

# THE FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF ISELIN

*Mind, hearts, hands and voices in Christ*

Minister: Rev. Chris Houtz

Liturgist: Elder Betsy Christensen

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

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

Sunday, October 10, 2021

10:30 A.M.

## PREPARING OUR HEARTS FOR THE PROMISE

PRELUDE

Alaine Bolton, Director of Music

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Elder Betsy Christensen

CHORAL INTROIT

**Great and Mighty**  
Ps. 150  
Songs of Praise  
Words and Music by  
Marlene Bigley

D  
Great and might - y is the Lord our God,

Em7 A  
Great and might - y in - deed.

Em7  
Great and might - y is the Lord our God,

A G/A D Em/A D  
Great and might - y in - deed. Lift up your

Em7(4) D/F#  
ban-ner, let the an-thems ring; prais - es ev - er

G D C6 B7  
sing! Great and might - y is the Lord our God,

Em7(4) A7 1. D G/A A 2. D  
Great and might - y in - deed. deed.

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

**Elder Betsy Christensen**

God, you are holy, enthroned on the praises of Israel.

**In you our ancestors trusted; they trusted you, and you delivered them.**

To you they cried, and they were saved; in you they trusted and were not put to shame.

**God, you are holy. All praise to you, now and forever!**

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

**Elder Betsy Christensen**

**Merciful God, in Jesus Christ you do not call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.**

**Draw us away from the easy road that leads to destruction, and guide us into paths**

**that lead to life abundant, that in seeking your truth, and obeying your will, we may**

**know the joy of being a disciple of Jesus Christ our Savior, who lives and reigns with**

**you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.**

**\* HYMN #475**

**Come, Thou Font of Every Blessing**

**INVITATION TO CONFESSION**

**Elder Betsy Christensen**

God is not far from us. When trouble is near, God is our help and our refuge. Let us confess our sins to God, that we might receive mercy.

**PRAYER OF CONFESSION (In Unison)**

**Elder Betsy Christensen**

**God of justice and mercy, we confess that we put ourselves first and trust in things**

**that will not last. We desire the evil and scorn the good; we gather up power and**

**wealth and push aside the needy in our way. O Lord, be gracious to us in spite of our**

**great sin. Teach us to love your justice and share in your mercy. Help us to seek the**

**treasure of heavenly life with you; through Jesus Christ our Savior.**

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 a great high priest who has passed through the heavens: Jesus, God's Son, our

Savior. Hear the good news: In Jesus Christ we are forgiven.

**Thanks be to God!**

**\* THE RESPONSE #582**

**Glory to God, Whose Goodness Shines on Me**

**\*THE PASSING OF THE PEACE**

The peace of Christ be with you.

**And also with you.**

*(Please pass the peace with friends and loved-ones)*

**CHILDREN'S TIME**

**Rev. Chris Houtz**

## ANTHEM

## O God, You Search Me *(from YouTube)*

### PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

Your word, O God, is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing and able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart. May your Word be for us today life and action, beacon and gavel. In the name of the Living Word we pray. Amen.

### SCRIPTURE READINGS

#### Hebrews 4:12-16

<sup>12</sup> Indeed, the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing until it divides soul from spirit, joints from marrow; it is able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart. <sup>13</sup> And before him no creature is hidden, but all are naked and laid bare to the eyes of the one to whom we must render an account.

<sup>14</sup> Since, then, we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God, let us hold fast to our confession. <sup>15</sup> For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who in every respect has been tested as we are, yet without sin. <sup>16</sup> Let us therefore approach the throne of grace with boldness, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

#### Job 23:1-9, 16-17

**23** Then Job answered:

<sup>2</sup> "Today also my complaint is bitter;  
his hand is heavy despite my groaning.

<sup>3</sup> Oh, that I knew where I might find him,  
that I might come even to his dwelling!

<sup>4</sup> I would lay my case before him,  
and fill my mouth with arguments.

<sup>5</sup> I would learn what he would answer me,  
and understand what he would say to me.

<sup>6</sup> Would he contend with me in the greatness of his power?  
No; but he would give heed to me.

