



Fifteenth Sunday after Pentecost
 September 1, 2024
 Old First Presbyterian Church
 Huntington, New York



To all who live joyfully and long to share their excitement ... to all who mourn and need comfort ... to all who are weary and need rest ... to all who are homeless and desire sheltering love ... to all who pray or need prayer ... to all who sin and need a Savior ... to all who recognize Christ in their midst and hunger to share God's love with all the world ... Old First Presbyterian Church opens wide its doors and in the name of Jesus Christ, says ... WELCOME!



All hymns and Scriptures are printed in today's order of worship or you may look them up in the pew Bibles and hymnals. Large print versions of each are available from the usher.

*** The congregation is invited to stand in body or spirit and speak items printed in bold.**

WELCOME

CALL TO WORSHIP

from Song of Solomon 2:8-13

One: The voice of my beloved! Look, they come,
leaping upon the mountains, bounding over the hills.

**All: My beloved is like a gazelle or young stag.
Look, there they stand behind our wall,
gazing in at the windows, looking through the lattice.**

One: My beloved speaks and says to me:
"Arise, my love, my fair one, and come away,

All: for now the winter is past, the rain is over and gone.

One: The flowers appear on the earth; the time of singing has come
and the voice of the turtledove is heard in our land.

**All: The fig tree puts forth its figs, and the vines are in blossom;
they give forth fragrance. Arise, my love, and come away!**

One: Hearing the voice of the Lord, our beloved, calling us to arise and worship God's
holy name, friends, let us lift our hearts and voices as we praise the living God!

*HYMN 14

For the Beauty of the Earth

*For the beauty of the earth, for the glory of the skies,
for the love which from our birth over and around us lies:*

(Refrain)

*Lord of all, to thee we raise
this our hymn of grateful praise.*

*For the wonder of each hour of the day and of the night,
hill and vale, and tree and flower, sun and moon, and stars of light:*

(Refrain)

*For the joy of ear and eye, for the heart and mind's delight,
for the mystic harmony linking sense to sound and sight:*

(Refrain)

*Lord of all, to thee we raise
this our hymn of grateful praise.*

*For the joy of human love, brother, sister, parent, child,
friends on earth, and friends above, for all gentle thoughts and mild:*

(Refrain)

*For thyself, best gift divine to the world so freely given;
for that great, great love of thine, peace on earth and joy in heaven:*

(Refrain)

Text: Folliot Sandford Pierpoint, 1864, alt.

Music: Conrad Kocher, 1838; abr. William Henry Monk, 1861; harm. *The English Hymnal*, 1906

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PRAYER OF ADORATION AND CONFESSION

Faithful God, in you we live and move and have our being. You are the beginning and end of all things, seen and unseen. Throughout your magnificent creation, you have made the seasons change, the sun shine, the rain fall, the vines bear fruit, and the fields produce good things. You alone are our strength and security, for you alone may bring us comfort and rest. We turn to you as the source of all life, marveling at your wisdom and seeking to learn your purpose for our lives. We offer you our praise and thanksgiving, for you are the God who made us, the Christ who heals us, and the Spirit who brings us life. So we worship you with humble adoration, Holy and Mysterious God, ever three and ever one, now and forever more.

Forgiving God, even though we know you are the source of our lives and all life, we confess that we often turn our backs on your word and your way. You set a path for us to follow, but we conform to the ways of this world. You give each one of us gifts to use for the work of your kingdom, but we wait for others to do what needs doing. We cling to old hurts and familiar habits, nurse anger and jealousies, and are often so self-absorbed, that we fail to notice those who are most in need. Forgive us for taking the easy way out and renew in us the eagerness and energy to serve you faithfully. We pray together in the name of Christ Jesus, our Savior. Amen.

DECLARATION OF GRACE

One: Friends, hear and believe the good news of the Gospel of Christ Jesus:
Who is in a position to condemn? Only Christ – and Christ died for us!
Christ rose for us! Christ reigns in power for us! Christ prays for us!

**All: In Christ Jesus, we are forgiven and set free by God's unconditional love.
When we seek the mercy of God in humility, God grants us grace.
May we revel in the grip of that grace, living at peace with God,
ourselves, and one another. Thanks be to our God! Amen!**

*HYMN 765

May the God of Hope Go with Us (sung twice)

*May the God of hope go with us every day,
filling all our lives with love and joy and peace.
May the God of justice speed us on our way,
bringing light and hope to every land and race.
Praying, let us work for peace;
singing, share our joy with all;
working for a world that's new,
faithful when we hear Christ's call.*

(Repeat)

Text: Alvin Schutmaat, 1984
Music: Argentine folk melody

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*SHARING THE PEACE OF CHRIST

One: The peace of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, be with you all.

