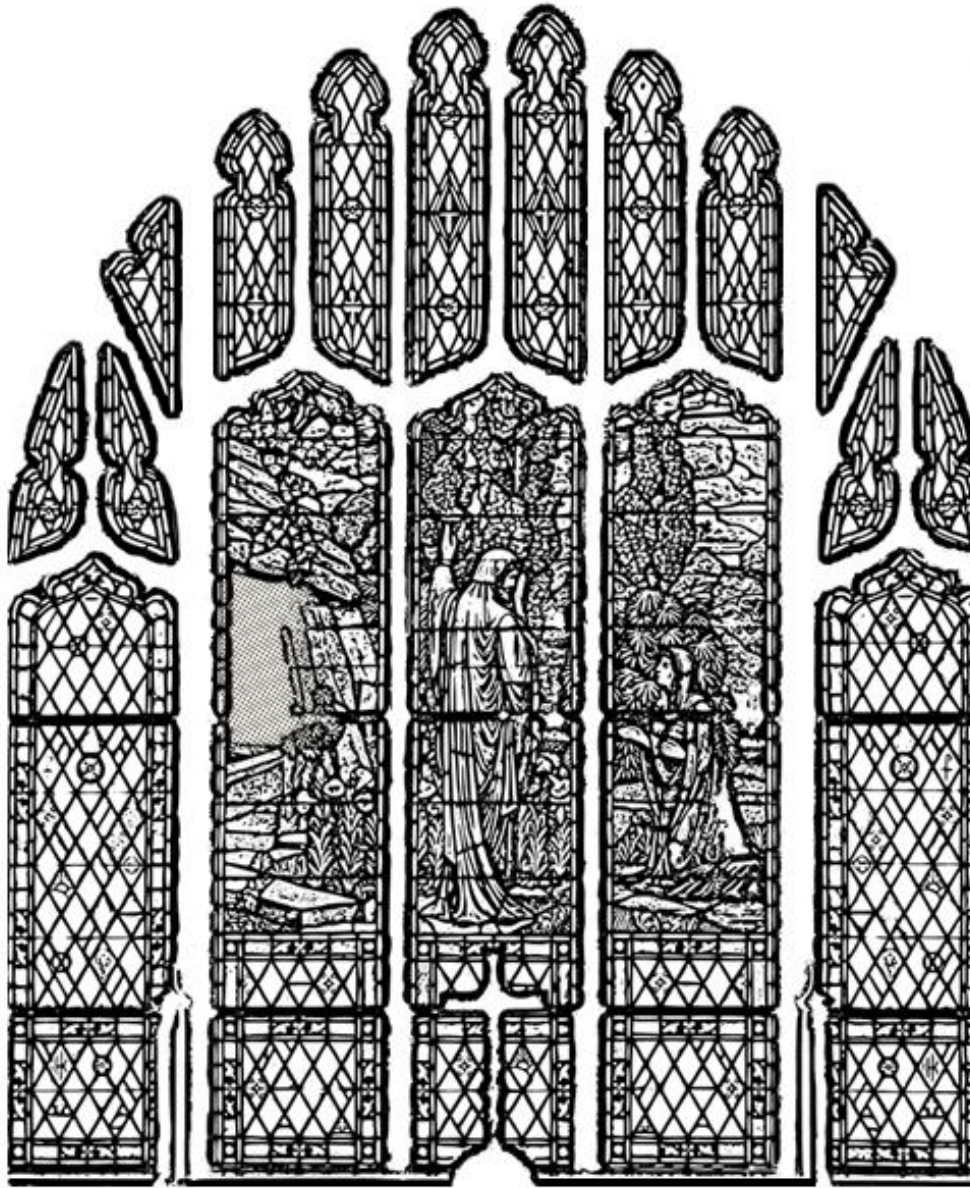


MT. LEBANON UNITED METHODIST CHURCH



Sunday, October 25, 2026, 8:30AM & 10:45AM

The Twenty-Second Sunday after Pentecost

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

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



Sunday, October 25, 2026 – The Twenty-Second Sunday after Pentecost

The apostle Paul has been described as a relentless agitator and disciplinarian but he also sees himself as a loving parent and fierce protector, capable of applying tender and loving care. We need both.

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

The Prelude

No. I from *Reformation-Fantasie* (Op.33)

Wilhelm Rudnick (1850-1927)

O Sing to the Lord

Arr. Martha Lynn Thompson

Offered by the Handbell Ensembles of MLUMC

The Introit (10:45)

Christ's Part

Glenn Rudolph (b.1951)

text: Robert Herrick (1591-664)

THIS ANTHEM WAS COMPOSED IN 2014 IN MEMORY OF THE REV'D DR. PAT ALBRIGHT

*Christ, He requires still, wheresoe'er He comes to feed or lodge, to have the best of rooms:
Give Him the choice; grant Him the nobler part of all the house: the best of all's the heart.*

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

*Opening Hymn

"A Mighty Fortress Is Our God"

UMH 110

* The Greeting & Call to Worship

∞ The Lord be with you.

℞ **And also with you.**

∞ We are chosen children of God, bound together by the Holy Spirit.

℞ **We belong to God, and through God, we belong to one another.**

∞ When we feel tested by hard decisions, calls to advocate against injustice, competing narratives, and worrying misinformation, we remember:

℞ **We belong to God, and through God, we belong to one another.**

∞ When we struggle with damaged trust and the need to repair our relationships with God and one another, when we are called to go against the social current to build communities of mercy and justice, we remember:

℞ **We belong to God, and through God, we belong to one another.**

∞ Come, let us worship God whose grace surrounds us when we feel tested and tried, empowering us to remain faithful disciples of Jesus Christ when we face chaos, division, injustice, and hardship.

