



# **PANTHER VALLEY ECUMENICAL CHURCH**

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

# **PANTHER VALLEY ECUMENICAL CHURCH**

**Sunday, March 15, 2020**

**3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of Lent**

*Welcome to our time of worship.*

*We invite you to begin your personal preparation as you enter the Sanctuary by visiting one of our prayer stations. Instructions for the prayer is at the station.*

## **PRELUDE**

**Our Life Together**

## **INTROIT**

### **\*CALL TO WORSHIP**

ONE: O come, let us sing to our God and make a joyful noise to the rock of our salvation.

**ALL: We lift our hearts and voices in joy and thanksgiving for being here together in the presence of our beloved God.**

ONE: Come, let us worship this amazing God, for we belong to God.

**ALL: We will listen for God's word and live in the hope it inspires**

### **\*OPENING PRAYER** *(Unison)*

**Loving and caring God, we come this morning in hope — hope that will sustain us in our trying times, our lonely times, our doubting times. Refresh us this morning with the living water of your presence and love. Open us to the possibilities of friendship— the possibilities of encountering you in unexpected ways, the possibilities of seeing the miraculous in everyday life. Amen.**

### **\*HYMN #127** *Guide Me, O Thou Great Jehovah*

## **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**

**Patient and ever-faithful God, we come to you this morning confessing that we can be a grumpy and unsatisfied people. When things are not perfect in our eyes, we murmur and complain, and grumble and doubt. We lose hope in the people around us and, even worse, we lose hope in you. We challenge instead of accept. We put you to the test rather than trust your caring love. Forgive our doubts and complaining. Forgive our loss of hope. Let your healing, life-giving waters pour over us. Restore our souls. Amen.**

## **Words of Assurance**

Our hope and assurance rest in God's unfailing love and forgiveness. Open your hearts and minds and souls that the healing waters of God's never-ending love and forgiveness may flow into and over you. Know that in this love and forgiveness you have encountered the living God.

**\*RESPONSE OF PRAISE #71** *(All Sing)*

*Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost; as it was in the beginning is now and ever shall be, world without end. Amen. Amen.*

**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:** Exodus 17:1-7 page 63

**GOSPEL READING:** John 4:5-42 page 969 *Pastor Ninabeth Metcalf*

**SERMON** *Seen Through The Eyes of Love* *Pastor Ninabeth Metcalf*

**\*HYMN #298** *When I Survey the Wondrous Cross*

**PRAYERS OF JOY AND CONCERN & THE LORD'S PRAYER**

*The flowers in the sanctuary today are given by the congregation.*

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 sins\*, as we forgive those who sin\* 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

*(\*May also say trespasses or debts)*

**\*THE PASSING OF THE PEACE**

*We invite you to "elbow bump" rather than hug your neighbor.*

**THE OFFERING**

**\*THE DOXOLOGY:** *(All Sing)*

*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.*

**\*OFFERTORY PRAYER**

Life-giving God, we offer you ourselves and our resources. Use us and our gifts, that we may be water bearers to a world thirsty for love, for meaning, for justice, and for hope. May all your people encounter fullness of life through the love of Christ, which lives within us. Amen.

**\*HYMN #361** *Rock of Ages*

**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.

**\*HYMN: #666**

“Shalom To You”

**Shalom to you now, shalom my friends.  
May God’s full mercies bless you, my friends.  
In all your living and through your loving,  
Christ be your shalom, Christ be your shalom.**

**POSTLUDE**

Today’s Liturgy is adapted from Joann Carlson Brown

***Visit our Prayer Station located in the back of the Sanctuary  
Today’s meditation:***

***“You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; you anoint my  
head with oil; my cup overflows.” ~ Psalm 23:5***

The last place an animal like a sheep would want to pause to eat would be in the presence of its enemies, unless that sheep completely trusts its shepherd.

God nourishes us even when we feel vulnerable, even when there is danger nearby. And we are fed so that we have the energy to follow our callings.

Anointing was a symbol of both healing and calling. God sets us aside for a purpose and guides us along that path.

