



## **PANTHER VALLEY ECUMENICAL CHURCH**

*For the Beauty of Creation  
“Let The Waters and the Earth  
Bring Forth Living Creatures”*

**August 15, 2021**

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

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

## PRELUDE

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

## CALL TO WORSHIP

ONE: This is your garden, Creator God, a thing of beauty beyond understanding.

**ALL: a poem that is being written not in words, but in colors, wind's whisper, soaring bird, snowdrop's petal, gentle rain, sunlight's warmth.**

ONE: This is your garden, Creator God, a thing of beauty beyond understanding.

**ALL: Let our songs, our words, and our thoughts reflect the beauty of God's Garden.**

## MOMENT OF GRATITUDE

ONE: We rejoice in all life.

**ALL: We live in all things. All things live in us.**

ONE: We rejoice in all life.

**ALL: We live by the sun. We move with the stars.**

ONE: We rejoice in all life.

**ALL: We eat from the earth. We drink from the rain. We breathe from the air.**

ONE: We rejoice in all life.

**ALL: We depend on the forests. We have knowledge through their secrets.**

ONE: We rejoice in all life.

**ALL: We share with the creatures. We have strength through their gifts.**

ONE: We rejoice in all life.

**ALL: We have the privilege of seeing and understanding. We have the responsibility of caring. We have the joy of celebrating.**

ONE: We are full of the grace of creation.

**ALL: We are graceful. We are grateful. We rejoice in all life.**

## THE LAKOTA PRAYER TO THE FOUR DIRECTIONS

**Creator, it is I. Thank you for today's sunrise, for the breath and life within me, and for all of your creations. Creator, hear my prayer, and honor my prayer.**

**As the day begins with the rising sun, I ask, spirit keeper of the east, Brother Eagle, be with me. Fly high as you carry my prayers to the creator. May I have eyes as sharp as yours, so I am able to see truth and hope on**

**the path I have chosen. Guide my step and give me courage to walk the circle of my life with honesty and dignity.**

**Spirit keeper of the south, Wolf, be with me. Help me to remember to love and feel compassion for all mankind. Help me to walk my path with joy and love for myself, for others, for the four legged, the winged ones, the plants and all creation upon Mother Earth. Show me it is right for me to make decisions with my heart, even if at times, my heart becomes hurt. Help me to grow and nurture my self-worth in all ways.**

**Spirit keeper of the west, Brown Bear, be with me. Bring healing to the people I love and to myself. Bring into balance the physical, mental and spiritual, so I am able to know my place on this earth, in life and in death. Heal my body, heal my mind and bring light, joy and awareness to my spirit.**

**Spirit keeper of the north, White Buffalo, be with me. As each day passes, help me to surrender, with grace, the things of my youth. Help me to listen to the quiet, and find serenity and comfort in the silences as they become longer. Give me wisdom so I am able to make wise choices in all things which are put in front of me, and when time for my change of worlds has come, let me go peacefully, without regrets, for the things I neglected to do as I walked along my path.**

**Mother Earth, thank you for your beauty, and for all you have given me. Remind me never to take from you more than I need, and remind me to always give back more than I take.**

## **HYMN**

All Creatures of Our God and King

All Creatures of Our God and King  
All creatures of our God and King,  
lift up your voice and with us sing,  
O praise ye! Alleluia!

O brother sun with golden beam,  
O sister moon with silver gleam,  
O praise ye! O praise ye!  
Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

O brother wind, air, clouds, and rain,  
By which all creatures ye sustain.  
O Praise ye! Alleluia!  
Thou rising morn, in praise rejoice,  
Ye light of evening find a voice!  
O praise ye! O praise ye!  
Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

### **SCRIPTURE Genesis 1:20-25**

And God said, "Let the waters bring forth swarms of living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth across the dome of the sky." So God created the great sea monsters and every living creature that moves, of every kind, with which the waters swarm, and every winged bird of every kind. And God saw that it was good. God blessed them, saying, "Be fruitful and multiply and fill the waters in the seas, and let birds multiply on the earth." And there was evening and there was morning, the fifth day.

And God said, "Let the earth bring forth living creatures of every kind: cattle and creeping things and wild animals of the earth of every kind." And it was so. God made the wild animals of the earth of every kind, and the cattle of every kind, and everything that creeps upon the ground of every kind. And God saw that it was good.

