

Labor Day Gathering of Faith Communities

The Worship Service – Sunday September 1, 2024

Shenkel United Church of Christ

1580 Shenkel Road, Pottstown, PA 19465

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Shenkel's UCC's Covenant Statement

So reach out and welcome one another to God's glory. Jesus did it, now you do it! (Romans 15:7, The Message)
We are aware of pain organized religion has inflicted on many; and we are aware many places of worship have not given the extravagant welcome God offers to us all. Therefore, Shenkel United Church of Christ covenants to extend heartfelt hospitality to ALL. Shenkel UCC affirms all persons are created in the image of God, so we offer full inclusion (communion, life, and ministries) in the faith journey of this congregation, regardless of differences: whether religious background, economic status, sexual orientation, gender identity, race, national origin, immigration and refugee status, age, ethnicity, relationship status, addiction/recovery, physical or mental ability, and political affiliation. We proclaim this statement: **no matter who you are or where you are on life's journey, you are welcome here.**

Welcome to Shenkel United Church of Christ!

An Open and Affirming congregation since 2018

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~Gathering Together~

Prelude	How Great the Almighty	(arr. Tornquist)
Welcome		Suzanne Spaulding
Invocation		Suzanne Spaulding
Call to Worship		Pam Reed

L: God, you have called the people of faith together.

C: So that we can be blessed by and share your love with each other.

L: God, in great love, you have given us Jesus.

C: So that we can see what the life of God looks like when it is lived in the world that you love.

L: God, you have charged us with a mission,

C: To live that Christ-life in the world that we are called to love in your name. Enable us to worship you in Spirit and in truth.

Opening Hymn	"Sing a New World Into Being"	See Insert
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~Coming Alive in Community~

Call to Confession		Nichole Jackson
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Prayer of Confession

L: Almighty God, our Creator and Redeemer, we call you Lord

C: But we do not do what you say.

L: We are like those who look in the mirror

C: And then walk away forgetting that we have looked upon your very image.

L: We go into the world

C: But most days we go in our own name and not yours.

L: We speak when we should hold our tongues

C: And are silent when we should cry out against racism and persecution of people who are different from us. We are silent in the face of our own sin.

L: But today is different, Lord.

C: Today we offer you our confession. And repenting, we ask you to forgive us. But we also ask you to make us people who do more than just hear your word. We want to do what you say. In the name of the risen and living one, Jesus Christ. Amen.

Silence for Prayer and Meditation

Assurance of Pardon

L: Your grace, O God, is a good and perfect gift from heaven.

C: As those who have received your grace, let us walk in your light today and all days. In the name of Jesus, we are forgiven. Thanks be to God. Amen.

~We Hear God's Word~

A Reading from James 1:17-27

Gary Nicholson

Witness to Truth

Suzanne Spaulding

Hymn for Reflection:

“Sanctuary”

See Insert

~Sharing Blessings with Others~

Offering for our Respective Ministries

Jim Jannotti

Offertory

“Always”

Threefold Blessing

A reading from Mark 7:1-8, 14-15, 21-23

Mary Uba

(Please read The Message, text on last page}

Witness to Truth

Marcia Bailey

Anthem

“Those Who are Not Yet Here”

Choir, Directed by Dan Wolgemuth

Offering of our Mutual Concern for the World

Jacqui Good

Executive Director, Pottstown Cluster of Religious Communities

Call for the Offering

Jim Jannotti

Offertory

“Siyahamba”

See Insert

Offertory Prayer

Celebration of Holy Communion

Nichole Jackson, Jim Jannotti

Nichole: Beloved in Christ, the Gospel tells us that on the first day of the week Jesus Christ was raised from death, appeared to Mary Magdalene, on that same day sat at the table with two disciples, and was made known to them in the breaking of the bread.

Jim: Today, we come to celebrate the joyful feast of the people of God. Siblings in Christ, come from the east and the west, from the north and the south, and gather about Christ's table. This table is for all who wish to know the presence of Christ and to share in the community of God's people.

Nichole: God be with you.

PEOPLE: And also with you.

Jim: Lift up your hearts.

PEOPLE: We lift them to God.

Nichole: Let us give thanks to God Most High.

PEOPLE: It is right to give God thanks and praise.

Jim: We give you thanks, God of majesty and mercy, for calling forth the creation and raising us from dust by the breath of your being. We bless you for the beauty and bounty of the earth and for the vision of the day when sharing by all will mean scarcity for none. We remember the covenant you made with your people Israel, and we give you thanks for all our ancestors in faith. We rejoice that you call us to reconciliation with you and all people everywhere and that you remain faithful to your covenant even when we are faithless.

