



## **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**

**We Celebrate the Sacrament of Holy Communion**

CCLI License # 2839486

April 6, 2025

10:30am

PRELUDE

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

## **CALL TO WORSHIP**

We come to this place because we want to know God,  
**who helps us set aside the past, to walk the path to new life.**

We come in these moments because we want to know Jesus,  
**who anoints us with the resurrection, who shares our lives with us.**

We come with these people because we want to know the Spirit,  
**who shapes us for life with God, so we may praise God forever!**

## **GATHERING PRAYER**

Creator God, you have formed us as your own, so whether we are weeping or laughing, dreaming or shouting for joy, we are always coming home to you. For all this and more, we thank you in Jesus' name. Amen.

**\*HYMN: "Open My Eyes, That I May See" #451**

**OPEN MY EYES**

## **CALL TO CONFESSION**

As we offer our prayers of confession, remember that God chooses to forget about our past, forgiving us so we may embrace the new life and new hope offered to us in grace. I invite you to join me, as we pray together,

## **PRAYER OF CONFESSION**

**Like Judas, God of new things, we like to complain about your generous ways, rather than living in your grace. The poor are always with us, we believe, which justifies our ignoring them. In our memories, we see a perceived golden past, and so close our eyes to the new things you do in our midst. We are so enamored with our achievements that we are not willing to throw them away in order to follow Jesus.**

**Forgive us, Restoring God, and help us to notice the kingdom springing forth in our midst. By your grace, may our fears turn to faith, our seeds of grief produce a bumper crop of joy, and our tears turn into torrents of tenderness as we journey with Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior, to Jerusalem.**

*Silence is kept*

## **ASSURANCE OF PARDON**

Making a way through all the foolishness and mistakes of our lives, God leads us into new life, where we are restored to grace, to hope, and to peace.

**Do we notice what God has done for us, what God is doing in us? This is good news for everyone. Thanks be to God, we are forgiven! Amen.**

**KYRIE ELEISON: "Lord Have Mercy" #579**

**KYRIE ELEISON (Orthodox)**

## **PASSING OF THE PEACE**

## **PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION**

Break open the Scripture through the power of your Spirit, O God. Let your word, read and proclaimed, pour out until its fragrance fills this house and our lives. Then, anointed with your word, send us out to share the good news we have received. We pray in the name of Jesus Christ, who is with us always. Amen.

**Old Testament Reading: Isaiah 43:16-21** The Lord gives water in the wilderness

<sup>16</sup>Thus says the LORD, who makes a way in the sea, a path in the mighty waters, <sup>17</sup>who brings out chariot and horse, army and warrior; they lie down; they cannot rise; they are extinguished, quenched like a wick: <sup>18</sup>Do not remember the former things or consider the things of old. <sup>19</sup>I am about to do a new thing; now it springs forth; do you not perceive it? I will make a way in the wilderness and rivers in the desert. <sup>20</sup>The wild animals will honor me, the jackals and the ostriches, for I give water in the wilderness, rivers in the desert, to give drink to my chosen people, <sup>21</sup>the people whom I formed for myself so that they might declare my praise.

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

**ALL GOD’S CHILDREN: The Faces of Easter V: Jesus as Healer and Parable-Maker**

**Responsive Psalm: 126** God does great things for us

<sup>1</sup>When the LORD restored the fortunes of Zion,

**we were like those who dream.**

<sup>2</sup>Then our mouth was filled with laughter and our tongue with shouts of joy;

**then it was said among the nations, "The LORD has done great things for them."**

<sup>3</sup>The LORD has done great things for us,

**and we rejoiced.**

<sup>4</sup>Restore our fortunes, O LORD,

**like the watercourses in the Negeb.**

<sup>5</sup>May those who sow in tears

**reap with shouts of joy.**

<sup>6</sup>Those who go out weeping, bearing the seed for sowing,

**shall come home with shouts of joy, carrying their sheaves.**

**Gospel Reading: John 5:1-18**

<sup>1</sup>After this there was a festival of the Jews, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. <sup>2</sup>Now in Jerusalem by the Sheep Gate there is a pool, called in Hebrew Beth-zatha, which has five porticoes. <sup>3</sup>In these lay many invalids—blind, lame, and paralyzed.

<sup>5</sup>One man was there who had been ill for thirty-eight years. <sup>6</sup>When Jesus saw him lying there and knew that he had been there a long time, he said to him, "Do you want to be made well?"

<sup>7</sup>The sick man answered him, "Sir, I have no one to put me into the pool when the water is stirred up; and while I am making my way, someone else steps down ahead of me."

<sup>8</sup>Jesus said to him, "Stand up, take your mat and walk."

<sup>9</sup>At once the man was made well, and he took up his mat and began to walk. Now that day was a sabbath. <sup>10</sup>So the Jews said to the man who had been cured, "It is the sabbath; it is not lawful for you to carry your mat." <sup>11</sup>But he answered them, "The man who made me well said to me, 'Take up your mat and walk.'"

