# The United Church of Christ of Robesonia

301 West Penn Avenue, Robesonia, PA 19551

610-621-5770 -- office@sprucc.org -- www.sprucc.org

No matter who you are, or where you are on life's journey, you're welcome here.



Welcome to our Worship Service In-Person & Streaming Online

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Sunday, September 3, 2023 14<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Pentecost

# Welcome

May God's loving presence be very real to you, and may you receive strength and guidance today That will enable you to handle life's challenges.

#### **Children's Bulletins**

Crayons and activity bulletins are available in the narthex.

The activities match today's Bible readings and are designed for 3-6 & 7-12 year olds.

#### **Biblias en Español**

Biblias Bilingües en Español y Inglés están disponible en el vestíbulo narthex en la mesa de visitantes azul. (Bilingual Bibles in Spanish & English are available in the narthex hallway on the blue visitors' table).

#### Nursery

Persons of all ages (including children) are welcome to participate in the entire worship service. For an additional option, we have a supervised nursery for 0-8 year olds, located on the first floor. Please see Nursery Coordinators, Laurie Ostimchuk, Beth Miller & Geri Gammel if you are in need of the nursery.

#### Junior Worship

On the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of the month, following the mini message, the option of "Junior Worship" is offered downstairs for elementary age children to learn more about today's scripture lessons with fellow youth.

#### **Restrooms**

Restrooms are located both on the first and second floors to the left of the elevator.

#### **Changing Tables**

All four of our restrooms have changing tables. Each restroom has two "child care protection seats" to keep toddlers safe and secure while their parents use the restroom.

#### **Water Fountains**

Water fountains are located on both the first and second floors to the left of the elevator.

#### Sunday School & Adult Faith Formation Classes

Classes for all ages are held at 9:00am.

#### Sunday Worship

Sunday Worship is held at 10:15am.

#### Youth Group

Our Youth Group, for those in grades 5-12 (or ages 12-20 years old), meets on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and Last Thursday of the month from 6:00-7:00pm. Members and visitors alike are welcome.

#### Young Children & Family Ministries

This ministry's focus is on children younger than youth group and their families, and most of the monthly activities are welcoming of children of all ages. Members and visitors alike are welcome.

#### **Prayer and Care**

If you would like to add yourself or someone else to the prayer list, or request a pastoral call, please call or email the church office. You are welcome to take home with you a copy of *Our Daily Bread* daily devotional booklet, located on a table in the narthex hallway.

#### Looking for a Church to Call Home

If you are looking for a new church family home, we would be happy for you to consider United Church of Christ of Robesonia. For more information about our church, we invite you to talk with our pastors, an usher, a greeter, or any member of our church.

#### More Information....

Additional literature about our missions, ministries, and fellowship opportunities is located on the *Blue Visitor Table* in the narthex hallway, or contact us using the contact information on the front page of this bulletin.

Please let us know if we can be in prayer with you or if there is any way in which we can help make your worship experience more meaningful.

{Symbols used in this bulletin: \*= if able please stand; h = Red Hymnal Page; A = Blue Hymnal Page

#### Virtual Worship Service

WWW.sprucc.org

Online: Live Stream at spruce.org - Live or Watch & Listen Later on Our YouTube Channel

Facebook Live at https://www.facebook.com/www.sprucc.org/ - Live or Watch & Listen Later Phone Stream at 1-888-649-5770 - Live or Listen Later



If you have any access problems, please let us know at 610-621-5770 or Office@sprucc.org

# **ORDER FOR WORSHIP**

# We Gather

We are coming together as a community of faith to worship our God, and provide for one another our love, support, and care.

A TIME OF GATHERING

**RINGING OF THE BELL** 

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

{If you have not already done so, please sign and pass the pew welcome pad to the person next to you.}

PRAYER BEFORE WORSHIP (Unison)

God, on this Labor Day weekend, revive our dedication to work for the kingdom, your kingdom. This work is not drudgery, this work is filled with love and zeal. We want our families and friends and co-workers to have what we have in you. In the name of the one whose work on the cross was done in love, we pray. Amen.

