

# Faith United Church of Christ

*“An inclusive spiritual family shaping a better you for creating a better world.*

*A place to make a difference.”*

October 1, 2017

**World Communion Sunday** Sacred Fellowship 10:45 a.m.

*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!*

## **POINTS TO PONDER**

“Life happens, yet we have become so complacent and take things so for granted that when the hard times come, these bad incidents become like prisons that snuff out our life.... People start dying when they lose hope.... We are called to choose life.... No gospel is suffering-proof.... Gospel living is not about finding an easy way out. It is about learning to see hope and possibilities even in the darkest moments of our lives.... How do we find hope and meaning in life? It all begins when we are able to look beyond ourselves and our circumstances. Paul in his prison cell looked beyond those dank walls to encourage and teach young communities of faith. We are called to look beyond our own circumstances and help others find meaning.”

— Gilberto Collazo in *Feasting on the Word, Year A, Vol. 4, p. 86, 88, 90.*

“Live your life in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ,  
so that, whether I come and see you or am absent and hear about you,  
I will know that you are standing firm in one spirit,  
striving side by side with one mind for the faith of the gospel,  
and are in no way intimidated by your opponents.”

— *Philippians 1.27-28a*

“*Live your lives* -- The imperative Greek verb here, *politeuesthe*, has political overtones:  
‘live as citizens,’ that is, as citizens of heaven.”

— *Jouette Bassler, The New Interpreter's Study Bible, p. 2102*

“Paul is not influenced by the individualism of America that would assume ‘living your life’ was something we needed to decide for ourselves after ‘finding’ ourselves. He assumes our life is the life of Christ within us – that ennobled and virtuous way of being in the world where we look out for one another, and especially the oppressed. This is the gospel of Christ by which our lives are made wor-

thy by being imitators of divine values and ways of being in the world. Jesus thought, spoke, and acted not on his own behalf, but on the behalf of others. In his love for all, he wanted to reconcile all people – not to his ways, and not to their ways, but to God's way; which he and Paul encouraged in us to be the way of us all. Working together in the one spirit, side by side like athletes on a team, creates in us a unity that makes us fearless in the face of those who would be God's opponents – not because we ourselves can't be defeated, but because what we stand and live for cannot be defeated within us.”

— *Rev. Bret S. Myers, 9/28/2017*

“If then there is any encouragement in Christ, any consolation from love, any sharing in the Spirit, any compassion and sympathy, make my joy complete:  
be of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind.”

— *Philippians 2.1-2*

“We might better translate it thus: ‘Since there is encouragement in Christ, since there is consolation from love, since there is fellowship in the Spirit...make my joy complete.’ Paul is reminding the Philippians of the reality in which they live as believers. Then, having reminded them who they are, he implores them to be themselves.”

— *David L. Bartlett in Feasting on the Word, Year A, Vol. 4, p. 113.*

“Though Paul is in prison, and does not know whether he will die there or ever be freed, he nevertheless speaks to the people, who are imprisoned by their own divisions within and persecutions from without, with words of encouragement, consolation, and compassion. He reminds them of Christ's own sufferings, implying that if we follow Christ we too will have to suffer. However, rather than as despairing in this circumstance, he suggests for them to remember their common purpose in Christ, their fulfillment of meaning in life by loving and being loved by one another, and the caring concern and compassion that arises when we are a fellowship of God's Spirit living among us. The Greek word translated here as ‘mind’ indicates not a unanimity of opinion, but rather a harmony or unity of wisdom.”

— *Rev. Bret S. Myers, 9/28/2017*

“Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility regard others as better than yourselves. Let each of you look not to your own interests, but to the interests of others.”

— *Philippians 2.3-4*

“By everyone looking out for others rather than their own selves, there develops a communal harmony that has a synergistic effect. This fellowship (Gk.: *koinonia*) is more than merely a collection of individuals doing their own thing in a mutually tolerant and respectful society. It is as if it is a living organism in itself that, focused on higher purposes and loftier aspirations than would be obtainable by people working together toward a common cause but with different motives, rises above the consideration of individual self-interests and achieves a spiritual interdependence that provides the whole community and each part of it with all that God has always longed and hoped for us.”

