



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

7th Sunday after Pentecost

CCLI License # 2839486

July 16, 2023

10:30 am

PRELUDE "Ni Nguvu Jina Lako"

Swahili Hymn

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

CALL TO WORSHIP

Your grace is a lamp for our hearts, O God.

Light our way through the shadows of this world.

When we struggle with questions and doubts,

tell us your stories of hope and grace.

When we are about to wander off into the wilderness,

show us the paths to your peace and joy.

GATHERING PRAYER

Author of Life, Living Word, Holy Breath, we have stumbled through the week and groped our way back to this place. Illumine the steps before us and write your word on our hearts, for we carry the name of Jesus, and would walk in the light of his love. Amen.

***HYMN: "This is My Father's World" #370**

TERRA BEATA

CALL TO CONFESSION

We talk about lives of faith, but are usually found walking down the streets of seduction and temptation. God sends the Spirit to live in us, so we might have life with God. Let us confess our mis-steps as we pray together,

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

We walk through the world, Life Giver, so focused on ourselves, that we do not notice sin laying traps for us. We choose favorites, hurting folks looking for love. In our rush to grasp what we want, we let go of your promises given for us. In resisting your claims on us, we turn our backs on your dreams for us. Forgive us, Promise Keeper, and have mercy. Like Isaac and Rebekah, we are heirs of your trust; like Jacob, we receive your grace even when we have done nothing to deserve it; like Esau, we share in your promises. May Jesus Christ, your Son, our Lord, sow seeds of faithfulness and hope in our hearts.

Silence is kept

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

God leans over so that great heart of forgiveness and hope might touch our own, healing us and restoring us to new life.

Not condemnation, but God's compassion; not judgment, but God's justice; not a punishment, but God's grace. We are forgiven and loved. Thanks be to God. Amen.

PASSING OF THE PEACE

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

God of life, by the power of your Spirit come to us now. Plow our hearts with your living Word until we who are broken become fertile with your love, for we long to bear fruit in a world that is wasting. We pray in the name of Jesus, whose charge we bear. Amen.

SCRIPTURE LESSONS

FIRST READING: Genesis 25:19-34

¹⁹These are the descendants of Isaac, Abraham's son: Abraham was the father of Isaac, ²⁰and Isaac was forty years old when he married Rebekah, daughter of Bethuel the Aramean of Paddan-aram, sister of Laban

the Aramean. ²¹Isaac prayed to the LORD for his wife, because she was barren; and the LORD granted his prayer, and his wife Rebekah conceived.

²²The children struggled together within her; and she said, "If it is to be this way, why do I live?" So she went to inquire of the LORD. ²³And the LORD said to her, "Two nations are in your womb, and two peoples born of you shall be divided; the one shall be stronger than the other, the elder shall serve the younger."

²⁴When her time to give birth was at hand, there were twins in her womb. ²⁵The first came out red, all his body like a hairy mantle; so they named him Esau. ²⁶Afterward his brother came out, with his hand gripping Esau's heel; so he was named Jacob. Isaac was sixty years old when she bore them.

²⁷When the boys grew up, Esau was a skillful hunter, a man of the field, while Jacob was a quiet man, living in tents. ²⁸Isaac loved Esau, because he was fond of game; but Rebekah loved Jacob. ²⁹Once when Jacob was cooking a stew, Esau came in from the field, and he was famished. ³⁰Esau said to Jacob, "Let me eat some of that red stuff, for I am famished!" (Therefore he was called Edom.)

³¹Jacob said, "First sell me your birthright."

³²Esau said, "I am about to die; of what use is a birthright to me?"

³³Jacob said, "Swear to me first." So he swore to him, and sold his birthright to Jacob. ³⁴Then Jacob gave Esau bread and lentil stew, and he ate and drank, and rose and went his way. Thus Esau despised his birthright.

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

ALL GOD'S CHILDREN

Psalm 119:105-112

¹⁰⁵Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.

¹⁰⁶**I have sworn an oath and confirmed it, to observe your righteous ordinances.**

¹⁰⁷I am severely afflicted; give me life, O LORD, according to your word.

¹⁰⁸**Accept my offerings of praise, O LORD, and teach me your ordinances.**

¹⁰⁹I hold my life in my hand continually, but I do not forget your law.

¹¹⁰**The wicked have laid a snare for me, but I do not stray from your precepts.**

¹¹¹Your decrees are my heritage forever; they are the joy of my heart.

¹¹²**I incline my heart to perform your statutes forever, to the end.**

SPECIAL MUSIC: "Thy Word is a Lamp Unto My Feet" - Hearts4Worship

THY WORD

GOSPEL READING: Matthew 13:1-9, 18-23

¹That same day Jesus went out of the house and sat beside the sea. ²Such great crowds gathered around him that he got into a boat and sat there, while the whole crowd stood on the beach. ³And he told them many things in parables, saying:

"Listen! A sower went out to sow. ⁴And as he sowed, some seeds fell on the path, and the birds came and ate them up. ⁵Other seeds fell on rocky ground, where they did not have much soil, and they sprang up quickly, since they had no depth of soil. ⁶But when the sun rose, they were scorched; and since they had no root, they withered away. ⁷Other seeds fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up and choked them. ⁸Other seeds fell on good soil and brought forth grain, some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty. ⁹Let anyone with ears listen!"

¹⁸"Hear then the parable of the sower. ¹⁹When anyone hears the word of the kingdom and does not understand it, the evil one comes and snatches away what is sown in the heart; this is what was sown on the path. ²⁰As for what was sown on rocky ground, this is the one who hears the word and immediately receives it with joy; ²¹yet such a person has no root, but endures only for a while, and when trouble or persecution arises on account of the word, that person immediately falls away. ²²As for what was sown among thorns, this is the one who hears the word, but the cares of the world and the lure of wealth choke the word, and it yields

nothing. ²³But as for what was sown on good soil, this is the one who hears the word and understands it, who indeed bears fruit and yields, in one case a hundredfold, in another sixty, and in another thirty."

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

SERMON: "Planting Seeds of Faith"

Rev. Dr. Rebecca Chaffee

SERMON HYMN: "By the Stream"

Christopher Grundy

Chorus: Blessed are those who trust in God
They will be like a tree Planted by the water, planted by the water
And sending out its roots by the stream (x2)

They will not fear when the heat comes
And their leaves will all stay green
In the year of the longest drought
They will still bear their fruit there by the stream, By the stream. (*chorus*)

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

We bring our gifts because tendrils of God's love have worked their ways into the soil of our hearts. Sisters and brothers, let us yield our lives to God's abundant harvest.

THE OFFERTORY "God Is Here Today" (Dios está aquí)

Javier Gacías

DOXOLOGY: "Praise to God the Father" #605

DA N'ASE

PRAYER OF DEDICATION

Giver of life, as the sower casts seeds abundantly, hopefully, so we long to participate in your seeding of the world. Receive these gifts as tokens of our lives. Send your cultivating Spirit to work among us until we yield and grow in grace, for we pray in the name of Jesus, who came out of love for the world. Amen.

***CLOSING HYMN: "You Are the Seed"**

ID Y ENSEÑAD

CHARGE

Now, go into the shadows of our world.

We will go carrying the light of God's love.

Now, go to where the forgotten dwell.

We will go to bring the justice and hope of Jesus.

Now, go to where the hurting are gathered.

We will go to bring the Spirit of healing.

BENEDICTION

