

Faith United Church of Christ

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

May 6, 2018

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 "To You Alone, Lord Jesus Christ" J. Pachelbel

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!”

***Centering Our Souls**

Since God is love, to abide in love is to abide in God.

Love is the sacred force that connects us to one another and all that is.

Love lives within us, the divine image in each one.

To obey love is to affirm our true identity.

Christ loved us, and told us to love one another.

We love as Christ loved. This is how we become the body of Christ in this world.

Christ called us friends; friends who are to share the same spirit and character.

When we live by Christ's values, Christ lives in us. We are friends of love.

We are to go and bear the fruit of love: loving-kindness, compassion, sympathetic joy, gentleness, patience, resilience, benevolence, and beneficence.

We reap the joy of the goodness we sow.

Let us love with resolve and perseverance.

In all things may we strive for that greater love; now and always.

***Hymn of Love as Friends in Christ "Help Us Accept Each Other" #388**

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

WE LISTEN FOR THE SACRED IN THE MIDST OF OUR LIVES

Choral Anthem What a Friend We Have in Jesus by Charles C. Converse

A Time for All God's Children

Prayers

Sharing Our Joys and Concerns

Silent Meditation: The Prayers of the People

Pastoral Prayer

Unison Prayer: "Poetic Prayer in the Spirit of Christ"

Loving Spirit, who is here and there,
we're grateful for your tender care.

Your virtues rise, your values prized;
near and far, and everywhere.

Feed our bodies, and feed our souls.

And by forgiveness make us whole.

And may we all evils deplore,
as we search and sail for mercy's shore.

May peace and love within us rule,
and justice be your Spirit's tool;

Now and always, for us and others,
and for all creation.

May we make it so, all as one,
by your inspiration.

*Hymn for Friends of Virtue	“Love’s Virtuous Heights”	see insert
Scripture Lesson	John 15.9-17	
Message	“Friends of Character”	
*Hymn for Friends Empowered	“Called as Partners in Christ’s Service”	#495

WE AFFIRM & CELEBRATE OUR UNITY
AS GOD’S CREATION

The Sacrament of Holy Communion

(As God calls all people to the table of forgiveness, peace, and loving fellowship, Faith UCC affirms an inclusive and open Communion Table. All persons (all ages, ethnicities, sexual orientations/identities, dis/abilities, religious affiliations, and other distinguishing features) 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. Love and peace are the uniting virtues of this spiritual meeting place. Therefore, all who wish to join in this ritual of unity are invited to do so providing that you do so in the spirit of peace and mutual love for one another.)

The Purpose of Holy Communion

God seeks to be in communion with us, and wills that we be in communion with one another. Through the Christ in Jesus, God drew closer to us by living among us with all the desires and temptations of being human, and showed us that we each have the power to overcome wrongdoing by the inspiration of our spiritual lives and the discipline of our physical lives; thereby affecting the Christ in us. Jesus represented the individual model of how we each can do this; and in calling to his side the disciples and followers in his way of love and peace, many of whom were ostracized by the wider society, he revealed how to model this in our community here on Earth.

Reminding us symbolically of this union of body and spirit, Jesus took a loaf of bread, broke it like we are often broken in our relationships with one another, and showed us the way to reconciliation by asking us to share our bread with one another in remembrance of his own example. Through the broken bread, we participate in and become the body of Christ in the world.

In like manner, Jesus took the cup filled with the fruit of the vine, the vine that sustains us and links us to one another, and the fruit that nourishes the spirit of virtue that abides within and between each of us, and asked us to drink of that same spirit of loving-kindness and uniting harmony that was in him. Through the cup of blessing, we participate in and become the new life of Christ in the world.

The bread and fruit we partake nourishes us that we may nourish others. Through this sacrament of Holy Communion, we affirm that we are committed to Christ’s way of love and peace by our motives, thoughts, actions, and practices in this world. We acknowledge that we are one community made by God, and that we must consciously choose, day by day, to be in right relationship with God, each other, and our sacred values. We therefore dedicate ourselves,

individually and collectively, to make the Body and Spirit of Christ real in this world, here and now, and throughout our life as a community of the faithful. What we symbolize here in this holy space, we make real by our service when we go forth from this place.

Invitation

Partaking of the Bread and Juice

(Please remain in your seats as you are served, waiting till instructed to partake. Grape juice is used, and gluten free bread is available upon request.)

Commissioning

WE DEDICATE OURSELVES TO GOD'S SERVICE THROUGH FAITHFULNESS

Giving of Our Tithes and Offerings

Offertory Organ Improvisation

***Song of Dedication** Tune: *Old Hundredth*

Our Easter joy triumphant rings! Our resurrection hope does spring!

Christ's love and peace will ever rise, when we see through forgiving eyes!

***Unison Prayer of Dedication**

We are a resurrection people! By rising with hope, we overcome apathy. By rising with courage, we overcome fear. By rising with joy, we overcome dejection. By rising with faith, we overcome powerlessness. By rising with perseverance, we overcome pain. By rising with forgiveness, we overcome anger. By rising with kindness, we overcome cruelty. By rising with generosity, we overcome poverty. By rising with Christ, we overcome death. May the tithes, gifts, and offerings we share empty the crosses and open the tombs of our own and others' lives. May we be beautiful like blossoming lilies, and graceful like fluttering butterflies, that we may rise with love for all and proclaim peace forever. Blessings be.

***Encouragement for the Journey**

Postlude Toccata in C Major Pachelbel

***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.

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.



May Special Offering

Hartman Center (<https://www.hartmancenter.com/>) is the Outdoor Ministries facility owned by Penn Central Conference of the United Church of Christ since 1964. Programming includes retreats, conferences, workshops, dinner meetings, summer camps, and other events. Hartman Center is located about 20 miles southeast of State College on old Rte. 322 in Milroy PA.

Thank you for your thoughtful consideration and financial donation.



- **May 8** Trustees' Meeting, 7 PM
- **May 10** Ascension Day
- **May 13** 7th Sunday of Easter
- **May 14** Consistory Meeting, 5:30 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.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.

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

Trustee — Tom Daubert

Ushers — Tom Daubert

Nursery — Lois Bair

Communion Servers — 6 May Tom Daubert, Jane Childs, June Irvin, Neil Christy

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.