



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

6th Sunday of Easter

CCLI License # 2839486

May, 25, 2025

10:30am

PRELUDE

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

CALL TO WORSHIP

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

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

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

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

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

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

GATHERING PRAYER

Astonishing God, you give us a vision of the heavenly city, the new Jerusalem, your home among mortals on earth. All people and nations will stream to your city where they will find nourishment, healing, and peace. Even now your blessing shines upon all the earth to help us see a larger vision of your loving care for all creation. And so you call us to move beyond our comfortable circles, and into unfamiliar places, as we seek to share your dream of a world made new in Christ. Amen.

***HYMN: "There's a Sweet, Sweet Spirit" #408**

SWEET, SWEET SPIRIT

CALL TO CONFESSION

How easy we can learn of God's love—but how hard it is to live it! The world distracts us with its easy choices, while we know how intentional we must be to love one another. Join me as we confess our failures to love as we open our hearts to God, saying,

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Because you dwell in our hearts, Eternal God, you know how the anger, the pain, the bitterness of our lives often 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.

Silence is kept

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

The Word that transforms 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.

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

PASSING OF THE PEACE

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

Living God, you sent your apostle to preach the gospel to women gathered by a river, in a secluded place of prayer. There a businesswoman named Lydia was led by the Spirit to hear your word as truth. You opened her heart in love, and she opened her home for the spreading of the gospel. By the power of your Holy Spirit, fling wide the doors of our hearts this day as we hear your word of life, that we too may open our lives to serve your world in love. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

First Reading: Acts 16:9-15 Lydia and her household are baptized

⁹During the night Paul had a vision: there stood a man of Macedonia pleading with him and saying, "Come over to Macedonia and help us." ¹⁰When 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.

¹¹We therefore set sail from Troas and took a straight course to Samothrace, the following day to Neapolis, ¹²and 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.

¹³On 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. ¹⁴A 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. ¹⁵When 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.

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

ALL GOD'S CHILDREN: Parable of the Great Pearl

Responsive Psalm 67 Let all the peoples praise God

¹May God be gracious to us and bless us

and make his face to shine upon us, Selah

²that your way may be known upon earth,

your saving power among all nations.

³Let the peoples praise you, O God;

let all the peoples praise you.

⁴Let the nations be glad and sing for joy,

for you judge the peoples with equity and guide the nations upon earth. Selah

⁵Let the peoples praise you, O God;

let all the peoples praise you.

⁶The earth has yielded its increase;

God, our God, has blessed us.

⁷May God continue to bless us;

let all the ends of the earth revere him.

Gospel Reading: John 14:23-29 The Father will send the Holy Spirit

²³Jesus answered him, "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. ²⁴Whoever 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.

²⁵"I have said these things to you while I am still with you. ²⁶But 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. ²⁷Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled, and do not let them be afraid. ²⁸You heard me say to you, 'I am going away, and I am coming to you.' If you loved me, you would rejoice that I am going to the Father, because the Father is greater than I. ²⁹And now I have told you this before it occurs, so that when it does occur, you may believe.

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

SERMON: "What Makes You Feel Close to God?"

Rev. Dr. Rebecca Chaffee

SERMON HYMN: "Light Dawns on a Weary World" #79

TEMPLE OF PEACE

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

The earth has yielded its increase and God has richly blessed us. Therefore bring your tithes and offerings and come into God's courts with praise.

THE OFFERTORY

DOXOLOGY: "Alleluia, Alleluia! Give Thanks" #240 (chorus only)

ALLELUIA NO. 1

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.

CLOSING HYMN: "We Will Go Out with Joy" #539

WE WILL GO OUT WITH JOY

CHARGE

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

With our hearts, we will sing God's praises;

with our hands, we will serve God's people.

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

We will comfort all whose hearts are troubled;

we will go to help all who cry out to us.

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

We will work for justice for all who are oppressed;

we will teach songs of hope to all who despair.

BENEDICTION

We would like to thank Adam Beiter for sharing his gifts and talents with us today.

Volunteers This Week:

Liturgist: Diane Charsley
Tech: Betsy Crocker
Usher(s): Billy Welch & Jessica Schurr
Greeter(s):
Coffee Hour:

Volunteers Next Week: 6/1/25

Liturgist:
Tech:
Usher(s):
Greeter(s):
Coffee Hour: Picnic

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, May 25

10:30 am	Sunday Worship for all ages (Sanctuary)
11:30am	Coffee Fellowship for all ages (Parlor)

Monday, May 26

	Memorial Day - Office Closed
10:00 am	Alcoholics Anonymous (Circle II Basement)
6:00pm	Church Stretch

Tuesday, May 27

9:00am – 2:00pm	Office Hours
7:00pm	Coffee and Tech Talk

Wednesday, May 28

9:00am – 2:00pm	Office Hours
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Thursday, May 29

10:00am	Alcoholics Anonymous (Circle II Basement)
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Saturday, May 31

10:00am	Alcoholics Anonymous (Circle II Basement)
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Sunday, June 1

10:30 am	Sunday Worship for all ages (Sanctuary)
11:30am	Church Picnic

