



PANTHER VALLEY ECUMENICAL CHURCH

Earth Sunday April 24, 2022

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

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

FRIENDS ~ FAMILY ~ FAITH

A PRAYER FOR PEACE

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WE PRAY FOR UKRAINE AND THE SAFETY AND SECURITY OF ITS CITIZENS.

Bless those fighting to protect their homeland
with resources, courage, determination, and strength.

WE PRAY FOR THE REFUGEES EVACUATING THEIR HOMES.

Watch over them on their journey, provide for their needs,
and enable them to return swiftly to Ukraine.

WE PRAY FOR THE RUSSIANS PROTESTING THE INVASION.

May their voices be heard and magnified
and help bring an end to the conflict.

WE PRAY FOR THE COUNTRIES OFFERING HUMANITARIAN AID.

Bless them with abundant resources
to feed, clothe and shelter the refugees.

WE PRAY FOR OUR WORLD LEADERS DETERMINING HISTORY.

Bless them with wisdom, clarity, and unity
and enable them to act decisively for the greater good.

WE PRAY FOR THOSE WHO ARE SUFFERING, GRIEVING AND AFRAID.

Bless them with hope and healing, comfort and connection,
and the knowledge that they are not alone.

WE PRAY FOR OUR BROKEN WORLD.

BLESS US WITH THE ABILITY TO WORK TOGETHER
TO USHER IN AN ERA OF ABIDING PEACE.



PRELUDE

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

CALL TO WORSHIP

ONE: Christ is risen!

ALL: Christ is risen indeed!

ONE: Creator God, we praise you!

ALL: Risen Christ, we greet you!

ONE: Holy Spirit, we are one body by your grace.

ALL: Alleluia! We have seen the Risen Christ! Alleluia!

ONE: You alone are holy, O God, and so we worship you.

ALL: You have brought Christ up out of the grave.

ONE: You have brought life out of death, hope out of despair.

ALL: We have seen your victory in our lives;

ONE: We have beheld your Risen Christ among us.

ALL: For what we have seen, we give thanks.

ONE: For what is yet to come, we give you our hearts.

ALL: We worship you, and give you ourselves. Alleluia!

HYMN

Thine Be the Glory

UMH #308

Thine be the glory,
risen, conquering Son;
endless is the victory
thou o'er death hast won.
Angels in bright raiment
rolled the stone away,
kept the folded grave clothes
where thy body lay.

Refrain:

Thine be the glory,
risen, conquering Son;
endless is the victory
thou o'er death hast won.

Lo! Jesus meets thee,
risen from the tomb;
lovingly he greets thee,
scatters fear and gloom.
Let the church with gladness
hymns of triumph sing,
for our Lord now liveth;
death hath lost its sting.

(Refrain)

No more we doubt thee,
glorious Prince of life!
Life is naught without thee;
aid us in our strife.
Make us more than conquerors,
through thy deathless love;
bring us safe through Jordan
to thy home above.

(Refrain)

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Gracious God, your risen Christ appeared to the disciples and spoke to them. Pass through the locked doors of our fears and our doubts, our need to control and understand. Be present with us; speak to us; open our hearts and minds, that we may hear with joy what you are saying to us today, and give you our hearts. Amen.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

**Creator God, we confess we have not honored your Creation;
we have not loved it as you have loved us.
We have thought ourselves separate, not part of your Creation.
Forgive our ignorance and arrogance,
our greed and destructiveness.
Bring us again into the oneness of your Creation;**

**forgive us, heal our fears and transform our desires,
and shepherd us to be good stewards
of the gift of life.**

Assurance of Pardon

ONE: Christ comes into every shadowed corner of our lives with the light of Easter. Christ comes into the locked rooms of our faults and gifts us with grace and hope.

ALL: Christ comes to fill us with peace, so we may proclaim the good news of mercy and forgiveness for all. Thanks be to God. Amen.

SCRIPTURE READING: from Psalm 148

ONE: Praise God! Praise the Holy One from the heavens;

ALL: praise God in the heights!

ONE: Praise God, sun and moon;

ALL: praise God, all you shining stars!

ONE: Let them praise the name of the Creator,

ALL: who commanded and they were created.

ONE: Praise the Eternal One from the earth,

ALL: you sea monsters and all deeps!

ONE: Fire and hail, snow and frost,

ALL: stormy wind fulfilling God's command!

ONE: Mountains and all hills,

ALL: fruit trees and all cedars!

ONE: Wild animals and all cattle,

ALL: creeping things and flying birds!

ONE: Rulers of the earth and all peoples!

ALL: people of every gender, age and race together!

ONE: Let them praise the name of the Loving One,

ALL: for God's name alone is exalted.

ONE: God's glory is throughout earth and heaven.

ALL: Praise God!

GOSPEL READING: John 20:19-31

When it was evening on that day, the first day of the week, and the doors of the house where the disciples had met were locked for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said,

"Peace be with you."

After he said this, he showed them his hands and his side. Then the disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord. Jesus said to them again,

"Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you."

