



PANTHER VALLEY ECUMENICAL CHURCH

Sixth Sunday of Easter May 22, 2022

Worship in the Presbyterian Tradition

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

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

FRIENDS ~ FAMILY ~ FAITH

PRELUDE

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

CALL TO WORSHIP

ONE: God calls us to this place, a haven for healing and hope.

ALL: We come, with the pain of our burdens, we come to hear God's Word of hope for us.

ONE: Together, we will sing songs of joy; each of us will hear God whisper our name, 'Beloved of my heart.'

ALL: We join our voices in prayer and praise; we sing of our longing for new lives.

ONE: Here, our shadowed corners are filled with Light; here we discover that God dwells in us.

ALL: And not just us, for God would teach all to love; God's Spirit would lead all peoples in peace.

CHILDREN'S TIME

HYMN

Shall We Gather At the River

UMH #723

Shall we gather at the river,
where bright angel feet have trod,
with its crystal tide forever
flowing by the throne of God?

Refrain:

Yes, we'll gather at the river,
the beautiful, the beautiful river;
gather with the saints at the river
that flows by the throne of God.

On the margin of the river,
washing up its silver spray,
we will walk and worship ever,
all the happy golden day.

(Refrain)

Ere we reach the shining river,
lay we every burden down;
grace our spirits will deliver,
and provide a robe and crown.

(Refrain)

Soon we'll reach the shining river,
soon our pilgrimage will cease;
soon our happy hearts will quiver
with the melody of peace.

(Refrain)

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Because you dwell in our hearts, Eternal God, you know how the anger, the pain, the bitterness of our lives tries to crowd you out. The noise of the world deafens us to that Word which can heal us. We want our children to be good, kind, and gentle to others, and then they hear us call others names, and speak of them with demeaning words. Our desire for revenge towards those who have hurt us shows that your peace, indeed, is not in us.

You promise a new heaven and a new earth, so create new spirits and new lives within us, Healing God. Shattered by our sin, your heart can still heal our brokenness. Your Spirit, living deep within our souls, can teach us faithful ways. Your Word, Jesus Christ our Lord, whispers to us of your mercy, your hope, your love.

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

ONE: The Word which can transform us is not some idle gossip, but good news for us. It fills us with forgiveness, equips us for service, and sends us forth to love others as God loves us.

ALL: In our midst, the Holy Spirit teaches us all we need to know, gives us what we need in order to be faithful, and fills us with peace. Thanks be to God. Amen.

SCRIPTURE Acts 16:9-15

During the night Paul had a vision: there stood a man of Macedonia pleading with him and saying, "Come over to Macedonia and help us."

When he had seen the vision, we immediately tried to cross over to Macedonia, being convinced that God had called us to proclaim the good news to them.

We set sail from Troas and took a straight course to Samothrace, the following day to Neapolis, and from there to Philippi, which is a leading city of the district of Macedonia and a Roman colony. We remained in this city for some days.

On the sabbath day we went outside the gate by the river, where we supposed there was a place of prayer; and we sat down and spoke to the women who had gathered there.

A certain woman named Lydia, a worshiper of God, was listening to us; she was from the city of Thyatira and a dealer in purple cloth. The Lord opened her heart to listen eagerly to what was said by Paul.

When she and her household were baptized, she urged us, saying, "If you have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come and stay at my home." And she prevailed upon us.

Revelation 21:10, 22-22:5

And in the spirit, he carried me away to a great, high mountain and showed me the holy city Jerusalem coming down out of heaven from God. I saw no temple in the city, for its temple is the Lord God the Almighty and the Lamb.

And the city has no need of sun or moon to shine on it, for the glory of God is its light, and its lamp is the Lamb. The nations will walk by its light, and the kings of the earth will bring their glory into it.

Its gates will never be shut by day--and there will be no night there.

People will bring into it the glory and the honor of the nations.

But nothing unclean will enter it, nor anyone who practices abomination or falsehood, but only those who are written in the Lamb's book of life.

Then the angel showed me the river of the water of life, bright as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb through the middle of the street of the city.

