



Sunset Hills United Presbyterian Church

900 Country Club Drive
Pittsburgh, PA 15228
www.shupchurch.org

10:15 am WORSHIP
February 16, 2025

The Sixth Sunday after Epiphany

IN PREPARATION FOR WORSHIP

The Beatitudes, for Luke, are about a community of disciples standing with the grieving, the poor, and the hungry of the land - as Jesus does. They are about practicing the presence of Jesus through acts of care and compassion.

- Thomas E. Frank, Wake Forest University Professor

Blessed are you who are poor, for yours is the kingdom of God. Blessed are you who are hungry now, for you will be filled. Blessed are you who weep now, for you will laugh.

- Luke 6:20-21

ENTERING GOD'S PRESENCE

Prelude (Campanile Bells)

Deep River

arr. D. Wagner

Announcements

Lighting of the Christ Candle

Prayer of Preparation

Introit: *Come, Now Is the Time to Worship*

B. Doerksen

Come, now is the time to worship.

Come, now is the time to give your heart.

Come, just as you are to worship.

Come, just as you are before your God. Come.

CCLI #1065469

Call to Worship (based on Jeremiah 17)

Liturgist: Kara Yates

Leader: When we turn our hearts away from God and toward ourselves, putting trust in our own strength,

People: we become like a shrub in the desert, living in a parched, salty place.

Leader: When we trust in God, when our trust IS God, we are like a tree planted by the water.

People: Our roots go deep, we are ever-green; even in a drought we are not anxious, but bear fruit, full and beautiful, gifts of the God who made us.

*Hymn: *Our God, Our Help in Ages Past*

No. 210

*Call to Confession

Leader: The prophet Jeremiah says that God tests our minds and searches our hearts, because the condition of mind and heart affects actions. Trusting in God's mercy, let us invite God to search us, so that God might also lead us in the way everlasting.

*Unison Prayer of Confession (based on Isaiah 6 and Luke 5)

Merciful God, your call to discipleship is demanding. You call us to reorder our lives by the kingdom you are bringing in Jesus Christ. Yet we still pass by the ones you especially notice: people who are poor and hungry, people who weep. We have not stood with those who are hated, bullied, and excluded. Comfortable with the way things are, we are too complacent, even complicit with injustice and prejudice. Forgive us, O God, and turn us back to your gospel. We pray this now, for our sake, and for the sake of your world; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

(Silent Confession)

*Assurance of Pardon (based on Corinthians 2:16)

Leader: Because Christ has been raised from the dead, sin and death do not have the last word!

People: Our faith is not in vain! Baptized into Christ's death and resurrection, we are forgiven and set free to live for God and neighbor. Thanks be to God!

*Response: *Gloria Patri*

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost;

As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be,

World without end. Amen. Amen.

*The Passing of the Peace, American Sign Language

Speaker: Peace be with you.

Respond: And also with you.

Campanile Bells: *Jesus Loves Me*

arr. D. Glasgow

Children's Story Time

Old Testament Reading: Jeremiah 17:5-10

⁵ Thus says the LORD:

Cursed are those who trust in mere mortals
and make mere flesh their strength,
whose hearts turn away from the LORD.

⁶ They shall be like a shrub in the desert
and shall not see when relief comes.

They shall live in the parched places of the wilderness,
in an uninhabited salt land.

⁷ Blessed are those who trust in the LORD,
whose trust is the LORD.

⁸ They shall be like a tree planted by water,
sending out its roots by the stream.

It shall not fear when heat comes,
and its leaves shall stay green;
in the year of drought it is not anxious,
and it does not cease to bear fruit.

⁹ The heart is devious above all else;
it is perverse—
who can understand it?

¹⁰ I the LORD test the mind
and search the heart,
to give to all according to their ways,
according to the fruit of their doings.

Gospel Reading: Luke 6:17-26

¹⁷ He came down with them and stood on a level place with a great crowd of his disciples and a great multitude of people from all Judea, Jerusalem, and the coast of Tyre and Sidon. ¹⁸ They had come to hear him and to be healed of their diseases, and those who were troubled with unclean spirits were cured. ¹⁹ And everyone in the crowd was trying to touch him, for power came out from him and healed all of them.

²⁰ Then he looked up at his disciples and said:

“Blessed are you who are poor,
for yours is the kingdom of God.

²¹ “Blessed are you who are hungry now,
for you will be filled.

“Blessed are you who weep now,
for you will laugh.

