



**PANTHER VALLEY ECUMENICAL CHURCH**

**July 5, 2020**

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

*Our Worship can be viewed on our website*  
[PantherValleyChurch.org](http://PantherValleyChurch.org)

*FRIENDS ~ FAMILY ~ FAITH*

## **PRELUDE**

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

## **CALL TO WORSHIP**

Come on in and find some rest!

We need that rest, for we are weary!

Come on in and discover peace!

We need peace, for our spirits are weighed down by troubles.

You have come to the right place! Our Lord is here, waiting for you.

Thanks be to God, who brings us rest and peace. AMEN.

## **OPENING PRAYER**

Lord of peace and hope, we open our hearts to you this day. Be with us as we hear your words of inspiration and healing. Guide our hearts and spirits as we seek to be witnesses to your redeeming and reconciling love. In Jesus' Name, we offer this prayer. AMEN.

**HYMN**     *Love Divine, All Loves Excelling*

**SCRIPTURE READING:**   *Romans 7:15-25*

**GOSPEL READING:**   Matthew 11:28-30

## **MESSAGE**

## **PRAYER OF INTERCESSION**

Welcoming Lord, we come before your throne of grace today. It's been quite a week for some, filled with busyness and exciting activities; for others it has been a long and lonely week. Still others have experienced ongoing troubles and frustrations, sorrows and sadness. Throughout all these conditions and at all times, you are with each one of us, giving us strength, calming our spirits; healing our wounds, celebrating the delights and triumphs. This morning we name in our hearts and by our voices loved ones who struggle with issues of health, loneliness, sorrow; we name in our hearts and by our voices those who have found great joy. Be with each person, giving strength and courage for all the times ahead. Help each one of us to remember that we can always come to you with our burdens and you will take them from us.

## **CALL TO RECONCILIATION**

Christ invites us to the peaceful place known as God's heart. May we let go of our burdens so that we can find rest.

## **PRAYER FOR FORGIVENESS**

Merciful and loving God, we are so grateful for your redeeming love for each one of us. We confess that there have been times of doubt in our spirits. We confess that when the times of difficulties are upon us, we don't always believe that you will take our burdens. We feel we have to always be in control, trying to demand the desired outcome. Help us to place our trust in you. Remind us that you surround us continually with your care, you never just let us go to drift aimlessly about. Open our hearts and spirits again to your healing powers. For we pray these things in the name of Jesus, the one who will take our burdens and give us peace. AMEN.

*Silence is kept*

## **ASSURANCE OF PARDON**

Hear the good news, dear friends! Jesus releases us from our burdens. Place your whole trust in his love. AMEN.

## **PASS THE PEACE**

## **PRAYER OF DEDICATION**

As you have received each one of us, O Lord, receive also these gifts that we offer to you that your love may be made known through ministries of peace, hope and justice. AMEN.

## **THE GREAT THANKSGIVING**

Jesus said, 'Come to me, all who are weary and whose load is heavy; I will give you rest.

Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble-hearted; and you will find rest for your souls.'

*~Matthew 11:28-29*

We are here because Jesus has called us – strangers and friends, locals and visitors, believers and doubters, the certain and the curious. It is always a mixed company that Jesus gathers and invites to his table where, in bread and wine, he meets us and through him we, who are different, are joined to each other.

So come, not because you understand, but because you are understood.

Come, not because of how you feel, but because God has food for you.

Come, not because you deserve a place, but because Jesus invites you, just as you are.

*~ Iona*

Friends, may the Lord be with you

**And also with you.**

Lift up your hearts.

**We lift them up to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

The hour came, God of imagination, when chaos was no more, as you lifted the cup of creation, and poured it out: ...

... Therefore, With those who have found their rest in you, with those who long for their burdens to be lifted, we join in saying your praise:

**Holy, holy, holy are you, God of the weary.**

**All creation celebrates your name in all generations.**

**Hosanna in the highest!**

**Blessed is the One who yokes himself to us.**

**Hosanna in the highest!**

Holy are you, God of our footloose hearts, and blessed is Jesus Christ, your Son, our Lord and Savior.

... As we remember his life and his rest in you, as we celebrate the good news of lightened burdens, we speak of that mystery we call faith:

**Christ came, that we may have life;**

**Christ died, so that the burden of death might be lifted from us;**

**Christ was raised to new life, so grace might be revealed to every generation;**

**Christ will return, to yoke us to God through all eternity.**

Pour out your Spirit of rest and shalom upon this bread and this cup, that these gifts might nourish us. ...  
... we will sing our praise for all eternity, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, God in Community, Holy in One.  
**Amen and amen.**

I invite you to raise a plate of “something” on your table, or a glass of whatever you are drinking, and let us bless it in this way, repeating after me:

Holy Comforter  
We gather in your name...  
invited by Jesus...  
bound together with your Spirit...  
in union with each other...

Feed our bodies and our spirits...  
with your comforting presence...  
so that we might be your comfort to others...

Bless this food...  
and break open our hearts...  
Bless this drink...  
and pour out your love...  
Amen...

**SPECIAL MUSIC**    *In Remembrance*

### **Benediction**

**Weary travelers, go now in peace with the love of Christ in your hearts. You are released from your burdens! Go with joy to serve God. AMEN.**

### **POSTLUDE**

Credits:

Cover Image: Carrying a Cross by SM

Today's Liturgy is adapted from: Nancy C Townley and Thom M Shuman

Hymn; Love Divine, All Loves Excelling, Words: 2007 Thomas Peck Music, Music Public Domain  
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## **Announcements & Upcoming Events**

### **Bible Study on Zoom:**

Monday Night at 7pm *Unshakable Hope*

Tuesday Night at 7pm beginning July 14<sup>th</sup> *The Good Gospel*

**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

**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**