On either side of the river is the tree of life with its twelve kinds of fruit, producing its fruit each month; and the leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations.

Nothing accursed will be found there anymore. But the throne of God and of the Lamb will be in it, and his servants will worship him; they will see his face, and his name will be on their foreheads.

And there will be no more night; they need no light of lamp or sun, for the Lord God will be their light, and they will reign forever and ever.

MESSAGE

SPECIAL MUSIC *I'll Fly Away*

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

God of dreams and Lord of visions, we pray for eyes to see and ears to hear for hearts and minds that will respond to all that you reveal to us:

'Come,' said the man who spoke through the night,
'Come to Macedonia and help us.'
And his plea echoes others offered down through the centuries.

'Come,' they chorus,
'Help,' they implore
In places of famine and desert they cry:
'Bring to our nations the waters of life.'

In places of pain and brokenness they cry:
'Bring to our nations leaves for healing, from the tree of life.'

In places of conflict and betrayal they cry:
'Bring to this world the peace that was given by Jesus himself.'

And of course, today,
we'll endeavor to bring justice and peace,
freedom, healing, and love.

But in our ambition to build heaven on Earth, remind us, good God of vision and dreams, with eyes to see and ears to hear, and hearts and minds to understand, that those we seek to help today, may be the very ones anointed to reveal the paths of salvation that we are yet to walk. 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.

MINUTE FOR MISSION

Zoe Milelli

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 do not only offer our gifts to you, but our community to all who are lonely, our hearts to all who are grieving, our hope to all who have lost their way, our lives to all who are tossed aside by the world. This we pray, in Jesus’ name. Amen.

BENEDICTION

ONE: Our God, who is gracious, sends us out to be a blessing.

ALL: With our hearts, we will sing God’s praises; with our hands, we will serve God’s people.

ONE: Jesus, who is our Brother, sends us to be with others.

ALL: We will comfort all whose hearts are troubled; we will go to help all who cry out to us.

ONE: The Holy Spirit, who is our Advocate, sends us into a broken world.

ALL: We will work for justice for all who are oppressed; we will teach songs of hope to all who despair.

POSTLUDE

Today’s Altar Flowers are from Carol Phillips in honor of Jackson and Chase O’Brien.

Stewardship Snippet

(6th Sunday of Easter - Year C) May 22, 2022

John 14: 23-26

Jesus answered, "Those who love me will keep my word, and my Father will love them, and we will come to them and make our home with them. Whoever does not love me does not keep my words; and the word that you hear is not mine but is from the Father who sent me. "I have said these things to you while I am still with you." But the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you everything, and remind you of all that I have said to you.

Yes Jesus's "Advocate" does speak to us from time to time, even when we find it's annoying! The Holy Spirit reminds us of what Jesus wants us to do in the life that God has given us. Do we support the poor, do we teach our children to follow his examples, do we encourage others to do the same? Stewardship is a way of life, a life of accountability and responsibility acknowledging God as Creator and Giver of all. Stewardship involves responsible management of our God-given resources of time, talent, and treasure. Stewards as disciples of Jesus Christ see themselves as caretakers of all God's gifts. Gratitude for these gifts is expressed in prayer, worship, offering and action by eagerly sharing our gifts out of love for God and one another. Come to church...the Holy Spirit will put you to work! Donna Weinberg, Stewardship Chair

*Credits: Today's liturgy is adapted from *The Book of Common Prayer**

Hymn: Shall We Gather At the River. CCLI #93731, Public Domain

Image: <https://dwellingintheword.wordpress.com/2019/10/03/2719-revelation-22/rev22-tree-of-life/>

Announcements & Upcoming Events

Please pray for:

The Ukrainian People & Our World, Refugees Everywhere, Walter, Charles, Lori, Laura, Helen, Bonnie Sue, Dan, Anne, Steve, Greg Weinrich, Dale Hooly, Ron McKinnon, Chris Weinrich, Sonya, Wayne

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

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Music Director: Diane Van Dongen

Church Administrator: Nikki Nicinski

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FAMILY ~ FAITH ~ FRIENDS