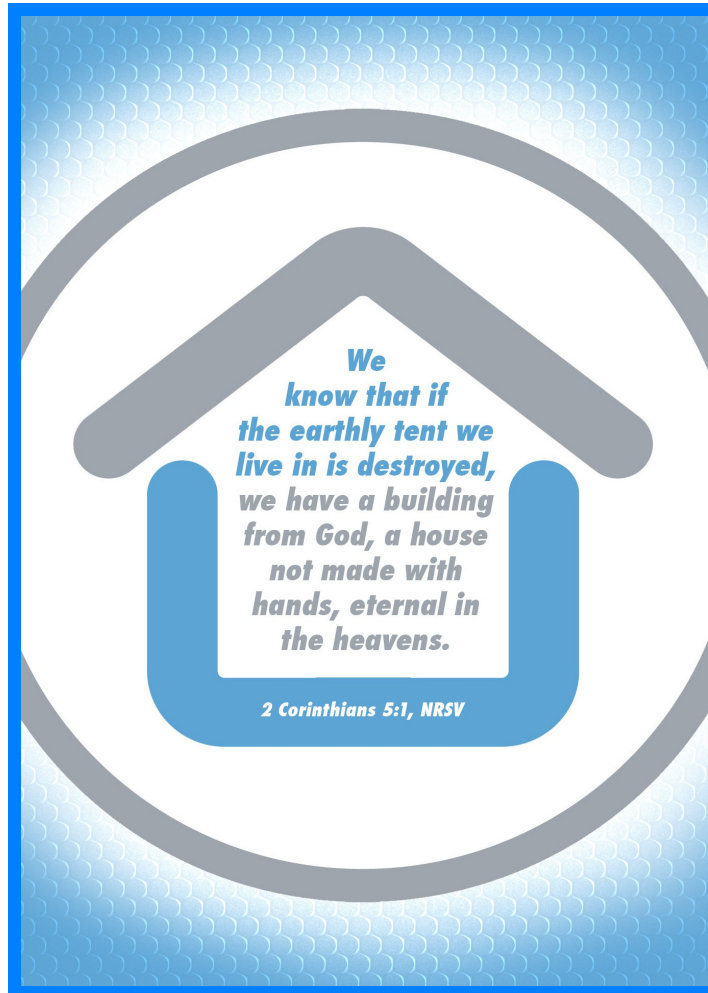


## **St. Paul's United Church of Christ**

301 West Penn Avenue, Robesonia, PA 19551  
610-621-5770 -- office@sprucc.org -- www.sprucc.org  
Worship 10:30am

*No matter who you are,  
or where you are on life's journey,  
you're welcome here.*



***Welcome to  
St. Paul's United Church of Christ  
Online Streaming Worship Service***

*May God's loving presence be very real to you,  
and may you receive strength and guidance today  
that will enable you to handle life's challenges.*

+++

**Sunday, June 6, 2021  
Second Sunday after Pentecost**

# ORDER FOR WORSHIP

## We Gather

*We are coming together as a community of faith to worship our God,  
and provide for one another our love, support, and care.*

### A TIME OF GATHERING

### RINGING OF THE BELL

### PRELUDE

*Used with Permission One License #A-728042*

### GREETING AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

*{To center your hearts and minds,  
you are invited to individually offer this prayer silently  
during or before the Prelude}*

### PRAYER BEFORE WORSHIP <sup>®</sup>

Our souls wait for you, O God. Our ears are attentive to your word. We hope for a clear understanding of your will for us. Let this time of meeting draw us together in unity, with a sense of direction and purpose for our church and our individual lives. Renew us within so that nothing we face around us can undermine our faith or cause us to despair. Claim us all as sisters and brothers of Jesus Christ, and help us to reflect this kinship in all we do or say. Amen.

*{Those who are able, please rise}*

### \*PROCESSIONAL HYMN

*"The God of Abraham Praise"*

vs 1 & 2

♪ Red #61

*Reprinted on following page.  
Used with Permission One License #A-728042*

### \*INVOCATION

Leader: In the name of God the Father, and of God the Son, and of God the Holy Spirit.

ALL: Amen.

### \*CALL TO WORSHIP <sup>®</sup>

Leader: Gather to give thanks with your whole heart.  
Rejoice in God's love and faithfulness.

People: **We bow down, for this is God's holy temple.  
We pour out our thanks in songs of praise.**

Leader: Wait for God, and hope in God's Word.  
Open your hearts to the holy presence in our midst.

