



Sunday, September 21, 2025

10:00 am Worship Service

15th SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Mission Statement: Compelled by God's love and our faith in Jesus Christ, Unity Church, a diverse people of faith, seeks to realize God's dream for the world through worship, learning, giving, and serving.

Core Values: We love children. Serve Christ with courage. Embrace diversity. Nurture community. Be an advocate for justice and peace.

Vision Statement: We are called to Reach Up, Reach In and Reach Out

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www.unitywilmington.org

We invite you to contact Unity's staff members:

The Rev. Brian K. Sanders, Lead Pastor

443-676-2239; bks0808@aol.com

The Rev. Dr. Melissa P. Lemons, Pastor for Community Ministry

melissalemons@gmail.com; 302-803-8866

Office hours: by appointment

Norwood Coleman, Jr., PhD, Music Director

Mrs. Sharlene Drummond, Choir Director

Vida Dawkins, Youth Ministry Director

vidadawkins@gmail.com, 302-345-2617

YOU CAN ACCESS US ON SUNDAY MORNINGS AT 10:00AM ON YOUTUBE, UNITY LUTHERAN CHURCH, WILMINGTON, DE WITH THE CURRENT SUNDAY DATE. FOR YOUR CONVENIENCE, USE LINK BELOW.

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCN4vkddPnbKEzTKIFg-Lkvg>

“Enter to Worship”

*Those who are able are invited to stand ** **Please, no walking or standing during this time. BOLD PRINT:** Congregation responds, P: Presider, A: Assisting Minister/Worship Leader. Where you see a ✠, you are invited to make the sign of the cross.

THE GATHERING

The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God.

PRAISE & WORSHIP

RINGING OF THE BELLS

Introduction

A: As we are invited today to consider what it means to be managers (rather than owners) of all that we have, it is crucial to recognize that we are bought with a price. “Christ Jesus, himself human, . . . gave himself a ransom for all.” Apart from the generosity of God we have nothing—we are nothing. By God’s gracious favor we have everything we need.

OPENING HYMN- “SON OF GOD, ETERNAL SAVIOR” ELW 655
Please Stand

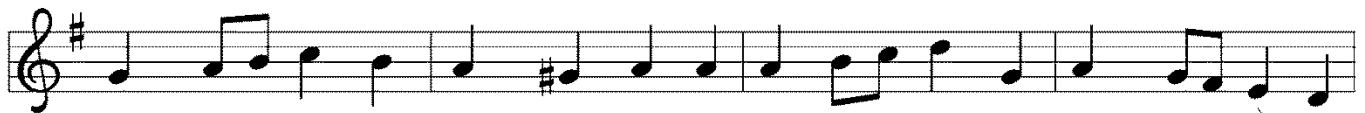
Son of God, Eternal Savior



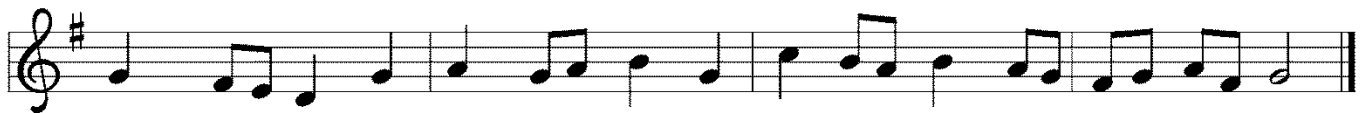
1 Son of God, e - ter - nal Sav - ior, source of life and truth and grace,
 2 As you, Lord, have lived for oth - ers, so may we for oth - ers live.
 3 Come, O Christ, and reign a - mong us, King of love and Prince of peace;
 4 Son of God, e - ter - nal Sav - ior, source of life and truth and grace,



Word made flesh, whose birth a - mong us hal - lows all our hu - man race,
 Free - ly have your gifts been grant - ed; free - ly may your ser - vants give.
 hush the storm of strife and pas - sion, bid its cru - el dis - cords cease.
 Word made flesh, whose birth a - mong us hal - lows all our hu - man race:



you our head, who, throned in glo - ry, for your own will ev - er plead:
 Yours the gold and yours the sil - ver, yours the wealth of land and sea;
 By your pa - tient years of toil - ing, by your si - lent hours of pain,
 by your pray - ing, by your will - ing that your peo - ple should be one,



fill us with your love and pit - y, heal our wrong, and help our need.
 we but stew - ards of your boun - ty held in sol - emn trust will be.
 quench our fe - vered thirst of plea - sure, stem our self - ish greed of gain.
 grant, oh, grant our hope's fru - i - tion: here on earth your will be done.

