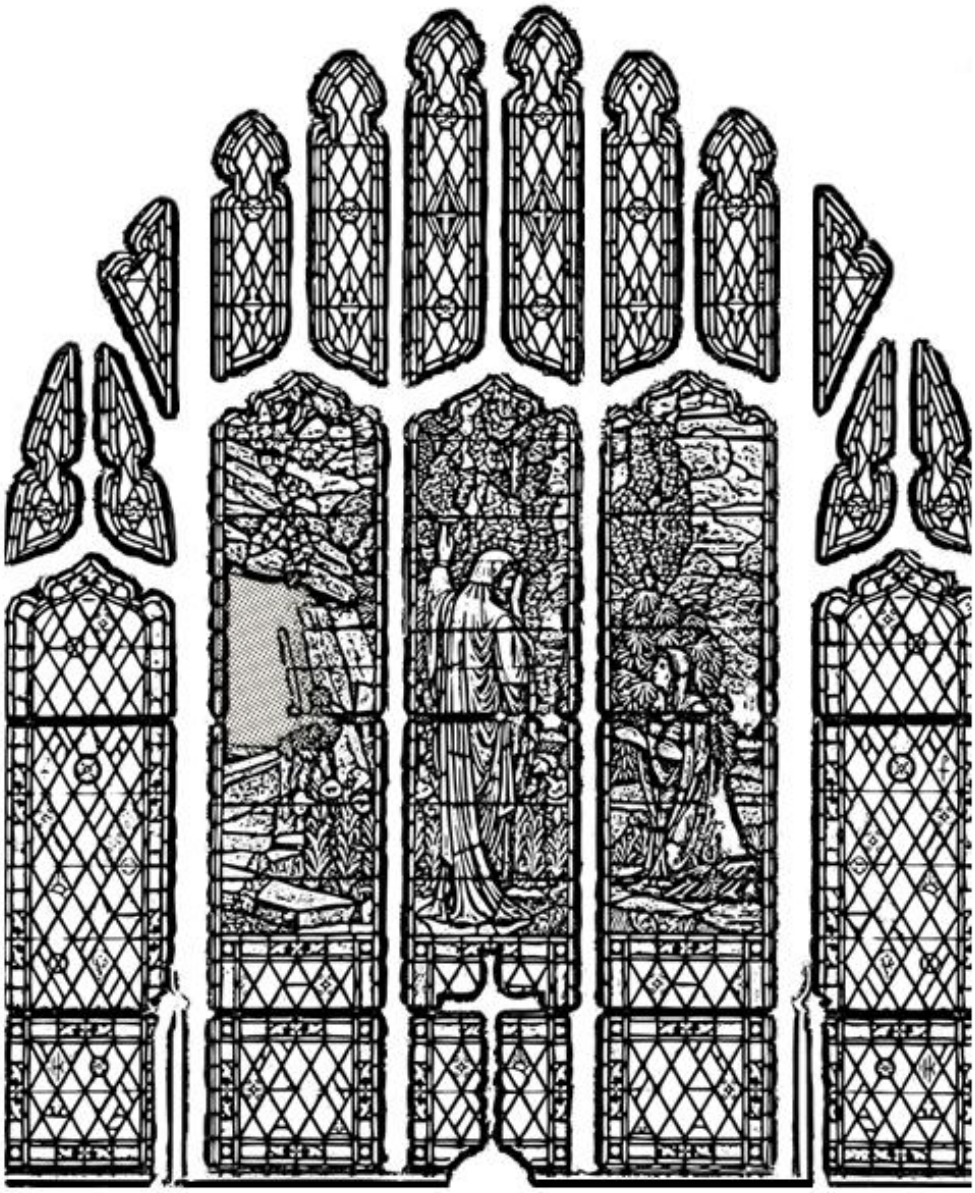
Mt. Lebanon United Methodist Church



Sunday, November 15, 2026, 8:30AM & 10:45AM

The Twenty-Fifth Sunday after Pentecost

3319 West Liberty Avenue ··· Pittsburgh, PA 15216 ··· 412-531-7131

The Rev'd Thomas Q. Strandburg, Pastor ··· *tstrandburg@mlumc.org*

Sunday, November 15, 2026 – The Twenty-Fifth Sunday after Pentecost

God has given us incredible gifts, and Jesus knows that great success requires great risk. Our efforts to extend his mission may sometimes end with poor results, but Jesus commends us for not being afraid of failure or negative judgment.

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

The Prelude *Variations on* ST. GEORGE Francis Cunningham Woods (1862-1929)

As the prelude begins, all are humbly asked to conclude any conversation and make use of this moment of quietude to prepare your hearts and minds for the worship of Almighty God.

The Introit (10:45) NEW ORLEANS Robert Boyd, from
("Why do we mourn departing friends?") *The Southern Harmony* (1854), p.76

Why do we mourn departing friends or shake at death's alarms?
'Tis but the voice that Jesus sends to call them to His arms.
Are we not tending upward, too, as fast as time can move?
Nor would we wish the hours more slow to keep us from our Love.
Then let the last loud trumpet sound and bid our kindred rise:
Awake, ye nations under ground! Ye saints, ascend the skies!
Are we not tending upward, too, as fast as time can move?
Nor would we wish the hours more slow to keep us from our Love.

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

***Opening Hymn "Come, ye thankful people" UMH 694**

*** The Greeting & Call to Worship**

℣ The Lord be with you.

℟ **And also with you.**

℣ Family of God, whom do you serve?