PIANO PRELUDE "There is a Balm in Gilead" Spiritual arranged for piano by Robert Thygerson

{Those who are able, please rise}

\*PROCESSIONAL HYMN "Lord, Whose Love Through Humble Service" W&R #575 One License #A-728042

## \*INVOCATION

Leader: We worship in the name of God the Father, and of God the Son, and of God the Holy Spirit.

ALL: Amen.

**\*CALL TO WORSHIP** adapted from Psalm 26

Leader: Test me, O Lord, and try me;

People: examine my heart and my mind.

Leader: For your steadfast love is before my eyes

People: I have walked faithfully with you.

Leader: I sing aloud a song of thanksgiving

People: and recount all your wonderful deeds.

# We Repent

This is a time to confess our wrongdoings and neglects, ask for God's mercy, admit our need for God's forgiving grace, hear the assurance of our forgiveness, and then give God our thanks and praise.

## \*CALL TO CONFESSION (Leader)

God of love and protection and forgiveness, hear now our confession of sins which separate us from you.

## \*Confession of Sin (Unison)

O God of mercy, do not let evil creep into our lives and into our congregation. Help us to beware and call it out. Help us to abide with each other in love, a love so extreme that we help each other be the best we can be. Forgive us when we fail in this mission. Oh God, hear this prayer. Amen.

\*SILENT PRAYERS OF CONFESSION

{A time to silently offer our personal prayers of confession}

**\*SUNG PRAYER FOR MERCY** 

"Search Me O God" Stanzas 1 & 3 W&R #385 Orr, Hopk ins Public Domain

Search me, O God, and know my heart today; try me, O Savior, know my thoughts, I pray. See if there be some wicked way in me; cleanse me from every sin and set me free.

Lord, take my life and make it wholly thine; fill my poor heart with thy great love divine. Take all my will, my passion, self, and pride; I now surrender, Lord - in me abide.

## \*Assurance of Pardon (Leader)

O People of God, God forgives us but does not absolve us from watchfulness against evil. It is our work to be diligent. It is our work to pour extravagant love into relationships just as Jesus poured extravagant love into his mission on the cross.

## \*CALL TO PRAISE

Leader: O Lord, open our lips **People: And our mouths shall show forth your praise.**  Sing praise to God who reigns above, The God of all creation, The God of pow'r, the God of love, The God of our salvation. With healing balm my soul He fills, And every faithless murmur stills: To God all praise and glory!

{please be seated}

# We Hear the Word of God

We seek to learn more about God's love and grace, and how we are to live our lives as disciples of Jesus Christ. The Bible is our primary text on faith, which we consider to be scripture - sacred writings. We believe the Bible to be the "inspired word of God." Gospel (which means "Good News") refers to Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, which are Christians' most central books of the Bible.

**PROCLAMATION OF SCRIPTURE** 

The Old Testament Reading:Jeremiah 15:15-21The New Testament Letter:Romans 12:9-21

Leader: This is the word of the Lord. **People: Thanks be to God.** 

Gospel Lesson: Matthew 16:21-28

Leader: This is the gospel of the Lord. **People: Thanks be to God.** 

Ηγμν	"I Have Decided to Follow Jesus"	W&R #344
		Public Domain

MINI-MESSAGE

CHILDREN'S SONG

"This Is the Day"

W&R #652 Les Garrett

This is the day, this is the day that the Lord has made, that the Lord has made; we will rejoice, we will rejoice and be glad in it, and be glad in it. This is the day that the Lord has made; we will rejoice and be glad in it. This is the day, this is the day that the Lord has made.

SERMON "Little by Little "

# We Respond with Thanks

We have heard God's call and have come and worshiped, we have confessed our sins and been assured of our forgiveness, we have learned more about God's grace and God's will. We now respond by re-affirming our faith in God, praying with and for one another, trusting in God's providence in our world, and giving of ourselves for the sake of the mission and ministry of Jesus Christ.

