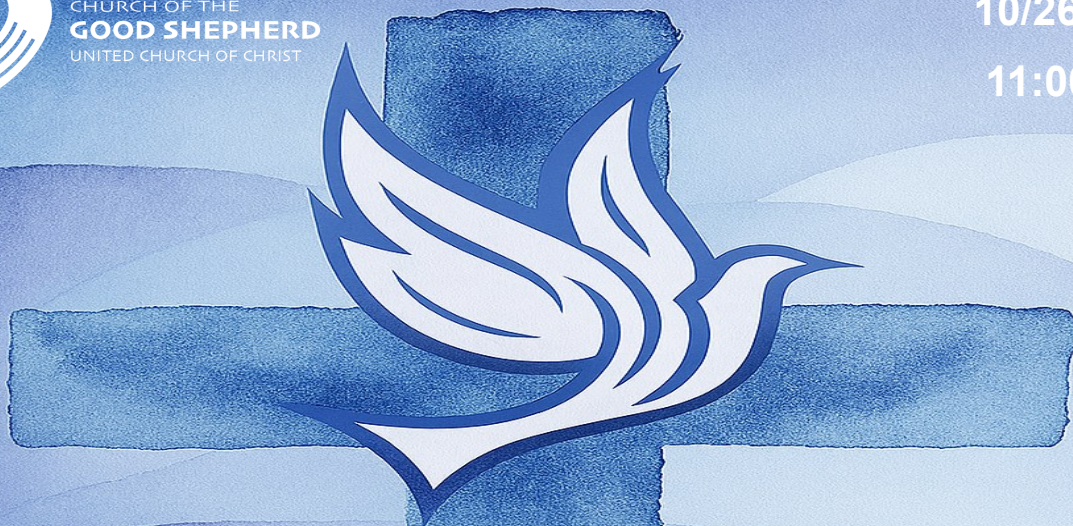




CHURCH OF THE
GOOD SHEPHERD
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

10/26/25

11:00am



Sin can't tell you how
to live; you're not living
under that old tyranny
any longer. *You're living in
the freedom of God.*

—Romans 6:14, The Message

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

October 26, 2025

Worship Leader: Diana Coleman

CALL TO WORSHIP.....

Leader: Beloved community, let us gather with hope and joy. Today, we witness new life rising from the waters.

People: We come to celebrate freedom— freedom to let go of hate, sin and sorrow and live into God's grace.

Leader: The promise of new life is for you, for the next generation, and for all whom God calls.

People: We hear the call. Surrounded by a great cloud of witnesses, we turn toward God and prepare to run the race set before us.

Leader: Fix your eyes on Jesus. Together, we will not grow weary. We will not lose heart.

All: Let us worship the God of freedom who meets us in the water and calls us to new life.

HYMN #299 For All The Saints 1,2,3

1 For all the saints who from their labors rest,
who to the world their steadfast faith confessed,
your name, O Jesus, be forever blessed.
Alleluia! Alleluia!

2 You were their rock, their refuge, and their might;
you, Christ, the hope that put their fears to flight;
'mid gloom and doubt, you were their one true light.
Alleluia! Alleluia!

3 Still may your people, faithful, true, and bold,
live as the saints who nobly fought of old.
and share with them a glorious crown of gold.
Alleluia! Alleluia!

OPENING REFLECTION.....

"The Windows of Heaven" music by Craig Courtney, lyrics by Pamela Stewart. Chancel Choir (Lyrics)

*You bend from the windows of heaven,
Where there is no darkness or night
To shine on this imperfect servant
And fill me with Your perfect light.*

*Your Spirit, the breath of my service,
That fans into flame as I move
In an ever widening circle,
Where the center is always You,
Where the center is always You.*

*Your light shining within me;
The times I serve alone;
The hands that work beside me
Beyond these walls, these walls of stone;*

*The joy and pain of living;
The gift of gratitude.
All these windows around me as I make my way to You,
As I make my way to You.*

*I sing to the windows of heaven,
To the heights I cannot see,
A song beyond music of language,
From the depth of Your love for me.*

*I sing! O I cannot be silent,
For the sound of my voice must rise
To join with the saints in Your service
And sing in Your house of light,
Sing in Your house of light, in Your house of light.*

*You bend from the windows of heaven
And fill me with Your light.*

JOYS AND CONCERNS.....