℟ **We serve God, who calls us to love our neighbors, tend creation, and care for the least of these.**

℣ Family of God, in a world that values productivity and profit, whom do you serve?

℟ **We serve God, who calls us to value equity, justice, and sabbath for all.**

℣ Family of God, in a world that privileges power over others instead of power shared with our neighbors, whom do you serve?

℟ **We serve God, who calls us to privilege the agency and flourishing of ourselves, our neighbors, and all creation.**

℣ Family of God, we gather here to grow in love of God, neighbor, self, and all creation. Let us now enter the joy of serving God, who is Love.

℟ **We gather to worship God and work for God's purposes until God's kingdom comes on earth as it is in heaven. Thanks be to God!**

*Opening Prayer

Said by all, with one voice.

God, our kind and loving Parent, you no longer call us servants but friends.
There is so much you have entrusted to us,
even the future of your kingdom of justice and love.
Give us the grace to work out with you the growth of mercy and goodness in this world,
to be united with all Christians and with all who seek you with a sincere heart
in bringing reconciliation and joy to everyone.
Let us go together the way to you, our living and loving God,
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

*Silent Prayer

***Response** **"O Jesus, I Have Promised"** **UMH 588**
(Tune: NYLAND)

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 First Epistle to the Thessalonians

1 THESS. 5:1-11

Now concerning the times and the seasons, brothers and sisters, you do not need to have anything written to you. For you yourselves know very well that the day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night. When they say, "There is peace and security," then sudden destruction will come upon them, as labor pains come upon a pregnant woman,

and there will be no escape! But you, brothers and sisters, are not in darkness, for that day to surprise you like a thief; for you are all children of light and children of the day; we are not of the night or of darkness.

So, then, let us not fall asleep as others do, but let us keep awake and be sober, for those who sleep sleep at night, and those who are drunk get drunk at night. But since we belong to the day, let us be sober and put on the breastplate of faith and love and for a helmet the hope of salvation. For God has destined us not for wrath but for obtaining salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, who died for us, so that whether we are awake or asleep we may live with him. Therefore encourage one another and build up each other, as indeed you are doing.

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

***Hymn** **"Take My Life, and Let It Be"** **UMH 399**

***The Second Lesson** **A Reading from the Gospel according to Matthew**
MT. 25:14-30

Jesus said, "For it is as if a man, going on a journey, summoned his slaves and entrusted his property to them; to one he gave five talents, to another two, to another one, to each according to his ability. Then he went away. At once the one who had received the five talents went off and traded with them and made five more talents. In the same way, the one who had the two talents made two more talents. But the one who had received the one talent went off and dug a hole in the ground and hid his master's money.

After a long time the master of those slaves came and settled accounts with them. Then the one who had received the five talents came forward, bringing five more talents, saying, 'Master, you handed over to me five talents; see, I have made five more talents.' His master said to him, 'Well done, good and trustworthy slave; you have been trustworthy in a few things; I will put you in charge of many things; enter into the joy of your master.' And the one with the two talents also came forward, saying, 'Master, you handed over to me two talents; see, I have made two more talents.' His master said to him, 'Well done, good and trustworthy slave; you have been trustworthy in a few things; I will put you in charge of many things; enter into the joy of your master.'

Then the one who had received the one talent also came forward, saying, 'Master, I knew that you were a harsh man, reaping where you did not sow and gathering where

you did not scatter, so I was afraid, and I went and hid your talent in the ground. Here you have what is yours.' But his master replied, 'You wicked and lazy slave! You knew, did you, that I reap where I did not sow and gather where I did not scatter? Then you ought to have invested my money with the bankers, and on my return I would have received what was my own with interest. So take the talent from him, and give it to the one with the ten talents. For to all those who have, more will be given, and they will have an abundance, but from those who have nothing, even what they have will be taken away. As for this worthless slave, throw him into the outer darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.'"

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 "Forward in Faith: Lead Courageously" 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.**

The people are now invited to share signs of peace with their fellow members of Christ's body. Extended conversation would ideally and most appropriately be reserved until the end of the service.

Announcements

At the Offertory

The Offertory Hymn (8:30 am) **"Whom shall I send?"** **UMH 582**

The Anthem (10:45 am) *Awake, my heart* Jane Marshall (1924-2019), text: Paul Gerhardt

Awake, my heart, and render, to God thy sure defender,
thy Maker, thy preserver, a song of love and fervor.

Confirm my deeds and guide me: my day, with thee beside me—
beginning, middle, ending—will all be upward tending.

My heart shall be thy dwelling, with joy and gladness swelling;
Thy word my nuture giv'n to bring me on toward heaven.

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

*The Sending Hymn "Go Forth for God" **UMH 670**

*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 *Choral Prelude on "St George"* Alec Rowley (1892-1958)

Prayer Concerns

In thanksgiving to God for the life of **Mary Garber,** *whose remains were laid to rest in our columbarium yesterday.*

Mark Cerneskie, *recovering from illness.*

Luella, *granddaughter of Jane and Rob Spicher, recovering from surgery.*

Erma Henry, *recovering from a recent stroke in a rehabilitation facility in Clarion.*

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 **Aotearoa/New Zealand** *and* **Australia.** *(Prayer Cycle of the World Council of Churches).*

Leaders in Worship this Morning

ABBY PURTILL AND EMMA PURTILL, ACOLYTES

ALAN CHESLEIGH, CROSS BEARER

KATHY TREMBLAY (8:30AM) AND DONNA CHESLEIGH (10:45AM), LECTORS

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 flowers in worship this morning given
to the Glory of God and in loving memory of
Mary Garber.

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.