

WORSHIP SERVICE

Northampton Presbyterian Church

Sixteenth Sunday After Pentecost

Homecoming Sunday

September 17, 2023

10:00 AM

PRELUDE

Prelude in G

Stein

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Session Meeting, Tuesday (9/19) at 7 PM.
- Esther Circle, Wednesday (9/20) at 9:30 AM.
- Membership Sunday (9/24)
- World Communion Sunday (10/1)
- Sharing Session by Mehr Austin Daniel (10/1 following worship), a former professor of English in her native country Pakistan. Join us for Pakistani treats during coffee hour followed by Mehr's compelling story.

RESPONSIVE CALL TO WORSHIP

Inspired by Psalm 103:1-5

ONE: Come! Come praise the eternal God! Let all that is within us—body, emotions, mind, and will—praise God’s holy name!

MANY: Despite our failures, He forgives and releases us. More than any doctor, He heals our diseases. When we are famished and weak, He fills us with good and beautiful things, satisfying our needs, and restoring our strength.

ONE: So come! Come, praise the eternal God! Sing songs from a grateful heart, and remember all that He has done for us.

HYMN

Come, Christians, Join to Sing

MADRID

Come, Christians, join to sing:

Alleluia! Amen!

Loud praise to Christ our King:

Alleluia! Amen!

Let all, with heart and voice,

Before his throne rejoice;

Praise is his gracious choice:

Alleluia! Amen!

Come, lift your hearts on high:

Alleluia! Amen!

Let praises fill the sky:

Alleluia! Amen!

He is our guide and friend;

To us he'll condescend;

His love shall never end:

Alleluia! Amen!

Praise yet our Christ again:

Alleluia! Amen!

Life shall not end the strain:

Alleluia! Amen!

On heaven's blissful shore

His goodness we'll adore,

Singing forevermore:

Alleluia! Amen!

RESPONSIVE PRAYER OF CONFESSION

ONE: Here we are again, God, with all that makes us who we are, all that fills our lives; Carrying into this place of joy and freedom the burdens we just can't seem to lay down, the weight of all the scores we long to have settled, the justice we want to demand for the wrongs we have suffered.

MANY: Yet we also know what would happen if you were to deal with us justly; with our greeds and violences, our betrayals and lusts. If justice was served in our lives we could not stand.

ONE: So forgive us our wrongs, God, forgive us as we do not deserve; forgive us against the demands of justice; And forgive our obsession that justice be done to those who have wronged us.

MANY: May our worship lead us to the place where our hunger for grace and mercy may be filled, and where we may be freed from the tyranny of vengeance.

(We pause for a moment of silent, personal confession.)

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

ONE: People of God, hear the good news! Our God is compassionate and merciful, full of endless love. He does not treat us as our sins deserve, or punish us as harshly as he could. For as high as the heavens are above the earth, so strong is his love toward us. And as far as the east is from the west, so far has he removed our sins from us. So be at peace: you are forgiven!

MANY: Thanks be to God!

HYMN

Glory to God, Whose Goodness Shines on Me *GLORY TO GOD*

**Glory to God, whose goodness shines on me,
And to the Son, whose grace has pardoned me,
And to the Spirit, whose love has set me free.**

As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be. Amen.

World without end, without end. Amen.

World without end, without end. Amen

World without end, without end. Amen.

As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be. Amen.

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

OLD TESTAMENT READING

Genesis 50:15-21

NEW TESTAMENT READING

Romans 14:1-12

SERMON

Why We Come Home

Rev. Judith A. Dwyer

HYMN

God of Compassion, in Mercy Befriend Us

O QUANTA QUALIA

God of compassion, in mercy befriend us,

Giver of grace for our needs all-availing.

Wisdom and strength for each day ever send us,

Patience untiring and courage unailing.

**Though we are lost, you have sought us and found us,
Stilled our rude hearts with your word of consoling.
Wrap now your peace, like a mantle, around us,
Guarding our thoughts and our passions controlling.**

**How shall we stray, with your hand to direct us,
You who the stars in their courses are guiding?
What shall we fear, with your power to protect us,
We who walk forth in your greatness confiding?**

SERVICE OF INSTALLATION FOR AN ELDER

Responsive Liturgy

ONE: There are different gifts,

MANY: But it is the same Spirit who gives them.

ONE: There are different ways of serving God,

MANY: But it is the same Lord who is served.

ONE: God works through different people in different ways,

MANY: But it is the same God who achieves God's purpose through them all.

ONE: Each one is given a gift by the Spirit,

MANY: To use for the common good.

ONE: Together we are the body of Christ,

MANY: And individually members of him.

