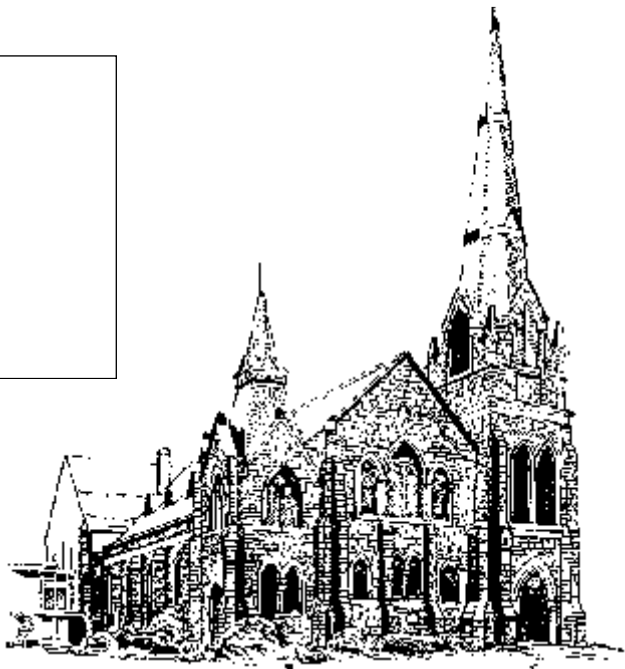


THE FIRST PRESBYTERIAN
CHURCH AT CALDWELL

*326 Bloomfield Avenue
Caldwell, NJ 07006
973-228-0310
www.firstprescaldwell.org*



*Our Mission: Shining God's light by ...
Knowing Christ, Growing in His love, Going where He leads.*

Sunday, July 23, 2023

10:00 am

Eighth Sunday after Pentecost

REFLECTION

"This parable is primarily about relationships between people. It's about not judging and not assuming that you and I are wheat and others are weeds. When we judge others and dismiss their contributions and value, we become weeds among the community's wheat."

Prof. Alyce McKenzie

PRELUDE

"Aberystwyth"

Wilbur Held

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

WELCOMING ONE ANOTHER

CALL TO WORSHIP

From the moment we open our eyes each morning,
until we close them at night, God is with us.

There is no one like you, our God!

In times when we are surrounded with struggles,
in all the surprising places we find hope, Jesus is with us.

There is no one like you, our Brother!

When we feel orphaned by the world,
when we are welcomed into faith's family,
the Holy Spirit is with us.

There is no one like you, Witnessing Spirit! We come in joy and join in praise.

*HYMN NO. 250

“Hymn of Promise”

PROMISE

1. In the bulb there is a flower; in the seed, an apple tree;
in cocoons, a hidden promise: butterflies will soon be free!
In the cold and snow of winter there’s a spring that waits to be,
unrevealed until its season, something God alone can see.
2. There’s a song in every silence, seeking word and melody;
there’s a dawn in every darkness, bringing hope to you and me.
From the past will come the future; what it holds, a mystery,
unrevealed until its season, something God alone can see.
3. In our end is our beginning; in our time, infinity;
in our doubt there is believing; in our life, eternity.
In our death, a resurrection; at the last, a victory,
unrevealed until its season, something God alone can see.

*PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Insolently we turn against you, God of truth. When we follow those desires that control us; when we live for ourselves, shutting off the gifts of those around us; when we think we do not need to share love, hope, peace with others, we show how we have joined that league of weeds who ignore your way of life.

Yet, you have chosen to adopt us as your children, God-who-stands-with-us, forgiving us and making us inheritors with Jesus of your grace and joy. So lead us by the Spirit, that we might follow Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior, into creation which groans for love and healing. Amen

*ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS (drawing from Psalm 139)

“Where can I go from your spirit? Or where can I flee from your presence? If I ascend to heaven, you are there; if I make my bed in Sheol, you are there. If I take the wings of the morning and settle at the farthest limits of the sea, even there your hand shall lead me, and your right hand shall hold me fast.” God is with us, always.

God’s steadfast love never ceases. Through Christ’s grace we are forgiven, reclaimed and renewed. We can live into His ways of love, justice, and peace. Amen.

*HYMN OF RESPONSE NO. 581

“Glory Be to the Father”

GLORIA PATRI

Glory be to the Father,
and to the Son,
and to the Holy Ghost;
as it was in the beginning,
is now, and ever shall be,
world without end. Amen, amen.

FIRST LESSON

Romans 8:18-25

Page 148, NT

SPECIAL MUSIC

“In the Garden”

C. Austin Miles arr. Douglas Wagner

GOSPEL LESSON

Matthew 13:24-30, 36-43

Page 14, NT

SERMON

“Living with Weeds”

Rev. William Schram

*HYMN NO. 435

“There’s a Wideness in God’s Mercy”

IN BABILONE

1. There’s a wideness in God’s mercy, like the wideness of the sea.
There’s a kindness in God’s justice, which is more than liberty.
There is no place where earth’s sorrows are more felt than up in heaven.
There is no place where earth’s failings have such kindly judgement given.
2. For the love of God is broader than the measures of the mind.
And the heart of the Eternal is most wonderfully kind.
If our love were but more faithful, we would gladly trust God’s Word,
and our lives reflect thanksgiving for the goodness of our Lord.

JOYS AND CONCERNS

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE & 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.

EXPRESSING OUR GRATITUDE

INVITATION TO GIVING

*HYMN NO. 839

“Blessed Assurance”

ASSURANCE

1. Blessed assurance, Jesus is mine!
O what a foretaste of glory divine!
Heir of salvation, purchase of God,
born of his Spirit, washed in his blood.
***Refrain: This is my story; this is my song, praising my Savior all the day long;
this is my story; this is my song, praising my Savior all the day long.***
2. Perfect submission, perfect delight,
visions of rapture now burst on my sight;
angels descending, bring from above
echoes of mercy, whispers of love.
Refrain
3. Perfect submission, all is at rest;
I in my Savior am happy and blest,
watching and waiting, looking above,
filled with his goodness, lost in his love.
Refrain

*BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE

“St Denio”

Wilbur Held

* Please rise in body or spirit

WORSHIP PARTICIPANTS

Rev. William Schram
Valerie Shondel, Director of Music
Chancel Handbell Choir
Barbara Romaine, Handbell Soloist
Abbey Clyne, Cantor
Ray Liptak, AV Engineer
Michael Sperrazza, & Matthew Califf AV Team

✚ We are glad you have chosen to worship here today! Please come again!

✚ For more information about our church, please visit our website:

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