²² “Blessed are you when people hate you and when they exclude you, revile you, and defame you^[a] on account of the Son of Man. ²³ Rejoice on that day and leap for joy, for surely your reward is great in heaven, for that is how their ancestors treated the prophets.

²⁴ “But woe to you who are rich,
for you have received your consolation.

²⁵ “Woe to you who are full now,
for you will be hungry.

“Woe to you who are laughing now,
for you will mourn and weep.

²⁶ “Woe to you when all speak well of you, for that is how their ancestors treated the false prophets.”

Leader: The Word of the Lord!

People: Thanks be to God.

Sermon

Rev. Dr. Laura Strauss

Anthem: *Blest Are They* (The Beatitudes, Matt. 5:3-12)

D. Haas

Blest are they, the poor in spirit, theirs is the kingdom of God.
Blest are they, full of sorrow, they shall be consoled.

Chorus:

**Rejoice! And be glad! Blessed are you, holy are you,
Rejoice! And be glad! Yours is the kingdom of God!**

Blest are they, the lowly ones, they shall inherit the earth.
Blest are they who hunger and thirst; they shall have their fill.
Blest are they who show mercy, mercy shall be theirs.
Blest are they, the pure of heart, they shall see God!

Chorus:

Blest are they who seek peace; they are the children of God.
Blest are they who suffer in faith, the glory of God is theirs.

Chorus:

Blest are you who suffer hate, all because of me.
Rejoice and be glad, yours is the kingdom; shine for all to see.

Chorus:

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RESPONDING TO GOD'S WORD

Reception of New Member: Alexis Obarsky

Blessing Hymn: *Blest Be the Tie That Binds* (vs. 1)

**Blest be the tie that binds our hearts in Christian love:
The fellowship of kindred minds is like to that above.**

Affirmation of Faith: The Confession of 1967, 9.36, 9.37

The church gathers to praise God, to hear his word for mankind, to baptize and to join in the Lord's Supper, to pray for and present the world to him in worship, to enjoy fellowship, to receive instruction, strength, and comfort, to order and organize its own corporate life, to be tested, renewed, and reformed, and to speak and act in the world's affairs as may be appropriate to the needs of the time. The church disperses to serve God wherever its members are, at work or play, in private or in the life of society. Their prayer and Bible study are part of the church's worship and theological reflection. Their witness is the church's evangelism. Their daily action in the world is the church in mission to the world. The quality of their relation with other persons is the measure of the church's fidelity.

Joys, Concerns, & Testimonies

The Lord's Prayer

**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 debts, as we forgive our debtors;
and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory, forever. Amen.**

Presenting Gifts, Tithes and Offerings

Prayer of Dedication

*Response: *Doxology*

**Praise God, from Whom all blessings flow;
Praise Him, all creatures here below;
Praise Him above, ye heavenly host;
Praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost. Amen.**

DEPARTING TO SERVE

Hymn: *Lord, Speak to Me, That I May Speak* (vs. 1-3)

No. 426

*Benediction: *(to be sung)*

May the peace of the Lord Christ go with you; wherever he may send you; may he guide you through the wilderness; protect you through the storm; may he bring you home rejoicing; at the wonders he has shown you; may he bring you home rejoicing; once again into our doors. Amen.

*Postlude

**If you are able to do so, please stand.*

Happy Birthday to Jeffrey Stimmel (16th), Michelle Brumfield (18th), Brienne Sembrat (19th), and Amy Sumner (19th)!

The Chancel Flowers were given today by Pat Patterson in memory of Patti Patterson.

Deacon Greeter(s)/Flower Deliveries Made By: Leslie Ney and Pat Patterson

Most Needed Items for SHIM: Dried beans, lentils, pasta sauce in jars, cereal & oatmeal, soup, condiments, spices, adult diapers, baby diapers (size 4-6), dog and cat food, and personal care items.

SHIM Clothing Closet: Accepting donations of clothes (in season), shoes, and linens (no large household items). Located at the Church of Nazarene (5601 Library Road). Drop-off hours: Monday – 10:00 am until 1:00 pm. *If you are not able to deliver your donations during their hours, you can leave them in the closet outside of Findley Hall and a Mission Commission member will deliver them for you.*

Hospital visits by Pastor Laura can be scheduled through the church office. If you or someone you know is having surgery or is in the hospital, please let us know so that Pastor Laura can be there to visit and pray with you and your loved ones.