Text: Somerset C. Lowry, 1855–1932

Music: IN BABILONE, *Oude en Nieuwe Hollandse Boerenliedjes en Contradansen*, 1710

THANKSGIVING FOR BAPTISM (Please Stand)

Blessed be the holy Trinity, ✠ one God, our maker, our helper, and our keeper. **Amen.**

Trusting in God's mercy, let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another. *Silence is kept for reflection.*

Merciful and loving God, **we are your stiff-necked people. We trample on the needy. We grumble about your grace to others. We turn away from the poor. Have mercy on us and forgive our sins. Rejoice over us as ones who were lost and have been found. Amen.**

Even when we are faithless, God remains faithful. Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners. You who were lost have been found. In the name of ✠ Jesus, your sins are forgiven! **Amen.**

PRAYER OF THE DAY

A or P: God among us, **we gather in the name of your Son to learn love for one another. Keep our feet from evil paths. Turn our minds to your wisdom and our hearts to the grace revealed in your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.**

WORD (Please be seated)

God speaks to us in scripture reading, preaching, and song

First Reading: Amos 8:4-7

⁴ Hear this, you who trample on the needy,
and bring to ruin the poor of the land,
⁵ saying, "When will the new moon be over
so that we may sell grain,
and the Sabbath,
so that we may offer wheat for sale?"

We will make the ephah smaller and the shekel heavier
and practice deceit with false balances,

⁶ buying the poor for silver
and the needy for a pair of sandals
and selling the sweepings of the wheat.”

⁷ The LORD has sworn by the pride of Jacob:
Surely I will never forget any of their deeds.

The Word of the Lord. Thanks be to God.

Second Reading: 1 Timothy 2:1-7

¹ First of all, then, I urge that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for everyone, ² for kings and all who are in high positions, so that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and dignity. ³ This is right and acceptable before God our Savior, ⁴ who desires everyone to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth. ⁵ For there is one God; there is also one mediator between God and humankind, Christ Jesus, himself human, ⁶ who gave himself a ransom for all—this was attested at the right time. ⁷ For this I was appointed a herald and an apostle (I am telling the truth; I am not lying), a teacher of the gentiles in faith and truth.

The Word of the Lord. Thanks be to God.

***GOSPEL ACCLAMATION (Please Stand)**

P: Please stand for the reading of the Holy Gospel.



GOSPEL

P: The Holy Gospel according to: **Luke 16:1-13**

C: **Glory to you, O Lord.**

Gospel:

¹ Then Jesus said to the disciples, "There was a rich man who had a manager, and charges were brought to him that this man was squandering his property. ² So he summoned him and said to him, 'What is this that I hear about you? Give me an accounting of your management because you cannot be my manager any longer.' ³ Then the manager said to himself, 'What will I do, now that my master is taking the position away from me? I am not strong enough to dig, and I am ashamed to beg. ⁴ I have decided what to do so that, when I am dismissed as manager, people may welcome me into their homes.' ⁵ So, summoning his master's debtors one by one, he asked the first, 'How much do you owe my master?' ⁶ He answered, 'A hundred jugs of olive oil.' He said to him, 'Take your bill, sit down quickly, and make it fifty.' ⁷ Then he asked another, 'And how much do you owe?' He replied, 'A hundred containers of wheat.' He said to him, 'Take your bill and make it eighty.' ⁸ And his master commended the dishonest manager because he had acted shrewdly, for the children of this age are more shrewd in dealing with their own generation than are the children of light. ⁹ And I tell you, make friends for yourselves by means of dishonest wealth so that when it is gone they may welcome you into the eternal homes.

