

# UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST EAST GOSHEN

An Open and Affirming Congregation

Hospitality, Grace, and Hope are Offered to All!

March 30, 2025 – 10 AM

## FOURTH SUNDAY OF LENT



Rev. Homer Royer, Bridge Pastor

Lindsay Woessner, Music Director

Carolyn Scherer, Office Administrator

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**THANK YOU to ALL helping with Worship Today:**

Ann Boohar: Greeters/Offering Collection

Bart Yost: Tech Support

Rick Morey: Lay Reader

Steve and Bonnie Yost : Fellowship Hour

Bonnie Yost and Andy Grim: Counters

**Worship volunteers for next Sunday, 4/6/25**

\_\_\_\_\_ : Greeters/Offering Collection

Susan Ward: Tech Support

Beth Saylor: Lay Reader

Todd Speece : Fellowship Hour

Bonnie Yost and Carol Swingle: Counters

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# Living In God's Love Together, We Gather

*\*Please stand as you are able.*

**Bold type = Congregation**

P = Pastor

## **PRELUDE**

*Mercy Tree*

Krissy Nordhoff and Michael Neale, arr. Brian Buda

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

## **RINGING OF THE SINGING BOWL**

# WE CENTER OURSELVES FOR WORSHIP

(All Sing Verse 1)

OPENING OF WORSHIP

70

## God Is Here! As We Your People Meet

Fred Pratt Green, 1978; alt.

1 God is here! As we your peo-ple meet to of - fer praise and prayer,  
2 Here are sym-bols to re - mind us of our life - long need of grace;  
3 Here our chil-dren find a wel-come in the Shep - herd's flock and fold;  
4 Sov - ereign God, of earth and heav-en, in an age of change and doubt

May we find in full - er mea-sure what it is in Christ we share.  
Here are ta - ble, font, and pul - pit, here the cross has cen - tral place.  
Here as bread and wine are tak - en, Christ sus - tains us as of old.  
Keep us faith - ful to the gos - pel, help us work your pur - pose out.

Here, as in the world a - round us, all our var - ied skills and arts  
Here in hon - es - ty of preach - ing, here in si - lence, as in speech,  
Here the ser - vants of the Ser - vant seek in wor - ship to ex - plore  
Here, in this day's ded - i - ca - tion, all we have to give, re - ceive;

wait the com - ing of the Spir - it in - to o - pen minds and hearts.  
here, in new - ness and re - new - al, God the Spir - it comes to each.  
what it means in dai - ly liv - ing to be - lieve and to a - dore.  
we, who can - not live with - out you, we a - dore you! We be - lieve!

*Though he retired in 1969, this distinguished British poet has continued to write hymns. In addition to administering several circuits and local congregations, Fred Pratt Green published plays, translations, and poems. Emory University in Atlanta awarded him an honorary doctorate.*

Tune: ABBOT'S LEIGH 8.7.8.7 D.  
Cyril V. Taylor, 1941

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Music Copyright © 1942, renewal 1970 by Hope Publishing Company

## WE GATHER FOR WORSHIP

Have you come far to be here today?

**If so, you enlarge our gathering: welcome!**

Have you come from around the corner?

**You anchor our gathering: welcome!**

Do you seek sanctuary? Do you seek inspiration?

**May this worship meet you.**

Do you come with purpose? Do you come with questions?

**We welcome you as you are!**

**All: Let us worship God together!**

### \*HYMN

In the Bulb There is a Flower

NCH 433

## PRAYER OF TRANSFORMATION AND NEW LIFE

Dear God,

**Your gifts are generous and yet we often fail to appreciate what we have been given. We demand more, but squander what we have received. Forgive us for taking for granted what we receive from you. When we fail to accept what you offer, or fail to steward those gifts, bring us back to awareness of you. Amen.**

### Words of Grace

However far we wander, God is always ready to receive us, to enfold us in love and grace. In the name of Jesus, you are forgiven.