People: **Our ears are attentive to the voice of God.  
We open our lives to God's direction.**

---

### Virtual Worship Service

Online: [Live Stream](https://www.sprucc.org) at [sprucc.org](https://www.sprucc.org) - Live or Watch & Listen on [St. Paul's UCC YouTube Channel](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC...) Later  
[Facebook Live](https://www.facebook.com/www.sprucc.org/) at <https://www.facebook.com/www.sprucc.org/> - Live or Watch & Listen Later  
[Phone Stream](https://www.sprucc.org) at 1-888-649-5770 - Live or Listen Later  
[Zoom](https://www.sprucc.org): Meeting ID: 104 401 368; Passcode: 301301 (or call 1-646-558-8656) - Live Only  
*If you have any access problems, please let us know at 610-621-5770 or [Office@sprucc.org](mailto:Office@sprucc.org)*

---

# God the Father

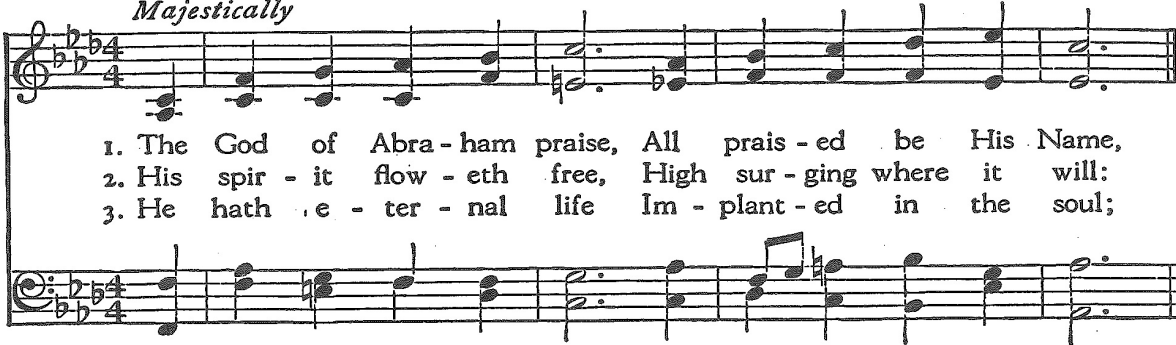
## His Eternity and Majesty

YIGDAL (LEONI)

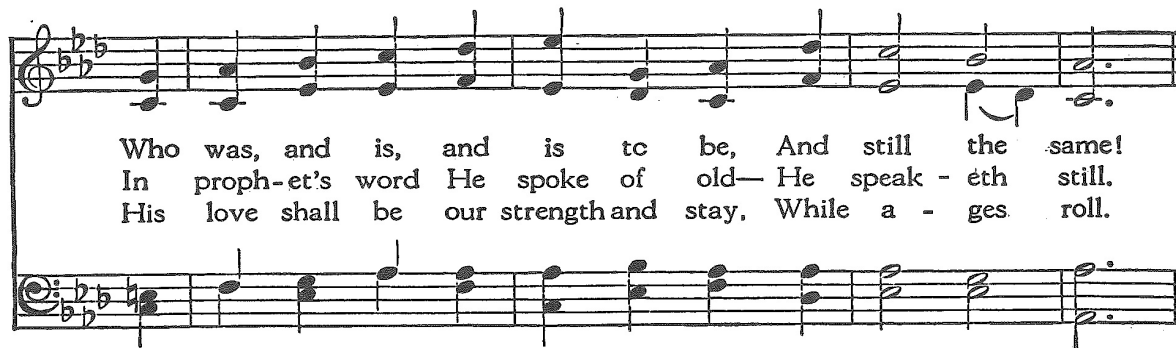
DANIEL BEN JUDAH, 14th century  
Revised version of *The Yigdal*

6. 6. 8. 4. D.

