



And he taught them in parables.

CHRIST CHURCH UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

247 South Market Street, Elizabethtown, Pennsylvania

Founded 1743



Christ Church
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

**A Creation Justice Church
An Open and Affirming (ONA) Congregation**



CHRIST CHURCH UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

July 26, 2026

WORSHIP 9:30 AM

GATHERING

Gathering Music

Justin McLaughlin, pianist

Welcome, Announcements

Call to Worship, Ringing of the Bell

Prelude

“O that I Had a Thousand Voices”

arr. Roger C. Wilson

PRAISING *(Please rise whether in body or in spirit.)*

Opening Words *(responsive)*

based on Psalm 128

One: Everyone, by having a deep reverence for God, by living a life which reflects God's ways, you will find a life full of blessings.

Many: God's goodness can be seen and felt, like people who are close to our hearts.

One: May God's blessings shower upon us in this sanctuary and in all the days of our lives. May Christ's peace be with you.

Many: And also with you.

Passing of the Peace

One: Please share the peace of Christ with each other.

Hymn

“Lead On Eternal Sovereign”

No. 573

Prayer of Thanksgiving *(unison)*

Eternal Sovereign God, with our hearts set free and our minds made new, we can see your treasure that was previously hidden from our eyes. Thank you for helping us value life by your standards and see worth in things we might have discarded. May our vision be expanded so that we may climb mountains of new possibilities and be granted new opportunities to serve your purposes. We ask this in Christ's name. Amen.

Response

“O Savior, Let Me Walk with You” (vs. 4 only)

No. 503

(Please be seated.)

AFFIRMING

Children's Moment

Joys and Concerns

May the Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Morning Prayers and the Lord's Prayer (*unison, on screen*)

LISTENING

Solo

"Won't You Let Me Be Your Servant"

Richard Gillard

Dale Mease, soloist

Christian scripture reading

Romans 8: 26-39

²⁶ Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we ought, but that very Spirit intercedes with sighs too deep for words. ²⁷ And God, who searches the heart, knows what the mind of the Spirit is, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God. ²⁸ We know that all things work together for good for those who love God, who are called according to his purpose.

²⁹ For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn within a large family. ³⁰ And those whom he predestined he also called; and those whom he called he also justified; and those whom he justified he also glorified.

³¹ What then are we to say about these things? If God is for us, who is against us? ³² He who did not withhold his own Son, but gave him up for all of us, will he not with him also give us everything else? ³³ Who will bring any charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies. ³⁴ Who is to condemn? It is Christ Jesus, who died, yes, who was raised, who is at the right hand of God, who indeed intercedes for us. ³⁵ Who will separate us from the love of Christ? Will hardship, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? ³⁶ As it is written, "For your sake we are being killed all day long; we are accounted as sheep to be slaughtered." ³⁷ No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. ³⁸ For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things

present, nor things to come, nor powers,³⁹ nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Gospel reading

Matthew 13: 31-33, 44-52

³¹ He put before them another parable: “The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed that someone took and sowed in his field; ³² it is the smallest of all the seeds, but when it has grown it is the greatest of shrubs and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and make nests in its branches.” ³³ He told them another parable: “The kingdom of heaven is like yeast that a woman took and mixed in with three measures of flour until all of it was leavened.”

⁴⁴ “The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which someone found and hid; then in his joy he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field. ⁴⁵ “Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant in search of fine pearls; ⁴⁶ on finding one pearl of great value, he went and sold all that he had and bought it. ⁴⁷ “Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a net that was thrown into the sea and caught fish of every kind; ⁴⁸ when it was full, they drew it ashore, sat down, and put the good into baskets but threw out the bad. ⁴⁹ So it will be at the end of the age. The angels will come out and separate the evil from the righteous ⁵⁰ and throw them into the furnace of fire, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. ⁵¹ **“Have you understood all this?” They answered, “Yes.”** ⁵² And he said to them, “Therefore every scribe who has been trained for the kingdom of heaven is like the master of a household who brings out of his treasure what is new and what is old.”

Sermon

Rev. Dr. Nora Foust, guest preacher

“Have you understood all this?” They answered, “Yes.”

Moment of Quiet Reflection

SHARING

Offering our Gifts, Tithes, and Other Offerings

Offertory

“Aria”

Mrs. Robinson

(Please rise whether in body or in spirit.)

Response

“Great is Your Faithfulness” (refrain only)

No. 423

Prayer of Dedication

(Please be seated.)

COMMUNING

Call to Commune

Breaking of the Bread, Lifting of the Cup

Prayer of Consecration

Sharing of the Bread and the Cup

Holy Communion is open for all who wish to know the presence of God in Christ and to share in the community of God's people. Gluten free bread is in the paper cups. Wine is light in color; grape juice is dark in color. Please have your bread and juice/wine ready at home, if desired.

Solo

“Jesus Took the Bread”

Ruth Duck

Dale Mease, soloist

(Sung during the sharing of Holy Communion.)

Prayer of Thanksgiving

RESPONDING

Commissioning of the Mission Team

Introduction of Mission Trip Participants

Questions

Response of the Congregation *(unison)*

We have heard your commitment and willingness to be of service to God in Philadelphia. We accept your work as an extension of Christ's ministry and this congregation. We pledge our prayers and support that your work will be effective. May the Holy Spirit's guidance be felt by all of us, while we are absent, one from another. In Christ we pray, Amen.

