

Order of Worship for August 16, 2026 - Weaponizing the Fruit: Self-Control

As disciples of Jesus Christ, we seek to grow in faith, love boldly, and make disciples by continually asking:

How am I loving God? How am I loving the people God puts in front of me?

How am I inviting others to embrace the hope of Christ in their lives?

† - Please rise in body or spirit where you see the cross

CENTERING WORDS The Holy Spirit doesn't simply help us react better. He transforms us so that the battle for our hearts is won before our circumstances ever become a war.

† **SERVICE OF THE ACOLYTE** – (The Sanctuary Song, twice) *Lord, prepare me to be a sanctuary, pure and holy tried and true, with thanksgiving I'll be a living sanctuary for you.*

† **CALL TO WORSHIP**

L: God seeks to remind us of what His Spirit produces in those who follow Christ.

P: Love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control.

L: These are not simply virtues to admire.

P: They are the character of Christ being formed within us.

L: Today we celebrate the work God has begun and continues in us.

All: Come, Holy Spirit. Continue Your work within us, that our lives may reflect Jesus Christ.

† **OPENING PRAYER**

Gracious and loving God, Thank You for walking with us throughout this journey of discovering the Fruit of Your Spirit. Week by week You have reminded us that these are not qualities we manufacture through determination, but gifts You cultivate as we remain rooted in Christ. Continue Your transforming work within us today. Win the battle for our hearts before our words, actions, and attitudes ever become weapons against those You call us to love. Shape us into people whose lives reveal Jesus. In His holy name we pray. AMEN.

† **OPENING HYMN** Trust and Obey UMH #467

† **BLESSING OF TITHES AND OFFERINGS – DOXOLOGY** *Praise God from whom all blessings flow. Praise him all creatures here below. Praise him above ye heavenly host. Praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost. Amen.*

JOYS AND CONCERNS - PASTORAL PRAYER (The Lord's Prayer – "trespasses")

PASSING OF THE PEACE [St. James UMC and Sprucetown UMC]

HYMN OF PREPARATION Take Time to Be Holy UMH #395 v. 4 only

SELECTED SCRIPTURE Proverbs 25:28 // Titus 2:11–14 // Matthew 4:1–11

MESSAGE: Self-Control: Win the Battle Before it Becomes War

† CLOSING HYMN Here I Am, Lord UMH #593

† COMMISSION & BLESSING

Reflection: Winning the battle before it becomes a war begins when God's truth gets the final word—even over the voice inside me that is certain I know better.

PENNS VALLEY CHARGE ANNOUNCEMENTS – Calendar also on PennsValleyParish.info

* Consider deepening your understanding and appreciation for our Methodist faith by taking the Lay Servant Ministries Basic Course. Read the preparatory booklet and join us Sept. 18 & 19 here at Sprucetown Church. Details available on the bulletin board flyer, or ask Pastor Theresa.

Registration is due by September 6.

- August 20 – Ladies Coffee & Conversation, all ladies in the valley are invited to get together at St. James UMC in Coburn the 1st and 3rd Thursdays at 9:30am conversation and refreshments.

- September 1 – Sprucetown UMC Administrative Board and Trustees Meeting 7pm, all are invited to assist with the business of the church.

- September 2 – St. James UMC's Trustees meet at 6:30pm and Administrative Board at 7pm. All are invited to assist with the business of the church.

- September 3 - Ladies Coffee & Conversation, only event for September due to the Homecoming Soup Sale preparations for the 17th. Join us at 9:30am for conversation and refreshments.

- September 23 – MOVED BACK: The 3rd Quarter Staff Parish Relations Committee meeting is moved back to the original date Wednesday, September 23rd 7pm at Trinity Woodward UMC.

SAVE THE DATE: Our Church Conference is Nov. 7, 1pm at Sprucetown UMC. Members of the church are encouraged to attend to be well informed and to vote on officers and more for 2027.

ABOUT OUR CHURCH:

Pastor: Theresa M. Heiser; theiser@susumc.org Our Church Website: PennsValleyParish.info

Conference Superintendent: Rev. Dr. Michelle Bodle District Website: statecollege.susumc.org

Susquehanna Conf. Bishop Héctor A. Burgos Núñez Annual Conference Website: susumc.org

Northeastern Jurisdiction Website: nejumc.org UMC Website: umc.org

CCLI #1671542 Elements of worship are from Ministry Matters, A Preacher's Guide Lectionary Sermon Series Thematic Plans for Years A B and C, Feasting on the Word, The United Methodist Book of Worship, and The Abingdon Worship Annual 2026.