¹⁰ "Whoever is faithful in a very little is faithful also in much, and whoever is dishonest in a very little is dishonest also in much. ¹¹ If, then, you have not been faithful with the dishonest wealth, who will entrust to you the true riches? ¹² And if you have not been faithful with what belongs to another, who will give you what is your own? ¹³ No slave can serve two masters, for a slave will either hate the one and love the other or be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and wealth."

The Gospel of our Lord. **Praise to you, O Christ.**

SERMON

Pastor Melissa Lemons

Notes...

HYMN OF THE DAY- "GUIDE MY FEET" TFF 153

Guide My Feet

Leader



1 Guide my feet
2 Hold my hand
3 Stand by me while I run this race.
4 I'm your child
5 Search my heart

All



Guide my feet
Hold my hand
Stand by me while I run this race.
I'm your child
Search my heart



Guide my feet
Hold my hand
Stand by me while I run this race,
I'm your child
Search my heart



for I don't want to run this race in vain.

Text: African American spiritual
Music: GUIDE MY FEET, African American spiritual

APOSTLES CREED (Please Stand)

C: I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth. I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried; he descended into hell.* On the third day he rose again; he ascended into heaven, he is seated at the right hand of the Father, and he will come to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Christian church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

*Or, "he descended to the dead," another translation of this text in widespread use.
From sundaysandseasons.com.

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION (Please sit, stand or kneel)

A: Gracious God, we come to you in prayer for the church, the world, and all in need. *A brief silence.*

O God, teach your church to act in solidarity with the poor, frustrating the efforts of those who trample on the needy and practicing justice in our own life and community. God of grace, **receive our prayer.**

Almighty Creator, we pray for an end to the misuse of the earth and its resources, that all people may benefit from your abundant gifts and that our stewardship of creation would be marked by justice and sustainability. God of grace, **receive our prayer.**

Holy One, embolden elected leaders to pursue policies of economic justice for the benefit of all, especially those who are most vulnerable and marginalized. Persuade them by your example of generosity and compassion. God of grace, **receive our prayer.**

Compassionate God, we pray for all facing illness, those near death, or those grieving the loss of loved ones (*especially*). May they find comfort and strength in your love. Prepare us to surround them with your healing care. God of grace, **receive our prayer.**

God of love, motivate our congregation to enact economic justice through tangible action, prioritizing the needs of our community and sharing resources generously through our outreach and justice ministries. God of grace, **receive our prayer.**

Here other intercessions may be offered.

Gracious God, we give thanks for the saints (*especially Matthew and all*) who now join the heavenly chorus in praising your name. Lift us up from the dust of grief and remind us of your promise of new life. God of grace, **receive our prayer.**

We entrust these prayers to you, O God, in the name of Jesus Christ, our redeemer and friend. **Amen.**

MEAL

God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ.

PEACE

P: The peace of Christ be with you always

C: And also with you. Please share a sign of Christ's peace.

OFFERING

(God loves a cheerful giver." 2 Cor. 9:7, 8)

(During the offering, the ushers will pass the offering plates moving from back to front while a musical selection is played. Then the congregation will sing the Offertory hymn printed below.)

Cre - ate in me a clean heart, O God, and re -

new a right spir - it with - in me.

Cast me not a - way from your pres - ence, and take not your

Ho - ly Spir - it from me. Re -

store to me the joy of your sal - va - tion, and up -

hold me with your free Spir - it.

Cre - ate in me a clean heart, O God, and re -

new a right spir - it with - in me.

OFFERING PRAYER

A: Lord of the harvest, **we return to you a portion of what you have given to us. Turn us to set our hope not on the uncertainty of riches, but on you, who richly provides for us. Multiply what we have gathered to bless all who are suffering and in need, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

All are welcome to communion

P: The Lord be with you

C: And also with you.

P: Lift up your hearts.

C: We lift them to the Lord.

P: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

C: It is right to give our thanks and praise.

