



***St. John's United Church of Christ
Chambersburg, PA
October 25, 2026***

**REFORMATION SUNDAY
DAVID AND BATHSHEBA**

*Please stand in body or in spirit

GATHERING SONG

"This is the Day"

UNISON WELCOME

"No matter who you are or where you are on life's journey, you are welcome here"

CONNECTIONS

PASSING OF THE PEACE

"The peace of Christ be with you"

"And also with you"

CHIMING OF THE TRINITY

PRELUDE

***CALL TO WORSHIP**

posted on Lectionary Sermons

May your love and mercy be upon us today, O Lord.

Cleanse and refresh us from every transgression.

Let your joy and gladness dawn in our spirits,

and the recreating power of your Spirit make us new.

Have mercy upon us, O God,

and let your Spirit lead us in truth and righteousness. Amen.

***HYMN #418**

"A Mighty Fortress Is Our God"

CALL TO CONFESSION

Let us confess our sins before God and one another.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Gracious God, Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, you have promised to receive us when we come to you. We confess that we have sinned against you in thought, word and deed. We have disobeyed your law. We have not loved you or our neighbors as we should. Forgive us, O God, and grant that we may live and serve you in newness of life; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

KYRIE

Hymnal Companion C-4

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

from the UCC Book of Worship

God hears the confession of our hearts and lips. Through Jesus Christ we are forgiven all our sins, and by the Holy Spirit we are empowered for new life. **We believe the good news of Jesus Christ. Amen.**

***GLORY BE TO THE FATHER #704**

SCRIPTURE READING

Matthew 21:33-41

RESPONSIVE READING

Psalm 51:1-9 (The Inclusive Bible)

O God, have mercy on me! Because of your love and great compassion, wipe away my faults; wash me clean of my guilt; purify me of my sin.

For I am aware of my faults, and have my sin constantly in mind.

I sinned against you alone, and did what is evil in your sight. You are just to pass sentence on me, blameless when you give judgment.

I was born in sin, conceived in sin – yet you want truth to live in my inmost being. Teach me your wisdom!

Purify me with hyssop until I am clean; wash me under I am purer than new-fallen snow.

Install some joy and gladness into me; let the bones you have crushed rejoice again. Turn your face from my sins, and wipe out all my guilt.

ANTHEM

"Come, Thou Fount"

arr. Craig Courtney

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

Roxanne Davenport

Children's Corner will be offered following the Children's Message

SCRIPTURE READING

2 Samuel 11:1-5, 26-27; 12:1-15a

SERMON

Rev. Caroline E. Saxton

SENTENCES OF CELEBRATION: REFORMATION SUNDAY (insert and on the screen)

SHARING OF JOYS AND CONCERNS

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE AND THE LORD'S PRAYER (DEBTS)

INVITATION TO GIVING

OFFERTORY

*OFFERTORY RESPONSE #706

"Praise God from Whom All Blessings Flow"

*PRAYER OF DEDICATION

adapted from Touch Holiness: Resources for Worship

O God, through the offering of these gifts may we become a more open people... open-minded in hearing your Word and wisdom, open-hearted in healing a broken world, open-handed in heeding your call for charity, justice, and enacted love. With thanks for all good gifts, we present a portion of our substance and the whole of ourselves. Amen.

*HYMN #285

"God of Grace and God of Glory"

*COMMISSION & BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE (seated)

Join us for a time of fellowship following the service!

Birthdays this week: 10/26 Lisa Fair; 10/27 Nancy Rebok; 10/30 David Collier;
11/01 Marlin Douglas and Julia Marker.

Worship Participants:	
Pastor	Rev. Caroline E. Saxton
Organist	Barbara Motichka
Choir Director	Gary Crum
Deacon in Charge	Greg St. Clair
Lector	Barbara Wissinger
Children's Corner	Diana Kongkeattikul
Media Coordinators	Calvin Frantz and Neath Ham
Bulletin cover	Reformation Lutheran Church, Media, PA

The Flowers at the Foot of the Cross are given in memory of John Long, Guy and Jane Long and Mae Mosel by Christine Long.

The Red Rose on the Altar is placed in honor of the birth of Lucas James Webster born September 17, 2026 to Jaden Painter and Brandon Webster. Jaden is the goddaughter of Barb and Harold Wissinger.



St. John's Vision

We are called to love, to learn, to worship and to witness in Christ
as a congregation that welcomes everyone,
and seeks service that will advance God's realm on earth.

