



PANTHER VALLEY ECUMENICAL CHURCH
June 26, 2022

*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: Throughout the ages, disciples have said,
"I will follow you wherever you go."

**All: Lord, give us the freedom to follow you
in the ways of love.**

One: We come from busy homes, filled with little time
to consider Christ in our lives.

**All: Lord, give us the strength to follow you
in the ways of peace.**

One: In times of struggle, we look to God for help.

**All: Lord, give us the opportunity to follow you
in the ways of kindness.**

One: Today, we celebrate the Holy Spirit,
who shows us the joy of following God.

**All: Lord, give us the patience to follow you
in the ways of faith. Amen.**

OPENING PRAYER

**Holy One, we come before you today:
full of hope, full of desire, full of promise.
Help us take up the mantle of faith you have laid before us,
that we may use our own gifts of the Spirit
to face the challenges before us.
Help us face the turmoil within and around us,
that we may face the future unafraid.
Show us your way, your truth, and your life.
Amen.**

HYMN

Spirit of God, Descend upon My Heart

Verse 1

Spirit of God descend upon my heart
Wean it from earth thro' all its pulses move
Stoop to my weakness mighty as Thou art
And make me love Thee as I ought to love.

Verse 2

I ask no dream no prophet ecstasies
No sudden rending of the veil of clay
No angel visitant no opening skies
But take the dimness of my soul away.

Verse 4

Teach me to feel that Thou art always nigh
Teach me the struggles of the soul to bear
To check the rising doubt the rebel sigh
Teach me the patience of unanswered prayer.

Verse 5

Teach me to love Thee as Thine angels love
One holy passion filling all my frame
The baptism of the heav'n descended dove
My heart an altar and Thy love the flame.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

**Gracious Lord, you have blessed us with freedom—
freedom to follow or to turn away; freedom to love or to hate;
freedom to heal or to hurt.**

**You ask only that we follow your ways, loving our neighbors as ourselves.
In the midst of our turbulent lives, help us find teachers to show us the
gifts you set within us. And help us claim these gifts today. Amen.**

SCRIPTURE

Scripture: Galatians 5:1, 13-25

For freedom Christ has set us free. Stand firm, therefore, and do not submit again to a yoke of slavery. For you were called to freedom, brothers and sisters; only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for self-indulgence, but through love become slaves to one another. For the whole law is summed up in a single commandment, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself." If, however, you bite and devour one another, take care that you are not consumed by one another. Live by the Spirit, I say, and do not gratify the desires of the flesh. For what the flesh desires is opposed to the Spirit, and what the Spirit desires is opposed to the flesh; for these are opposed to each other, to prevent you from doing what you want. But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not subject to the law. Now the

works of the flesh are obvious: fornication, impurity, licentiousness, idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousy, anger, quarrels, dissensions, factions, envy, drunkenness, carousing, and things like these. I am warning you, as I warned you before: those who do such things will not inherit the kingdom of God. By contrast, the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. There is no law against such things. And those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. If we live by the Spirit, let us also be guided by the Spirit.

MESSAGE

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

Harvest the fruit of the Spirit, freely given by God, and share it freely with others.
Know that you are loved and forgiven.
Trust that you are treasured, now and always. Amen.

LORD'S PRAYER

We invite you to pray the prayer in the language you are used to speaking.

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.

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.

OFFERATORY PRAYER

**Receive our humble offerings, O Lord,
for your work in the world.**

**Bless those who give, those who send,
and those who will receive these gifts.**

**May our offering sow seeds of hope
and bear the fruit of love wherever they are sown.
Amen.**

CLOSING PRAYER

Father, thank you for all the marvelous things you have done today. Thank you for your love that you have revealed to us, And for the love that we share together as your body. We pray for all the words that you have sown into our hearts this day. Watch over them, protect them. May they take root and produce wonderful things, things of beauty and great blessings to many. And as we leave this place now, thank you that you walk with us. May we be alert to your promptings And live in your endless love. For yours is the kingdom, the power and glory In this age and forevermore.