ONE: Though we have different gifts, together we are a ministry of reconciliation led by the risen Christ. We work and pray to make Christ's church useful in the world. Within our common ministry, some are chosen for particular work as ministers of the Word and Sacrament, Ruling Elders, or Deacons. In this service, we recognize these special ministries, remembering that our Lord Jesus said: *Whoever among you wants to be great must become the servant of all, and if they want to be first among you, they must be the slave of all.*

MANY: Just as the Son of Man came not to be served, but to serve, and to give his life to set others free.

An Elder Comes Forward With the Candidate for Installation:

Elder: Madam Moderator, speaking for the people of the church, I bring Cathy Cocchia to be installed for a second consecutive term of office as a Ruling Elder.

The Moderator Asks the Questions Required by the Constitution of the PC(USA):

Do you trust in Jesus Christ your Savior, acknowledge him Lord of all and Head of the Church, and through him believe in one God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit? ***I do.***

Do you accept the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments to be, by the Holy Spirit, the unique and authoritative witness to Jesus Christ in the Church universal, and God's Word to you? ***I do.***

Do you sincerely receive and adopt the essential tenets of the Reformed faith as expressed in the confessions of our church as authentic and reliable expositions of what Scripture leads us to believe and do, and will you be instructed and led by those confessions as you lead the people of God? ***I do and I will.***

Will you fulfill your ministry in obedience to Jesus Christ, under the authority of Scripture, and be continually guided by our confessions? ***I will.***

Will you be governed by our church's polity, and will you abide by its discipline? Will you be a friend among your colleagues in ministry, working with them, subject to the ordering of God's Word and Spirit? ***I will.***

Will you in your own life seek to follow the Lord Jesus Christ, love your neighbors, and work for the reconciliation of the world? ***I will.***

Do you promise to further the peace, unity, and purity of the church? ***I do.***

Will you pray for and seek to serve the people with energy, intelligence, imagination, and love? ***I will.***

Will you be a faithful ruling elder, watching over the people, providing for their worship, nurture, and service? Will you share in government and discipline, serving in councils of the church, and in your ministry will you try to show the love and justice of Jesus Christ? ***I will.***

The Elder Asks the Questions of the Congregation

Do we, the members of the church, accept Cathy as a Ruling Elder, chosen by God through the voice of this congregation to lead us in the way of Jesus Christ? ***We do.***

Do we agree to pray for her, to encourage her, to respect her decisions, and to follow as she guides us, serving Jesus Christ, who alone is Head of the Church? ***We do.***

The Prayer of Installation

Those previously ordained will stand, if able, along with the congregation, for the prayer of installation.

Almighty God, in every age you have chosen servants to speak your word and lead your people. We thank you for these people whom you have called to serve you. Give them special gifts to do your special work; and fill them with the Holy Spirit, so they may have the same mind that was in Christ Jesus, and be a faithful disciple as long as they shall live.

God of grace, give Cathy courage and discipline to follow where you rightly lead her, that she may declare your wonderful deeds and show your love in the world: through Jesus Christ the Lord of all. Amen.

Declaration

Cathy, you are again an elder in the church and for this congregation. Whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God through him.

Let us once more welcome this gracious servant into the service of the church!

OFFERING SENTENCE

(Scan the QR Code to give online →)

OFFERTORY

Amazing Grace



Pote

DOXOLOGY AND PRAYER OF DEDICATION

**Praise God from whom all blessings flow;
Praise Him, all creatures here below;
Praise Him above, ye heav'nly host;
Praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost.**

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE AND THE LORD'S PRAYER

Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done, on earth as 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, for ever and ever. Amen.

HYMN

Blest Be the Tie That Binds

DENNIS

**Blest be the tie that binds
Our hearts in Christian love.
The fellowship of kindred minds
Is like to that above.**

**Before our Father's throne
We pour our ardent prayers.
Our fears, our hopes, our aims are one,
Our comforts and our cares.

We share our mutual woes;
Our mutual burdens bear.
And often for each other flows
The sympathizing tear.**

**When we are called to part,
It gives us inward pain;
But we shall still be joined in heart,
And hope to meet again.**

**From sorrow, toil, and pain,
And sin, we shall be free;
And perfect love and friendship reign
Through all eternity.**

CHARGE AND BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE

Go Forth

Adkins

WORSHIP NOTES:

The **Prayer of Confession** is written by John van de Laar. Copyright © 2008 Sacredise.com. Visit that site for many other great worship resources.

The **Pastoral Prayer** is written by Thom Shuman and posted on his blog, Lectionary Liturgies.

The **Benediction** is written by Nancy C. Townley and posted on Ministry Matters website at www.ministrymatters.com.

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