

TRINITY UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

2340 State Street, East Petersburg, PA 17520 717-569-1632

Website: www.trinityeastpete.org E-Mail:secretary@trinityeastpete.org
The Rev. Dr. Christopher M. Rankin, Pastor
The Rev. Harry G. Royer, Pastor Emeritus
The Rev. Dr. Carolyne Call, Covenanted Minister of Mission
Mr. Michael Slechta, Director of Music/ Sounds of Trinity Choir Director
Mrs. Christine Oetama, Supply Organist
Mrs. Carmen Richards, Pianist
Mrs. Carol Kratz, Administrative Assistant
Mr. Michael Querry, Sexton
Mrs. Amy Grube, Preschool Director

FOURTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST 7:45 A.M. SERVICE

The Sundays after Pentecost, also called "common or ordinary time," constitute a season of growth in Christian faith, life, and ministry. Nearly half of the Christian year is reserved for this season, which spans the Sundays between Pentecost (50 days after Easter) and Advent (around Thanksgiving.)

Traditionally, the liturgical color of ordinary time is green. Green is the color of nature and growth. It symbolizes the need of Christians to be disciples, persons who live out the values of the gospel and share them joyfully with others. During this time, the scriptural texts, sermons, and hymns are usually directed toward the task of helping us grow as faithful followers of Jesus Christ and bear good fruit in our witness.

Today's Theme: The grumbling of the religious leaders in today's gospel is actually our holy hope: This Jesus welcomes sinners and eats with them. That our God seeks and saves the lost is not only a holy hope, it is our only hope. As the writer of 1 Timothy reminds us, "The saying is sure and worthy of full acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners." Thanks be to God.

Welcome all visitors! We welcome all who worship with us. May the joy of Christ's presence and the power of the Holy Spirit fill you with peace and hope! We are honored by your presence and trust that you will join us in the praise and worship of God. Activity bags for children can be found in the Narthex. Please sign our guest book in the Narthex and receive a gift of Trinity Bread from our greeters. If you are interested in church membership, please give your name and telephone number to Pastor Rankin.

Welcome to the Eucharist! All who seek to follow Jesus and who seek the gifts Jesus offers us are invited to share in this sacrament of Holy Communion.

Children are invited to receive communion at the discretion of their parents/guardians. If a child wants to receive a blessing, they are asked to fold their hands.

HEARING ASSISTED DEVICES –If you have trouble with hearing, please check with one of the ushers for a Hearing Assist Sound Receiver.

Prayer As You Enter: May the words that are spoken, and the reflections of our hearts, be worthy of your grace, O God, to whom all honor and glory is given now and forevermore. Amen.



CATCH THE VISION & SHARE THE JOY



TRINITY U.C.C. VISION STATEMENT:

All will know the love of God through the teachings of Jesus!!

Trinity U.C.C. is called by God to:

- --Share God's love with our community
- --Serve God's children
- --Bring healing and wholeness to those in need
- --Share the Gospel in liturgy, music, and study

BY YOUR SILENCE OTHERS MAY HEAR THE STILL SMALL VOICE OF GOD!

PARISH ANNOUNCEMENTS

(PLEASE STAND IF YOU ARE ABLE)

CALL TO WORSHIP

AFFIRMATION OF BAPTISM AND INVITATION TO THE TABLE

In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

When the lost are found, there is joy!

When hope overcomes despair, there is joy!

When we seek and find God's faithfulness, there is joy!

Praise to God who is present to us through Jesus Christ! Praise to God who is present to us through one another!

As we come to the table of God's heavenly feast, let us prepare our hearts anew to be in communion with one another and the risen Christ.

We come, ready to partake of bread and cup; ready to commune with one another and with the living God.

Take hold of the life that really is life. Come, take your place at the table.

CONFESSION OF SINS

CALL TO CONFESSION

We are called to examine our faithfulness to God's covenant with us.

God, in whose presence we gather, promises us grace and pardon when we acknowledge our weakness and shame.

Let us silently confess our sin before God.

(SEATED OR KNEELING)

SILENT CONFESSION OF SINS

CONFESSION OF SIN

Baptized in Christ, let us confess our sin.

