

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF BLAIRSTOWN, NJ

Fourteenth Sunday after Pentecost

10:00 AM

ORDER OF WORSHIP

Sep. 3, 2023

GATHERING IN GOD'S NAME

PRELUDE: *Vocalise by Sergei Rachmaninoff*

WELCOME, ANNOUNCEMENTS, &

AFFIRMATION OF MISSION STATEMENT:

Deb Albrecht

**As disciples of Jesus Christ, led by the Holy Spirit,
we experience God's unconditional love, and we witness to
others by discovering and sharing our gifts.**

* PRAISE SONG: *Lord, Prepare Me (Sanctuary)* (No. 701 GTG)

***Lord, prepare me to be a sanctuary, pure and holy, tried and
true. With thanksgiving, I'll be a living sanctuary for you.***

* CALL TO WORSHIP: *(Adapted from Psalm 105: 1-3)*

Leader: Give thanks to the Lord,

People: Call on God's name.

Leader: Make known God's name among the peoples. Sing to God,

**People: Sing praises to God. Tell of all God's wonderful
works. Glory in God's holy name.**

Leader: With great gladness and great gratitude, let us worship God!

* HYMN OF PRAISE: *No. 476 O Worship the King* vv. 1 & 4

PRAYER OF CONFESSION: *(in silence then unison)*

**God of love and God of life, you ask us to love one another from
the center of who we authentically are. You seek our blessing and
tell us to hold fast to what is good, to rejoice in hope, to extend
hospitality to strangers, to bless those who persecute us, and to
live a life that at times seems strange and foreign to us.**

**Forgive us, we pray, when we fail to live the good and succeed
at living the bad. Help us to break the bad and live the good. That
your divine work may be seen in us and working through us. This
we pray in Jesus' name and to his glory. Amen.**

ASSURANCE OF CHRIST'S FORGIVENESS:

Leader: Friends — hear, grasp, and accept the good news of God's
great love for you.

**People: Because of Jesus, I am forgiven! You are forgiven.
We are forgiven!**

* CELEBRATION OF CHRIST'S FORGIVENESS: *No. 582 GTG*
Glory to God, Whose Goodness Shines on Me

* EXCHANGE OF CHRIST'S PEACE:

Leader: Since God has forgiven us in Christ, let us forgive one another. The peace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all.

People: And also with you.

Share Christ's peace by using the peace sign or by waving to those around you.

GIVING OF OUR GIFTS & OFFERTORY

* DOXOLOGY & PRAYER OF DEDICATION: *No. 428* *v. 1*
We Give Thee but Thine Own

DECLARING GOD'S WORD

EPISTLE LESSON: Romans 12: 9–21
St. Paul gives a prescription for living a life in God.

GOSPEL LESSON: Matthew 16: 21–28
Jesus explains his suffering that is to come.

MEDITATION: *Divine Work* Pastor David Harvey

RESPONDING TO GOD'S WORD

* AFFIRMATION OF FAITH: *The Contemporary Apostles' Creed*

I believe in God who places joy in our souls, dancing in our toes and songs in our hearts. I believe God wanted gladness to flow like a river, so the Good Lord created a bountiful earth with plenty for all to share. I believe in Jesus, who turned water into wine, partied with outcasts and sinners, and touched the broken so they could leap and dance. I believe Jesus opened the doors and set an extra place so we could feast.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, who prompts us to smile, who sends us invitations to come and dine, who nudges us to openness and tenderness. I believe the Spirit is present every time we gather to break bread and stirs within us the desire to live joyfully, to walk hopefully, and to enact justice boldly. Forever, I will live in the embrace of God and be a witness to Christ's resurrection joy. Amen.

* COMMUNION HYMN: *No. 508 For the Bread Which You Have Broken*

SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION

INVITATION TO THE LORD'S TABLE:

Elder Deb Albrecht

Elder: Friends, this is the joyful feast of the people of God!

People: People will come from east and west, and from north and south, and sit at the table in the kingdom of God.

Elder: Behold, how good and pleasant it is when brothers and sisters dwell in unity.

People: God sent the whole world God's only Son. Since God loved us so much, we too, should love one another.

Elder: This is the Lord's Table. Our Savior invites all who are truly sorry for their sins and would humbly put their trust in him to come to the feast which he has prepared. Listen to the gracious words of our Savior Jesus Christ:

"Come to me, all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me; for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light". Matthew 11: 28–30

This is indeed the will of my Father, that all who see the Son and believe in him may have eternal life, and I will raise them up on the last day. John 6: 40

Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if those who hear my voice open the door, I will come in to them and eat with them, and they with me. Revelation 3: 20

Pastor: The Lord be with you.

People: And with your spirit.

Pastor: Lift up your hearts.

People: We lift them to the Lord.

Pastor: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

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

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING, PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE, & THE LORD'S

PRAYER:

Pastor: Holy Lord . . . as we pray together:

All: Nourished at this table, O God, may we know the power of Christ's redemptive love and may we live in the power of his grace and truth. Give us courage to dismantle and break down the barriers that separate us from your love and from living lovingly on this planet, within this nation and in this community. In Jesus' name, we pray saying: "Our Father who art . . . For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory, forever. Amen.

THE WORDS OF INSTITUTION

OFFERING OF THE ELEMENTS: *Approach the Table, receive the bread, take the cup, and return to your pew.*

SHARING THE BREAD: Jesus said, *"I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never be hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty."* (Jn. 6:37) Let us eat this bread in remembrance of Christ and may the spirit that is in him be in us also.

DRINKING THE CUP: Jesus said, *"I am the vine, you are the branches, apart from him, we can do nothing."* Let us drink this cup in remembrance of Christ and may the spirit in which he died be our Spirit.

