



BREATHING UNDER WATER

A SPIRITUAL PATH ROOTED IN 12 STEPS

Living the story forward



FAITH UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
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VISITORS

If you are new to Faith United Methodist Church, welcome! We encourage you to complete a guest card available from a welcome host. Please drop it in the offering chest or hand it to one of the welcome hosts following the worship service.

ACCOMMODATIONS

Faith offers a variety of accessibility resources for your use, including large-print hymnals and Bibles, magnifiers, printed versions of the sermon, FM wireless assistive-listening devices, and noise-cancelling headphones. These items are available on the white bookshelf at the Sanctuary entrance. Please feel free to use whatever you need and return the items after the service. If you have any questions, speak with the welcome hosts at the Sanctuary entrance. You may also contact Jennifer Young, Faith's Accessibility Coordinator, at young.jennifer@gmail.com to request additional accommodations.

Sunday, September 6, 2026 | 10:00 a.m. Fifteenth Sunday after Pentecost

WE GATHER

Centering

Prelude: *Invitation to Quiet No. 1*

Dr. Michael Wu, organ

Clarence Mader, 1904-1971; (published posthumously in 1973)

Welcome

Ryan Miller

Call to Worship

Frank Johnson, Liturgist

One voice: We have been met by grace—

Many voices: and now we are sent to share it.

One voice: What has been mended in us—

Many voices: becomes healing for the world.

All: God, meet us where we are, and lead us toward wholeness.

One voice: Sending God,
breathe your Spirit into us again.
Make our lives signs of hope, mercy, and healing.
Send us into the world
as people shaped by grace. Amen.

WORD

Special Music: *Be Thou My Vision* (2003) Dr. Michael Wu, organ
In Jazz Inspirations for Organ 1: for Church Services and Concerts
edited by Uwe Karsten Groß, 1930-2015, with Gunther Martin Göttsche, b. 1953

Scripture Reading: Psalm 78:1-7 Frank Johnson
John 4:5-42 (Common English Bible)

The first scripture can be found in the Old Testament on
page #?? of the pew Bible.

Children's Message Rev. Dr. Laura Norvell

Message Rev. Dr. Laura Norvell

*Hymn #389: *Freely, Freely* Congregation; Dr. Michael Wu, organ

WONDER

Invitation to Reflection and Holy Communion
Rev. Dr. Laura Norvell; Stewards

Invitation and Confession
Please refer to the projection screen for the liturgy.

Great Thanksgiving
Please refer to the projection screen for the liturgy.

The Lord's Prayer

**All: 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,
and the power,
and the glory, forever. Amen.**

Breaking the Bread and Invitation

Please come forward by the center aisle at the direction of the ushers. You will approach the servers on the side you were seated. From them you will receive a piece of bread, dip it into the cup and eat it immediately. You may then return to your seat by the side aisle.

If you prefer not to receive by dipping bread in a common cup, OR if you need gluten free elements, there are gluten free self-contained communion elements in a basket in the center between the two server teams. Please take one and return to your seat by the side aisle.

If you are unable to come forward for Communion, please let an usher know and Communion will be brought to you.

Prayer After Receiving Rev. Dr. Laura Norvell; Congregation

One voice: Inhale: God is with me.

Many voices: God is with me.

One voice: Exhale: I am not alone.

Many voices: I am not alone.

One voice: Again, inhale: God is with me.

Many voices: God is with me.

One voice: Exhale: I am not alone.

Many voices: I am not alone.

Candle Ritual

Rev. Dr. Laura Norvell; Congregation

**Many voices: God, meet us where we are,
and lead us toward wholeness.**

Prayer

Rev. Dr. Laura Norvell; Congregation

Many voices: God of mercy and mission,

**You have fed us at your table
and breathed your Spirit into us.**

Send us now as witnesses to your grace.

**Let our lives tell of your mercy.
Let our repair become part of your healing.
Let our love become visible in the world.**

**God, meet us where we are,
and lead us toward wholeness.
Amen.**

Invitation to Offering

Rev. Dr. Laura Norvell

Offertory Prayer

Frank Johnson

WHAT NOW?

