



First Presbyterian Church of Newton

10:30 AM APRIL 28, 2024

Fifth Sunday of Easter

* indicates when to rise in body or in spirit

QUOTE FOR MEDITATION

“It’s not fear that gets in the way of daring leadership; it’s armor. When things get tough, do we lean in to vulnerability and get curious, or do we self-protect in ways that move us away from our values?”

-- Brené Brown

GATHERING IN GOD’S NAME

WORDS OF WELCOME

PRELUDE

“When We Are Living”

Bell Choir

*CALL TO WORSHIP (based on Psalm 31:1-5; 15-16)

Leader: Come, people of God! Take refuge in the Lord,

People: who listens when we cry out,

Leader: who rescues us when we call,

People: and who leads and guides us according to his unfailing love.

Leader: You are our God;

People: Our lives are in your hands.

ALL: Let us worship God together!

* HYMN PH #376

“Love Divine All Loves Excelling”

See Insert

CALL TO RECONCILIATION

(based on I John 3:1-3)

PRAYER OF BROKENNESS AND CONFESSION

Creator God, You created the earth, whole and round;
You created us to be whole people.

But we have become fragmented, cracked and broken. We have been broken by false promises, lost relationships, shattered trust.

We have become cracked with the experience of systemic sin: prejudice, oppression and fear. We have become fragmented, building up walls instead of lending hands.

Forgive us when we have done the breaking, heal us where we have been hurt.

Let Your light shine through our cracks and scars so that we might bring light to the world, showing that in You we are made whole. In You we find healing. In You we find renewed life. Help us to forgive, to love, to mend.

(A Time of Silent Prayer)

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

* SUNG RESPONSE OF JOY *“All are Welcome”* (verse 1)

*Let us build a house where love can dwell and all can safely live,
a place where saints and children tell how hearts learn to forgive.
Built of hopes and dreams and visions, rock of faith and vault of grace;
here the love of Christ shall end divisions:
All are welcome, all are welcome, all are welcome in this place.*

*SHARING THE PEACE OF CHRIST

<h2>LISTENING FOR THE WORD BY THE POWER OF THE SPIRIT</h2>
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PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION (in unison)

Draw us close, Holy Spirit, as the Scriptures are read and the Word is proclaimed. Let the word of faith be on our lips and in our hearts, and let all other words slip away. May we hear your voice today – speaking words filled with truth and grace.

RESPONSIVE READING 1 John 4:7-21

Leader: Beloved, let us love one another, because love is from God; everyone who loves is born of God and knows God.

People: **Whoever does not love does not know God, for God is love.**

Leader: God's love was revealed among us in this way: God sent his only Son into the world so that we might live through him.

People: **In this is love, not that we loved God but that God loved us and sent God's own Son to be the atoning sacrifice for our sins.**

Leader: Beloved, since God loved us so much, we also ought to love one another.

People: **No one has ever seen God; if we love one another, God lives in us, and God's love is perfected in us.**

Leader: By this we know that we abide in God and God in us, because God has given us the Spirit.

People: **And we have seen and do testify that the Parent has sent their own Child as the Savior of the world.**

Leader: God abides in those who confess that Jesus is the Son of God, and they abide in God.

So we have known and believe the love that God has for us.

People: **God is love, and those who abide in love abide in God, and God abides in them.**

**Love has been perfected among us in this:
that we may have boldness on the day of judgment,
because as God is, so are we in this world.**

Leader: There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear; for fear has to do with punishment, and whoever fears has not reached perfection in love.

People: **We love because God first loved us.**

Leader: Those who say, "I love God," and hate their brothers or sisters, are liars; for those who do not love a brother or sister whom they have seen, cannot love God whom they have not seen.

ALL: **The commandment we have from God is this:
those who love God must love their brothers and sisters and all their siblings also.**

TIME WITH CHILDREN

SCRIPTURE READING Acts 8:26-40

Now an angel of the Lord said to Philip, “Go south to the road – the desert road– that goes down from Jerusalem to Gaza.” So he started out, and on his way he met an Ethiopian eunuch, an important official in charge of all the treasury of the Candace (*which means “queen of the Ethiopians”*).

This one had gone to Jerusalem to worship, and on his way home was sitting in his chariot reading the Book of Isaiah the prophet.

The Spirit told Philip, “Go to that chariot and stay near it.”

Then Philip ran up to the chariot and heard the man reading Isaiah the prophet. “Do you understand what you are reading?” Philip asked.

