



# PANTHER VALLEY ECUMENICAL CHURCH

*For the Beauty of Creation*  
*“God Rested”*

**August 29, 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: As we gather in worship, Jesus speaks to our hearts and spirits now, saying "Peace, be still."

**ALL: As we rest in your presence, Lord, may all our storms grow quiet within us.**

ONE: Bring rest to our hearts, O Lord; may we feel like a leaf after a storm, when the wind is still.

**ALL: May we know both your presence and your peace.  
May you receive both our praise and our thanksgiving.**

### **MOMENT OF GRATITUDE**

God smiles, this much I know, for as I look at all that God has created;  
subtle sunrises and spectacular sunsets,  
birds, butterflies, and flowers dressed in their finest colors,  
incredible insects, playful puppies, dancing deer, hilarious humans;  
I smile too!

**Creator God, we praise you for the diversity of your world and for the life  
you have breathed into all things:**

**for the colors we see**

**the sounds we hear**

**the textures we feel**

**for the large**

**and the small**

**the fierce**

**and the timid**

**predator**

**and prey.**

**Creator God,  
we thank you for your creation,  
perfect in its design and purpose,  
perfect in its diversity and unity.**

## LITANY TO THE FOUR DIRECTIONS

*The drum in the back of the Sanctuary will be used  
to give 4 drum beats after each section of the prayer.*

*We invite you to hold your hand over your heart to share in the drumming.*

**As we face the East, it is the time of the beginnings. With the rising of the sun, the birth of a child, the start of the week, we begin anew. We remember that with the springtime comes the blossoming of the plants and the birth of animals as we celebrate the emerging patterns of life. We hear the drum beat, the heart of the Mother Earth. We give thanks for our birth, this time of exploration and creation.**

*Listen to the beat of the drum*

**As we face the South, we celebrate and acknowledge our emotion. We recognize the strengths and struggles of our youth. Help us share our laughter, love, and joy as we walk through the day in our world of diversity. In this time of growing, we hear the drum beat. We give thanks for the gifts of tenderness, kindness, and understanding for these draw us closer to each other and to you, our Creator.**

*Listen to the beat of the drum*

**As we face the West, we celebrate Spirit. This time of reflection and of stillness for the depth of our growth and courage. Bring together the patterns of life and our emotions with the Spirit in whom we are led to greater integrity and faith. As we reap the harvest, we hear the drum beat. As the sun moves along its path in the sky, we bring closure to those who have walked on. We remember and reflect on the experiences of the day. We give thanks for this time of reflection and remembrance.**

*Listen to the beat of the drum*

**As we face North, we celebrate the life of oldest of our generations. For the gifts of insight and wisdom that God has revealed to them out of their past which are so vital to us in our present we give thanks. In every way we take the opportunities to listen to the stories across all the generations, we hear the drum beat. As we listen and share, we build respect for each other. We give thanks for the strengths of the community.**

*Listen to the beat of the drum*

**As we continue the circle of the year and the circles of Life itself, we are united in the love of God. As we look down to the Earth, we are reminded of the care and provision. As we look upward to the sky, we are reminded of the limitless gift of grace.**

*Listen to the beat of the drum*

**We listen for the drum beat and are reminded that as we move through our lives, we impact all around us. We are reminded of our responsibility to nurture those around us from the four directions and the ground below, and the sky above.**

*Listen to the beat of the drum*

## **HYMN**

### *Come and Find the Quiet Center*

Come and find the quiet center  
in the crowded life we lead,  
find the room for hope to enter,  
find the frame where we are freed:  
clear the chaos and the clutter,  
clear our eyes, that we can see  
all the things that really matter,  
be at peace, and simply be.

Silence is a friend who claims us,  
cools the heat and slows the pace,  
God it is who speaks and names us,  
knows our being, touches base,  
making space within our thinking,  
lifting shades to show the sun,  
raising courage when we're shrinking,  
finding scope for faith begun.

In the Spirit let us travel,  
open to each other's pain,  
let our loves and fears unravel,  
celebrate the space we gain:

there's a place for deepest dreaming,  
there's a time for heart to care,  
in the Spirit's lively scheming  
there is always room to spare!"