Pastoral Prayer

Rev. Dr. Laura Norvell

**Hymn #77: How Great Thou Art*

Congregation; Dr. Michael Wu, organ

Sending Forth

Rev. Dr. Laura Norvell

Postlude: *Litanies* (1939)

Dr. Michael Wu, organ
Jehan Alain, 1911-1940



ATTENDANCE

Please take a moment to scan the QR code—whether you are a guest or a member—so we know that you joined us today!



Everyone Sign In!

OFFERING

We are not passing an offering plate currently. An offering box has been placed on the welcome table in the Narthex. You may also scan the QR code to the right to give online.



Give today.

BACK TO BASICS...BACK TO SUNDAY SCHOOL

Sunday, September 13

Sunday School is one of those “church traditions” that carries a holy purpose: helping children know they are seen, known, and loved in the body of Christ. On Sundays, all children and youth are welcome in worship at 10 a.m. in the sanctuary, either seated with their family or at the activity table up front.



Nursery and Sunday School classes are taught by two screened, trained, and caring adults. All children and youth (except those in the nursery) will be invited to leave worship to go to their Sunday School classrooms.

K-2nd: Rm 203; 3rd-5th: Rm 200; 6th-8th: Rm 206; 9th-12th: Rm 205

YOUTH MINISTRY KICK-OFF DINNER

Sunday, September 13 at 5:00 p.m.

Youth (grades 6-12) and their families are invited to a kick-off potluck dinner at Cabin John park, pavilion B. Contact Suzanne Smedberg, Youth Ministry Coordinator at ssmedberg@FaithWorksHere.com for more details.

Scan the QR code to access the Youth ministry full year schedule with dates, times, locations and topics.



BACK TO BASICS: CHOOSE YOUR MINISTRY PATH

Sunday, September 13 following worship

We're kicking off the fall season with a Ministry Fair & Ice Cream Social. Just as going back to school in the fall means deciding what classes to take, our Ministry Fair gives you a chance to prayerfully consider where you feel called to use your gifts and talents.



From acolytes to the altar guild, from greeters to bellringers, ministry team leaders will be there to answer your questions. Whether your call is learning to be a liturgist or working in the community garden, helping in the nursery or picking up audio-visual skills for the online service, let's joyfully greet the fall season.

SPIRITUAL GIFTS CHECK UP

Every person is uniquely equipped with different gifts and talents that together make Christian community the vibrant and thriving place it's meant to be. Taking time to reflect on our gifts and assess what they are, if they've changed as we've entered new seasons of life, and how we are leaning into them and developing them is vital for leaning into the fullness of who God is calling us to become.

There's something special that happens when we serve out of our giftings and sense of calling rather than sense of duty or volunteering. **So we invite you to scan the QR code to access a short (10min) survey to help you assess your spiritual gifts.** We hope you will join us at Fellowship Hour Sunday, September 13th to engage with and ask questions of current ministry leads and explore the power of using your gifts to the flourishing of the church community.



OUR COLORFUL ESOL BANNER SAYS IT ALL - ENGLISH CLASSES BEGIN SOON!

Tuesday, September 15

Faith has received a \$4,500 grant from Montgomery County Adult English Learning (MCAEL) to support the development of ESOL classes. Sara Romeyn will offer a

beginning English Language class on Tuesday nights. Classes will be open to adults seeking to develop spoken English skills. Know someone in our community who might benefit? **Copies of the flyer that includes registration information are available in the Narthex.** If you have any questions, email ESOL@FaithWorksHere.com.



EMPTY NESTERS GATHERING

Saturday, September 19 at 3:30 p.m.

The Empty Nesters are a group of Faith members with young adult children who gather quarterly for activities ranging from trivia night to hiking to museum visits to game night. Our first event of the new school year will be a service project on September 19th from 3:30-5:30 p.m. We will gather in the Fellowship Hall and kitchen with two goals. First, we'll make a meal for the Stepping Stones Shelter and second, we'll assemble several hundred toiletry bags (dental hygiene and menstrual products) for use in the Blessing Box. There will also be time to visit and catch up! Please join us. For questions, contact Sara Romeyn at sararomeyn@yahoo.com.

NEW THIS FALL: FAITHFUL FRIENDS:

Friday, September 25 from 6:00-8:00 p.m.

We're excited to launch a brand-new quarterly program just for children in third-fifth grades:

Faithful Friends! Each quarter, kids will gather on

a Friday evening for two hours of dinner, games, hands-on service projects, and plenty of fun. For our first gathering on Sept. 25, we'll be making fleece pet beds and homemade dog biscuits to support local animal shelters. To register for the September 25th gathering, scan the QR code. Deadline is Monday, September 21st.