Hebrew Melody

*Majestically*


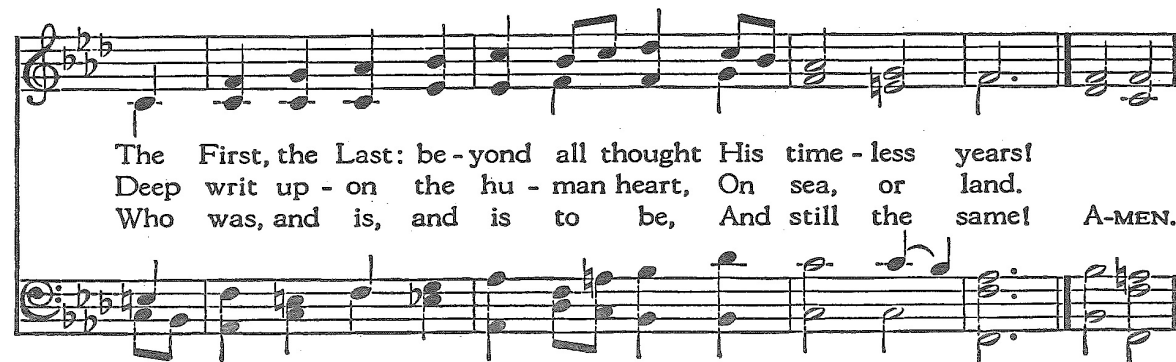
1. The God of Abra - ham praise, All prais - ed be His Name,  
2. His spir - it flow - eth free, High sur - ging where it will;  
3. He hath e - ter - nal life Im - plant - ed in the soul;



Who was, and is, and is to be, And still the same!  
In proph-et's word He spoke of old— He speak - eth still.  
His love shall be our strength and stay, While a - ges roll.



The one e - ter - nal God, Ere aught that now ap - pears;  
Es - tab - lished is His law, And change-less it shall stand,  
Praise to the liv - ing God! All prais - ed be His Name,



The First, the Last: be - yond all thought His time - less years!  
Deep writ up - on the hu - man heart, On sea, or land.  
Who was, and is, and is to be, And still the same! A-MEN.

## We Repent

*This is a time to confess our wrongdoings and neglects, ask for God's mercy, admit our need for God's forgiving grace, hear the assurance of our forgiveness, and then give God our thanks and praise.*

### \*CALL TO CONFESSION<sup>®</sup> (Leader)

God does not forsake us, but we often choose other rulers. We abdicate responsibility for our own lives, in relation to our Creator, turning instead to entertainers, politicians, and financial wizards as our hope. We fail to take sufficient time to discern God's will – to be in prayer, to study Holy Scripture, to center ourselves in the Holy Spirit. In worship, we are recalled to our primary accountability to God. Let us confess our sins before God, and before one another. Let us pray....

### \*CONFESSION OF SIN<sup>®</sup> (Unison)

**We confess, O God, that we often act as if we know better than you what is right for us. We make decisions without considering your larger purposes. We fail to put our faith, hope, and trust in you and in your will for us. Our own convenience, anxieties, and desires are more important to us than your commands. We go our own way and then blame others for our mistakes. Our inner confusion creates division and brokenness. We hide from you rather than admitting our needs. O God, we want to face our sin and find forgiveness. Help us! Amen.**

### \*SILENT PRAYERS OF CONFESSION

*{A time to silently offer our personal prayers of confession}*

### \*ASSURANCE OF PARDON<sup>®</sup> (Leader)

The One who raised Jesus from the dead offers us new life today. Through repentance and faith in Christ, our sins are forgiven, our lives are cleansed, and our inner nature is being renewed. God does not forsake us. We are the work of God's hands, the object of steadfast love. Meet the world with the assurance that you are loved, valued, and empowered as an ambassador of God's eternal kingdom. **Amen.**

### \*CALL TO PRAISE<sup>®</sup>

Leader: Let us give thanks and praise to our Triune God.

People: **We sing in praise of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.**

### \*PRAISE RESPONSE "The God of Abraham Praise"

vs 3

♪ Red #61

**He hath eternal life Implanted in the soul;  
His love shall be our strength and stay, While ages roll.  
Praise to the living God! All praised be His Name,  
Who was, and is, and is to be, And still the same!**

*Reproduced with permission One License #A-728042*

*{Please be seated}*

# We Hear the Word of God

We seek to learn more about God's love and grace, and how we are to live our lives as disciples of Jesus Christ. The Bible is our primary text on faith, which we consider to be scripture - sacred writings.  
 We believe the Bible to be the "inspired word of God."  
 Gospel (which means "Good News") refers to Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, which are Christians' most central books of the Bible.

