



PANTHER VALLEY ECUMENICAL CHURCH

Connecting with the Community, Growing Disciples, and Serving Jesus Christ

FRIENDS ~ FAMILY ~ FAITH

Panther Valley Ecumenical Church
March 22, 2020
4th Sunday of Lent

We invite you to begin your personal preparation at the beginning of the prelude.

PRELUDE

OUR LIFE TOGETHER

***OPENING PRAYER**

Gracious God, who created us in God's own image, we are grateful for all that you have done for us, for all that you are doing in us, and for all that you will do through us. Open our eyes to see your presence among us, moving in powerful ways at all times and in all places. Open our ears to hear familiar words in new ways — ways that will change us and challenge us to become the people you created us to be. Grant us the power and the courage to come out of the darkness and into the light of Jesus Christ, that we may serve you by serving others. We love you with all our heart, soul, mind, and strength. Amen.

***HYMN** *Great Is Thy Faithfulness*

Chorus

Great is Thy faithfulness
Great is Thy faithfulness
Morning by morning
New mercies I see
All I have needed
Thy hand hath provided
Great is Thy faithfulness
Lord unto me

Verse 1

Great is Thy faithfulness
O God my Father
There is no shadow
Of turning with Thee
Thou changest not
Thy compassions they fail not
As Thou hast been
Thou forever wilt be

Verse 2

Summer and winter
And springtime and harvest
Sun moon and stars
In their courses above

Join with all nature
In manifold witness
To Thy great faithfulness
Mercy and love

Verse 3

Pardon for sin
And a peace that endureth
Thy own dear presence
To cheer and to guide
Strength for today
And bright hope for tomorrow
Blessings all mine
With ten thousand beside

CALL TO CONFESSION

When we least expect it, even when we are not ready, God comes to us, calling us to trust, calling us to follow, calling us to set aside our foolish lives, for the grace-full ones which are offered to us. Let us open our hearts and confess how often we choose not to follow, as we pray together saying,

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Forgiving God, in a world filled with so much fear and pain, we would rather shut our eyes and be blind than see things as they really are. Grant us the courage to face the reality of our world, and give us the strength to bring your light to those who walk in darkness. Help us see others as you see them, and forgive us when we do not trust you enough to open our eyes to the possibilities before us. Heal our self-inflicted blindness, O God, and lead us in the footsteps of the Light of the World, who reveals your glory in his life, his teachings, and his love. In his holy name, we pray. Amen.

(use this time as your personal confession as the choir softly sings)

Words of Assurance

Christ is with us in times of danger and times of peace. The goodness and mercy of God are given to us each and every day of our lives. God forgives us for our failings, upholds us in love, and leads us to the place that Christ has prepared for us. Believe in your heart that God loves you and forgives you.

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

Almighty God, your Word is living and active, and the stories of our lives bear witness to your Good News. We thank you for these words, of scripture and testimony. Open us to hear your voice within these words, and guide us as we respond in faith. We pray in Jesus' name. Amen.

SCRIPTURE READING: Psalm 23

The LORD is my shepherd, I shall not want. He makes me lie down in green pastures; he leads me beside still waters; he restores my soul. He leads me in right paths for his name's sake. Even though I walk through the darkest valley, I fear no evil; for you are with me; your rod and your staff-- they comfort me. You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; you anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I shall dwell in the house of the LORD my whole life long.

GOSPEL READING: John 9:1-41**SERMON****PASTORAL PRAYER & LORD'S PRAYER**

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

THE OFFERING

We invite you to take this time to express your gratitude to God for all that you have been given by dedicating your time, talents, witness, service, and resources. The gifts you give are helping God build the community of love in this place and in our world. We offer several ways that you can give your fiscal pledge: by mail, through our website [Here](#), or add PVEC to your online bill pay. Thank you for your generosity.

SPECIAL MUSIC**BENEDICTION**

Whatever wilderness the Spirit has brought you to:
walk in boldness, as a beloved child of God
walk in peace, under the shelter of the Most High
walk in faith, knowing Christ walks with you. Amen.

POSTLUDE

Credits:

Cover Image: Along the Paulinskill by Ken Metcalf

Today's Liturgy is adapted from Sharon McCart

Today's Hymn, Great is The Faithfulness; CCLI Song # 18723, Thomas Obediah Chisholm | William Marion Runyan, © Words: Public Domain, Music: Public Domain

Announcements & Upcoming Events

PVEC Shop & Drop If you are in a situation where you can not leave your house and you need food or medication contact our office and we will arrange for someone to shop and drop your items at your house.

Children's faith formation is found on our [website](#) and [facebook](#).

Bedtime Stories with Ms. Sarah & Mr. Dan are on Facebook live at 7:30pm

Lenten Bible Studies are being held on Zoom. Email or call the office if you are interested in joining these studies.

The Last Days of Jesus - Monday evenings at 7pm via Zoom

The Passion Play - Wednesday Mornings at 10am via Zoom

Camp Johnsonburg Workdays Throughout April - any hours or days you can volunteer will be appreciated. Carpentry, painting, and cleaning projects. Call or email Kathy Zinckgraf.

Our **PVEC Handbell Choir** offers us a unique musical and visual experience that speaks to our souls. Our Bells are 30+ years old and require a much needed refurbishing. Their value is \$16K, and we only have to find \$1,700 to make them like new. If you are interested in making a donation to this project, please speak to Faye Kennedy.

Care and Nurture Prayer Shawls and Palm Prayer Squares are in the coat closet outside Fellowship Hall. People can take a bag to give to anyone who is in need of support and comfort.

PANTHER VALLEY ECUMENICAL CHURCH 1490 Route 517 Hackettstown, NJ 07840
~Welcome—we were built for you!~

Panther Valley Ecumenical Church is a multi-denominational church serving northwest New Jersey since 1969. We are formally affiliated with: The Episcopal Church, The United Church of Christ, The Presbyterian Church USA, and The United Methodist Church.

We are a congregation of many Christian traditions who worship together in accordance with Christ's prayer: "that they may all be one."

May God's Blessing go with you this week.

Pastor: Ninabeth Metcalf

Music Director: Diane Van Dongen

Church Administrator: Cynthia Richards

Office hours: Mon. – Fri. 9:00am – 2:00pm

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Friends • Family • Faith