



PANTHER VALLEY ECUMENICAL CHURCH

September 27, 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 come to hear the stories of other people in another world long ago.
We come to hear the stories that are also about us today in this place.
God, give us ears to listen. eyes to see, hearts to accept.

GATHERING PRAYER

Can it be that easy, Jesus?

Can it be that hard?

That what You want for us is just to love and be loved?

Is it possible that even those who have tried the hardest, signed on the dotted line, sat for years in classes and strained their eyes from reading, dressed in all the most appropriate garments, and spoken with only the most measured words... that these can miss You?

How can it be when those who have hardly tried at all, who have damaged themselves and others so much, that in the end they have nowhere else to turn but to throw themselves on Your grace... that these are the ones You search out?

How do we make sense of this, Jesus?

How do we love so scandalously, so inclusively?

How do we allow ourselves to be loved enough, that all our hard and sharp edges grow soft and round?

Help us to find the humility and courage, the boldness and grace, that in our loving and being loved, we may somehow ignite our world with a compassion so fierce that violence and abuse, rejection and condemnation, neglect and greed become unthinkable. Amen.

HYMN *Trust and Obey*

SCRIPTURE READING:

Philippians 2:1-13 NRSV

If then there is any encouragement in Christ, any consolation from love, any sharing in the Spirit, any compassion and sympathy, make my joy complete: be of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind. Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility regard others as better than yourselves. Let each of you look not to your own interests, but to the interests of others. Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus,

who, though he was in the form of God,

did not regard equality with God

as something to be exploited,

but emptied himself,

taking the form of a slave,

being born in human likeness.

And being found in human form,

he humbled himself

and became obedient to the point of death—

even death on a cross.

Therefore God also highly exalted him

and gave him the name

that is above every name,

so that at the name of Jesus

every knee should bend,

in heaven and on earth and under the earth,
and every tongue should confess
that Jesus Christ is Lord,
to the glory of God the Father.

Therefore, my beloved, just as you have always obeyed me, not only in my presence, but much more now in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God who is at work in you, enabling you both to will and to work for his good pleasure.

Matthew 21:23-32 NRSV

When he entered the temple, the chief priests and the elders of the people came to him as he was teaching, and said, "By what authority are you doing these things, and who gave you this authority?" Jesus said to them, "I will also ask you one question; if you tell me the answer, then I will also tell you by what authority I do these things. Did the baptism of John come from heaven, or was it of human origin?" And they argued with one another, "If we say, 'From heaven,' he will say to us, 'Why then did you not believe him?' But if we say, 'Of human origin,' we are afraid of the crowd; for all regard John as a prophet." So they answered Jesus, "We do not know." And he said to them, "Neither will I tell you by what authority I am doing these things.

"What do you think? A man had two sons; he went to the first and said, 'Son, go and work in the vineyard today.' He answered, 'I will not'; but later he changed his mind and went. The father went to the second and said the same; and he answered, 'I go, sir'; but he did not go. Which of the two did the will of his father?" They said, "The first." Jesus said to them, "Truly I tell you, the tax collectors and the prostitutes are going into the kingdom of God ahead of you. For John came to you in the way of righteousness and you did not believe him, but the tax collectors and the prostitutes believed him; and even after you saw it, you did not change your minds and believe him.

MESSAGE *To Love and Be Loved*

SPECIAL MUSIC *Hymn of Promise*

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

PRAYER OF DEDICATION

May the simple gifts we offer this day become a fountain of blessings for others, bringing them hope, healing, joy, and peace. Amen.

SENDING FORTH

Let us have the same mind as God. We will see each person as God's child.
Let us have the same justice as Jesus. We will stand with each person who struggles.
Let us have the same hope as the Spirit. We will put others before us in all we do.

POSTLUDE

Credits: Today's Liturgy is adapted from: Call To Worship, Joanna Harader, Gathering Prayer, John van de Laar.

Drone footage of PVEC by Chris Metcalf.

HYMN, Trust and Obey, CCLI# 22094, Public Domain,

SPECIAL MUSIC, Hymn of Promise, CCLI#126529, 1986 Hope Publishing Company

Announcements & Upcoming Events

Save the Date! Sunday October 4, 2020 we will be returning to Worship in our sanctuary!

We will be requiring masks, practicing physical distancing, and sanitation practices will be followed for your safety. We ask that you park in every other parking spot and come to the front entrance of the building. The door will be open and our ushers will be helping you to your seat. Sunday school children will meet their teachers at the front door. Kids in grades 1 – 6 will be meeting outside so we ask that they dress appropriately.

If you are not ready to join us in our sanctuary the service will continue to be available online.

Bible Study on Zoom:

Monday Night at 7pm *God's Answers to Life's Difficult Questions*

Wednesday Morning at 10am *Who Is This Man?*

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.

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Pastor: Ninabeth Metcalf

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