

# *Faith United Church of Christ*

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

January 7, 2018

**Epiphany Sunday**

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**

#### **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**

Over the formless watery void of pre-creation, your Spirit brooded and swept through the darkness.

**With a thought and a pronouncement, you created light.**

Out of our own darkness and from the void that sometimes lies within, we, too, need thoughts of light and pronouncements that make them real.

**We are made in your image, though we deny we have your powers.**

Help us to see the power of our own myths – of our mind’s ability to envision a different reality, of our heart’s passion to pursue our noblest dreams, and of our soul’s creative force to shape our experiences.

**Let us know the power of our thoughts and words that affect our own and others’ existence.**

Bestow on us an epiphany of how we can let your divinity enter our world...of how we can be manifestations of the sacred.

**Create in us a consciousness of your holy presence, that we may be encouraged and inspired to be the blessings to the world that we were intended to be.**

Let us think of light, dream of light, and work for light that wherever there is darkness, we will bring illumination.

**Let us create light in our world, and be a light to the world.**

Let our spirits brood over life’s dungeons of despair, and sweep over the vast expanses of meaninglessness, that we may brighten the way to life’s goodness and joy.

**May we be the lighthouses that lead legions to your love, and the path-makers that prepare the way to your peace. May it be so.**

\*Hymn of Illumination      “Arise, Your Light Is Come”

**#164**

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

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

**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 of Shining Forth**                      “Brightest and Best”                      **#156**

**Scripture Lessons**                      Genesis 1.1-5

**Message**                      “The Story of Creation: Shedding Some Light”

**\*Hymn of Being Light**                      “Many Are the Lightbeams”                      **#163**

**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**

Christ invites "all" to the table of reconciliation – those who affirm their intrinsic worth, and those who are yet to do so...those whose hearts and minds are admirable, and those still struggling to make them so...those who are most like us, and those who are least like us. In the spirit of Christ, we at Faith United Church of Christ welcome you to share your spiritual journey with us as we share ours with you in a sacrament designed to bridge all differences in a spirit of extravagant welcome, of heartfelt openness, and of mutual loving-kindness. In coming together, let us recognize our responsibility in living in love and peace with one another and all creation so as to be joined together as one Holy Communion of Body and Spirit throughout this good earth.

### **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**

Go forth with forgiveness, courage, faith, hope, love, peace, justice, kindness, and gentleness. May these virtues, representing the image of God in each one of us as was also manifested in Jesus, strengthen you to reach out in compassion as you nurture and aid others within this worldwide community. May the Spirit and grace of God be with you and among you. Amen

**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 of Love and Illumination: Let our offerings given today cast light on a world in need. May our lives be a beacon of hope and our actions a floodlight of faith that overpowers the darkness. Bless us to be the blessings of light you have created us to be – lights of truth, goodness, joy, wisdom, virtue, love, and peace. In the name of the Light of Lights, more brilliant than the sun, the moon, and the stars, may it be so.

### **\*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**

### **\*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
Trustee — Tom Daubert	Ushers — Tom Daubert
Liturgist —	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:**

Bob Ritzman, the family of June Brown, the family of Jean Weller, 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.

-----

### **January Special Offering**

**Centre County Women's Resource Center Services** ([www.http://ccwrc.org](http://ccwrc.org)) for women, men, and children who have experienced dating & domestic violence, sexual assault or stalking. Inclusive of all gender identities and sexual orientations.

Make checks payable to Faith UCC with "Women's Resource Center" noted in the memo line.



- **January 10**      **ESGMT @ 1 PM**  
                         **Trustees @ 7 PM**
- **January 14**      **2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday After Epiphany**
- **January 15**      **MLK, Jr Day**
- **January 21**      **3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday After Epiphany**

### **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  
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, Wednesdays, & Fridays

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.