

First United Methodist Church
of Shelton, Connecticut
Open hearts. Open minds. Open doors.



February 23, 2025
7th Sunday after the Epiphany

Revised Common Lectionary Texts – Epiphany Lectionary:

Genesis 45:3-11, 15 | Psalm 37:1-11, 39-40

1 Corinthians 15:35-38, 42-50 | Luke 6:27-38

Prelude: "I Will Rise"

Chris Tomlin

Welcome & Announcements

Centering Prayer

***Call to Worship**

UMC Discipleship Ministries

Leader: Jesus teaches us, "Do to others as you would have them do to you." But who are the others?

People: Our enemies and friends, family and strangers.

L: Jesus teaches us, "Be merciful as your Father is merciful." But what is mercy?

P: To act with compassion, to help without expecting anything in return.

L: Jesus teaches us, "Forgive, and you will be forgiven." But how do we forgive?

P: By recognizing enemies, friends, family, strangers, and ourselves as people in need of compassion.

L: Let us worship God, who loves us and empowers us to love one another with mercy and compassion.

P: Come, let us worship! Thanks be to God! Amen!

***Hymn:** "Alleluia, Alleluia"

UMH 162

Invitation to Confession

Prayer of Confession

T. Yonkman | UMC DM (adapted)

God, we are so conditioned to respond in kind. We are so worried that when the reckoning comes, we will find ourselves cheated. And not without reason. The powerful take and take and lie and lie and oppress and oppress, seemingly without consequence.

Teach us to love with skill. Teach us to love with commitment. Teach us to love with abandon, trusting that when we step into the ocean of your abundant love, we will receive the blessings of your abundant life. Amen.

Moment of Silent Confessional Prayer & Words of Assurance

Epistle Reading: 1 Corinthians 15:35-38, 42-50

This is the Word of God for the people of God.

Thanks be to God.

Children's Message: "Golden Around the Globe"

Children's Hymn: "His Name is Wonderful"

UMH 174

***Gospel Reading:** Luke 6: 27-38

This is the Word of God for the people of God.

Thanks be to God.

Sermon: "Start Now"

Anthem: "Redemption"

J. Tinley

Prayers of the People/Pastoral Prayer

The Lord's Prayer

UMH 895

Passing of the Peace

Invitation To Offer Our Gifts

Offertory: "In the Sweet By and By"

Webster

***Presenting Our Gifts:** "Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow." UMH 95
**Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;
Praise God, all creatures here below;
Praise God above, ye heavenly host;
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.**

***Prayer of Dedication** UMC Discipleship Ministries (adapted)
Merciful God, who calls us to love beyond measure, we offer these gifts as a sign of our commitment to your teachings. Help us love our enemies, do good to those who hate us, and bless those who curse us. May our lives be changed through Jesus Christ so we can offer a vision that transforms lives of others through your grace. May our offerings bring healing and hope to our community and to your created world. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.

***Sending Hymn:** "Shine, Jesus, Shine" TFWS 2173

Benediction

Postlude: "Swing Low Sweet Chariot" Spiritual

*Please stand in body or spirit as you are able.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

PLEASE PRAY FOR JOYCE REHLING AND FAMILY

We are saddened to share the news of the passing of Joyce Rehling's sister, Jane, who lived in California. Joyce and Jane were very close. Please pray for Joyce and her family as they mourn. Of course, cards and calls are welcome as we surround Joyce with love and compassion.

WOULD YOU LIKE TO JOIN OUR FIRST UMC OF SHELTON?

Whether moving from another Christian denomination, transferring from another UMC, or joining a church for the first time, you are welcome! Please see Pastor Bill to discuss your interest in joining our congregation through profession of faith.

PLEDGES & OFFERINGS

The last two Sundays have given us difficult weather and low attendance. As we return to worship, please remember your financial commitment to First UMC of Shelton. While we are not in the building, the expenses still need to be met, and we count on all our people to support our work.

