

Rockville United Church
Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)/United Church of Christ
26th Sunday after Pentecost
November 22, 2026 ~ Hybrid Workshop

PREPARATION FOR WORSHIP

PRELUDE

CELEBRATING OUR LIFE TOGETHER

GATHERING MUSIC ***Njalo*** South African

***CALL TO WORSHIP**

Leader: Make a joyful noise to God, all the earth!
People: We come with gladness, bringing our songs and our whole selves.
Leader: Know that the Holy One is God, who made us and to whom we belong.
People: We are God's people, held in love and gathered in grace.
Leader: Enter God's gates with thanksgiving and God's courts with praise.
People: We come with grateful hearts, making room for one another.
Leader: For God is good; God's steadfast love endures forever.
People: God's faithfulness embraces every generation.
All: With every voice and every story, let us worship God!

HYMN** ***Rejoice, You Pure in Heart Chalice Hymnal No. 15

Rejoice, you pure in heart; lift praises to the sky;
your festive banner wave with joy, the cross of Christ raise high!

Rejoice (rejoice), rejoice (rejoice)
Rejoice, give thanks and sing

With voice as full and strong as ocean's surging praise,
send forth the hymns the saints have loved, the psalms of ancient days.

Rejoice (rejoice), rejoice (rejoice)
Rejoice, give thanks and sing

Praise God who rules all worlds; the risen Christ adore.
Praise God the Spirit, Holy Fire, one God forevermore!

Rejoice (rejoice), rejoice (rejoice)
Rejoice, give thanks and sing

PRAYER OF TRANSFORMATION (unison)
God of love, justice, and peace, we gather today to celebrate the reign of Christ, a reign not built on power or privilege, but on compassion, mercy, and grace. As we worship, open our hearts to the transforming power of your love. Remind us that your kindom welcomes all people, your table has room for everyone, and your justice calls us to care for one another. May our worship inspire us to live as Christ taught us: loving boldly, serving humbly, and working faithfully for a world where all may flourish. In the spirit of Christ, who reigns through love, we pray. Amen.

MOMENT OF SILENCE

CHORAL RESPONSE ***Amen for Choir*** Abrahams

SCRIPTURE **Ezekiel 34:11-16, 20-24** The Inclusive Bible
"For thus says the Sovereign God: I myself will search for my sheep; I will seek them out. As shepherds seek out their flocks when their flocks are scattered in every direction, so I will search for my sheep and rescue them, no matter where they scattered on that day of full clouds and thick darkness. I will bring them out from the countries and bring them into their own land. And I will feed them on the mountains of Israel, by its streams and wherever there is a settlement. I will feed them on good pasture land, and the mountain heights of Israel will be their grazing ground. I myself will tend my flock and have it lie down, thus says the Sovereign God. I will seek out the lost, I will return the strayed, I will bind up the injured, and I will strengthen the weak, and I will watch over the fat and the sleek. I will be a true shepherd to them.

Therefore, thus says the Sovereign God to you: I myself will judge between the fat sheep and the lean sheep, for you shove aside the weak with flank and shoulder; you butt them with your horns until they are scattered in every direction.

"I will save my flock and they will be ravaged no longer. I will judge between one sheep and another. I will set up over them one shepherd to care for them: my servant David. He will care for them and be their shepherd. And I, the Sovereign God, will be their God, and my servant David will be their leader. I, the Sovereign God, have spoken.

One: Listen to what the Spirit is teaching.
All: Thanks be to God.

WORD FOR CHILDREN **What If...** Pastor Guy Johnson
By: Regina J. Williams
Illustrastions by: Doug Keith

Following the "Word for Children," we invite children (ages 3 years—5th grade) to attend a Sunday School class, dismissing to the classroom on the lower level through the front side door of the sanctuary. Parents/guardians are welcome to accompany your child(ren) if you choose; please pickup children in their classroom following the worship service. Visitors are welcome. Nursery care for infants through age 3 is available in the nursery on the lower level.
Our nursery caregiver is Caitlin Vredenburg. Our nursery helper is Mariana Nolan.

ANTHEM ***We Gather Together*** Kremser/Baker/Levy

SCRIPTURE **Matthew 25:31-46** The Inclusive Bible
"The ruler will say to those on the right, 'Come, you blessed of my Abba God! Inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the creation of the world! For I was hungry and you fed me; I was thirsty and you gave me drink. I was a stranger and you welcomed me; naked and you clothed me. I was ill and you comforted me; in prison and you came to visit me.'

"Then these just will ask, 'When did we see you hungry and feed you, or see you thirsty and give you drink? When did we see you as a stranger and invite you in, or clothe you in your nakedness? When did we see you ill or in prison and come to visit you?'

"The ruler will answer them, 'The truth is, every time you did this for the least of my sisters or brothers, you did it for me.'

