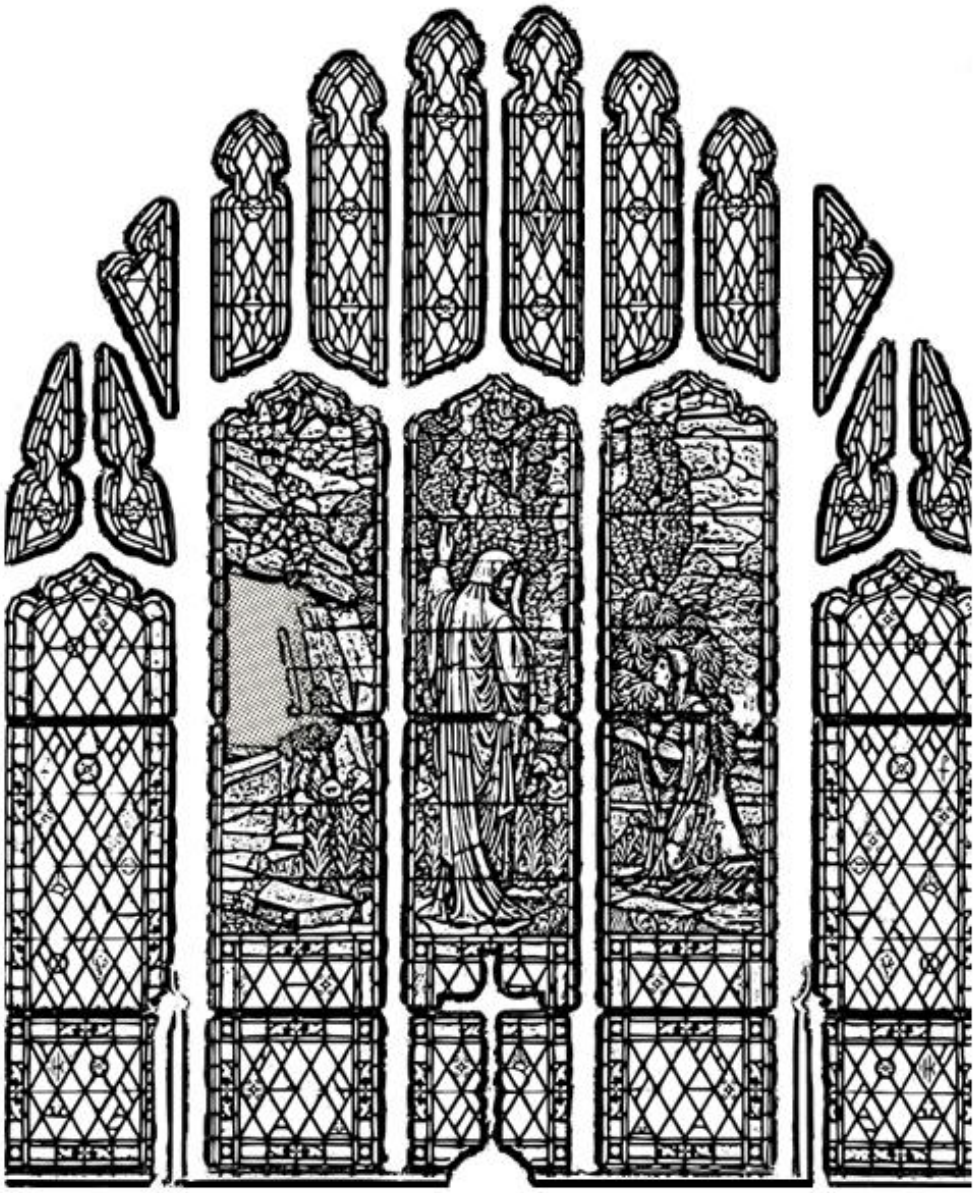
# Mt. Lebanon United Methodist Church



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

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## The Twenty-Fourth Sunday after Pentecost

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

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

**Sunday, November 8, 2026 – The Twenty-Fourth Sunday after Pentecost**

*The Joshua Imperative—"Choose this day whom you will serve"—is the recurring message of Scripture. It accounts for why the lives of so many people have been transformed when they've opened the Bible and appropriated its message for their daily living. The Bible has reached many people who have been at a crossroads in their lives, and when people read it, they often encounter some version of the Joshua Imperative: Choose this day whom you will serve.*

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

**The Prelude** *Nimrod (No. IX from Enigma Variations, Op. 36)* Edward Elgar (1857-1934), arr. P. Gouin

**The Introit (10:45)** *Keep Your Lamps Trimmed and Burning* trad. Spiritual, arr. Andre Thomas

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

***Opening Hymn "Wake, Awake, for Night Is Flying" UMH 720**

*** The Greeting & Call to Worship**

℣ The Lord be with you.

℟ **And also with you.**

℣ Family of God, rejoice! The kingdom of God is all around us!

℟ **We gather to encourage one another to keep awake and watch, for the kingdom of God is at hand.**

℣ Sometimes we grow weary in the waiting, and we wonder if we are watching and working for nothing.

℟ **We gather to encourage one another to keep awake and watch, for the kingdom of God is at hand.**

℣ Sometimes God surprises, and we are overwhelmed by joy and wonder at all God is doing among us.