— *Rev. Bret S. Myers, 9/28/2017*

“Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus.”

— *Philippians 2.5*

“There is a great difference between an impersonator and an imitator. Impersonators take great pains to make people believe they are who they are not. On the other hand, imitators are clearly aware that they strive to live up to the challenge of being a reflection of the person they look up to.”

— *Gilberto Collazo in Feasting on the Word, Year A, Vol. 4, p. 110.*

“Since they had been educated by the same law and trained in the same virtues and brought up in right living, they loved one another all the more.

A common zeal for nobility strengthened their goodwill towards one another, and their concord, because they could make their brotherly love more fervent with the aid of their religion. Companionship and virtuous habits had augmented the affection of family ties.”

— *4 Maccabees 13.24-27*



## 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 "Communion" A. Guilmant

### 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!"

\*Hymn for Gathering and Unity "Gather Us In" see insert

### \*Centering Our Souls

We are called to live lives worthy of the gospel of Christ.

**That gospel is the good news of love and peace; that we share with all, everywhere.**

Together we work towards creating justice, unity, and harmony between us all – every one, and every part, of God's good creation.

**We trust that God is with us in all things. Therefore, we go forth to do good in our world; fearing no one, and being confident that carrying forth Christ's purposes will bring about blessing for others, if not also ourselves.**

We are encouraged by Jesus' own example. We are consoled by the love he shared and taught us to share. We are nurtured by the Spirit living within us and among us.

**For whenever we give or receive compassion and kindness, we are filled with joy.**

In the oneness of the Spirit, our minds are not distracted by selfish ambitions, and our hearts are not encumbered with conceit.

**While seeing us all as equals, we treat others as better than we treat ourselves; for in our magnanimity we build mutual respect and warm-heartedness. May it be so now and always.**

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

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

Choral Anthem We Are One, Lord Stan Pethel

### 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 of Loving Community “Thank Our God for Sisters, Brothers” #397

## Scripture Lesson

Philippians 1.27-2.8

## Message

“The Unity of Community: Purpose and Spirit”

## \*Hymn for Unity of Spirit

“In the Midst of New Dimensions”

#391

## WE CELEBRATE OUR UNITY AS GOD’S CREATION

### The Sacrament of Holy Communion: A World Communion Liturgy

*(As God calls all people, no exceptions, to the table of forgiveness and loving fellowship, Faith UCC affirms an open Communion Table. All persons are welcome to partake of this sacrament which affirms that we are all part of God’s family and are to commune together in sacred relationship. Therefore, all who wish to join in this ritual of unity are invited to do so, regardless of religious affiliation, providing that you do so in the spirit of peace and mutual love for one another.)*

### “A World Communion Liturgy”

### An Introduction to the Sacrament of Holy Communion

Communion, in its holiest form, is only possible when there is sincere welcome, earnest hospitality, and genuine care for the well-being of others. God, through Christ, serves as welcomer and hostess to us in the sacrament of Holy Communion. The welcome is open to all. The hospitality is made apparent through the sharing of the bread and the cup. May our care for one another inspire, nurture, and sustain us out this shared table and in our daily lives with all whom we meet – all around the world.

The word sacrament is derived from words that mean “mystery” and “sacred feast.” How God is present and remains in communion with us outside the realm of our five physical senses is somewhat of a mystery, although many may “sense” God’s presence in very real ways through the touch, taste, smell, sight of the bread and cup...and, yes, even in hearing the breaking of bread and the pouring into the cup. It is a sacred feast not simply because God invites us to table as children, but because we as children are there with our family -our spiritual family- in a shared meal in which we focus not so much on the food prepared as on the importance of our relationships with one another and God.

