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THE UNITED CHURCH OF CHESTER

An Open & Affirming Congregation of
The United Church of Christ
September 29, 2024 10:00 a.m.
Nineteenth Sunday after Pentecost

PREPARATION FOR THE WORD

WELCOME		Deb Calamari, Deacon
PRELUDE	*Choral Song*	S. Wesley
INTROIT	*As We Gather*	M. Fay and T. Coomes

CALL TO WORSHIP
Bless the Lord, every soul, for God has done great wonders for us!
The works of God are bountiful; the whole earth is full of God's goodness.
The hands of God open, and we are filled with good and wonderful things.
May we rejoice in all God's works, and may they endure forever through all creation!
We will sing to God for as long as we live;
We will rejoice in God's everlasting blessings! Amen.

*HYMN *Here in This Place (Gather Us In)* 250

Here in this place, the new light is streaming, now the dark night has vanished away. See in this space our fears and our dreamings, brought here to you in the light of this day. Gather us in, the lost and forsaken; gather us in; our spirits in flame. Call to us now, and we shall awaken; we shall arise at the sound of our name.

We are the young- our lives are a mystery; we are the old, who yearn for your face. We have been sung throughout all of history, called to be light to the whole human race. Gather us in, the rich and the haughty; gather us in, the proud and the strong; give us a heart so meek and so lowly; give us the courage to enter the song.

Here we receive new life in your waters; here we receive the bread of new birth; here you shall call your sons and your daughters, call us anew to be salt for the earth. Give us to drink the wine of compassion, give us to eat the bread that is you; nourish us well, and teach us to fashion lives that are holy and hearts that are true.

Not just in buildings, small and confining, not in some heaven, light years away, here in this place the new light is shining; now is God present, and now is the day. Gather us in and hold us forever; gather us in and make us your own; gather us in, all peoples together, fire of love in our flesh and our bone.

INVOCATION (Sir Thomas More, 1478-1535)

Give to us, good Lord, humble, lowly, quiet, peaceable, patient, charitable, kind, filial and tender minds, every shade, in fact, of charity, with all our words and all our works and all our thoughts, that we might have a taste of your holy blessed Spirit; through Jesus Christ our Lord, Amen.

PROCLAMATION OF THE WORD

NEW TESTAMENT LESSON James 2.14-26

What good is it, my brothers and sisters, if you say you have faith but do not have works? Can faith save you? If a brother or sister is naked and lacks daily food, and one of you says to them, 'Go in peace; keep warm and eat your fill', and yet you do not supply their bodily needs, what is the good of that? So faith by itself, if it has no works, is dead. But someone will say, 'You have faith and I have works.' Show me your faith without works, and I by my works will show you my faith. You believe that God is one; you do well. Even the demons believe—and shudder. Do you want to be shown, you senseless person, that faith without works is barren? Was not our ancestor Abraham justified by works when he offered his son Isaac on the altar? You see that faith was active along with his works, and faith was brought to completion by the works. Thus the scripture was fulfilled that says, 'Abraham believed God, and it was reckoned to him as righteousness', and he was called the friend of God. You see that a person is justified by works and not by faith alone. Likewise, was not Rahab the harlot also justified by works when she welcomed the messengers and sent them out by another road? For just as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is also dead.

ANTHEM *Here I Am Lord* D. Schutte

OLD TESTAMENT LESSON Esther 7.1-10 (p 441)

SERMON *"A Faith That Works"* Rev. W. Alan Froggatt

"Show me your faith apart from your works, and I by my works will show you my faith." (James 2.18a)

RESPONSE TO THE WORD

OFFERTORY *We Are Not Alone* 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 & LORD'S PRAYER *("trespasses")*

POEM *Sermons We See* (Edgar A. Guest, 1881-1959)

*HYMN *God of Grace and God of Glory* 477

God of grace and God of glory, on your people pour your power; now fulfill your church's story; bring its bud to glorious flower. Grant us wisdom, grant us courage, for the facing of this hour, for the facing of this hour.

Lo! The hosts of evil round us scorn your Christ, assail his ways! From the fears that long have bound us, free our hearts to faith and praise. Grant us wisdom, grant us courage, for the living of these days, for the living of these days.

Cure your children's warring madness; bend our pride to your control; shame our wanton, selfish gladness, rich in things and poor in soul. Grant us wisdom, grant us courage, lest we miss your heav'nly goal, lest we miss your heav'nly goal.

Save us from weak resignation to the evils we deplore; let the search for your salvation be our glory evermore. Grant us wisdom, grant us courage, serving you whom we adore, serving you whom we adore.

*BLESSING & BENEDICTION

BENEDICTION RESPONSE *Go Now in Peace* D. Besig

LOOKING AHEAD

September 29	**10:00 am** **11:00 am** 5:00 pm	**Worship** **Trustees Mtg** Soup Kitchen	October 3	8:30 am 6:30 pm **7:00 pm**	Yoga Scouts **Choir Rehearsal**
September 30	5:30 pm	Irish Dance Classes	October 4	**8:15 am**	**Coffice Hours at Simon's Marketplac e**
October 1	8:30 am 6:30 pm	Yoga Scouts	October 6	**10:00 am** **11:00 am** **11:00 am** 5:00 pm	**Worship** **Chair Yoga** **Christmas Fair Meeting** Soup Kitchen
October 2	6:00 pm	Scouts	Many thanks for the donation of postage stamps!		

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 **Deb Germini Calamari.** You were greeted this morning by **Barbara-Jan Wilson** and **Sarah Wilson Murcko.** Chancel Flowers were given by Marie Ready in memory of her mother, **Ann Holcomb,** and in celebration of all those who celebrate their birthdays in September, especially **Paul Indorf** whose birthday is today. Coffee Hour is being hosted by **Marie Ready** and **Linda Jones**.

Christmas Fair Meeting – October 6th
There will be a meeting to discuss the upcoming Christmas Fair. Please attend if you are able. Any questions please contact Judy Schondorf at 860.399.7772.

Chair Yoga – October 6th

A chair yoga session (like we did last year) will be conducted by our yoga instructor Megan Spaulding on Oct.6 in fellowship hall directly after the service. It is a terrific, no stress introduction to the benefits of yoga and lots of fun! Whatever you wear to church is fine for this brief session. Come join us!

Rev. Dr. Cheryl Caronna Installation
The Rev. Dr. Cheryl Caronna will be installed at the Deep River Congregational Church on Sunday, October 6th at 2:00 pm. All are welcome.

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

CHURCH OFFICE HOURS: Tuesday - 9:00 am to 1:00 pm. **Office Closed Wednesday – Friday – Sally will be on vacation.**