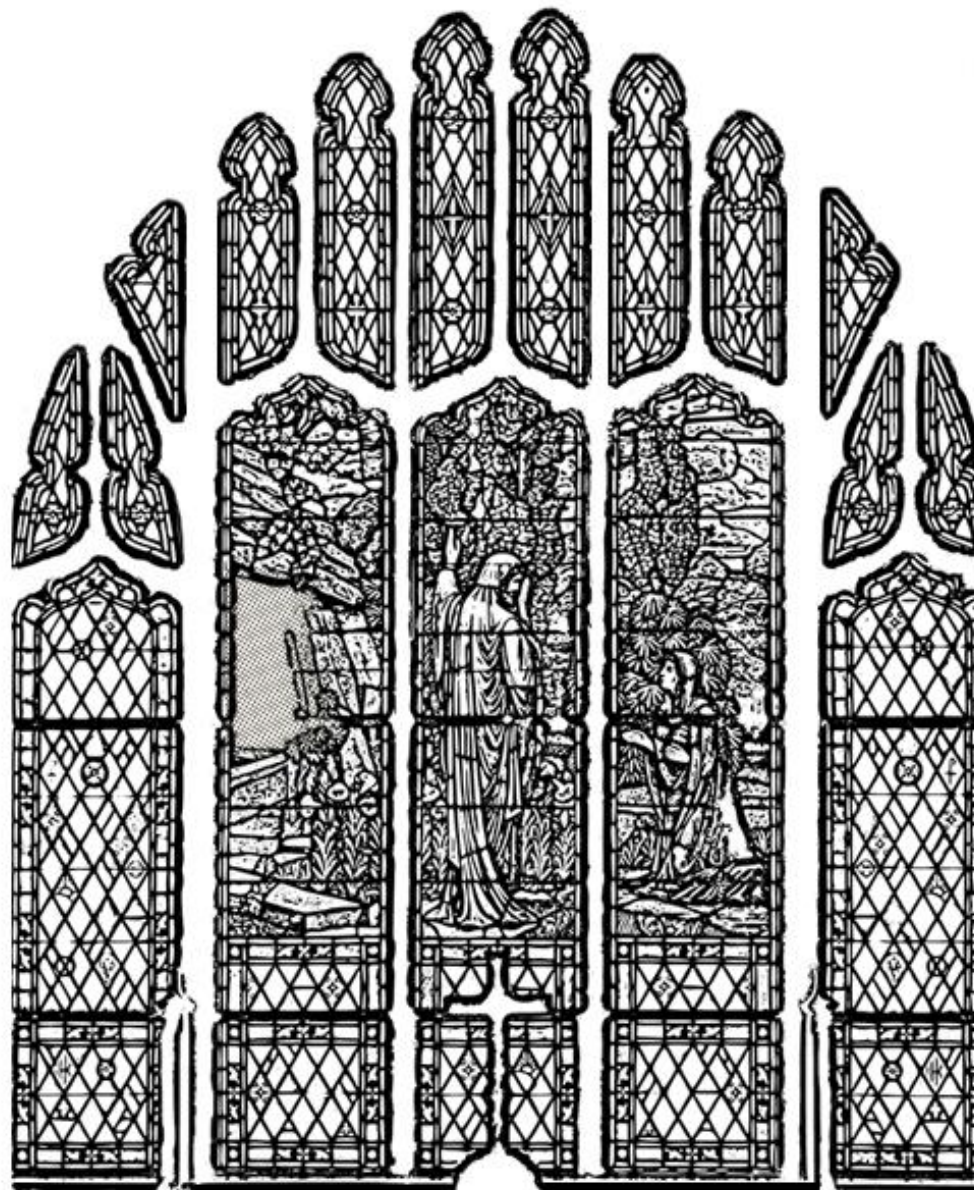


# MT. LEBANON UNITED METHODIST CHURCH



Sunday, February 16, 2025, 8:30AM & 10:45AM

The Sixth Sunday after Epiphany

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THE REV'D THOMAS Q. STRANDBURG, PASTOR ... [tstrandburg@mlumc.org](mailto:tstrandburg@mlumc.org)



**Sunday, February 16, 2025 – The Sixth Sunday after Epiphany**

*When Jesus says, “Blessed are the poor ... the hungry ... and those who weep,” he’s telling us God will bless us if we have faith. God will bless us through our time of need, and may even bless us with what we most desire. But it’s not the final balance sheet of blessings that’s important. It’s the blessing itself that counts.*

*\*Indicates an invitation to stand in spirit or posture, as able.*

**The Prelude**

*Prelude on DEEP RIVER*

Adolphus Hailstork (b.1941)