BENEDICTION

May the transforming love of God
work in your lives, today and always.

Go forth into the world with peace, love, and joy.

Follow Christ wherever he leads you.

Fulfill the promise found in the fruit of the Spirit. Amen.

POSTLUDE

Credits: Hymn: CCLI Song # 2083, Words by Frederick Cook Atkinson, Music by George Croly © Words: Public Domain, Music: Public Domain.

Stewardship Snippet

(Third Sunday after Pentecost - Year C) June 26, 2022

2 Kings 2: 6-14

Then Elijah said to him, "Stay here; for the LORD has sent me to the Jordan." But he said, "As the LORD lives, and as you yourself live, I will not leave you." So the two of them went on. Fifty men of the company of prophets also went, and stood at some distance from them, as they both were standing by the Jordan. Then Elijah took his

mantle and rolled it up and struck the water; the water was parted to the one side and to the other, until the two of them crossed on dry ground. When they had crossed, Elijah said to Elisha, "Tell me what I may do for you, before I am taken from you." Elisha said, "Please let me inherit a double share of your spirit." He responded, "You have asked a hard thing; yet, if you see me as I am being taken from you, it will be granted you; if not, it will not." As they continued walking and talking, a chariot of fire and horses of fire separated the two of them, and Elijah ascended in a whirlwind into heaven. Elisha kept watching and crying out, "Father, father! The chariots of Israel and its horsemen!" But when he could no longer see him, he grasped his own clothes and tore them in two pieces. He picked up the mantle of Elijah that had fallen from him and went back and stood on the bank of the Jordan. He took the mantle of Elijah that had fallen from him, and struck the water, saying, "Where is the LORD, the God of Elijah?" When he had struck the water, the water was parted to the one side and to the other, and Elisha went over.

Think of what it was like for Elisha to pick up that mantle. The mantle did not fall from heaven and rest on his shoulders; he had to decide to pick it up and put it on. He had to decide: *Do I really want to put this on?* Elijah's ministry was one of great power, but also of great pressure and responsibility. So here we are, experiencing Ninabeth answering her call from God as PVEC prepares itself to respond to God by calling another pastor to pick up our mantle. Will the new pastor have a "double share of the spirit?" **Fill out your "Leadership Competencies " form prepared by the Discernment Committee and return by June 30. If you are unable to do so, call the office and we will get the form to you!** Blessings, Donna Weinberg

Announcements & Upcoming Events

Please pray for:

The Ukrainian People & Our World, Refugees Everywhere, Our Church, The Family of Eloise Mial in her passing, Bettina Samanns for knee surgery on 6/30, Steve

REMINDER - CHANGES TO CHURCH OFFICE HOURS FOR SUMMER

<i>Mondays</i>	<i>9am - 2pm</i>	
<i>Tuesdays</i>	<i>9am - 2pm</i>	<i>(Nikki off, volunteer covers office)</i>
<i>Wednesdays</i>	<i>OFFICE CLOSED</i>	<i>(but Nikki works remotely from home)</i>
<i>Thursdays</i>	<i>9am - 2pm</i>	
<i>Fridays</i>	<i>9:30 - 11:30am</i>	<i>(then Nikki works remotely until 2pm)</i>

A Note from the Discernment Team

As noted last week, The Discernment Team created a survey for the congregation to fill out regarding competencies (qualities) that you personally would like to see in our new pastor. The survey was emailed to all members and there are copies available at church.

Please help us by having every adult in your household fill out the survey and return it to church by June 30 – that's Thursday! Thank you for your input.

Tidings & Treasures from Donna was mailed recently. There is valuable information enclosed, including a **note from Care & Nurture**.

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: TBA, transition period

Email: pvecpastor@gmail.com

Music Director: Diane Van Dongen

Church Administrator: Nikki Nicinski

Email: pvecsecretary@gmail.com

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

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FAMILY ~ FAITH ~ FRIENDS