



PANTHER VALLEY ECUMENICAL CHURCH

**Worship in the Tradition of the Presbyterian Church USA
Celebration of the Lord's Supper
November 7, 2021**

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

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

PRELUDE

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

CALL TO WORSHIP

One: What joy it is to have you here today!

All: We have come from very busy lives, filled both with joys and difficulties.

One: Welcome to this place in which God will ease your burdens and celebrate your joys with you.

All: We have come to find hope and peace in our lives.

One: Whatever has happened this week in your life, know that God is with you and offering you peace, rest and blessing.

All: Thanks be to God who accepts us as we are, and thanks for the warm welcome in this service of worship. Amen.

CALL TO CONFESION

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Gracious God, when we hold back and give only a bit of ourselves, forgive us; when we let pride and insecurity keep us from trusting your mercy and grace, renew us.

Have mercy on us, that you might restore our lives and nourish us as we grow in the love of Christ. Strengthen us to give ourselves fully and completely to Christ's work in the world. Amen.

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

In Christ Jesus, our sins are forgiven and our lives are restored. Thanks be to God for this glorious grace!

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

Holy Spirit, bless this our reading of your word that we might neither add to it nor take anything away from it. (Deut. 4:2)

Help us to keep your commandments and plant them within our hearts. Amen.

SCRIPTURE

Mark 12:38-44 New International Version

As he taught, Jesus said, "Watch out for the teachers of the law. They like to walk around in flowing robes and be greeted with respect in the marketplaces, and have the most important seats in the synagogues and the places of honor at banquets. They devour widows' houses and for a show make lengthy prayers. These men will be punished most severely."

Jesus sat down opposite the place where the offerings were put and watched the crowd putting their money into the temple treasury. Many rich people threw in large amounts. But a poor widow came and put in two very small copper coins, worth only a few cents.

Calling his disciples to him, Jesus said, "Truly I tell you, this poor widow has put more into the treasury than all the others. They all gave out of their wealth; but she, out of her poverty, put in everything—all she had to live on."

SERMON *Opening our Hands; Suffering with a Neighbor* *Pastor Ninabeth*

HYMN

Take my life, and Let It Be

Take my life, and let it be
consecrated, Lord, to thee.
Take my moments and my days;
let them flow in ceaseless praise.
Take my hands, and let them move
at the impulse of thy love.
Take my feet, and let them be
swift and beautiful for thee.

Take my will, and make it thine;
it shall be no longer mine.
Take my heart, it is thine own;
it shall be thy royal throne.
Take my love, my Lord, I pour
at thy feet its treasure-store.
Take myself, and I will be
ever, only, all for thee.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

In a world where many would seek to damage your creation, bring hatred to your people, show violence to your children ... help us always to be grateful for the gifts of love and life, for the glimpses of transforming beauty and unending wonder. Take us now and use us well to combat evil and destruction wherever we find it.

In world driven by greed and a lust for power; where the material threatens to overwhelm the spiritual; where goodness seems too frail in the face of badness ... help us not to give up on righteousness and truth; to believe that you can use well the gifts we offer; that you will call forth the gifts of your people again and again.

In a world where people are broken at the hands of humanity and by the vagaries of nature ... help us to trust the healing of your blessing and love, placed even now in the hands of those who seek to face down injustice and champion human rights; who stand in the dark places with your light held high; who give of themselves for the sake of others.

In a world where we struggle to understand pain and suffering, and, most especially, in the lives of those we love ... we bring before you those for whom we weep; those we embrace in our hearts; those to whom we reach out in the yearnings of our prayers ...

Silence

In a world where we can feel so insignificant and helpless ... help us to know you have a place for us; lift our spirits when we don't feel good enough; fit us into your plan in amazing ways.

In a world where so much is focused on the here and now ... help us to remain bound with those who have gone before us; to rejoice in our fellowship in the one kingdom of your love; to give thanks that, from time to time, we have a glimpse of eternity. 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.pantervalleychurch.org, or add PVEC to your online bill pay. Thank you for your generosity.

PRAYER OF DEDICATION

O Lord, you have filled the earth with good things and invited us to share freely in the blessings of life. By sharing our gifts with others, we proclaim your grace. May the offerings we present be a sign of the abundant life you intend for all your people. We pray in Jesus’ name. Amen.

THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

ONE: The Lord be with you.

ALL: And also with you.

ONE: Lift up your hearts.

ALL: We lift them to the Lord.

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

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

With our whole heart and our very being we praise you for you are a wise and wonderful God. With nothing more than a word, you created the whirling planets and breathed life into all of creation. You made us in your image, that we might be stewards of this good earth.

Together, with all of creation, we sing your majesty:

**ALL: 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 blessed us with the promise of abundance and grace if only we lived within the bounds of your mercy. But we pushed those boundaries and neglected your earth, mistreating one another and failing to care for creation. So you sent your Son, Jesus Christ, to redeem us for we were unable to redeem ourselves. In the flesh he came among us and preached the Gospel not only in word but in deed.

We give you thanks that the Lord Jesus, on the night before he died, took bread, and after giving thanks to you, he broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying: Take, eat. This is my body, broken for you.

In the same way Jesus took the cup, saying: This cup is the new covenant sealed in my blood, shed for you for the forgiveness of sins. Whenever you drink it, do this in remembrance of me.

We gather this day, God of all majesty and power, to lift up your holy name and proclaim the mystery of faith:

ALL: Christ has died, Christ is risen, Christ will come again.

Giver of Every Mercy, send us the presence of your Spirit that she might bless us in this holy meal, sending us forth into the world to be both hearers and doers of your Word.

Unite us this day with our sisters and brothers around the world as we preach the Gospel and grow in our understanding of discipleship.

Through Christ, with Christ, in Christ, all glory and honor are yours, Holy God, both now and forever more. 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 written in the 17th century and is used by reformed and Presbyterian churches.

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 debts, as we forgive our debtors; 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.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

God of grace, you have given us all things, and you have fed us with Christ's presence through this sacrament. We commit ourselves to you now, and we give ourselves to the work of your kingdom, which is upon us in Jesus' life. Thanks be to God! Amen.

BENEDICTION

May the holy wisdom of God guard your ways and guide your paths.
May the living truth of God enlighten your hearts and open your minds.
And may the living Spirit of God give you life, and life to the full!
Amen!

POSTLUDE

Questions to Consider

When have you spent time with someone who suffers deeply? How did you feel?

What would it look like for you to stop and listen to someone who is suffering?

How was your heart transformed as you encountered another's suffering?

How might you courageously speak truth to the "principalities and powers" intent on destroying the lives of people?

Credits: *Call to worship is written by Nancy Townley. Prayer of Confession is written by Mary J Scifres. Prayer of Illumination and Communion liturgy is written by Stephen M. Fearing. Prayers of the People is written by Tom Gordon.*

Image: Compassion Word Art

Hymn: Take My Life and Let It Be, Public Domain

STEWARDSHIP SNIPPET

Nov. 7th 2021 (24th Sunday after Pentecost, Year B)

Mark 12:42:44 – A poor widow came and put in two small copper coins, which are worth a penny. Then he called his disciples and said to them, “Truly I tell you, this poor widow has put in more than all those who are contributing to the treasury. For all of them have contributed out of their abundance; but she out of her poverty has put in everything she had, all she had to live on.”

The things that are valued in the Kingdom of God differ from the human realm. Should we give our money to fund a new air-conditioning unit for the church? Should we give money so that our name goes on a plaque inside the door as a cornerstone giver? Are those the things valued in the kingdom? Or should money be given to relief organization? Food pantries? Homeless shelters?

Announcements & Upcoming Events

PLEASE PRAY FOR:

Rick Nelson, Keith, Friends @ Heath Village, Mike, Ellie, Cindy & Family, Katie, Joe & Elaine O'Reilly, Amy Testa, Jim, Adam, Kailin (surgery) and her parents, Marie, Jim & Michelle, Charles, Walter, Bonnie Sue, Yvonne, Helen, Claire, Grey, Bernadette Jacobus, The abducted missionaries in Haiti, Eloise Mial, Dong-Hee Nam, Lisa & Brandon in the passing of Brandon's father, Kathy Pflugfelder, Bruce, Angus, Rick Wilson's father, Kailynn, The De La Cruz Family, Rich K., Ann Custard, Anne Ellis, George Capola, Bridget, Refugees and those seeking asylum, Zachary, Churches as they try and do ministry in a new time, The Tamarco Family, The Miller Family, Meghan Rose, Anne, Julie, The Ward Family, Rich Pearson & Family, The Willet Family, Carol D., Derek Fleming, Lauren, Tom & Lisa Grillo, Jaylyn & Savanna, Brian, Dee Lartie, Robyn, Diane, Amy, Nick, Leslie M., Jackie, Mike, Danielle, Carolyn, Patrick, Anne, Maggie, Giselle, Judy, Marianne

Thank you and please let us know when to remove a name from the list.

We made our goal of filling 5 buckets with cleaning supplies to be shared through UMCOR enabling those affected by floods, hurricanes, and tornadoes to begin the overwhelming job of cleaning up. On Friday October 29th we filled the buckets and on Sunday October 31st the congregation blessed the buckets! Now the buckets will be delivered to the Skylands Outreach Depot. **We are so grateful for all your donations!**

Menu for Today's Fellowship Hour

Penny's spectacular Chili with Accoutrement (guacamole - chips - cheese), Donna's Baked Ham & Cheese Rolls, Crumb Cake, Cookies/Coffee/Juice

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

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

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FRIENDS ~ FAMILY ~ FAITH