

# Memorial Presbyterian Church

SERVICE FOR THE LORD'S DAY

16<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Pentecost

September 17, 2023

## GATHERING AROUND THE WORD

O God who is our strength,  
you have protected us from those who would  
seek to oppress us.  
You have shielded us from those who would  
seek to destroy  
the good gifts you have put in us.  
Your love and power never fail.  
Thanks and praise to you, our safety and stronghold.  
We exalt you, O God, majestic in holiness,  
for there is none like you. Amen.

## WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

PRELUDE

Trenton Paris

## BRINGING THE LIGHT

\*CALL TO WORSHIP

Vince Leseney

God of grace, we are a broken people, but you love us.

**We will bear your mercy. Alleluia!**

Christ our redeemer, you forgive us and make us new.

**We will bear your mercy. Alleluia!**

Holy Spirit, you fill us with love even for those who hurt us.

**We will bear your mercy. Alleluia!**

**God of mercy, we worship you. We serve you. Alleluia!**

\*SONG OF PRAISE

Come, You Faithful, Raise the Strain

Hymnal, No. 234

\*CONFESSION AND PARDON

Let us pray:

**God our Judge,**

**we admit we have double standards.**

**We seek forgiveness for ourselves,  
but fail to forgive others.**

**We seek relief for ourselves,**

**but fail to seek relief for others.**

**We seek leniency for ourselves,**

**but fail to show that mercy to others.**

**Forgive us, mighty God,**

**and help us to forgive,**

**showing others the same grace and mercy**

**that you have generously shown to us.**

*(Time of silent reflection)*

People of God, hear and believe:  
God does not deal with us according to our sins,  
but according to God's own steadfast love for us.

**As far as the east is from the west,  
so far God removes our sins from us.  
Thanks be to God!**

\*THE PEACE

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

**And also with you.**

\*SONG OF RESPONSE

Glory to God

Hymnal, No. 582

Glory to God, whose goodness shines on me,  
And to the Son, whose grace has pardoned me,  
And to the Spirit, whose love has set me free.  
As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be. Amen

World without end, without end. Amen (x3)  
As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be. Amen

TIME WITH YOUNG DISCIPLES

MOMENT FOR MISSION

Joan Cole

**PROCLAIMING THE WORD**

PRAYER FOR UNDERSTANDING

Trudy Beard

SCRIPTURE READING

Romans 14:1-12

Page No. 923

The Word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

RESPONSIVE PSALM

Psalms 114

When Israel went out from Egypt, the house of Jacob from a people of  
strange language,

**Judah became God's sanctuary, Israel his dominion.**

The sea looked and fled; Jordan turned back.

**The mountains skipped like rams, the hills like lambs.**

Why is it, O sea, that you flee? O Jordan, that you turn back?

**O mountains, that you skip like rams? O hills, like lambs?**

Tremble, O earth, at the presence of the Lord, at the presence of the God  
of Jacob,

**who turns the rock into a pool of water, the flint into a spring of  
water.**

ANTHEM

You Are My God and King

SCRIPTURE READING

Matthew 18:21-35

Page No. 800

The Word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

MESSAGE

So Much Forgiving

Tracy L. Evans

\*SONG OF FAITH

God, How Can We Forgive

Hymnal, No. 445

\*AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

**The life, death, resurrection,  
and promised coming of Jesus Christ  
has set the pattern for the church's mission.  
His human life involves the church  
in the common life of all people.  
His service to men and women  
commits the church  
to work for every form of human well-being.  
His suffering makes the church sensitive  
to all human suffering  
so that it sees the face of Christ  
in the faces of persons in every kind of need.  
His crucifixion discloses to the church  
God's judgment on the inhumanity  
that marks human relations,  
and the awful consequences  
of the church's own complicity in injustice.  
In the power of the risen Christ  
and the hope of his coming,  
the church sees the promise  
of God's renewal of human life in society  
and of God's victory over all wrong.  
The church follows this pattern  
in the form of its life  
and in the method of its action.  
So to live and serve  
is to confess Christ as Lord.**

*Adapted from the Confession of 1967, 9.32–33*

SHARING OF JOYS AND CONCERNS

Response: ...\_God in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

LORD'S PRAYER

Hymnal, p. 35

*Please pray the Lord's Prayer  
in the language and wording most familiar to you.*

THE OFFERING

OFFERTORY

\*DOXOLOGY

Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow

Hymnal, No. 606

\*DEDICATION PRAYER

### **FOLLOWING THE WORD INTO THE WORLD**

\*SENDING SONG

Help Us Accept Each Other

Hymnal, No. 754

\*TAKING LIGHT INTO THE WORLD

\*BLESSING AND CHARGE

\*POSTLUDE

\*Please rise in body or spirit.