When he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them,

"Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained."

But Thomas (who was called the Twin), one of the twelve, was not with them when Jesus came. So the other disciples told him,

"We have seen the Lord."

But he said to them,

"Unless I see the mark of the nails in his hands, and put my finger in the mark of the nails and my hand in his side, I will not believe."

A week later his disciples were again in the house, and Thomas was with them.

Although the doors were shut, Jesus came and stood among them and said,

"Peace be with you."

Then he said to Thomas,

"Put your finger here and see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it in my side. Do not doubt but believe."

Thomas answered him,

"My Lord and my God!"

Jesus said to him,

"Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have come to believe."

Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book. But these are written so that you may come to believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that through believing you may have life in his name.

MESSAGE

SPECIAL MUSIC

Dona Nobis Pacem

PVEC Choir

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE from the Book of Common Worship

Eternal God, your touch makes this world holy. Open our eyes to see your hand at work in the splendor of creation, and in the beauty of every human life.

**Especially this morning we thank you
for the beauty of green growing things throughout the land . . .
for the sustaining love of family and friends . . .
for the treasure stored in every person . . .
and for the fellowship of faith in your church . . .
Lord in your mercy . . . Hear our prayer**

We dare to pray for others, God our Savior, claiming your love in Jesus Christ for the whole world, committing ourselves to care for those around us, in His name.

**Especially this morning we pray
for the people in countries ravaged by strife or warfare . . .
for those isolated by sickness or sorrow . . . and those who face death . . .
for those who cannot find work today . . .
and for those who work in His name in every land . . .
Lord in your mercy . . . Hear our prayer**

**Lord, listen as we now offer our individual prayers, in silence or in words.
[each individual prayer ends with, Lord in your mercy . . . Hear our prayer]**

THE 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 Ecumenical Text which was
developed in contemporary language by the English Language Liturgical
Consultation in 1988.*

**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: dropping it into the "church" located in the Narthex, by mail, through our website, or add PVEC to your online bill pay. Thank you for your generosity.

PRAYER OF DEDICATION

We could keep our treasures locked up where they never see the light of your love, or we can offer them back to you so that those who live in the shadows of poverty might be fed, those who walk the streets of loneliness find a community, and those who long for peace will find an end to the violence in their lives. And so we open our hearts and our gifts in joyous praise to you. Amen.

BENEDICTION

Go forth in peace. May the grace of the Risen Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all. Amen.

POSTLUDE

Stewardship Snippet (2nd Sunday of Easter - Year C) April 24, 2022, John 20:24-29
But Thomas (who was called the Twin), one of the twelve, was not with them when Jesus came. So the other disciples told him, "We have seen the Lord." But he said to them, "Unless I see the mark of the nails in his hands, and put my finger in the mark of the nails and my hand in his side, I will not believe." A week later his disciples were again in the house, and Thomas was with them. Although the doors were shut, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you." Then he said to Thomas, "Put your finger here and see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it in my side. Do not doubt but believe." Thomas answered him, "My Lord and my God!" Jesus said to him, "Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have come to believe."

Jesus comes to us as he came to the first disciples, right in the midst of our fear, pain, doubt, and confusion. He comes speaking peace, breathing into our anxious lives the breath of the Holy Spirit. What is more, he keeps showing up. As he came back a week

later for Thomas, Jesus keeps coming back week after week among his gathered disciples — in the word, the water, the bread, and the wine — not wanting any to miss out on the life and peace he gives. And he keeps sending us out of our safe, locked rooms, into a world that, like us, so desperately needs his gifts of life and peace.

Donna Weinberg

Credits: Today's Liturgy is adapted from: Steve Garnaas-Holmes and Thom M. Shuman

Hymn: Thine Be the Glory. CCLI#21837, Public Domain

Image: "All Our Relations," anonymous.

Announcements & Upcoming Events

The Ukrainian People & Our World, Refugees Everywhere, Andrew Dauch Sr., Glenn McFall, Steve, Pat, Joseph, Hunter & Family, Tom & Lee, Rob, John, Stacey, Cecelia, Billy, Sally, Gordon, Lois, Donald

Thanks to those of you who have written on The Discernment Team's PVEC timeline in Fellowship Hall. **We hope to see many more responses between now and May 1st.** Remember you can also share a longer story.

Sun. 4/24 Rummage Sale - After worship, Bag Day \$5 small/\$8 large

Sat. 4/30 Last day for Rummage Sale 9am-2pm, Dollar Day

Sat. 5/14 Non-Church Sponsored - All Day Craft 'N' Crop event 9am-5pm, see brochures in church office or on bulletin boards throughout building for more information

Sat. 6/1 Fish & Chips Dinner 5-7pm (proceeds go to VBS) tickets for sale now

8/1-5 VBS 9am-12pm

*Be sure to see this week's e-news sent on Fridays for many wonderful pictures of current and recent events.

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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FAMILY ~ FAITH ~ FRIENDS