“How can I,” the other said, “unless someone explains it to me?” So he invited Philip to come up and sit with him.

This is the passage of Scripture the eunuch was reading:

*“He was led like a sheep to the slaughter,
and as a lamb before its shearer is silent,
so he did not open his mouth. In his humiliation he was deprived of justice.
Who can speak of his descendants? For his life was taken from the earth.”*

The eunuch asked Philip, “Tell me, please, who is the prophet talking about, himself or someone else?” Then Philip began with that very passage of Scripture and told him the good news about Jesus.

As they traveled along the road, they came to some water and the eunuch said, “Look, here is water. What can stand in the way of my being baptized?”

And he gave orders to stop the chariot. Then both Philip and the eunuch went down into the water and Philip baptized him. When they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord suddenly took Philip away, and the eunuch did not see him again, but went on his way rejoicing. Philip, however, appeared at Azotus and traveled about, preaching the gospel in all the towns until he reached Caesarea.

MESSAGE

“God Shows Up... and Loves”

RESPONDING TO THE WORD WITH OUR LIVES

AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

Adapted from the Confession of Belhar

We believe that God's life-giving Word and Spirit has conquered the powers of sin and death, and therefore also of irreconciliation and hatred, bitterness, and enmity, that God's life-giving Word and Spirit will enable the church to live in a new obedience which can open new possibilities of life for society and the world.

*HYMN

"Faith Will Not Grow From Words Alone"

See Insert

CALL TO OFFER OUR GIFTS TO GOD'S SERVICE

OFFERTORY

* SONG OF GRATITUDE

"Praise with Joy"

TUNE: LAUDA ANIMA

*Praise with joy the world's Creator,
God of justice, love and peace,
Source and end of human knowledge
grace bestowing will not cease.
Celebrate our God's great glory,
power to rescue and release.*

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

ANNOUNCEMENTS

SHARING OF PRAYER JOYS and CONCERNS

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE ending with the LORD'S PRAYER (in unison)

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 OUT TO SHARE THE GOOD NEWS OF CHRIST

***HYMN PH #499** *“Wonder of Wonders”* (verses 1 and 4) See Insert

*** BENEDICTION**

*** POSTLUDE**

**We thank our Worship Leader Tim Voss
and the Ushers/Greeters this morning.**

Liturgical Resources:

PH denotes The Presbyterian Hymnal and STF denotes Sing the Faith Hymnal

Prayer of Brokenness and Confession and Assurance of Pardon

- Rev. Mindi Welton Mitchell

**CONGREGATIONAL LIFE AT
FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF NEWTON
Week of April 28, 2024**

- Sun. 4/28 9:00 am Adult Study & Prayer
 9:00 am Faith Formation Classes
 9:00 am Worship in the Chapel
 9:45 am Family Choir Practice
 9:45 am Chime Choir Practice
 10:30 am Worship in Sanctuary
 11:30 am Music, Worship and the Arts Meeting
 1:00 pm - 2:30 pm Girl Scouts
 No Youth Group
- Mon. 4/29 10:00 am Wired Word
- Wed. 5/1 8:00 pm Midweek Vespers via Zoom
- Thur. 5/2 7:00 pm Bell Choir Practice
- Fri. 5/3 1:00 - 3:00 pm Hearts and Hands Craft Group
- Sun. 5/5 Communion
 9:00 am Adult Study & Prayer
 9:00 am Faith Formation Classes
 9:00 am Worship in the Chapel
 9:30 am Family Choir Practice
 9:45 am Chime Choir Practice
 10:30 am Worship in Sanctuary
 1:00 pm - 2:30 pm Girl Scouts
 5:00 pm - 7:00 pm Youth Group - Pizza!

*Our service can also be found on our YouTube channel sometime after 3 pm.
Go to: www.YouTube.com and search for: fpcnewtonnj

Our Staff

Interim Pastor Heather Morrison-Yaden
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Organist Ann Socha
Bell Choir Director Melinda Kline
Choir Director Cate Pasculli
Child Care Heather Woods

Church Office Hours:

Monday through Thursday 8:00 am - 4:00 pm
Friday 9:00 am - 1:00 pm

Church Email Address: admin@fpcnewtonnj.org
Church Telephone # 973-383-4420

54 High Street, Newton NJ

Church Web Site Address: www.fpcnewtonnj.org facebook.com/FPCNJ
www.youtube.com (Search for: "fpcnewtonnj")

E-Giving - *It makes giving easy!*

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As always, we thank you for your generosity and support!