

Reverend W. Alan Froggatt, Pastor & Teacher
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THE UNITED CHURCH OF CHESTER

An Open & Affirming Congregation of
The United Church of Christ
September 17, 2023, 10:00 a.m.
Sixteenth Sunday after Pentecost

WELCOME

Peggy Phillips, Deacon

PRELUDE

Eleanor Rigby/With a Little Help From My Friends J Lennon & P McCartney

INTROIT

Surely the Presence of the Lord is in this Place

L. Wolfe

CALL TO WORSHIP

The God of compassion, our patient father and affectionate mother, holds us in the divine embrace:

The grace of God blesses us richly.

The Christ of love, our spiritual brother, walks beside us through times of turmoil and periods of peacefulness:

The grace of Christ engages our living.

The Holy Spirit of faithfulness, the very breath within, strengthens our witness and builds our fellowship:

The grace of the Spirit manifests the Christ in each of us. Amen.

*HYMN

We Gather Together

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We gather together to ask for your blessing, you chasten and hasten your will to make known; the wicked oppressing now cease from distressing. We praise your name, O God; forget not your own.

Beside us to guide us, O God, with us joining, ordaining, maintaining, redeeming our world; so from the beginning the fight we were winning; Lord you were at our side; we trust in your word.

We all do extol you, our leader triumphant, and pray that you still our defender will be. Let your congregation escape tribulation. Your name be ever praised! O Lord, make us free!

***INVOCATION**

Gather us together, O God, in the fellowship of faithful people. May we never forget what the church has done for our world, and for us. Remind us that we *are* the church, and if we cease to grow, if we stand still in our pride, if we let the flames die, we are no longer the church. May our growth be in our service, our pride be in you alone, and our spirit be fervent. Give us the will and the power to continue the ministry of Jesus in ourselves and through this church, today and every day of our life together. Amen.

PROCLAMATION OF THE WORD

SCRIPTURE LESSON

I Thessalonians 5.11-24

Therefore encourage one another and build up each other, as indeed you are doing. But we appeal to you, brothers and sisters, to respect those who labor among you, and have charge of you in the Lord and admonish you; esteem them very highly in love because of their work. Be at peace among yourselves. And we urge you, beloved, to admonish the idlers, encourage the faint-hearted, help the weak, be patient with all of them. See that none of you repays evil for evil, but always seek to do good to one another and to all. Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. Do not quench the Spirit. Do not despise the words of prophets, but test everything; hold fast to what is good; abstain from every form of evil. May the very God of peace sanctify you entirely; and may your spirit and soul and body be kept sound and blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. The one who calls you is faithful, and will do this.

ANTHEM

Joyful Thanks

J. Martin

SCRIPTURE LESSON

Hebrews 10.19-25

(p 1097)

POEM

The Creation James Weldon Johnson (1871-1938)

SERMON

“Ah, Look at All the Lonely People” Rev. W. Alan Froggatt
“How lonely sits the city that once was full of people!”
(Lamentations 1.1)

RESPONSE TO THE WORD

OFFERTORY

Peace I Leave With You

W. Mozart and D. Moore

*DOXOLOGY

*Praise God from whom all blessings flow / Praise God all creatures here below
Praise God for all that love has done / Creator, Christ and Spirit, One. Amen*

JOYS AND CONCERNS

PASTORAL PRAYER AND LORD'S PRAYER (*"trespasses"*)

*HYMN

O Church of God United

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O church of God, united to serve one common Lord, proclaim to all one message, with hearts in glad accord. Christ ever goes before us; we follow day by day with strong and eager footsteps along the upward way.

From ev'ry land and nation the ordered ranks appear; to serve one valiant leader they come from far and near. They chant their one confession, they praise one living Lord, and place their sure dependence upon his saving word.

Though creeds and tongues may differ, they speak, O Christ of thee; and in thy loving spirit we shall one people be. Lord, may our faithful service and singleness of aim proclaim to all the power of thy redeeming name.

May thy great prayer be answered that we may all be one, close bound, by love united in thee, God's blessed Son: to bring a single witness, to make the pathway bright, that souls which grope in darkness may find the one true light.

*BENEDICTION

BENEDICTION RESPONSE

Go In Peace

(Waters/White)

LOOKING AHEAD

September 17	5:00 pm	Soup Kitchen	September 20	8:30 am 7:00 pm	Yoga Choir Rehearsal
September 18	6:30 pm	Irish Dance	September 21	8:15 am	Coffee Hours at Simon's Marketplace
September 19	8:30 am	Yoga	September 22	11:00 am	Chester HS Alumni Reunion
			September 23	10:00 am	Worship

NOTES AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Welcome! No matter who you are, or where you are on life's journey, you are welcome here at the United Church of Chester, an Open and Affirming Church and a member of the United Church of Christ. **The United Church of Chester is centered in Christ's love, embracing, nurturing, serving all, and committed to justice and peace.**

The Deacon for the month of September is **Peggy Phillips**. Our Greeter for today is **Laurel Johnson**. Flowers on the altar were provided by **Susanne Spellacy**.

We are currently out of Adams Food Cards and we have received requests for cards. Please consider donating a card in any amount. Thank you.

ALAN'S OFFICE HOURS: Wednesday – Friday 8:30 am – 12:30 pm, or by appointment

CHURCH OFFICE HOURS: Tuesday-Thursday 9am-1pm.