All: And also with you.

One: Please turn to those around you and share the peace of Christ.

Please share signs and words of Christ's peace with those worshipping near you.

PRAYER FOR UNDERSTANDING

God of wisdom and understanding, you teach us with love, embrace us with mercy, and challenge us with truth. Send your Holy Spirit upon us as these Scriptures are read, interpreted, and embodied in thought, word, and action. Strengthen our commitment to living as doers of your Word, not merely listeners, so that our lives may reflect the truth we meet in Jesus, the Christ, your Living Word. Amen.

GOSPEL READING (p. 42 in pew Bible)

Mark 7:1-8, 14-15, 21-23 [NRSVUE]

¹ Now when the Pharisees and some of the scribes who had come from Jerusalem gathered around Jesus, ² they noticed that some of his disciples were eating with defiled hands, that is, without washing them. ³ (For the Pharisees, and all the Jews, do not eat unless they wash their hands, thus observing the tradition of the elders, ⁴ and they do not eat anything from the market unless they wash, and there are also many other traditions that they observe: the washing of cups and pots and bronze kettles and beds.) ⁵ So the Pharisees and the scribes asked Jesus, “Why do your disciples not walk according to the tradition of the elders but eat with defiled hands?” ⁶ Jesus said to them, “Isaiah prophesied rightly about you hypocrites, as it is written,

‘This people honors me with their lips,
but their hearts are far from me;
⁷ in vain do they worship me,
teaching human precepts as doctrines.’

⁸ “You abandon the commandment of God and hold to human tradition.”

¹⁴ Then Jesus called the crowd again and said to them, “Listen to me, all of you, and understand: ¹⁵ there is nothing outside a person that by going in can defile, but the things that come out are what defile.

²¹ For it is from within, from the human heart, that evil intentions come: sexual immorality, theft, murder, ²² adultery, avarice, wickedness, deceit, debauchery, envy, slander, pride, folly. ²³ All these evil things come from within, and they defile a person.”

One: This is the Word of the Lord.

All: **Thanks be to God.**

NEW TESTAMENT READING (p. 229 in pew Bible)

James 1:17-27 [NRSVUE]

¹⁷ Every 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. ¹⁸ In fulfillment of God's own purpose God gave birth to us by the word of truth, so that we would become a kind of first fruits of God's creatures.

¹⁹ You must understand this, my beloved brothers and sisters: let everyone be quick to listen, slow to speak, slow to anger, ²⁰ for human anger does not produce God's righteousness. ²¹ Therefore 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.

²² But be doers of the word and not merely hearers who deceive themselves. ²³ For if any are hearers of the word and not doers, they are like those who look at themselves in a mirror; ²⁴ for they look at themselves and, upon going away, immediately forget what they were like. ²⁵ But 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.

²⁶ If any think they are religious and do not bridle their tongues but deceive their hearts, their religion is worthless. ²⁷ Religion 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.

One: This is the Word of the Lord.

All: **Thanks be to God.**

MESSAGE

“Hearers ... Who Are Also Doers!”

***HYMN 726**

Will You Come and Follow Me

*“Will you come and follow me if I but call your name?
Will you go where you don't know and never be the same?
Will you let my love be shown; will you let my name be known;
will you let my life be grown in you and you in me?”*

*“Will you leave yourself behind if I but call your name?
Will you care for cruel and kind and never be the same?
Will you risk the hostile stare should your life attract or scare?
Will you let me answer prayer in you and you in me?”*

*“Will you let the blinded see if I but call your name?
Will you set the prisoners free and never be the same?
Will you kiss the leper clean, and do such as this unseen,
and admit to what I mean in you and you in me?”*

*“Will you love the ‘you’ you hide if I but call your name?
Will you quell the fear inside and never be the same?
Will you use the faith you’ve found to reshape the world around,
through my sight and touch and sound in you and you in me?”*

*Lord, your summons echoes true when you but call my name.
Let me turn and follow you and never be the same.
In your company I’ll go where your love and footsteps show.
Thus I’ll move and live and grow in you and you in me.*

Text: John L. Bell and Graham Maule, 1987

Music: Scottish melody; arr. John L. Bell, 1987

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***AFFIRMATION OF FAITH**

The Apostles’ Creed (Ecumenical)

I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.

**I believe in Jesus Christ, God’s only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died,
and was buried; he descended to the dead.**

**On the third day he rose again; he ascended into heaven,
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church,
the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.**

DISCERNING GOD'S CALL TO ACTION

In the book of James, we are taught that every generous act of giving and every perfect gift are from God. As we discern God's call on our hearts and lives to live as doers of God's Word, may our gifts of time, talent, and treasure reflect God's generosity and our gratitude for every blessing we have received through God's faithfulness to us.