Merciful God, you free us to love others, but we neglect our neighbors and follow our own way. You lead us by the Spirit of joy and peace, but we turn away from the abundant life you offer. You surround us with patience, kindness, and generosity, but we grow weary in doing what is right. In your mercy, forgive us. Do not give up on us. Heal us, break our bonds, and show us the path of life. We confess all of this in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

KYRIE

Lord, have mercy.
Christ, have mercy.
Lord, have mercy.
Christ, have mercy.
Lord, have mercy.
Lord, have mercy.

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

(PLEASE STAND IF YOU ARE ABLE)

ACT OF PRAISE

O God, open my lips.

And my mouth shall proclaim your praise.

Praise to the holy and undivided Trinity, one God:

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, as it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

COLLECT FOR FOURTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Let us pray the collect together.

O God, overflowing with mercy and compassion, you lead back to yourself all those who go astray. Preserve your people in your loving care, that we may reject whatever is contrary to you and may follow all things that sustain our life in your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

THE WORD OF GOD

THE FIRST LESSON

Exodus 32:7-14

While Moses is on Mount Sinai, the people grow restless and make a golden calf to worship. Today's reading shows Moses as the mediator between an angry God and a sinful people. Moses reminds God that the Israelites are God's own people, and boldly asks for mercy for them.

The Word of the Lord. Thanks be to God!

PSALTER

Psalm 51:1-10

Have mercy on me, O God, according to your steadfast love; according to your abundant mercy blot out my transgressions. Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin.

For I know my transgressions, and my sin is ever before me. Against you, you alone, have I sinned, and done what is evil in your sight, so that you are justified in your sentence and blameless when you pass judgment.

Indeed, I was born guilty, a sinner when my mother conceived me. You desire truth in the inward being; therefore teach me wisdom in my secret heart.

Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.

Let me hear joy and gladness; let the bones that you have crushed rejoice.

Hide your face from my sins, and blot out all my iniquities.

Create in me a clean heart, O God, and put a new and right spirit within me.

THE SECOND LESSON

1 Timothy 1:12-17

The letters to Timothy and Titus are called the pastoral epistles because they contain advice especially intended for leaders in the church. Here the mercy shown to Paul, who once persecuted the church, is cited as evidence that even the most unworthy may become witnesses to the grace of God.

The Word of the Lord. Thanks be to God!

(PLEASE STAND IF YOU ARE ABLE)

THE HOLY GOSPEL

St. Luke 15:1-10

Jesus tells two stories that suggest a curious connection between the lost being found and sinners repenting. God takes the initiative to find sinners, each of whom is so precious to God that their recovery brings joy in heaven.

Glory be to You, O Lord.

THE GOSPEL OF OUR LORD

Praise be to You, O Christ

(PLEASE BE SEATED)

SERMON

"Growing Together in God's Love"

Pastor Rankin

(PLEASE STAND IF YOU ARE ABLE)

NICENE CREED

We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.

We believe in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, light from light, true God from true God, begotten not made, of one Being with the Father; through him all things were made. For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven, was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary and became fully human. For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate; he suffered death and was buried. On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures; he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who in unity with the Father and the Son is worshipped and glorified, and has spoken through the prophets.

We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic church. We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins. We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.

PEOPLE'S OFFERING

OFFERING DEDICATION

Because we have been blessed by you, O God, we are delighted to share. Because there are many who do not enjoy your bounty, we search for ways to help them. Thank you for showing us the way of mercy and patient example, the way of generosity and self-forgetful service, the way of faithfulness and joyous celebration. Bless us and our offerings, we pray in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

THE EUCHARISTIC PRAYER

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them up to the Lord!

Let us give thanks to God Most High.

It is right to give God thanks and praise.

It is truly right and our greatest joy to give you thanks and praise, eternal and triune God, whom we worship as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. In Jesus Christ you spoke the word that brought the world into being. By the Holy Spirit you brought order out of chaos and breathed life into your creatures. In your great love, you stood by us in spite of our disobedience, correcting us with gracious reproof, and welcoming us again into your loving embrace. Therefore we praise you, joining our voices with choirs of angels and with all the faithful of every time and place, who forever sings to the glory of your name:

Holy, holy God of love and majesty, the whole universe speaks of your glory, O God, Most High. Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest!