*As the prelude begins, all are humbly asked to conclude any conversation and make use of this moment of quietude to prepare your hearts and minds for the worship of Almighty God.*

**The Introit (10:45)**

*Deep River*

Harry T. Burleigh (1866-1949)

Ms. Timothi Williams, soloist

*Deep river, my home is over Jordan, Deep river, Lord, I want to cross over in to campground.  
Oh don't you want to go to that gospel feast, that promis'd land where all is peace?  
Oh deep river, Lord, I want to cross over in to camp ground.*

*All rise, in body or spirit, at the sound of the chimes.*

**\*Opening Hymn**

**“Nothing between”**

**UMH 373**

**\*The Greeting**

∇. The Lord be with you.

℞. And also with you.

**\*Call to Worship**

∇ Now is the moment of grace

℞ **This is the hour of blessing.**

∇ Today is the day of salvation.

℞ **Here is the path to new life.**

∇ Already joy is abounding,

℞ **And love is flowing.**

∇ For this is the day God is making.

℞ **Let us rejoice and sing.**

## **\*Opening Prayer**

*Said by all, with one voice.*

**Compassionate God,**

**we recognize that our world is a broken place,  
hurt by poverty, famine, and disease.**

**We admit that sometimes we make the world a broken place,  
tolerating prejudice, conflict, and self-interest.**

**We confess that our hearts also suffer with anger, resentment, and jealousy.**

**Renew us in Your love, O God,**

**and heal us with the comfort of Your abundant love.**

**Awaken us to the role we can play in healing Your creation.**

**Strengthen us through the power of the Holy Spirit  
to hear Your word and move forward in faith.**

**Amen.**

## **\*Silent Prayer**

**\*Response**

**“Balm in Gilead”**

**UMH 375**

## **A Message for Young Disciples (10:45 am)**

*As the young disciples gather at the front of the church, all sing:*

**This, this is where children belong, welcomed as part of the worshipping throng.  
Water, God's word, bread and cup, prayer and song: This is where children belong.**

*The young disciples (3 yr. - 3<sup>rd</sup> grade) then depart the sanctuary for Kids Praise.*

*Teachers will lead them back to the sanctuary prior to the conclusion of the service.*

## **The First Lesson**

## **A Reading from the book of the Prophet Jeremiah**

**JER. 17:5-10**

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. 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.

Blessed are those who trust in the Lord, whose trust is the Lord. 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.

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

Lector: Hear what the Spirit is saying to God's people.

People: Thanks be to God.

**\*Hymn**

**"I shall not be moved"**

*Refrain*

I shall not be, I shall not be moved. I shall not be, I shall not be moved;

like a tree plant-ed by the wa - ter, I shall not be moved. be moved.

1 When my cross is heav - y, I shall not be moved,  
 2 The church of God is march - ing, I shall not be moved, the  
 3 Je - sus is our cap - tain, I shall not be moved,  
 4 Fight - ing sin and Sa - tan, I shall not be moved,

when my cross is heav - y, I shall not be moved;  
 church of God is march - ing, I shall not be moved;  
 Je - sus is our cap - tain, I shall not be moved;  
 fight - ing sin and Sa - tan, I shall not be moved;

*Refrain*

like a tree plant-ed by the wa - ter, I shall not be moved. be moved.

Jesus 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. They had come to hear him and to be healed of their diseases, and those who were troubled with unclean spirits were cured. And everyone in the crowd was trying to touch him, for power came out from him and healed all of them.

Then he looked up at his disciples and said:

“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.

“Blessed are you when people hate you and when they exclude you, revile you, and defame you on account of the Son of Man. 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.

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

“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.

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

Lector: This is the word of the Lord.

**People: Thanks be to God.**

### **The Pastoral Prayer & The Lord's Prayer**

*Said by all, with one voice.*

**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 trespasses,  
as we forgive those who trespass against us.  
And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil,  
for thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory forever.  
Amen.**

## **\*The Affirmation of Faith**

UMH 882

*All are invited to stand, in spirit or in posture, and to face the altar as the affirmation of faith is recited.*

Pastor: Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is the one true church, apostolic and universal, whose holy faith let us now declare:

**All: I believe in God, the Father Almighty,  
creator of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord,  
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,  
born of the Virgin Mary,  
suffered under Pontius Pilate,  
was crucified, died, and was buried;  
he descended to the dead.  
On the third day he rose again;  
he ascended into heaven,  
is seated at the right hand of the Father,  
and will come again to judge the living and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit,  
the holy catholic church,  
the communion of saints,  
the forgiveness of sins,  
the resurrection of the body,  
and the life everlasting.  
Amen.**

## **\*The Sign of Peace**

☩. The peace of Christ be with you.