{Those who are able, please rise}

\*AFFIRMATION OF FAITH (Unison) (Section Four: The Church) United Church of Christ Statement of Faith ①

All: You call us into your church to accept the cost and joy of discipleship, to be your servants in the service of others,

to proclaim the gospel to all the world and resist the powers of evil, to share in Christ's baptism and eat at his table,

to join him in his passion and victory.

Blessing and honor, glory and power be unto you. Amen.

{Please be seated}

CALL TO PRAYER

Leader: The Lord be with you. **People: And also with you.** Leader: Let us pray.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE Leader: Merciful God, People: receive our prayer.

LORD'S PRAYER (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.

SUNG PRAYER RESPONSE "Hear Our Prayer, O Lord"

♪ Red #501 George Whelpton Public Domain

Hear our prayer, O Lord; Hear our prayer, O Lord; Hear our prayer, O Lord, And grant us Thy peace.

{Ushers, please assemble at rear of Sanctuary}

#### **OFFERTORY INVITATION**

Leader: God welcomes our offerings. God has plans for our offerings.
People: May we bring our offerings gladly to fulfill God's plans.
Leader: May it be so!
People: Yes, may it be so!

#### **RETURNING GOD'S TITHES AND PRESENTING OUR OFFERINGS**



{Today, we will be passing the offering plate in person. You may also offer your tithe and offering to God through our secure <u>Online Giving</u> option on our website at **spruce.org** (<u>Click Here</u>), or you may mail your offering to United Church of Christ of Robesonia; 301 West Penn Ave; Robesonia, PA 19551}.

## **VOCAL OFFERTORY** *"Turn Your Eyes Upon Jesus"* Trio: Terry Pastor, Sheri Rowe, Brian Keppley

by Helen H. Lemmel

{Those who are able, please rise}

\*OFFERTORY RESPONSE

We Praise Thee, O God" Stanza 1 ♪ Red #19 Julia Cory One License #A-728042

## We praise Thee, O God, our Redeemer, Creator, In grateful devotion our tribute we bring. We lay it before Thee, we kneel and adore Thee, We bless Thy holy Name, glad praises we sing.

## \*OFFERTORY PRAYER ① (Leader)

Loving God, these gifts have been brought to your altar to help us to fulfill your plans for our congregation. Now we beseech you to direct us according to your plans. In the name of Jesus, who fulfilled the plans set before him, we pray. **Congregation: Amen.** 

{Please be seated}

# Sacrament of Holy Communion 1.4

The Sacrament of Holy Communion is the central act of Christian worship, bringing us more fully together with one another and the Triune God, through the sacrifice of the body and blood of Jesus Christ. (Matthew 26:20-30, Mark 14:17-26, Luke 22:14-23, John 13:21-30)

## Our Communion Service, on this Labor Day Sunday, is Written by Matt Laney in the book, Do This: Communion for Just and Courageous Living, edited by Mary Luti.

#### INVITATION

Leader: The Spirit is laboring today.

People: Grace is rolling up her sleeves.

Leader: We give thanks for the work of Christ

People: who toils on our behalf.

Leader: It is right and just to lift up

People: all who water the earth with their sweat.

#### **COMMUNION PRAYER**

Leader: And so we pray:

People: Wonder worker, we gather on stolen land, at a table we did not make, to receive bread we did not bake, to satisfy an ache we alone cannot shake.

#### **WORDS OF INSTITUTION**

- Pastor: We come, tired from our own labors, overwrought and worn thin, to remember and receive the life-giving work of Jesus.
- Pastor: On the night he was betrayed, Jesus got up from the table. He bent before his friends like a servant, and washed their feet, saying, "Unless you let me do this for you, you can have no part of me."
- Pastor: He also took bread, blessed, it, divided it, and handed it to them, saying, "Take, eat, this is my body, broken for you."
- Pastor: He also filled his cup, gave thanks for it, and gave it to them, saying, "Take, drink, this is my lifeblood, poured out for you."
- Both Pastors: "As often as you eat this bread and drink this cup you celebrate my lifework until it is complete."