For this prayer, we invite you to use a bit of oil to make a sign of the cross on your forehead or on the back of your hand, or ask someone else to do it for you. As you make the sign, remember that you belong to God and that God shepherds you and calls you his own.

## This Week's Calendar

<b><i>Sunday, March 15</i></b>	<b><i>Monday, March 16</i></b>	<b><i>Tuesday, March 17</i></b>	<b><i>Wednesday, March 18</i></b>
<b>9:30am</b> Choir Practice <b>10:30am</b> Worship <b>11:45am</b> Fellowship	<b>7:00pm</b> Bible Study	<b>9:30am</b> F4Mom/Stroller Strides  <b>12:30pm</b> Knitting  <b>7:00 pm</b> AA Business Meeting	<b>8:30am—9:00am</b> Contemplative Prayer  <b>10:00am</b> Bible Study, " <i>The Passion Play</i> "  <b>12:00—</b> Food & Faith  <b>4-5:15pm—</b> Sacrament Class  <b>6:30</b> Friends & Neighbors  <b>7:00PM</b> Choir
<b><i>Thursday, March 19</i></b>	<b><i>Friday, March 20</i></b>	<b><i>Saturday, March 21</i></b>	<b><i>Sunday, March 22</i></b>
<b>9:30-10:30am</b> F4Mom/Stroller Strides  Food Packing  <b>11:30am</b> Senior Yoga  <b>6:30pm</b> AA Meeting  <b>7:00pm</b> Bells	<b>7:00pm</b> AA Meeting		<b>9:30am</b> Choir Practice  <b>10:30am</b> Worship  <b>11:45am</b> Fellowship

# **Announcements & Upcoming Events**

## **Lenten Bible Studies**

**The Last Days of Jesus** Monday evenings at 7pm in the conference room

**The Passion Play** Wednesday Mornings at 10am in the conference room

**Our Spaghetti Dinner extravaganza has been postponed to a later date.**

## **Community Easter Egg Hunt**

Help us make this a terrific event! See and sign our Volunteer List in fellowship hall.  
Saturday March 28<sup>th</sup> 11am—1pm @ PVEC

## **Save the Dates! Camp Johnsonburg Workdays**

April 13 to 15 at 8am to 5pm lunch included. Any hours or days you can volunteer will be appreciated. Carpentry, painting, and cleaning projects. Sign up sheet in Fellowship Hall on easel.

**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**

Bags with 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 Presbyterian Church USA,*

*The United Church of Christ,  
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." You are welcome to follow the practices that are most comfortable for you as we worship. May God's Blessing go with you this week.

**If you are looking for a church home or would welcome a call, we invite you to sign the Guest Book located in the Narthex.**

**WORSHIP:** Sunday mornings at 10:30 a.m.

The Lord's Supper is celebrated on the first Sunday of the month.

**CHURCH SCHOOL:** Classes for age three through grade twelve: 10:30 a.m. downstairs in our education wing.

**NURSERY:** The nursery, for infants through age two, is available from 10:15 a.m. to 11:45 a.m. and is located downstairs next to fellowship hall.

#### **COUNCIL OFFICERS 2020**

**Chair:** Donna Weinberg

**Vice Chair:** Cylvia Ultz

**Treasurer:** Kathy Pflugfelder

**Secretary:** Lynne Moore

#### **COUNCIL MEMBERS 2020**

**Bldgs. & Grounds –** John Samanns

**Care & Nurture–** Jayne Lambo

**Christian Education–** Chrissie Aulenbach **Christian Outreach –** Linda Trent

**Communications–** Jim Visco

**Denominational Liaison—**Mary Lightfoot

**Member-at-Large –**Elsa Todd

**Stewardship—**Judy Vinson

**Worship –**Betty Schultheis

**Youth Representative –** This could be you!

## **Pastor Ninabeth Metcalf**

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

**Church Administrator:** Cynthia Richards

**Website:** <http://www.panthervalleychurch.org>

**Tel:** 908-852-5444    **Fax:** 908-850-4754    **Email:** officepvec@gmail.com

**Friends • Family • Faith**