We invite anyone who wishes to consider membership in this church to contact the pastor or a member of the session. You may also indicate interest in membership by checking the appropriate column in the ritual of friendship booklet. Membership in this church is a step made by profession of faith, reaffirmation of faith or transfer of church letter.

**Lectionary Readings** for September 24: Exodus 16:2-15 and Psalm 105:1-6, 37-45; Jonah 3:10-4:11 and Psalm 145:1-8; Philippians 1:21-30; Matthew 20:1-16.

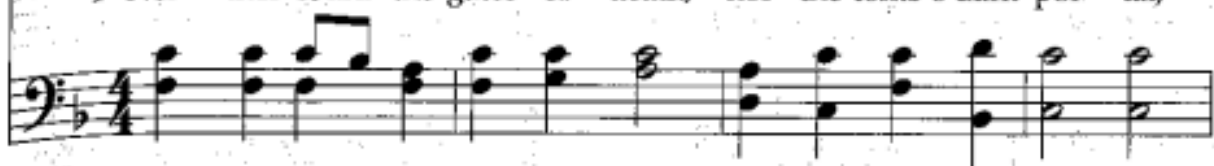
The Food & Shelter items of the month for **September are crackers and soups. Please place your donations in the box by the church information table.**

**Hearing-assistance** devices and **large print hymnals** are available from the head usher.

# Come, You Faithful, Raise the Strain 234



1 Come, you faith - ful, raise the strain of tri - um - phant glad - ness!  
2 'Tis the spring of souls to - day: Christ has burst his pris - on,  
3 Now the queen of sea - sons, bright with the day of splen - dor,  
4 Nei - ther could the gates of death, nor the tomb's dark por - tal,



God has brought forth Is - ra - el in - to joy from sad - ness,  
and from three days' sleep in death as a sun has ris - en.  
with the roy - al feast of feasts comes its joy to ren - der;  
nor the watch - ers, nor the seal hold you as a mor - tal:



loosed from Pha - raoh's bit - ter yoke Ja - cob's sons and daugh - ters;  
All the win - ter of our sins, long and dark, is fly - ing  
comes to glad Je - ru - sa - lem, who with true af - fec - tion  
but to - day, a - mong your own, you ap - pear, be - stow - ing



led them with un - moist - ened foot through the Red Sea wa - ters.  
from the Light, to whom we give laud and praise un - dy - ing.  
wel - comes in un - wea - ried strains Je - sus' res - ur - rec - tion!  
your deep peace, which ev - er - more pass - es hu - man know - ing.



# 445 God, How Can We Forgive

1 God, how can we for - give when bonds of love are torn?  
 2 When we have missed the mark, and tears of an - guish flow,  
 3 Who dares to throw the stone to damn an - oth - er's sin,

How can we rise and start a - new, our trust re - born?  
 how can you still re - lease our guilt, the debt we owe?  
 when you, while know - ing all our past, for - give a - gain?

When hu - man lov - ing fails and ev - ery hope is gone,  
 The o - cean depth of grace sur - pass - es all our needs.  
 No more we play the judge, for by your grace we live.

your love gives strength be - yond our own to face the dawn.  
 A priest who shares our hu - man pain, Christ in - ter - cedes.  
 As you, O God, for - give our sin, may we for - give.

# Help Us Accept Each Other 754



1 Help us ac - cept each oth - er as Christ ac - cept - ed us;  
 2 Teach us, O Lord, your les - sons, as in our dai - ly life  
 3 Let your ac - cep - tance change us, so that we may be moved  
 4 Lord, for to - day's en - coun - ters with all who are in need,



teach us as sis - ter, broth - er, each per - son to em - brace.  
 we strug - gle to be hu - man and search for hope and faith.  
 in liv - ing sit - u - a - tions to do the truth in love;  
 who hun - ger for ac - cep - tance, for jus - tice and for bread,



Be pres - ent, Lord, a - mong us and bring us to be - lieve  
 Teach us to care for peo - ple, for all, not just for some,  
 to prac - tice your ac - cep - tance un - til we know by heart  
 we need new eyes for see - ing, new hands for hold - ing on:



we are our - selves ac - cept - ed, and meant to love and live.  
 to love them as we find them, or as they may be - come.  
 the ta - ble of for - give - ness, and laugh - ter's heal - ing art.  
 re - new us with your Spir - it; Lord, free us; make us one!