



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

We Celebrate the Sacrament of Holy Communion

CCLI License # 2839486

September 8, 2024

10:30am

PRELUDE

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

CALL TO WORSHIP

Here, in this place, we will not be afraid to sing the good news.

We will praise our God, now and always.

Here, with this people, we will not fear in living the good news.

We will walk with Jesus, as he comes with justice in his hands.

Here, in these moments, we will not be scared to tell the good news.

We will be open to all the Holy Spirit is doing in our midst.

GATHERING PRAYER

God of love, you show your people how to be truly rich in faith, through the gifts you give when least hoped for or expected. Come to your people today with words of both judgment and mercy, that we may be fed from the bread of life. We pray this in your holy triune name: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, one God, Mother of us all. Amen.

***HYMN: "Earth and All Stars" #26**

EARTH AND ALL STARS

CALL TO CONFESSION

So many choices, and we make the wrong ones; so many paths to take, and we go down the wrong ones; so much good we could do, and all we do is offer empty words. Let us bring our lives and hearts to our God, who is our help and hope, in this and every moment. Let us pray together, saying,

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

We say that we are good listeners, God of holy ways, but we turn stopped up ears to the vulnerable around us. We say that we live as your people, but too often, put ourselves ahead of the people we love. We say that we are people of faith, but then try to overwhelm people with words, rather than acts of service.

We say so much, God of compassion, that we cannot hear you calling us to faithful living. Have mercy on us and send us out to offer kindness to the lonely. Have mercy on us and send us to be generous with the love you offer. Have mercy on us, so we might be open to all the chances we will have to follow, and to serve alongside our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

Silence is kept

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

Whisper it. Say it. Shout it. Sing it! Our God comes with justice, not judgment; with hope, not a heavy hand; with grace, not grudges. This is the good news for us.

We will not be scared to tell anyone, and everyone, of our God who overflows with mercy, who sets us free, who watches over us. Thanks be to God, we are forgiven! Amen.

PASSING OF THE PEACE

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

Holy God, whose Spirit comes to us in moments of both strength and weakness, come now into our midst that we might be able to hear your Word in fullness and in truth, through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

Old Testament Reading: Isaiah 35:4-7a God comes with healing

⁴Say to those who are of a fearful heart, "Be strong, do not fear! Here is your God. He will come with vengeance, with terrible recompense. He will come and save you."

⁵Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be opened; ⁶then the lame shall leap like a deer, and the tongue of the speechless sing for joy. For waters shall break forth in the wilderness and streams in the desert; ^{7a}the burning sand shall become a pool and the thirsty ground springs of water.

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

ALL GOD'S CHILDREN: Rally Day

RESPONSIVE PSALM 146 Help and hope come from God

¹Praise the LORD!

Praise the LORD, O my soul!

²I will praise the LORD as long as I live;

I will sing praises to my God all my life long.

³Do not put your trust in princes, in mortals,
in whom there is no help.

⁴When their breath departs, they return to the earth;
on that very day their plans perish.

⁵Happy are those whose help is the God of Jacob,
whose hope is in the LORD their God,

⁶who made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them;
who keeps faith forever;

⁷who executes justice for the oppressed; who gives food to the hungry.

The LORD sets the prisoners free;

⁸the LORD opens the eyes of the blind.

The LORD lifts up those who are bowed down; the LORD loves the righteous.

⁹The LORD watches over the strangers;

he upholds the orphan and the widow, but the way of the wicked he brings to ruin.

¹⁰The LORD will reign forever,

your God, O Zion, for all generations. Praise the LORD!

EPISTLE READING: James 2:1-10, 14-17 Faith without works is dead

¹My brothers and sisters, do not claim the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ of glory while showing partiality. ²For if a person with gold rings and in fine clothes comes into your assembly, and if a poor person in dirty clothes also comes in, ³and if you take notice of the one wearing the fine clothes and say, "Have a seat here in a good place, please," while to the one who is poor you say, "Stand there," or, "Sit by my footstool," ⁴have you not made distinctions among yourselves and become judges with evil thoughts?

⁵Listen, my beloved brothers and sisters. Has not God chosen the poor in the world to be rich in faith and to be heirs of the kingdom that he has promised to those who love him? ⁶But you have dishonored the poor person. Is it not the rich who oppress you? Is it not they who drag you into court? ⁷Is it not they who blaspheme the excellent name that was invoked over you?