**SCRIPTURE** Genesis 2:1-3 (in Hebrew & English)

וַיִּכְלֹוּ הַשָּׁמַיִם וְהָאָרֶץ וְכָל־צְבָאָם:

The heaven and the earth were finished, and all their array.

וַיְכַל אֱלֹהִים בַּיּוֹם הַשְּׁבִיעִי מְלַאכְתּוֹ אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה וַיִּשְׁבֹּת בַּיּוֹם הַשְּׁבִיעִי מְכֹל־מְלַאכְתּוֹ אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה:

On the seventh day God finished the work that He had been doing, and He ceased on the seventh day from all the work that He had done.

וַיְבָרֶךְ אֱלֹהִים אֶת־יוֹם הַשְּׁבִיעִי וַיְקַדְּשׁ אֹתוֹ כִּי בּוֹ שָׁבַת מְכֹל־מְלַאכְתּוֹ אֲשֶׁר־בְּרָא אֱלֹהִים לַעֲשׂוֹת: {פ}

And God blessed the seventh day and declared it holy, because on it God ceased from all the work of creation that He had done.

**MESSAGE** *God Rested*

**STATEMENT OF FAITH** *United Church of Canada*

**We are not alone; we live in God's world.**

**We believe in God:**

**who has created and is creating,**

**who has come in Jesus, the word made flesh, to reconcile and make new**

**who works in us and others by the Spirit.**

**We trust God.**

**We are called to be the Church:**

**to celebrate God's presence,**

**to live with respect in Creation,**

**to love and serve others,**

**to seek justice and resist evil,**

**to proclaim Jesus, crucified and risen, our judge and our hope.**

**In life, in death, in life beyond death, God is with us.**

**We are not alone. Thanks be to God.**

## **JOYS AND CONCERNS AND A PRAYER FOR OUR EARTH**

**All-powerful God, you are present in the whole universe and in the smallest of your creatures.**

**You embrace with your tenderness all that exists.**

**Pour out upon us the power of your love, that we may protect life and beauty.**

**Fill us with peace, that we may live as brothers and sisters, harming no one.**

**O God of the poor, help us to rescue the abandoned and forgotten of this earth, so precious in your eyes.**

**Bring healing to our lives, that we may protect the world and not prey on it, that we may sow beauty, not pollution and destruction. Touch the hearts of those who look only for gain at the expense of the poor and the earth.**

**Teach us to discover the worth of each thing, to be filled with awe and contemplation, to recognize that we are profoundly united with every creature as we journey towards your infinite light.**

**We thank you for being with us each day.**

**Encourage us, we pray, in our struggle for justice, love and peace. Amen.**

## **LORD'S PRAYER**

*Today we are highlighting the prayer in the Anglican New Zealand Prayer Book.*

Our creator God, Ancient of Days, Holy Mother of all worlds and living souls: Your arms, that once flung galaxies of stars like grains of sand, are open wide, and close enough to carry each of us like a father cradles his child next to his heart. May your sacred name be praised! May your realm extend, a commonwealth of mercy, peace, and justice. Your love knits all created nature into one whole. Your will for us always is love; and so we pray:

**May your love be done on earth, in time, as it is in eternity.**

**Give all of us each day the bread we need, and hope to all who hunger for your life.**

**And as we share our bread along the way, pardon us the times we've broken faith.**

**Forgive our lack of loyalty and love; and move us quickly to forgiveness when wrongs are done to us.**

**Do not abandon us in the time of hard testing.**

**Save us from evil's every incarnation, from the powers that possess our spirits and our structures.**

**Forever bind us to your liberating joy!  
For you alone are God of grace and glory, and Rock of our Redemption.  
Let it be so, God, let it be so.  
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**

**Awesome, Holy and Loving God, we acknowledge that tears and smiles are both an important part of life. May these gifts be instrumental in wiping away tears and bringing smiles to your children throughout the world. Our prayer is that no one will miss the joy. May it be so. Amen.**

