

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

9th Sunday after Pentecost

CCLI License # 2839486

July 30, 2023

10:30 am

PRELUDE "Here in This Place"

GATHER US IN

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

CALL TO WORSHIP

On this day of worship, we call on God's name,

and hear our own invitation to work for the good of all.

Gathered with neighbors and strangers, we call on God's hope,

and discover that a lifetime of service seems but a few days.

In this place of praise and prayer, we call on God's love,

and receive that grace which is as old as creation, yet as fresh as each morning.

GATHERING PRAYER

Holy God, we try to fix and fasten you, but you will not be stayed. You are love in motion: always breathing us into being, calling us to serve, sustaining us in the wilderness. Come to us as the morning breaks. Soften what has grown dry and brittle in our hearts until we worship with abandon, for we pray in the name of the Son you sent and through the Spirit that gives us life. Amen.

***HYMN: "My Shepherd Will Supply My Need" #803**

RESIGNATION

CALL TO CONFESSION

We spend so much time accusing ourselves, judging ourselves, punishing ourselves for what we have done, or not done. But God would draw us closer to the Heart of forgiveness, that we might be filled with healing and grace. Join me, as we pray together,

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

What then are we to say about our lives, Searcher of our hearts? We know how often we have duped others with our deceit. We remember how often we promise one thing, only to do the opposite. We struggle to trust you, while we so easily listen to the promises of those who would pull us away from you. Forgive us, Heart overflowing with mercy. Your grace is more powerful than any of our sins, your hope is more durable than our silly choices, your love will traverse anything, and everything, which separates us from you. In Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior, we are forgiven!

Silence is kept

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

Hear the good news: the One who could accuse us, saves us from sin and death. The One who could condemn us, cradles us in grace. The One who could punish us, prays for us.

Now we know, there is nothing, not a thing, that can separate us from God. Thanks be to the One who forgives us. Amen.

PASSING OF THE PEACE

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

Spirit of life, we do not know how to pray as we ought. Meet us in words written, in words spoken; intercede for us with sighs too deep for words, until we shine with the hope that is hidden in our hearts, for we pray in the name of Jesus. Amen.

SCRIPTURE LESSONS

FIRST READING: Genesis 29:15-28

¹⁵Then Laban said to Jacob, "Because you are my kinsman, should you therefore serve me for nothing? Tell me, what shall your wages be?"

¹⁶Now Laban had two daughters; the name of the elder was Leah, and the name of the younger was Rachel. ¹⁷Leah's eyes were lovely, and Rachel was graceful and beautiful. ¹⁸Jacob loved Rachel; so he said, "I will serve you seven years for your younger daughter Rachel."

¹⁹Laban said, "It is better that I give her to you than that I should give her to any other man; stay with me." ²⁰So Jacob served seven years for Rachel, and they seemed to him but a few days because of the love he had for her.

²¹Then Jacob said to Laban, "Give me my wife that I may go in to her, for my time is completed."

²²So Laban gathered together all the people of the place, and made a feast. ²³But in the evening he took his daughter Leah and brought her to Jacob; and he went in to her. ²⁴(Laban gave his maid Zilpah to his daughter Leah to be her maid.)

²⁵When morning came, it was Leah! And Jacob said to Laban, "What is this you have done to me? Did I not serve with you for Rachel? Why then have you deceived me?"

²⁶Laban said, "This is not done in our country--giving the younger before the firstborn. ²⁷Complete the week of this one, and we will give you the other also in return for serving me another seven years." ²⁸Jacob did so, and completed her week; then Laban gave him his daughter Rachel as a wife.

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

ALL GOD'S CHILDREN

Psalm 105:1-11, 45b

¹O give thanks to the LORD, call on his name,
make known his deeds among the peoples.

²Sing to him, sing praises to him;
tell of all his wonderful works.

³Glory in his holy name;
let the hearts of those who seek the LORD rejoice.

⁴Seek the LORD and his strength;
seek his presence continually.

⁵Remember the wonderful works he has done,
his miracles, and the judgments he uttered,

⁶O offspring of his servant Abraham, children of Jacob, his chosen ones.

⁷**He is the LORD our God; his judgments are in all the earth.**

⁸He is mindful of his covenant forever,

of the word that he commanded, for a thousand generations,

⁹the covenant that he made with Abraham, his sworn promise to Isaac,

¹⁰**which he confirmed to Jacob as a statute, to Israel as an everlasting covenant,**

¹¹saying, "To you I will give the land of Canaan as your portion for an inheritance."

^{45b}**Praise the LORD!**

SPECIAL MUSIC: "Be Thou My Vision"

SLANE

GOSPEL READING: Matthew 13:31-33, 44-52

³¹He put before them another parable: "The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed that someone took and sowed in his field; ³²it is the smallest of all the seeds, but when it has grown it is the greatest of shrubs and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and make nests in its branches."

³³He told them another parable: "The kingdom of heaven is like yeast that a woman took and mixed in with three measures of flour until all of it was leavened."

⁴⁴"The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which someone found and hid; then in his joy he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field.

⁴⁵"Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant in search of fine pearls; ⁴⁶on finding one pearl of great value, he went and sold all that he had and bought it.