SERVING US TODAY

Altar Guild for August: Debbie Spriggs

Audio Visual Volunteers: Brian Jones, Debbie Spriggs & Eric Winchenbach

Communion Stewards: Carol Benson, Emma Brown, Jim & Karen Johnston

Congregational Welcome: Ryan Miller

Liturgist: Frank Johnson

Money Counters: Tim Evans & Jane Rall

Nursery Caregivers: Lesley Avery & Tessa Ricketts

Online Host: Mary Stark

Welcome Hosts: Bill Beisner

FAITH UMC STAFF

Rev. Dr. Laura Norvell, Pastor | Ann Bartlow, Organist | André Coleman, Tenor Section Leader | Keshika Dias, Facilities Manager | Valerie Kunsman, Office Administrator | Tessa Ricketts, Nursery Staff | Suzanne Smedberg, Youth Ministry Coordinator | Kim Webster, Financial Manager | Dr. Michael Wu, Music Director

BREATHING UNDER WATER: WE JOURNEY TOGETHER

Steps 12: Living the Story Forward

KEY IDEA: Healing becomes mission

In this final week focusing on Breathing Under Water: Spirituality and the Twelve Steps, we claim the truth that healing is never meant to stop with us. Grace moves outward. We recognize that what has been mended in us becomes healing for the world. Love becomes witness and we serve others as people shaped by grace.

Below are ideas and questions to consider in your journal, with friends and/or family.

1. Throughout the Bible, it's made clear that actions speak louder than words and we must serve others. Matthew 10:8 says, "What was given to you freely, you must give away freely." Father Richard Rohr notes that spiritual gifts increase in value with use, whereas physical gifts decrease in value with usage. What spiritual gifts do you possess that you can share with another person? What's one way you might prioritize serving others?
2. God offers us freedom. How does God's gift of "free will" help you appreciate the experiences in your life, both the good and the bad? How do you think that the breath mantra: "God meet us where we are; and lead us to wholeness," relate to ideas of free will?
3. In the Hebrew Bible, it is commonly believed that there is only one sin – idolatry, or making a god of something that is not God. What do you think about more than anything else? How might this be perceived as a god? How do you address issues of idolatry in your life?

Issues of addiction and transformation often are accompanied by suffering and pain. Is there a time in your life when suffering brought you closer to God? How do you feel about God sharing your suffering? How is God present with you in difficult experiences? How might you share God's presence with others who are experiencing tough times?



When we seek to put our faith into action, it's sometimes hard to find a first step. Think about one area of social justice or compassion that stirs your spirit. What change or difference are you seeking to make in the world? This week, focus on doing for one person what you wish you could do for everybody. Follow your acts of service by sharing it with others in the congregation.



FROM AGE TO AGE: Sharing Intergenerationally

Asking children why we help others can build a sense of empathy and compassion. Talk with them about what things or actions they think can make someone feel truly cared for. Build upon that, drawing in ideas about faith. When introducing the idea of service and mission to children, it's often useful to start at things they're good at and then explore how they might use these skills and talents to help other people.

Nothing introduces the idea of service better than serving. As a family, choose one or two things or issues you care deeply about and come up with one idea to put that passion into action.



As we end this study of *Breathing Under Water*, explore together what the following quote from Lao Tzu means and how it can impact the ways we choose to live: “Watch your thoughts, they become your words; watch your words, they become your actions; watch your actions, they become your habits; watch your habits, they become your character; watch your character, it becomes your destiny.”

WRITE A BENEDICTION

Think back over the past nine weeks and our exploration of “Breathing Underwater.” Consider the idea that “You can breathe and even breathe under water, because the breath of God is everywhere.” Then write a personal benediction or blessing that reflects some of the thoughts from your experiences.

At Faith UMC this week, for example, we prayed, “Go now, rooted in grace and shaped by truth. Carry hope gently. Practice mercy boldly. Trust that what God has begun within you will continue to grow.” What words of blessings are on your heart that you can carry into the week ahead?

TO LEARN MORE ABOUT THE *BREATHING UNDER WATER* SERIES AND TO ACCESS MORE RESOURCES SCAN THE QR CODE.

