



# **PANTHER VALLEY ECUMENICAL CHURCH**

**July 4, 2021**

*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

ONE: Come! Listen to the word of the Lord!

**ALL: Help us to receive God's word and direction for our lives.**

ONE: Proclaim the goodness of God's love!

**ALL: Let our voices and our actions be filled with love.**

ONE: Come, now is the time to worship.

**ALL: Open our eyes, our hearts and our spirits this day, Lord. Amen.**

## HYMN

### America

My country 'tis of thee  
Sweet land of liberty  
Of thee I sing  
Land where my fathers died  
Land of the pilgrims' pride  
From every mountain side  
Let freedom ring

My native country thee  
Land of the noble free  
Thy name I love  
I love thy rocks and rills  
Thy woods and templed hills  
My heart with rapture thrills  
Like that above

Let music swell the breeze  
And ring from all the trees  
Sweet freedom's song  
Let mortal tongues awake  
Let all that breathe partake  
Let rocks their silence break  
The sound prolong

## **GATHERING PRAYER**

**Lord, there is much in our past of which we are proud and in which we find hope for the future. Yet, there is also much in our past that pains us, shames us, and that we know requires us to attempt to make right. Give us the strength and courage, personally and as a nation, to do the work that is before us to make our nation a beacon of hope, a land of true liberty and justice, and a place of welcome and succor for all who seek peace. Amen.**

## **SCRIPTURE READING:**

### **Mark 6:1-13 The Message**

Jesus left there and returned to his hometown. His disciples came along. On the Sabbath, he gave a lecture in the meeting place. He stole the show, impressing everyone. “We had no idea he was this good!” they said. “How did he get so wise all of a sudden, get such ability?”

But in the next breath they were cutting him down: “He’s just a carpenter—Mary’s boy. We’ve known him since he was a kid. We know his brothers, James, Justus, Jude, and Simon, and his sisters. Who does he think he is?” They tripped over what little they knew about him and fell, sprawling. And they never got any further.

Jesus told them, “A prophet has little honor in his hometown, among his relatives, on the streets he played in as a child.” Jesus wasn’t able to do much of anything there—he laid hands on a few sick people and healed them, that’s all. He couldn’t get over their stubbornness. He left and made a circuit of the other villages, teaching.

Jesus called the Twelve to him, and sent them out in pairs. He gave them authority and power to deal with the evil opposition. He sent them off with these instructions:

“Don’t think you need a lot of extra equipment for this. You are the equipment. No special appeals for funds. Keep it simple.

“And no luxury inns. Get a modest place and be content there until you leave.

“If you’re not welcomed, not listened to, quietly withdraw. Don’t make a scene. Shrug your shoulders and be on your way.”

Then they were on the road. They preached with joyful urgency that life can be radically different; right and left they sent the demons packing; they brought wellness to the sick, anointing their bodies, healing their spirits.

## **MESSAGE**

### **PRAYER OF INTERCESSION**

*“My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.”*  
2 Corinthians 12:9

**Gracious and loving God,  
We come to you with hearts that need to be opened to your word and your love.**

**There is so much around us that tears at us and causes us to tremble.  
Keep us ever mindful of your presence and the hope that you have given us in your Son Jesus Christ.**

**Guide us, we pray, as your church, struggling to spread the good news.  
Keep us focused on the mission and ministry to which you have called us and lead us forward.**

**We know, Lord,  
that there will often be bumps and holes in the road along the way.  
Save us from dwelling on them and make us secure in the goals you have placed before us.**

**Hear our prayers for all who need your tender touch of healing in their lives—  
those we name before you each day, and those who are known only to you in the depths of our hearts.  
Be with those who mourn.  
May we all remember the love and grace that your faithful people have brought to our world.**

**We pray for all your creation, always at odds with one another.  
Guide our leaders and those of other nations that this world might truly be as you created it to be—a world of peace, hope and love.**

**These are our prayers,  
together with those that lie on the hearts of all your faithful people, which we offer to you in the spirit of our Lord Jesus Christ, who said “not my will, but thine be done.”**

## 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: in person by placing your offering in the “church mailbox” in the narthex, dropping it off at the office, by mail, through our website [www.panthervalleychurch.org](http://www.panthervalleychurch.org), or add PVEC to your online bill pay. Thank you for your generosity.

