

The Worship of God
Fourth Sunday of Easter – April 21, 2024 – 9:00 Morning Worship
Welcome to First Presbyterian Church via Zoom!

PRELUDE

“Christ, You Are the Day and Light”

Georg Böhm

WELCOME

GATHERING AROUND GOD’S WORD

CALL TO WORSHIP

In this time of worship and throughout our lives, we call on God.

In moments when we search for the power to act justly,

let us do so in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth.

In situations when our lips long for powerful words to speak,

let us do so in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth.

At times when we feel lost and need to find the power to follow,

let us do so in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth.

When it is easier to hate, and we desperately need the power to love,

let us do so in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth.

God offers salvation, transformation, solace, and refuge.

In it, we obtain the power to act, the power to speak,

the power to follow, and the power to love.

In all we do and all we say, let us do so in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth.

Come, let us worship.

OPENING PRAYER

Loving and living God,

we gather together today, guided by you, our Shepherd.

You protect and care for us; you lead us as we journey through life.

During this time of worship, we ask that our ears are open to hear your word,

our eyes are open to see your light,

our hearts are open to feel your love.

As your sheep, we know love,

and we have heard the commandment to love one another.

May our worship be a testament to your love and our dedication to love one another.

Amen.

SING

“God, You Spin the Whirling Planets”

#23

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Standing before the religious authorities in Jerusalem,

Peter cried out, “the stone rejected by you, the builders, has become the cornerstone.”

Like those who threw Peter and John in prison and placed law before love,

we too confess that we have rejected the stone that is Christ Jesus.

In our doubt, we have and turned towards false securities, hopes, and promises.

In our ignorance, we have invested in artificial love and cheap grace.

In our defiance, we have denied our beliefs and ignored your guidance.

We, too, have rejected the stone in these ways and others.

In this silence, we confess our acts of rejection now (pause).

Hear our confessions as recognition for wrongs done
in the past and hope for transformation to come.

Amen.

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

People of God,

be assured that even though the stone was rejected,
it now sits as the cornerstone,
ever-present, ever-forgiving, ever-lasting.

We are forgiven, stand firm on this foundation, now and forever.

Thanks be to God!

SHARING GOD'S PEACE

I invite you to turn to one another and share a sign of peace:

You're invited to unmute yourselves and exchange peace with one another

LISTENING TO GOD'S WORD

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

FIRST LESSON

Psalm 23

SECOND LESSON

John 10:11-18

...The Word of God for the people of God. **Thanks be to God.**

REFLECTION

Rev. Susan Phillips

RESPONDING TO GOD'S WORD

SING

"For the Fruit of All Creation"

#36

GIVING OUR GIFTS

DOXOLOGY

"Halle, Halle, Hallelujah!"

#591

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

To the one who has commanded us to love one another,
we give thanks for the love we have received.

Hugs, prayers, gifts, words of encouragement, forgiveness, and grace.

In recognition of all we are given let us now commit to doing love.

Sharing, caring and sacrificing,

being patient, generous, selfless,

risking judgment, loss, disappointment.

Let us offer all the love we have in all the ways we can until our doing becomes our being.

Let us do love, let us be love,

in the name of the one who is love.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE FROM THE CHAT

THE LORD'S PRAYER (debts & debtors)

SENDING INTO GOD'S WORLD

SING

“God, You Made Your Good Creation”
BEACH SPRING 8.7.8.7 D (“God Whose Giving Knows No Ending”)
God, you made your good creation and you hold it in your care —
From each starry constellation to each forest under-layer.
Tiny creatures, mountain splendor, rivers, lakes and ocean floors —
You are loving, kind and tender in your care for what is yours.

Yet, O God, the earth is crying, times are changing, storms are strong.
Now the coral reefs are dying, floods are raging, droughts are long.
Though the circumstances differ, when the earth is in distress,
See! The poor are first to suffer from our greed and selfishness.

God, you love this world we live in, so you sent your only Son.
"Here on earth as in your heaven," God, we pray, "Your will be done."
By your Spirit, may we listen to the earth and to the poor;
May we care for all you've given till creation is restored.

SENDING

You have heard it proclaimed; God is love.
This love is powerful and transformative.
It sacrifices everything, even one's life.
It boldly cries out for justice.
It beckons us to leave behind jealousy, hatred, and grudges to abide within.
It convicts us to act courageously.
Go from this place, knowing that the one who is love profoundly loves you.
Take this love and share it with family and friends,
as well as stranger and foe, gift it to the hurt and sick, the lonely and troubled.
Be bold, be humble, be love.
Amen?

POSTLUDE

“Canzona in G Major”

Franz Tunder