**THE UNITED CHURCH OF CHESTER**

An Open & Affirming Congregation of
The United Church of Christ
August 25, 2024 9:00 a.m.
*Fourteenth Sunday after Pentecost*

## PREPARATION FOR THE WORD

WELCOME — Peggy Phillips, Deacon

PRELUDE — *Après un Rêve* — Gabriel Fauré
Sue Saltus, organist

CALL TO WORSHIP
We need not look up to find God, but only to look around:
**To look within ourselves and beyond ourselves, to see God in the eyes of another.**
We need not listen for distant thunder to find God:
**We need only to hear the music of life, the words of children, the questions of the curious, the rhythm of a heartbeat.**
Let us worship the God who inhabits our world;
**Let us worship the God who is alive in our living together. Amen.**

*HYMN — *I Sing a Song of The Saints of God* — 494

I sing a song of the saints of God patient and brave and true, who toiled and fought and lived and died for the Lord they loved and knew. And one was a doctor and one was a queen, and one was a shepherdess on the green; they were all of them saints of God, and I mean, God helping, to be one too.

They loved their Lord so dear, so dear, and his love made them strong; and they followed the right, for Jesus' sake, the whole of their good lives long. And one was a soldier, and one was a priest, and one was slain by a fierce wild beast; and there's not any reason, no, not the least, why I shouldn't be one too.

They lived not only in ages past, there are hundreds of thousands still; the world is bright with the joyous saints who love to do Jesus' will. You can meet them in school, or in lanes, or at sea, in church or in trains, or in shops, or at tea; for the saints of God are just folk like me, and I mean to be one too.

INVOCATION

**Together as a small part of the great family of faith, we come before you this morning in hope and expectation, O God. We know that you love and care for us in all circumstances of life. Our faith holds us steady when at times we cannot yet see where we are traveling. In trust we bring you our struggles and joys, our laughter and tears, knowing that in your presence all things will be redeemed. To live adequately and fulfillingly, we ask now your abiding presence as Counselor and Friend, through Jesus our brother, Amen.**

## PROCLAMATION OF THE WORD

OLD TESTAMENT LESSON Zechariah 8.1-8

ANTHEM *Rêverie* C. Debussy
Alan Froggatt, violin

NEW TESTAMENT LESSON Mark 10.13-16

People were bringing little children to Jesus in order that he might touch them; and the disciples spoke sternly to them. But when Jesus saw this, he was indignant and said to them, 'Let the little children come to me; do not stop them; for it is to such as these that the kingdom of God belongs. Truly I tell you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God as a little child will never enter it.' And he took them up in his arms, laid his hands on them, and blessed them.

SERMON *"Holy Play"* Rev. W. Alan Froggatt

"And the streets of the city shall be full of boys and girls playing in its streets."
(Zechariah 8.5)

## RESPONSE TO THE WORD

OFFERTORY *Steal Away* (spiritual)
Anne Skagen, solo

*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 *Forever Young* Bob Dylan, 1974

*HYMN *Jesus' Hands Were Kind Hands* 171

Jesus' hands were kind hands, doing good to all, healing pain and sickness, blessing children small, washing tired feet, and saving those who fall; Jesus' hands were kind hands, doing good to all.

Take my hands, O Jesus, let them work for you, make them strong and gentle, kind in all I do; let me watch you, Jesus, till I'm gentle too, till my hands are kind hands, quick to work for you.

*BLESSING & BENEDICTION

BENEDICTION RESPONSE *Amen* William Smith

## LOOKING AHEAD

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| August 25 | **9:00 am**<br>5:00 pm | **Worship**<br>Soup Kitchen | August 29 | 8:30 am | Yoga |
| August 27 | 8:30 am | Yoga | August 30 | **8:15 am** | **Coffice Hours at The Villager** |
| | | | September 1 | **10:00 am**<br>5:00 pm | **Worship**<br>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 August is **Peg Phillips.** You were greeted this morning by **Daphne Stitt.** Chancel Flowers were provided by **Barbara Smith** in memory of dear friends. Coffee Hour is being hosted by **Jennifer Gill** and **Ruth Mowrey.**

**Many thanks** to **Sue Saltus** for accompanying us in worship today.

**Worship Service Time Change**
Starting on Sunday, September 1st our worship service returns to 10:00 am!

**Rally Day Picnic – September 8th**
Our annual Rally Day picnic is scheduled for Sunday, September 8th following the worship service. Please bring a dish to share, invite a friend and enjoy the day!

**Food Cards**
We are continuing to receive food cards for our neighbors in need. All contributions are welcome. Thank you!

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

**CHURCH OFFICE HOURS:** Tuesday - Friday 9:00 am to 1:00 pm