

ST. MATTHEW'S UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

May 9, 2021

Sixth Sunday of Easter

"A faithful family reaching out to serve Christ."

PRELUDE

LIGHTING OF THE CANDLES

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

***CALL TO WORSHIP**

Connie Moretz

(L) Sing to God a new song, for God has done marvelous things.

(P) All the ends of the earth have seen the gifts of our God.

(L) Make a joyful noise to the Lord! Break forth into joyful singing!

(P) God judges the world in righteousness. Let us resound with the praise of God!

***OPENING PRAYER**

Connie Moretz

(L) Loving God, who longed to gather us together as a mother hen gathers her chicks, help us to love others as Christ loved us. Bring us into the spiritual joy of living our lives as your friend, and teach us to abide in your love, that we may show that love to the world. Amen.

***HYMN** *Come Just as You Are*

Come just as you are, hear the Spirit call.

Come just as you are, Come and see, come receive, come, and live forever.

Life everlasting, and strength for today, Taste the Living Water and never thirst again.

Life everlasting, and strength for today, Taste the Living Water and never thirst again.

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come receive, come, and live forever.

***CALL TO CONFESSION**

***PRAYER OF CONFESSION**

**Tender Savior, we receive with gratitude your love,
which you demonstrated by laying down your life for us.
You have chosen us as your own,
and call us to love one another as you have loved us.
But we fall far short of your life-giving command:
we cling in fear to the little we have,
rather than laying it down so that your riches of love
may fill us and flow through us.**

**Pour out your Spirit on us anew that we may know and proclaim
the depth, the breadth, the height, and the length of your love.
Cause us to abide in that love so fully that it will overflow among us,
and through us to the world around us:
that we would be your faithful children
for you love us with everlasting love. Amen.**

***MOMENTS OF SILENT CONFESSION**

***ASSURANCE OF PARDON**

***ACT OF PRAISE # 307**

*Your name we bless, O risen Lord, and sing today with one accord
the life laid down; the life restored: "Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!"*

THE TIME FOR CHILDREN

Staci Gower

THE READING OF SCRIPTURE

The Old Testament Lesson: Psalm 131

Connie Moretz

(L) O Lord, my heart is not lifted up, my eyes are not raised too high;

I do not occupy myself with things too great and too marvelous for me.

(P) But I have calmed and quieted my soul,

like a weaned child with its mother;

my soul is like the weaned child that is with me.

(L) O Israel, hope in the Lord from this time on and forevermore.

The Epistle Lesson: 1 John 5: 1-6

Connie Moretz

1 Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ has been born of God, and everyone who loves the parent loves the child. **2** By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and obey his commandments. **3** For the love of God is this, that we obey his commandments. And his commandments are not burdensome, **4** for whatever is born of God conquers the world. And this is the victory that conquers the world, our faith. **5** Who is it that conquers the world but the one who believes that Jesus is the Son of God? **6** This is the one who came by water and blood, Jesus Christ, not with the water only but with the water and the blood. And the Spirit is the one that testifies, for the Spirit is the truth.

***The Gloria Tibi:** *Glory be to thee, O Lord.*

***The Gospel:** John 15: 8-17

8 My Father is glorified by this, that you bear much fruit and become my disciples. **9** As the Father has loved me, so I have loved you; abide in my love. **10** If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in his love. **11** I have said these things to you so that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be complete. **12** "This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. **13** No one has greater love than this, to lay down one's life for one's friends. **14** You are my friends if you do what I command you. **15** I do not call you servants any longer, because the servant does not know what the master is doing; but I have called you friends, because I have made known to you everything that I have heard from my Father. **16** You did not choose me, but I chose you. And I appointed you to go and bear fruit, fruit that will last, so that the Father will give you whatever you ask him in my name. **17** I am giving you these commands so that you may love one another.

***Laus Tibi:** *Praise be to thee O Christ.*

THE SERMON "God the Mother, God the Family" The Rev. Scott Brooks-Cope

***HYMN** *Something Beautiful*

CHORUS: *Something beautiful, something good.
All my confusion He understood;
All I had to offer Him was brokenness and strife.
But He made something beautiful, of my life.*

*If there ever were dreams that were lofty and noble,
They were my dreams at the start;
And the hopes for life's best were the hopes that I harbored
Down deep in my heart;
But my dreams turned to ashes, my castles all crumbled
My fortune turned to loss;
So I wrapped it all in the rags of my life, and laid it at the cross!*
(CHORUS)

***AFFIRMATION OF FAITH**

In life and in death we belong to God. Through the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit, we trust in the one triune God, the Holy One of Israel, whom alone we worship and serve.

We trust in Jesus Christ, fully human, fully God. Jesus proclaimed the reign of God, preaching good news to the poor and release to the captives, teaching by word and deed and blessing the children, healing the sick and binding up the brokenhearted, eating with outcasts, forgiving sinners and calling all to repent and believe the gospel. Unjustly condemned for blasphemy and sedition, Jesus was crucified, suffering the depths of human pain and giving his life for the sins of the world. God raised this Jesus from the dead, vindicating his sinless life, breaking the power of sin and evil, delivering us from death to life eternal. AMEN.

