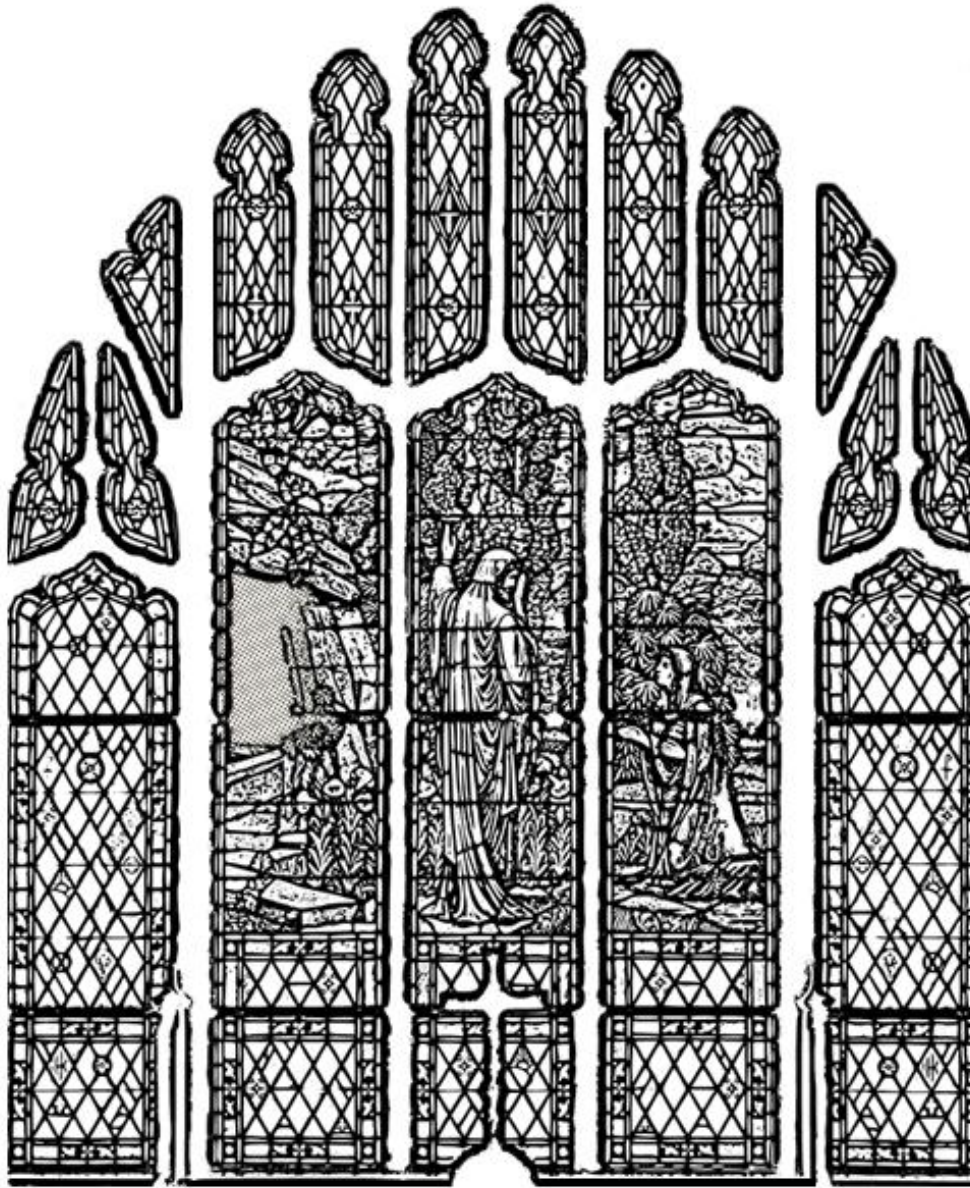


MT. LEBANON UNITED METHODIST CHURCH



Sunday, July 19, 2026, 8:30AM & 10:45AM

The Eighth Sunday after Pentecost

3319 WEST LIBERTY AVENUE ... PITTSBURGH, PA 15216 ... 412-531-7131

THE REV'D THOMAS Q. STRANDBURG, PASTOR ... tstrandburg@mlumc.org



Sunday, July 19, 2026 – The Eighth Sunday after Pentecost

The United States Geological Survey has embedded thousands of small metal disks in concrete across the country. These enduring benchmarks give surveyors an accurate reference point to make maps we can use to chart our course. Jacob may have been the first to place a benchmark, but his version keeps us on the path to faithful living.

**Indicates an invitation to stand in spirit or posture, as able.*

The Prelude

I. *Entrée* & II. *Offertoire*
from HEURES MYSTIQUES (Op. 29, No. 5)

Léon Boëllmann (1862-1897)

*Opening Hymn

“Come, Ye Thankful People, Come”

UMH 694

* The Greeting & Call to Worship

℣ The Lord be with you.

℞ **And also with you.**

℣ Today, we gather to join our voices with winds and seas, sunshine and rain, mountains and grassy plains to worship God, our Creator.

℞ **We gather as children of God, stewards of God’s creation.**

℣ We gather to join our hearts with creatures who creep and crawl, slither and squirm, swim and soar, to worship God, our Creator.

℞ **We gather as children of God, stewards of God’s creation.**

℣ We gather as witnesses of the harm that has been done to God’s creation, to the groanings of the earth and all the earth’s inhabitants who long for peace and flourishing.

℞ **We gather as children of God, stewards of God’s creation.**

℣ Come, let us worship God who strengthens and equips us, guiding us to live out our faith as good stewards of God’s good creation.

℞ **Come, let us worship God who inspires and empowers us to be stewards of hope and redemption in a wounded and hurting world! Amen.**

*Opening Prayer

Said by all, with one voice.

Holy God, like a loving father and caring mother, you watch over us and beckon us to follow the right path. But we get stuck: stopped by our fear of trying something new, trapped by our memories of past failures, caught in a web of conflicting choices, halted by the clamor of many voices. We know the distress of worry and the blur of tears. Like staring at an empty page, we feel trapped and