God welcomes us to the table of mutual hospitality and loving care, as a mother or father does in preparing a meal in which the family gathers together in thankfulness. Also known as the Eucharist (which means, “thanksgiving”), the Sacrament of Holy Communion is an acknowledgment and appreciation for the relations with have with God and with each other. Participating in this sacrament means that we accept the welcome and hospitality of God, becoming “companions” with God and each other in the sharing of a meal.

Derived from the Latin words “cum” (with) and “panis” (bread), a companion is literally one with whom we share bread. Jesus shared bread with his “12 Companions,” and asked them to share bread with the world. Today, we are the evidence that bread has continued to be shared in sacred community ever since Jesus first asked his companions to do this in remembrance of him and his companionship with them.

Abraham shared bread cakes and water with three strangers in whom he saw the presence of God. The Jewish Seder meals were the first ritualized acts of communion in our Judeo-Christian-Islamic tradition of monotheism. The Seder in which Jesus shared with his companions was that of the Passover, remembering how God, through Moses, had broken the manacles of unholy communion between people evidenced in the slavery of the ancient Hebrews by the ancient Egyptians, and liberated them so that both peoples would be free to seek more wholesome and holy relationships. While in the desert, God provided meals of manna that came with the morning dew, and water from a rock.

What kind of bread was used and what filled the cup have been of less concern than the sharing of food and drink – the primal necessities of life, in which all people have a responsibility to share with one another no matter whether the persons be friend or stranger...native or foreigner. Whether unleavened or leavened bread, or grape juice/wine or water, or any other elements of food or drink, the importance is on being in right relationship together – showing welcome, hospitality, and genuine care for all. This emphasis on our loving and peaceful relationships is what makes the communion “holy.”

As we celebrate this sacrament on “World Communion Sunday,” may our emphasis be not so much on the various elements of food and drink that we will partake, but on our interdependent and holy relationship with God and with all peoples everywhere as God’s children.

### Presentation of the Breads and Juices of the World: A Bounty of Blessing

#### Invitation to the Sacrament

With our ancestors of the past, our companions of the present, and our descendants in future generations, Christ Jesus invites us to be in communion with him, one another, and with God. On the night in which the world would seek to sever their relationship from him, he sought to keep it forever united in saying: “*I have eagerly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer.*” And taking a cup and giving thanks over it he said, “*Take this and divide it among yourselves.*” And then taking a loaf of bread and giving thanks over it he said, “*This is my body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me.*”

Come all of you who will join in this sacred meal – in remembrance of what was, in affirmation of what is, and in hope for what is to be.

#### Partaking of the Elements

*(Walk down center aisle, around table, & return by side aisles)*

*(The breads and juices from the 6 inhabited continents of the world are in pairs on the altar table, labeled as to the kind that each is, and from what area of the world that they are associated. Each person is encouraged to partake of any or all breads and juices by dipping a morsel in the cup, remembering our connection as brothers and sisters with those in other parts of the world. The act of tasting the variety of breads and drinks, reminds us that what is holy is always before us and in many forms if we are willing to be present to its presence.)*

#### Commissioning

We have dined with God at the table of companionship. Go forth to be a companion to the world! For those who are companions of what God has created is a companion to God...those who forgive will

be forgiven...those who show compassion will receive compassion...those who share bread will themselves be fed...those who share the cup will have their own cup overflowing.

**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*

The light of love does shine most bright when all are siblings in our sight;  
We are one fam’ly on this earth; we are God’s children from our birth.

**\*Unison Prayer of Dedication**

O God who prods us to be earnest in caring, dutiful in sharing, joyful in giving, and abundant in gratitude: We pray that these tithes of our income, and offerings of our spirit, will be blessed for your purposes near and far. We are doubly blessed in our giving – being able to, and doing so freely from our hearts. Remind us not to be prideful in giving, nor ashamed in receiving; for we are here for each other – sowing seeds of compassion that will feed the world, and together reaping a harvest of peace. May it be so.

