



First Presbyterian Church of Newton

10:30 AM MAY 14, 2023

** indicates when to rise in body or in spirit*

(PH denotes *The Presbyterian Hymnal*, STF denotes *Sing the Faith Hymnal*)

Gathering in God's Name

WORDS OF WELCOME

PRELUDE

* CALL TO WORSHIP

Leader: God has set this day before us,

People: A day set apart, a day of rest and praise.

Leader: God has set our lives before us,

People: A span of years in which we love, and learn, and serve.

Leader: God has set God's seal upon our hearts,

People: So that we might live fully in deep love.

Leader: Let us worship God.

*** HYMN STF #2050 “Mothering God, You Gave Me Birth”**

***Mothering God, you gave me birth
In the bright morning of this world.
Creator, source of every breath,
You are my rain, my wind, my sun.***

***Mothering Christ, you took my form,
Offering me your food of light,
Grain of life, and grape of love,
Your very body for my peace.***

***Mothering Spirit, nurt’ring one,
In arms of patience hold me close,
So that in faith I root and grow
Until I flow’r, until I know.***

CALL TO CONFESSION

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

God, we believe you have called us to unity, but often we have isolated ourselves from others, forgive us for the times we have turned our backs on those who are different.

God, we believe you have called us to live together as one body, forgive us for the times we ourselves have created division in a community we have been a part of, including your church.

God, we believe you ask us to look, listen, and learn from others, forgive us for the times we have ridiculed and attacked those with different viewpoints.

God, we believe you ask us to accept and seek to understand all who are called by your name, forgive us for the times we have offended you by failing to love others as we do ourselves. God, we believe you call us to be one even as you are one, forgive us for the disunity we have harbored and make us one. (Our silent prayers continue...)

Leader: Hear our prayers and forgive us, we pray. God and Creator of all humankind, Jesus Christ prayed that your church might be one even as you, our God, are one. May you renew our minds and rekindle your love in our hearts, so that by the power of the Spirit, we might find the Oneness that you intend for us.

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

Leader: God brings us the good news of Jesus Christ, and the assurance of resurrection. Thanks be to God for this amazing grace!

People: **Alleluia. Amen.**

***SONG OF JOY**

*In thankfulness we look for you, alive to us in all we do.
We members of your body share in service, sacrament and prayer.*

SHARING THE PEACE OF CHRIST

(Based on Ephesians 2.15,16)

Christ is our peace. Christ has reconciled us to God in one body by the cross. We meet in Christ's name and share the peace of Christ. May the peace of the Lord be always with you.

And also with you. (Please share the peace from a distance.)

Listening For God's Word

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION (in unison)

Savior God, we are in awe of you and the way you guide us to the greater good. You have gifted us with the Holy Spirit as our advocate and guide. Open us to the Spirit's wisdom and truth. Open our ears, minds and hearts to your Word read and proclaimed today. May we know your truth and respond in faith. Amen.

RESPONSIVE READING

Acts 17:22-29

Leader: Then Paul stood in front of the Areopagus and said,
"Athenians, I see how extremely religious you are in every way.
For as I went through the city and
looked carefully at the objects of your worship,

**People: I found among them an altar with the inscription,
'To an unknown god.'
What therefore you worship as unknown, this I proclaim to you.
The God who made the world and everything in it,
the One who is Lord of heaven and earth,
does not live in shrines made by human hands,**

Leader: nor is God served by human hands, as though God needed anything,
since God gives to all mortals life and breath and all things.
From one ancestor God made all nations to inhabit the whole earth,
and God allotted the times of their existence and the boundaries of the
places where they would live, so that they would search for God and
perhaps grope and find God --though indeed God is not far from
each one of us.

**People: For 'In God we live and move and have our being';
as even some of your own poets have said,
'For we too are God's offspring.' Since we are God's
offspring, we ought not to think that the deity is like gold,
or silver, or stone, an image formed by the art and imagination
of mortals.**

TIME WITH CHILDREN AND BUCKET BRIGADE

SCRIPTURE LESSON

John 14:15-21

"If you love me, you will keep my commandments. And I will ask the Father, and
God will give you another Advocate, to be with you forever. This is the Spirit of
truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees nor knows who
that is. You know the Spirit, because the Spirit abides with you, and will be in
you.

I will not leave you orphaned; I am coming to you. In a little while the world will no longer see me, but you will see me; because I live, you also will live. On that day you will know that I am in my Father, and you in me, and I in you. They who have my commandments and keep them are those who love me; and those who love me will be loved by my Father, and I will love them and reveal myself to them."

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

SERMON

"What does it mean to be loved?"

Responding to God's Word

* HYMN PH #275

"God of Our Life"

*God of our life, through all the circling years,
We trust in Thee;
In all the past, through all our hopes and fears,
Thy hand we see.
With each new day, when morning lifts the veil,
We own Thy mercies, Lord, which never fail.*

*God of the past, our times are in Thy hand;
With us abide.
Lead us by faith to hope's true promised land;
Be Thou our guide.
With Thee to bless, the darkness shines as light,
And faith's fair vision changes into sight.*

*God of the coming years, through paths unknown
We follow Thee;
When we are strong, Lord, leave us not alone;
Our refuge be.
Be Thou for us in life our daily bread,
Our heart's true home when all our years have sped.*

*** AFFIRMATION OF FAITH (in unison)**

Confession of 1967 Inclusive
(From Section 9:15)

God's sovereign love is a mystery beyond the reach of the human mind. Human thought ascribes to God superlatives of power, wisdom, and goodness. But God reveals divine love in Jesus Christ by showing power in the form of a servant, wisdom in the folly of the cross, and goodness in receiving sinful people. The power of God's love in Christ to transform the world discloses that the Redeemer is the Lord and Creator who made all things to serve the purpose of God's love.

SHARING OF ANNOUNCEMENTS

MINUTE FOR MISSION

OFFERING OUR GIFTS TO GOD'S SERVICE

OFFERTORY

***SONG OF PRAISE PH #591**

*Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;
Praise Christ, all people here below;
Praise Holy Spirit evermore;
Praise Triune God, whom we adore. Amen.*

*** PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING**

JOYS AND CONCERNS

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.

Going Into The World as Christ's Disciples

* HYMN PH #263 "Immortal, Invisible, God Only Wise"

*Immortal, invisible, God only wise,
In light inaccessible hid from our eyes,
Most blessed, most glorious, the Ancient of Days,
Almighty, victorious, Thy great name we praise.*

*Unresting, unhasting, and silent as light,
Nor wanting, nor wasting, Thou rulest in might;
Thy justice like mountains high soaring above
Thy clouds, which are fountains of goodness and love.*

*To all, life Thou givest, to both great and small;
In all life Thou livest, the true life of all;
We blossom and flourish like leaves on the tree,
Then wither and perish; but naught changeth Thee.*

*Thou reignest in glory, Thou rulest in light,
Thine angels adore Thee, all veiling their sight;
All praise we would render; O help us to see
'Tis only the splendor of light hideth Thee!*

* CHARGE AND BENEDICTION

* POSTLUDE

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**OUR WORSHIP IS ENDED.**

**OUR SERVICE BEGINS!**  
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Worship Leader: Terry Van Auken
Ushers/Greeters: Donna Kronen and Daele Phlegar

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