## \*PASSING THE PEACE *(in a safe manner)*

## \*WE REGATHER IN SONG

*God, Speak to Me, That I May Speak* NCH 531\* (verse 1)

(\*=For complete music, refer to NCH 531):

*Verse 1:*

*God, speak to me, that I may speak in  
li-ving ech-oes of your tone; as you have sought, so  
Let me seek your err-ing chil-dren lost and lone.*

## CONVERSATION FOR ALL AGES

## PASTORAL PRAYER

### **Silent Prayers**

P: Next, we share out loud our prayers of concern for family, friends, and our community, for wounded places and people burdened with care.

*[You are invited to offer your prayers of concern.]*

P: Lord, in Your Mercy  
**Hear our prayers.**

P: Now we share our joys and gratuudes, the ways in which God has blessed us this week, and the moments we felt God's presence.

*[You are invited to offer your prayers of thanksgiving, celebration, blessings, and gratitude.]*

P: Lord, in Your Mercy  
**Hear our prayers.**

P: Having shared our prayers of concern and our prayers of gratitude, we now recommit ourselves to following the Way of Jesus who taught us to pray saying...

**Our Creator/Mother/Father/Spirit,  
who is in Heaven,  
hallowed be your name.  
Your Kin-dom come,  
your will be done,  
on earth as it is heaven.  
Give us this day our daily bread,  
and forgive us our faults, as we forgive the faults of others.  
Prevent us and deliver us from evil.  
For yours is the realm, power, and glory, forever. Amen.**

~ *Healing: Service Prayers for the Sixth Sunday after Pentecost* was written by Rev. Roberto Ochoa, the Minister for Ethnic Inclusion, & Congregational Support for Rural and Small Churches for the National Setting of the United Church of Christ. He is a member of Mt. Zion Congregational UCC in Cleveland, OH.

# WE PREPARE TO HEAR GOD'S WORD

*God, Speak to Me, That I May Speak*

NCH 531 (verse 3):

*Verse 3:*

*O fill me with your full-ness, God, your  
ov-er-flow-ing love to know; In glow-ing word and  
kin-dling thought, your love to tell, your praise to show.*

# WE LISTEN TO OUR SACRED TEXT

Rick Morey

Psalm 100

## **All Lands Summoned to Praise God**

### **A Psalm of thanksgiving.**

<sup>1</sup> Make a joyful noise to the LORD, all the earth.

<sup>2</sup> Serve the LORD with gladness;  
come into his presence with singing.

<sup>3</sup> Know that the LORD is God.

It is he who made us, and we are his;<sup>[a]</sup>  
we are his people and the sheep of his pasture.

<sup>4</sup> Enter his gates with thanksgiving  
and his courts with praise.

Give thanks to him; bless his name.

<sup>5</sup> For the LORD is good;  
his steadfast love endures forever  
and his faithfulness to all generations.

## The Parable of the Lost Sheep

**15** Now all the tax collectors and sinners were coming near to listen to him. **2** And the Pharisees and the scribes were grumbling and saying, “This fellow welcomes sinners and eats with them.”

**3** So he told them this parable:

## The Parable of the Prodigal and His Brother

**11** ..., “There was a man who had two sons. **12** The younger of them said to his father, ‘Father, give me the share of the wealth that will belong to me.’ So he divided his assets between them. **13** A few days later the younger son gathered all he had and traveled to a distant region, and there he squandered his wealth in dissolute living. **14** When he had spent everything, a severe famine took place throughout that region, and he began to be in need. **15** So he went and hired himself out to one of the citizens of that region, who sent him to his fields to feed the pigs. **16** He would gladly have filled his stomach<sup>[b]</sup> with the pods that the pigs were eating, and no one gave him anything. **17** But when he came to his senses he said, ‘How many of my father’s hired hands have bread enough and to spare, but here I am dying of hunger! **18** I will get up and go to my father, and I will say to him, “Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you; **19** I am no longer worthy to be called your son; treat me like one of your hired hands.” ’ **20** So he set off and went to his father. But while he was still far off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion; he ran and put his arms around him and kissed him. **21** Then the son said to him, ‘Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you; I am no longer worthy to be called your son.’<sup>[c]</sup> **22** But the father said to his slaves, ‘Quickly, bring out a robe—the best one—and put it on him; put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. **23** And get the fatted calf and kill it, and let us eat and celebrate, **24** for this son of

mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found!' And they began to celebrate.