PRAYER.....

SCRIPTURE.....Diana Coleman

Hebrews 12:1-3, New International Version

Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles. And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us, **2** fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith. For the sake of the joy to come, he endured the cross, scorned its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. **3** Consider him who endured such opposition, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart.

Acts 2:38-39, New Living Translation

38 Peter replied, “Each of you must repent of your sins and turn to God, and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. Then you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. **39** This promise is to you, to your children, and to those far away—all who have been called by the Lord our God.”

Romans 6:1-14, The Message

6 1-3 So what do we do? Keep on sinning so God can keep on forgiving? I should hope not! If we’ve left the country where sin is sovereign, how can we still live in our old house there? Or didn’t you realize we packed up and left there for good? That is what happened in baptism. When we went under the water, we left the old country of sin behind; when we came up out of the water, we entered into the new country of grace—a new life in a new land!

3-5 That's what baptism into the life of Jesus means. When we are lowered into the water, it is like the burial of Jesus; when we are raised up out of the water, it is like the resurrection of Jesus. Each of us is raised into a light-filled world by our Heavenly Parent so that we can see where we're going in our new grace-sovereign country.

6-11 Could it be any clearer? Our old way of life was nailed to the cross with Christ, a decisive end to that sin-miserable life—no longer captive to sin's demands! What we believe is this: If we get included in Christ's sin-conquering death, we also get included in his life-saving resurrection. We know that when Jesus was raised from the dead it was a signal of the end of death-as-the-end. Never again will death have the last word. When Jesus died, he took sin down with him, but alive he brings God down to us. From now on, think of it this way: Sin speaks a dead language that means nothing to you; God speaks your mother tongue, and you hang on every word. You are dead to sin and alive to God. That's what Jesus did.

12-14 That means you must not give sin a vote in the way you conduct your lives. Don't give it the time of day. Don't even run little errands that are connected with that old way of life. Throw yourselves wholeheartedly and full-time—remember, you've been raised from the dead!—into God's way of doing things. Sin can't tell you how to live. After all, you're not living under that old tyranny any longer. You're living in the freedom of God.

Española. Hebreos 12:1-3, Reina Valera Actualizada

12 Por tanto, nosotros también, teniendo en derredor nuestro tan grande nube de testigos, despojémonos de todo peso y del pecado que tan fácilmente nos enreda, y corramos con perseverancia la carrera que tenemos delante de nosotros 2 puestos los ojos en Jesús, el autor y consumador de la fe, quien por el gozo que tenía delante de él sufrió la cruz, menospreciando el oprobio, y se ha sentado a la diestra del trono de Dios. 3 Consideren, pues, al que soportó tanta hostilidad de pecadores contra sí mismo, para que no decaiga el ánimo de ustedes ni desmayen.

Hechos 2:38-39, Reina Valera Actualizada

38 Pedro les dijo:
—Arrepiéntanse y sea bautizado cada uno de ustedes en el nombre de Jesucristo para[a] perdón de sus pecados, y recibirán el don del Espíritu Santo. 39 Porque la promesa es para ustedes, para sus hijos y para todos los que están lejos, para todos cuantos el Señor nuestro Dios llame.

Romanos 6:1-14, La Palabra (Hispanoamérica)

6 ¿Querrá todo esto decir que debemos seguir pecando para que se desborde la gracia? 2 ¡De ningún modo! Quienes hemos muerto al pecado, ¿cómo vamos a seguir viviendo