**PROCLAMATION OF SCRIPTURE**

- First Lesson: [1 Samuel 8:4-20](#)  
 Second Lesson: [2 Corinthians 4:13-5:1](#)  
 Gospel Lesson: [Mark 3:20-35](#)

**HYMN**

"A Mighty Fortress Is Our God" vs 1 & 4

Red #281

Used with Permission One License #A-728042

**CHILDREN'S MESSAGE**

**SERMON**

## 281 The Christian Life

MARTIN LUTHER, 1529 EIN' FESTE BURG  
 Tr. FREDERICK H. HEDGE, 1853 MARTIN LUTHER, 1529  
8. 7. 8. 7. 6. 6. 6. 6. 7.  
*May be sung in unison. In majestic style*

-5-

## We Respond with Thanks

*We have heard God's call and have come and worshiped,  
we have confessed our sins and been assured of our forgiveness, we have  
learned more about God's grace and God's will. We now respond by  
re-affirming our faith in God,  
praying with and for one another, trusting in God's providence in our world, and  
giving of ourselves for the sake of the mission and ministry of Jesus Christ.*

*{Those who are able, please rise}*

**\*AFFIRMATION OF FAITH (Unison)**      *The Apostle's Creed*

**I believe in God, the Father Almighty,  
Creator of heaven and earth.  
And in Jesus Christ, his only begotten Son, our Lord,  
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,  
born of the virgin Mary,  
suffered under Pontius Pilate,  
was crucified, died, and buried;  
he descended to the dead;  
on the third day he rose again,  
ascended into heaven,  
and is seated on the right hand of God the Father Almighty.  
He will come again to judge the living and the dead.  
I believe in the Holy Spirit,  
the holy catholic church,<sup>†</sup>  
the communion of saints,  
the forgiveness of sins,  
the resurrection of the body,  
and the life everlasting. Amen.**

<sup>†</sup>The word "catholic" means "*the universal church*" and was the word used in the original version of the Creed. It does not refer here to the particular denomination of the Roman Catholic Church, but rather the whole Christian church of all denominations, the body of Christ, as a universal fellowship.

*{Please be seated}*

### CALL TO PRAYER

Leader: The Lord be with you.

**People: And also with you.**

Leader: Let us pray....

### PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE <sup>®</sup>

Leader: Let us come before the triune God in prayer.

*{A time of silent prayer}*

Leader: God of wholeness, we pray for believers all over the globe. Unify us in service of the gospel, that we may work together as beloved siblings to share your love with all. Lord, in your mercy,

**People: hear our prayer.**

Leader: God of the cosmos, we pray for creation; the gardens, waterways and creatures near to us and diverse forms of life that remain unseen. Teach us to treat the natural world with reverence, seeking restoration when human divisions have caused harm to your beloved creation. Lord, in your mercy.

**People: hear our prayer.**

Leader: God of all people, we pray for harmony among the nations. Cast out from us unclean spirits of greed and fear, that we may work in solidarity with one another for the common good. Lord, in your mercy.

**People: hear our prayer.**

Leader: God of abundance, we pray for those who are oppressed or in any need. Encourage those who have begun to lose heart. Strengthen and renew us with your Spirit. Lord, in your mercy,

**People: hear our prayer.**

Leader: God of righteousness, we pray for this holy house of worship. Set our gaze upon things eternal, that in thanksgiving for your mercy, we may extend grace to more and more people. Lord, in your mercy,

**People: hear our prayer.**

Leader: God of the ages, in your goodness you have sent us faithful witnesses for every time and place. We give you thanks for those saints who now rest in your eternal mercy. Lord, in your mercy,

**People: hear our prayer.**

Leader: We lift our prayers to you, O God, trusting in your abiding grace. We pray in the name of the one who taught us to pray....

#### LORD'S PRAYER *(Unison)*

**Our Father, who art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name.  
Thy kingdom come, thy will be done  
on earth as it is in heaven.  
Give us this day our daily bread,  
and forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors,  
and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.  
For thine is the kingdom and the power,  
and the glory forever. Amen.**

#### SUNG PRAISE

*"Alleluia"*

♩ *Blue #189*

**You're my Savior, alleluia; you're my Savior, alleluia;  
You're my Savior, alleluia; you're my Savior, alleluia!**

*Music & Text: Jerry Sinclair  
Reproduced with permission One License #A-728042*

#### OFFERTORY INVITATION <sup>®</sup>

Leader: The Apostle Paul writes of confidence in the power of God revealed in the resurrection of Jesus that must underlie a life of faithfulness and generosity.