You are holy, O God of majesty, and blessed is Jesus Christ, your Son, our Lord. Born of Mary, he came to dwell among us, full of grace and truth. To all who believed, he gave power to become your children. In ministry among your own Jesus cared for all, forgiving their failures, healing their hurts, and nurturing their faith, giving himself in utter sacrifice for those he loved. He inspired ordinary people to Spirit-filled living and displayed in his life, death, and rising again to the power of your Spirit.

(PLEASE BE SEATED)

WORDS OF INSTITUTION AND PRAYER OF CONSECRATION

THE PRAYER OF OUR LORD

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, for ever. Amen.

BREAKING OF THE HOST & POURING OF THE CUP

As this grain was once scattered in the fields, and has come together in one bread, so we, with different needs and hopes, come together as one, for we share one bread.

The Bread of Life, broken for us.

The cup which we share is the cup of the New Covenant written in our hearts and witnessed by Jesus.

The Cup of Blessing, poured out for us and for the many.

RESURRECTION ACCLAMATION

Alleluia! Christ our Passover is offered for us.

Therefore let us keep the feast. Alleluia!

RECEIVING THE GIFTS OF GOD

(Those who wish to come forward will be invited by the pastor. The pastor will serve you the host, saying, "The Body of Christ." You reply, "Amen!" The assistant will present you with the cup, saying, "The Blood of Christ." You reply, "Amen!" Grape juice is in the chalice with the cross and wine is in the other chalice. If you do not wish to come forward, you are invited to use the packaged elements at the back of the sanctuary and commune in your pew or ask someone near you to have the pastor and assistant come to you in the pew. The pastor will offer a blessing everyone has communed. Children are invited to receive communion at the discretion of their parents/guardians. If a child wants to receive a blessing, they are asked to fold their hands.)

(PLEASE STAND IF YOU ARE ABLE)

POST COMMUNION PRAYERS

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

In peace, let us pray to the Lord.

Gracious God, we come to you in prayer for the church, the world, and all in need.

Merciful God, pour out your grace upon your church. Forgive us for the times when we have been unfaithful, and renew our commitment to your gospel of love. Empower us to live as a community of mercy. God of grace, receive our prayer.

Merciful God, we ask forgiveness for the ways we have neglected and harmed this earth and its creatures. Confirm our commitment to care for all you have made, and grant us wisdom and strength to take action toward restoring your creation to its fullness. God of grace, **receive our prayer.**

Merciful God, govern all who hold positions of power and authority. Instruct them to make just decisions that serve the common good. Make them instruments of your mercy in the world, working to heal divisions and promote peace. God of grace, **receive our prayer**.

Merciful God, bind us together as a community of forgiveness and love. Supply us with humility to seek forgiveness when we have wronged one another and generosity to extend mercy when we have been wronged. God of grace, **receive our prayer**.

Merciful God, we lift up all who suffer. Bring healing, comfort, and peace to those who are sick, grieving, or in pain. Give us compassionate hearts to accompany those who are hurting and courage to work for justice and mercy. God of grace, **receive our prayer**.

SILENT PRAYER

Let us pray together.

Gracious God, may we who have received this sacrament live in the unity of your Holy Spirit, that we may show forth your gifts to all the world. We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

CLOSE OF WORSHIP

BENEDICTION

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chancel Flowers are given by Mark Eyer in celebration of Chris' birthday.

The Worship Aids are given by Jerry & Carmen Richards in celebration of their 70th wedding anniversary.

Happy Birthday!

Today – Denise Huggins, Christine Oetama Monday – Scott DeLong Wednesday – Christine Eyer, Jill Otthofer, Beth Bossert Thursday – Lon Wible **Ministering Today**

Pastor Rev. Dr. Christopher Rankin

Lector Rev. Jack Esbenshade

Money Counters Diane Rice, Karen Olley, George DeLong, Jodi Keller Altar Guild Anita Rohrer, Charlene Cristy, Hedwig Hunsicker

Koinonia Board of EldersBuilding Trustee Dave Connor

Ministries Card Children's Sunday School Class

Called to Care Nancy Enders Visitation Donna Geisler

Attendance for Sun., September 7

7:45–19 9:30–62

TOTAL - 81

This Week at Trinity Church

(Church Office Hours: Monday-Friday 9:00 a.m.-2 p.m.)