℞ **We come to worship God who chooses us, empowers us, and inspires us to live as the Body of Christ in a broken and hurting world.**

***Opening Prayer**

Said by all, with one voice.

**Happy are we, O God, when our hearts are full,
our ways are yours, our spirits enlivened by your call.
Happy are we, O God, when our lives are guided by delight.
We gather here today for just that, holy God.
We gather to draw on all you would give us to be more fully yours.
In Jesus' name: Amen.**

***Silent Prayer**

***Response**

"The Church's One Foundation"

UMH 545

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 Psalter

Ps.90:1-6,13-17

Lord, you have been our refuge from one generation to another. Before the mountains were brought forth, or the land and the earth were born, from age to age you are God. You turn us back to the dust and say, "Go back, O child of earth." For a thousand years in your sight are like yesterday when it is past and like a watch in the night. You sweep us away like a dream; we fade away suddenly like the grass. In the morning it is green and flourishes; in the evening it is dried up and withered.

Return, O Lord; how long will you tarry? be gracious to your servants. Satisfy us by your loving-kindness in the morning; so shall we rejoice and be glad all the days of our life. Make us glad by the measure of the days that you afflicted us and the years in which we suffered adversity. Show your servants your works and your splendor to their children. May the graciousness of the Lord our God be upon us; prosper the work of our hands; prosper our handiwork.

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

People: Thanks be to God.

The people are seated for the reading from the epistle.

The Second Lesson**A Reading from the first Epistle to the Thessalonians**

1 THESS. 2:1-8

You yourselves know, brothers and sisters, that our coming to you was not in vain, but though we had already suffered and been shamefully mistreated at Philippi, as you know, we had courage in our God to declare to you the gospel of God in spite of great opposition. For our appeal does not spring from deceit or impure motives or trickery, but, just as we have been approved by God to be entrusted with the message of the gospel, even so we speak, not to please mortals but to please God, who tests our hearts.

As you know and as God is our witness, we never came with words of flattery or with a pretext for greed, nor did we seek praise from mortals, whether from you or from others, though we might have made demands as apostles of Christ. But we were gentle among you, like a nurse tenderly caring for her own children. So deeply do we care for you that we are determined to share with you not only the gospel of God but also our own selves, because you have become very dear to us.

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

"The Hard and the Soft"

Mr. Seitz

***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

The Offertory Hymn (8:30 am)	"Freely, freely"	UMH 389
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The Anthem (10:45 am)	<i>A New Commandment</i>	William Mundy (1529-1591)
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*A new commandment give I unto you, saith the Lord: that ye love together;
 as I have loved you, that e'en so ye love one another.* (Jn. 13:34-35)

*The Doxology & Prayer of Dedication	UMH 94
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***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

Toccata and Fugue in d (BWV565)

J.S. Bach (1685-1750)

Please note: for this extended postlude, anyone interested is welcome to come to the chancel and be seated in the choir stalls to listen.

Prayer Concerns

Donna Strandburg, sister-in-law to Pastor Tom, recovering from lung transplant surgery at Cleveland Clinic.

Jim Lutz, recovering from recent surgery.

Erma Henry, enduring 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

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

The Caribbean. *(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

The choral music this morning reflects the lectionary Gospel text from Matthew 22, in which Jesus gives his answer to which of the commandments are the greatest. The first part of his response is to love God with all of our heart, soul, and mind; this is echoed in the introit text, by 16th century poet Robert Herrick, who reminds us to render to Christ the "nobler part of all the house", which is the heart of the believer in whom he comes to dwell. This anthem is of special importance to our congregation, as it was composed shortly after the death of beloved MLUMC pastor the Rev'd Dr. Pat Albright in 2014 in his memory. At the anthem, we hear a lovely instance of Tudor polyphony by William Mundy that urges us to the second half of Christ's two great commandments: to love one another, even as Christ has loved us.

The prelude and postlude celebrate other elements of the church year: as we look forward this week to observing Reformation Day, the prelude is a florid and jubilant setting of Luther's great rallying-cry hymn, "A Mighty Fortress is our God". To conclude the service, and to look forward to the commemorative of all things spooky, scary, creepy, and crawly, we have perhaps the most famous organ piece of all time: JS Bach's "Tocatta and Fugue in d". Please note that this is an extended-length postlude; those wishing to get a 'front row seat' to the experience are encouraged to come forward and listen from the choir stalls in the chancel.

Leaders in Worship this Morning

DILLON SCHMIDT AND EMILY SCHMIDT, ACOLYTES

COURTNEY SCHMIDT, CROSS BEARER

KATHY TREMBLAY (8:30AM) AND LIZZIE DILLER (10:45AM), LECTORS

THE HANDBELL CHOIRS OF THE MT LEBANON UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

MRS. NANCY LUTZ, DIRECTOR

THE CHOIR OF THE MT. LEBANON UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

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

MR. DAVID SEITZ, PASTORAL ASSOCIATE & PREACHER

THE REV'D THOMAS Q. STRANDBURG, SENIOR PASTOR

*The altar flowers this morning given by
Allen and Becky Smith and
Amanda Erickson and Alex Smith
to the Glory of God and in loving memory of
Andrew Smith,
beloved son and father.*

*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.*

