

# *Faith United Church of Christ*

*“An inclusive spiritual family shaping a better you for creating a better world.  
A place to make a difference.”*

March 11, 2018

The 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Lent

Sacred Fellowship 10:45 AM

*We are delighted that you are here today! We hope you will find us an affirming, uplifting, and committed family of faith. Here we work to make everyone, without any exceptions, to feel accepted, inspired, and encouraged in their spiritual journey. In dialogue, we seek to understand. In encouragement, we seek to heal. In all things we yearn to live by love, for peace, with joy. This is a place where your intellect will be challenged, your heart will be nurtured, and your spirit refreshed. Varying beliefs are expressed openly and freely, and your doubts will not be suppressed. We trust that we are all, every person and part of creation, continuing to be blessed by God’s grace; and that in community we can help each other to see this grace alive in our lives and relationships. We hope to share our gifts with you, even as we pray that you will want to share your gifts with us. Whoever you are and wherever you may be in your life’s journey, we invite you to be a part of our lives and our spiritual home. Welcome!*

## **CALLED TOGETHER AS SPIRITUAL FAMILY**

### **Welcome and Announcements**

*Please sign the registration pads at the ends of the pews on the center aisle.*

*We ask that you please shut off cell phones and practice quietness during the service.*

*Please join us for fellowship and refreshments after the worship  
in Romig Hall (lower level of elevator or stairs).*

\* = You are invited to stand as you are able

**Prelude**

Adagio in C

Mozart

**Welcoming the Light of Love in Our Midst**      *(acolytes light altar candles)*

*We prepare ourselves for communing with the sacred as love’s light is brought into our awareness. The light of love burns within and among each of us, and we carry that light into our sanctuary; visually reminding us of the image of the divine that lives in our hearts, minds, and souls – and that we nourish through our faith-filled fellowship.*

**Affirming God’s Presence in Us All**

“You Matter!”

**Sharing Christ’s Peace**

*As a sign of our reconciliation with God and one another, greet and welcome those around you and share “the peace of Christ.”*

**\*Centering Our Souls**      *“We Come, We Go”*

When we come to this sanctuary, we come to commune with the sacred.

**We come to learn, to teach, to share, and to be in relationship.**

We come to experience the community and realm of God.

**We come to be transformed as individuals and as a community in God’s ways.**

Jesus told us that to “see” the realm of God, we have to be born from above.

**We are born from above, born anew, when we nurture God’s values within us; when we make our own character like that of God’s.**

Jesus told us that to “enter” the realm of God, we must be born not only of water but of Spirit.

**The Spirit of Christ, which is the Spirit of God, can live within us. It does when we are compassionate as God is compassionate, when we are just as God is just, and when we live by peace for peace as God intends.**

When we do these things, we go to be Christ’s disciples to the world that God loves.

**We go to love all the world, as does God.**

We go to give of ourselves as God and Jesus gave of themselves.

**We go to serve that none may perish, but that we may all, here and now, have life that is eternal.**

We go not as mere believers, but as doers; not merely praising God and Christ, but following their lead.

**We go to be light to the world, and to do deeds of love; for love is the light within us. May it be so, now and always.**

**\*Hymn of the Spirit’s Birth** *“We Are Born of the Spirit”*

*see insert*

**Our Stories of Random Acts of Kindness & Intentional Deeds of Compassion**

**WE LISTEN FOR THE SACRED IN THE MIDST OF OUR LIVES**

**Choral Anthem**      Surely He Has Borne Our Grievs by John Carter

**A Time for All God’s Children**

**Prayers**

*Sharing Our Joys and Concerns*

*Silent Meditation: The Prayers of the People*

**Pastoral Prayer**  
**Unison Prayer**

**“Prayer from the New Zealand Book of Common Prayer”**

Eternal Spirit, Earth-maker, Pain-bearer, Life-giver, Source of all that is and that shall be, Father and Mother of us all, Loving God, in whom is heaven: The hallowing of your name echo through the universe! The way of your justice be followed by the peoples of the world! Your heavenly will be done by all created beings! Your commonwealth of peace and freedom sustain our hope and come on earth. With the bread we need for today, feed us. In the hurts we absorb from one another, forgive us. In times of temptation and test, strengthen us. From trials too great to endure, spare us. From the grip of all that is evil, free us. For you reign in the glory of the power that is love, now and forever. May it be so.

**\*Hymn for Birth Eternal**

“Born of God, Eternal Savior”

**#542**

**Scripture Lesson**

John 3.1-21

**Message**

“Jesus’ Encounter with a Literalist”

**\*Hymn for Birthing Action**

“Christian, Rise and Act Your Creed”

**#537**

**WE DEDICATE OURSELVES TO GOD’S SERVICE**  
**THROUGH FAITHFULNESS**

**Giving of Our Tithes and Offerings**

*“Generosity arises from gratitude like heat arises from fire.*

*Like fire, gratitude is lovely to see;*

*but when it warms others with generosity,*

*that is when it becomes a true blessing.”*

**Offertory** “Organ Improvisation”

**\*Song of Dedication**

*Tune: Old Hundredth; p. 7*

When we give thanks, then go to sow;

Our blessings are assured to grow.

We are not known by what we keep;

We’re known by deeds that others reap.

