

THE FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF ISELIN

Mind, hearts, hands and voices in Christ

Minister: Rev. Chris Houtz

Liturgist: Elder Ron Stamboly

We request that you silence all electronic devices **before** service begins.

****Please rise in body or spirit.***



Sunday, May 2, 2021

10:30 A.M.

PREPARING OUR HEARTS FOR THE PROMISE

PRELUDE

Alaine Bolton Director of Music

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Elder Ron Stamboly, Liturgist

CHORAL INTROIT **He is Lord (sung 2x)**

**He is Lord, He is Lord, He is risen from the dead and He is Lord;
Every knee shall bow, every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord.**

***THE CALL TO WORSHIP (Responsive)**

Elder Ron Stamboly, Liturgist

In the wilderness, water brings life.

Seek us out, O God, and take us to the water.

In the Word of God, the good news gives light.

Seek us out, O God, and fill us with understanding.

In the bread and the wine, the body of our Savior nourishes everyone.

Seek us out, O God, and give us yourself.

Here is the water of life, the word that feeds, the food of eternity. Come and praise the vine that gives all goodness.

***PRAYER OF THE DAY (In Unison)**

Elder Ron Stamboly, Liturgist

O God, form the minds of your faithful people into a single will. Make us love what you command and desire what you promise, that, amid all the changes of this world, our

hearts may be fixed where true joy is found; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

*HYMN #624

I Greet Thee, Who My Sure Redeemer Art 624

1 I greet thee, who my sure Re-deem-er art,
2 Thou art the King of mer-cy and of grace,
3 Thou art the life, by which a-lone we live,
4 Thou hast the true and per-fect gen-tle-ness;
5 Our hope is in no oth-er save in thee;

my on-ly trust and Sav-ior of my heart,
reign-ing om-ni-po-tent in ev-ery place:
and all our sub-stance and our strength re-ceive;
no harsh-ness hast thou and no bit-ter-ness.
our faith is built up-on thy prom-ise free;

who pain didst un-der-go for my poor sake;
so come, O King, and our whole be-ing sway;
sus-tain us by thy faith and by thy power,
O grant to us the grace we find in thee,
Lord, give us peace, and make us calm and sure,

I pray thee from our hearts all cares to take.
shine on us with the light of thy pure day.
and give us strength in ev-ery try-ing hour.
that we may dwell in per-fect u-ni-ty.
that in thy strength we ev-er-more en-dure.

INVITATION TO CONFESSION

Elder Ron Stamboly, Liturgist

Trusting in the mercy of God, let us confess to God and to one another our failure to love our neighbor.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION (In Unison)

Elder Ron Stamboly, Liturgist

God of mercy, we confess that we have not borne the fruit of the Spirit. We have not loved others as you have loved us. We have denied the promises of baptism and cut ourselves off from you. Forgive us, restore us, that we may abide in your love and live out in your mercy, for the sake of Jesus Christ, in whose name we pray.

Merciful God, hear now our own personal confessions that we lift up to you in silence.

PERSONAL CONFESSION

Rev. Chris Houtz

In the strong name of Jesus Christ we pray. **Amen.**

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

Rev. Chris Houtz

We have already been cleaned by the word that God has spoken to us. In baptism God claimed us and joined us to Christ, as branches to a vine. Believe the promise given to us: in Jesus Christ, we are forgiven.

Thanks be to God.

THE RESPONSE #581

Glory Be to the Father 581

The musical score is written in 4/4 time with a key signature of two flats (B-flat and E-flat). It consists of four systems, each with a vocal line (treble clef) and a piano accompaniment line (bass clef). The lyrics are: "Glo - ry be to the Fa - ther, and to the Son, and to the Ho - ly Ghost; as it was in the be - gin - ning, is now, and ev - er shall be, world with - out end. A - men, a - men." The piano accompaniment features a steady bass line with chords that support the vocal melody.

THE PASSING OF THE PEACE

Elder Ron Stamboly, Liturgist

The peace of Christ be with you.