#### PRAYER OF CONSECRATION

People: Spirit of labor and of rest, may your presence rest here, on this table, on these gifts. As we receive them, may we also receive and celebrate all the labor you have expended on our behalf, your creating love given freely and without conditions. Amen.

#### CALL TO THE SUPPER

- Pastor: We welcome all believers to the table of our Lord. The inner rings have white grape juice. The outer rings have red wine. Please hold the bread and then the wine until everyone has received. Then we will partake together.
- Pastor: Ministering to you in the name of Jesus,
- Pastor: you are welcome to taste and see the goodness of God.

#### **DISTRIBUTION OF THE ELEMENTS**

{This morning we will be partaking of communion in the pews.

The Elders will first distribute the bread, Gluten free bread is in the center, and regular bread is in the outer ring. The Pastor will then instruct the congregation to eat the bread at the same time.

The Elders will distribute the wine and grape juice. The **wine is red** in the outer rings, and the **grape juice is white** in the inner ring. The Pastor will then instruct the congregation to drink of the cup at the same time.}

{We invite <u>all</u> baptized Christians who profess a belief in Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour to participate in the sacrament of Holy Communion. You do <u>not</u> need to be a member of this congregation or of the UCC to participate in Communion.}

Youth & Children:

Children of Members who have not yet professed their Christian faith through the Rite of Confirmation are to participate in communion and refresher classes prior to communing, and follow the "Children & Communion Guide."

Children of Visitors - if you commune at your home church, you are welcome to commune here.

For the bread: The body of Christ broken for you. For the cup: The blood of Christ shed for you.

{Those who are able, please rise}

## \***PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING** (Unison)

Holy Provider, Grace made tangible, Love in motion, we have received your gifts with thanks in our hearts. Grateful for the labor that produced them, we promise we'll never forget the justice we owe to all people who work, and work to repay them our debt.

Pastor: In the name of Jesus,

Pastor: we work

Pastor: and serve

Pastor: and love.

# We Are Sent Out

In response to God's love and grace, we go out into the world to share God's Good News through our words and actions.

## \*Commission ①

Leader: As we go forth on this Labor Day weekend,

People: let us remember all the workers on whom we depend

Leader: for our style of living.

People: Let us examine our style of living.

Leader: Is love the key component?

People: Let us give love our highest priority.

## \*BENEDICTION

\*THREE FOLD SUNG AMEN

\*Sending Hymn

"We Are Called To Be God's People"

{Acolyte carries the light back into the world, leading us, as we now go to carry God's light and love back into the world.}

POSTLUDE

Join Us For Fellowship and Food in Miller Fellowship Hall

Free WiFi: StPaulsUCC-Guest & StPaulsUCC-5G-Guest Password (for both): iamheretoserve ♪ Red #558 Public Domain

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## The Flow of the Worship Service

Our worship service has an intentional order to it. The flow of worship is called the liturgical movement. The movement reminds us weekly of our journey in faith of moving from being separated from God by sin, to being restored by God's grace as disciples of Christ. It is based on the sixth chapter of the Biblical book of Isaiah.

(1) God welcomes us and invites us

(2) We respond to God's call by worshiping Him

- (3) We confess our need for God's forgiveness and grace
- (4) We are assured of God's forgiveness and grace

(5) We learn more about God's will through scripture, song, and sermon

(6) We grow closer to God and one another through praver

- (7) We give God thanks by offering our time, talent, and treasure
- (8) We experience greater oneness with God and each another through Holy Communion
- (9) God sends us into the world to share His love and grace with others

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- <sup>(2)</sup> Gathered By Love by Lavon Baylor. (1994). United Church Press; Cleveland, OH.

