

Absecon Presbyterian Church

Welcome to Absecon Presbyterian Church! Thank you for being here to participate this week in a worship service centered on love of God for you, and your opportunity to participate in God's work to reconcile all things through Jesus Christ. This service is not made to be just another show to watch, but a place to interact as a community and join our voices in prayer.



INTERACTIVE ONLINE WORSHIP

FIFTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

Sunday, April 28, 2024 at 10:30 a.m.

The service outlined in this bulletin is meant to be interactive.

Please participate by reading all parts in *bold italic* and please feel free to comment, greet your fellow viewers, and type in prayer requests.

Another way to participate is using the reactions on Facebook to be a part of the service. *Please stand as you are able.

Preparing Our Hearts to Receive the Word

PRELUDE

Rick DeKarski, Music Director

ANNOUNCEMENTS & WELCOME

CALL TO WORSHIP*

Louise Speitel

One: In the wilderness, water brings life.

All: Seek us out, O God, and take us to the water.

One: In the Word of God, the good news gives light.

All: Seek us out, O God, and fill us with understanding.

One: In the bread and the wine, the body of our Savior nourishes everyone.

All: Seek us out, O God, and give us yourself.

One: Here is the water of life, the word that feeds, the food of eternity. Come and praise the vine that gives all goodness.

OPENING PRAYER*

Louise Speitel

Wondrous Vinegrower, you make all things new in water and Word, feeding your people with love, joy, and peace. Lead us today and every day to the font of new beginnings. Teach us to love what you have commanded and to prune what does not nourish your creation, in the name of the Creator, Redeemer, and Sustainer, one God, now and forever. Amen.

OPENING HYMN #35

"Morning Has Broken"

The Season of Easter

We are now in the season of Easter, which is a week of Sundays, leading to Pentecost. In this time, we focus on the resurrection as the amazing revelation that sin and death have been conquered. This empowers us as believers to live without fear as we embark on our calling to join in Christ's work to reconcile all things to himself. Indeed, we now await his return to make all things new and complete the divine restoration

What is a Call to Worship?

The Call to Worship is an interactive use of scripture, intended to help us remember that every service is a time of worship. God calls us to be citizens in the Kingdom through the church. This part of our liturgy calls the gathered to join the worship.

What is Confession?

To confess is to tell the truth. In this part of the service, we are first called by the church to confess our sins. We then tell the truth about our sins, or our separation from God caused by what we have done or left undone, and what others have done or left undone. By our prayer of repentance we seek to turn away from sin and turn toward God's Kingdom. Since it is God who ultimately calls us to faith and worship, we trust that our repentance is always met with grace, a free gift of mercy.

Forgiveness

Forgiveness is central to the faith of Christians. To forgive is not to say that an offense never occurred, but to tell someone they

Accepting God's Grace and Forgiveness

are guilty, and that you will show mercy.

To repent and be forgiven is not to convince God that we did nothing wrong, but to give up any attempt to lie to the One who cannot be deceived and accept our conviction with mercy that God promises up front.

What is a Prayer for Illumination?

This prayer asks the Holy Spirit to open our ears to the Word of God and drown out our own voices. In this prayer, we are submitting to God's will, not ours.

Why are we reading these?

At APC, the readings each week are typically drawn from the lectionary, which gives options for readings from the Old and New Testaments, including a selection from one of the gospels.

The suggested readings to draw from for today are from Year B:

- Acts 8:26-40
- Psalm 22:25-31
- 1 John 4:7-21
- John 15:1-8

Affirmation of Faith

An Affirmation (or Confession) of Faith is a statement of what the Church believes. These bear central tenets of the faith and what is called the gospel, beginning with Jesus Christ, fully God and fully human, through whom we receive an eternal life – salvation – because of His death on the cross and His glorious resurrection.

A typical service at Absecon Presbyterian Church will include a Confession of Faith soon after the sermon. This allows the church body to follow up the specific preaching for the day with an added reminder of the big picture. This is the common faith of the Church as a

CALL TO CONFESSION:

Trusting in the mercy of God, let us confess to God and to one another our failure to love our neighbor.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION:

In Unison

God of mercy, we confess that we have not borne the fruit of the Spirit. We have not loved others as you have loved us. We have denied the promises of baptism and cut ourselves off from you. Forgive us, restore us, that we may abide in your love and live out your mercy, for the sake of Jesus Christ, in whose name we pray. Amen.

MOMENT OF SILENCE

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

RESPONSE TO FORGIVENESS*

Gloria Patri

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost, as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen. Amen.

Receiving the Word Proclaimed

Response after each reading: Thanks be to God.