Prayer of Commissioning

Declaration of Commission

Hymn
Blessing
Postlude

“Be Now My Vision”

No. 451

“Be Thou My Vision”

arr. Victor Lebenski

End of Worship—Beginning of Service



Our Church in Action

WELCOME TO CHRIST CHURCH! If this is your first time to Christ Church, please fill out a “Connection” card found at the entrances to the sanctuary or pew racks, and put it in the box at the entrances. Or visit <https://2hac.page.link/mdHS>. You can also scan the QR code in the pew racks to access our website: www.etownucc.org for more information.

WELCOME TO REV. DR. NORA FOUST, our guest worship leader and preacher this morning. Nora serves as the Transitional Regional Conference Minister of the Keystone Conference UCC and is a member of our congregation. Welcome Nora!

“THE GENESIS OF OUR FAITH”—SUMMER WORSHIP SERIES: ‘Genesis’ means beginning—the beginning of scripture, the Jewish faith, and our faith. The next one in the series is set for Sunday, August 2, and the focus is on Joseph and his coat of many colors.

OUR MISSION TRIP TEAM is going to Philadelphia this afternoon until Tuesday. They are taking the clothing we’ve collected with them to support the Clothing Bank at Old First Reformed Church. Thank you for your support.

SNAP DELAY LETTERS: Thank you to all who signed the SNAP delay letters to our Congressional delegation. These letters ask them to support delaying the implementation of SNAP’s new cost-sharing requirements. You can sign a letter up until the end of July. If you are unable to attend church in person or if you worship online and still wish to participate, please contact the church office, and we can email you the copies which you can download, sign and email back to christchurch@etownucc.org.

DID YOU KNOW... that you can purchase Giant or Weis grocery cards along with Groff’s Meats gift certificates at church? Did you know that when you use the cards/certificates that the church makes some money? Purchase your grocery cards this week in the church office.

MEMBERS REQUESTING PRAYERS:

- ✝ **Denise Clissold** is at home recovering, but it is difficult for her to walk.
- ✝ **Karen Johnson**, upon the death of her husband Robert last week
- ✝ **Sue Martin** had a brain bleed two weeks ago, has slight vision loss, but is better now
- ✝ **Mike Schmidt** had knee replacement surgery and is now in rehab
- ✝ **Jill Funk** is in the hospital for testing.

SWEET SUCCESS! Many thanks to the bakers for the Threads and Treads event. The bake sale on Sunday brought in a profit of \$388!! The small amount of bake items that were left are in the freezer and will be traveling with the Mission Team on today.

THE NEXT COMPOST BUCKET EXCHANGE **August 2** Please bring your filled compost buckets to the church that morning in exchange for a fresh, clean bucket. Thank you for your faithful devotion to this project.

WITTEL FARM: The next workday will be August 1st from 9-12 and lunch is provided. There is a signup sheet on the Mission Trip bulletin board by the stairs in the hallway.

APPRECIATIONS FOR July 26

Lay Leader:	Tom Downing
Acolyte:	Conner Templin
Ushers:	Kendra Snyder, Ken and Mary Smeltz, Jereme and Steph Wells
Nursery:	Volunteers needed
Musician:	Justin McLaughlin, church pianist and organist
Sound Media Team:	Tom Downing, Chris Eurich, Dale Mease, Wes Runnels, Garrett Runnels
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July Cookie Time:	Creation Justice Team

APPRECIATIONS FOR August 2

Lay Leader:	Ann Dinsmore
Acolyte:	Calli Heslop
Ushers:	Dave Wheeler, Andy and Jo Brandt
Nursery:	Volunteers needed
Musicians:	Justin McLaughlin, church pianist and organist Ann and Cris Dinsmore
Sound Media Team:	Tom Downing, Chris Eurich, Dale Mease, Wes Runnels, Garrett Runnels
August Cookie Time:	Social/LiFT Committee

ASSOCIATE PASTOR ELECT LISA CLARK is coming, and we want to help her get started in her new apartment. We are collecting regular household supplies. If you can donate cleaning or bathroom supplies or non-perishable food items, utensils, or gift cards, etc., please let the office know and bring these to the church before August 3rd. Thank you!

FIRST REFORMED MEAL, Tuesday, July 28th. We need **3 volunteers** to serve and **2 to bake brownies**. Place single serving brownies in zip lock baggies. Servers should be at the church at 3:00 PM. Contact Dori Heisey at 717-203-4511 or email: dsheisey@hotmail.com

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED FOR OUR NURSERY: Please sign up if you can help. Now going through the summer, we will need volunteers helping with our nursery.

PASTOR GALEN ON VACATION: Rev. Dr. Bob Sorozan is the on-call pastor. He can be reached for pastoral emergencies (860) 805-4262. Call the church office first during office hours. If not, please call Bob directly.

AUGUST OUTREACH—HOFFMAN HOMES continues its commitment to the mental health needs of young people by providing a community of support using a trauma-informed, healing centered approach. Thank you for your support.

This Week at a Glance

<u>Sunday 7/26</u>		<u>Thursday 7/30</u>	
Worship	9:30 AM	Board of Faith Formation mtg. (Zoom)	7:00PM
Cookie Time	10:30 AM	<u>Saturday 8/1</u>	
Mission Trip to load and depart	12:00 PM	Wittel Farm Workday	9:00 AM
<u>Monday 7/27</u>		Lisa Clark's Ordination	10:30 AM
Green Team (Zoom)	7:00 PM	<u>Sunday 8/2</u>	
<u>Tuesday 7/28</u>		Worship	9:30 AM
Meal at 1 st Reformed Church	3:00PM	Cookie Time	10:30 AM
Contemporary Christian Conv. Class	8:00 PM		
Mission Trip Returns			