✠. **And also with you.**

*The people are now invited to share signs of peace with their fellow members of Christ's body.  
Extended conversation would ideally and most appropriately be reserved until the end of the service.*

## **Announcements**

### *At the Offertory*

**The Offertory Hymn (8:30 am)**

**"Sweet, sweet spirit"**

**UMH 334**

**The Anthem (10:45 am)**

*Poor Man Lazarus* trad. spiritual, arr. Jester Hairston

**\*The Doxology & Prayer of Dedication**

UMH 94

**\*The Sending Hymn**

**"I will trust in the Lord"**

UMH 464

**\*The Dismissal**

☩. Let us bless the Lord.

℞. Thanks be to God.

**\*The Benediction & Recessional**

*The people remain in place until the altar party has retired.*

**The Postlude**

*Toccata on GREAT DAY*

A. Hailstork

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## *Prayer Concerns*

**George Gittens**, *recovering from recent surgery.*

**Shaun Eric Davis**, *struggling with constant pain from Rheumatoid arthritis.*

**Nadine Zambozi**, *recovering from impacts of hurricanes in Punta Gorda, FL.*

**Susan Zirpoli**, *currently hospitalized at UPMC Shadyside.*

*The son of* **Rich Dalzotto**, *who no longer needs a kidney. He received his second kidney transplant and is in recovery.*

**Werner Philipp**, *newly elected bishop of our partners in the German UMC.*

*Family and loved ones of* **Charlotte Sonne**, *retired soprano soloist, who passed away last week.*

*This week, we remember and pray for the church in* **Austria, Liechtenstein, and Switzerland**  
*(Prayer Cycle of the World Council of Churches).*

**Captain Shaun Hay, LTC Azizi Wesmiller, LTC Matthew Wesmiller, and  
Spc Russell Dale**, *serving in the Army.*

**Corporal Wyatt Hoover and LTC Zachary Allen Finch**, *serving in the Marines.*

*Please remember the special concerns of those in our community and throughout our world  
in your personal prayer life throughout the week.*

*If you wish to solicit prayers from the congregation for any matter (health, travel, special  
concerns, etc.), please contact Cheryl in the church office to have your concern added to the  
prayer list.*

## *A Music Note*

*As we proceed through Black History Month, the music selections this week continue to draw upon the rich contributions of African-American persons to the body of the church's song. The congregational hymns are largely drawn from the spiritual tradition, except the opening hymn, which was penned by prolific 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> hymnwriter Charles A. Tindley. The prelude and postlude are also settings of spirituals, composed by award-winning contemporary composer Adolphus C. Hailstork III, whose career included posts at Youngstown State University and Norfolk State University. The introit is the famous setting of the spiritual "Deep River," by Harry T. Burleigh, which notably was the first arrangement of a spiritual to be sung at Carnegie Hall, in 1917.*

*The anthem, a setting of a spiritual which tells the gospel story of Lazarus and the Rich man from Luke 16; though unnamed in the biblical rendition, this text refers to the rich man as "Dives"/"Divies", the name tradition has ascribed to him in the English-speaking church. The setting of this spiritual is by Jester Hairston, a noted 20<sup>th</sup> century composer, arranger, and conductor. Born in North Carolina, Hairston's family moved to Homestead, PA while he was young, and he lived in Western Pennsylvania until going away to college. In addition to his musical activities, Hairston was also a radio and television, appearing on diverse programs including the widely-viewed 1990s sitcom "Family Matters".*

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### *Leaders in Worship this Morning*

ABBY PURTILL AND EMMA PURTILL, ACOLYTES

ROB SPICHER, CROSS BEARER

JOETA D'ESTE (8:30AM) AND ROB SPICHER (10:45AM), LECTORS

THE CHOIR OF THE MT. LEBANON UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

MR. BRENTON RAHMAN, CHORAL SCHOLAR

MS. TIMOTHY WILLIAMS, STAFF MEZZO-SOPRANO

MR. KIRBY DILWORTH, STAFF TENOR

MR. A. MITCHELL V. STECKER, DIRECTOR OF MUSIC & LITURGY

THE REV'D THOMAS Q. STRANDBURG, SENIOR PASTOR

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*The altar flowers this morning given by*

**William Timmons**

*in loving memory of his parents,*

**Mr. & Mrs. Wilbert G. Timmons.**

*For information about furnishing altar flowers for future services, contact Lizzie Diller at 412-860-3614. The cost is \$45 per arrangement.*