And also with you. (*Please pass the peace of Christ to one another.*)

CHILDREN'S TIME

Rev. Chris Houtz

ANTHEM

Abide (*by Sing Scripture*)

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

Elder Ron Stamboly, Liturgist

Come, Holy Spirit, that through your word we may be guided into the love of God for all the world. Amen.

SCRIPTURE READINGS

Acts 8:26-40

²⁶ Then an angel of the Lord said to Philip, "Get up and go toward the south to the road that goes down from Jerusalem to Gaza." (This is a wilderness road.) ²⁷ So he got up and went. Now there was an Ethiopian eunuch, a court official of the Candace, queen of the Ethiopians,

in charge of her entire treasury. He had come to Jerusalem to worship ²⁸ and was returning home; seated in his chariot, he was reading the prophet Isaiah. ²⁹ Then the Spirit said to Philip, "Go over to this chariot and join it." ³⁰ So Philip ran up to it and heard him reading the prophet Isaiah. He asked, "Do you understand what you are reading?" ³¹ He replied, "How can I, unless someone guides me?" And he invited Philip to get in and sit beside him. ³² Now the passage of the scripture that he was reading was this:

"Like a sheep he was led to the slaughter,
and like a lamb silent before its shearer,
so he does not open his mouth.

³³ In his humiliation justice was denied him.
Who can describe his generation?
For his life is taken away from the earth."

³⁴ The eunuch asked Philip, "About whom, may I ask you, does the prophet say this, about himself or about someone else?" ³⁵ Then Philip began to speak, and starting with this scripture, he proclaimed to him the good news about Jesus. ³⁶ As they were going along the road, they came to some water; and the eunuch said, "Look, here is water! What is to prevent me from being baptized?" ³⁸ He commanded the chariot to stop, and both of them, Philip and the eunuch, went down into the water, and Philip baptized him. ³⁹ When they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord snatched Philip away; the eunuch saw him no more, and went on his way rejoicing. ⁴⁰ But Philip found himself at Azotus, and as he was passing through the region, he proclaimed the good news to all the towns until he came to Caesarea.

John 15:1-8

15 "I am the true vine, and my Father is the vinegrower. ² He removes every branch in me that bears no fruit. Every branch that bears fruit he prunes to make it bear more fruit. ³ You have already been cleansed by the word that I have spoken to you. ⁴ Abide in me as I abide in you. Just as the branch cannot bear fruit by itself unless it abides in the vine, neither can you unless you abide in me. ⁵ I am the vine, you are the branches. Those who abide in me and I in them bear much fruit, because apart from me you can do nothing. ⁶ Whoever does not abide in me is thrown away like a branch and withers; such branches are gathered, thrown into the fire, and burned. ⁷ If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask for whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. ⁸ My Father is glorified by this, that you bear much fruit and become my disciples.

THE MESSAGE

Abide With Me

Rev. Chris Houtz

***HYMN #836 (v. 1)**

836

Abide with Me

1 A - bide with me: fast falls the e - ven - tide.
 2 Swift to its close ebbs out life's lit - tle day;
 3 I need thy pres - ence ev - ery pass - ing hour;
 4 I fear no foe, with thee at hand to bless;
 5 Hold thou thy cross be - fore my clos - ing eyes;

The dark - ness deep - ens; Lord, with me a - bidel!
 earth's joys grow dim; its glo - ries pass a - way;
 what but thy grace can foil the tempt - er's power?
 ills have no weight, and tears no bit - ter - ness.
 shine through the gloom and point me to the skies.

When oth - er help - ers fail and com - forts flee,
 change and de - cay in all a - round I see.
 Who, like thy - self, my guide and stay can be?
 Where is death's sting? Where, grave, thy vic - to - ry?
 Heaven's morn - ing breaks, and earth's vain shad - ows flee;

help of the help - less, O a - bide with me.
 O thou who chang - est not, a - bide with me.
 Through cloud and sun - shine, Lord, a - bide with me.
 I tri - umph still, if thou a - bide with me.
 in life, in death, O Lord, a - bide with me.

