



PANTHER VALLEY ECUMENICAL CHURCH

Easter Sunday April 11, 2021

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

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

FRIENDS ~ FAMILY ~ FAITH

PRELUDE

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

CALL TO WORSHIP

ONE: We gather in the name of the risen Lord.

ALL: Christ is risen! Alleluia!

ONE: We gather as sisters and brothers of the resurrected one.

ALL: Christ is risen! Alleluia!

ONE: We gather to share our faith and to worship God.

ALL: Christ is risen! Alleluia!

ONE: We gather to proclaim the good news of Easter!

ALL: Christ is risen! Alleluia!

GATHERING PRAYER

God of the resurrection, we gather this morning as a community of believers. We come with joy to greet one another and to tell again and again the amazing news:

Christ is risen!

Love is victorious over death!

You have given us new life in the name of your Son!

May our singing, praying, listening, and proclaiming be a testimony to the power of your love to make us a new creation as a community of faith.

We pray in the name of the risen Christ. Amen.

HYMN

CALL TO RECONCILIATION

PRAYER OF RECONCILIATION

We long to find a place to relax, O God, to lean into the welcome and the love of real friends who stay true no matter who we are or what we've done.

We want to be known – not just our names, but our selves, our dreams and longings, our fears and failings and be warmly, unrestrainedly welcomed.

We yearn to know the joy of opening our arms to others and seeing them melt and grow soft in the safety of our acceptance.

And you have created a place like this for us a place of people, with failings and disagreements who still look out for one another; a place of difference and struggle where we can all belong; a place of faith and deep doubt, a place of awkward stumbling toward Christlikeness; a place of worship, of mystery and of rest. And though we can't always see it, although sometimes it doesn't feel like it; this is the place – here. Not the buildings and the furniture – no, these people who gather each week in your name and try so hard to remember each other's and for this place, and your being with us we give our heartfelt gratitude and devotion. Amen.

WORDS OF ASSURANCE

When we walk in the light of Christ, we have fellowship with one another. When we confess our sins, the One who is faithful and just forgives our sins and cleanses us from all unrighteousness. For in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, God has showered mercy upon the entire world. Amen.

SCRIPTURE READING:

Acts 4:32-35 NRSV

Now the whole group of those who believed were of one heart and soul, and no one claimed private ownership of any possessions, but everything they owned was held in common. With great power the apostles gave their testimony to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and great grace was upon them all. There was not a needy person among them, for as many as owned lands or houses sold them and brought the proceeds of what was sold. They laid it at the apostles' feet, and it was distributed to each as any had need.

1 John 1:1-2:2 CEB

We announce to you what existed from the beginning, what we have heard, what we have seen with our eyes, what we have seen and our hands handled, about the word of life. The life was revealed, and we have seen, and we testify and announce to you the eternal life that was with the Father and was revealed to us. What we have seen and heard, we also announce it to you so that you can have fellowship with us. Our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son, Jesus Christ. We are writing these things so that our joy can be complete.

This is the message that we have heard from him and announce to you: "God is light and there is no darkness in him at all." If we claim, "We have fellowship with

him,” and live in the darkness, we are lying and do not act truthfully. But if we live in the light in the same way as he is in the light, we have fellowship with each other, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, cleanses us from every sin. If we claim, “We don’t have any sin,” we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. But if we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and cleanse us from everything we’ve done wrong. If we claim, “We have never sinned,” we make him a liar and his word is not in us.

My little children, I’m writing these things to you so that you don’t sin. But if you do sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous one. He is God’s way of dealing with our sins, not only ours but the sins of the whole world.

MESSAGE What does the resurrection of Jesus make possible? Fellowship!

SPECIAL MUSIC

PRAYER OF THE PEOPLE

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 www.panthervalleychurch.org, or add PVEC to your online bill pay. Thank you for your generosity.

PRAYER OF DEDICATION

Generous and surprising God, when we thought that death had claimed your only Son, you amazed us with the resurrection. Surprise us again with your ability to turn these humble offerings into gifts that will transform the world through our witness to your love.

We lay our very lives at your feet, O God, knowing that you will use us to proclaim and embody the gospel. Amen.

BENEDICTION

ONE: Go now with the love of God, the grace of Jesus Christ, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit.

ALL: Christ is risen! Alleluia!

ONE: Go to share your faith and your lives.

ALL: Christ is risen! Alleluia!

ONE: Go to proclaim the good news of Easter.

ALL: Christ is risen! Alleluia!

POSTLUDE

Credits:

Today's Liturgy is adapted from: Opening Words and Prayer, Prayer of Dedication by Laura Jaquith Bartlett Prayer for Reconciliation written by John van de Laar.

Announcements & Upcoming Events

Children's faith formation is being offered on Class Dojo and at PVEC on Sundays.

Sunday School teachers are needed for preschoolers.

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

- 1st Corinthians - Monday evenings at 7pm via Zoom
- Spiritual Guides for the 21st Century; Protestant Reformers - Wednesday mornings at 10am via Zoom

PVEC Rummage Sale May 14 – 22nd! We are looking for volunteers! Please contact Penny Newell or Cylvia Ultz if you are interested in helping in any way!

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.

The Lord's Pantry needs brown paper bags please.

The Church Directory has been updated and hard copies are available. We can also send them electronically. Let Nikki know if you have any changes.

Christian Outreach is looking for a new chair.

We are looking for someone to film services.

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

Email: pvecpastor@gmail.com

Music Director: Diane Van Dongen

Church Administrator: Nikki Nicinski

Email: pvecsecretary@gmail.com

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

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Friends • Family • Faith