**MESSAGE** *Let the Waters and the Earth Bring Forth Living Creatures*

### **PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE**

**Lord you give life to life, from day one; your Spirit brooding over the deep, your wind rushing, your breath filling. As creatures of the earth we rejoice in life using our breath, our being, to raise this hymn of praise:**

**Hallelujah to the sun whose radiance gives us light and warmth.**

**Hallelujah for water who quenches our thirst and gives us life.**

**Hallelujahs for the growth from seed to plant greening the earth; its fruit—beauty and food!**

**Hallelujahs for generations of life tumbling one after another. Life creeping, swimming, flying, running, below, above, upon, within.**

**All the world sings, calls, signals, speaks praise to God whose glory grows in all that breathes!**

**Knowing your power, knowing your love for us, we bring requests this morning;**

**We pray for all we know who are sick, in mind or body, or who suffer from chronic conditions.**

**We pray for all who have lost loved ones.**

**We pray for all who struggle with addiction.**

**We pray for those who are lonely.**

**We long for reconciliation with those we have harmed with harsh words or harsh actions, and for peace among our warring nations.**

**Fill us, enliven us, to be ambassadors of life abundant, breathing out your song in harmony, singing to you, our Creator, whose glory shines through all the world. Amen**

## **LORD'S PRAYER**

*We invite you to pray the prayer in the language you are used to speaking.*

*Today we are highlighting the prayer in the Traditional text that was written in the 17th century and is used by reformed and Presbyterian churches.*

**Our Father in heaven,  
hallowed be your Name,  
your kingdom come,  
your will be done,  
on earth as in heaven.  
Give us today our daily bread.  
Forgive us our sins  
as we forgive those  
who sin against us.  
Save us from the time of trial,  
and deliver us from evil.  
For the kingdom, the power,  
and the glory are yours,  
now and for ever. 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: 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

O great and holy God, we sing hymns; we offer prayers; we stand in awe of your creation; we are humbled by your love. When we come to you, we are often asking for something from you. You have given to us even when we did not ask. Now, in this moment, we are not asking for anything. Accept our gifts, God of grace, and use our lives to bring hope, healing, and wholeness to your beautiful and broken world. In Jesus’ name, Amen.

## SENDING FORTH

For the freshness of this new day, thanks be to you, O God.

For morning’s gift of clarity, its light like the first day’s dawn, thanks be to you.

In this newborn light, let us see afresh.

In this gateway onto what has never been before, let our soul breathe hope, for the earth, for the creatures, for the human family.

Let our soul breathe hope.

## POSTLUDE

*Credits: Call to Worship is adapted from Third Space. Moment of Gratitude is adapted from “Only One Earth,” a United Nations Environment Programme publication for “Environmental Sabbath/Earth Rest Day,” June 1990; UN Environment Programme, DC2-803 United Nations, New York, NY 10017. Four Directions Prayer is from the Lakota. Prayer of the People is adapted from Carol Penner. Sending Forth is written by John Philip Newell.*

*Image: <https://theredeemer.ca/event/season-of-creation-said-eucharist-4/>*

*Hymn: CCLI #1503*

## **Announcements & Upcoming Events**

Thank you for coming to church today. We are always glad to see you ~ continue to stay safe and healthy!

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

**Please pray for:** The nation and the world with COVID, The health of children returning to school, Control of the California fires, Churches as they try and do ministry in a new time, Cuba & Haiti, Ending Gun Violence, Those suffering from mental illness, Giselle & The Family of Gennaro Sirianni, Diane's dear family friend in hospice care, The Miller Family, The Ward Family, The Washburn Family, Rich Pearson & Family - heart transplant, Maureen Bloom - surgery recovery, Betty Schultheis - life transition, Diane, Amy, Charles, Laura, Bonnie Sue, Keith, Nick, Leslie M., Jackie, Mike, Danielle, Carolyn, Patrick, Anne, Maggie, Michelle, Lila, Eleanor, Giselle, Judy, Catherine, Marianne, Diana (Let us know when to remove a name from the list please.)

**Christian Outreach Backpack Program** collection bins are in the narthex and downstairs near the office. Thank you for your generosity! You can find the detailed list of items being requested on our website and in this past Friday's e-news.

**First Presbyterian Church** will host a free community dinner on the second Saturday of each month starting at 5:30pm. The first dinner is on Saturday, September 11, 2021. Dinners will be held at our Chapel – 291 Main Street, Hackettstown, NJ. All are welcome to come and enjoy a free meal and fellowship with friends from the community! For more information, go to their website at: [www.fpchackettstown.org](http://www.fpchackettstown.org)

The next 2 **\$5 Chicken Dinners** here at PVEC will be on the 2nd Thursday of the Month - SEPTEMBER 9TH & OCTOBER 14<sup>TH</sup> - after that we'll probably not see you until next Spring. Menus will be available when Chef Donna makes them! The menu is listed on the website when it becomes available.

Vendors wanted for **Panther Valley Friends & Neighbors Mega Event Day** here at PVEC in the parking lot on Saturday, 9/25 from 10-5. The rain date is 10/2. To reserve space call 973-222-8290.

**PVEC SUMMER 2021 SERMON SERIES continues - For the Beauty of Creation**  
**Join us as we explore the first chapter of Genesis: Israel's Poem of Creation**  
August 15<sup>th</sup> ~ Let the waters and the earth bring forth living creatures  
August 22 ~ Let us make humankind in our image  
August 29<sup>th</sup> ~ God rested

## **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)

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

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

Tel: 908-852-5444

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

***FRIENDS ~ FAMILY ~ FAITH***