℟ **We gather to encourage one another to keep awake and watch, for the kingdom of God is at hand.**

***Opening Prayer**

*Said by all, with one voice.*

**Almighty God, we gather this morning to worship you and rededicate our lives to you. We thank you for this new day and the wonder of your creation. Open our hearts and minds to hear your Word. Empty us of ourselves and fill us with your Spirit. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.**

***Silent Prayer**

***Response "Lo, He Comes with Clouds Descending" UMH 718**

## 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 Joshua

JOSHUA 24:1-3A, 14-25

Then Joshua gathered all the tribes of Israel to Shechem and summoned the elders, the heads, the judges, and the officers of Israel, and they presented themselves before God. And Joshua said to all the people, "Thus says the Lord, the God of Israel: Long ago your ancestors—Terah and his sons Abraham and Nahor—lived beyond the Euphrates and served other gods. Then I took your father Abraham from beyond the River and led him through all the land of Canaan and made his offspring many.

"Now, therefore, revere the Lord and serve him in sincerity and in faithfulness; put away the gods that your ancestors served beyond the River and in Egypt and serve the Lord. Now if you are unwilling to serve the Lord, choose this day whom you will serve, whether the gods your ancestors served in the region beyond the River or the gods of the Amorites in whose land you are living, but as for me and my household, we will serve the Lord."

Then the people answered, "Far be it from us that we should forsake the Lord to serve other gods, for it is the Lord our God who brought us and our ancestors up from the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery, and who did those great signs in our sight. He protected us along all the way that we went and among all the peoples through whom we passed, and the Lord drove out before us all the peoples, the Amorites who lived in the land. Therefore we also will serve the Lord, for he is our God."

But Joshua said to the people, "You cannot serve the Lord, for he is a holy God. He is a jealous God; he will not forgive your transgressions or your sins. If you forsake the Lord and serve foreign gods, then he will turn and do you harm and consume you, after having done you good." And the people said to Joshua, "No, we will serve the Lord!" Then Joshua said to the people, "You are witnesses against yourselves that you have chosen the Lord, to serve him." And they said, "We are witnesses." He said, "Then put away the foreign gods that are among you, and incline your hearts to the Lord, the God

of Israel." The people said to Joshua, "The Lord our God we will serve, and him we will obey." So Joshua made a covenant with the people that day and made statutes and ordinances for them at Shechem.

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

***Hymn** **"My Hope Is Built"** **UMH 368**

***The Second Lesson** **A Reading from the Gospel according to Matthew**
MT. 25:1-13

Jesus said, "Then the kingdom of heaven will be like this. Ten young women took their lamps and went to meet the bridegroom. Five of them were foolish, and five were wise. When the foolish took their lamps, they took no oil with them, but the wise took flasks of oil with their lamps. As the bridegroom was delayed, all of them became drowsy and slept. But at midnight there was a shout, 'Look! Here is the bridegroom! Come out to meet him.' Then all those young women got up and trimmed their lamps. The foolish said to the wise, 'Give us some of your oil, for our lamps are going out.' But the wise replied, 'No! there will not be enough for you and for us; you had better go to the dealers and buy some for yourselves.' And while they went to buy it, the bridegroom came, and those who were ready went with him into the wedding banquet, and the door was shut.

"Later the other young women came also, saying, 'Lord, lord, open to us.' But he replied, 'Truly I tell you, I do not know you.' Keep awake, therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour."

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: Serve Joyfully" 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 and Missions & Outreach Moment**

*At the Offertory*

**The Offertory Hymn (8:30 am)** **"Soon and very soon"** **UMH 706**

The Anthem (10:45 am) *Woke up this morning* Spiritual, arr. J. Jefferson Cleveland and Verolga Nix

*Oh, I woke up this mornin' with my mind and it was stayed, stayed on Jesus.*
*Hallelu, hallelu, hallelujah.*
*Can't hate your neighbor in your mind, if you keep it stayed, stayed on Jesus.*
*Hallelu, hallelu, hallelujah.*
*Makes you love everybody with your mind, when you keep it stayed, stayed on Jesus.*
*Hallelu, hallelu, hallelujah.*

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

***The Sending Hymn** **"Shall We Gather at the River"** **UMH 723**

***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 on* Great Day*!* Adolphus Hailstork

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# *Prayer Concerns*

**The Lynch Family** *and all impacted by the tragedy in our community this week.*

**Luella,** *granddaughter of Jane and Rob Spicher, undergoing surgery Monday, Nov. 9.*

*The family and loved ones of* **Jean Boyer,** *who entered life eternal last week.*

*In thanksgiving for the leaders, volunteers, and all served by the* **Rummage Sale.**

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

**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* **Oceania:** *American Samoa, Cook Islands, Fiji, French Polynesia (Maohi Nui), Kanaky, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Micronesia, Nauru, Niue, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu, Vanuatu***.**

*(Prayer Cycle of the World Council of Churches).*

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## *Leaders in Worship this Morning*

BRIAN KAPPELER, CROSS BEARER

KATHY KARNS (8:30AM) AND LIZZIE DILLER (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

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*The altar flowers this morning given*
*to the Glory of God and honor of*
the Veterans from our Congregation and Community.

*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.*