**People: We seek to reveal such faithfulness in our lives.**

Leader: Paul says, "just as we have the same spirit of faith that is in accordance with scripture-- 'I believed, and so I spoke'-- we also believe, and so we speak,

**People: because we know that the one who raised the Lord Jesus will raise us also with Jesus, and will bring us with one another into his presence."**

Leader: Today, let us believe, and give with generosity

**People: that God's goodness may be known in the world.**

#### RETURNING GOD'S TITHES AND PRESENTING OUR OFFERINGS

Online Giving

*{As we share in hybrid worship, there is no passing of the plate in person.  
A plate is placed in the rear of the sanctuary for offerings to be placed  
when arriving or departing from the sanctuary.*

*Whether worshiping in person or online,  
the safest way to offer your tithe and offering to God through his church  
is through our secure [Online Giving](#) option on our website at [sprucc.org](http://sprucc.org). [Click Here](#)  
Offerings may also be mailed to St. Paul's UCC; 301 West Penn Ave; Robesonia, PA 19551}.*

*{Those who are able, please rise}*

**\*OFFERTORY RESPONSE**

NCH #283

**Giving, loving, holy God, receive our gifts we pray.  
Giving, loving, holy God, receive our gifts we pray.  
Take them, bless them, use them, grow them.  
Giving, loving, holy God, receive our gifts we pray.**

*Text: Benjamin Motz  
Used with Permission One License #A-728042*

**\*OFFERTORY PRAYER <sup>2</sup> (Leader)**

Thank you, God, for your faithfulness. We bring ourselves and some of what we have accumulated to praise you and do the work you call us to do. Fulfill your purpose for this church as you enlist our tithes, our offerings, and our lives. In amazement at the work of your hands, we reach out our hands to help others and invite them to join us. In our labors for you, we will not lose heart. Help us to do your will. **Amen.**

**We Are Sent Out**

*In response to God's love and grace,  
we go out into the world to share God's Good News  
through our words and actions.*

**\*COMMISSION <sup>2</sup>**

**Leader:** God's grace has been poured out on us.  
We are invited to share it with more and more people.  
**People:** **We seek to live so God's grace is evident through us.  
We will consult with God in our decision-making.**  
**Leader:** We are brothers and sisters of Jesus Christ.  
Go into the world to serve, to the glory of God.  
**People:** **Our praise will not cease when we leave this place.  
We have good news to share, so we will do it!**  
**ALL:** **Amen.**

**\*BENEDICTION**

**\*THREE FOLD SUNG AMEN**

*♩ Red #558  
Used with Permission One License #A-728042*

**\*SENDING HYMN**

*"I'm So Glad, Jesus Lifted Me"*

vs 1,2,3 & 4

*♩ Blue #522*

*Reprinted on following page.  
Used with Permission One License #A-728042*

*{Acolyte carries the light back into the world, leading us,  
as we now go to carry God's light and love back into the world.}*



**Worship Service Resource Credits**

Biblical quotations, unless otherwise noted, are from the New Revised Standard Version (NRSV) of the Bible (1989) by the Division of Christian Education of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U.S.A.  
<sup>1</sup> Reprinted with permission from *The New Century Hymnal* of the United Church of Christ. (1995). Cleveland, Ohio: The Pilgrim Press. and/or the *Book of Worship* of the United Church of Christ (1986). New York: United Church of Christ Office for Church Life and Leadership.  
<sup>2</sup> *Taught By Love* by Lavon Baylor. (1998). United Church Press; Cleveland, OH.  
<sup>3</sup> Reprinted with permission from *Sundays and Seasons*. (2020). Augsburg Fortress.  
<sup>4</sup> Reprinted with permission from the *Order of Worship for the Reformed Church in the United States*. and/or *The Hymnal of the Evangelical and Reformed Church*. (1985) New York: United Church Press.  
<sup>5</sup> Reprinted with permission from *Sourcebook of Worship Services*  
<sup>6</sup> scouting.org - resources for Boy Scouts of America  
<sup>7</sup> Reprinted with permission from *Worship Ways of the United Church of Christ*. (2013).  
<sup>8</sup> *Lecturn Resource*. (2014). Logos Productions, Inc.; Grove Heights, MN.  
<sup>9</sup> Edmonds, Robert Lee (Editor). (2008). *In Our Own Way; Living a Scouting Life Through Faith; A Handbook of Prayer and Devotion*. Dallas, TX: Red Honor Press  
<sup>10</sup> Reprinted with Permission from *Lecturn Resource*. 2014. Logos Productions, Inc., Inver Grove Heights, MN.  
<sup>11</sup> Miller, Earl D. (1994). *Consecrating Stewards*. Ohio Conference, United Church of Christ.  
<sup>12</sup> The Rev. Dr. Benjamin Motz  
<sup>13</sup> *Occasional Services; A Companion to the Lutheran Book of Worship*. Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress. (1982).  
One License is our Church Copyright License# A-728042., which is a subscription service giving us copyright permission to print the words and music found in the bulletin and to live stream music on the internet during the Worship Service.  
*Resources are edited and adapted for use in this worship service.*