For those who have been consistently giving online, thank you! The weather does not slow down this method. If you would like to learn more about online giving, please contact the office.

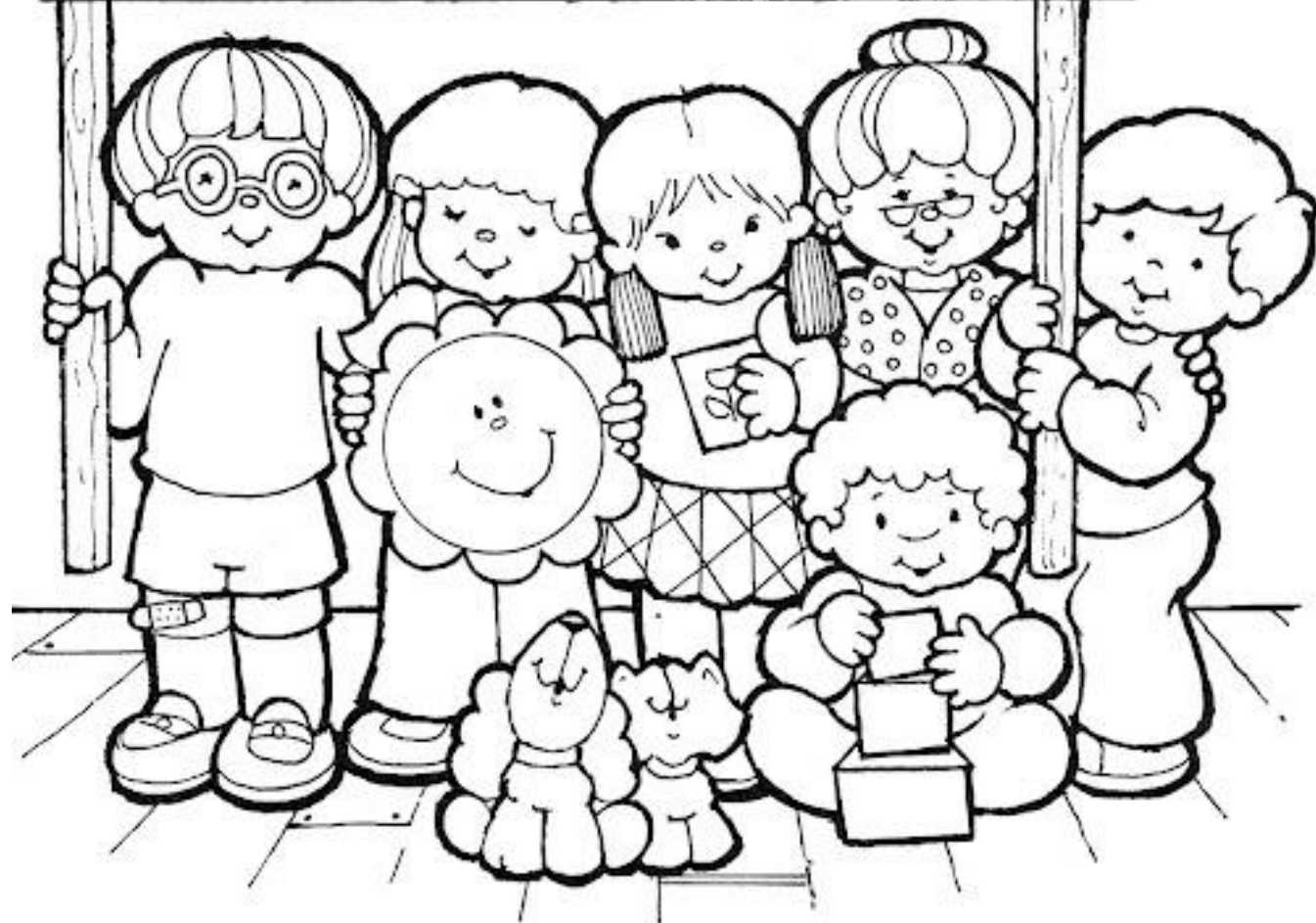
Thanks to all for your commitment to our church and the community we serve as the body of Christ. **Stronger Hands. Faster Feet.**

LITURGISTS NEEDED

We need Liturgists for Sunday, March 2 and March 9. If you can help out, please call the office or let Pastor Bill know. Thank you.

