



First Presbyterian Church

149 Broad Street

Tonawanda, New York 14150 ~ 2111

Church: (716) 692-1319

Rev. Alicia Dixon-Garrard, Guest Preacher

Come, Worship the Lord, Our God

13th Sunday After Pentecost

CCLI License # 2839486

August 18, 2024

10:30am

PRELUDE

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Opening Sentence:

The God of wisdom sent Jesus Christ, the bread of life, to teach us his ways, feed us with his flesh and blood, and fill us with the Holy Spirit. Please join me in the Call to Worship.

CALL TO WORSHIP

With voices and instruments, with hearts and with hands,
we play music for our God.

At all times, with each person; in every place, through every moment,
we give thanks in the name of Jesus.

Turning away from evil, doing good at every chance; seeking peace, and sharing hope everywhere,
we will walk in the Spirit's way.

GATHERING PRAYER

God our Living Father, we give you thanks for sending our Lord Jesus Christ to give his life as bread for the world. Fill us now with your Spirit that we may make the most of the time, understanding your will and expressing your wisdom in the midst of the people you have chosen. Amen.

***HYMN: "There's a Sweet, Sweet Spirit" #408**

SWEET, SWEET SPIRIT

CALL TO CONFESSION

We are convinced that God watches us, just waiting to catch us using the wrong words, doing the dumb thing, hanging out with the trouble-makers. But the truth is, God watches in love, in hope, in grace—just waiting to forgive us whenever we mess up. Let us bring our messy lives to God, as we pray together, saying,

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

It is not easy to admit, Watching God, but we are not very careful with our lives. We could find a home in your heart, but seem to stay in the Airbnb run by fear. We could sip the Spirit's best vintage, yet get drunk on cheap bottles of bitterness. We could learn your ways of wise choices, but prefer sin's silly paths.

Forgive us, God of mercy. Remind us that we no longer need to live in the old ways, or to yearn for those good ol' days. But we are free to listen to your hopes, to learn from your heart, and to walk with Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior.

Silence is kept

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

Are you watching what God does, as love embraces us, as grace forgives us, and hope gives us the wisdom to walk in God's ways?

Our God restores our lives with the peace of the Spirit, so we may feast on the gifts of mercy and grace offered to us by the Bread of heaven. Thanks be to God, we are forgiven! Amen.

PASSING OF THE PEACE

The peace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all

And also with you.

Let's share a sign of Christ's peace with one another. (shake hands)

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

Great God of steadfast love, we study your works and delight in your ways. Illumine our understanding by your Holy Spirit, that we may reverence your name, grow in your wisdom, and discern between good and evil. Amen.

Epistle Reading: Ephesians 5:15-20

¹⁵Be careful then how you live, not as unwise people but as wise, ¹⁶making the most of the time, because the days are evil. ¹⁷So do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is. ¹⁸Do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery; but be filled with the Spirit, ¹⁹as you sing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs among yourselves, singing and making melody to the Lord in your hearts. ²⁰giving thanks to God the Father at all times and for everything in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

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

ALL GOD'S CHILDREN

RESPONSIVE PSALM 111

¹Praise the LORD! I will give thanks to the LORD with my whole heart,
in the company of the upright, in the congregation.

²Great are the works of the LORD,
studied by all who delight in them.

³Full of honor and majesty is his work,
and his righteousness endures forever.

⁴He has gained renown by his wonderful deeds;
the LORD is gracious and merciful.

⁵He provides food for those who fear him;
he is ever mindful of his covenant.

⁶He has shown his people the power of his works,
in giving them the heritage of the nations.

⁷The works of his hands are faithful and just;
all his precepts are trustworthy.

⁸They are established forever and ever,
to be performed with faithfulness and uprightness.

⁹He sent redemption to his people; he has commanded his covenant forever.
Holy and awesome is his name.

¹⁰The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom;
all those who practice it have a good understanding. His praise endures forever.

GOSPEL READING: John 6:51-58

⁵¹I am the living bread that came down from heaven. Whoever eats of this bread will live forever; and the bread that I will give for the life of the world is my flesh."

⁵²The Jews then disputed among themselves, saying, "How can this man give us his flesh to eat?"