# I'm So Glad, Jesus Lifted Me 522

*I will exalt You, O Lord, for You lifted me out of the depths. Psalm 30:1*

1. I'm so glad, Je - sus lift - ed me! I'm so glad,  
 2. I was sink - ing down, Je - sus lift - ed me! I was sink - ing down,  
 3. Sa - tan had me bound, Je - sus lift - ed me! Sa - tan had me bound,  
 4. I'm so glad, Je - sus lift - ed me! I'm so glad,

Je - sus lift - ed me! I'm so glad, Je - sus lift - ed me! Sing - ing  
 Je - sus lift - ed me! I was sink - ing down, Je - sus lift - ed me! Sing - ing  
 Je - sus lift - ed me! Sa - tan had me bound, Je - sus lift - ed me! Sing - ing  
 Je - sus lift - ed me! I'm so glad, Je - sus lift - ed me! Sing - ing

Optional extended or choral ending

glo - ry, hal - le - lu - jah! Je - sus lift - ed me!  
 glo - ry, hal - le - lu - jah! Je - sus lift - ed me!  
 glo - ry, hal - le - lu - jah! Je - sus lift - ed me! Je - sus lift - ed me!  
 glo - ry, hal - le - lu - jah! Je - sus lift - ed me!

TEXT: Traditional and Camp Kirkland

MUSIC: Traditional; arranged by Camp Kirkland

I'M SO GLAD

Irregular meter

Text and Arr. © Copyright 1997 by Integrity's Hosanna! Music and Word Music (a div. of WORD MUSIC). All rights reserved. Used by permission.



## The Flow of the Worship Service

Our worship service has an intentional order to it. The flow of worship is called the liturgical movement. The movement reminds us weekly of our journey in faith of moving from being separated from God by sin, to being restored by God's grace as disciples of Christ. It is based on the sixth chapter of the Biblical book of Isaiah.

- (1) God welcomes us and invites us
- (2) We respond to God's call by worshipping Him
- (3) We confess our need for God's forgiveness and grace
- (4) We are assured of God's forgiveness and grace
- (5) We learn more about God's will through scripture, song, and sermon
- (6) We grow closer to God and one another through prayer
- (7) We give God thanks by offering our time, talent, and treasure
- (8) God sends us into the world to share His love and grace with others



## † Prayer List †

*Please lift up those listed here in your prayers this week.*

*"Pray for one another, so that you may be healed.*

*The prayer of the righteous is powerful and effective." ~ James 5:16b*

### **Medical Concerns & Healing:**

Sam B.  
Lori & Ryan B.  
Rich D.  
Jacob E.  
Jaden G.  
Ann H.  
Leigh H.  
Rev. David K.  
Jim & Donna K.  
Janice L.  
Ella L.  
Amy M.  
Diane M.  
George M.  
Starr M.

### **Medical Concerns & Healing:**

Steve M.  
Terry O.  
Paul P.  
Fred R.  
Julie R.  
Jim S.  
Rob & Jodi S.  
Martha W.

### **Mourning:**

Family & Friends of Ron S.  
Family & Friends of Barb B.  
Family & Friends of Marilyn W.

### **Social Concerns:**

Those impacted by COVID-19  
Those working on a vaccine for COVID-19

*Please let us know if we can be in prayer with you.*

*All are welcome to add names to the prayer list.*

*Names are generally left on the list for about four weeks.*

*Please let us know if you would like a name to remain longer or shorter.*

*If you would like someone's name added to the prayer list, please contact the church office at 610-621-5770 or [office@sprucc.org](mailto:office@sprucc.org).*

### **Visitation Care Team**

Our Visitation Care Team (VCT) is composed of lay members who have been trained for visitation. If you are in need of prayer, a visit, or just a listening ear, they are here to be of support to you. To contact the Visitation Care Team with a visitation request or to share information about a potential care need email the VCT at [CareTeam@sprucc.org](mailto:CareTeam@sprucc.org). For more information, go to our "[Visitation Care Ministries](#)" page at [www.sprucc.org](http://www.sprucc.org) under the "ministries" tab.