<sup>7</sup> There an upright person could reason with him,  
and I should be acquitted forever by my judge.

<sup>8</sup> "If I go forward, he is not there;  
or backward, I cannot perceive him;

<sup>9</sup> on the left he hides, and I cannot behold him;  
I turn to the right, but I cannot see him.

<sup>16</sup> God has made my heart faint;  
the Almighty has terrified me;

<sup>17</sup> If only I could vanish in darkness,  
and thick darkness would cover my face!

**THE MESSAGE**

**Struggling in the Darkness**

**Rev. Chris Houtz**

**\*HYMN**

**Nearer, My God, to Thee 784**

1. Near - er, my God, to thee, Near - er to thee!  
2. Though like the wan - der - er, The sun gone down,  
3. There let the way ap - pear, Steps un - to heav'n;  
4. Then, with my wak - ing thoughts Bright with thy praise,  
5. Or if, on joy - ful wing Cleav - ing the sky,

E'en though it be a cross That rais - eth me,  
Dark - ness be o - ver me, My rest a stone;  
All that thou send - est me, In mer - cy giv'n;  
Out of my ston - y griefs Beth - el I'll raise:  
Sun, moon, and stars for - got, Up - ward I fly,

Still all my song shall be, Near - er, my God, to thee;  
Yet in my dreams I'd be Near - er, my God, to thee;  
An - gels to beck - on me Near - er, my God, to thee;  
So by my woes to be Near - er, my God, to thee;  
Still all my song shall be, Near - er, my God, to thee;

Near - er, my God, to thee, Near - er to thee!

Text: Sarah F. Adams, 1805-1848  
Tune: BETHANY, 6 4 6 4 6 6 6 4; Lowell Mason, 1792-1872

### **\*AFFIRMATION OF FAITH—Apostles' Creed**

**I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried; he descended to the dead. On the third day he rose again; he ascended into heaven, he is seated at the right hand of the Father, and he will come again to judge the living and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.**

### **JOYS AND CONCERNS**

#### **THE 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.**

#### **THE OFFERING**

**With grateful hearts, let us bring our tithes and offerings to the God from whom they came.**

**\*THE OFFERTORY RESPONSE #608      Praise God, From Whom All Blessings Flow**

#### **\*THE PRAYER OF DEDICATION (In Unison)**

**Gracious God, we present these gifts and renew our commitment to leave everything behind and follow you. Give us the courage to fulfill your will so that with everything we do and say we can become a living offering worthy of being called your disciples. Amen.**

**\*HYMN #320**

**The Church of Christ in Every Age**

#### **BENEDICTION**

**CHORAL BENEDICTION**

**Halle, Halle, Hallelujah**

# Halle, Halle, Hallelujah

Songs of Praise

Music: Unknown  
Arr. Geoff Weaver

Hal - le, hal - le, hal - le - lu -

Em /D C  
jah! Hal - le, hal - le, hal - le -

Am D G  
lu - jah! Hal - le, hal - le, hal - le -

D/F# Em Am7  
lu - jah! Hal - le - lu - jah, hal -

G/D D 1. G C G/B Am 2. G C/G G  
le - lu - jah! jah!

THE POSTLUDE



**Blessing of the Animals! Saturday, October 16<sup>th</sup> at 10 am**  
**Location: Church Parking Lot**

**Per Capita Apportionment for 2021 is \$40.45**

### **REGULAR ACTIVITIES**

Church Office open Monday-Friday, 9am to 1 pm

Prayer Shawl Ministry - Tuesdays at 12 noon

Bible Study - Wednesdays in Fellowship Hall at 11 am

Rev. Chris' Congregational Call - Every Thursday at 11 am

Men's Breakfast - 1<sup>st</sup> Saturday of the month at 8 am.

CLEF Ladies' Breakfast  
1<sup>st</sup> Saturday of the month at 9 am

Sunday Bible Study  
9:00 am

Session meeting every 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of the month

Choir practice: 1<sup>st</sup> and last Sunday of the Month at 9:30 am

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