arm of a reluctant God  
to seek good things for this world,  
nor find ways to persuade a distant God  
to come near and listen to us.**

**Let us remember that as we pray  
we kneel alongside Jesus Christ,  
in the presence of God,  
with the help of the Spirit.**

So let us bring to mind now  
those people who are in need of our prayers:  
those who are ill, or anxious;  
those who are lonely or sad;  
those who are despairing or defeated;  
those who are hungry or homeless;  
those whose relationships are breaking apart;  
those who are bullied or abused;  
those who cannot find work;  
and those who are over-worked.

In silence now, let us make our own specific prayers  
for those on our hearts and minds today.

*(silence)*

In the presence of God,  
alongside Jesus Christ,  
with help from the Spirit  
may we go into this week  
to live out our prayers through our lives.

*(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**

**\* 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:**

**Gracious God, thank you for the gifts you give and allowing us to be gift givers as well. May our generous offerings bear fruit to nurture our community, our neighbors, and all creation. Amen.**

**GO IN GOD'S NAME**

**\* CLOSING HYMN: *THE DAY OF RESURRECTION* 245**

**\* BENEDICTION AND THREEFOLD AMEN**

**\* 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 Fifteenth 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 this morning are presented by Donald & Tootie Koch in celebration of their 63<sup>rd</sup> Anniversary.**

**The rosebud on the altar is in honor of the baptism of Elena Leah Greger. Elena was born on March 9, 2023 to Darci and Philip Greger. *God's blessings to Elena and her family.***

**Special thanks to Darin Jellison for sharing special music with us today.**

**Join us for Back to Church Sunday on September 17<sup>th</sup> at 10:15 am.** Sunday School will take place during the church hour. We will start the new church year off with a fun day at church followed by our church picnic! Please plan to be here!!

**September is Neighbors in Need month!**

**Neighbors in Need (NIN) is a special mission offering of the United Church of Christ that supports ministries of justice and compassion in the United States.** Please read the bulletin inserts included and prayerfully consider how you can help support Neighbors in Need.

Artist: Alexis

Age: 15

Congregation: Trinity United Church of Christ, St. Louis MO



# Behold!

*“God saw everything God made  
and behold, it was very good.”*

*Genesis 1:31*



UNITED CHURCH  
OF CHRIST

NEIGHBORS IN NEED 2023

[ucc.org/nin](http://ucc.org/nin)

## Mayflower United Church of Christ practices what it preaches.

It called for divestment from fossil fuels, and Mayflower Foundation became one of the first church organizations to invest in the Beyond Fossil Fuels fund of United Church Funds. It authored a resolution for General Synod that champions electrification to transition from fossil fuels to combat climate change, and it has committed itself to becoming a carbon neutral church by 2030. You can see the congregation's commitment to caring for God's creation in its 204 solar panels, its pollinator garden, its protests against fossil fuel pipelines, and its regard for Earth Sunday as a high holy day like Easter and Christmas. Get inspired by watching this video about Mayflower's commitments to creation justice: <https://bit.ly/MayflowerInspiration>



Dear God,

Each day we behold the beauty and goodness of all that you have created. Each day we breathe in your air, drink your water, and enjoy your fields of harvest. We rejoice and give thanks for the gifts of your creation! Amen.

### Litany of Wonder

Leader: Let us behold the wonders of creation. Let us marvel at the infinite artistry of nature.

People: Let our senses take it all in: each tree, each flower, each blade of grass.

Leader: All around us are gifts that have been bestowed upon us by God.

People: Today, we renew our spirits and fill our hearts with gratitude

# CALENDAR

OFFICE HOURS: Mon - Remotely 9 am – 4:30 pm;  
Tuesday, Wednesday & Thursday 10 am – 3 pm  
Closed on Friday

TODAY -10:15 am Worship

TUESDAY -2:00 pm Faith in Stitches

THURSDAY -10:00 am Samaritan Fund

FRIDAY -Pastor's Day Off  
-Office Closed

SUNDAY -Back to Church Sunday  
-10:15 Worship  
-Picnic to follow

## *Those Who Will Serve:*

	<b>September 10</b>	<b>September 17</b>
Head Usher:	Mike Ford	Kim Ritter
Ushers:	Rose Mirth	Sara & Tim Hovis
Lay Reader:	Rose Mirth	Barbara Maursky
Fin. Sec.	Bruce Torrence	Bruce Torrence
Flowers:	Donald & Tootie Koch	Talboos
Lawn:	Bruce Torrence Wes Koser	The Mirth Crew