Monday 6:00 PM – Music Committee

7:00 PM – SOT Choir/8:15 PM Bells

Tuesday 1:00 PM – Prayer Shawl

7:00 PM — Consistory

Wednesday 6:30 PM – Preschool Parent's Night Thursday 1:00 PM – Pinochle—Isenberg Hall

2:00 PM - CROP Walk Committee --- Choir Room

6:00 PM – Cub Scouts

Saturday 8:30 AM – Meet at church for Parade

10:00 AM – East Pete Parade

8:00 PM – Alanon/AA

 $Sunday \hspace{1cm} 7:45 \hspace{0.1cm} AM-Eucharist$

9:00 AM – Sunday School

10:00 AM - Koinonia 10:30 AM - Eucharist

PRAYERS FOR GOD'S HEALING PRESENCE

MEMBERS

Donna Zirkel Lori Daly Walt & Betty Tyndall

Ron & Donna Denlinger Rev. Dr. Carrie Call Dawn Stauffer

Janice Jenkins Mid Gockley Ken & Phyllis Zimmerman

Rhonda Hartenstine Joann Peck Scott & Jane Owens

The Lehman family Mary Lou Shaab Carmen & Jerry Richards

Donna Wolf & Family George & Ellie Latsha Himelwright Family Sam Minder III Rev. Ken Trauger Rev. Bob Musser

Erika Otthofer Danielle Huggins Holbein

Betty Fogle Betty Tyndall & family Michael McDonough
Denise Huggins Don Miller Bob & Marlyn Wible

Ron Becker Joann & Dawn Garvin Rev. Bob & Judie Bistline

Arlene Hoxworth Mary Lou Sturgis Pastor Harry Royer

Rev. Sandy Morris Hank Fox Kathleen Sensenig Adams

John Shelsky Rev. Dr. Rich & Lainie Christensen

Rev. Jere & Judy Chapman

Jack Richards and family on the birth of his grandson, Jack James Sollenberger

FAMILY & FRIENDS

Pat Seachrist

The family of Rosalla Hollenbach (mother of Dr. Rob Hollenbach)

The family of Deb Wealand (sister-in-law of Denise Pfeiffer)

The family of Mike Ross (friend of Chuck Husted)

The family of Gerald Brandt (friend of Pat & Stan Seachrist)

The family of Dr. Phil Billings (Pastor Chris' college professor)

The family of Rev. Dr. Chuck Maxfield (friend of several Trinity members)

Carol Feyock (friend of Carmen & Jerry Richards)

Janet Latsha (sister-in-law of George & Ellie Latsha)

Claudia Esbenshade (cousin of George DeLong, Jodi Keller, & Denise Gobrecht)

Sherry Kline (former substitute organist at Trinity)

Dennis Amour (father of John & Kayla Brennan's friend)

Lynnette Fritz (cousin of Betty Tyndall)

Andrew Hicks (husband of Katie Weeber)

Billy Schoffstall (uncle of Kayla Brennan)

Matthew Davis (brother-in-law of Hillary Bossert-Davis)

Tom & Elaine Lichtenwalner (parents of Mike Lichtenwalner)

Cindy Greiman (friend of Betty Fogle)

Marianne Gibble (friend of Trinity)

Chad Zirkel (son of Donna Zirkel)

Ken Hoshauer (husband of Dr. Cathy Hoshauer)

Kurt Kalbach (brother of Dr. Cathy Hoshauer)

Mary Call (mother of Rev. Dr. Carrie Call)

The Herr Family (Former Trinity Preschool Family)

David Brown (nephew of Shelley & Mike Wagner)

Harvey Sick (friend of Judy Chapman)

James Malone & family

Barry Richards (son of Jerry & Carmen Richards)

Tyler Miller (grandson of Iris DeMaio)

Joan Kalbach (mother of Dr. Cathy Hoshauer)

Jim & Kathy Long (friends of Jerry & Carmen Richards)
Jo Jo Richards & family (Carmen & Jerry's granddaughter-in-law)
Terry Kratz (Carol Kratz's husband)

OTHER CONCERNS

Victims of Disasters

World Peace

Church World Service & Other Faith-Based Relief Organizations

THE SEPTEMBER PARISH POST is available in the information racks on both floors of the church building.

