



CHURCH OF THE  
**GOOD SHEPHERD**  
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

09/17/23

HOLY

11:00am



*No matter where you are on life's journey, you are welcome here.*

***September 17, 2023***

# Worship Leader: Janet Putnam

## PRELUDE.....

“Be Still My Soul - Schlegel/Sibelius

Dick Goins, organ

## WELCOME.....

**HYMN #** Love Astounding 1,2

(Tune: HOLY MANNA)

**1** Love astounding, Love confounding

Limits fearful minds impose.

Love renewing, Love pursuing

Every heart until it knows.

Love’s transforming, healing goodness,

Love’s abiding gentle grace,

Love’s endurance, Love’s assurance,

Love’s consoling strong embrace.

**2** Love receiving Love believing,

We rejoice with thanks and song,

Faith regaining, hope proclaiming;

Love has taught us we belong

Safe within Love’s tender keeping,

Safe from fear’s persistent call,

Love defending, Love unending,

Love of God enfolding all.

# GREETING OUR GUESTS.....

## OPENING REFLECTION.....

“The Love of the Lord,” by Michael Joncas, arr. by Mark Hayes

Dorenda Morse, piano

## JOYS AND CONCERNS.....

### PRAYER.....**Rev. Sarah Tevis Townes**

### SCRIPTURE.....**Rev. Sarah Tevis Townes**

#### **Acts 8:26-40, adapted from the English Standard Version**

**26** Now an angel of God said to Philip, “Rise and go toward the south to the road that goes down from Jerusalem to Gaza.” This is a desert place.

**27** And he rose and went. And there was an Ethiopian, a eunuch, a high official of the queen of the Ethiopians, who was in charge of all her treasure.

He had come to Jerusalem on a pilgrimage to worship **28** and was returning, seated in his chariot, and he was reading the prophet Isaiah. **29** And the Spirit said to Philip, “Go over and join this chariot.” **30** So Philip ran to him and heard him reading Isaiah the prophet and asked, “Do you understand what you are reading?” **31** And he said, “How can I, unless someone guides me?” And he invited Philip to come up and sit with him. **32** Now the passage of the Scripture that he was reading was this:

“Like a sheep he was led to the slaughter  
and like a lamb before its shearer is silent,  
so he opens not his mouth.

**33**

In his humiliation justice was denied him.

Who can describe his generation?  
For his life is cut off from the living.”

**34** And the eunuch said to Philip, “About whom, I ask you, does the prophet say this, about himself or about someone else?” **35** Then Philip opened his mouth, and beginning with this Scripture he told him the good news about Jesus. **36** And as they were going along the road they came to some water, and the eunuch said, “See, here is water! What prevents me from being baptized?” **38** And he commanded the chariot to stop, and they both went down into the water, Philip and the eunuch, and he baptized him. **39** And when they came up out of the water, the Spirit of God carried Philip away, and the eunuch saw him no more, and went on his way rejoicing. **40** But Philip found himself at Azotus, and as he passed through he preached the gospel to all the towns until he came to Caesarea.

## **A TIME FOR ALL AGES**.....

### **HYMN #309 We Are Your People 1,2,3,6**

**1** We are your people,  
Spirit of grace,  
you dare to make us  
Christ to our neighbors  
of every culture and place.

**2** Joined in community,  
treasured and fed,  
may we discover  
gifts in each other,  
willing to lead and be led.

**3** Rich in diversity,  
help us to live  
closer than neighbors,  
open to strangers,  
able to clash and forgive.

6 Spirit, unite us,  
make us, by grace,  
willing and ready,  
Christ's living body,  
loving the whole human race.

**SERMON**.....**Rev. Sarah Tevis Townes**

**PASTORAL PRAYER**.....

**PRAYER OF JESUS**

Our Father, Our Mother,  
Who is in Heaven, Holy be Your name,  
Your Kin(g)dom come, Your will be done,  
On Earth as it is in Heaven.  
Give us this day our daily bread  
And forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors.  
And do not lead us into temptation,  
But deliver us from evil,  
For yours is the Kin(g)dom and the  
Power and the glory,  
Now and forever, Amen.

**SHARING OUR GIFTS**.....

**OFFERTORY**.....

“All Things Bright and Beautiful” English melody, arr. by Faye Lopez  
Dorenda Morse, piano

**DOXOLOGY**.....

Praise God from whom all blessings flow.  
Praise God all creatures here below.  
Alleluia! Alleluia!

Praise God the source of all our gifts.

Praise Jesus Christ whose power uplifts.

Praise the Spirit, Holy Spirit.

Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

**PRAYER OF DEDICATION**.....

**CLOSING HYMN**.....

**HYMN #All the Colors of the Rainbow 1,2,4**

(Tune: ABBOT’S LEIGH)

**1** All the colors of the rainbow

Live unseen in daily light,

But their splendors find expression

When released to human sight;

So the church reveals most beauty

Where diver\_sity is real;

Breadth of race and class and gender,

Room for doubt and space to heal.

**2** All the body’s parts are wanted,

Nor can one despise the rest:

Head and hand must work together,

As must eye and ear and chest;

So the church needs all its members

For a range of min\_istries:

Varied gifts with one great mission,

“Do this for the least of these.”

4 Teach us, God, our need of others;  
Through them help us fully live.  
Wean us from our selfish habits;  
Let us listen, learn, forgive.  
May we see your longed-for image  
In each human heart and face,  
And behold how those around us  
Can be channels of your grace.

**LIFE OF OUR COMMUNITY**.....

**CLOSING REFLECTION**.....

“Hallelujah” by Leonard Cohen  
Axel Catterall, solo

**BENEDICTION**.....

**POSTLUDE**.....

All Glory, Laud and Honor by Teschner/Neale  
Dick Goins, organ

**PLEASE PRAY FOR:**

- 1. Mathew for healing requested by Grace.**
- 2. Gail, mother-in-law, for successful surgery this week and healing by Joanna.**

Thank you for joining us in worship today

# Welcome!



***We are delighted to have you worshipping with us today!***

Church of the Good Shepherd, UCC is a dynamic congregation with a rich history and an exciting ministry in the community.

Our church is a part of a blend of four major Protestant denominations that united together in 1957 to form the United Church of Christ.

We claim the early Pilgrim and Puritan settlers of this country as part of our heritage, and celebrate the words of Pastor John Robinson, who in his farewell remarks to the Pilgrims as they were leaving for the “new world,” said,

***“There is still more light and truth to break forth from God’s holy word.”***

We are a church that:

- Takes the Bible seriously, but not literally.
- Worships God with joyful hearts and open minds.
- Includes children in the life and ministry of the church.
- Celebrates creativity and the arts.
- Seeks to be inclusive of ALL people.
- Believes that growth in wisdom and understanding happens at all stages of life.
- Is committed to work for justice for all people and for the environment.
- Cares for one another, laughs easily, and rests in God’s love.
- Looks to Jesus as teacher, prophet and Child of God.

## Vision Statement

**Church of the Good Shepherd desires to be an inclusive community that shares Divine love as a path to peace and justice in the world.**

## Mission Statement

**The mission of Church of the Good Shepherd is to build a just world through community one life at a time.**

***An Open and Affirming Congregation of the United Church of Christ***

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