hesitant. Free us, O God, to follow with joyful steps, to hear clearly your directions, to be bold in our loving, courageous in our caring and brave in our speaking. Through our Lord, Jesus. Amen.

***Silent Prayer**

***Response**

“Take Time to Be Holy”

UMH 395

A Message for Young Disciples (10:45 am)

As the young disciples gather at the front of the church, all sing:

**This, this is where children belong, welcomed as part of the worshipping throng.
Water, God's word, bread and cup, prayer and song: This is where children belong.**

The young disciples (school-age children) then depart the sanctuary for Kids Praise. Teachers will lead them back to the sanctuary prior to the conclusion of the service. Nursery is available for younger children; please see an usher for directions.

The First Lesson

A Reading from Genesis

GEN. 28:10-19

Jacob left Beer-sheba and went toward Haran. He came to a certain place and stayed there for the night, because the sun had set. Taking one of the stones of the place, he put it under his head and lay down in that place. And he dreamed that there was a stairway set up on the earth, the top of it reaching to heaven, and the angels of God were ascending and descending on it. And the Lord stood beside him and said, “I am the Lord, the God of Abraham your father and the God of Isaac; the land on which you lie I will give to you and to your offspring, and your offspring shall be like the dust of the earth, and you shall spread abroad to the west and to the east and to the north and to the south, and all the families of the earth shall be blessed in you and in your offspring. Know that I am with you and will keep you wherever you go and will bring you back to this land, for I will not leave you until I have done what I have promised you.” Then Jacob woke from his sleep and said, “Surely the Lord is in this place—and I did not know it!” And he was afraid and said, “How awesome is this place! This is none other than the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven.” So Jacob rose early in the morning, and he took the stone that he had put under his head and set it up for a pillar and poured oil on the top of it. He called that place Bethel, but the name of the city was Luz at the first.