RALLY DAY is TODAY, September 14. The theme is "Growing Together in God's Love"!

We have returned to our regular schedule:



7:45—Worship with Holy Communion

9:00---Devotions/singing, recap of VBS, and launching our Christian Education ministry for the 2025-26 school year!

10:00---Koinonia (fellowship time)

10:30---Worship (we will be singing VBS songs during the service)

The Sunday School classes will begin on September 21. Here's information about the different classes:

- 1. The Children's Class will meet in the downstairs classroom and will be using the Spark lectionary-based curriculum.
- 2. The Youth Class will meet in the side room by the kitchen in Isenberg Hall and use resources from the Bible Project website for their curriculum through November.
- 3. The Wired Word class will be meet in the choir room. Each week they will have a Bible study lesson linked to the latest headlines and current events using appropriate scriptures. Participants can opt in or out of receiving the lesson by email before Sunday. To opt in before the first session, contact Diane Rice with your email address.
- 4. The Adult Bible Class will meet in the front of Isenberg Hall and will be studying the Gospel of Luke through the Kerygma study series.

BOOK STUDY: Pastor Chris is planning to do a book study in the coming months via Google Meet. We will be reading Henri Nouwen's book *With Open Hands: Bring Prayer Into Your Life*. Contact the church office or Pastor Chris if you are interested in participating.



East Pete Parade Saturday, September 20th 10:00 AM

THE PARISH LIFE COMMITTEE IS PLANNING TO HAVE A FLOAT AGAIN THIS YEAR!

There is a sign-up sheet on the table across from the church office for those who want to ride the float and those who are willing to donate candy. We are looking for hard candy or gummy candy (chocolate often melts)! We will assemble the bags of candy during Rally Day!

KOINONIA HAS RETURNED!

Koinonia (community fellowship) has resumed at 10 a.m. in Isenberg Hall. Volunteers are asked to provide light refreshments. The drinks/coffee will be taken care of for you! The sign-up sheet is on the kitchen counter. If you have any questions, contact Paula Dennes. We hope you will join us for this time of fellowship between our Sunday School classes and worship!

Pastor Chris will brew a pot of coffee when he arrives in the morning for people to enjoy between the 7:45 service and Sunday School.



MEN OF TRINITY (M.O.T.) BREAKFAST MEETING: The men will NOT be meeting at the Family Fare Restaurant for breakfast in September. We will resume on October 4. This is open to all men of the congregation! You are encouraged to invite other men to the breakfast.

GRIEF GROUP: The next session will be September 30 at 1:30 p.m. We continue to read Francis Weller's *The Wild Edge of Sorrow: Rituals of Renewal and the Sacred work of Grief.* If you would like to participate in the grief group, contact Pastor Chris or the Church office.

UPCOMING LEADERSHP SEMINAR: The Pastor-Parish Committee will be sponsoring another leadership seminar in Isenberg Hall on Saturday, October 11 from 9-11:00 a.m. Myka Kennedy Stephens will be returning to do a seminar on leadership strengths. Please sign-up so that we can order the materials for the seminar. This seminar is for all members of the Consistory and the committees/boards of Trinity Church. Speak with Pastor Rankin for more information!

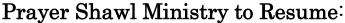
THE JULY-SEPTEMBER VOLUNTEER SCHEDULES are available on the table in the Narthex.

DEVOTIONALS: The July-September edition of These Days are available on the table across from the church office or on the lower level by the portico entrance.



It's time to have fun and play Pinochle! Everyone is invited to come on Thursday,
September 18, at 1:00 pm. Please sign up on the sheet across from the office. Bring a
snack to share. We're happy to teach if you are new to this card game.







The Knit in God's Love Prayer Shawl is resuming meeting the 3rd Tuesday. The next meeting is September 16. Contact Betty Tyndall for more information.



2025 CHANCEL FLOWERS AND WORSHIP AID SPONSORS: The price for flowers is \$60. The price for worship aids is \$26. Look for the charts and the forms on the bulletin board in the Narthex. Please submit the forms to Carol!

PRESCHOOL REGISTRATION FORMS are available on both floors of the church building. If you have any questions, contact Amy Grube (Trinity Preschool Director) at preschool@trinityeastpete.org.