Scheduling a Meeting with Pastor Laura: if you would like to meet with Pastor Laura to discuss a matter that is **not** a medical or pastoral care emergency, please reach out to her. You can contact her via email at revlaurastrauss@gmail.com or by calling the church office at (412)561-6261 to schedule a meeting. Dropping in to say “hi” is always appreciated, but scheduling a meeting ensures that Pastor Laura can dedicate the necessary time to your discussion if needed.

PRAYER LIST

Prayer Circle – Susan Pochek and Ryan & Harriet Rickard

February – Petty Family

Ongoing - Nancy Brumfield; our mission co-workers at the U.S.-Mexico border, the Rev. Mark Adams and Miriam Maldonado Escobar and their children, Cindy, Anna Flor, and Nathan; our sister church in Malawi, Africa, Litchenza CCAP; our WorldVision child, Pabatso Makhalanyane; and all those who are affected by natural disasters.



WELCOME TO SUNSET HILLS UNITED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH!

CONNECT with us!

Phone: 412-561-6261

Office hours: Monday – Friday, 9:00 am – 3:00 pm

Address: 900 Country Club Dr. Pgh, PA 15228

Pastor: Rev. Dr. Laura E. Strauss

Pastor Emeritus: Rev. Dr. William Gracey

Website: www.shupchurch.org

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/shupchurch/>

CHURCH CALENDAR

Sun, Feb 16

- 9:00 am Adult Sunday School – Findley Hall
- 9:00 am Children’s Sunday School - Library
- 10:15 am Worship – Sanctuary
- 10:45 am Children’s Church
- 11:30 am Mission Meeting
- 5:00 pm AA – Findley Hall
- 5:30 pm Troop #16212 - Crystal

Mon, Feb 17

- 7:00 am Lifeline Screening
- 1:00 pm Findley Hall Bible Study
- 6:30 pm Troop #46920 – Rm. 110

Tues, Feb 18

- 12:30 pm Tues. Afternoon Bible Study – Cort Rm.
- 5:30 pm Yoga – Crystal Hall
- 6:30 pm Campanile Bells
- 7:00 pm Square Dance Class – Crystal Hall
- 7:00 pm Counseling Group – Rm. 6
- 7:30 pm Chancel Choir Practice

Wed, Feb 19

- 10:00 am Days for Girls – Wilson Hall
- 4:00 pm Quilters – Findley Hall
- 6:30 pm Tai Chi – Crystal Hall

Fri, Feb 20

- 5:00 pm AA – Crystal Hall

Sun, Feb 21

- 9:00 am Adult Sunday School – Findley Hall
- 9:00 am Children’s Sunday School - Library
- 10:15 am Worship – Sanctuary
- 10:45 am Children’s Church
- 5:00 pm AA – Findley Hall

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- ❖ **LifeLine Screening:** Life Line will be here to conduct screenings for Carotid Artery Disease, Peripheral Arterial Disease, Abdominal Aortic Aneurysm, and Atrial Fibrillation on Monday, February 17th. To learn more and/or sign up for the screenings, please visit their website www.LifeLine.com.
- ❖ **Women’s Retreat:** Join us on Saturday, March 1st for the first women’s retreat of the year from 9am to 3pm in Findley Hall. We will enjoy good food and fun while we learn about the Art of Faith with pastor and educator Rev. Dr. Laura Strauss. The cost is \$30 by check or Venmo.
- ❖ **Studying Luke’s Gospel with Adult Sunday School:** You are invited to join us each Sunday at 9:00 a.m. in Findley Hall as we use Adam Hamilton’s curriculum on the Book of Luke. Next Sunday, we’re studying reflections on Luke’s gospel from theologian, N.T. Wright.
- ❖ **Annual Giving Reports:** Thank you to SHUP members for notifying the office staff of the error in the Annual Giving Reports which were mailed out recently. We want to reassure all members that the 2024 data is correct and to disregard the previous years listed at the bottom of the page; this data is not correct and does not reflect your giving from previous years. We apologize for any confusion or concern this error may have caused.
- ❖ **VBS: Take VBS to the Alaskan Wilderness!** This year’s Vacation Bible School theme, *True North: Trusting God in a Wild World* is an Alaskan theme. We need to borrow the following supplies for Vacation Bible School from August 4 – 8: Canoes / Kayaks / Oars, Artificial Christmas Trees (unlighted), Coolers, Camp Chairs, Alaskan/Tundra-Themed Décor, Camping Decor/Supplies. Please make sure to put your name on your supplies so they may be returned to you in a timely manner. Supplies can be put in the Junior High Youth room, located on the left after the Sexton office in the downstairs hallways leading to the preschool. Contact Pastor Laura (revlaurastrauss@gmail.com) with any questions.