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

Louise Speitel

NEW TESTAMENT – ACTS 8:26-40

Then an angel of the Lord said to Philip, 'Get up and go towards the South to the road that goes down from Jerusalem to Gaza.' (This is a wilderness road.) So he got up and went. Now there was an Ethiopian eunuch, a court official of the Candace, queen of the Ethiopians, in charge of her entire treasury. He had come to Jerusalem to worship and was returning home; seated in his chariot, he was reading the prophet Isaiah. Then the Spirit said to Philip, 'Go over to this chariot and join it.' So Philip ran up to it and heard him reading the prophet Isaiah. He asked, 'Do you understand what you are reading?' He replied, 'How can I, unless someone guides me?' And he invited Philip to get in and sit beside him. Now the passage of the scripture that he was reading was this: 'Like a sheep he was led to the slaughter, and like a lamb silent before its shearer, so he does not open his mouth. In his humiliation justice was denied him. Who can describe his generation? For his life is taken away from the earth.' The eunuch asked

Philip, 'About whom, may I ask you, does the prophet say this, about himself or about someone else?' Then Philip began to speak, and starting with this scripture, he proclaimed to him the good news about Jesus. As they were going along the road, they came to some water; and the eunuch said, 'Look, here is water! What is to prevent me from being baptized?' He commanded the chariot to stop, and both of them, 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 snatched Philip away; the eunuch saw him no more, and went on his way rejoicing. But Philip found himself at Azotus, and as he was passing through the region, he proclaimed the good news to all the towns until he came to Caesarea.

EPISTLE - 1 JOHN 4:7-21

Beloved, let us love one another, because love is from God; everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. Whoever does not love does not know God, for God is love. 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. In this is love, not that we loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the atoning sacrifice for our sins. Beloved, since God loved us so much, we also ought to love one another. No one has ever seen God; if we love one another, God lives in us, and his love is perfected in us. By this we know that we abide in him and he in us, because he has given us of his Spirit. And we have seen and do testify that the Father has sent his Son as the Saviour of the world. 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. 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 judgement, because as he is, so are we in this world. 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. We love because he first loved us. 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. The commandment we have from him is this: those who love God must love their brothers and sisters also.

TIME WITH THE CHILDREN

GOSPEL—JOHN 15:1-8

'I am the true vine, and my Father is the vine-grower. He removes every branch in me that bears no fruit. Every branch that bears fruit he prunes to make it bear more fruit. You have already been cleansed by the word

whole, so while individual believers might struggle with their understanding of particular pieces of a Confession, the corporate expression reflects our unity and the faith passed down from Christ and the Apostles to us.

Prayers of the People

Each week the people of God at APC join in prayers of thanksgiving, praise and petition to pray as one community for needs in the church.

Praying for others keeps our focus outward and opens us up to know the will of God in our own lives. Consider making these prayer lists part of your daily prayer life. Doing so, may just help your feelings of isolation. Through prayer, the Holy Spirit brings others, even strangers, closer to you.

Here is our standing list of friends and family to keep in prayer at all times, for chronic health conditions and long-standing concerns. If there is an acute issue, they will be moved to the acute need list.

- ✿ Rita Abelson
- ✿ Kathy Boyte
- ✿ Edith Budd
- ✿ Emilia Carboy
- ✿ Lucy Croneberger
- ✿ Darryl, Kristen, Quentin
- ✿ Olga Davies
- ✿ Carol DeLaurentis
- ✿ Marie C. & Carmen Devece
- ✿ Gail Driscoll
- ✿ Kavonna and Essence
- ✿ Dorie Keener
- ✿ Eric Lajeuness
- ✿ Aiden and Wendy Licolli
- ✿ Marge Loeb
- ✿ Robin McBrearty
- ✿ JoAnne Morgan
- ✿ Essie Newell
- ✿ Rob Perry
- ✿ Joyce Pfeiffer

- ✚ Marilyn Rosado
- ✚ Irene Smith
- ✚ Georgina Umoren
- ✚ Mary Umoren and Family
- ✚ Ethel Washington
- ✚ Frances Weir
- ✚ Dirk Williamson

How can I give?

Please give your time by praying for your church and your community, and by checking in on your church family, including those you do not talk to regularly.

Please give your talent, by offering your skills when and where they are needed.

Please give from your treasure through your tithes and offerings in person or mail to:

Absecon Presbyterian Church
208 New Jersey Avenue
Absecon, NJ 08201

You can also give online at:

www.AbseconPresby.org/give

All gifts made online are safe and secure through the Presbyterian Foundation.

At this time, gifts to the General Fund and Benevolence are what is most needed.

that I have spoken to you. Abide in me as I abide in you. Just as the branch cannot bear fruit by itself unless it abides in the vine, neither can you unless you abide in me. I am the vine, you are the branches. Those who abide in me and I in them bear much fruit, because apart from me you can do nothing. Whoever does not abide in me is thrown away like a branch and withers; such branches are gathered, thrown into the fire, and burned. If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask for whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. My Father is glorified by this, that you bear much fruit and become my disciples.

