

# 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

### SIXTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

*Sunday, May 5, 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\*

Bill Keener

One: Sing to our God a new song.

**All: God has done marvelous things!**

One: Make a joyful noise to the Lord!

**All: Break forth into joyous song and sing praises.**

One: Let the sea roar and all that fills it.

**All: Let the world and its people sing together for joy!**

#### OPENING PRAYER\*

Bill Keener

Loving God, help us to love others as Christ has loved us. Bring us into the spiritual joy of living our lives as your friend, and teach us to abide in your love, that we may show that love to the world. **Amen.**

#### OPENING HYMN #51

"How Great Thou Art"

### *Accepting God's Grace and Forgiveness*

#### CALL TO CONFESSION:

We have been called to follow Christ by obeying his one commandment: that we love one another as he has loved us. Let us confess how we have fallen short of that love.

#### 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

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 10:44-48
- Psalm 98
- 1 John 5:1-6
- John 15:9-17

**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

**PRAYER OF CONFESSION:**

**In Unison**

**Loving God, we have not loved you or each other with our whole hearts. Forgive us, we pray, and lead us toward wholeness, that we may be filled with your joy. In Jesus' 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**

Bill Keener

**GOSPEL – JOHN 15:9-17**

As the Father has loved me, so I have loved you; abide in my love. If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in his love. I have said these things to you so that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be complete. 'This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. No one has greater love than this, to lay down one's life for one's friends. You are my friends if you do what I command you. I do not call you servants any longer, because the servant does not know what the master is doing; but I have called you friends, because I have made known to you everything that I have heard from my Father. You did not choose me, but I chose you. And I appointed you to go and bear fruit, fruit that will last, so that the Father will give you whatever you ask him in my name. I am giving you these commands so that you may love one another.

**TIME WITH THE CHILDREN**

**NEW TESTAMENT: ACTS 10:44-11:18**

While Peter was still speaking, the Holy Spirit fell upon all who heard the word. The circumcised believers who had come with Peter were astounded that the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out even on the Gentiles, for they heard them speaking in tongues and extolling God. Then Peter said, 'Can anyone withhold the water for baptizing these people who have received the Holy Spirit just as we

have?’ So, he ordered them to be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ. Then they invited him to stay for several days. Now the apostles and the believers who were in Judea heard that the Gentiles had also accepted the word of God. So, when Peter went up to Jerusalem, the circumcised believers criticized him, saying, ‘Why did you go to uncircumcised men and eat with them?’ Then Peter began to explain it to them, step by step, saying, ‘I was in the city of Joppa praying, and in a trance, I saw a vision. There was something like a large sheet coming down from heaven, being lowered by its four corners; and it came close to me. As I looked at it closely, I saw four-footed animals, beasts of prey, reptiles, and birds of the air. I also heard a voice saying to me, “Get up, Peter; kill and eat.” But I replied, “By no means, Lord; for nothing profane or unclean has ever entered my mouth.” But a second time the voice answered from heaven, “What God has made clean, you must not call profane.” This happened three times; then everything was pulled up again to heaven. At that very moment three men, sent to me from Caesarea, arrived at the house where we were. The Spirit told me to go with them and not to make a distinction between them and us. These six brothers also accompanied me, and we entered the man’s house. He told us how he had seen the angel standing in his house and saying, “Send to Joppa and bring Simon, who is called Peter; he will give you a message by which you and your entire household will be saved.” And as I began to speak, the Holy Spirit fell upon them just as it had upon us at the beginning. And I remembered the word of the Lord, how he had said, “John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.” If then God gave them the same gift that he gave us when we believed in the Lord Jesus Christ, who was I that I could hinder God?’ When they heard this, they were silenced. And they praised God, saying, ‘Then God has given even to the Gentiles the repentance that leads to life.’

**SERMON**

“Even on the Gentiles!”

Rev. Judy Fiocco

*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.

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 McBreaty
- ✿ JoAnne Morgan
- ✿ Essie Newell
- ✿ Rob Perry
- ✿ Joyce Pfeiffer

- ✚ Jan Rogiers
- ✚ 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](http://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.

- † 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, Jackie Daddone, 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, , Nani Rosa, Dave and Judy Stebbins, Sandy Sylvester, James Zakrzewski.***

**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, now and forever. Amen.***

**CALL TO OFFER OURSELVES AND OUR GIFTS**

Bill Keener

**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**

Bill Keener

*Sacrament of the Lord's Supper*

**COMMUNION HYMN #696**

"Come, Share the Lord"

**INVITATION TO THE TABLE**

**GREAT PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING**

Leader: The Lord be with you.

**All: And also with you.**

Leader: Lift up your hearts.

**All: We lift them unto the Lord.**

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

**All: It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

**PRAYER FOR THE ELEMENTS**

Through Christ, with Christ, in Christ, In the unity of the Holy Spirit. All glory and honor are yours, Almighty God. Now and forever. Amen.

**THE WORDS OF INSTITUTION**

Come, for the Table is ready.

**DISTRIBUTION OF THE ELEMENTS**

**HYMN #740** The Lord's Prayer

*Bringing the Word to the World*

**CLOSING HYMN\* #595**

"They'll Know We Are Christians by Our Love"

**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. Pray-ers 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\***

Holy One, I begin today breathing in your love for me, for others, and for the world. Keep me mindful of all the marvelous things you are doing around and within me today. Help me to feel my friendship with Jesus and his confidence in me. Maintain in my heart the image of myself as a tree, bearing the fruit of Christ's love everywhere I go today.

Amen.

## **EVENING PRAYER FOR THE WEEK\***

God, you are both judge and friend. Even as I review my day, I give it over to you. I let go of the good, the bad, and the in-between, trusting in your care for me. I am content this night to abide in your love. I breathe in your joy and your peace. Whatever I need, I ask of you in Jesus' name. 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](http://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 10:44-46

**Tuesday:** Acts 10:47-48

**Wednesday:** Psalm 98:1-4

**Thursday:** Psalm 98:5-9

**Friday:** 1 John 5:1-6

**Saturday:** John 15:9-17

*Absecon Presbyterian Church  
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(609) 641-3759*

[www.AbseconPresby.org](http://www.AbseconPresby.org) — [www.Facebook.com/AbseconPresby](http://www.Facebook.com/AbseconPresby)