<sup>25</sup> "Now his elder son was in the field, and as he came and approached the house, he heard music and dancing. <sup>26</sup> He called one of the slaves and asked what was going on. <sup>27</sup> He replied, 'Your brother has come, and your father has killed the fatted calf because he has got him back safe and sound.' <sup>28</sup> Then he became angry and refused to go in. His father came out and began to plead with him. <sup>29</sup> But he answered his father, 'Listen! For all these years I have been working like a slave for you, and I have never disobeyed your command, yet you have never given me even a young goat so that I might celebrate with my friends. <sup>30</sup> But when this son of yours came back, who has devoured your assets with prostitutes, you killed the fatted calf for him!' <sup>31</sup> Then the father<sup>[d]</sup> said to him, 'Son, you are always with me, and all that is mine is yours. <sup>32</sup> But we had to celebrate and rejoice, because this brother of yours was dead and has come to life; he was lost and has been found.' "

## MEDITATION/SERMON

Rev. Homer Royer

*[In the silence after the sermon, we allow the sacred text and dialogue of the sermon to settle in our hearts, bones and bodies, and soul. We do this by opening our hearts and inviting God to settle the message we each needed to receive.]*

## \*AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

The Heidelberg Catechism

Question 1. What is thy only comfort in life and in death?

**That I, with body and soul, both in life and in death, am not my own, but belong to my faithful Saviour Jesus Christ, who with his precious blood has fully satisfied for all my sins, and redeemed me from all the power of evil; and so preserves me that without the will of my Father in heaven not a hair can fall from my head, yea that all things must work together for my salvation. Wherefore, by his Holy Spirit He also assures me of eternal life and makes me heartily willing and ready henceforth to live unto Him.**

## **WE ARE INVITED TO GIVE**

Remembering the gifts we have received, let us make our offerings to God's work through this church.

## **WE GIVE GENEROUSLY**

*Shall We Gather at the River*

Robert Lowry, arr. James Michael Stevens

## **EASY OFFERING OPTION**

If you prefer to give electronically, please use your cell phone camera to scan this QR code.



**\*DOXOLOGY** (*sung*)

**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.**

**\*WE DEDICATE OUR OFFERINGS**

Prayer of Thanksgiving and Dedication

Gracious God,

**Bless these gifts and our lives to your service.**

**\*HYMN**

Lift High the Cross

NCH 198

**\*BENEDICTION**

## \*SUNG BENEDICTION

*God, Speak to Me, That I May Speak*

NCH 531 (verse 4):

*Verse 4:*

*O use me, God, use ev-en me just  
as you will, and when, and where, un-til your bless-ed  
face I see, your rest, your joy, your glory share.*

## POSTLUDE

*Oh Wondrous Image, Vision Fair (Deo Gracias)*

*15<sup>th</sup> Century English  
Folksong*

Our worship has ended, and our service has just begun...

Please join us for fellowship in the Parlor.

## UCCEG Worship & Events

**April 2--5:45pm – 7pm: Wednesday Night Lenten Service with Church of the Loving Shepherd (location: CLS)-** Our Jewish brothers and sisters will lead us in prayer and reflection.

**April 6-- 10am Worship**

### Upcoming Bell Rehearsals:

- Sunday, March 30th, 9:15am - 9:45 am
- Sunday, April 6th, 9:15am - 9:45 am

### Upcoming Choir Rehearsals:

- Friday, April 4th, 2pm-3pm

## Church Office Hours This Week

	<u>Pastor Homer</u>	<u>Office</u>
<i>Monday</i>	---	---
<i>Tuesday</i>	---	<i>Work from home</i>
<i>Wednesday</i>	3PM – 5PM	<i>Work from home</i>
<i>Thursday</i>	2PM – 4PM	11AM-12PM
<i>Friday</i>	---	---
<i>Saturday</i>	---	---

## Prayer Requests\*

Please fill out a prayer request form (on the table in the Foyer) or email [office@ucceastgoshen.org](mailto:office@ucceastgoshen.org) for any updates or additions to our prayer list.