***AFFIRMATION OF FAITH—Nicene Creed**

We believe in one God,
 The Father, the Almighty,
 Maker of heaven and earth,
 Of all that is, seen and unseen.

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,
 The only Son of God,
 Eternally begotten of the Father,
 God from God, Light from Light,

true God from true God,
Begotten, not made,
Of one Being with the Father;
Through him all things were made.
For us and for our salvation
He came down from heaven,
Was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary
And became truly human.
For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;
He suffered death and was buried.
On the third day he rose again
In accordance with the Scriptures;
He ascended into heaven
And is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,
And his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,
Who proceeds from the Father and the Son,
Who with the Father and the Son
Is worshiped and glorified,
Who has spoken through the prophets.
We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic church.
We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.
We look for the resurrection of the dead,
And the life of the world to come. Amen.

JOYS AND CONCERNS

THE PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

THE OFFERING

***THE OFFERTORY RESPONSE #717 For the Life That You Have Given**

717 For the Life That You Have Given

For the life that you have giv - en, for the love in
Christ made known, with these fruits of time and la - bor, with these
gifts that are your own: here we of - fer, Lord, our prais - es;
heart and mind and strength we bring; give us grace to
love and serve you, liv - ing what we pray and sing.

The image shows a musical score for the hymn "For the Life That You Have Given". It consists of six systems of music, each with a vocal line (treble clef) and a piano accompaniment line (bass clef). The key signature is one flat (B-flat) and the time signature is 4/4. The lyrics are written below the vocal line. The music is in a simple, hymn-like style with a steady rhythm.

*THE PRAYER OF DEDICATION (In Unison)

Through our offerings, O God, give your loving Spirit to a world in need of comfort.
Make our many gifts one offering for the world; in the name of Jesus we pray. Amen.

*HYMN #526

Let Us Talents and Tongues Employ

526 Let Us Talents and Tongues Employ



1 Let us tal - ents and tongues em - ploy, reach - ing out with a
2 Christ is a - ble to make us one; at the ta - ble he
3 Je - sus calls us in, sends us out bear - ing fruit in a



shout of joy; bread is bro - ken; the wine is poured;
sets the tone, teach - ing peo - ple to live to bless,
world of doubt, gives us love to tell, bread to share:



Christ is spo - ken and seen and heard.
love in word and in deed ex - press. Je - sus lives a - gain;
God (Im - man - u - el) ev - ery - where!



earth can breathe a - gain; pass the Word a - round: loaves a - bound!

THE INVITATION TO COMMUNION

Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us;
Therefore let us keep the feast. Alleluia!

THE GREAT PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

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.

It is truly right and our greatest joy to give you thanks and praise, eternal God, creator and ruler of the universe.

At your word the earth was made and spun on its course among the planets. Your hand formed us from the dust of the earth and set us among all your creatures to love and serve you. When we were unfaithful to you, you kept faith with us. When we were slaves in Egypt, you broke the bonds of our oppression, brought us through the sea to freedom, and made covenant to be our God. By a pillar of fire you led us through the desert to a land flowing with milk and honey, and set before us the way of life. You spoke of love and justice in the

prophets, and in the Word made flesh you lived among us, manifesting your glory. He died that we might live, and is risen to raise us to new life.

Therefore we praise you, joining our voices with angels and archangels and with all the faithful of every time and place, who forever sing to the glory of your name:

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.

You are holy, O God of majesty, and blessed is Jesus Christ, your Son, our Lord, whom you sent to save us.

He came with healing in his touch, and was wounded for our sins. He came with mercy in his voice, and was mocked as one despised. He came with peace in his heart, and met with violence and death. By your power he broke free from the prison to the tomb, and at his command the gates of hell were opened. The one who was dead now lives. The one who humbled himself is raised to rule over all creation, the Lamb upon the throne. The one ascended on high is with us always, as he promised.

On the night before he met with death, Jesus came to the table with those he loved. He took bread and praised you, God of all creation. He broke the bread among his disciples and said: Take this, all of you, and eat it. This is my body, given for you.

