

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 18, 2018

The 5th 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

Prelude in C Minor, BWV 549

J. S. Bach

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 “Unity with God, Christ, One Another, & Creation”**

O One who created us in your image to be one with one another, with you, and all creation:

We are grateful for your prodding us to let the Spirit you made within us to flourish into an outpouring of love and an overflowing of compassion.

We are inspired by prophets like Jeremiah, who in seeing the mystical unity of all that is, noted how we are to see ourselves in relationship to our world.

We are not to put our own needs above those of others, but to see how we are all part of the same whole.

This is how your character is written on our own; how your Spirit is written on our hearts and transforms us into beings of peace, grace, kindness, and gentleness.

When we live with your virtues within us, we let your Spirit be our Spirit.

Help us to learn the lessons of our unity with you and all things, and to be able to learn that the truth of the seed and the grain of wheat is the truth that also lives in us.

For until we die to our own self-interests, we are like seeds in the ground that never sprout.

You will that we be transformed from seeds of selfish greed to stalks of golden grain.

You entice us to die to our own interests and put the interests of all at the center of our consciousness.

You tell us to love one another, not with a lesser love than what we love ourselves, our families, those of our own ethnicity, nationality, or religion; but with a love equal to that of the love we have for those we most love.

In serving others, we serve you; even as Jesus served.

Encourage us to have faithfulness in our ability to follow in Christ’s ways.

For you have called us to be compassionate, even as you are compassionate. May it be so, now and always.

***Hymn of the Spirit’s Unity**

“In Christ There Is No East or West”

#394

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

WE LISTEN FOR THE SACRED IN THE MIDST OF OUR LIVES

Choral Anthem

Bitter Tears by Ruth Elaine Schram

A Time for All God’s Children

Prayers

Sharing Our Joys and Concerns

Silent Meditation: The Prayers of the People

Pastoral Prayer

The Prayer Jesus Taught (unison) *Please feel free to do the version you know, or the one below:*

“Our heavenly Creator, sacred be your name: your kin-dom* come, your will be done, on earth as if in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our sins, as we forgive those who sin against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For yours is the kin-dom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen”

**"Kin-dom" is an inclusive, non-authoritarian, and egalitarian term that reminds us that we are all "kin" as the children of God.*

***Hymn for Unity in Love** “Where Charity and Love Prevail” **#396**

Scripture Lessons Jeremiah 31.31-34 John 12.20-26

Message “Written on the Heart: Not A Personal Relationship, but One of Character”

***Hymn for Hearts in Action** “O God in Whom All Life Begins” **#401**

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**

Postlude

Fugue in C Minor, BWV 549

J. S. Bach

***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

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| Ministers — All the Congregation | Interim Pastor — Rev. Bret Myers |
| Trustee — Larry Bair | Ushers — Larry Bair |
| Liturgist — Lois Bair | Children's Message — |
| Acolyte — | Nursery — |
| Fellowship — | |

Church Staff

Custodian — Scott Luzier Church School Coordinator — Barbara Chellman
Organist—Mark Ferraguto 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:

Susie Keck, 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!

Electronic Giving Options: During the offering time in the service, you may place your offerings on the plates the ushers will bring around. If you prefer to give electronically simply **scan the QR code** with your smartphone to be directed to our online donation page.



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 25th.

UPCOMING *Mark Your Calendars* **EVENTS** 

- **March 18** **5th Sunday in Lent**
Welsh Society, 1-5 PM
- **March 19** **Consistory, 5:30 PM**
- **March 22** **Operation Smile Fundraiser, 6-8 PM**
- **March 25** **6th Sunday in Lent**

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 facebook.com/SCFaithUCC
Church Office Email: faithucc@comcast.net Pastor's Email: 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 as to give you the time you need without interruptions. You may call the church office, or his cell at 608-370-9472, or email him at revbmyers@yahoo.com.