



First Presbyterian Church

149 Broad Street

Tonawanda, New York 14150 ~ 2111

Church: (716) 692-1319

Rev. Dr. Rebecca Chaffee

Come, Worship the Lord, Our God

7th Sunday after Epiphany

CCLI License # 2839486

February 23, 2025

10:30am

PRELUDE

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

CALL TO WORSHIP

We come, those who seek to trust in God.

We commit ourselves to do as Jesus would do for those around us.

We come, delighting in all the wonders God provides for us.

We would not worry, but open ourselves to God's heart.

We come, waiting patiently for God to speak.

We will be still, listening for God's words of hope, of peace.

GATHERING PRAYER

God of abundant mercy, you alone can turn evil into good, sorrow into rejoicing, and death into everlasting life. Teach us your way of grace—to meet hatred with kindness, to answer curses with blessing, to love without holding back, to give without thought of return; all in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

***HYMN: "Come, Worship God" #386**

O QUANTA QUALIA

CALL TO CONFESSION

Over and over we are told how simple life with God can be: trust, do good to others, take delight in the wonders God provides for us. But we simply have trouble living such a life. Let us confess the struggles we have, as we bring our prayers to God, saying,

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

In this season of light, Revealing God, we find ourselves wandering the shadows of the world. In this time when we focus on Jesus' ministry of healing, we hold tight to all those emotions—hatred, fear, worry—which continue to damage us. In these days when we are invited to listen to Jesus' teachings, we confess it is easier to hear the seductive words of sin.

Forgive us, Resurrecting God, for trusting in promises which are short-lived, rather than in your Word which endures forever. You have sent Jesus before us so that, as we follow him, we might travel from that far country of fear and doubt to that better country of resurrection life.

Silence is kept

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

Take delight in the good news, dear friends. Salvation is from our God, who restores us to new life.

God chooses to be gracious; God longs to give us our heart's desires; God provides healing and hope to all. Thanks be to God, we are forgiven! Amen.

PASSING OF THE PEACE

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

Gracious God, by your Word you provide all we need—for salvation, for wholeness, for abundant life. Now draw us close in your Spirit so that we may discover your will and live according to your purposes; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Old Testament Reading: Genesis 45:3-11, 15 Joseph forgives his brothers

³Joseph said to his brothers, "I am Joseph. Is my father still alive?" But his brothers could not answer him, so dismayed were they at his presence.

⁴Then Joseph said to his brothers, "Come closer to me." And they came closer. He said, "I am your brother, Joseph, whom you sold into Egypt. ⁵And now do not be distressed or angry with yourselves because you sold me here, for God sent me before you to preserve life. ⁶For the famine has been in the land these two years, and there are five more years in which there will be neither plowing nor harvest.

⁷God sent me before you to preserve for you a remnant on earth and to keep alive for you many survivors. ⁸So it was not you who sent me here but God; he has made me a father to Pharaoh and lord of all his house and ruler over all the land of Egypt.

⁹Hurry and go up to my father and say to him, 'Thus says your son Joseph, God has made me lord of all Egypt; come down to me; do not delay. ¹⁰You shall settle in the land of Goshen, and you shall be near me, you and your children and your children's children, as well as your flocks, your herds, and all that you have. ¹¹I will provide for you there, since there are five more years of famine to come, so that you and your household and all that you have will not come to poverty.'

¹⁵And he kissed all his brothers and wept upon them, and after that his brothers talked with him.

This is the word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

ALL GOD'S CHILDREN

Responsive Psalm 37:1-11, 39-40 The lowly shall possess the land

¹Do not fret because of the wicked;

do not be envious of wrongdoers,

²for they will soon fade like the grass

and wither like the green herb.

³Trust in the LORD and do good;

live in the land, and enjoy security.

⁴Take delight in the LORD,

and he will give you the desires of your heart.

⁵Commit your way to the LORD;

trust in him, and he will act.

⁶He will make your vindication shine like the light

and the justice of your cause like the noonday.

⁷Be still before the LORD, and wait patiently for him;

do not fret over those who prosper in their way, over those who carry out evil devices.

⁸Refrain from anger and forsake wrath.

Do not fret—it leads only to evil.

⁹For the wicked shall be cut off,

but those who wait for the LORD shall inherit the land.

¹⁰Yet a little while, and the wicked will be no more;

though you look diligently for their place, they will not be there.

¹¹But the meek shall inherit the land

and delight themselves in abundant prosperity.