When the supper was ended, he took a cup of wine and gave thanks to you, God of all creation. He passed the cup among his disciples and said: Take this, all of you, and drink from it. This is their cup of the new covenant sealed in my blood for the forgiveness of sin. Do this in remembrance of me.

Remembering all your mighty and merciful acts, we take this bread and this wine from the gifts you have given us, and celebrate with joy the redemption won for us in Jesus Christ. Accept this our sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving as a living and holy offering of ourselves, that our lives may proclaim the One crucified and risen.

Christ is the bread of life.

When we eat this bread and drink this cup, we proclaim the saving death of our risen Lord until he comes in glory.

Gracious God, pour out your Holy Spirit upon us and upon these your gifts of bread and wine, that the bread we break and the cup we bless may be the communion of the body and blood of Christ. By your Spirit make us one with Christ that we may be one with all who share this feast, united in ministry in every place. As this bread is Christ's body for us, send us out to be the body of Christ in the world.

Nourished at this table, O God, may we know Christ's redemptive love and live a new life in him. Give us who are fed at his hand, grace to share our bread with the hungry and with the hungry of heart. Keep us faithful in your service until Christ comes in final victory, and we shall feast with all your saints in the joy of your eternal realm.

Through Christ, with Christ, in Christ, all glory and honor are yours, almighty God, with the Holy Spirit in the holy church, now and forever. Amen.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

As our Savior Christ has taught us, we are bold to pray:

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

BREAKING OF THE BREAD

Because there is one loaf, we, many as we are, are one body; for it is one loaf of which we partake.

When we break the bread, is it not a sharing in the body Christ?

When we give thanks over the cup, is it not a sharing in the blood Christ?

Friends, these are the gifts of God for the people of God.

Thanks be to God.

COMMUNION OF THE PEOPLE

PRAYER AFTER SUPPER

Loving God, you graciously feed us, who have received those holy mysteries, with the bread of life and the cup of eternal salvation. May we who have received this sacrament be strengthened in your service; we who have sung your praises tell of your glory and truth; we who have seen the greatness of your love see you face to face in your kingdom. For you have made us your own people by the death and resurrection of your Son our Lord and the life-giving power of your Spirit. Amen.

***HYMN #611**

Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee

611 Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee

1 Joy - ful, joy - ful, we a - dore thee, God of glo - ry, Lord of love!
2 All thy works with joy sur-round thee; earth and heaven re- flect thy rays;
3 Mor-tals, join the hap-py cho-rus which the morn-ing stars be-gan.

Hearths un-fold like flowers be-fore thee, o-pening to the sun a-bove.
stars and an-gels sing a-round thee, cen-ter of un-bro-ken praise.
Love di-vine is reign-ing o'er us, join-ing all in heav-en's plan.

Melt the clouds of sin and sad-ness; drive the dark of doubt a-way.
Field and for-est, vale and moun-tain, flower-y mead-ow, flash-ing sea,
Ev-er sing-ing, march we on-ward, vic-tors in the midst of strife.

Giv-er of im-mor-tal glad-ness, fill us with the light of day.
chant-ing bird and flow-ing foun-tain, call us to re-joice in thee.
Joy-ful mu-sic leads us sun-ward in the tri-umph song of life.

*THE BENEDICTION

*CHORAL BENEDICTION

Lord, I Lift Your Name on High (2x-Don't forget your egg shakers!)

Lord I lift Your name on high
Lord I love to sing Your praises
I'm so glad You're in my life
I'm so glad You came to save us

You came from heaven to earth to show the way
From the earth to the cross, my debt to pay
From the cross to the grave, from the grave to the sky
Lord I lift Your name on high

THE POSTLUDE

Friendly Reminders

Church Office will open Monday-Friday, 9am to 1 pm
Starting Monday, May 3, 2021

Sanctuary Open for Quiet Prayer and Contemplation
Monday through Thursdays 9 am to 1 pm
(Please call at 732.283.1188 before you come)

Prayer Shawl Ministry
Tuesdays at 2 pm

Thursday Congregational Call
Every Thursday at 11 am

Sunday Bible Study
9:00 am

Divine Worship: In sanctuary and on Facebook Livestream
10:30 am