SERMON

“Sent”

Rev. Judy Fiocco

HYMN OF RESPONSE #565

“O Christians, Haste”

Responding to the Word

AFFIRMATION OF FAITH*

Nicene Creed

Please find the Nicene Creed in the rack on the pew in front of you.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

- † For victims of gun violence and their families.
- † Peace in Ukraine, Middle East, Haiti, the Sudan and other countries experiencing conflicts.
- † Members of our armed services.
- † For confidence to know that in the struggle, God is with us.
- † For renewed commitment to God’s purpose in us all.
- † For us to come together in the bond of self-giving love.
- † For renewed energy in finding our place in God’s church, as people who pray, share and volunteer.
- † For wisdom and discernment when facing the unknown.
- † For God’s church to embrace the poor and marginalized, to see God’s image and be God’s image in this broken world.
- † For a revival in our faith to live boldly for God’s Kingdom.
- † For these individuals and families in acute need right now who are connected to your church in Absecon.
- † For those on our standing prayer list and for the needs of your church not listed here, including those intentions held in our hearts and those shared in the comments of Facebook.

Bonnie Bates, Vance Bauford, Kathy Bordanora, Doug Campbell, Maddie Caracozzo, Louis Carr, Don Croneberger, Robin Deaver, Billy Forwalt, Cathy Follansbee, Wendy Garwood, The Family of Jim Gleeson, Linda Gormley, Christopher Green, Carol and Dave Guenther, Margareta Gustafasson, Jack and Dee Heil, John Harvey, Nelson Haws, Linda Hurlburt, Carol Crisafulli Johnson, Walt Koteles Sr., Susan Lobrano, Carol McDowell, Jim McManus, Lin Migone, Lisa Nagle, Milton Reed, Jr. Chellee Roff, Jan Rogiers, Nani Rosa, Dave and Judy Stebbins, Sandy Sylvester, James Zakrzewski.

CALL TO OFFER OURSELVES AND OUR GIFTS

Louise Speitel

OFFERTORY MUSIC

Rick DeKarski

RESPONSE OF THANKSGIVING*

Doxology

Praise God from whom all blessings flow; Praise God, all creatures here below; Praise God above, ye heavenly host: Praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost.

PRAYER OF DEDICATION

Louise Speitel

Bringing the Word to the World

CLOSING HYMN* #557

“Pass It On”

CHARGE AND BENEDICTION*

Rev. Judy Fiocco

PEOPLES' RESPONSE* #298

“The Day of Resurrection”

The day of resurrection! Earth, tell it out abroad; the Passover of gladness, the Passover of God. From death to life eternal, from sin's dominion free, our Christ has brought us over with hymns of victory.

POSTLUDE

Rick DeKarski, Music Director



PRAYER

Please come to the front of the sanctuary immediately after the worship service if you would like someone to pray with you and for you. Prayers will be standing by!

*Absecon
Presbyterian
Church*

Session

Rita Abelson

Janet Gee

Karen Little

Gwen Monhollen

Jackie Rosen

Scott Sabo

Ann Wallace, Clerk

Jo-ann Weller

Deacons

Vic Abelson

John Carsone

Bob Hudak

Donna Hughes, Chair

Bill Keener

Betty Price

Jo-Ann Sabo

Trustees

Amos Bhagwandeem

Woody Duncan

Scott Sabo, Chair

Sandy Shinsato

Melvin Washington

Don Wong

Music Director

Rick DeKarski

Office Coordinator

Teresa Barone

Technology Specialist

Frank Nale

Christian Ed Coordinator

Tina Harvey

Treasurer

Diana Kwaitkowski

Custodian

Linda Adkisson

Pastor

Rev. Judy Fiocco

MORNING PRAYER FOR THE WEEK*

God of all beginnings, you bring a new day, and you promise to journey with me through the hours. I thank you for the breath and strength I have, and I beg your help that I may use my powers wisely and with compassion toward everyone I meet. Let my questions today be a form of pruning to bring forth in me new understandings, healing, and good fruit; in Jesus' name. Amen.

EVENING PRAYER FOR THE WEEK*

Sweet Jesus, in this night of rest, heal my broken places and restore my faith. You are my vine; only in you am I strong enough to face the darkness of this world. I thank you for the safety of my home and pray for those who have no bed tonight. Make me grateful, in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, one God, Mother of us all. Amen.

**Prayers used/adapted from "Feasting on the Word: Worship Companion," © 2015, Westminster John Knox Press*

RECOMMENDED READING FOR THE WEEK

Read each day's passage in your home Bible or online. Each day at 6:30 a.m. the reading of the day and the morning and evening prayers will be posted at www.facebook.com/abseconpresby. Be sure to read the posts, comment with any questions you might have about the scriptures, then like and share too!

Monday: Acts 26-33

Tuesday: Acts 26:34-40

Wednesday: Psalm 22:25-31

Thursday: 1 John 4:7-14

Friday: 1 John 4:15-21

Saturday: John 15:1-8

*Absecon Presbyterian Church
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(609) 641-3759*

www.AbseconPresby.org — www.Facebook.com/AbseconPresby