## **BENEDICTION**

May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

## **POSTLUDE**

*Credits: Call to Worship is written by Rev. Jeff Ramsland. Moment of Gratitude prayer is from Third Space. Litany of the four directions adapted from the work of Rev. Marlene White Rabbit-Helgemo, Pastor All Nations Indian Church of Minneapolis, MN. Used and adapted with permission. A Prayer For Our Earth from Pope Francis Encyclical. Prayer of Dedication is written by Herb Matter. Image: Vincent Van Gogh, Noon Day Rest (after Millet), 1890, Wikiart.*

*Hymn: Come and Find the Quiet Center. CCLI#5267527, Words: 1992 Murray, Shirley ErenaMusic: 1978, 1993 Abingdon Press*



## **Announcements & Upcoming Events**

### **PLEASE PRAY FOR:**

The nation and the world with COVID, the health of children and staff returning to school, Healthcare workers inundated with patients, our mental & physical health, the innocent people of Afghanistan, our military personnel, victims of Tennessee flooding, victims of the Haitian earthquake, control of the wildfires, churches as they try and do ministry in a new time, our friends at Heath Village & Colonial Manor, Diane's dear family friend in hospice care, The Willet Family, The Tamarco Family, The Ledwith Family, The Calandriello Family, The Miller Family, The Ward Family, The Washburn Family, Rich Pearson & Family, Frank, Lisa who is hospitalized with Covid, Jim & Dave Fairless, Ray, Arlene, Christina, Greg, Olivia, Dave, Sue, Roger, Lauren, Faye's college friend, Dave & Sue, Bridget, Tom & Lisa Grillo, Jaylyn & Savanna, Brian, Vinnie Candito, Dee Lartie, Anne, Robyn, Maureen Bloom, Betty Schultheis, Diane, Amy, Charles, Laura, Bonnie Sue, Keith, Nick, Leslie M., Jackie, Mike, Danielle, Carolyn, Patrick, Anne, Maggie, Michelle, Lila, Giselle, Judy, Catherine, Marianne, Diana in hospice care & husband Richard **(Thank you and please keep sharing & praying! Let us know when to remove a name from the list please.)**

**Ninabeth will be on vacation** from Saturday, September 4th - Monday, September 13th.

Episcopal Deacon Jeanette Hile will be leading worship service on Sunday, September 5th. September 12<sup>th</sup> leader to be announced.

Christian Outreach collections for the **Backpack Program** are ending next Sunday. Thank you for contributing!

**SEPTEMBER 9<sup>TH</sup> \$5 Chicken Dinner menu** - Honey BBQ Chicken with mac n' cheese, bean salad, roll & butter, brownie. **Donna is looking for brownie bakers if you can help!**

**Sunday School** will be starting on September 12th @ 10:30 am. Contact Dan Ledwith if you have questions.

### **Youth Group/Youth Squad (Ages 10 and up) Come join us!**

- Friday, September 24th 6-8pm Theater Night Skit for Worship
- Friday, October 29th 6-8pm Halloween Party
- Sunday, November 21st 1-3pm Community Thanksgiving Dinner
- Friday, December 17th 6-8pm Ugly Sweater Party



HISPANIC  
RESOURCE  
CENTER OF  
NORTHWEST  
NEW JERSEY

## **GRAN INAUGURACIÓN del CENTRO DE RECURSOS HISPANOS**

2 DE SEPTIEMBRE, 5pm-8pm; Trinity House, 212 E. Moore St., Hackettstown

¡Habrà comida y cuidado de niños GRATIS!

Tendremos presentaciones sobre recursos de educación, alimentos, abuso, atención médica, vivienda y inmigración.

## **GRAND OPENING of the HISPANIC RESOURCE CENTER**

SEPTEMBER 2, 5pm-8pm; Trinity House, 212 E. Moore St., Hackettstown

There will be FREE food and childcare!

We'll have presentations on education, food, abuse, healthcare, housing, and immigration resources.

En HRC, nuestro objetivo es proporcionarle un contacto de habla hispana en cada organización en nuestra Base de Datos de Referencias.

Horas de Servicio: martes y jueves de 5 a 8 pm y domingos de 2 a 5 pm.

At HRC, our goal is to provide you with a Spanish-speaking contact at each organization in our Referral Data Base.

Office Hours: Tuesday & Thursday from 5-8pm and Sunday from 2-5pm

## **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>

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***FRIENDS ~ FAMILY ~ FAITH***