THE UNITED CHURCH OF CHESTER

An Open & Affirming Congregation of
The United Church of Christ
June 23, 2024 10:00 a.m.
Fifth Sunday after Pentecost

PREPARATION FOR THE WORD

WELCOME — Jennifer Gill, Deacon

PRELUDE — *Casta Diva* from Norma — Bellini

INTROIT

CALL TO WORSHIP (from *episcopalpartnership.org*)

We come today, representing all the majesty of creation.
Diverse and beautiful, blessed and beloved, all made in the image of the Creator.
We come today, called to this time and this place by an infinite God,
Who hears our cries and responds with love and mercy.
We come today, knowing You care for us.
We come today, knowing that your arms are always open to offer comfort. We come declaring the Sanctity of Life and the Dignity of All. Amen.

*HYMN — *All the Colors of the Rainbow* — insert
(both hymns this morning are from Songs for the Holy Other, used with permission)

All the colors of the rainbow live unseen in daily light; but their splendors find expression when released to human sight; so the church reveals most beauty where diversity is real: breadth of race and class and gender, room for doubt and space to heal.

All the body's parts are wanted, nor can one despise the rest: head and hand must work together, as must eye and ear and chest; so the church needs all its members for a range of ministries: varied gifts with one great mission, "Do this for the least of these."

Every language gains more music when the words for peace appear: Pax, Salaam, Eirini, Heiwa, Pace, Santi, Frieden, Mir. Though the tongues make sounds that vary all bespeak a common home: longing for the end of conflict and a new life in God's Shalom.

Teach us, God, our need of others; through them help us fully live. Wean us from our selfish habits; let us listen, learn, forgive. May we see your longed for image in each human heart and face, and behold how those around us can be channels of your grace.

INVOCATION (Rev. Sam Lundquist, St John's Presbyterian Church, San Francisco)
God of wild love and extravagant acceptance - Spirit of boldness and beauty… You are faithfully present in both the grit and glitter of life, and you are present here with us now. Awaken us to your dream for creation: A world in which every member of the human family is free to flourish however you have made us. Ignite the Divine Light within us to sparkle through the prism of our bodies and brighten every corner of this Earth. Holy One, You call each of us beloved, each of us cherished, each of us desired, each of us sacred. And so we give you thanks now and forever. Amen.

PROCLAMATION OF THE WORD

OLD TESTAMENT LESSON Genesis 9.12-17 (p. 9)

ANTHEM *Gilbert's Rainbow*
Tune: Somewhere Over The Rainbow, Harold Arlen & Mark Leydorf
Diane Adams (soloist)

NEW TESTAMENT LESSON Romans 8.37-39
In all these things we are more than conquerors through the God who loves us. For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

SERMON *"Marriage Equality at 20"* Rev. W. Alan Froggatt
"I have set my bow in the clouds, and it shall be a sign of the covenant between me and the earth."
(Genesis 9.13)

OPEN AND AFFIRMING STATEMENT

RESPONSE TO THE WORD

OFFERTORY *Rainbow Connection* Paul Williams & Kenneth Ascher

*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 *A Box of Crayons* author unknown

*HYMN *Sing a New World Into Being* insert

Sing a new world into being. Sound a bold and hopeful theme. Find a tune for silent yearnings. Lend your voice and dare to dream: dream a church where all who worship find their lives and loves belong. Sing a new world into being. Sing as Christ inspires your song!

Sing a new world into being where each gender class and race brings its rainbow gifts and colors to God' limitless embrace; where the lines that once divided form instead the ties that bind. Sing a new world into being: risk transforming heart and mind!

Sing a new world into being where the homeless find a home. Where no children ever hunger but are filled with God's shalom; where all people work for justice, where all hate and vengeance cease. Sing a new world into being: raise the harmonies of peace.

Sing a new world into being. Join the ancient prophets' cry for a time of health and plenty when all tears have been wiped dry; when compassion flows like waters, pouring balm for all who grieve. Sing a new world into being: live the promise you believe.

*BLESSING & BENEDICTION

BENEDICTION RESPONSE

(* all who are able may stand)

LOOKING AHEAD

June 23	**10:00 am** 5:00 pm	**Worship** Soup Kitchen	June 27	8:30 am 5:30 pm	Yoga TreeHouse Players
June 24	6:30 pm	Irish Dance	June 28	**8:15 am**	**Coffice Hours at The Villager**
June 25	8:30 am	Yoga	June 30	**10:00 am** **11:00 am** 5:00 pm	**Worship** **Trustees Mtg.** 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**.

The deacon for the month of June is **Jennifer Gill.** You were greeted this morning by **Diane Lindsay.** Chancel Flowers were provided by **Laurel Johnson.** Coffee Hour is being hosted by **Michele Procko**, **Jane Zanardi** and **Diane Lindsay**.

Special Volunteer Request – June 22-23
Peg Breslin, a long-time Chester resident living at 21 East Liberty Street is in need of help. Rosie Bininger of Chester Social Services is working to bring her home under a state program called The Money Follows the Person. The town has agreed to fund a dumpster the weekend of June 22-23 (each day starting at 11:00 am) and Peg could use some help bringing items upstairs from the basement. Items are not heavy. Even one hour would be appreciated.

Welcome New Members – June 30th
Next Sunday, June 30th please join us in welcoming four new members into the covenant fellowship of United Church of Chester.

Worship Service Time Change
Please remember that in July and August worship service begins at 9 am beginning with July 7th worship service.

ALAN'S OFFICE HOURS: Wednesday – Friday 8:30 am – 12:30 pm

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