



PANTHER VALLEY ECUMENICAL CHURCH

September 13, 2020

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

*Our Worship can be viewed on our website
PantherValleyChurch.org*

FRIENDS ~ FAMILY ~ FAITH

PRELUDE

CALL TO WORSHIP

We gather our voices and spirits in praise.

O God, quiet our souls so we may listen.

We seek within our heart Your call on our lives.

O God, quiet our minds so we may ponder Your words.

We rejoice in the knowledge that You are merciful and gracious, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love!

O God, unite us together as one in worship of You.

We long to join together in person; however, we know You are with all of us now.

GATHERING PRAYER

God of mercy, we come here thirsty for your word, to learn and relearn what really matters in this world. Fill us with a desire to be your people and to worship you in truth. Amen.

HYMN Freely, Freely

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

We say “forgive our trespasses” but we hold on to grievances.

We say “thy will be done” but we fail to let God move us.

Forgive us, God of Mercy, soften our hearts, free us to respond, in the generosity of your spirit. Amen.

WORDS OF ASSURANCE

Hear the good news: God is merciful and full of compassion. God has patience. God will guide us as a loving parent teaches a beloved child. In the name of Jesus, we are forgiven.

SCRIPTURE READING:

Psalm 103

Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless his holy name.

Bless the Lord, O my soul, and do not forget all his benefits— who forgives all your iniquity, who heals all your diseases, who redeems your life from the Pit, who crowns you with steadfast love and mercy, who satisfies you with good as long as you live so that your youth is renewed like the eagle’s.

The Lord works vindication and justice for all who are oppressed. He made known his ways to Moses, his acts to the people of Israel. The Lord is merciful and gracious, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love. He will not always accuse, nor will he keep his anger forever. He does not deal with us according to our sins, nor repay us according to our iniquities. For as the heavens are high above the earth, so great is his steadfast love toward those who fear him; as far as the east is from the west, so far he removes our transgressions from us. As a father has compassion for his children, so the Lord has compassion for those who fear him. For he knows how we were made; he remembers that we are dust.

As for mortals, their days are like grass; they flourish like a flower of the field; for the wind passes over it, and it is gone, and its place knows it no more. But the steadfast love of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting on those who fear him, and his righteousness to children’s children, to those who keep his covenant and remember to do his commandments.

The Lord has established his throne in the heavens, and his kingdom rules over all. Bless the Lord, O you his angels, you mighty ones who do his bidding, obedient to his spoken word. Bless the Lord, all his hosts, his ministers that do his will. Bless the Lord, all his works, in all places of his dominion. Bless the Lord, O my soul.

Matthew 18:15-20

Then Peter came and said to him, "Lord, if another member of the church sins against me, how often should I forgive? As many as seven times?" Jesus said to him, "Not seven times, but, I tell you, seventy-seven times.

"For this reason the kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who wished to settle accounts with his slaves. When he began the reckoning, one who owed him ten thousand talents was brought to him; and, as he could not pay, his lord ordered him to be sold, together with his wife and children and all his possessions, and payment to be made. So the slave fell on his knees before him, saying, 'Have patience with me, and I will pay you everything.' And out of pity for him, the lord of that slave released him and forgave him the debt. But that same slave, as he went out, came upon one of his fellow slaves who owed him a hundred denarii; and seizing him by the throat, he said, 'Pay what you owe.' Then his fellow slave fell down and pleaded with him, 'Have patience with me, and I will pay you.' But he refused; then he went and threw him into prison until he would pay the debt. When his fellow slaves saw what had happened, they were greatly distressed, and they went and reported to their lord all that had taken place. Then his lord summoned him and said to him, 'You wicked slave! I forgave you all that debt because you pleaded with me. Should you not have had mercy on your fellow slave, as I had mercy on you?' And in anger his lord handed him over to be tortured until he would pay his entire debt. So my heavenly Father will also do to every one of you, if you do not forgive your brother or sister from your heart."

MESSAGE *God's Economy of Compassion and Forgiveness*

PASTORAL PRAYER

Special Music: Look Around

Verse 1: When you're tired and feel you can't get through
Uncertainty comes over you

Just Look Around

When your problems seem too much to bear

Unsure if there's someone who cares

Just Look Around

Whether stranger, neighbor, family, or a friend

On each other in tough times we can depend

Chorus: Look Around – kindness, love is ours to share

We can see it everywhere

Though it might seem like forever

Look Around—for even in the darkest night

Things are gonna be alright

We'll get through this together

Just Look Around!

Lift up prayers of joy and concern

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

Special Music: Look Around

Verse 2: Sometimes it can be hard to see
Life is full of possibilities
So Look Around
Each new day is such a gift
Embrace it and the life you live
And Look Around
Outstretched arms and many helping hands
Don't give up on all your dreams and all your plans

Chorus: Look Around – kindness, love is ours to share
We can see it everywhere
Though it might seem like forever
Look Around—for even in our darkest night
Things are gonna be alright
We'll get through this together
Just Look Around! Look Around!
Just Look Around.

PRAYER OF DEDICATION

Giving God, all we are and all we have come from you. We offer back to you what has always been yours. As you have entrusted your gifts to us, so we return these gifts to you, trusting that you will multiply them to the great glory of your kingdom on earth. We pray through Jesus who gave the totality of his life for us. Amen.

SENDING FORTH

Rejoice in the knowledge that our God is merciful and gracious, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love!

Go out into the world in peace; have courage; hold on to what is good; return no one evil for evil; strengthen the fainthearted; support the weak, and help the suffering; honor all people; love and serve the Lord, rejoicing in the power of the Holy Spirit.

POSTLUDE

Credits: Today's Liturgy is adapted from: Call to Worship, Rev. Mindi. Gathering Prayer and Prayer of Confession and Word of Assurance, Laurie Zelman. Prayers of the People, Marsha Jean Moors-Charles, arr. Caleb Collins. Make Me A Channel of Your Peace sung by Andrew Van Dongen. Drone footage of PVEC by Chris Metcalf.

HYMN, Freely, Freely, CCLI#13209. 1072 Bud John Songs, Inc.

Announcements & Upcoming Events

Bible Study on Zoom:

Monday Night at 7pm *Daniel Dilema*

Wednesday Morning at 10am *God Is Closer Than You Think*
Wednesday Night at 7pm *Present Over Perfect*

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

Pastor: Ninabeth Metcalf

Music Director: Diane Van Dongen

Church Administrator: Cynthia Richards

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

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

Tel: 908-852-5444 Fax: 908-850-4754

Email: officepvec@gmail.com