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy, that we should at all times and in all places give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God, through our Savior Jesus Christ.

In the night in which he was betrayed, our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks; broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying: Take and eat; this is my body, given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it for all to drink, saying: This cup is the new covenant in my blood, shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin. Do this for the remembrance of me. We remember and proclaim the mystery of faith: **Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.**

With this bread and cup we remember your Word dwelling among us, full of grace and truth. We remember our new birth in Christ's death and resurrection. We look with hope for the Lord's coming and ask... **Come, Lord Jesus. Come Holy Spirit. Amen**

THE LORD'S PRAYER

P: Gathered as one by the Holy Spirit, we pray as Jesus taught us:
(*Alternate/modern versions of prayer in This Far by Faith p. 3, WOV p. 39*)

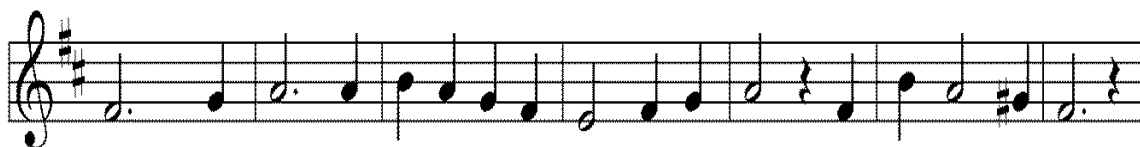
C: Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is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

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

P: Jesus welcomes sinners and eats with them.
Come to this meal of mercy.



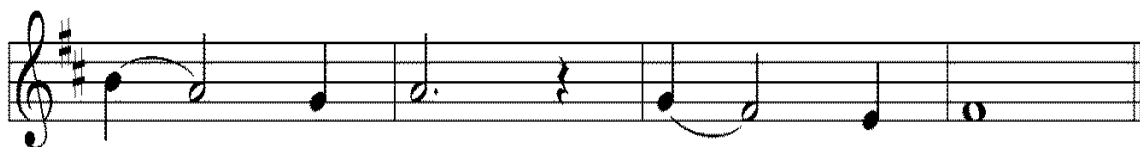
☪ Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world; have mer-cy on us.



Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world; have mer-cy on us.



Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the world;



grant us peace, grant us peace.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

A & C: O God, through this meal you have strengthened us and appointed us to be your servants. Send us to do good and to share our possessions with all in need. We ask this in Jesus' name. **Amen.**

THE SENDING

God blesses us and sends us to minister to the world.

BLESSING

P: The God of righteousness, who gives justice to the oppressed, who gives food to the hungry, who sets the prisoners free,
✠ bless you now and forever. **Amen.**

SENDING HYMN– “I’M SO GLAD JESUS LIFTED ME” Unity Song
Book # 30 Please Stand

**I’M SO GLAD JESUS LIFTED ME
I’M SO GLAD JESUS LIFTED ME
I’M SO GLAD JESUS LIFTED ME
SINGING GLORY HALLELUJAH, JESUS LIFTED ME.**

**SATAN HAD ME BOUND JESUS LIFTED ME
SATAN HAD ME BOUND JESUS LIFTED ME
SATAN HAD ME BOUND JESUS LIFTED ME
SINGING GLORY HALLELUJAH, JESUS LIFTED ME.**

**WHEN I WAS IN TROUBLE, JESUS LIFTED ME
WHEN I WAS IN TROUBLE, JESUS LIFTED ME
WHEN I WAS IN TROUBLE, JESUS LIFTED ME
SINGING GLORY HALLELUJAH, JESUS LIFTED ME.**

DISMISSAL

A: Go in peace. Do not lose heart. **Thanks be to God.**

“Let us exit to serve”

We are called to reach up, reach in, and reach out.....

IF YOU HAVE ANYONE YOU WOULD LIKE TO ADD TO THE PRAYER LIST, PLEASE CALL THE CHURCH OFFICE @ 302-658-5288. NAMES WILL REMAIN ON THE PRAYER LIST FOR 3 MONTHS, UNLESS YOU REQUEST LONGER. PLEASE CALL THE OFFICE to MAKE ADDITIONS – (302) 658-5288.