"Then the ruler will say to those on the left, 'Out of my sight, you accursed ones! Into that everlasting fire prepared for the Devil and the fallen angels! I was hungry and you gave me no food; I was thirsty and you gave me nothing to drink. I was a stranger and you gave me no welcome; naked and you gave me no clothing. I was ill and in prison and you did not come to visit me.'

"Then they in turn will ask, 'When did we see you hungry or thirsty, or homeless or naked, or ill or in prison, and not take care of you?'

"The answer will come, 'The truth is, as often as you neglected to do this to one of the least of these, you neglected to do it to me.'

"They will go off to eternal punishment, and the just will go off to eternal life."

One: This is the word of God for the people of God.
All: Thanks be to God.

CHORAL PRAYER OF ILLUMINATION ***Sending You Light*** Demore

SERMON **What If?** Rev. Guy Johnson

HYMN** ***Jesus Shall Reign Where'er the Sun Chalice Hymnal No. 95

Jesus shall reign where'er the sun
does its successive journeys run;
his love shall spread from shore to shore
till moons shall wax and wane no more.

People and realms of every tongue
dwell on his love with sweetest song;
and infant voices shall proclaim
their early blessings on his name.

Let every creature rise with song;
honor and praise to Christ belong;
angels descend with songs again,
and earth repeat the loud amen!

MORNING PRAYER

PRAYERS OF THE CONGREGATION
Refrain: One: Holy One, in your mercy,
All: ***Receive our prayers.***

THE PRAYER THAT JESUS TEACHES
Our God, who dwells among us and throughout creation,
Holy is your name.
May your kindom come,
May your will be done,
On earth as it is in heaven.
Give us today the bread we need,
And teach us to share generously with others.
Forgive us our sins, As we forgive those who have sinned against us.
Lead us away from temptation,
And deliver us from all that separates us from your love.
May the reign of Christ be made known among us,
Not through power or domination,
But through justice, compassion, mercy, and peace.
For yours is the kingdom, And the power of love,
And the glory of creation,
Now and forever.
Amen.

OFFERING OUR GIFTS

OFFERTORY
***DOXOLOGY**
Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;
Praise God, all creatures here below
Praise God above, ye heavenly host;
Creator, Christ, and Holy Ghost. Amen.

PRAYER OF DEDICATION (unison)
God of grace, love, and justice, as we come to the close of another liturgical year, we give thanks for your presence throughout our journey of faith. Through seasons of hope and uncertainty, celebration and sorrow, you have walked beside us, calling us to live more fully into your love. On this Reign of Christ Sunday, remind us that Christ's reign is not established through wealth, power, or domination, but through compassion, humility, justice, and peace. As we prepare to enter a new season of Advent, renew our commitment to building a world where all are welcomed, every person is valued, and love triumphs over fear. Send us forth with grateful hearts, courageous spirits, and willing hands, that we may be living witnesses to your kindom here on earth. In the name and spirit of Jesus the Christ, we pray. Amen.

HYMN** ***Fairest Lord Jesus Chalice Hymnal No. 97

Fairest Lord Jesus, ruler of all nature,
O thou of God to earth come down;
thee will I cherish, thee will I honor,
thou, my soul's glory, joy, and crown.

Fair are the meadows, fairer still the woodlands,
robed in the blooming garb of spring:
Jesus is fairer, Jesus is purer,
who makes the woeful heart to sing.

Fair is the sunshine, fairer still the moonlight,
and all the twinkling, starry hosts:
Jesus shines brighter, Jesus shines purer,
than all the angels heaven can boast.

***BENEDICTION**

BENEDICTION RESPONSE

POSTLUDE

Thanks to our worship helpers today!
Liturgist: Suzanne Junod
Digital Host: Lori Merrill
Welcome Table: Tida Strey

Welcome to Rockville United Church!

We are glad you have joined us for worship this morning. We trust that you will find RUCto be a welcoming and engaging place to explore the life of faith within a communitythat honors each person's spiritual journey. We encourage you to ask questions, visit ourwebsite, and share your contact information at the welcome table near the front doors. I hope to greet you personally following worship, and invite you to contact me.

Blessings,
Rev. Jennifer Knutsen
jennifer@rockvilleunitedchurch.org

Our complimentary Wi-Fi network is **RUC Mesh**. The password is **heavenly**.

Please Scan Me To Give To RUC.

RUC Staff

Rev. Jennifer R. Knutsen, Senior Pastor
Rev. Guy S. Johnson, Associate Pastor
Jim Levy, Director of Music
Dalia Marciano, Administrative Coordinator
Cha'Mia Holloman, Communications Coordinator
Caitlin Vrendenburg, Nursery Coordinator
Juan Mendez, Sexton

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(Office Hours: Wed, Fri—10am to 3pm or by appointment)

Ecumenical † Just Peace † Open & Affirming † More Light