



First Presbyterian Church

149 Broad Street

Tonawanda, New York 14150 ~ 2111

Church: (716) 692-1319

Kurt Ebsary & Elder William Welch, IV

Come, Worship the Lord, Our God

We Celebrate the Sacrament of Holy Communion

CCLI License # 2839486

September 1, 2024

10:30am

PRELUDE

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

CALL TO WORSHIP

Here, our Beloved speaks to us;

the voice of our Beloved sounds in our hearts:

calling us to generous acts, to share the gifts we have been given.

Now, our Beloved speaks to us;

the voice of our Beloved sounds in our land:

calling us to generous acts, to open our hearts to all in need.

In every place, in every moment, our Beloved speaks to us;

the voice of our Beloved sounds in all creation:

calling us to generous acts, to stand with God's people:

the least, the lost, the little, the last.

GATHERING PRAYER

Unchanging God, you have blessed us forever through the Beloved One, Jesus Christ our Lord. Born again by your word of truth, let us live out your love, doing your word, caring for the weak and vulnerable in their distress, and ever pursuing your reign of justice, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

***HYMN: "All Creatures of Our God and King" #15**

LASST UNS ERFREUEN

CALL TO CONFESSION

Do we honor God only with our lips, while keeping our hearts from the Holy One? Do we deceive ourselves, thinking we are religious rather than living faithful lives? Let us confess to God our sin, trusting in the One who seeks to make us whole.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Holy One of leaders and little children, we hear your words every day, but rarely live them out. Our anger roars like a flooded creek, but our forgiveness drips like a rusty faucet. Our impetuous tongues rush to judgment, while our words of hope sound like a sluggish soundtrack. We listen with impatient ears to the cries of the poor.

Father of Lights, may your mercy fall on us like a summer shower on parched grass; may your hope overflow our hearts; may your Beloved Child, Jesus Christ, speak to us and call us to life.

Silence is kept

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

Listen and understand—the voice of the Beloved speaks to us, implanting the word of hope, the word of grace, and the word of forgiveness into our hearts.

We listen and understand. Every gift comes from God, especially the gifts of mercy and love. Thanks be to God, we are forgiven. Amen.

PASSING OF THE PEACE

ANTHEM: "Welcome Home"

Bill Carter

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

Father of lights, there is no variation or shadow due to change in you. Let your Spirit illumine our hearts through your holy Word, turning us from the emptiness of our human traditions to the fullness of life in the Beloved One, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Old Testament Reading: Song of Solomon 2:8-13

⁸The voice of my beloved! Look, he comes, leaping upon the mountains, bounding over the hills. ⁹My beloved is like a gazelle or a young stag. Look, there he stands behind our wall, gazing in at the windows, looking through the lattice. ¹⁰My beloved speaks and says to me: "Arise, my love, my fair one, and come away; ¹¹for now the winter is past, the rain is over and gone. ¹²The flowers appear on the earth; the time of singing has come, and the voice of the turtledove is heard in our land. ¹³The fig tree puts forth its figs, and the vines are in blossom; they give forth fragrance. Arise, my love, my fair one, and come away.

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

ALL GOD'S CHILDREN

RESPONSIVE PSALM 150

¹Praise the Lord! Praise God in his sanctuary;

praise him in his mighty firmament!

²Praise him for his mighty deeds;

praise him according to his surpassing greatness!

³Praise him with trumpet sound;

praise him with lute and harp!

⁴Praise him with tambourine and dance;

praise him with strings and pipe!

⁵Praise him with clanging cymbals;

praise him with loud clashing cymbals!

⁶Let everything that breathes praise the Lord!

Praise the Lord!

Epistle Reading: James 1:17-27

¹⁷Every generous act of giving, with every perfect gift, is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change. ¹⁸In fulfillment of his own purpose he gave us birth by the word of truth, so that we would become a kind of first fruits of his creatures.

¹⁹You must understand this, my beloved: let everyone be quick to listen, slow to speak, slow to anger; ²⁰for your anger does not produce God's righteousness. ²¹Therefore rid yourselves of all sordidness and rank growth of wickedness, and welcome with meekness the implanted word that has the power to save your souls. ²²But be doers of the word, and not merely hearers who deceive themselves. ²³For if any are hearers of the word and not doers, they are like those who look at themselves in a mirror; ²⁴for they look at themselves and, on going away, immediately forget what they were like. ²⁵But those who look into the perfect law, the law of liberty, and persevere, being not hearers who forget but doers who act—they will be blessed in their doing.

²⁶If any think they are religious, and do not bridle their tongues but deceive their hearts, their religion is worthless. ²⁷Religion that is pure and undefiled before God, the Father, is this: to care for orphans and widows in their distress, and to keep oneself unstained by the world.

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

SERMON: "Praising God through Song: The Power of the Psalms"

Kurt Ebsary

HYMN: "Halle, Halle, Hallelujah!" #591

HALLE, HALLE

PASTORAL PRAYER AND PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

THE LORD'S PRAYER (*ecumenical version*)

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.

INVITATION TO THE OFFERING

Every generous act of giving, with every perfect gift, is from above, coming down from the Father of lights. Filled by God's generosity, let us offer our gifts with gladness through Jesus Christ our Lord.

THE OFFERTORY

DOXOLOGY: "With Grateful Joy"

Richard Bruxvoort Colligan

With grateful joy for You the Source of all life
We raise one voice to You from whom all blessings flow
You are the Giver of life
You are the Lover of life
The good Sustainer of life
We live in You

PRAYER OF DEDICATION

Let us be slow in our yearning to hang on to our blessings, and quick to share them with the hungry, the lonely, the forgotten, and the hurting of our world, that our gifts might become a kind of first fruits for those whose lives are so empty. This we pray in Jesus' name, Amen.

CLOSING HYMN: "Praise Ye the Lord" #633

CLEVELAND

CHARGE

Arise, and let us go forth as God's people.

Look! God sends us forth with songs of love on our lips.

Arise, and let us go forth to serve beside Jesus.

Look! He stands, waiting for us to help tear down the barriers of injustice.

Arise, and let us go forth to join the generous Spirit.

Look! We will be doers as well as givers with our gifts.

BENEDICTION

The blessing of God be with you, the love of Jesus fill you, and the power of the Holy Spirit sustain you, now and forevermore.

We would like to thank Elder Billy Welch and Kurt Ebsary for sharing their amazing gifts with us today.

Volunteers This Week:

Liturgist: Billy Welch
Tech: Betsy Crocker
Usher(s): Linda Barry
Greeter(s): Terry DeLuca & Ina Charsley
Coffee Hour: Diane Charsley

Volunteers Next Week 9/8:

Liturgist: Sue Schurr
Tech: Betsy Crocker
Usher(s): Diane Charsley
Greeter(s): Pat Loeswick
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 1

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

Monday, Sept 2

10:00 am Alcoholics Anonymous (Circle II Basement)

Tuesday, Sept 3

9:00am – 2:00pm Office Hours

Wednesday, Sept 4

9:00am – 2:00pm Office Hours
12:00pm-3:00pm UFO (Unfinished Objects) (Parlor)

Thursday, Sept 5

9:00am – 2:00pm Office Hours
10:00am Alcoholics Anonymous (Circle II Basement)
12:00pm Worship Team Meeting

Saturday, Sept 7

10:00am Alcoholics Anonymous (Circle II Basement)

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)



Sing to Him a
new song
Psalm 33