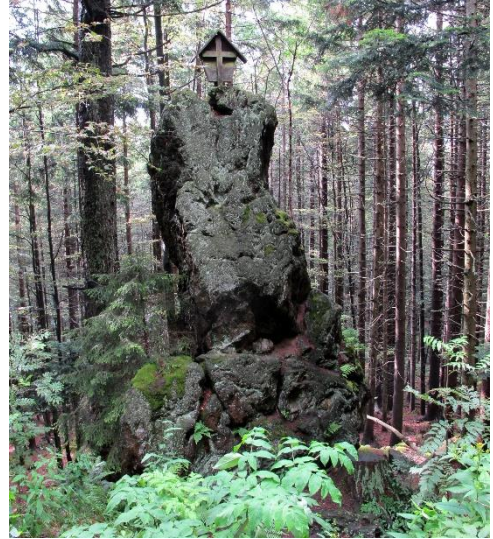


**The Second Sunday of
Creation**
September 14, 2025



*Rock with Cross on path near Black Lake in the
park of Sumava, outside of Spicak, Czech
Republic.*

We Gather in Response to God's Invitation

THE GIFT OF MUSIC TO GATHER US

GREETINGS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS: A GREETING FOR CREATION

Greetings in the name of our God who is good: whose love endures forever.

Greetings to you, sun and moon, you stars of the northern sky: give to our God your thanks and praise. Sunrise and sunset, night and day: give to our God your thanks and praise.

Greetings to you, hills and valleys, rivers and ponds, sea and rain: give to our God your thanks and praise.

Greetings to you, oak and pine, hemlock and birch, tamarack and maple: give to our God your thanks and praise.

Greetings to you, hawks and sparrows, cardinals and robins, bats and blue jays, ravens and crows: give to our God your thanks and praise.

Greetings to you, bears and deer, chipmunks and squirrels, and beaver and bobcats: give to our God your thanks and praise.

Greetings to you, people of all genders, elders and children, indigenous and colonists, diverse cultures of this rainbow land: Nurses and teachers, scientists and artists, cleaners and clerks, students and job-seekers, All who care, who love, and who pray, who laugh and learn, who rest and who play: give to our God your thanks and praise. Amen.

Because of who YOU are and where YOU are on life's journey, YOU ARE WELCOME HERE!

2173 Stoverstown Rd. / Spring Grove, PA 17362 / 717-225-6357

***CALL TO WORSHIP (RESPONSIVE)**

**An asterisk indicates when the people stand in body or spirit.*

One: Let us enter the presence of our God with a renewed heart and a right spirit.

All: **Have mercy on us, O God, according to your steadfast love.**

Let us speak, hear, and embrace truth and the wisdom of God.

Strengthen and empower us, O God, according to your steadfast love.

Let us hear joy and gladness. Restore our crushed spirits.

Revive us again, O God, according to your steadfast love.

***OPENING PRAYER (TOGETHER)**

Maker of Heaven and Earth, we rejoice in your presence. In you, we find joy and strength, comfort and courage, truth and insight. Speak to us again. Reveal your power in and through us. Show us your glory and be glorified in our worship. May your glorious light shine through hidden spaces. May your blessed darkness make space for rest. Fortify us for this journey and make us instruments of your kingdom. Amen.

***SINGING TOGETHER**

“Earth and All Stars”

Brown #10 v. 1-3, 5

Earth and all stars, Loud rushing planets, Sing to the Lord a new song!

O victory, Loud shouting army, Sing to the Lord a new song!

He has done marvelous things. I, too, will praise him with a new song!

Hail, wind, and rain, Loud blowing snowstorms, Sing to the Lord a new song!

Flowers and trees, Loud rustling dry leaves, Sing to the Lord a new song!

He has done marvelous things. I, too, will praise him with a new song!

Trumpet and pipes, Loud clashing cymbals, Sing to the Lord a new song!