For the week of June 6 the Primary VCT is Geri Gammel, the Secondary VCT is Beth Miller.

For the week of June 13 the Primary VCT is Jon Henning, the Secondary VCT is Rob Seifrit.

## ††† General Announcements †††

### Welcome!

We are glad that you are here to worship with us. May you find the worship and message meaningful and satisfying to your soul. May your week be blessed.

### Sunday School

Sunday school has ended for the summer months. It will resume on September 12. However, Sunday school music, videos, and an assortment of other materials are available for downloading over the summer. Click on this link for [Sunday school for youth](#).

### Devotional Music

Devotional music for all ages, courtesy of Pastor Bob, is available on our website. Click on this link for [Devotional Music](#).

### Weekly Lectionary Bible Study

Every Tuesday morning Zion UCC of Womelsdorf offers a Zoom Bible Study based on the scripture passages for the coming Sunday. You may use any version of the Bible. The study goes from 9:00 to 9:45am. We would be happy to have you join us! Zoom login information may be found on our [website](#).

### Summer Schedule

During the months of June, July & August, we switch to our summer worship schedule with worship beginning at 9:30am. Please make note of the change.

### Community Blood Drive - June 12

The next Community Blood Drive will take place at St. Paul's Church on Saturday, June 12 from 8:00am to 1:00pm. For more information contact Terry Pastor at 610-693-5024. To schedule an appointment to donate, call 1-800-223-6667 or schedule online at [www.giveapint.org](http://www.giveapint.org).

### Community Vacation Bible School (VBS) - June 14 to June 17

In-person VBS will take place from Monday, June 14 to Thursday, June 17, from 6:00-8:00pm at St. Daniel's Lutheran Church. The theme is "*Christmas in June*". VBS is open to children 3 years old and up to and including Grade 6. This event is sponsored by St. Daniel's, St. Paul's and Zion churches. Online registration is required. Go to the church's website, [www.sprucc.org](http://www.sprucc.org), to register. If you do not have access to a computer, please contact the church office.

### Strengthen the Church Offering

On Sunday, June 20, during worship we will receive the Strengthen the Church Offering. The Strengthen the Church Offering furthers the work of local UCC Conference, as well as the National UCC. The funds raised support leadership development, new churches, youth ministry, and innovation in existing congregations.

### Reading Phillies - June 24

We would like to organize a group outing to a Reading Phillies game. We are looking at Thursday, June 24. The game would begin at 7:05pm. To reserve a ticket, please contact the church office. Please join us.

**The deadline for reserving a ticket is this Thursday, June 10.**

### Telephone Live Streaming & Playback Worship

This service is being offered to those who do not have internet access. You may call us at our toll free number **1-888-649-5770** and listen to the worship service live using a landline or cell phone. (No internet, smartphone, tablet, or computer is necessary - this works with a standard corded phone, cell phone, or even with a rotary phone). You also have the option for the church to automatically call you when the live stream worship begins (rather than you calling the church); which you can sign up for at the above toll free number, or you can call the church office, and we can add you to the call list. If you have any questions, difficulties, or issues, please let us know by calling the office at 610-621-5770. There is no charge to you for this service. If you know of someone who does not have internet access, please let them know of this feature.

## About Today

**Church Season: Pentecost** -which is the season of the church in mission. It is the time between the ascension of Christ and his second coming, which is the time we are presently living in today, and as such is the longest season of the church year. The day of Pentecost is the birthday of the Christian church.

**Color of the Paraments** (cloths on the altar and pulpit):

**Green** - symbolizing the life God brings, especially through our mission work.

The suggested scripture lessons are from the Revised Common Lectionary (RCL), which selects passages throughout the Bible over a three year cycle. The RCL is the most common lectionary used by Christian churches. We are in **Year B**, which emphasizes the Gospel of Mark.

The Bible is in two sections: Old Testament - OT (scripture prior to Christ's birth), located in the first 2/3 of the Bible; and New Testament - NT (about Christ & early church).