JOYS AND CONCERNS

THE PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE AND THE LORD'S PRAYER

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 debts, as we forgive our debtors; and lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. AMEN.

***CLOSING HYMN** *That's Why We Praise Him*

*He came to live, live a perfect life; He came to be the Living Word, our light.
He came to die so we'd be reconciled; He came to rise to show His power and might.*

(CHORUS)
*That's why we praise Him, that's why we sing; That's why we offer Him our everything.
That's why we bow down and worship this King, 'Cause He gave His everything,
'Cause He gave His everything.*

*He came to live, live again in us; He came to be our conquering King and friend.
He came to heal and show the lost one His love; He came to go prepare a place for us.*
(CHORUS)

*Halle, hallelujah. Halle, hallelujah. Halle, hallelujah. Halle, hallelujah.
Halle, hallelujah. Halle, hallelujah. Halle, hallelujah. Halle, hallelujah. (CHORUS 2x)*

***CHARGE AND BENEDICTION**

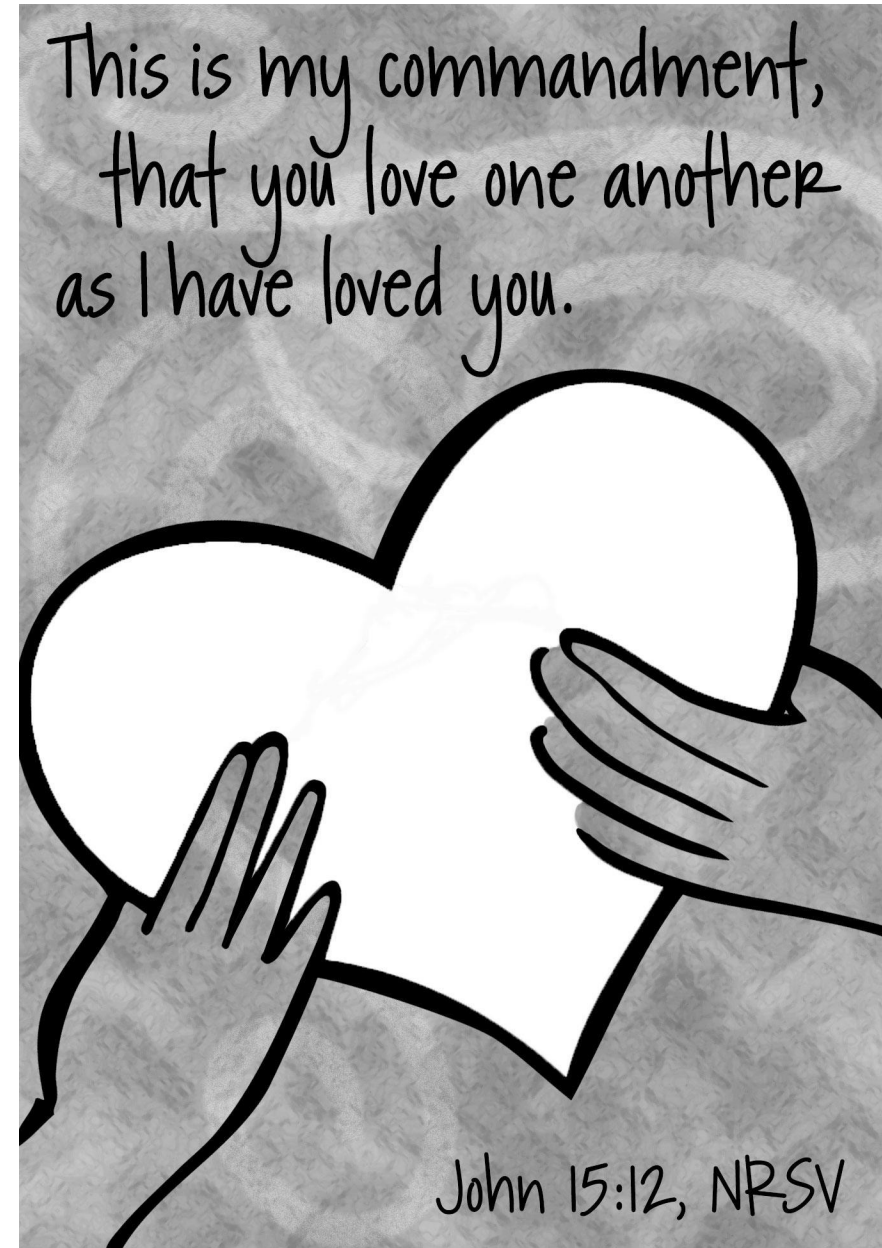
***CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE**