Harp, lute, and lyre, Loud humming cellos, Sing to the Lord a new song!

He has done marvelous things. I, too, will praise him with a new song!

Knowledge and truth, Loud sounding wisdom, Sing to the Lord a new song!

Daughter and son, Loud praying members, Sing to the Lord a new song!

He has done marvelous things. I, too, will praise him with a new song.

We Pray for Transformation and New Life

INTRODUCTION

Our holy and loving God seeks us when we are lost and alienated from God, from ourselves and our neighbors, and from the created world, our only home. Help us to find our home and our life in and through you and your creation.

Because of who YOU are and where YOU are on life's journey, YOU ARE WELCOME HERE!

PRAYER FOR TRANSFORMATION

Gracious God, You do not turn away from those who others minimize and demean. Help us to recognize the belovedness of every human being and all your creation. Give us courage and curiosity to engage with those that others would ignore or isolate.

Where we have walked heavily on your earth, overused and wasted its resources, taken for granted its beauty and abundance, and treated its inhabitants unjustly, holding future generations hostage to our self-centeredness, have mercy on us and forgive us. Renew in us the resolve to keep and conserve your earth as you desire and intend, with grateful and compassionate hearts, through your Son, our Savior Jesus Christ. Amen.

WORDS OF GRACE

Beloved, the Holy One seeks you and rejoices when you turn from the ways of the world that minimize and marginalize the community God has prepared for us. We can be builders of a future that celebrates the kingdom of God alive and rejoicing on earth.

THE PEACE

The God of heaven has made a home on earth.

Christ dwells among us and is one with us.

The peace of Christ be always with you.

And also with you

*REGATHERING SONG:

“To You O God, All Creatures Sing!”

Black #17, vs 1

To you, O God, all creatures sing,

and all creation, everything sings your praises, alleluia!

Your burning sun with golden beam,

your silver moon with softer gleam

sing your praises, alleluia, alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!

We Hear God's Word

MINISTRY THROUGH MUSIC

Psalm 95

by Liebergen

THE CREATION COLLECT OF THE DAY

O God, having shown us how far your love goes in saving the lost and forgotten, mercifully grant that we might join you in the work of reuniting with all creatures; through Jesus Christ the Wisdom of Creation, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, now and forever. Amen.

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PLAIN AND SIMPLE

“Alexander and the Terrible, Horrible, No Good, Very Bad Day,” by Judith Viorst

HEBREW SCRIPTURE READING:

JEREMIAH 4:11-12, 22-28

Judgment of lands waste & destroyed.

¹¹ At that time it will be said to this people and to Jerusalem: A hot wind comes from me out of the bare heights in the desert toward the daughter of my people, not to winnow or cleanse, ¹² a wind too strong for that. Now it is I who speak in judgment against them.

²² “For my people are foolish;
they do not know me;
they are stupid children;
they have no understanding.
They are skilled in doing evil
but do not know how to do good.”

²³ I looked on the earth, and it was complete chaos,
and to the heavens, and they had no light.

²⁴ I looked on the mountains, and they were quaking,
and all the hills moved to and fro.

²⁵ I looked, and there was no one at all,
and all the birds of the air had fled.

²⁶ I looked, and the fruitful land was a desert,
and all its cities were laid in ruins
before the Lord, before his fierce anger.

²⁷ For thus says the Lord: The whole land shall be a desolation, yet I will not make a full end.

²⁸ Because of this the earth shall mourn
and the heavens above grow black,
for I have spoken; I have purposed;
I have not relented, nor will I turn back.

LETTER OR EPISTLE READING

1 CORINTHIANS 1:3-9

Paul’s thanksgiving after affliction.

³ Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and the God of all consolation, ⁴ who consoles us in all our affliction, so that we may be able to console those who are in any affliction with the consolation with which we ourselves are consoled by God. ⁵ For just as the sufferings of Christ are abundant for us, so also our consolation is abundant through Christ. ⁶ If we are being afflicted, it is for your consolation and salvation; if we are being consoled, it is for your consolation, which you experience when you patiently endure the same

Because of who YOU are and where YOU are on life’s journey, YOU ARE WELCOME HERE!

sufferings that we are also suffering. ⁷ Our hope for you is unshaken, for we know that as you share in our sufferings, so also you share in our consolation.

⁸ We do not want you to be ignorant, brothers and sisters, of the affliction we experienced in Asia, for we were so utterly, unbearably crushed that we despaired of life itself. ⁹ Indeed, we felt that we had received the sentence of death so that we would rely not on ourselves but on God, who raises the dead.

GOSPEL READING:

LUKE 15:1-10

Grumbles about Jesus eating with sinners; parables of finding.

Now all the tax collectors and sinners were coming near to listen to him. ² And the Pharisees and the scribes were grumbling and saying, “This fellow welcomes sinners and eats with them.”

³ So he told them this parable: ⁴ “Which one of you, having a hundred sheep and losing one of them, does not leave the ninety-nine in the wilderness and go after the one that is lost until he finds it? ⁵ And when he has found it, he lays it on his shoulders and rejoices. ⁶ And when he comes home, he calls together his friends and neighbors, saying to them, ‘Rejoice with me, for I have found my lost sheep.’ ⁷ Just so, I tell you, there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who need no repentance.

⁸ “Or what woman having ten silver coins, if she loses one of them, does not light a lamp, sweep the house, and search carefully until she finds it? ⁹ And when she has found it, she calls together her friends and neighbors, saying, ‘Rejoice with me, for I have found the coin that I had lost.’ ¹⁰ Just so, I tell you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents.”

Hear what the Spirit is saying to all God’s Creation.

We, your creatures, are listening.

MEDITATION:

“Sitting with Creation’s Desolations”

Pastor Dave

SINGING TOGETHER:

“Gentle Shepherd”

Brown #596

**Gentle Shepherd, come and lead us,
For we need You to help us find our way.
Gentle Shepherd, come and feed us,
For we need Your strength from day to day.
There’s no other we can turn to
Who can help us face another day;
Gentle Shepherd, come and lead us,
For we need you to help us find our way.**

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We Respond to God's Word

BLESSING FOR FAITH FORMATION SUNDAY

At the start of a new formation program year let us note that signs of faithful and vital local churches and church members in our denomination include: “exhibiting a spiritual foundation and ongoing spiritual practice” and “engaging sacred stories and traditions”.

What does “exhibiting a spiritual foundation and ongoing spiritual practice” mean? Among other things: “loving God, following Jesus Christ and his teachings, being guided by the Holy Spirit, and living a life of discipleship; praying actively and embracing a diversity of spiritual practices; showing a commitment to lifelong spiritual development and faithful stewardship; encouraging opportunities for all to practice sabbath and spiritual renewal”.

And what does “engaging sacred stories and traditions” mean? Among other things: “exhibiting knowledge, understanding, and continuing study of scriptures; understanding the history of the Christian church and approaching the future of the Christian church with curiosity and wonder; and creating faith formation opportunities across generations and learning styles”.

Keeping all this in mind, let us pray that God's Spirit of wisdom more deeply form us in the ways of God's love in Christ Jesus.

God of all wisdom and knowledge, give your blessing to all engaged in faith formation here at St. Paul's UCC, whether in formal communities of formation, or in daily devotions alone, or both. Help us to see ourselves as a school of love, where all are formed as disciples of the Way of Jesus our Savior, and all are teachers. May the Holy Spirit guide and strengthen us all, that in this, and in all things, we may love God with all our heart, soul, mind, and strength, and love our neighbors as our selves. Amen.