Lancaster CROP Hunger Walk registration is open

1:00 p.m. Registration 1:30 p.m. Program

2:00 p.m. Walk begins

(Location: Annunciation Greek Orthodox Church)

Please join us in the fight against hunger. The steps we take and funds we raise will make a

difference in the lives of others through the Lancaster Food Hub and Church World Service!

You can register to walk or support one of our walkers at: https://events.crophungerwalk.org/crophungerwalks/team/trinity-east-pete

The members of Trinity who have already registered to walk are: Mark & Chris Eyer, Karen Olley, Diane Rice, Hedwig Hunsicker, and the Rankin Family. We have already raised \$1,600!

There will be a pre-walk rally at the Church World Service office in Lancaster on Saturday, September 27 from 10-11:30 a.m. Speak with Pastor Rankin if you would like to attend!

Pastor Rankin is once again serving as the coordinator of the Lancaster CROP Walk. Thanks to Mark & Chris Eyer for serving as Trinity's coordinators again this year!

Annual Anniversary Worship Service at Old Zion German Reformed Church

TODAY, at 3:00 p.m., Old Zion German Reformed Church, Brickerville, will conduct its annual anniversary service. The service provides an opportunity to reflect on Old Zion's rich history and faith traditions. This year's theme will be "Brickerville 1813," and topics of interest to area residents and the German Reformed Church when the current church building was constructed and initially used in the Fall of 1813.

Rev. William LaSalle will portray the Rev. John Theobald Faber, Jr., who served as the minister at Old Zion from 1807 to 1819, and other local churches. Michael Weber will portray Deacon Hollinger, a lay leader at Old Zion. The worship service will include music and hymns from the period and will feature the choir from Bethany United Church of Christ, in Ephrata. For many years, the pastor at Old Zion, also served as pastor at Bethany in Ephrata, Jerusalem Church in Penryn, and other local churches. J.P. Welliver, Director of Music at St. Paul Lutheran Church, Penryn, will play the historical pump organ at Old Zion as part of the service. A free-will offering will be collected during the service.

Please join us for an afternoon of faith, music, history, and fellowship. Refreshments

will be served after the service. Old Zion German Reformed Church is located near Brickerville at 187 Reifsnyder Rd.

Please visit our website www.oldzionchurch.org

Directions

From Lititz – take Route 501 North of Lititz, turn right at the light at Brubaker Valley Road, and turn left on Reifsnyder Road

From Ephrata – take Route 322 west of Ephrata, turn left on Reifsnyder Road as you enter Brickerville



Old Zion German Reformed Church, Brickerville. Photo by Michael Weber.

300th Anniversary Celebration

of the First Communion of the German Reformed Church in America

October 12th
@ 1:30 pm
Falkner Swamp UCC
2077 Swamp Pike,
Gilbertsville

w/ Guest Preacher The Rev. Dr. Karen Georgia Thompson



October 15th
@ 6:30 pm
each PA UCC
Conference

will hold a communion service within its boundaries see website link below

For more information and registration links go to: psec.org and click on the 300th Anniversary Celebrations slider

Historic online presentations @ 7:00 pm via Zoom

September 25—United and Uniting: How the UCC Makes Room for German Reformed and Armenian Evangelical Christians w/ Rev. Dr. Heather Ohaneson
October 28—Gifts of the Reformed Church Going Forward w/ Dr. Randall Zachman

Coming this fall...

A commemorative book with essays tracing the development of the German Reformed Church from its European origins through present day.

FOR MORE INFORMATION GO TO HTTPS://PSEC.ORG/300TH-ANNIVERSARY-OF-THE-GERMAN-REFORMED-CHURCH-IN-THE-US/

NOTE---The October 12 service is a hybrid event. You do need to register at the website above to indicate if you will attend in-person or virtually (there is limited space in the church to attend in-person).

SPECIAL COMMEMORATIONS IN THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH

Sunday, September 14--Holy Cross Day

Helena, the mother of Constantine, made a pilgrimage to Israel to look for Christian holy sites. She found what she believed were the sites of the crucifixion and burial of Jesus, sites that modern archaeologists believe may be correct. Here Constantine built two churches. The celebration of Holy Cross Day originated with the dedication of the Church of the Resurrection in 335. Today the festival provides the church an opportunity to lift up the victory of the cross with a spirit of celebration that might be less suitable on Good Friday.