THIS WEEK WE ASK THAT YOU KEEP THE FOLLOWING IN YOUR DAILY PRAYERS:

**UNITY CHURCH
DEBBIE SWAN
NORMAN GARRETT
TYLER ALEXANDER
BILL ELLSWORTH
REV. LORRAINE
DRANE JONES**

**PASTOR BRIAN SANDERS
PASTOR CLARENCE PETTIT
SPENCER DRUMMOND
CURTIS JACKSON
NANCY ELLSWORTH
RUTH JOE
ROB FISHER**

ANNOUNCEMENTS – Birthdays, Anniversaries, Visitors
WE WOULD LIKE TO WELCOME ALL VISITORS TO UNITY THIS MORNING.
IT IS SO GOOD TO HAVE YOU AND PLEASE COME AGAIN.

WOMEN'S FALL RETREAT – St. Philip's Lutheran Church has invited the women of Unity to a Fall Retreat on Saturday, November 8, 2025, from 8am-1pm in their fellowship hall. A continental breakfast and lunch will be provided. RSVP by Sunday, October 26th. The theme is "Far More Precious than Diamonds".

DIANE MAZZONI – would love to hear from her friends at Unity Church. She is living in an assisted living facility in PA. Her new address is: 130 N. Larkspur Drive, Palmyra, PA 17078.

YOU ARE INVITED – to the funeral service for Luci Nardo's sister, Anna. Everything will be held at the DAP (next door to our church) on Saturday, October 4, 2025. Visitation will be at 12:00 with the service beginning at 1:00. There will be a luncheon served following the service. Luci has invited us all.

PUB THEOLOGY – Through a generous donation, we will be able to resume Pub Theology on the third Sunday of each month. In September, we will be meeting TODAY in the Weiser Room, following morning worship, and lunch will be brought in for those attending. ALL ARE WELCOME!!

WORSHIP & MUSIC COMMITTEE – The next meeting will be held on Sunday, September 28, immediately following morning worship.

PRIVATE PRAYERS – If you would like extra prayer time, you are welcome to stay at the altar after you have had communion.

WEEKLY ZUMBA CLASSES – We will suspend Weekly Zumba Classes for the summer and will resume in the fall.

Dementia Caregiver Support Group: 2nd Thursday of the month, 6-7:30pm. Contact Rev. Brain Sanders for more info.

Food Pantry: Evening Hours – Every Thursday 5:00-7:00pm

Prayer: Anyone interested in 30 minutes of presenting prayer leads is invited to join our Prayer Line every Monday evening at 6:30-7:00 pm. Dial 1-240-591-0390, 315-704#.

Volunteers needed: Readers (lectors), Assisting Ministers (Worship leaders), Communion Assistants and Altar Guild. Please consider helping out in this capacity. Also, we need a volunteer liaison for the Boy Scouts to replace Bob Mazzoni. See Carol Egan for more info.

Council Vacancies: There are several open positions on Unity Church Council – volunteers needed to oversee Education, Hospitality, and Stewardship Committees; as well as anyone with accounting or bookkeeping skills to assist the Treasurer. See Rob Snowden or Pastor Sanders.

Offering/Giving: An alternative way to contribute to Unity is to set up VANCO on your mobile phone by texting (844)794-0738 and follow directions to donate by credit card. There is a “donate now” button on our Website which is www.unitywilmington.org

Spiritual Direction/Companionship: If you’d like to talk individually about your faith life and how God shows up for you, contact Pr. Melissa. Sessions are free for Unity members (normally \$50 per hour). Companions usually meet once a month.

Bible Study will resume on **Wednesday, September 24, 2025**. Please access Zoom as follows:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87206052414?pwd=cWxnSnJodFE5S3hObzQrVGdMWGwwUTo9>

One tap mobile

+13017158592,,87206052414#.....0#,,717690# US (Wash, DC)

Meeting ID: 872 0605 2414

Passcode: 717690