Nichole: We rejoice that you call the entire human family to this table of sacrifice and nourishment. We come in remembrance and celebration of the gift of Jesus Christ, whom you sent, in the fullness of time, to be the good news. Born of Mary, our sister in faith, Christ lived among us to reveal the mystery of your Word, to suffer and die on the cross for us, to be raised from death on the third day, and then to live in glory. We bless you, gracious God, for the presence of your Holy Spirit in the church you have gathered. With your sons and daughters of faith in all places and times, we praise you with joy.

Jim: We remember that on the night of betrayal and desertion, and on the eve of death, Jesus gathered the disciples for the feast of Passover. Jesus took bread, and after giving thanks to you, broke it, and gave it to the disciples, saying: "This is my body which is for you. Do this in remembrance of me." In the same way also the cup, after supper, saying: "This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me."¹³ Therefore we proclaim the mystery of our faith.

ALL: Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.

Nichole: Eternal God, we unite in this covenant of faith, recalling Christ's suffering and death, rejoicing in Christ's resurrection, and awaiting Christ's return in victory. We spread your table with these gifts of the earth and of our labor. We present to you our very lives, committed to your service in behalf of all people. We ask you to send your Holy Spirit on this bread and wine, on our gifts, and on us. Strengthen your universal church that it may be the champion of peace and justice in all the world. Restore the earth with your grace that is able to make all things new. Be present with us as we share this meal, and throughout all our lives, that we may know you as the Holy One, who with Christ and the Holy Spirit, lives forever.

Nichole: And now, let us pray the prayer Jesus taught us, however you know it:

Our Mother/Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our sins, as we forgive those who sin against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory, forever. Amen.

Jim: *(while taking the bread and breaking it)* Through the broken bread we participate in the body of Christ.

Nichole: *(while pouring the wine and raising the cup)* Through the cup of blessing we participate in the new life Christ gives.

Jim: Come, for all things are ready.

Prayer After Communion

Nichole: Let us pray.

ALL: We thank you, God, for inviting us to this table where we have known the presence of Christ and have received all Christ's gifts. Strengthen our faith, increase our love for one another, and let us show forth your praise in our lives; through Jesus Christ our Savior. Amen.

~Going out in Joy~

Sending Hymn "O For a World" See Insert

Benediction Mike Remel, Cedarville UMC

Postlude German Hymn (*Neander*)

<u>Participating Churches</u>	<u>Participating Clergy</u>	<u>Musicians</u>
Cedarville UMC	Jim Jannotti	Susan Royer
First Baptist	Marcia Bailey	Dan Wolgemuth
Open Table UCC	Mike Remel	Jim Jannotti
Shenkel UCC	Nichole Jackson	Threefold Blessing
St. Johns UCC	Suzanne Spaulding	Jen Bowden
Temple UMC		Rich Bowden
		Carole Cyktor
		Pam Reed

9/1/2024 – Gathering of Faith Communities

Scriptures:

Mark 7:1-8, 14-15, 21-23 (MSG)

7 1-4 The Pharisees, along with some religion scholars who had come from Jerusalem, gathered around him. They noticed that some of his disciples weren't being careful with ritual washings before meals. The Pharisees – Jews in general, in fact-would never eat a meal without going through the motions of a ritual hand-washing, with an especially vigorous scrubbing if they had just come from the market (to say nothing of the scourings they'd give jugs and pots and pans).

5 The Pharisees and religion scholars asked, "Why do your disciples brush off the rules, showing up at meals without washing their hands?"

6-8 Jesus answered, "Isaiah was right about frauds like you, hit the bull's-eye in fact:

These people make a big show of saying the right thing, but their heart isn't in it.

They act like they are worshiping me, but they don't mean it.

They just use me as a cover for teaching whatever suits their fancy.

Ditching God's command and taking up the latest fads."

14-15 Jesus called the crowd together again and said, "Listen now, all of you-take this to heart. It's not what you swallow that pollutes your life; it's what you vomit-that's the real pollution."

20-23 He went on: "It's what comes out of a person that pollutes obscenities, lusts, thefts, murders, adulteries, greed, depravity, deceptive dealings, carousing, mean looks, slander, arrogance, foolishness-all these are vomit from the heart. There is the source of your pollution."

