

Welcome to Shenkel United Church of Christ!

Sunday, May 7, 2023 – Traditional Service at 9:45 am

Fifth Sunday of Easter

~Gathering Together ~

Prelude "Andante" Rheinberger

Welcome

Invocation

Solo Introit "Gathered Here"

Call to Worship

Pastor: In this season of the year, there is the lengthening of daylight. There is the striking wetness of large spring raindrops.

People: There is the hum of hovering insects. There is the warm wind that hints of summer's coming heat.

All: These things are real and true.

Pastor: In every season of growing faith, there is the love of God. There is the stunning power of gracious goodness.

People: There is the movement of Spirit in our midst. There is the bold beckoning of God's Word.

All: These things are real and true. As we gather to worship, thanks be to God.

Opening Hymn "As We Gather at Your Table" NCH # 332

As we gather at your table, as we listen to your word,
help us know, O God, your presence; let our hearts and minds be stirred.
Nourish us with sacred story till we claim it as our own;
teach us through this holy banquet how to make Love's victory known.

Turn our worship into witness in the sacrament of life;
send us forth to love and serve you, bringing peace where there is strife.
Give us, Christ, your great compassion to forgive as you forgave;
may we still behold your image in the world you died to save.

Gracious Spirit, help us summon other guests to share that feast
where triumphant Love will welcome those who had been last and least.
There no more will envy bind us nor will pride our peace destroy,
as we join with saints and angels to repeat the sounding joy.

~ *Coming Alive in Community* ~

Call to Confession

Trusting in God's great mercy, let us confess our sins.

Prayer of Confession

O God, we confess our lack of faith. Although we have called you the God of hope, we often feel lost, cynical, without hope. The world is so full of big nails and little nails – people are put on so many different kinds of crosses in so many different places that we wonder if there can ever be enough resurrections. We are reluctant to leave the tomb of our own ignorance and fear to claim the promise.

We confess that our weaknesses and insensitivities stand in the way of new life in our world. We know that the world is full of suffering. Our brothers and sisters are nailed to crosses of poverty and injustice. People close enough to touch are sealed in tombs of loneliness and despair. But we have failed to halt the crucifixions, to roll away the stones. Forgive us, O God.

Silence for Prayer and Reflection

Assurance of Forgiveness

Our confession is an acknowledgment of our humanness, our need for God's grace. God has promised that we can be forgiven for our weaknesses, our insensitivities, our cynicism and our lack of faith. We accept this assurance with humility and with the confidence that it will lead us toward resurrection.

Special Music

“Come, My Way, My Truth, My Life” Kelly Strunk, Soloist
George Herbert/Ralph Vaughan Williams [CCLI #1412885-P.D.]

~ *We Hear God's Word* ~

Scripture Lessons

The Epistle Lesson: Acts 7:54-60

Lori Scharneck

The Reading of Psalm 31:1-5, 15-16

The Gospel Reading: John 14:1-14

The Word of God for the people of God. **Thanks be to God.**

Sermon

Rev. Suzanne M. Spaulding

Hymn for Reflection

“O Jesus, I Have Promised”

NCH # 493

O Jesus, I have promised to serve you to the end;
remain forever near me, my Savior and my Friend;
I shall not fear life's struggles if you are by my side,
nor wander from the pathway if you wilt be my guide.

O let me hear you speaking in accents clear and still,
above the storms of passion, the murmurs of self-will!

O speak to reassure me, to hasten or control!

O speak, and make me listen, O guardian of my soul!

O Jesus, you have promised to all who follow you
that where you are in glory your servant shall be, too;
And, Jesus, I have promised to serve you to the end;
O give me grace to follow my Savior and my Friend!

~ *Sharing Blessings With Others* ~

Prayers of the People

The Prayer of Our Savior

Minister: Let us pray as Christ our Savior has taught us.

All: Our 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.

Offering our Gifts - Thank you for your faithful support of Shenkel's ongoing ministries
Strengthen the Church is a special mission offering to reimagine and build the future of the UCC. Shared at Conference and national levels, STC largely supports youth ministries and full-time leaders for new churches where the UCC voice has not been heard. For more information, go to www.ucc.org.

Offertory "Swing Low, Sweet Chariot" Negro Spiritual

Offering Response "We Give You But Your Own" NCH # 785
We give you but your own, whate'er the gift may be;
All that we have is yours alone, we give it gratefully.

Prayer of Dedication

~ *Holy Communion* ~

Invitation

The Communion Prayer

Minister: God be with you.

People: And also with you.

Minister: Lift up your hearts.

People: We lift them to God.

Minister: Let us give thanks to God Most High.

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

Minister: Eternal God, holy and mighty.....sing to the glory of your name:

All: Holy, holy, holy, Lord, God of power and might, heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is the One who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.

Minister: You are holy.....Come for all things are now ready.

~Upcoming events at Shenkel UCC~

- Sun., 5/14 ~ Reflective Worship service at 8:30 am in sanctuary.
~ Worship service at 9:45 am in sanctuary
~ Book Study at 11 am
- Tues., 5/16 ~ Midday Dinner Club at WQ Diner at noon
- Thurs., 5/18 ~ Card class at 10 am
~ Agape at 6:30 pm

The flours are presented by Carole & Henry Bailey, John & Linda Jonides and the William and Stephanie Reid family in memory of John and Thelma Renninger.

Pottstown Cluster. This month's items are cleaning supplies: toilet brushes, toilet plungers, dust pans and brushes, mops, brooms. Please place your items in the bin marked for the Cluster.

Operation 143. We will be packing backpacks of food again for operation 143 on May 22, 2023 at 6 pm. We need at least 8 people to help. Youth Group and any church members are welcome to help. Please let Gloria Mest know if you are able to help by May 14.

Mid-day Dinner club will be meeting at WQ Diner on Tuesday, May 16 at noon. It is open to young-at-heart adults of any age who enjoy eating out and would like to get to know other Shenkel members a little better. If you are attending, please add your name and phone number on the sign up sheet no later than Sunday, May 14 or you may call Sharon Sabo at 610-326-1945 or let her know at the Sunday service if you are able to attend.

The Pottstown Cluster of Religious Communities "Trash Team" will be working collaboratively on the following clean-ups:

Supporting Veterans Island Project & Travis Manion Foundation

Landscaping Work & Trash Clean-up

May 13th & May 20th from 8:30AM - Noon
Veteran's Island; 251 Manatawny Street; Pottstown PA 19464

<https://donate.travismanion.org/event/pottstown-pa-annual-clean-up/e465028>

Anyone who registers through the Travis Manion Website gets a free T-shirt. You **DO NOT** have to donate to get the shirt.

Learn more about volunteering for our Resource Team and Trash Team: <https://www.pottstowncluster.org/volunteer/>