COMMUNION BLESSING: Elder Deb Albrecht

Elder: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

People: By your Spirit, strengthen our souls to be brave and bold in Christ's Service. Use our offerings and our lives for your glory and gain, in Jesus' name, our crucified and risen Lord, we pray. Amen.

DEPARTING IN GOD'S NAME

* HYMN: *Will You Let Me Be Your Servant* (vv. 1, 2, 4, 5, No. 727 GTG)

* CHARGE TO THE PEOPLE & BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE: *When Morning Gilds the Skies* by Dale Wood

Our Worship has ended — our Christian Witness begins!

TODAY'S WORSHIP ASSISTANTS

Greeter: Bill Olivier
Usher: Gail Weber
Worship Leader & Pastor
Assistant: Deb Albrecht
Pastor: Rev. David Harvey

MIDI: Frank Wilson
DLP: Jennifer Plut
Communion Prep.: Maggie Wilson
Ministers: The Congregation

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

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PLEASE REMEMBER IN YOUR DAILY PRAYERS

The Human Family: Persons and individuals who struggle with food insecurity and homelessness, the people in the Ukraine; families and communities impacted by gun violence; those impacted by severe weather; families and communities destroyed by the Maui fire. Schools within our community and country as they resume.

Men & Women Serving in the Armed Forces & America's Veterans

Those in elected office: The President, the Congress, State Assembly, local community servants

Healing for Friends & Families with:

Cancer: Judy Dales, Gordon Dugan, Samantha Elwell, Ann Fleming, Olivia Hollis, Adam Hubble, Tracy Lance, Troy Lutz, Caitlyn McMorrow and her family, Jay Ohland Jr., Bill S., Andrew Shan, Abbi Sparkman, Robert Talmadge, Tracy Wolfe, Molly Grace Young, Alicia, Audrey, Darlene, Eva, Gail, Liza

Illness & Injuries: Robert Benz, Sue Bonkowski, Joan Caldwell, Derek Cameron, Elaine Canonico, Kyle Canonico, Lucy Cuipa, Noah Haiduc-Dale, Jan Smith, Margaret Stephens, Betty Ann Weir, Ann, Carter, Demares, Tracy

THIS WEEK IN OUR CHURCH

{ Dates/times subject to change }

Sunday, Sep. 3

10:00 AM Family Worship &
Communion

Monday, Sep. 4

Office closed – Labor Day

Tuesday, Sep. 5

7:00 PM Music & Worship and
Christian Ed./OC

Saturday, Sep. 9

9:00 AM Presbyterian Women/FH

Sunday, Sep. 10

10:00 AM Worship

10:15 AM Sunday School

11:15 AM Deacon Meeting

Note of Thanks:

"Dear treasured friends,

What a lovely, delicious, and very meaningful coffee hour we spent together on Sunday (8/20). It was special, as are each of you. Our time spent together worshipping, caring for one another, and working together will always be remembered. You are all such great people. I quote something I heard the other day: "If something makes you sad when it's over, it must have been wonderful."

~ Carol McLain

p.s., My pool is open until the 8th, come for a swim!

ANNOUNCEMENTS

ShopRite (\$25/\$100), **Acme** (\$25/\$100), **Dunkin** (\$10), **IHOP** (\$10), **Starbucks** (\$10), and **Panera** (\$10) **gift cards** are available. See Gail Weber (or Jen Plut) to order additional cards or if you have any questions about how to support this ministry!

Presbyterian Women: The next PW meeting will take place on Saturday, Sep. 9 in Fellowship Hall. If you are able, please bring a breakfast item to share. There is a sign-up sheet in Fellowship Hall.

Deacon Meeting: The next Board of Deacons meeting will be held Sunday, Sep. 10 after church in Fellowship Hall.

Sunday School volunteers wanted! If you enjoy being with young children and would like to help shape their faith formation, we encourage you to volunteer in our Sunday School program. This year we are offering 2 classes: Children & Worship for Pre-K through grade 1 and Faith Works for grades 2 through 8. Classes begin Sep. 10 and will meet in Fellowship Hall during the worship service. We are looking for teen helpers and teachers. If you are interested, please contact Deb Albrecht at debalbrecht20@gmail.com / (908) 447-2112 or Zach Burke at zburke50@gmail.com / (862) 812-6271.

Fish & Chips: Mark Your Calendars for our Annual Tastefully British Fish/Chicken & Chips Dinner which will take place on Friday, Oct. 6 at the Outreach Center! This will be a take-out only dinner! Tickets will be available soon! Volunteers will be needed! Please speak with Gail Weber or contact the church office if you will be able and willing to help!

Sharing - Fall Fun Day at Johnsonburg Camp: Oct. 15 from 1:00–6:30 PM. Enjoy fun activities for all ages, like zip-lining, apple roasting, and pumpkin bowling. End the day with a delicious hot meal spent in community with friends and family. Visit the camp's website at www.campjburg.org/events/fall-fun-day/ for more information or to register.

It's not too soon to mark your calendar for Membership and Fellowship's, ever popular, Fall Square Dance! Ed LaPlante will be returning to FPCB to be our live caller on Saturday, Nov. 4. We'll have a covered dish supper in Fellowship Hall from 5–6 PM and the square dance will run from 6–8 PM. It's a great evening out for all ages, and if by chance you're not up for dancing, you'll have a guaranteed good time laughing and watching the fun. Invite your friends! RSVP by calling the church office at 908.362.5254, email at fpcb@ptd.net, or sign up in Fellowship Hall.

8th Annual Tastefully British

FISH & CHIPS
TAKE-OUT DINNER

Fri., Oct. 6 5 – 7 PM

First Presbyterian Church

OUTREACH CENTER

35 Main Street, Blairstown (next to the Post Office)