### **This Sunday, June 6, 2021, Lectionary Reading for Second Sunday after Pentecost**

1 Samuel 8:4-11, (12-15), 16-20, (11:14-15) *and* Psalm 138; Genesis 3:8-15 *and* Psalm 130;  
2 Corinthians 4:13 - 5:1; Mark 3:20-35

### **The First Book of Samuel**

The First Book of Samuel describes the transition of the nation of Israel from their time of being ruled by the judges to that of being ruled by their first king, Saul. The end of First Samuel and the beginning of Second Samuel describe the transition to Israel's second king, David. First Samuel begins with the birth of the prophet Samuel, who is a priest, judge, seer, military leader, and the one who anointed both Saul and David as king. First Samuel covers the time span of about 1100 BC to 1000 BC, and Second Samuel covers the time from about 1000 BC to 960 BC.

### **Psalm 138**

This is an OT song giving thanks for God's deliverance, which is attributed to the authorship of King David.

### **Genesis**

The book of Genesis (OT) is a part of the Pentateuch (first five books of the OT or Torah or one of the five most central books in Judaism). Genesis means beginning. The book of Genesis tells about the creation of humankind and the entire universe by the will and power of God. Genesis creates a context for the reading of the entire rest of the Bible. The book is traditionally attributed to Moses, who led the Israelite people from Egyptian slavery to freedom, through the saving grace and divine providence of God.

### **Psalm 130**

This is an OT sung prayer of humility and trust in God. Psalms 120-134 are a part of the collection known as "A Song of Ascents." These songs were most likely sung by people on religious pilgrimages.

### **The Second Letter of Paul to the Corinthians**

This NT Epistle (letter) was written by the Apostle Paul between 50-56 A.D. to a gentile congregation he had founded several years earlier in Corinth (the capital city of the Roman province of Achaia, a large and prospering urban center that was ethnically, culturally, and religiously diverse). This letter is believed to be a compilation of fragments of multiple letters. This letter is in response to Titus' glowing reports and other negative reports Paul has received about this church. Paul was a Christian, Jew, Pharisee, Roman citizen, and church leader, who had a direct encounter with Jesus Christ on the road to Damascus after Jesus' ascension into heaven. Paul wrote more of the NT than any other person.

### **The Gospel According to Mark**

Mark's Gospel is the oldest and shortest of the four Gospels, written between 65-75 A.D. Papias, a church leader in the 2<sup>nd</sup> century, reported that this Gospel's author is Mark, a follower of Peter who wrote this Gospel after Peter's death.

### **Next Sunday, June 13, 2021, Lectionary Reading for Third Sunday after Pentecost**

1 Samuel 15:34 - 16:13 *and* Psalm 20; Ezekiel 17:22-24 *and* Psalm 92:1-4, 12-15;  
2 Corinthians 5:6-10, (11-13), 14-17; Mark 4:26-34



Link to Website's  
Upcoming Events



## New Covenant

The Strengthen the Church Offering supports congregations making crucial adaptations. During the last year, several congregations sought help updating their technology to be able to connect with people when not worshipping in person.

Sarah Hugus of the Florida Conference struggled with the virtual services at her congregation. "In the beginning months of watching Facebook Live services, it was usually a big miss. Week after week, the quality was poor, which was not encouraging." Thanks to a grant from the Strengthen the Church Offering, Sarah's congregation invested in new technology to create an engaging virtual worship experience. The technology also worked for enhanced outdoor services with appropriate COVID protocols in place.

Outside of Chicago, Plainfield Congregational faced a similar problem. The church's high-risk members could not come to worship, but the congregation wasn't prepared to produce online worship. A grant made the difference. As church member Sharon explained, "2020 pushed everyone beyond their limits on so many different levels, but thanks to the push to learn and gift to purchase new technology, we have expanded our reach beyond the doors of our sanctuary to the greater local and world community. We have grown, and the financial boost has allowed us to minister to more than we had imagined."

New Covenant Community UCC in Baltimore used grants to support a meal program and technology improvements. The church reports that a couple living in two different cities nurtured their relationship in part through shared weekly worship and Bible Study. The online church gatherings helped their relationship, and now the couple plans to marry in the coming months. **Renewal happens because of these grants.**

**Gifts to the Strengthen the Church Offering,  
Renew the United Church of Christ.**



Please give to the 2021 Strengthen the Church campaign.