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THE UNITED CHURCH OF CHESTER

An Open & Affirming Congregation of
The United Church of Christ
July 20, 2025 9:00 a.m.
Sixth Sunday after Pentecost

PREPARATION FOR THE WORD

WELCOME — Daphne Stitt, Deacon

PRELUDE — *Spring* (from Vivaldi's Four Seasons)

INTROIT — *Saranam, Saranam* (trad Punjabi melody)

CALL TO WORSHIP

The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want;
The Lord makes me lie down in green pastures, leads me beside still waters, and restores my soul.
The Lord leads me in paths of righteousness for the holy name's sake.
Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I fear no evil, for God is with me.
Your rod and your staff, they comfort me.
You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies;
You anoint my head with oil, my cup overflows.
Surely goodness and mercy will follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever. Amen.

*HYMN — *There's a Wideness in God's Mercy* — 72

There's a wideness in God's mercy, like the wideness of the sea; there's a kindness in God's justice, which is more than liberty.

There is no place where earth's sorrows are more felt than up in heaven; there is no place where earth's failings have such kindly judgement given.

For the love of God is broader than the measure of our mind; and the heart of the Eternal is most wonderfully kind.

If our love were but more faithful, we would gladly trust God's word; and our lives would be illumined by the presence of our Lord.

INVOCATION (Book of Common Prayer, 1979)

Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid: cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you, and worthily magnify your holy name; through Christ our Lord. Amen.

PROCLAMATION OF THE WORD

OLD TESTAMENT LESSON Deuteronomy 7.6-8

"For you are a people holy to the Lord your God; the Lord your God has chosen you out of all the peoples on earth to be God's people and treasured possession. It was not because you were more numerous than any other people that the Lord's heart has set upon you and chosen you, for you were the fewest of all peoples. It was because the Lord loved you and kept the oath that was sworn to your ancestors that the Lord has brought you out with a mighty hand and redeemed you from the house of slavery, from the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt."

ANTHEM *Laudemas Te* (from Vivaldi's Gloria)
Jennifer Gill and Pat Holloway

NEW TESTAMENT LESSON Matthew 5.43-48 (p. 883)
Selections from I John (p. 1112)

SERMON *"Love Them? I Don't Even Like Them!"* Rev. W. Alan Froggatt

"Beloved, let us love one another, because love is from God; everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. Whoever does not love does not know God, for God is love." (I John 4.7-8)

RESPONSE TO THE WORD

OFFERTORY *Domine Deus* (from Vivaldi's Gloria)

*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")*

POEMS *Enemies* Wendell Berry (1934 -)
This Morning I Pray for My Enemies Joy Harjo (1951 -)

*HYMN *How Can We Name a Love* 409

How can we name a love that wakens heart and mind, in dwelling all we know or think or do or seek or find? Within our daily world, in every human face, love's echoes sound and God is found, hid in the commonplace.

If we awoke to life upheld by loving care that asked no great reward but firm, assured, was simply there, we can, with our parents' names, describe, and thus adore, love unconfined, a father kind, a mother strong and sure.

When people share a task, and strength and skills unite in projects old or new, to make or do with shared delight, our Friend and Partner's will is better understood, that all should share, create, and care, and know that life is good.

So, in a hundred names, each day we all can meet a presence, sensed and shown at work, at home or in the street. Yet names and titles all shine in a brighter sun: in Christ alone is love full grown and life and hope begun.

*BLESSING & BENEDICTION

BENEDICTION RESPONSE *Saranam, Saranam* (trad Punjabi melody)

(* all who are able may stand)

LOOKING AHEAD

July 20	**9:00 am** 5:00 pm	**Worship** Soup Kitchen	July 24	8:30 am 4:30 pm	Yoga Irish Dance
July 21	4:30 pm	Irish Dance	July 25	**8:15 am**	**Coffice Hours at Simon's Marketplace**
July 22	8:30 am 4:30 pm	Yoga Irish Dance	July 27	**9:00 am** **10:00 am** 5:00 pm	**Worship** **Trustees Meeting** Soup Kitchen
July 23	4:30 pm	Irish Dance			

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 this week is **Daphne Stitt**. The flowers in the chancel were provided by **Sue Germini-Humble** who is thankful for all of our blessings**.** The greeter this morning is **Sherrie Hank**. Thank you all who volunteer!

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

CHURCH OFFICE HOURS: Tuesday – Friday 9:00 am – 1:00 pm