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## THE UNITED CHURCH OF CHESTER

An Open & Affirming Congregation of

The United Church of Christ

October 8, 2023, 10:00 a.m.

*Nineteenth Sunday after Pentecost*

WELCOME

Daphne Stitt, Deacon

PRELUDE

*Meditation from Thais*

J. Massenet

INTROIT

*Over My Head*

M. Kemp

CALL TO WORSHIP

(E. Espinosa)

Let God change our hearts and make them ever true;

**Let God change our hearts, and let us be made new.**

God is the potter, we are the clay,

**God makes us and molds us; these things we pray.**

Let God change our hearts, and let us be made new;

**Let God change our hearts, and make them ever true. Amen.**

\*HYMN

*Come, Christians, Join to Sing*

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Come, Christians, join to sing: Alleluia! Amen! Loud praise to Christ we bring: Alleluia!  
Amen! Let all with heart and voice, with hymns of thanks rejoice; praise we with grateful  
choice: Alleluia! Amen!

Come lift your hearts on high: Alleluia! Amen! Let praises fill the sky: Alleluia! Amen!  
Christ is our Guide and Friend on whom we can depend; his love shall never end:  
Alleluia! Amen!

Praise yet our Christ again: Alleluia! Amen! Life shall not end the strain: Alleluia! Amen!  
On heaven's blissful shore Christ's goodness we'll adore, singing forevermore: Alleluia!  
Amen!

\*INVOCATION

**Our Lord, catch us off guard today. Surprise us with some moment of beauty or joy so that we may be startled into seeing that you are with us, here in all your splendor, always and everywhere, barely hidden, beneath and beyond, within this life we breathe. When we meet as brother and sister, help us to see beneath our differences to our common humanity, our common needs, that we may love and serve each other faithfully. Open our hearts to the knowledge that beneath our need for one another lies a deeper need, a yearning which only you can fill. May we learn in this hour that we can be fully each other's only when we are fully yours. Through Jesus Christ our Lord we pray, Amen.**

**PROCLAMATION OF THE WORD**

OLD TESTAMENT LESSON

Proverbs 24.30-34

I passed by the field of one who was lazy, by the vineyard of a stupid person; and see, it was all overgrown with thorns; the ground was covered with nettles, and its stone wall was broken down. Then I saw and considered it; I looked and received instruction. A little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to rest, and poverty will come upon you like a robber, and want, like an armed warrior.

ANTHEM

*Glory Bound* (trad. spirituals)

J.A. Shafferman

NEW TESTAMENT LESSON

Luke 14.15-24

(p. 954)

SERMON

*"Good Excuses"*

Rev. W. Alan Froggatt

"When the time for the dinner arrived, the host sent his servant out to say to those who were invited, 'Come; for everything is ready now.' But they all alike began to make excuses."

(Luke 14.17-18)

**RESPONSE TO THE WORD**

OFFERTORY

*Amor Vincit Omnia* (Love Conquers All)

P. Choplin

\*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"*)

POEM

*Ode to Laziness*

Pablo Neruda (1904-1973)

\*HYMN

*In Christ There is No East or West*

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In Christ there is no east or west, in him no south or north; but one community of love throughout the whole wide earth.

In Christ shall true hearts everywhere their high communion find; his service is the golden cord close binding humankind.

Join hands, disciples of the faith, what e'er your race may be; all children of the living God are surely kin to me.

In Christ now meet both east or west, in him meet south and north; all Christly souls are one in him throughout the whole wide earth.

\*BENEDICTION

BENEDICTION RESPONSE

*Irish Blessing*

A. Lovelace

### LOOKING AHEAD

October 8	11:00 am 11:00 am 5:00 pm	Trustees Meeting Christmas Fair Meeting Soup Kitchen	October 11	6:30 pm	Scouts - Webelos
October 9	6:30 pm	Irish Dance	October 12	8:30 am 10:00 am 5:30 pm 6:30 pm 7:00 pm	Yoga Backpack Program Scouts – Wolf Den Scouts - Bear Den Choir Rehearsal
October 10	8:30 am 6:00 pm 6:30 pm	Yoga Chester Garden Club Scouts – AOL	October 13	8:15 am	Coffee Hours at Simon's Marketplace
			October 15	10:00 am 11:00 am	Worship Deacons Meeting

### 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 October is **Daphne Stitt**. Our Greeter for today is **Gail Thompson**. Flowers on the altar were provided by **Susanne Spellacy** in memory of her mother, who loved flowers. Coffee hour is being hosted by **The Easton Family**.

**Rev. George Easton** turned 90 yesterday. Please join us after church today for a special celebration!

The **Outreach Committee** is designating the month of October to collect Adams foods cards in any denomination for the upcoming holiday season. Please consider picking up a food card. Any questions please contact Sue Germini-Humble at 860-395-4340 or the church office.

**Chester Hose Company Craft Fair** is on Saturday, October 14<sup>th</sup> at the Chester Fairgrounds.

**Tellabration 2023** is returning on November 5<sup>th</sup> at 4:00 pm. There are sign-up sheets in the narthex and Fellowship Hall for this event. Any questions please contact Margie Warner at 860-227-7391.

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

**CHURCH OFFICE HOURS:** Tuesday - Friday 9am-1pm