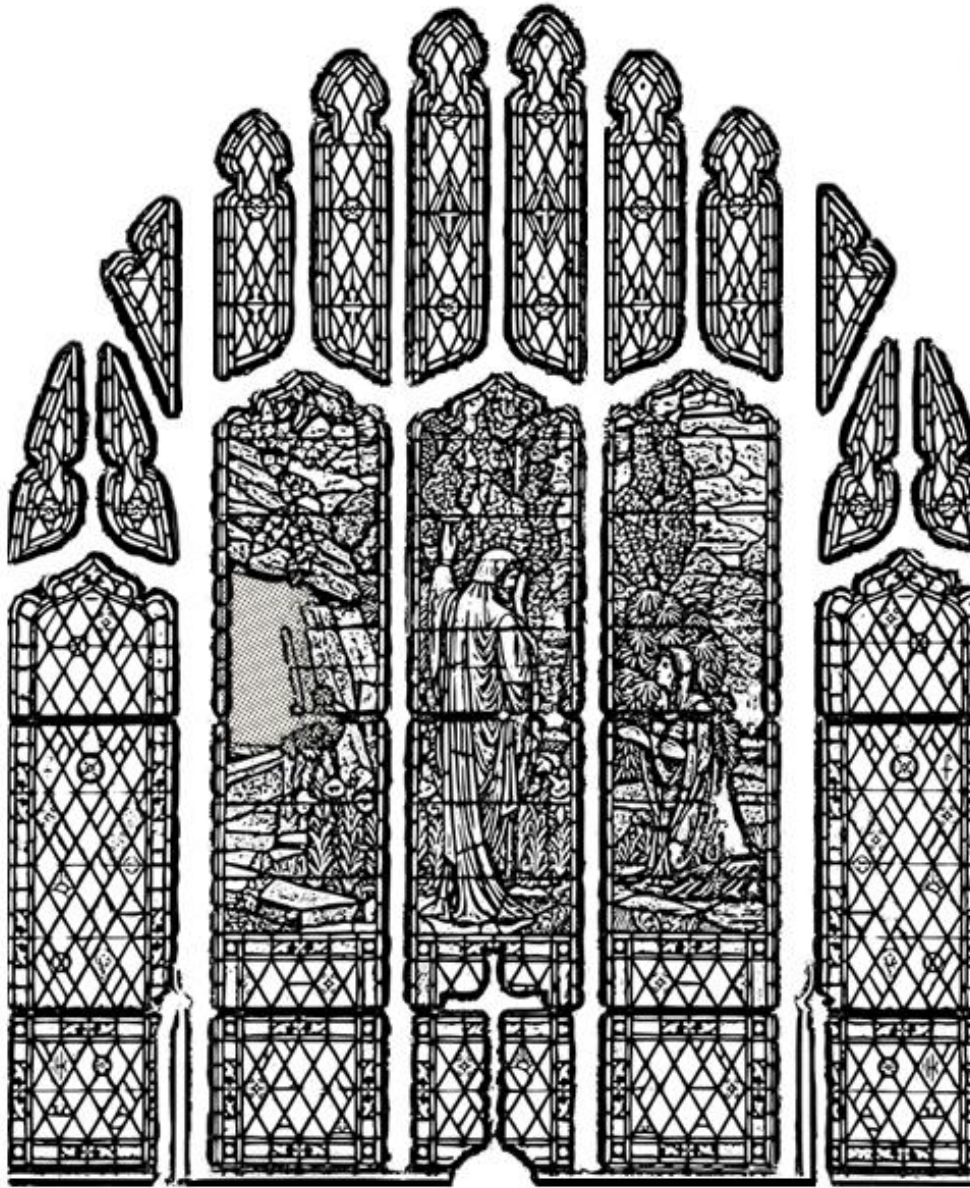


MT. LEBANON UNITED METHODIST CHURCH



Sunday, October 26, 2025, 8:30AM & 10:45AM

The Twentieth 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 26, 2025 – The Twentieth Sunday after Pentecost

Long ago and seemingly in a different world, there was a show called Romper Room. Miss Jan was the hostess of the show and she would have children do something called Bend and Stretch. It was the fitness part of the show. But sometimes we bend and stretch to further our own purposes in ways that God didn't intend.

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

The Prelude

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)

Venite Exultemus
(O COME, LET US SING UNTO THE LORD)

Wm. Boyce
Text: UMH91

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

*Opening Hymn

"Behold a broken world" (*vv.1-5*)

UMH 426

* The Greeting & Call to Worship

℣ The Lord be with you.