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   *®* Edmonds, Robert Lee (Editor). (2008). In Our Own Way; Living a Scouting Life Through Faith; A Handbook of Prayer and Devotion. Dallas, TX: Red Honor Press
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- Miller, Earl D. (1994). Consecrating Stewards. Ohio Conference, United Church of Christ.
- 1 The Rev. Dr. Benjamin Motz

The Rev. Mary Etta Mest

@ Occasional Services; A Companion to the Lutheran Book of Worship. Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress. (1982).

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## Staff & Leadership

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Sextons: Michael Pastor & Terry Pastor

Treasurer: Terry Pastor

Financial Secretary & Assistant Secretary: Geneva Aulenbach

Consistory President: Elsa Wertz Consistory Vice President: George McLain Consistory Secretary: Geri Gammel

## About Today

**Church Season: Pentecost** -which is the season of the church in mission. It is the time between the ascension of Christ and his second coming, which is the time we are presently living in today, and as such is the longest season of the church year. The day of Pentecost is the birthday of the Christian church.

#### Color of the Paraments (cloths on the altar and pulpit):

Green - symbolizing the life God brings, especially through our mission work.

The suggested scripture lessons are from the Revised Common Lectionary (RCL), which selects passages throughout the Bible over a three year cycle. The RCL is the most common lectionary used by Christian churches. We are in **Year A**, which emphasizes the Gospel of Matthew.

The Bible is in two sections: Old Testament - OT (scripture prior to Christ's birth), located in the first 2/3 of the Bible; and New Testament - NT (about Christ & early church).

#### This Sunday, September 3, 2023, Lectionary Reading for 14th Sunday after Pentecost

Exodus 3:1-15 and Psalm 105:1-6, 23-26, 45b or Jeremiah 15:15-21 and Psalm 26:1-8; Romans 12:9-21; Matthew 16:21-28

#### Jeremiah

The book of Jeremiah (OT) is attributed to the major prophet Jeremiah and written around 600-500 B.C. (B.C.E.). A prophet is one who is divinely appointed by God to lead and instruct. Jeremiah's ministry extended over the last tragic forty years of the kingdom of Judah to the destruction of Jerusalem and the deportation of the Jewish people to Babylon.

## Psalm 26

This OT song is an individual prayer seeking God's righteous and favorable judgement as one enters the God's holy sanctuary, such as when seeking vindication from false accusations, or an assertion of one's efforts to live a righteous life.

## The Letter of Paul to the Romans

This epistle (letter) is addressed "to all God's beloved in Rome." It was dictated by the Apostle Paul to Tertius in 58 A.D. in Corinth and delivered to Rome by Phoebe (she was appointed by Paul as a deacon, teacher, and leader of the church). Paul was a Christian, Jew, Pharisee, Roman citizen, and church leader, who had a direct encounter with Jesus Christ on the road to Damascus after Jesus' ascension into heaven. Paul, a highly educated man, wrote more of the NT than any other person.

## The Gospel According to Matthew

Matthew's Gospel was written around 80-90 A.D. in Antioch, Syria by a Greek-speaking Jewish Christian. The first writing was probably by a Christian scribe who wrote in the name of Matthew. Matthew was a disciple who knew Jesus personally.

## Next Sunday, September 10, 2023, Lectionary Reading for 15th Sunday after Pentecost

Exodus 12:1-14 and Psalm 149 or Ezekial 33:7-11 and Psalm 119:33-40; Romans 13:8-14; Matthew 18:15-20

## Lord, Whose Love Through Humble Service 575



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8.7.8.7.D.

I Have Decided to Follow Jesus 344



WORDS: Anonymous MUSIC: Indian folk tune ASSAM 10.10.10.8.



WORDS: Thomas A. Jackson (1931-), alt. MUSIC: Franz Joseph Haydn (1732-1809) Words © 1975 Broadman Press (Admin. Genevox Music Group) AUSTRIAN HYMN 8.7.8.7.D.