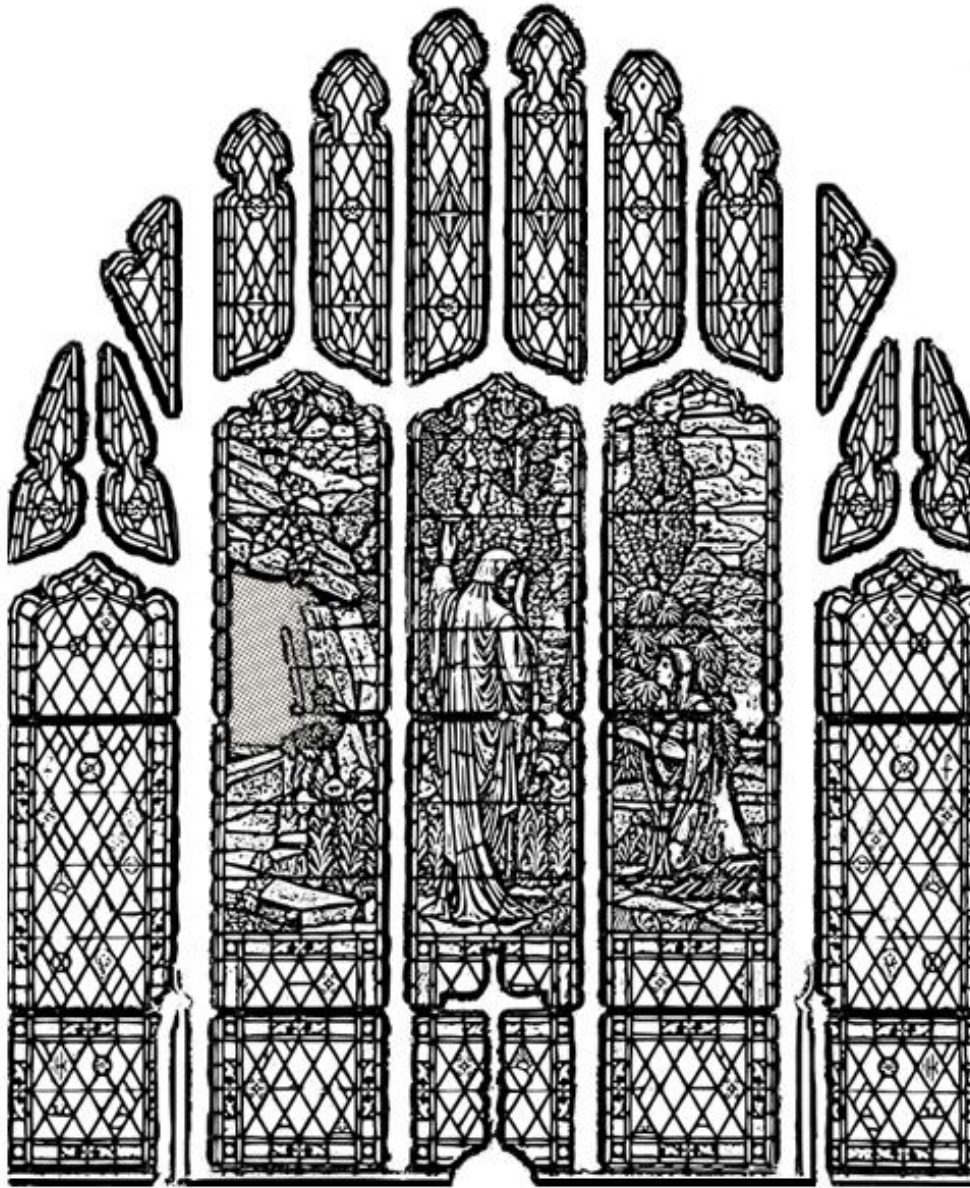


MT. LEBANON UNITED METHODIST CHURCH



Sunday, September 27, 2026, 9:00AM

The Eighteenth Sunday after Pentecost – Visioning Sunday

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

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



Sunday, September 27, 2026 – The Eighteenth Sunday after Pentecost
Visioning Sunday

God calls congregations not merely to dream about the future, but to clearly articulate and faithfully pursue it together.

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

The Prelude No. 1: "My soul hath a desire and longing to enter the courts of the Lord" George Oldroyd (1887-1956)
from *Three Liturgical Improvisations*

The Introit *The King's Highway* David McK. Williams (1887-1978)

*I know not where the road will lead—I follow day by day—or where it ends: I only know
I walk the King's highway.
I know not if the way is long, and no one else can say; but rough or smooth, uphill or down,
I walk the King's highway.
And some I love have reached the end; but some with me may stay, their faith and hope still guiding me:
I walk the King's highway.
The way is truth, the way is love, for light and strength I pray, and through the years of life, to God
I walk the King's highway.
The countless hosts lead on before; I must not fear nor stray; with them, the pilgrims of the faith,
I walk the King's highway.
Through light and dark the road leads on 'til dawns the endless day, when I shall know why in this life
I walk the King's highway.*

All rise, in body or spirit, at the sound of the chimes.