**\*Unison Prayer of Dedication**

O God, whose coming was tender and mild, but whose presence is empowering and passionate: We are thankful for the hope you inspire in our world where poverty is painful and loving-kindness is lacking. Jolt us with justice that the world’s prayers for peace may be answered. Jostle us with generosity that we may know the joy of giving. In this season of Lent, enter into our hearts that hope may arise within us to expect that which has been promised: that nourishment will be provided for the hungry...that

comfort will call upon the suffering...that freedom will ensue for the imprisoned...that justice will be imparted to the persecuted...that compassion will nurture the oppressed...that peace will pacify the violent...and that love will live in the midst of all peoples and creatures that you have declared good. May this gift of hope that you give to us be passed on to others by how we give of ourselves through our time, talents, tithes, and offerings. Blessings be.

### **\*Encouragement for the Journey**

When life brings you loss, sadness, or suffering, may the hope within you rise like a cool, refreshing stream. When circumstances are disillusioning, painful, or despairing, may the faith by which you sail be persevering and bring you back safely to the harbor of peace. In all your life, remember that you are born to give wings to love. Be thankful for the love you have received, and be generous in the love that you give. May your life be laced with grace.

**Postlude**

Overture in C

Mozart

### **\*The Light of Love Goes into the World**

*Love's light is not extinguished from our worship, but is transferred from the flame of the candles to the passion in our hearts that we may go forth to let the light of love shine through us as we go to serve in the world!*

### **WE GO FORTH AS PEACEMAKERS TO CREATE JUSTICE FOR ALL**

*Our worship is fulfilled, and our purpose is confirmed,  
through our service as God's stewards to the world and all creation.  
Use the blessings God has given you as you share  
the joy in your heart, the wisdom in your mind,  
the love in your spirit, and the peace in your soul.*

*Thank you for sharing sacred fellowship with us.*

Faith UCC is an open and affirming church, embracing diversity in our congregation and community, and affirming the dignity and worth of every person. We are an inclusive community of faith that celebrates God's presence through worship and the sharing of God's word. We welcome all persons into the full life and ministry of the church, regardless of race, ethnic background, gender identity, sexual orientation, capability, or circumstance of life.

## Our Ministry

Ministers — All the Congregation  
Trustee — Tom Daubert  
Nursery — Lois Bair

Interim Pastor — Rev. Bret Myers  
Ushers — Tom Daubert  
Fellowship — Susan Brandse

## Church Staff

Custodian — Scott Luzier  
Organist—Mark Ferraguto

Church School Coordinator — Barbara Chellman  
Choir Director – Mike Dolan  
Administrative Assistant — Jeff Stormer

*The liturgies for this morning's worship, along with the Song of Dedication, were written by Rev. Bret S. Myers except where otherwise noted.*

### **Prayers for healing and wholeness:**

Joann Edwards, Lisa V. (John Vincenti's daughter), the family of Lois Bair, Carlton Miller, Bob Ritzman, the family of June Brown, Lisa B. (JoAnn's daughter), Brandon G., Lisa Neidigh, Bunnie Hartswick, Katelynn Wilson, Darlene Ripka, April S., Randy Brown (Aimee's Dad), the Piggot family, Robert Zupp (Eileen Pfaff's nephew), the Snook family.



### **Welcome to all first-time (and returning) guests to Faith UCC!**

We would like to get to know you and for you to get to know us.

Join us after worship for coffee and **conversation**.

There is free parking on Sundays at the meters and at the McAllister & Pugh Street parking garages – so, we hope you'll worship with us again next Sunday!

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**Electronic Giving Options:** During the offering time you may place your offerings on the plates the around. If you prefer to give electronically simply **code** with your smartphone to be directed to our page.



in the service, ushers will bring **scan the QR** online donation

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### **March Special Offering**

[One Great Hour of Sharing](http://onegreathourofsharing.org/) (http://onegreathourofsharing.org/ )

One Great Hour is a Christian effort to empower, provide water, supply food, and give relief from disasters. Learn more at: <http://onegreathourofsharing.org> Make checks payable to Faith UCC with "OGHS" noted in the memo line, or the special envelope on Sunday, March 25<sup>th</sup>.

**UPCOMING** *Mark Your Calendars* **EVENTS** 

- **March 12**            **OOTC3 Tear Down**
- **March 17**            **St Patrick's Day**
- **March 18**            **5<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Lent**  
**Welsh Society, 1-5PM**
- **March 19**            **Consistory**
- **March 22**            **Operation Smile Fundraiser, 6-8PM**

**Get In Touch with Us!**

Faith United Church of Christ      300 E. College Avenue State College, PA 16801  
Tel: (814) 237-3904      Websites: [www.faithucc.info](http://www.faithucc.info)      [facebook.com/SCFaithUCC](https://www.facebook.com/SCFaithUCC)  
Church Office Email: [faithucc@comcast.net](mailto:faithucc@comcast.net)      Pastor's Email: [revbmyers@yahoo.com](mailto:revbmyers@yahoo.com)

Church Office Hours: 9:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.      Tuesdays, **Thursdays**, & Fridays  
Pastor Bret's Office Hours: Tuesday 5-8 p.m., Wednesday 11 a.m.-2 p.m., Thursday 2-4 p.m.  
or other hours by appointment.

Appointments are recommended so you may have the time you need without interruptions.  
To make an appointment, call the church office, or Bret's cell at 608-370-9472, or email him at [revbmyers@yahoo.com](mailto:revbmyers@yahoo.com).