⁸If you really fulfill the royal law according to the scripture, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself," you do well. ⁹But if you show partiality, you commit sin and are convicted by the law as transgressors. ¹⁰For whoever keeps the whole law but fails in one point has become accountable for all of it.

¹⁴What good is it, my brothers and sisters, if someone claims to have faith but does not have works? Surely that faith cannot save, can it? ¹⁵If a brother or sister is naked and lacks daily food ¹⁶and one of you says to them, "Go in peace; keep warm and eat your fill," and yet you do not supply their bodily needs, what is the good of that? ¹⁷So faith by itself, if it has no works, is dead.

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

SERMON: "A Vision for Community"

Rev. Dr. Rebecca Chaffee

SERMON HYMN: "Jesu, Jesu, Fill Us with Your Love" #203

CHEREPONI

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

For the healing of this world, let us now bring forth our tithes and offerings.

THE OFFERTORY

DOXOLOGY: "Praise to God the Father" #605

DA N'ASE

PRAYER OF DEDICATION

May our gifts not be the crumbs of our lives, but justice for those overlooked by the world; be healing for those broken by pain and grief; be grace for those who long to be listened to and welcomed. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.

THE SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION

GREAT PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

You came, God of Imagination ... we lift our songs of thanksgiving to you:

**Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might,
heaven and earth are full of your glory.**

Hosanna in the highest.

**Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest.**

In the baby born into poverty, ... may we not be afraid to speak of that mystery we call faith:

**Christ has died,
Christ is risen,
Christ will come again.**

In these moments, and in this place, ... God in Community, Holy in One. **Amen.**

Breaking the Bread

Jesus said: I am the bread of life.

Jesus said: I am the vine, you are the branches.

Come to me and never be hungry; believe in me and never thirst.

The gifts of God for the people of God.

Thanks be to God.

Communion

Today, we come forward to receive the bread and the cup. A server will circulate to offer communion to those who remain seated. All of the bread is gluten free.

The bread of heaven. **Amen.** The cup of salvation. **Amen.**

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING AFTER COMMUNION

Bless the Lord, O my soul!

And all that is within me, bless God's holy name.

Bless the Lord, O my soul!

And forget not all God's benefits.

***HYMN: "Let Us Build a House" #301**

TWO OAKS

CHARGE

Now, let us go with grace in our hearts.

We will not be afraid to proclaim the good news.

Now, let us go with justice in our hearts, in our hands.

**We will not shrink from speaking to those in power
to set the most vulnerable free from all that limits them.**

Now, let us go with hope in our hearts, in our hands, on our lips.

We will join the Spirit in singing the good news to our world.

BENEDICTION

Volunteers This Week:

Liturgist: Sue Schurr

Tech: Betsy Crocker

Usher(s): Diane Charsley

Greeter(s): Pat Loeswick

Coffee Hour: Terry DeLuca

Volunteers Next Week 9/15:

Liturgist: Scott Chaffee

Tech: Betsy Crocker

Usher(s): Billy Welch & Jessica Schurr

Greeter(s): Bonnie Sibley

Coffee Hour:

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, Sept 8

9:30am Rally Day: All Age Faith Formation (Parlor)
10:30 am Sunday Worship for all ages (Sanctuary)
11:30am Coffee Fellowship for all ages (Parlor)

Monday, Sept 9

10:00 am Alcoholics Anonymous (Circle II Basement)
6:00pm Church Stretch

Tuesday, Sept 10

9:00am – 2:00pm Office Hours
10:00am-11:30am God Loves Me Storytime

Wednesday, Sept 11

9:00am – 2:00pm Office Hours
11:00am Deep Talk
6:00pm Deep Talk
7:30pm The Pastor's Study: *Everything Happens for a Reason*

Thursday, Sept 12

9:00am – 2:00pm Office Hours
10:00am Alcoholics Anonymous (Circle II Basement)
6:00-8:00pm Choir Rehearsals

Saturday, Sept 14

10:00am Alcoholics Anonymous (Circle II Basement)
1:00pm-3:00pm Pet Blessing Expo

Sunday, Sept 15

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