Go now in peace; never be afraid, God will go with you each hour of every day. Go now in faith, steadfast, strong and true. Know He will guide you in all you do. Go now in love, and show you believe, reach out to others, so all the world can see. God will be there, watching from above. Go now in peace, in faith and in love. Amen. Amen. Amen. (CCLI #2810357 Don Besig)

***POSTLUDE**

*(*Please stand in body or spirit.)*

St. Matthews United Church of Christ
102 Church St, Kunkletown, PA 18058
610-381-2442, stmatts@ptd.net
Pastor: The Rev. Suzanne Brooks-Cope
Coordinator of Spiritual Formation: Mrs. Staci Gower
Office Manager: Mrs. Rose Arace
Council President: Mr. Cheryl Dorshimer
Sunday Worship, 9 AM; Adult Sunday School, 10:30 AM
Children's Sunday School is virtual at
www.stmattsucckunkletown.com





Dear Jesus, you wanted to shelter Jerusalem like a mother hen would her chicks. Shelter me always under your loving wings. Amen

This Week Ahead

Sunday, May 9	Sixth Sunday of Easter CIA Class	- Sanctuary, 9 am - Stage Classroom 10:30 am
Monday, May 10		-Office Open 10:30 am-1pm -Gathering Room, 1 pm
Tuesday, May 11	Exercise Group Council Meeting	-Social Hall or Zoom, 7 pm -Office Open 10:30 am-1pm
Wednesday, May 12	Exercise Group	-Gathering Room, 1 pm -Office Open 10:30am-1 pm
Thursday, May 13		-Grove, 6 to 8:30 pm
Friday, May 14	Youth Group	-Grove Bathrooms, TBA
Saturday, May 15	Youth Group Painting Project	- Sanctuary, 9 am
Sunday, May 16	Seventh Sunday of Easter CIA Class	- Stage Classroom 10:30 am

Flowers: Vase 1—in honor of Starlene Barr’s birthday by family
Vase 2—in honor of Abby Huber’s 21st Birthday by family

Prayer Concerns

Rev. John Harding, Joyce Gower, Jalene Keiser, Albert Serfass, Conner Bittenbender, Hudson Stewart, Doug Hawk, Gladys Meixsell, Janet Gower, Eliza Dymond, Lois Bohn, Neal Murphy, Janet Gower, Grace Everett, Dora Tartar, Randy Cramer, Lila Kleintop, Gladys Lindenmoyer, Joyce Smith, Louise Shupp, Chip Diehl, Rose Arace, Rosemarie Stranahan, Shirley Smith, Shirley Borger, Brayden Wunder, Kim and Trevor Cope, Mae Borger, and the Families of Roy Anthony and Megan Stranahan

Today’s Ushers:

Jennie Rose Serfass and Gabrielle Bentley

Next Week’s Ushers:

Shirley Brotzman and Cheryl Dorshimer

Today’s Acolyte: Ally Pfancook

Don’t forget to play CIA’s Bible Bingo game based on the Fruits of the Spirit. A new game begins today. Directions are on the back of the Bingo card. If you would like an extra card, speak to Diann Bittenbender. **This week’s fruit is:** Banana—Philemon 1:3, Apple-Genesis 2:18, pear-John 15:5

The Council decided at their April meeting to move Sunday morning worship back to the Grove from Memorial Day to Labor Day, weather permitting. Up at the Grove, people will be able to scatter out around the gazebo or stay in their cars for worship. Also, since Pennsylvania is loosening COVID restrictions, the council will be expanding our allowed number of worshipers in the sanctuary to 90. Please however continue to attempt to sit 6 feet away from anyone not in your family; you may need to sit in the center of the pew. Please continue to wear masks in the sanctuary.



Our Secretary, Rose Arace will be out of the office recovering from surgery. Office hours will be 10:30 am to 1 pm on Monday, Wednesday, and Thursdays while she is gone. The office will be closed on Fridays during her recovery. Joan Madden is filling in for Rose while she is away. Magen Snyder will be editing the White Dove Flyer.

Our Strawberry Picnic Festival Committee is up and running. There is a sign-up sheet for volunteers for our food stands in the narthex (foyer). We will be buying ice cream again this year due to COVID, but we do plan on a Cake Walk so we will be looking for donations for both the adult and children’s cake walk. Laymen’s Fellowship will also be holding a tricky tray and is looking for donations. CIA is seeking donations for trophies. Thank you for your assistance!!

Graduate Recognition Sunday will be June 6. There is an insert in the bulletin. If you know of a church member or if you have a family member who is graduating, we will honor them on June 6 during worship. Please fill out the enclosed insert and be sure to give a complete mailing address so we can send them a card.

Youth Group will meet this Friday, May 14 up at the Grove at 6 pm for games, a campfire, roasted hot dogs and we will prep the bathrooms for painting. Then we will meet again in the afternoon on Saturday, May 15 to paint. That time is TBA.