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THE UNITED CHURCH OF CHESTER

An Open & Affirming Congregation of
The United Church of Christ
May 17, 2026, 10:00 a.m.
Seventh Sunday of Easter

WELCOME — Deb Germini Calamari, Deacon

PRELUDE — *Jerusalem, My Happy Home* — L. Koch

INTROIT — *Now It's Spring* — Paie Cantiones 1582

CALL TO WORSHIP

We confess what we believe: we believe in Jesus the risen Christ.

Yet now Easter has come and gone; the lilies have faded and fallen, the crowds have drifted away.

We believe that Jesus died, was raised and is ascended into heaven.

And sometimes it feels as though we have been left behind to fend for ourselves: we go to our jobs, raise our families, pay the bills, and let worry slip into the portal of our hearts.

Yet Jesus left us with a promise: a promise of God's presence, a promise of God's spirit, a promise to build the church into a beacon of hope and grace and salvation.

We believe that Christ has died, Christ is risen, Christ will come again. Alleluia and Amen!

*HYMN — *Crown Him With Many Crowns* — 210

Crown him with many crowns, the Lamb upon the throne; Hark! How the heavenly anthem drowns all music but its own. Awake, my soul, and sing of Christ who died for you, and to your risen Savior bring your thanks for life made new.

Crown him whose love has flowed down hands and feet and side. Look past the peak of Calvary's road to Christ the glorified. The sun that lights the sky is pale before that sight. At prayer we glimpse, then turn the eye from mysteries so bright.

Crown him the truth, the life who triumphed o'er the grave and rose victorious in the strife, this fallen world to save. Christ's glories now we sing, Christ's name we magnify, who died eternal life to bring, and lives that death may die.

Crown him who rules in peace, whose power a sceptre sways from pole to pole, that wars may cease, and all be prayer and praise: Christ's reign shall have no end, for 'round those wounded feet a fragrant garden shall extend forever green and sweet.

Crown him who holds the years, embracing space and time, Creator of the rolling spheres, ineffably sublime: all hail, Redeemer, hail! For you have died for me; your praise shall never, never fail throughout eternity.

PRAYER OF INVOCATION

Most holy God, your only Son was taken up into heaven that he might prepare a place for us and bring us the Spirit of truth. Make us joyful in his ascension, that we may worship him in his glory. Grant us faith to recognize his abiding presence with his people on earth. Illumine our hearts and minds by your Spirit, that the scriptures may be your living word to us this day, through Jesus Christ our Lord, Amen.

PROCLAMATION OF THE WORD

OLD TESTAMENT LESSON Amos 9.11-15

On that day I will raise up the booth of David that is fallen, and repair its breaches, and raise up its ruins, and rebuild it as in the days of old; in order that they may possess the remnant of Edom and all the nations who are called by my name, says the Lord who does this. The time is surely coming, says the Lord, when the one who plows shall overtake the one who reaps, and the treader of grapes the one who sows the seed; the mountains shall drip sweet wine, and all the hills shall flow with it. I will restore the fortunes of my people Israel, and they shall rebuild the ruined cities and inhabit them; they shall plant vineyards and drink their wine, and they shall make gardens and eat their fruit. I will plant them upon their land, and they shall never again be plucked up out of the land that I have given them, says the Lord your God.

ANTHEM *I Want to Thank You, Lord* M. Hogan

NEW TESTAMENT LESSON Acts 15.5-14, 19-21 (p. 1009)

SERMON *"We Have to Start Meeting Like This"* Rev. W. Alan Froggatt

"After Jesus was done speaking, as they were watching,
he was lifted up, and a cloud took him out of their sight."
(Acts 1.9)

RESPONSE TO THE WORD

OFFERTORY *The Lily of the Valley*
(spiritual)

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

POEM

*HYMN *Blest Be the Tie That Binds* 368

Blest be the tie that binds our hearts in Christian love; the fellowship of kindred minds is like to that above.

Before God's gracious throne we pour our ardent prayers; our fears, our hopes, our aims are one, our comforts and our cares.

We share each other's woes, each other's burdens bear, and often for each other flows the sympathizing tear.

When we are called to part it gives us inward pain, but we shall still be joined in heart, and home to meet again.

*BENEDICTION

BENEDICTION RESPONSE *Now It's Spring* Paie Cantiones

(*all who are able may stand)

LOOKING AHEAD

May 17	**10:00 am** **11:00 am** 5:00 pm	**Worship** **Annual Meeting** Soup Kitchen	May 21	8:30 am 6:30 pm **7:00 pm**	Yoga Scout Pack Mtg. **Choir Rehearsal**
May 18	5:30 pm	Irish Dance	May 22	**8:15 am**	**Coffice Hours at The Villager**
May 19	8:30 am 7:00 pm	Yoga Chester Garden Club	May 23	**9:00 am**	**Town-wide Tag Sale** Chester Garden Club Plant Sale
			May 24	**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**.

The Deacon for the month of May is **Deb Germini Calamari.** Chancel flowers were provided by **Barbara Smith** in celebration of all those who have birthdays in May. You were greeted this morning by **Barbara Smith**. Coffee hour is being hosted by **Diane Lindsay**.

Annual Meeting – Sunday, May 17th

Please join us following the worship service for our Annual Meeting on Sunday, May 17th. Annual Reports will be available today for your review prior to the meeting. Thank you.

Town-wide Tag Sale – Saturday, May 23rd

United Church of Chester is participating in the town-wide tag sale this year. There is a sign-up sheet in Fellowship Hall to help with set-up, selling between 9am and 1pm, and clean-up. Please consider helping out – any help would be greatly appreciated. Thank you.

Katie Wilcox Day – Sunday, May 31st

This year we will celebrate Katie Wilcox Day on May 31st. A special donation will be collected for Lady Doak College on that date. Separate envelopes will be provided starting next week. Thank you.

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

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