³⁹The salvation of the righteous is from the LORD;

he is their refuge in the time of trouble.

⁴⁰The LORD helps them and rescues them;

he rescues them from the wicked and saves them because they take refuge in him.

Gospel Reading: Luke 6:27-38 Love your enemies

²⁷"But I say to you who are listening: Love your enemies; do good to those who hate you; ²⁸bless those who curse you; pray for those who mistreat you. ²⁹If anyone strikes you on the cheek, offer the other also, and from anyone who takes away your coat do not withhold even your shirt. ³⁰Give to everyone who ask of you, and if anyone takes away what is yours, do not ask for it back again. ³¹Do to others as you would have them do to you.

³²"If you love those who love you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners love those who love them. ³³If you do good to those who do good to you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners do the same. ³⁴If you lend to those from whom you expect to receive payment, what credit is that to you? Even sinners lend to sinners, to receive as much again. ³⁵Instead, love your enemies, do good, and lend, expecting nothing in return. Your reward will be great, and you will be children of the Most High, for he himself is kind to the ungrateful and the wicked. ³⁶Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful.

³⁷"Do not judge, and you will not be judged; do not condemn, and you will not be condemned. Forgive, and you will be forgiven; ³⁸give, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, will be put into your lap, for the measure you give will be the measure you get back."

This is the word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

SERMON: "Joseph Forgives"

Rev. Dr. Rebecca Chaffee

SERMON HYMN: "Make Me a Channel of Your Peace" #753

PRAYER OF ST. FRANCIS

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

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, forever. Amen.

INVITATION TO THE OFFERING

Children of the Most High God, in obedience to Jesus' words to love others as we love ourselves, do good, bless and pray for friends and enemies alike, let us now do to others as we would have them do to us, offering our tithes and gifts for the sake of our sisters and brothers in need.

THE OFFERTORY

DOXOLOGY: "In the Bleak Midwinter" #144 (vs 4)

CRANHAM

PRAYER OF DEDICATION

You pour out grace upon us, Loving God, not so we might be filled, but we might empty ourselves for others. Take these gifts we offer in these moments and use them to bring new life and hope to all around us. This we pray in Jesus' name. Amen.

CLOSING HYMN: "When Peace like a River" #840

VILLE DU HAVRE

CHARGE

We leave, our hearts filled with God's love.

**We will go to offer the wonders of laughter
and hope to everyone we will meet.**

We leave, following Jesus into the world.

**We will serve alongside him in the brokenness
of our neighbors and our communities.**

We leave, having heard the whispers of the Spirit.

**We will speak justice to those
who would hoard it only for themselves.**

BENEDICTION

We would like to thank Maria Crisafulli for sharing her gifts with us today.

Volunteers This Week:

Liturgist: Tom Dugan

Tech: Betsy Crocker

Usher(s): Leslie Dugan

Greeter(s): Terry DeLuca & Ina Charsley

Coffee Hour: Marilee Mathias

Volunteers Next Week 3/2/25

Liturgist:

Tech: Betsy Crocker

Usher(s):

Greeter(s):

Coffee Hour: Laura & Alvin Marohn

PRAYER CONCERNS

The prayer concerns have recently been updated. If you have a prayer request, please contact **Pastor Rebecca at 315-317-6140 or the church office at 716-692-1319.**

CALENDAR

Sunday, Feb 23

9:30am All Age Faith Formation (Parlor)
10:30 am Sunday Worship for all ages (Sanctuary)
11:30am Coffee Fellowship for all ages (Parlor)

Monday, Feb 24

10:00 am Alcoholics Anonymous (Circle II Basement)
5:30pm Church Stretch
6:30pm-9:30pm Godly Play Core Training

Tuesday, Feb 25

9:00am – 2:00pm Office Hours
10:00am-11:30am God Loves Me Storytime

Wednesday, Feb 26

9:00am – 2:00pm Office Hours
11:00am or 7:00pm The Pastor's Study: *Prayer in the Night: For Those Who Work, or Watch, or Weep*

Thursday, Feb 27

10:00am Alcoholics Anonymous (Circle II Basement)
6:00pm-8:00pm Choirs Practice

Saturday, Mar 1

10:00am Alcoholics Anonymous (Circle II Basement)

Sunday, Mar 2

9:30am All Age Faith Formation (Parlor)
10:30 am Sunday Worship for all ages (Sanctuary)
11:30am Coffee Fellowship for all ages (Parlor)