**\*Encouragement for the Journey**

When we see the world, all its peoples, all its creatures, and all creation as the whole community of God, our hearts are warmed, our minds are bedazzled, and our spirits are lifted. For in all that we experience, we come to understand that we are all one family. Everywhere we go is home. All whom we meet are our siblings. And in this hope and expectation that unity may abound, we draw closer to making that unity a reality. In your thoughts and perceptions, in your emotions and sentiments, in your words and gestures, and in your actions and practices, show the world that you love the world. Be a friend to the friendless, a giver to the one with less, a receiver to the generous of heart, a caretaker for the one in need, and a beloved to the one with love abundant so that you may help bring peace, justice, and harmony to all your relationships – near and far. Go, be good!

**Postlude** Short Prelude and Fugue in F Major 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**

Ministers — All the Congregation Interim Pastor — Rev. Bret Myers  
Ushers — Tom Daubert, Mary Jane Wild Trustee — Tom Daubert  
Liturgist — Children’s Message —  
Acolyte — Nursery —  
Fellowship —  
Communion Stewards: Clovis & Marilyn Morrisson, Peggy Salamon, Tom Daubert

**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.*



**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 smart phone to be directed to our online donation page.



## October Special Offering

**Neighbors in Need** (<http://www.ucc.org/nin/>) is a special mission offering of the United Church of Christ that supports ministries of justice and compassion throughout the United States.

Please note “NIN” in the memo line of your check or on the offering envelope.



- **October 1** Friends In Faith (Youth & Young Adults) 7 PM
- **October 6** First Friday
- **October 8** 27<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time
- **Cider Outing @ The Bair's**
- **October 10** Trustees 7 PM
- **October 15** 28<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time
- **CROP Walk 1 PM**
- **Congregational Meeting/Workshop: The Church Profile**
- **October 16** Consistory Meeting 7 PM

## Get In Touch with Us!

Faith United Church of Christ, 300 E. College Avenue, State College, PA 16801

Tel: (814) 237-3904 Websites: [www.faiithucc.info](http://www.faiithucc.info), [facebook.com/SCFaithUCC](https://www.facebook.com/SCFaithUCC)

Church Office Email: [faiithucc@comcast.net](mailto:faiithucc@comcast.net) Pastor's Email: [revbmyers@yahoo.com](mailto:revbmyers@yahoo.com)

Church Office Hours: 9:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m. Tuesday, Wednesday, & Friday

Please make an appointment with Rev. Myers if you would like to meet with the pastor.

You may call the church office, or his cell at 608-370-9472.

## *Nourishment for the Journey*

### **When “What Ifs” Become “We Cans”**

What if we created a church where beliefs were not as important as values...where creeds were not formulated, but virtues...where right conduct and character mattered more than right doctrine and dogma?

What if we created a church where everyone was accepted and affirmed for who they were created to be rather than as who they happened to be at the time...who were loved because of their inherent worth rather than their apparent utility...who were respected for who they were capable of becoming rather than for what they had done?

What if we created a church where learning new ideas, discussing varying viewpoints, and understanding one another despite disparate perspectives served to increase our faith rather than

challenge it...served to make us grateful rather than anxious...served to make us more united rather than divided?

What if we created a church where the comfortable were challenged to share out of their abundance, and all members sought for the justice of their neighbors near and far as they would seek for their own...where the Golden Rule was practiced as well as professed?

What if we created a church where forgiveness was the norm, and compassion was the rule...where malice, gossip, and disdain could not remain, and loving-kindness, compliments, and reverence were always sustained?

What if we created a church where we not only professed that we care for all, but followed that up by making people feel cared for and beautifying the natural world around us by showing how we care for it?

What if we created a church where every gift was valued, and every soul was cherished...where opportunities to share talents were available and encouraged, and no one envied another but sought only to contribute their part...where there was no concern for who gets the credit, or any struggle for power, but a genuine appreciation for the work that each other offered?