⁴⁷"Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a net that was thrown into the sea and caught fish of every kind; ⁴⁸when it was full, they drew it ashore, sat down, and put the good into baskets but threw out the bad. ⁴⁹So it will be at the end of the age. The angels will come out and separate the evil from the righteous ⁵⁰and throw them into the furnace of fire, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

⁵¹"Have you understood all this?" They answered, "Yes." ⁵²And he said to them, "Therefore every scribe who has been trained for the kingdom of heaven is like the master of a household who brings out of his treasure what is new and what is old."

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

SERMON: "Treasures"

Rev. Dr. Rebecca Chaffee

PASTORAL PRAYER AND PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

THE LORD'S PRAYER(*ecumenical*)

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 forever, Amen.

CALL TO THE OFFERING

The Lord calls us to consider what we treasure, and to be generous in using those treasures to bless others. Let us share our treasures for God's purposes.

THE OFFERTORY: "Morning Has Broken"

BUNESSAN

DOXOLOGY: "Praise to God the Father" #605

DA N'ASE

PRAYER OF DEDICATION

Dear Lord, like the mustard seed, may these gifts that we share today grow wildly to bless and comfort all those you send us to care for. Amen.

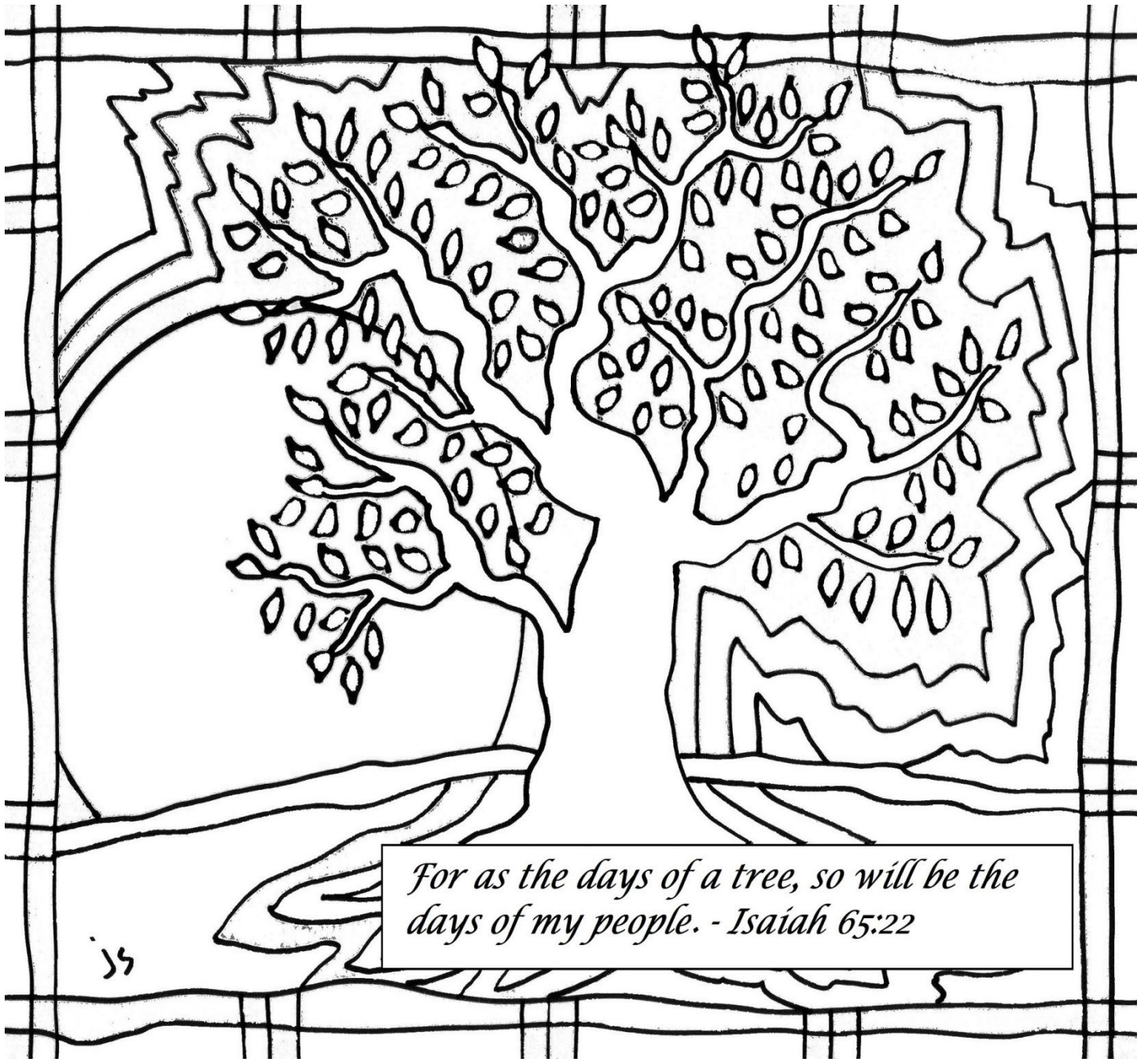
***CLOSING HYMN: "Bring Forth the Kingdom"**

BRING FORTH THE KINGDOM

CHARGE

Go forth to proclaim God's constant love.

We will live out that love for everyone we meet.



For as the days of a tree, so will be the days of my people. - Isaiah 65:22

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