Tuesday, September 16--Cyprian, Bishop of Carthage, martyr, died around 258 Cyprian worked for the unity of the church and cared for his flock in North Africa during a time of great persecution. During Cyprian's time as bishop many people had denied the faith under duress. In contrast to some who held the belief that the church should not receive these people back, Cyprian believed they should be welcomed into full communion after a period of penance. He insisted on the need for compassion in order to preserve the unity of the church. His essay On the Unity of the Catholic Church stressed the role of bishops in guaranteeing the visible, concrete unity of the church. Cyprian was also concerned for the physical well-being of the people under his care. He organized a program of medical care for the sick during a severe epidemic in Carthage.

Wednesday, September 17--Hildegard, Abbess of Bingen, died in 1179

Hildegard lived virtually her entire life in convents yet was widely influential within the church. After an uneventful time as a nun, she was chosen as abbess of her community. She reformed her community as well as other convents. Around the same time, she began having visions and compiled them, as instructed, in a book she called Scivias. Hildegard's importance went beyond mysticism. She also advised and reproved kings and popes, wrote poems and hymns, and produced treatises in medicine, theology, and natural history. She was also a musician and an artist.

Thursday, September 18--Dag Hammarskjöld, renewer of society, died in 1961 Dag Hammarskjöld (HAH-mar-sheld) was a Swedish diplomat and humanitarian who served as secretary general of the United Nations. He was killed in a plane crash on this day in 1961 in what is now Zambia while he was on his way to negotiate a cease-fire between the United Nations and the Katanga forces. For years Hammarskjold had kept a private journal, and it was not until that journal was published as Markings that the depth of his Christian faith was known. The book revealed that his life was a combination of diplomatic service and personal spirituality, and of contemplation on the meaning of Christ in his life and action in the world.

FIRST READING: Exodus 32:7-14

The LORD said to Moses, "Go down at once! Your people, whom you brought up out of the land of Egypt, have acted perversely; 8 they have been quick to turn aside from the way that I commanded them; they have cast for themselves an image of a calf, and have worshiped it and sacrificed to it, and said, 'These are your gods, O Israel, who brought you up out of the land of Egypt!'" 9 The LORD said to Moses, "I have seen this people, how stiff-necked they are. 10 Now let me alone, so that my wrath may burn hot against them and I may consume them; and of you I will make a great nation."

¹¹But Moses implored the Lord his God, and said, "O LORD, why does your wrath burn hot against your people, whom you brought out of the land of Egypt with great power and with a mighty hand? 12 Why should the Egyptians say, 'It was with evil intent that he brought them out to kill them in the mountains, and to consume them from the face of the earth'? Turn from your fierce wrath; change your mind and do not bring disaster on your people. ¹³Remember Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, your servants, how you swore to them by your own self, saying to them, 'I will multiply your descendants like the stars of heaven, and all this land that I have promised I will give to your descendants, and they shall inherit it forever." 14And the LORD changed his mind about the disaster that he planned to bring on his people.

Psalm 51:1-10

SECOND READING: 1 Timothy 1:12-17

I am grateful to Christ Jesus our Lord, who has strengthened me, because he judged me faithful and appointed me to his service, ¹³ even though I was formerly a blasphemer, a persecutor, and a man of violence. But I received mercy

because I had acted ignorantly in unbelief, ¹⁴and the grace of our Lord overflowed for me with the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus. ¹⁵The saying is sure and worthy of full acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners—of whom I am the foremost. ¹⁶But for that very reason I received mercy, so that in me, as the foremost, Jesus Christ might display the utmost patience, making me an example to those who would come to believe in him for eternal life. ¹⁷To the King of the ages, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honor and glory forever and ever. Amen.

GOSPEL: Luke 15:1-10

Now all the tax collectors and sinners were coming near to listen to [Jesus]. ²And the Pharisees and the scribes were grumbling and saying, "This fellow welcomes sinners and eats with them."

³So 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? ⁵When he has found it, he lays it on his shoulders and rejoices. ⁶And when he comes home, he calls together his friends and neighbors, saying to them, 'Rejoice with me, for I have found my sheep that was lost.' ⁷Just 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? ⁹When 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.' ¹⁰Just so, I tell you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents."