



# PANTHER VALLEY ECUMENICAL CHURCH

Worship in the United Methodist Tradition  
November 21, 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.

## INTROIT

*Let All Things Now Living*

*PVEC Bell Choir*

## CALL TO WORSHIP

ONE: To the Thanksgiving table of plenty,

**ALL: Come, thankful people, come!**

ONE: To the kitchen where familiar hands prepare with love,

**ALL: Come, thankful people, come!**

ONE: To the farm where calloused hands plant and tend,

**ALL: Come, thankful people, come!**

ONE: To the rich earth, where roots stretch and seeds grow,

**ALL: Come, thankful people, come!**

ONE: To this service of worship and praise of the God of creation,

**ALL: Come, thankful people, come!**

## OPENING PRAYER

**God of sowing and harvesting, we lift our thanks and praise for the cycles and seasons that remind us of your faithfulness, your generosity, and the abundance of your love. Thank you for walking with us through all the seasons of life. We come today, remembering the moments in which you have restored us from despair to laughter, from sadness to joy, from fear to gladness. We come today, remembering that all we have comes from you. In our rejoicing and remembering, let gratitude reorient our hearts that we might live in grateful praise always. Amen.**

## HYMN

*Come, Ye Thankful People Come*

Come, ye thankful people, come,

raise the song of harvest home;

all is safely gathered in,

ere the winter storms begin.

God our Maker doth provide

for our wants to be supplied;

come to God's own temple, come,

raise the song of harvest home.

All the world is God's own field,

fruit as praise to God we yield;  
wheat and tares together sown  
are to joy or sorrow grown;  
first the blade and then the ear,  
then the full corn shall appear;  
Lord of harvest, grant that we  
wholesome grain and pure may be.

Even so, Lord, quickly come,  
bring thy final harvest home;  
gather thou thy people in,  
free from sorrow, free from sin,  
there, forever purified,  
in thy presence to abide;  
come, with all thine angels, come,  
raise the glorious harvest home.

### **PRAYER OF CONFESSION**

**Sower of Creation, we admit that we are not sure where all our food comes from. We do not always know who prepared it, or whether those who grow and prepare our food have enough food themselves.**

**To You, who crafted each of us by hand, we confess that we do not always care for our bodies, that we sometimes eat what is easy rather than what is healthy, and that in doing so we have disrespected your gifts to us.**

**Help us to appreciate the good food you have provided for us, heighten our awareness of the ways we benefit from labor in farm and factory, remind us of the miracle that brings us nourishment each day, and make us truly thankful today and every day. Amen.**

### **ASSURANCE OF PARDON**

**Created Community, know that God's everlasting faithfulness reaches out to each and every one of us to give us hope for a better harvest in the changing seasons of our lives.**

## SCRIPTURE

*Psalm 126 Common English Bible* A pilgrimage song.

When the Lord changed Zion's circumstances for the better,  
it was like we had been dreaming.

Our mouths were suddenly filled with laughter;  
our tongues were filled with joyful shouts.

It was even said, at that time, among the nations,  
"The Lord has done great things for them!"

Yes, the Lord has done great things for us,  
and we are overjoyed.

Lord, change our circumstances for the better,  
like dry streams in the desert waste!

Let those who plant with tears  
reap the harvest with joyful shouts.

Let those who go out,  
crying and carrying their seed,  
come home with joyful shouts,  
carrying bales of grain!

*Matthew 6:25-33 Common English Bible*

"Therefore, I say to you, don't worry about your life, what you'll eat or what you'll drink, or about your body, what you'll wear. Isn't life more than food and the body more than clothes? Look at the birds in the sky. They don't sow seed or harvest grain or gather crops into barns. Yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Aren't you worth much more than they are? Who among you by worrying can add a single moment to your life? And why do you worry about clothes? Notice how the lilies in the field grow. They don't wear themselves out with work, and they don't spin cloth. But I say to you that even Solomon in all of his splendor wasn't dressed like one of these. If God dresses grass in the field so beautifully, even though it's alive today and tomorrow it's thrown into the furnace, won't God do much more for you, you people of weak faith? Therefore, don't worry and say, 'What are we going to eat?' or 'What are we going to drink?' or 'What are we going to wear?' Gentiles long for all these things. Your heavenly Father knows that you need them. Instead, desire first and foremost God's kingdom and God's righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.

## MESSAGE

**PRAYER FOR OTHERS**

**God, like the Israelites in the wilderness, we too have known Your love, and experienced Your care and provision. You invite us to extend that love to the world around us— to care for others as deeply as we care for ourselves. And so we bring the needs of our world before You now.**

*pause*

**In Your mercy, hear our prayer.**

**We pray for the many who do not have enough: enough food to eat, or shelter to keep warm; enough employment, or money to pay their bills; enough medicine or medical care.**

*pause*

**Lord, in Your mercy, hear our prayer.**

**We also pray for those who have more than enough, but who still struggle to find meaning and purpose in life, who indulge in dangerous or self-serving activities to dull their pain or loneliness.**

*pause*

**Lord, in Your mercy, hear our prayer.**

**God, Your grace reaches out to all of us. You call us to live as citizens of heaven, working together with one heart and mind. Strengthen us to live in a manner worthy of the Good News we have received, offering our lives in service of Your kingdom, where the last are first, and the first are last, and there is grace enough for all.**

*pause*

**Lord, in Your mercy, hear our prayer.**

**In the name of Jesus Christ, our Saviour and Lord, 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 16<sup>th</sup> century for the Book of Common Prayer. This prayer is utilized by the Episcopal Church and the United Methodist Church.*

**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: 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**

**Giver of all good things, we thank you:**

**for health and vigor, for the air that gives the breath of life, the sun that warms us, and the good food that makes us strong;  
for happy homes and for the friends we love, for all that makes it good to live.**

**Make us thankful and eager to repay, by cheerfulness and kindness, and by a readiness to help others.**

**Freely we have received; let us freely give, in the name of him who gave his life for us, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

## **BENEDICTION**

May the Lord bless you and keep you,  
May He make His face shine upon you and be gracious to you.

May the eyes of your heart be open  
to all the blessings which surround you;  
may this awareness produce a harvest of generosity in your spirit.

May thankfulness rise up within you,  
not just during this short season,  
but day after day,  
from the early morning watch until you retire for the night.

May thoughts of Jesus fill your mind,  
and hunger for God drive your soul,  
and love for the Holy Spirit guide your speech and your actions.

## POSTLUDE

### **Questions to consider this week**

How does worrying about what we have keep us  
from a right relationship with God and our neighbor?

What 3 blessings have you received that you would like  
to share with someone else?

Think of a time when someone shared their gratitude for you.  
How did it feel?

Who needs your words of love and praise today?

**Credits:** *Call to Worship and Prayer of Confession is adapted from A Better Harvest. An Intergenerational Liturgy for Thanksgiving Day was written by the Rev. Dr. Laurel Koepf Taylor, Assistant Professor of Old Testament at Eden Theological Seminary, Saint Louis, Missouri.*

*Prayer of Dedication is written by Thoman Ken (1637-1711).*

*The prayer for others is written by Christine Longhurst.*

*Image: PVEC Harvest Table 2020*

*Hymn: Come, Ye Thankful People Come. CCLI#50200, Public Domain, We Gather Together, CCLI#3865495, Public Domain*



## **Announcements & Upcoming Events**

### **PLEASE PRAY FOR:**

Joy that Diane's son Jonathan is officially engaged!, Our Leaders, Relief from rising costs, Rick Nelson, Keith, Gordon, Heath, 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, Laura, Bonnie Sue, Yvonne, Helen, Claire, Grey, Bernadette Jacobus, the abducted missionaries in Haiti, Eloise Mial, Dong-Hee Nam, Kathy Pflugfelder, Bruce, 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., 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

**Some names have been on our list for an extended time. Please let us know when to remove them, thank you.**

### **SPECIAL DELIVERY COMING SOON TO YOUR DOOR**

**The 2021 Annual Reports** will be available for your review soon.

Around Thanksgiving you should expect **Advent packets** to be delivered by the Worship Commission.

The Annual Report will be distributed at this time if you don't receive it before then.

### **\*\*Our Annual Congregational Meeting is December 5th\*\***

All are invited to attend after worship at 11:45am (in-person OR via Zoom).

Fellowship Hour will follow the meeting at 12:15pm. See this week's e-news for the menu.

### ***Stewardship Snippet***

**Nov. 21st 2021 (26<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Pentecost, Year B) John 18:-33-37**

John 18:33-37 begins a long scene in which the Gospel writer unfolds the reality of Jesus' kingship. It is a kingship that can be difficult to see, for it is manifest in crucifixion rather than in political dominance. Today, Jesus' kingship can be difficult to see for the same reasons. Our allegiances to earthly powers lead us to deny God's kingship. We may not even be aware that we have done so.

Please join us this afternoon for our  
**4<sup>th</sup> annual Thanksgiving Community dinner**  
in Fellowship Hall **1:00pm – 3:00pm**  
AND  
our **2<sup>nd</sup> annual Hanging of the Greens Open House**  
in the sanctuary **2:30pm – 4:00pm**

### **Frequently Asked Questions:**

**Do I have to bring something to the dinner?** ~ No.

**Does it cost money?** ~ No.

**Can I bring something to the dinner?** ~ Yes, you can bring a side dish or a dessert

**Do I have to attend both events?** ~ No, you are welcome to attend either.

**Will the “Hanging of the Greens” open house be held at another time as well?**

~ Yes, our Hanging of the Greens open house will be available from November 21 through December 25<sup>th</sup>. You are welcome to learn about the symbols of Christmas and hang an ornament any time the church is open.

**When is the church open?** ~ The church is open Monday through Friday from 9am – 2pm and on Sundays from 10am – 12pm.

### **Breadmaker Supreme Prayer**

Take 3 kilos of flour says the recipe ...

We thank you, Lord, for flour:  
flour made from wheat or other grain,  
grown in the mystery of the earth,  
ripened in the warmth of the sun;  
ripened, then cut down at the harvest by the farmer’s skill,  
ground by the miller,  
sold by the shop assistant,  
placed in the bowl...  
we thank you, Lord, for flour.

We thank you, Lord, for salt:  
Jesus told us we were to be salt of the earth,  
and we must never lose our flavour.  
The salt, which adds flavour to our food,  
is also antiseptic to our wounds,  
reminding us of the challenge to our faith  
and the healing power of Jesus ...  
We thank you, Lord, for salt.

We thank you, Lord, for yeast:  
that small yet living organism  
that enables the bread to rise,  
that reminds us of the fact that even small works done in Jesus' name  
can enable the kingdom to grow ...  
we thank you, Lord, for yeast.

We thank you, Lord, for water:  
water, without which none of us could live,  
water, which forms the other elements of our bread into dough,  
which, having risen, and been formed and drawn into shape by human  
hands, is baked to give us the staff of life;  
water, which cleanses and renews us,  
refreshes and revives us,  
the water of baptism, which commits us to our faith ...  
we thank you, Lord, for water...

We thank you, Lord, for bread:  
Bread, the basis of the food we eat,  
bread for toast, for sandwiches, for bread and jam,  
bread for bread pudding and bread for buns –  
and bread that is broken and shared in communion with one another,  
in remembrance –  
remembrance of that night when Jesus sat with his friends at supper,  
and broke the bread and gave it to them,  
saying, "This is my body broken for you."  
We thank you, Lord, for bread.

~ posted on the **Diocese of Bath and Wells** website. <http://www.bathandwells.org.uk/>

## **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***