OFFERTORY

"I'll Sing Hallelujah" by Ken Friese
Ken Duncan and Gail Glister, Duet

If you would like to offer a financial gift during today's worship service, please do so by placing your gift in one of the two wooden boxes, conveniently located at both Sanctuary entrances.

INVITATION TO THE LORD'S TABLE

*This is the Table of our Lord and Savior, Jesus, the Christ!
God invites **ALL** who trust and believe in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus
to share in the joyful feast that God has graciously prepared for God's people!*

*HYMN 526

Let Us Talents and Tongues Employ

*Let us talents and tongues employ, reaching out with a shout of joy:
bread is broken; the wine is poured; Christ is spoken and seen and heard.*

(Refrain)

*Jesus lives again; earth can breathe again;
pass the Word around: loaves abound!
Jesus lives again; earth can breathe again;
pass the Word around: loaves abound!*

*Christ is able to make us one; at the table he sets the tone,
teaching people to live to bless, love in word and in deed express.*

(Refrain)

*Jesus calls us in, sends us out bearing fruit in a world of doubt,
gives us love to tell, bread to share: God (Immanuel) everywhere!*

(Refrain)

Text: Fred Kaan, 1975

Music: Jamaican folk melody; adapt. Doreen Potter, 1975

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GREAT PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

One: The Lord be with you.

All: And also with you.

One: Lift up your hearts.

All: We lift them up to the Lord.

One: Let us give thanks to the Lord, our God.

All: It is right to give God our thanks and praise.

Therefore, we praise you, joining our voices with the celestial choirs and with all the faithful of every time and place, who forever sing to the glory of your name:

Holy, holy, holy Lord. God of power and might.

Heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest!

Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord.

Hosanna in the highest heaven!

For great is the mystery of faith:

Christ has died.

Christ is risen.

Christ will come again.

Hear us now as we pray together, sharing the words of prayer
taught to us by our Lord and Savior, Jesus, the Christ:

**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.

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

The Bread of Life, the body of Christ, broken for all for the forgiveness of sins.

The Cup of Salvation, the blood of Christ, shed for all for the forgiveness of sins.

All are invited to commune together, sharing bread and cup when invited by the Pastor.

MINISTRY OF MUSIC

“Let There Be Peace on Earth” arr. by Mark Hayes

Ken Duncan, Soloist

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

God of everlasting hope, we thank you for gathering us at your table, feeding us with the bread of life, and sharing with us the cup of salvation. As we leave this meal of love and grace to go out to the many places you call us, send your Spirit to accompany us. Empower us to live not only as hearers of your Word, but doers, offering every perfect gift to your work among us. We pray in the name of Jesus, the Christ, amen.

*HYMN 697

Take My Life

*Take my life and let it be
consecrated, Lord, to thee;
take my moments and my days;
let them flow in ceaseless praise;
let them flow in ceaseless praise.*

*Take my hands and let them move
at the impulse of thy love;
take my feet and let them be
swift and beautiful for thee,
swift and beautiful for thee.*

*Take my voice and let me sing
always, only, for my King;
take my lips and let them be
filled with messages from thee,
filled with messages from thee.*

*Take my silver and my gold;
not a mite would I withhold;
take my intellect and use
every power as thou shalt choose,
every power as thou shalt choose.*

Take my will and make it thine;
it shall be no longer mine.
Take my heart, it is thine own;
it shall be thy royal throne,
it shall be thy royal throne.

Take my love; my Lord, I pour
at thy feet its treasure store;
take myself and I will be
ever, only, all for thee,
ever, only, all for thee.

Text: Frances Ridley Havergal, 1874
Music: H.A. Cesar Malan, 1827

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***CHARGE AND BENEDICTION**

***CHORAL BENEDICTION**

Come, O Lord, be with us. Fill us with joy and thanksgiving.
May our hearts, flow with peace. Come with your love and surround us.
Friendship and love, may they bloom and grow, bloom and grow forever.
Bless us now. Bless our friends. Bless all people forever.

***POSTLUDE**

This Morning's Worship Leaders:

Rev. Matthew Means, Pastor
Clerk Kerry Degnan, Live-Stream
Elder Martha Tibbetts, Liturgist
Ken Friese, Director of Music
Ken Duncan and Gail Glister, Special Music
Deacon Carol Breckner, Deacon Linda Ketcham, Deacon Bob
Miller, and Elder Martha Tibbetts, Communion Servers
Dan Degnan, Usher