sometidos a él? 3 ¿No saben ustedes que, al ser vinculados a Cristo por el bautismo, fuimos vinculados también a su muerte? 4 Por el bautismo, en efecto, fuimos sepultados con Cristo, a fin de participar en su muerte. Por tanto, si Cristo venció a la muerte resucitando por el glorioso poder del Padre, es preciso que también nosotros emprendamos una vida nueva. 5 Si hemos sido injertados en Cristo compartiendo una muerte como la suya, compartiremos, también su resurrección. 6 Tengan en cuenta que nuestra antigua condición pecadora fue clavada junto con Cristo en la cruz, para que así quedara destruido este cuerpo sometido al pecado y nosotros quedáramos liberados de su servidumbre. 7 Pues cuando una persona muere, queda libre del dominio del pecado. 8 Si, pues, hemos muerto con Cristo, debemos confiar en que también viviremos con él; 9 sabemos, en efecto, que Cristo, al haber resucitado de entre los muertos es ya inmortal; la muerte ha perdido su dominio sobre él. 10 En cuanto a la razón de su muerte, murió para liberarnos definitivamente del pecado; en lo que se refiere a su vivir, vive para Dios. 11 Igualmente ustedes, consideren que han muerto al pecado y viven para Dios en unión con Cristo Jesús.

12 Que no los siga dominando el pecado; aunque el cuerpo sea mortal, no se sometan a sus apetencias, 13 ni se conviertan en instrumentos del mal al servicio del pecado. Preséntense, más bien, ante Dios como lo que son: muertos retornados a la vida, y hagan de sus cuerpos instrumentos del bien al servicio de Dios. 14 No se dejen dominar por el pecado, ya que no están bajo el yugo de la ley, sino bajo la acción de la gracia.

A TIME FOR ALL AGES.....

HYMN #351 I Was There To Hear Your Borning Cry 1,2,3

1. I was there to hear your morning cry,
I'll be there when you are old.
I rejoiced the day you were baptized,
To see your life unfold.
I was there when you were but a child,
With a faith to suit you well;
I'll be there in case you wander off
And find where demons dwell.

2 When you found the wonder of the Word,
I was there to cheer you on;
You were raised to praise the living God,
To whom you now belong.
Should you find someone to share your time
And you join your hearts as one,
I'll be there to make your verses rhyme
From dusk till rising sun.

3. In the middle ages of your life,
Not too old, no longer young,
I'll be there to guide you through the night,
complete what I've begun.
When the evening gently closes in
And you shut your weary eyes,
I'll be there as I have always been
With just one more surprise.

I was there to hear your morning cry,
I'll be there when you are old.
I rejoiced the day you were baptized,
To see your life unfold.

SERMON.....Rev. Dr. Sarah Townes

PASTORAL PRAYER.....

PRAYER OF JESUS

Life Giver,
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.....

“Exuberance” by David R. Kent. Joyful Noise Bell Choir

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DOXOLOGY —Romans 6:14, The Message

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.....

BAPTISM.....

“I Am One Voice”

LIFE OF OUR COMMUNITY.....

BENEDICTION.....

CLOSING REFLECTION.....

"Lord of All Hopefulness," Traditional Irish Melody, Tune: SLANE, arr. By Janet Vogt

PRAYER REQUEST:

Please pray for our nation and remaining hostages for comfort and healing

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“Exuberance” by David R. Kent

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to live; you’re not living
under that old tyranny
any longer. *You’re living in
the freedom of God.*

—Romans 6:14, The Message



Thank you for joining us in worship today

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 vibrant ministry in the community. Our church is a part of a blend of five major Protestant denominations that united together in 1957 to form the United Church of Christ: Congregational, Christian, Afro-Christian, German Evangelical and Reformed. We 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 say at our church that "God is still speaking!" "There is still more light and truth to break forth from God's holy word."

- We are a church that:
 - Centers our faith and practice in the life and ministry Jesus Christ.
 - Takes the Bible seriously, not literally.
 - Builds community partnerships across differences.
 - Worships God with joyful hearts and open minds.
 - Includes children in the life and ministry of the church.
 - Celebrates creativity and the arts.
 - Encounters Christ in Creation, community, sacraments, music, scripture, and service.
 - Listens and responds to the movement of the Holy Spirit.
 - Celebrates an open table and seeks to be inclusive of ALL people.
 - Seeks to live out our faith in the world as we build God's reign of love and justice on earth.
 - Believes that growth in wisdom and understanding happens at all stages of life.
 - Embraces solidarity, not just charity.
 - 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.

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