



First Presbyterian Church

149 Broad Street

Tonawanda, New York 14150 ~ 2111

Church: (716) 692-1319

Rev. Dr. Rebecca Chaffee

Come, Worship the Lord, Our God

4TH Sunday in Lent

CCLI License # 2839486

March 10, 2024

10:30am

PRELUDE

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

CALL TO WORSHIP

In this place, the community of faith is reminded of the promise:

God's love endures forever!

In spite of our impatient grumbling, despite our attraction to the shadows:

Christ's light shines in us!

When we think our hands are empty, when we have no music in our souls:

the Spirit fills us with glad songs, and creates us for good works!

GATHERING PRAYER

Almighty God, through Jesus Christ you bring salvation to the world. Give us strength to believe in him that we may share in his victory over the power of death and fulfill the purpose for which you have made us, for he dwells with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, forever and ever. Amen.

***HYMN: "O God of Every Nation" #756**

LLANGLOFFAN

CALL TO CONFESSION

By nature, we are impatient, irritated, grumbling, disobedient children, always demanding our way. But God, who is good and kind and gentle, comes to transform us, by grace, into the people we are meant to be. Let us open ourselves to the One who overflows with love for us, as we confess our sins to God.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

The Light of the world has come, Ceaseless Creator, but we admit we love the shadows all around us. For there, we can boast of our achievements, rather than point to your grace; there, we can grumble of our unhappiness with you, instead of singing your praises; there, we can give into our natural anger, and not be touched by your call to be agents of peace and hope.

Forgive us, Eternal Love: lead us from the shadows of sin into the light of your joy; raise us up, as your children, so we may kneel in service to others; shower us with the grace, the hope, the peace you have brought to us through Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior. Amen.

Silence is kept

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

Let the community of faith say so:

God's love endures forever!

Let those gathered in grace say so:

God's love endures forever!

Let those gathered from all parts of the world say so:

God's love endures forever!

This is the good news for us:

God's love endures forever. Thanks be to God. Amen.

PASSING OF THE PEACE

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

Almighty God, by the power of the Holy Spirit, open your Word and illumine our darkened world, that we may see clearly and live faithfully by the light of your truth in Jesus Christ. Amen.

SCRIPTURE LESSON: Numbers 21:4-9

⁴From Mount Hor they set out by the way to the Red Sea, to go around the land of Edom; but the people became impatient on the way. ⁵The people spoke against God and against Moses, "Why have you brought us up out of Egypt to die in the wilderness? For there is no food and no water, and we detest this miserable food."

⁶Then the LORD sent poisonous serpents among the people, and they bit the people, so that many Israelites died. ⁷The people came to Moses and said, "We have sinned by speaking against the LORD and against you; pray to the LORD to take away the serpents from us." So Moses prayed for the people. ⁸And the LORD said to Moses, "Make a poisonous serpent, and set it on a pole; and everyone who is bitten shall look at it and live."

⁹So Moses made a serpent of bronze, and put it upon a pole; and whenever a serpent bit someone, that person would look at the serpent of bronze and live.

This is the word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

ALL GOD'S CHILDREN

RESPONSIVE PSALM 107:1-3, 17-22

¹O give thanks to the LORD, for he is good;

for his steadfast love endures forever.

²Let the redeemed of the LORD say so,

those he redeemed from trouble

³and gathered in from the lands, from the east and from the west,

from the north and from the south.

¹⁷Some were sick through their sinful ways,

and because of their iniquities endured affliction;

¹⁸they loathed any kind of food,

and they drew near to the gates of death.

¹⁹Then they cried to the LORD in their trouble,

and he saved them from their distress;

²⁰he sent out his word and healed them,

and delivered them from destruction.

²¹Let them thank the LORD for his steadfast love,

for his wonderful works to humankind.

²²And let them offer thanksgiving sacrifices,

and tell of his deeds with songs of joy.

GOSPEL READING: John 3:14-21

¹⁴And just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, ¹⁵that whoever believes in him may have eternal life.

¹⁶"For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life.

¹⁷"Indeed, God did not send the Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him. ¹⁸Those who believe in him are not condemned; but those who do not believe are condemned already, because they have not believed in the name of the only Son of God. ¹⁹And this is the judgment, that the light has come into the world, and people loved darkness rather than light because their deeds were evil. ²⁰For all who do evil hate the light and do not come to

the light, so that their deeds may not be exposed. ²¹But those who do what is true come to the light, so that it may be clearly seen that their deeds have been done in God."

This is the word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

SERMON: "Praying with Symbols"

Rev. Dr. Rebecca Chaffee

SERMON HYMN: "O Lord, Hear My Prayer" #471

HEAR MY PRAYER

PASTORAL PRAYER AND PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

THE LORD'S PRAYER

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.

INVITATION TO THE OFFERING

People of God, let us offer our sacrifice of thanksgiving, telling of God's deeds with songs of joy.

THE OFFERTORY

DOXOLOGY: "We Praise You, O God, vs. 1" #612

KREMSER

PRAYER OF DEDICATION

As we have been gathered in this place because of the faithfulness of those who have gone before us, so we pray that the gifts we offer in these moments might be used to reach out to those in all corners of the world who need hope, who hunger for food and justice, who yearn for peace, and who long for your graceful presence in their lives. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.

***HYMN: "Make Me a Channel of Your Peace" #753**

PRAYER OF ST. FRANCIS

CHARGE

As you leave this place, remember you are God's community in the world:

for God's love endures forever!

As you leave this place, remember you are alive with Christ:

for Christ's light shines in the deepest shadows!

As you leave this place, remember the gifts God offers to you:

for the Spirit fills us with good works to do, and glad songs to sing to the world!

BENEDICTION

CHORAL BENEDICTION: "Go With Us, Lord" #748

TALLIS' CANON

Volunteers This Week:

Liturgist: Bonnie Zimmer

Tech: Betsy Crocker

Usher(s): Randy Marohn

Greeter(s): Bonnie Sibley

Coffee Hour: Leslie & Tom Dugan

Volunteers Next Week 3/17:

Liturgist: Pat Loeswick

Tech: Betsy Crocker

Usher(s): Bill Welch & Jessica Schurr

Greeter(s): Terry DeLuca & Ina Charsley

Coffee Hour: Laura & Alvin Marohn,

Adam & Nathan Harrington

PRAYER CONCERNS

The prayer concerns have recently been updated. If you have a prayer request, please contact **Pastor Rebecca at 315-317-6140 or the church office at 716-692-1319.**

CALENDAR

Sunday, Mar 10

9:30am Faith Formation (All Ages)
10:30 am Worship for all ages (Sanctuary)
11:30am Coffee Fellowship for all ages (Parlor)

Monday, Mar 11

10:00 am Alcoholics Anonymous (Circle II Basement)

Tuesday, Mar 12

9:00am – 2:00pm Office Hours

Wednesday, Mar 13

9:00am – 2:00pm Office Hours
6:00pm-9:00pm Historical Society of the Tonawandas

Thursday, Mar 14

9:00am – 2:00pm Office Hours
10:00am Alcoholics Anonymous (Circle II Basement)
6:00pm Hearts4Worship
6:45pm Bell Choir
7:15pm Choir

Saturday, Mar 16

10:00am Alcoholics Anonymous (Circle II Basement)

Sunday, Mar 17

9:30am Faith Formation (All Ages)
10:30 am Worship for all ages (Sanctuary)
11:30am Coffee Fellowship for all ages (Parlor)



The story of Moses and the bronze serpent.