Lector: Hear what the Spirit is saying to God's people.

People: Thanks be to God.

The Second Lesson**A Reading from the Epistle to the Romans**

ROM. 8:12-25

So then, brothers and sisters, we are obligated, not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh—for if you live according to the flesh, you will die, but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live. For all who are led by the Spirit of God are children of God. For you did not receive a spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you received a spirit of adoption. When we cry, "Abba! Father!" it is that very Spirit bearing witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, then heirs: heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, if we in fact suffer with him so that we may also be glorified with him.

I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory about to be revealed to us. For the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the children of God, for the creation was subjected to futility, not of its own will, but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself will be set free from its enslavement to decay and will obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God. We know that the whole creation has been groaning together as it suffers together the pains of labor, and not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the first fruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly while we wait for adoption, the redemption of our bodies. For in hope we were saved. Now hope that is seen is not hope, for who hopes for what one already sees? But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience.

Lector: This is the word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

The Pastoral Prayer & The Lord's Prayer

Said by all, with one voice.

**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, the power, and the glory forever.
Amen.**

The Sermon**"Your Spiritual Benchmark"****Rev. Strandburg**

***The Affirmation of Faith**

UMH 882

All are invited to stand, in spirit or in posture, and to face the altar as the affirmation of faith is recited.

Pastor: Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is the one true church, apostolic and universal, whose holy faith let us now declare:

**All: I believe in God, the Father Almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, his 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 to the dead.
On the third day he rose again;
he ascended into heaven,
is seated at the right hand of the Father,
and will come again to judge the living and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting.
Amen.**

***The Sign of Peace**

℣. The peace of Christ be with you.

℟. And also with you.

Announcements

At the Offertory

III. *Élevation* from HEURES MYSTIQUES

L. Boëllmann

***The Doxology & Prayer of Dedication**

UMH 94

***The Sending Hymn**

"Here I Am, Lord"

UMH 593

***The Dismissal**

℣. Let us bless the Lord.

℟. Thanks be to God.

***The Benediction & Recessional**

The people remain in place until the altar party has retired.

The Postlude

V. *Sortie* from HEURES MYSTIQUES

L. Boëllmann

Prayer Concerns

Gayle Radnich, *who received a recent diagnosis of a health condition.*

The people of Venezuela, *recovering after the recent earthquake.*

Gary Henry, *undergoing cancer treatment.*

Norma Buhrman, *enduring serious illness.*

For those serving their country or community as first responders or in the armed forces, especially:

SPC **Russell Dale** - CPT **Shaun Hay** - LTC **Azizi Wesmiller** - LTC **Matthew Wesmiller**

2LT **Keith Cable** - LTC **Zachary Allen Finch** - CPL **Wyatt Hoover**

We pray for victims of violence in our nation and around the world.

*This week, we remember and pray for Christ's body throughout the world, especially remembering this week the church in **Djibouti and Somalia**. (Prayer Cycle of the World Council of Churches).*

Please remember the special concerns of those in our community and throughout our world in your personal prayer life throughout the week. If you wish to solicit prayers from the congregation for any matter (health, travel, special concerns, etc.), please contact the church office to have your concern added to the prayer list.

Leaders in Worship this Morning

JOETA D'ESTE (8:30AM) AND ROB SPICHER (10:45AM), LECTORS
MR. A. MITCHELL V. STECKER, DIRECTOR OF MUSIC & LITURGY
THE REV'D THOMAS Q. STRANDBURG, SENIOR PASTOR

The altar flowers this morning given by
Asher and Silas Ward
to the Glory of God and in celebration of
the 20th Wedding Anniversary of their parents,
Laura & Nate Ward,
celebrated on July 15.

To provide flowers for a future service of worship,
please call the church office at 412-531-7131,
or use the form linked through the QR code below.