We pray for the following members and friends of UCCEG:



Roy Garlisch, Cliff Keljikian, George Litzke, Susan Morey, Susan Ward, Carol Swingle, Anne Phinney, Ron Rising, Beverly Catt, MaryAnn McCracken, Eric Flicker, Jim Wilson

\*The prayer list is being updated. Please fill out a Prayer Request (in the Foyer) and place it in the offering plate, or contact the office or Carol Swingle if you would like to add someone.

### Wednesdays in Lent: Soup & Prayer, with the members of UCCEG and Church of the Loving Shepherd

Dates: Wednesdays from March 12 – April 9<sup>th</sup>.

Times: 5:45-7:00PM.

Location: at Church of the Loving Shepherd.

Topic (s): Join us for soup, fellowship and a time of spiritual reflection and discussion.

April 2<sup>nd</sup>: Jewish Prayer & Reflection

April 9<sup>th</sup>: Muslim Prayer & Reflection.

No cost to attend! All are welcome!

***Note: Sign Ups needed! Our congregation is responsible for the food offerings on April 9<sup>th</sup>. Please see the sign-up sheet in the foyer or notify Carol Swingle if you can contribute that day. We need 3 soups and 3 breads.***

### **Easter Flower Orders**

The order forms for Easter Flowers are in the foyer on the table. Lilies, tulips and hyacinths are priced as marked on the forms. Please include your dedication/memorial as you want it in the Easter Sunday bulletin. Order deadline is April 6th. Any questions, please see Bonnie Yost.

### **West Chester Food Cupboard**

West Chester Food Cupboard is always grateful for our donations. They are currently in need of cereal, non-grape jelly, and personal items, especially toothbrushes and feminine hygiene products.

### **March Outreach for Safe Harbor**

UCCEG's outreach to Safe Harbor (SH) during the month of March will be to provide individual bags of chips. Chips will be part of the bagged lunches which SH makes for the residents. Please donate either small individual bags or a box of individual bags. Or place a monetary donation labeled "chips for SH" in the collection plate and we will purchase them for you. Your donation will be greatly appreciated. Thank you. And thank you again for generously donating coffee and/or monetary donations to SH in February.

### **Safe Harbor Celebrates Volunteers**

In April Safe Harbor is showing their appreciation for the time, heart, and care that the volunteers give to their residents. A special thanks to the volunteers and also to those who donate items needed by this program.

### **Be the Light - One Great Hour of Sharing**

One Great Hour of Sharing (OGHS) is a vital special mission offering of the United Church of Christ. It supports life-giving recovery efforts when disasters devastate communities and also provides refugee assistance around the globe. Through our support, OGHS funds comprehensive development programs in areas such as healthcare, education, agriculture, food security, and women's empowerment throughout the world. It plants seeds of peace where war has multiplied despair and destruction. During the month of March we are invited to give to the One Great Hour of Sharing offering with a spirit of joyful generosity. Special envelopes are available for this donation. Please write "One Great Hour of Sharing" or "OGHS" on your check.

## **Church/Plant-Garden Opportunity**

(For more info contact Sara Beam at saralzb@icloud.com or 610-812-6826.)

Nurturing Creation, Building Community, and Cultivating Growth

### **WELCOME TO CHURCH/PLANT A PROJECT OF WILLISTOWN UNITED METHODIST CHURCH**

**Spring is here and WUMC is beginning their 2nd year of growing fresh produce for the West Chester Food Cupboard.**

**APRIL 5TH IS THE FIRST DAY OF PLANTING! BE A PART OF GOD'S CREATION.**

6051 West Chester Pike · Newtown Square, PA 19073 · 610-644-2227

willistownumc@gmail.com · willistownumc.org

### **Environmental Justice Day**

Saturday, May 3, 2025

11:30 AM (March begins at Noon)

Chester City Hall

Hosted by: Chester Residents Concerned for Quality Living

Please see the flier in this week's UCCEG email for more information or you can contact Carol Swingle.

It would be powerful to have a car-ful from our church go to this event. Todd Speece and Carol Swingle are driving and can fit three more people, or could take both of their cars if more people want to go. It's about a 30-min drive from the church. For several reasons carpooling would work best. Carol knows many of the people who will be at this. There will be lots of local adults and children, students from several area colleges, and usually many people from religious communities. Please contact Carol if you are interested.