<sup>12</sup>They asked him, "Who is the man who said to you, 'Take it up and walk'?"

<sup>13</sup>Now the man who had been healed did not know who it was, for Jesus had disappeared in the crowd that was there. <sup>14</sup>Later Jesus found him in the temple and said to him, "See, you have been made well! Do not sin any more, so that nothing worse happens to you."

<sup>15</sup>The man went away and told the Jews that it was Jesus who had made him well. <sup>16</sup>Therefore the Jews started persecuting Jesus, because he was doing such things on the sabbath.

<sup>17</sup>But Jesus answered them, “My Father is still working, and I also am working.” <sup>18</sup>For this reason the Jews were seeking all the more to kill him, because he was not only breaking the sabbath, but was also calling God his own Father, thereby making himself equal to God.

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

**SERMON: “Jesus: Healer, Teacher”**

**Rev. Dr. Rebecca Chaffee**

**SERMON HYMN: “O Christ, the Healer” #793**

**ERHALT UNS, HERR**

**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**

As it is written in Deuteronomy: “Since there will never cease to be some in need on the earth, I therefore command you, ‘Open your hand to the poor and needy neighbor.’” Through our tithes and offerings, we can give generously, as Mary did, and remember the poor. As we open wide our hands, we attend to Christ himself, who is present especially among those considered the least and the lost. Let us offer to God these gifts for ministry in Christ’s name.

**THE OFFERTORY**

**DOXOLOGY: “Holy, Holy, Holy” #595**

**ARGENTINE SANTO**

**PRAYER OF DEDICATION**

**If we want to know you, Generous God, we must see you in those all around us. If we want to serve you, we must give up that which is most important to us, even our material resources, so that blessings of hope and life might be offered to the needy, the lonely, the hungry all around us. Receive our gifts, we pray, so that others might be transformed even as we are. In Jesus’ name, we pray. Amen.**

**THE SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION**

**INVITATION TO THE TABLE**

**GREAT PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING**

May the Lord be with you!

**And also with you!**

Lift up your hearts. **We lift them to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

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

You made a path through the emptiness of chaos, God of every imagination, ..... So with those who long to know you, with those who run to be with you, we offer our songs of thanksgiving:

**Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might,  
heaven and earth are full of your glory.**

**Hosanna in the highest.**

**Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.**

**Hosanna in the highest.**

Though you are holy, God of restoration, you were willing to set aside all we had done, so that Jesus might anoint us with new life.....

As we long to want to know Jesus more, as we seek to be restored to life by you, we speak of that mystery we call faith:

**Christ has died,**

**Christ is risen,**

**Christ will come again.**

We pray that you would anoint this Table and its gifts of the bread and cup with your Spirit of life and love, which are offered to the people you love..... Holy in One. Amen.

### **BREAKING OF THE BREAD**

#### **Communion of the People**

Come forward to receive the bread and the cup. A server will bring the elements to those unable to come forward, or those requiring Gluten free bread.

#### **Prayer of Thanksgiving After Communion**

Bless the Lord, O my soul!

**And all that is within me, bless God's holy name.**

Bless the Lord, O my soul!

**And forget not all God's benefits.**

**CLOSING HYMN: "A Sower Came from Ancient Hills" #171**

**SEACHRIST**

### **CHARGE**

And now, God sends us out into our communities,

**not to cling to a faded past,**

**but to share all the new things God is doing.**

And now, Jesus calls us to notice those around us,

**to shower them with hope,**

**to feed them from our deep pantries,**

**to welcome them as family.**

And now, the Spirit anoints us with grace,

**to make a way through the injustices around us**

**so we might walk with our sisters and brothers**

**into the kingdom springing forth in our midst.**

### **BENEDICTION**

**The Annual Congregation and Business Meeting will take place after the worship service today.**

**Volunteers This Week:**

Liturgist: Diane Charsley  
Tech: Betsy Crocker  
Usher(s): Bonnie Zimmer  
Greeter(s): Linda Barry  
Coffee Hour:  
Communion: Laura Marohn, Sue Schurr,  
Billy Welch

**Volunteers Next Week 4/13/25**

Liturgist: Pat Loeswick  
Tech: Betsy Crocker  
Usher(s): Linda Barry  
Greeter(s): Bonnie Zimmer  
Coffee Hour:

**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, April 6

9:30am All Age Faith Formation (Parlor)  
10:30 am Sunday Worship for all ages (Sanctuary)  
11:30am Annual Congregation and Business Meeting  
12:30am Coffee Fellowship for all ages (Parlor)

Monday, April 7

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

Tuesday, April 8

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

Wednesday, April 9

9:00am – 2:00pm Office Hours

Thursday, April 10

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

Saturday, April 12

10:00am Alcoholics Anonymous (Circle II Basement)

Sunday, April 13

9:30am Palm Sunday  
All Age Faith Formation (Parlor)

10:30 am

Sunday Worship for all ages (Sanctuary)

11:30am

Coffee Fellowship for all ages (Parlor)