⁵³So Jesus said to them, "Very truly, I tell you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in you. ⁵⁴Those who eat my flesh and drink my blood have eternal life, and I will raise them up on the last day; ⁵⁵for my flesh is true food and my blood is true drink.

⁵⁶Those who eat my flesh and drink my blood abide in me, and I in them. ⁵⁷Just as the living Father sent me, and I live because of the Father, so whoever eats me will live because of me. ⁵⁸This is the bread that came down from heaven, not like that which your ancestors ate, and they died. But the one who eats this bread will live forever."

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

SERMON: "Expressing Praise"

Rev. Alicia Dixon-Garrard

SERMON HYMN: "Praise Ye the Lord, the Almighty" #35

LOBE DEN HERREN

PASTORAL PRAYER AND PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

THE LORD'S PRAYER (*ecumenical version*)

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours now and forever, Amen.

INVITATION TO THE OFFERING

God has given to us the bread of life. With joyful hearts, let us offer ourselves and our gifts to God.

THE OFFERTORY

DOXOLOGY: "With Grateful Joy"

Richard Bruxvoort Colligan

With grateful joy for You the Source of all life
We raise one voice to You from whom all blessings flow
You are the Giver of life
You are the Lover of life
The good Sustainer of life,
We live in You

PRAYER OF DEDICATION

As we offer our gifts to you, O God, may we not stand by thinking we need only watch you go to work. But may we join you in feeding the hungry, in offering a welcome to outsiders, and building communities of peace and justice. This we pray in Jesus' name. Amen.

***HYMN: "We Will Go Out with Joy" #539**

WE WILL GO OUT WITH JOY

CHARGE

You are grace and wonder, God of our lives,
**and so, we will go to offer mercy to everyone we meet,
to share your good news in every place.**

You are the Bread of Life, Jesus of our hearts.
**and so, we will go to feed those whose stomachs ache for food,
and whose souls hunger for hope and justice.**

You are the Wisdom that builds communities, Holy Spirit,
**and so, we will go to gather all rejected by our society,
to welcome them into our hearts and lives.**

BENEDICTION

We would like to thank Rev. Alicia Dixon-Garrard for sharing her gifts with us today.

Volunteers This Week:

Liturgist: Bonnie Zimmer

Tech: Betsy Crocker

Usher(s): Linda Barry

Coffee Hour: Nancy Rolando

Greeter(s): Terry DeLuca & Ina Charsley

Volunteers Next Week 8/25:

Liturgist: Scott Chaffee

Tech: Betsy Crocker

Usher(s): Randy Marohn

Coffee Hour: Laura Marohn

Greeter(s):

Introduction of Reverend Alicia Dixon-Garrard

Rev. Alicia D. Dixon-Garrard is a native New Yorker from Westchester County. She arrived in the Binghamton area to attend Binghamton University in 1993. She received the call to ministry in 2006. She graduated from Northeastern Seminary with her Masters of Divinity degree, and is an ordained American Baptist minister. Currently, Rev. Alicia is in the Buffalo area completing a chaplaincy residency at Sisters of Charity Hospital.

Rev. Alicia has preached cross-denominationally, taught leadership and racial reconciliation classes, led discipleship and youth, and presided over retreats during her ministry. She feels called to shepherd God's people, to teach God's Word, and to facilitate healing among both the saved and unsaved. Her life verse Jeremiah 29:11 strengthens her in this call.

Rev. Alicia is enjoying her ministry journey with her husband of twenty-one years, Larry Garrard. They reside in Johnson City, New York. Some of her favorite things are a good cup of tea, reading, and spiritual retreats.

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, Aug 18

10:30 am Sunday Worship for all ages (Sanctuary)
11:30am Coffee Fellowship for all ages (Parlor)

Monday, Aug 19

10:00 am Alcoholics Anonymous (Circle II Basement)

Tuesday, Aug 20

9:00am – 2:00pm Office Hours

Wednesday, Aug 21

9:00am – 2:00pm Office Hours

Thursday, Aug 22

9:00am – 2:00pm Office Hours
10:00am Alcoholics Anonymous (Circle II Basement)

Saturday, Aug 24

10:00am Alcoholics Anonymous (Circle II Basement)

Sunday, Aug 25

10:30 am Sunday Worship for all ages (Sanctuary)
11:30am Coffee Fellowship for all ages (Parlor)
1:00pm PorchFest