St. John's Mission

To grow in love of God and neighbor

Worship Resources:

Call to Worship posted on the archives section of the Lectionary Sermons website

UCC Book of Worship

The Inclusive Bible: The First Egalitarian Translation

Touch Holiness: Resources for Worship edited by Ruth C. Duck and Maren C. Tirabassi

A Mighty Fortress Is Our God

1. A might - y for - tress is our God, a bul-wark nev - er fail - ing;
 2. Did we in our own strength con-fide, our striv-ing would be los - ing,
 3. And though this world, with dev - ils filled, should threat-en to un - do us,
 4. That word a - bove all earth - ly powers, no thanks to them, a - bid - eth;

our help-er He, a - mid the flood of mor - tal ills pre - vail - ing.
 were not the right Man on our side, the Man of God's own choos - ing.
 we will not fear, for God has willed His truth to tri-umph through us.
 the Spir - it and the gifts are ours through Him who with us sid - eth.

For still our an - cient foe doth seek to work us woe; his craft and power are
 Dost ask who that may be? Christ Je - sus, it is He; Lord Sab - ba - oth, His
 The Prince of Dark-ness grim, we trem-ble not for him; his rage we can en -
 Let goods and kin - dred go, this mor-tal life al - so; the bod - y they may

great, and, armed with cru - el hate, on earth is not his e - qual.
 name, from age to age the same, and He must win the bat - tle.
 dure, for lo, his doom is sure; one lit - tle word shall fell him.
 kill: God's truth a - bid-eth still, His king-dom is for - ev - er.

WORDS: Martin Luther, ca. 1529; tr. Frederick H. Hedge, 1853 (Ps. 46)
 MUSIC: Martin Luther, ca. 1529

EIN' FESTE BURG
 8.7.8.7.6.6.6.7

Sentences of Celebration: Reformation Sunday

Throughout the human story the Spirit of God continues to speak,

in visions and voices, in images and ideas,

and in all languages and all times, to all people in all places,

inviting the people of God to discover new revelation.

To Abram it came as a sign in the stars and the sand that he has been chosen by God.

To Moses it came in the sense that earth was ablaze with God's glory.

To Rahab it came as an unexplainable feeling that her enemies should be befriended.

To Esther it came as courage to speak, to act, to imagine, to risk.

To Mary it was dramatic, angelic, unbelievable—an overpowering realization that neither her life nor the world—would ever be the same.

To the disciples and a blind man, and a bleeding woman

and a boy in seizures, and a woman caught in guilt

and a dying thief

and a Roman soldier

and to thousands of others

It was the personal touch, the eyewitness experience of the teacher-healer-storyteller-lover, the human being they called Jesus of Nazareth.

To three women at the empty tomb it was a gift in return for their faith, an ecstasy no one else remained to enjoy, a story no one else had faith, at first, to recount or believe.

And the words and the life and the power of this Jesus have tunneled through tomb and have flown through time and culture and continue to live for us today.

The Spirit continues to speak

in visions and voices, in images and ideas,

in all languages and times, to all people in all places.

To people like Irenaeus, Paula, Aquinas, and Theresa,

through prophets and popes and priests and peasants,

and through women whose names are forgotten but whose faith will endure etched in the hearts of those they have taught and nurtured, resounding in the songs they have sung and passed on, incarnate in ideas and questions they shared and inspired.

The Spirit has spoken through people of many faiths from the Buddha to Gandhi, whose lives and teachings seem to echo those of Christ.

Sentences of Celebration: Reformation Sunday

To Luther and Calvin and Wesley and Mary Dyer, Susan B. Anthony and Rosa Parks,
Spirit came as a reformer's fire, blazing in the heart.

And still the Spirit comes to us today

in new voices and new visions

**and in new understandings of the voices and visions passed on to us from
yesterday.**

It may burn in our hearts like fire or whisper in the silence as a still, small voice. It may
sing to us from the stars or sneak up on us from within, or embrace us in the touch of
another child of God.

But we are here today, because the Spirit speaks to us and we respond!

Written by John W. Howell, included in *Touch Holiness: Resources for Worship*, edited
Ruth C. Duck and Maren C. Tirabassi.

285 God of Grace and God of Glory

1. God of grace and God of glo - ry, on Thy peo - ple
 2. Lo! the hosts of e - vil round us scorn Thy Christ, as -
 3. Save us from weak res - ig - na - tion to the e - vils
 4. Set our feet on loft - y plac - es; gird our lives that

pour Thy power; crown Thine an - cient church - 's sto - ry,
 sail His ways! Fears and doubts too long have bound us,
 we de - plore; let the search for Thy sal - va - tion
 they may be ar - mored with all Christ - like grac - es

bring her bud to glo - rious flower. Grant us wis - dom, grant us cour - age,
 free our hearts to work and praise. Grant us wis - dom, grant us cour - age,
 be our glo - ry ev - er - more. Grant us wis - dom, grant us cour - age,
 in the fight to set all free. Grant us wis - dom, grant us cour - age,

for the fac - ing of this hour, for the fac - ing of this hour.
 for the liv - ing of these days, for the liv - ing of these days.
 serv - ing Thee whom we a - dore, serv - ing Thee whom we a - dore.
 that we fail not man nor Thee! That we fail not man nor Thee!