℟ **And also with you.**

℣ Come, all who trust in your own righteousness —
and all who know you fall short.

℟ **We come, not to compare ourselves with others,
but to humble ourselves before God.**

℣ The proud will be brought low,
and the humble will be lifted up.

℟ **We come like the tax collector, saying,
"God, be merciful to me, a sinner."**

℣ Let us worship the God who sees the heart,
who offers grace to the repentant and mercy to all.

℟ **We come to worship with open hearts,
trusting not in ourselves, but in the love and justice of our God.**

***Opening Prayer**

Said by all, with one voice.

**Lord our God,
You yourself remind us through Your holy people
that all our religious practices, even the eucharistic sacrifice,
are not worth anything if we use them to bend You our way.
God, may we come to You in humility and repentance,
ready to encounter You in love and to turn toward You.
Accept us as Your sons and daughters,
together with Jesus Christ, your Son and our Lord forever. Amen.**

***Silent Prayer**

***Response**

"Behold a broken world" (v.6)

UMH 426

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 (3 yr. - 3rd grade) then depart the sanctuary for Kids Praise.

Teachers will lead them back to the sanctuary prior to the conclusion of the service.

The First Lesson

A Reading from the book of Joel

JOEL 2: 28-32

The LORD said,

"Then afterward I will pour out my spirit on all flesh; your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, and your young men shall see visions. Even on the male and female slaves, in those days I will pour out my spirit. I will show portents in the heavens and on the earth, blood and fire and columns of smoke. The sun shall be turned to darkness and the moon to blood, before the great and terrible day of the Lord comes. Then everyone who calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved, for in Mount Zion and in Jerusalem there shall be those who escape, as the Lord has said, and among the survivors shall be those whom the Lord calls.

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

People: Thanks be to God.

***The Second Lesson**

A Reading from the Gospel of Luke

LK. 18: 9-14

Jesus also told this parable to some who trusted in themselves that they were righteous and regarded others with contempt:

"Two men went up to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. The Pharisee, standing by himself, was praying thus, 'God, I thank you that I am not like other people: thieves, rogues, adulterers, or even like this tax collector. I fast twice a week; I give a tenth of all my income.' But the tax collector, standing far off, would not even lift up his eyes to heaven but was beating his breast and saying, 'God, be merciful to me, a sinner!' I tell you, this man went down to his home justified rather than the other, for all who exalt themselves will be humbled, but all who humble themselves will be exalted."

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

"A False Idol"

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.

*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) "Standing in the Need of Prayer" UMH 352

The Anthem (10:45 am) *Might I in thy sight appear* Samuel Wesley (1766-1837)

*Might I in thy sight appear, as the publican distrest,
Stand, not daring to draw near, smite on my unworthy breast,
Groan the sinner's only plea, "God, be merciful to me!"
O remember me for good, passing through the mortal vale!
Show me the atoning blood, When my strength and spirit fail;
Give my gasping soul to see Jesus crucified for me!*

***The Doxology & Prayer of Dedication**

UMH 94

***The Sending Hymn**

"Make me a captive, Lord"

UMH 421

***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

Paean

Oliphant Chuckerbutty (1884-1960)

Prayer Concerns

*The family and loved ones of **Steve Stockton**,
long-time MLUMC member who recently passed away.*

Jacob Lowe, as he moves to Virginia this week to join the mission of Project Crossroads..

George Gittens, recovering from a recent stroke.

Jean Crosby, in St. Clair Hospital.

Richard Campbell, undergoing an MRI next week.

Pastor Tom Strandburg, travelling this weekend to Atlanta, GA.

Pat Macey, who is under hospice care and desires prayers that her pain may be minimal.

Cleon Cornes, convalescing at Providence Point.

Clark Remington, struggling with illness.

The Rev'd **Deborah Ackley-Killian**, 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**

*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.

Leaders in Worship this Morning

DILLON SCHMIDT, ACOLYTE

ALAN CHESLEIGH, CROSS BEARER

LIZ DiPIETRO (8:30AM) AND DONNA CHESLEIGH (10:45AM), LECTORS

THE CHOIR OF THE MT. LEBANON UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

MR. BRENTON RAHMAN, CHORAL SCHOLAR

MS. BETHANY MINGLE, SOPRANO

MR. KIRBY DILWORTH, TENOR

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

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
in loving memory of their son and their father,
Andrew Smith.*

*For information about furnishing altar flowers for future services,
contact Lizzie Diller at 412-860-3614. The cost is \$45 per arrangement.*