THE UNITED CHURCH OF CHESTER

An Open & Affirming Congregation of
The United Church of Christ

Reverend W. Alan Froggatt, Pastor & Teacher
Every Member of the Congregation, Ministers
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May 21, 2023 10:00 a.m.
Katie Wilcox Day

PREPARATION FOR THE WORD

PRELUDE	*Jana Gana Mana*	R. Tagore
	The Lady Doak College Song	anon.
INTROIT	*As We Are Gathered*	J. Daniels

CALL TO WORSHIP
Leader 1: God said, Let there be Light;
Leader 2: Jesus said, I am the light of the world;
People: May the Spirit of God shine Christ's light through us.
Leader 1: God revealed the divine name to Moses: "I am who I am."
Leader 2: When asked if he was the Christ of God, Jesus said, "I am."
People: Who is called by the Spirit to live Christ's mission? We are.
Leader 1: In the beginning, God spoke the word of creation, and it came to pass.
Leader 2: In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.
People: And so does the Spirit speak in and through us all for a new day. Amen.

*HYMN *Diverse in Culture, Nation, Race* 372

Diverse in culture, nation, race, we come together by your grace. God, let us be a meeting ground where hope and healing lover are found.

God, let us be a bridge of care connecting people ev'rywhere. Help us confront all fear and hate and lust for pow'r that separate.

When chasms widen, storms arise, O Holy Spirit, make us wise. Let our resolve, like steel, be strong to stand with those who suffer wrong.

God, let us be a table spread with gifts of love and broken bread, where all find welcome, grace attends, and enemies arise as friends.

INVOCATION Michele Procko, Deacon

Eternal spirit, you have called us into relationship to fulfill a mission whose meaning we know only in part. Yet, we are ready, Lord; ready to be propelled into the struggle for justice, liberation, and peace. We are ready to use the gifts of faith, prayer, love and hope that you have so freely given us in the service of your beloved. Rekindle the fire of your Spirit in us, God of passion, and send us into the world as sparks that will light the way for all. We ask in the name of Christ our Lord, Amen.

PROCLAMATION OF THE WORD

GOSPEL LESSON Matthew 28.16-20

"Now the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain to which Jesus had directed them. When they saw him, they worshipped him; but some doubted. And Jesus came and said to them, 'All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Creator, the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age.'"

ANTHEM *Amazing Grace* J. Newton and E. Lojeski

Amazing grace how sweet the sound, that saved a wretch like me!
I once was lost but now am found, was blind but now I see.

'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear and grace my fears relieved,
How precious did that grace appear the hour I first believed!

Thru many dangers, toils and snares I have already come.
'Tis grace hath brought me safe thus far and grace will lead me home.

When we've been there ten thousand years, bright shining as the sun.
We've no less days to sing God's praise than when we'd first begun.

NEW TESTAMENT LESSON Acts 1.6-11

SERMON *"Diamonds in Our Eyes"* Rev. W. Alan Froggatt

"Go now and make disciples of all the peoples, baptizing them in the name of the Creator, the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you." (Matthew 28.19-20)

RESPONSE TO THE WORD

OFFERTORY *Love is Little* (Shaker tune) arr K. Siegfried

Love is little, love is low, love will make my spirit grow.
Grow in peace, grow in light, love will do the thing that's right.

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 & LORD'S PRAYER *("trespasses")*

POEM *Ascension* Denis Devlin (1908-1959)

*HYMN *Now Let Us All, In Hymns of Praise* 362

Now let us all, in hymns of praise, bear witness with one voice to God's redeeming work in Christ, and bid the world rejoice. Today we call to mind the things that time cannot erode: what God, Creator of the world, is doing for our good.

What changes, tests and challenges the church of Christ survives! How rich the records left to us of dedicated lives! Still must the church proclaim to all that now, and evermore, the house of God is open house, and Christ the Open Door.

Of all our labors, who can say what harvest there shall be, when time, that limits and distorts, becomes eternity? Then shall our hymns, rehearsed below, be perfect praise above, as, face to face, we fully know what this means: God is love!

BLESSING & BENEDICTION

BENEDICTION RESPONSE *Bless The Lord, O My Soul* Ipalitov & Ivanov

LOOKING AHEAD

May 21	**11:00 am** **11:45 am** 5:00 pm	**Annual Meeting** **Trustee Meeting** Soup Kitchen	May 25	8:30 am 10:00 am 6:30 pm **7:00 pm**	Yoga Backpack Program Scouts – Pack Meeting **Choir Rehearsal**
May 22 May 23	5:30 pm 8:30 am 6:30 pm	Irish Dance Group Yoga Scouts – Arrows of Light	May 26	**8:15 am**	**Coffice Hours at The Villager**
May 24	6:00 pm	Scouts – Bear Den	May 28	**10:00 am** 5:00 pm	**Worship** Soup Kitchen

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**.

Congratulations – Mason Fearon
Congratulations to **Mason Fearon** who was confirmed this morning at the DRCC and many thanks to his sponsor **Skip Weisenburger** for guiding Mason through confirmation.

Yoga at UCC
You may notice in the calendar that yoga classes are being held at the church on Tuesday and Thursday mornings. The instructor is Megan Spaulding. You can learn about Megan's practice at aspen-yoga.com. If you are interested in the class you can call Megan at 860-331-6910 for the details.

Memorial Day Refreshments Needed
Sandwiches and cookies are needed for the reception at the Meeting House following the Memorial Day Parade on May 29.

Food can be dropped off between 8:30-9:30 that day. Please consider making a little extra as the Valley high school band will be marching in the parade. Any questions contact janezanardi@comcast.net or call 860 526-9007

The Deacon for May is **Michele Procko.** Our Greeter for today is **Peggy Phillips**. Flowers on the altar were provided by **Peggy Phillips**. Coffee hour is being hosted by **Bridget Forant**.

ALAN'S OFFICE HOURS: Wednesday-Friday 8:30am-12:30pm, other times by appt.

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