WORDS: Harry Emerson Fosdick, 1930

MUSIC: John Hughes, 1907

CWM RHONDDA

8.7.8.7.8.7

Lower key, No. 33

NEWS IN THE PEWS October 25, 2026

The Rev. Caroline E. Saxton, pastor@sjucc1811.org (641) 260-1868 (cell)
Tonya Schwartz, Office Administrator, manager@sjucc1811.org (717) 263-8593 (office)
Gary Crum, Music Director | Barbara Motichka, Organist
Roxanne Davenport, Director of Children & Youth
The Rev. Stephen W. Hoffman, Pastor Emeritus

THIS WEEK AT ST. JOHN'S

TODAY:

12:00pm Book Sale – Fellowship Hall and Room 116
8:00 pm No Bible Study we'll resume on 11/1 on 1 Peter Chapter 2

Monday, October 26

No Book Study – we'll resume on 11/2
7:00 pm Boy Scouts – Fellowship Hall

Tuesday, October 27

5:30pm Yoga – Room 202
6:00 pm Ladies Bible Study via Zoom
6:30 pm Cub Scouts – Fellowship Hall/then break into smaller groups

Wednesday, October 28

6:30 PM Council Meeting – Conference Room 111

Thursday, October 29

11:00 am NETwork Ministries Meal Prep - Kitchen
6:00 pm Bell Choir Practice – Room 117
7:15 pm Choir Practice – Room 103

Saturday, October 31

6:00 pm No Tricks Just Treats – Church Grounds

Sunday, November 1

8:45 am Godly Play Church School Class (Ages 3-K) – Room 119
8:45 am SPARK! Church School Class (Grades 1-5) – Room 115
8:45 am Scripture/Contemporary Issues (Grades 6-12) – Room 206
8:45 am Wired Word Adult Church School Class – Library Room 106
8:45 am Upper Room Adult Church School Class – Conference Room 111
10:00 am Sunday Worship – Sanctuary
8:00 pm Bible Study on 1 Peter Chapter 2 – Zoom via link from Friday's e-blast

Monday Afternoon Book Study We will begin reading Jeff Chu's book "Good Soil: The Education of an Accidental Farmhand" on Monday, November 2, 1:30 PM in Conference Room 111. All are invited to join us for this discussion!

No Tricks, Just Treats will be Saturday, October 31, 6-8 pm. Candy donations can be dropped off at the church office to help support this special event.

Sunday Night Bible Study Join Pastor Caroline on Sunday, November 1 at 8 pm via Zoom for a Bible study on the letter of 1 Peter Chapter 2 Zoom Meeting ID: 836 0593 5961 and Passcode 277938. A hyperlink is included in the weekly e-blast.

DIY Christmas Ornament Bar Craft Night Come have some early holiday cheer by painting your own Christmas ornament! Please sign up by October 25th. The signup sheet is located at the Welcome Center. Indicate which ornament(s) you wish to purchase. Ornaments are \$5 each. All Materials will be provided. A free ornament will be available to each person. Additional ornaments will be available, if you would like to purchase and donate to our Christmas Cookies and Crafts event on December 5.

Winter Quarter First Fruits in November, December and January will go to support the Salvation Army Angel Tree, Hoffman Homes Holiday Gift Program, and "Operation Christmas Joy," an opportunity to make the holiday season brighter for the residents of Laurel Lakes Rehabilitation and Wellness Center. More information about each of these organizations and opportunities is included in the November Spirit. Thank you for your generosity in serving our neighbors and demonstrating God's love in action.

Totenfest will be Sunday, November 22, the last Sunday of the church year. We will remember with love and thanksgiving those members of our faith community who have died during the past year. We also wish to include the people in your lives who have transitioned to be with God since our last observance of Totenfest on November 23, 2025. Please contact Pastor Caroline by Monday, November 16, with the name of the person you wish to be remembered, along with their date of death, so that we can honor them during the service and in the bulletin.

Mercersburg Association Fall Meeting will be held at St. Paul's UCC in Mechanicsburg on Sunday, November 15, 3-5 pm. This will be a hybrid meeting with a Zoom option to attend. Please contact Pastor Caroline if you would like to attend as one of two lay delegates.

Keystone Conference Fall Budget Meeting will be held on Zoom via Saturday, November 14. If you are interested in participating as a lay delegate, please contact Pastor Caroline.

November/December Upper Room devotionals are currently available at the Welcome Center. We suggest a donation of \$1 for small print/\$2 for large print copies. If you would like to have a copy mailed to you, please contact the church office.

Bible and a Beer is an opportunity to talk about our faith in public. Join us on the 3rd Monday of the month at the Trojan Diner at 6:30 pm. Our next gathering will be November 16.

St. John's Nursery School will be selling The Butcher Shoppe cookie dough and coffee again this year, as well as pizza and sub coupons, after worship on Sunday November 15. Delivery of coffee and cookie dough will be in early December.