SINGING TOGETHER:

“Gentle Shepherd” Brown #596

**Gentle Shepherd, come and lead us,
For we need You to help us find our way.
Gentle Shepherd, come and feed us,
For we need Your strength from day to day.
There's no other we can turn to
Who can help us face another day;
Gentle Shepherd, come and lead us,
For we need you to help us find our way.**

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A TIME FOR COMMUNAL PRAYER

SHARING OF JOYS AND CONCERNS

You are invited to share joys and concerns we can pray for together. Let our sharing itself be an act of prayer.

PRAYERS ON BEHALF OF THE PEOPLE

A VERSION OF THE LORD'S PRAYER (TOGETHER)

**Eternal Spirit, Life-giver. Pain-bearer. Love-maker.
Source of all that is and shall be. Father and mother of us all.
Loving God, in whom is heaven:
The hallowing of your name echo across the universe!
The way of your justice be followed by all the peoples of the world!
Your heavenly will be done by all created beings.
Your commonwealth of peace and freedom
sustain our hope and come on earth.
With the bread we need for today, feed us.
In the hurts we absorb from one another, forgive us.
In times of temptation and test, strengthen us.
From trials too great to endure, spare us.
From the grip of all that is evil, free us.
For you reign in the glory of the power that is love, now and forever.
Amen.**

Used in A New Zealand Prayer Book. A translation from Maori.

MISSION MOMENT

Lifepath/Harvest Home

Maryann Brenneman

GROUP ENCOURAGEMENT TO SHARING OUR TITHES AND OFFERINGS

You are invited to place your gifts in the offering basket as you arrive or depart from our worship together.

Let us give generously and lovingly to support the ministry of the gospel-loving our neighbors as ourselves through sharing the abundant gifts of God.

DEDICATING OUR OFFERING (TOGETHER)

God our Provider, receive these gifts in gratitude from your people. We pray that these offerings meet the needs of the world and our community. May they serve as a public witness of our commitment to being your church. Amen.

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We Go Out to Serve

***SINGING TOGETHER**

"O Day of Rest and Gladness"

Brown #12

**O day of rest and gladness, O day of joy and light,
O balm of care and sadness, Most beautiful, most bright:
On thee the high and lowly, Through ages joined in tune,
Sing "Holy, holy, holy," To the great God Triune.**

**On thee, at the creation, The light first had its birth;
On thee, for our salvation, Christ rose from depths of earth;
On thee, our Lord victorious, The Spirit sent from heaven;
And thus on thee, most glorious, A triple light was given.**

**Today on weary nations The heavenly manna falls;
To holy convocations The silver trumpet calls,
Where gospel light is glowing With pure and radiant beams,
And living water flowing with soul-refreshing streams.**

**New graces ever gaining From this our day of rest,
We reach the rest remaining To spirits of the blest;
To Holy Ghost be praises, to Father and to Son;
The church her voice upraises To Thee, blest Three in One.**

GOOD WORDS FOR GOING FORTH

As you go,

Rejoice that God knows you, recognizes you, and communes with you
even in your deepest desolations.

Rejoice knowing that you have the power do the same
With all you encounter.

Go forth now to care for God's world. Use resources wisely. Share your
knowledge. Sacrifice where necessary. Live in harmony with all creation. Go out
into all the world as prophets of a new way of living and preach the good news to
all.

And the blessing of the Creator God, the Risen Son, and the ever-present Holy
Spirit bless you that you might be a blessing to others today and always. Amen.

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*SINGING TOGETHER.

“Go In Peace” Sing! #194

**Our God’s light, Our Savior’s grace,
The warm love of the Spirit’s embrace, will guide you as you leave this
place.**

Go in peace. Go in peace. May you find peace as you walk in faith.

May you find joy as you run the race.

May God bless you and keep you always.

Go with love. Go with love.

DISMISSAL

Let us go forth into all Creation, rejoicing in the power of the Spirit.

Thanks be to God.

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Much of the liturgy is adapted from Joy in Heaven: Service Prayers for the Fourteenth Sunday after Pentecost by the Rev. Dr. Cheryl A. Lindsay, Minister for Worship and Theology for the United Church of Christ.

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