## PRAYER OF DEDICATION

**Holy God who both calls us and confronts us: the gifts we bring to you are only a small part of multitude we have received from your goodness. In the depth of our being, we know that in calling us, what you really seek is our faith, our belief, our conviction – our very hearts. What you long for from us is not a trip to church but a lifelong journey into the world to follow Jesus with our whole being. Forgive our unbelief, our holding back, and lead us in the way that frees us from the grip of the world – the way of life! In Christ, we pray. Amen.**

## THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

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

ONE: The Lord be with you.

**ALL: And also with you.**

ONE: Lift up your hearts.

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

ONE: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

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

Eternal God, it is truly right and our greatest joy to give you thanks and praise,

...

Therefore we raise you, joining our voices, with the heavenly choirs and with all the faithful of every time and place, who forever sing to the glory of your name:

**Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might,**

**Heaven and earth are full of your glory.**

**Hosanna in the highest.**

**Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.**

**Hosanna in the highest.**

You are holy, O God of majesty, and blessed is Jesus Christ, your Son, our Lord.

...

Great is the mystery of faith:

**Christ has died; Christ is risen; Christ will come again.**

Gracious God, pour out your Holy Spirit upon us and upon these gifts of bread and juice,

...

Through Christ, with Christ, in Christ, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, all glory and honor are yours, Eternal God, now and forever.

**Amen.**

## **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.**

## **WE SHARE THE MEAL**

Behold the mystery - The Bread we break is the Bread of Life.

Behold the mystery - The Cup we Share is the Cup of Love

These are the gifts of God for the people of God.

**ALL: Thanks be to God.**

## **SENDING FORTH**

Go in confidence. Know that God goes with you to give you words of hope, comfort and peace. May God's love flow through you to all those whom you meet. Amen.

## **POSTLUDE**

*Credits: Today's liturgy is adapted from: Call To Worship. Prayer of Confession and Benediction are written by Nancy C. Townly. Gathering Prayer is written by Javier Viera.*

*Hymn: America, CCLI#46582 Public Domain*

## **Announcements & Upcoming Events**

Thank you for coming to church today. We are glad to see you!

We care for about all our congregants and look forward to seeing everyone when they are comfortable returning to inside worship.

Please pray for:

Those injured, lost, and affected by the condo collapse in Surfside, FL, Praise God for Cylvia's new grandchild Rhys Payton, Betty Schultheis, Danielle, Carolyn, Patrick, Anne, Maggie, Michelle, Lila, Eleanor, Giselle, Jayne, Judy, Catherine, Marianne, Barbara McConnell Family, The Sass Family, The Washburn Family - medical tests, Rich Pearson & Family, and for those struggling with loss. Thank you and please keep sharing & praying. Let us know when to remove a name from the list please.

### **Congratulations to Faye & Rich Kennedy on their 60th Wedding Anniversary!**

Please join us after worship on July 11th in fellowship hall for a farewell luncheon for Arlene Metrione. Arlene is moving to South Carolina on July 14th. Please let us know by July 9th if you plan to attend. Donations are gladly accepted to cover the cost of the food.

Arlene Metrione - parishioner and writer - is published in *These Days* (daily devotions) dated September 2021. The passage is posted in this last Friday's e-news.

The next 2 Chicken Dinners will be held on the 2nd Thursday of the month, which will be Thursday, July 8 & Thursday, August 12.

(July – Italian Chicken, August – Baked Cheeseburgers)

### **BROWNIE BAKERS NEEDED FOR JULY ONLY - Please & Thank You!**

If you haven't heard about last Friday's unwanted visitor in the office (a SNAKE!) and the hubbub that ensued, you can read about it in this last Friday's e-news. Nikki is very grateful to those who came to the rescue, especially Bettina.



## **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](mailto:pvecpastor@gmail.com)

**Music Director:** Diane Van Dongen

**Church Administrator:** Nikki Nicinski

Email: [pvecsecretary@gmail.com](mailto:pvecsecretary@gmail.com)

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***FRIENDS ~ FAMILY ~ FAITH***