***Opening Hymn “Praise to the Lord, the Almighty” UMH 139**

* The Greeting & Call to Worship

¶ The Lord be with you.

R And also with you.

¶ The Lord has spoken, and God's truth is established forever. A voice proclaims,
"Write the vision and make it plain, so that those who read it may run."

R We gather today to look upon God's truth, ready to run the race set before us.

¶ For the revelation awaits an appointed time; it speaks of the end and will not prove false.

R Though the answer seems to linger, we will wait with steady hearts.

✠ Do not grow weary, and do not lose heart, for the promises of God are sure.

R It will certainly come; it will not delay. Let us worship the Lord together.

***Opening Prayer**

Said by all, with one voice.

We gather in Your holy presence today, thankful that you are a God who speaks, who reveals, and who fulfills every promise.

Your word reminds us through the prophet Habakkuk to "write the vision and make it plain," so that we may faithfully run the race set before us.

Today, we anchor our hearts in your divine truth: the vision is for an appointed time. Even when Your answers seem to tarry, help us to wait with active faith, unwavering hope, and joyful expectation.

May our lives bear witness to your steadfastness while we wait.

Fill this sanctuary with your Holy Spirit.

In the faithful and beautiful name of Jesus we pray. Amen.

***Silent Prayer**

***Response**

"Spirit Song"

UMH 347

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 the book of Habakkuk

HAB. 2:2-3

Then the Lord answered me and said: Write the vision; make it plain on tablets, so that a runner may read it. For there is still a vision for the appointed time; it speaks of the end and does not lie. If it seems to tarry, wait for it; it will surely come; it will not delay.

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

People: Thanks be to God.

The Second Lesson*A Reading from the Gospel according to Matthew**

Mt. 17:1-8

Six days later, Jesus took with him Peter and James and his brother John and led them up a high mountain, by themselves. And he was transfigured before them, and his face shone like the sun, and his clothes became bright as light. Suddenly there appeared to them Moses and Elijah, talking with him. Then Peter said to Jesus, "Lord, it is good for us to be here; if you wish, I will set up three tents here, one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah." While he was still speaking, suddenly a bright cloud overshadowed them, and a voice from the cloud said, "This is my Son, the Beloved; with him I am well pleased; listen to him!" When the disciples heard this, they fell to the ground and were overcome by fear. But Jesus came and touched them, saying, "Get up and do not be afraid." And when they raised their eyes, they saw no one except Jesus himself alone.

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**"Write the Vision"****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 & Announcements**

℣. The peace of Christ be with you.
 ℞. And also with you.

At the Offertory

The Anthem

He is Marvelous

Rosephanye Powell (b.1962),
 Ms. Timothi Williams, soloist

***The Doxology & Prayer of Dedication**

UMH 94

***The Sending Hymn**

"Go, Make of All Disciples"

UMH 571

***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

Processional

Martin Shaw (1875-1958)

Prayer Concerns

Mary Garber, hospitalized with serious illness.

Mark Cerneskie, recovering from illness.

Joyce Campbell, sister of Nancy Marshall, struggling with ongoing health issues.

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**

*For our **UMC Friends and Partners in Ministry in Latvia, Lithuania, and Estonia**, facing anxieties resulting from the Russia-Ukraine war.*

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 **Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, and Peru**. (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.

A Music Note

On this day that we have set aside to envision what our congregation dreams to be, we hear choral music reflecting this theme. At the introit, "The King's Highway" by David McK. Williams (1887-1978) expresses the deep resolve both to turn our faces to the future with trust and without fear, and at the same time, to cherish and emulate the example of forebears who have brought us to this point. In that spirit, it is noteworthy that this piece (piece no. 100 in our music catalogue) was sung at the celebration of the 100th anniversary of our sanctuary building in November 2024. At the anthem, we hear music that expresses the exuberance that comes when we remember the greatness and goodness of the one who holds us yesterday, today, tomorrow, and forever--"He is Marvellous", a contemporary choral composition in the gospel tradition by Dr. Rosephanye Powell (b.1962).

Leaders in Worship this Morning

ASHER WARD AND DILLON SCHMIDT, ACOLYTES

MATT BAKER, CROSS BEARER

THE CHOIR OF THE MT. LEBANON UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

MR. A. MITCHELL V. STECKER, DIRECTOR OF MUSIC & LITURGY

THE REV'D THOMAS Q. STRANDBURG, SENIOR PASTOR

The altar flowers this morning given by

Rob Spicher

to the Glory of God and in celebration of

Jane,

his beloved wife, whose birthday will be celebrated September 30.

*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.*