THE GOLDEN RULE

Do for others what
you want them to
do for you!



WEEKLY EMAIL NEWSLETTER

An email newsletter is sent out each Wednesday. Please have any items for submission to the church office by Wednesday at 9 am.

TO REACH PASTOR BILL

Please call or text 475-282-2800. He may also be reached via email: pastor@umcshelton.org. His office hours at the church office are Mondays and Fridays from 9:00 am to 2 pm (but may vary from week to week).

SERVING TODAY:

Bill Florin, Pastor
Ron Giannattasio, Organist
Daniella Natividad, Liturgist
Sal Iorfino, Video & Sound Tech

CHURCH LEADERSHIP:

Bill Florin, Pastor
Ron Giannattasio, Organist

Bob Singletary, Chair. of Church Council
Bob Wood, Chair. of the Board of Trustees
Jorge Varas Chair. of Staff Parish Relations Committee

WELCOME

We welcome you to our worship and our church community. We are so glad you are here. We invite you to participate in the service as much as you feel comfortable and to sit out parts of the service you might not yet feel comfortable with. Wherever you are in your journey of faith, you are welcome here. As our "Welcoming Statement" says, "We welcome **all** to full inclusion in the life and ministry of our church."

(see below for complete "Welcome" and "Mission" statements)

**SUNDAY WORSHIP // 10:00 also live-streamed & recorded
Fellowship 11:00 am**

Welcoming Church Statement

A welcoming family of God committed to becoming more and more like Jesus Christ.

We affirm and respect each individual as a child of God. We celebrate the uniqueness of each person and welcome people of every age, ethnicity, and race, sexual orientation and gender identity, marital status, socio-economic situation, and physical/mental ability.

Empowered by the Holy Spirit, we strive to create a community of faith that reflects Christ's message of love and justice. We invite all to full inclusion in the life and ministry of our church in Christ.

FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH OF SHELTON
188 ROCKY REST RD. // SHELTON, CT 06484
PHONE: (203)929-3537 **WEB:** UMCHELTON.ORG

Alleluia, Alleluia UMH 162

Refrain:

Alleluia, alleluia! Give thanks to the risen Lord,
Alleluia, alleluia! Give praise to His name.

Jesus is Lord of all the earth.
He is the King of creation.

Spread the good news o'er all the earth:
Jesus has died and has risen.

We have been crucified with Christ.
Now we shall live forever.

Come, let us praise the living God,
joyfully sing to our Savior.

His Name is Wonderful UMH 174

His name is wonderful, his name is wonderful,
his name is wonderful, Jesus my Lord.

He is the mighty King, Master of everything;
his name is wonderful, Jesus my Lord.

He's the great Shepherd, the Rock of all ages,
almighty God is he;

bow down before him, love and adore him,
his name is wonderful; Jesus my Lord.

Shine, Jesus Shine TFWS 2173

Refrain:

Shine, Jesus, shine, fill this land with the Father's glory,
blaze, Spirit, blaze, set our hearts on fire;
flow, river, flow, flood the nations with grace and mercy,
send forth your word, Lord, and let there be light.

Lord, the light of your love is shining
in the midst of the darkness shining;
Jesus, Light of the World, shine upon us,
set us free by the truth you now bring us.
Shine on me, shine on me

Lord, I come to Your awesome presence
from the shadows into your radiance;
by the blood, I may enter your brightness,
search me, try me, consume all my darkness.
Shine on me, shine on me.

As we gaze on your kingly brightness,
so our faces display your likeness;
ever changing from glory to glory,
mirrored here may our lives tell Your story.
Shine on me, shine on me.