What if we created a church where there was no prejudice over race, religion, sexuality, disability, or difference, but all were respected and loved as oneself...where no “sacred text” would be used to ostracize or condemn another, and where all saw the commonness of spirit and equity of worth in the heart, mind, and soul of each other?

What if we created a church where we only built each other up, and never tore another down...where all were warm, friendly, hospitable, and welcoming...where each one found nourishment, healing, encouragement, and inspiration?

What if we created a church dedicated to peace-making and non-violence...where the rights of those in other places roused our passion more than patriotism...where the livelihood and flourishing of all peoples and creatures the world over stirred our commitment more than nationalism?

What if we created a church where the emotionally wounded could go for refuge, and the spiritually afflicted could go for nurture...where seekers could find, and doubters could build faith...where cynics would find reason for hope?

What if we created a church that was fun and delightful, invigorating and refreshing...where enthusiasm was rampant and motivation was palpable...where generosity was overflowing and gratitude was ever-flowing?

What if we created a church that cultivated our calling and promoted our purpose...that provided an ambience of identity and a milieu of meaning?

What if we dared to envision that we could create such a church by the grace of that which is greater than ourselves? What if we had that kind of faith?

We can actualize our “what ifs.” We can make real this vision. But only when our “what ifs” become our “we cans.”

Let's get started!

— Rev. Bret S. Myers

“(Communion is) Like when you sit in front of a fire in winter — you are just there in front of the fire. You don't have to be smart or anything. The fire warms you.”

— Desmond Tutu

— *William Shakespeare, The Merchant of Venice, 17th century*

"Christians should put survival of the planet ahead of national security...Here is the mystery of our global responsibility: that we are in communion with Christ- and we are in communion with all people...The fact that the people of Nicaragua, Guatemala, El Salvador, Russia, Afghanistan, and Ethiopia are our brothers and sisters is not obvious. People kill each other by the thousands and do not see themselves as brothers and sisters. If we want to be real peace-makers, national security cannot be our primary concern. Our primary concern should be survival of humanity, the survival of the planet, and the health of all people. Whether we are Russians, Iraqis, Ethiopians, or North Americans, we belong to the same human family that God loves. And we have to start taking some risks- not just individually, but risks of a more global quality, risks to let other people develop their own independence, risks to share our wealth with others and invite refugees to our country, risks to offer sanctuary- because we are people of God."  
— *Henri J.M. Nouwen*

Love is an act of endless forgiveness, a tender look which becomes a habit. — *Peter Ustinov*

Tenderness emerges from the fact that the two persons, longing, as all individuals do, to overcome the separateness and isolation to which we are all heir because we are individuals, can participate in a relationship that, for the moment, is not of two isolated selves but a union. — *Rollo May*

To get the full value of joy you must have someone to divide it with. — *Mark Twain*

"The primary joy of life is acceptance, approval, the sense of appreciation and companionship of our human comrades. Many men do not understand that the need for fellowship is really as deep as the need for food, and so they go through life accepting many substitutes for genuine, warm, simple."  
— *Joshua Loth Liebman*

"We live in an extraordinary time. Our thinking styles are severing us from our families, our religions, our ideologies, and nature. We are caught up in a pace of social and technological change that makes our work, business, and education sources of anxiety and unfulfillment. At the same time, thinking about our thinking and observing our observations can bring us a new world in which work becomes a place for innovation, and in which peace, wisdom, friendship, companionship, and community can exist. Let us design this world together."  
— *Fernando Flores*

"Do your little bit of good where you are; it's those little bits of good put together that overwhelm the world."  
— *Desmond Tutu, 21st century*

"Out of suffering have emerged the strongest souls; the most massive characters are seared with scars."  
— *Kahlil Gibran, 20th century*

"Should you shield the canyons from the windstorms you would never see the true beauty of their carvings."  
— *Elisabeth Kübler-Ross, 20th century*

"How far that little candle throws his beams! So shines a good deed in a weary world."

Announcements: [Please see NEWS under About Us.](#)