



156TH MEETING OF PALO DURO PRESBYTERY

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

VERNON, TEXAS

SEPTEMBER 29, 2023

GATHERING of God's People In Praise and Contemplation

CHIMING OF THE HOUR

Leader: The Lord be with you!

Body of Christ: And also with you!

GREETING & ANNOUNCEMENTS

PRELUDE: Agincourt Hymn, John Dunstable, c.1415

***CALL TO WORSHIP: Psalm 84**

Leader: How lovely is your dwelling place,
God of power and might.
I long with heartfelt yearning
To be within God's house.
My whole being sings for joy
To God, the living God.

Body of Christ: Even the sparrow finds a home
And the swallow makes a nest
Where she can rear her brood
Close to your holy altars.

**Happy are those who live in your house
Forever offering praise.
Happy are those who trust in you
As they walk their pilgrim way.**

Leader: Better is one day in your temple
Than a thousand days elsewhere.
Better to stand at the door of God's house
Than live in the tents of the wicked.

Body of Christ: God is our sun, God is our shield,
Give of glory and grace.
God refuses no good thing
To those who do what is right.
Happy are those who trust in you,
God of power and might.

***HYMN OF PRAISE: "Be Still, My Soul" #819**

UNISON PRAYER OF CONFESSION

It is true that we grumble too much, Patient God. We are easily stampeded by the promises of those around us, only to wonder how we end up where we find ourselves. We see so much of everything on our devices, and become convinced we deserve more. Though we know others have the same struggles, we have trouble standing by their side.

You are so slow to get mad, yet rush to share your grace with us. We seek you Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior.

Quiet Contemplation and Confession. Amen.

WORDS OF ASSURANCE

"For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, so that whosoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life." [John 3:16]

***GLORIA PATRI: #581**

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 Scripture Reading: Genesis 18:1-12

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

Second Scripture Reading: Matthew 11:28-30; 26:26-30

Word Proclaimed: "Table Talk--The Price We Pay for Love" with The Rev. Dr. Fran Shelton

Meditating on and Responding to God's Word

***HYMN OF AFFIRMATION: "Ah, Holy Jesus" #218**

***AFFIRMATION OF FAITH (Apostles' Creed)**

I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth; and in Jesus Christ His only Son our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried; He descended into hell; the third day He rose again from the dead; He ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from thence He shall come to judge the quick and the dead. I believe in the Holy Ghost; the holy catholic church; the communion of saints; the forgiveness of sins; the resurrection of the body; and the life everlasting. Amen.

SHARING JOYS AND CONCERNS, PASTORAL PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

THE LORD'S PRAYER (Traditional)

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 glory forever. Amen.

SHARING TITHES AND OFFERINGS – Celebration Scholarship for PDP Graduating Seniors

OFFERTORY and Special Music: Ukulele musicians Clara Abello, Bob Harber (Bass), Landry Conley, Elder M.J. Ethington, John Johansen, Phil McCuiston, Pam Surber

"On the Wings of a Dove" by Bob Ferguson, 1958

***DOXOLOGY: #606**

***PRAYER OF DEDICATION**

May we offer our gifts, not with grumbling under our breath about what you might do with them, but with thanks that you will use them to bring healing, hope, grace, and peace to all whose lives are empty of such needs. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.

CELEBRATION OF HOLY COMMUNION

GREAT PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

Leader: May the unpredictable God be with you.

Body of Christ: And also with you.

Leader: Let us open our hearts to God.

Body of Christ: We will welcome the constant love of our God.

Leader: Let us not stand idly by, but rejoice in the grace of God.

Body of Christ: We will sing glad songs of praise forever.

Leader: When you saw chaos standing idle, you chose to give us creation, imaginative God: squirrels chattering in trees, luminous rings around planets, glaciers carving out lochs and fjords, towering trees shading toadstools. You did all this to show those created in your image what the kingdom of heaven is like.

Prophets, both reluctant and willing, came so we might know how gracious you are, yet

we chose to stand side by side with death, grumbling every moment. Given the chance to respond in anger, you did not do it but sent your steadfast love to us in Jesus.

**Body of Christ: Holy, holy, holy are you, God who cannot be predicted.
All creation sings of your justice and grace. Hosanna in the highest!
Blessed is the One who continues to be with us. Hosanna in the highest!**

Leader: When you saw us standing idly by the world's side, in your holiness, you chose to give us your heart, Jesus, who shows us what the kingdom of heaven is like.

When we hoard all we have, he shows us how to share abundantly.
When we mumble about life, he calls us to serve all oppressed by fear and hate.

When we whisper behind the backs of others, he turns us to face them so we can see you staring back at us. When we would mutter of how little you have done for us, he went into death's foul depths, so we might receive resurrection from our unpredictable God.

Body of Christ: Living, Christ showed us how to live; dying, Christ showed us how to trust; raised, Christ revealed resurrection hope for all; now and always, Christ is with us.

Leader: We would not be idle bystanders but come eagerly to the Table which you have prepared for us. Here, the Holy Spirit is poured out on the bread and the cup and on those gathered for this feast.

Here, the bread that is broken strengthens us so we may proclaim your grace to those forgotten by others.

Here, the cup that overflows with grace enables us to give honor and hope to all pushed to the back of the line. And when the evening of all time comes, we will gather with our sisters and brothers at your Table of eternal joy, each receiving as you would give - the grace, the love, the peace of God in Trinity, Holy in One. Amen.

COMMUNION PRAYER

SENDING FORTH

***CLOSING HYMN:** "When Peace Like a River" #840

***BENEDICTION AND BLESSING**

***POSTLUDE:** Agincourt Hymn, John Dunstable, c.1415

Cover art: An impressionistic shadow of one seeking the Holy One. The seeker has a long dark, heavy shadow, but a stream of light surrounds and seems to hold brightly the seeker as if to say, "For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light."

Helping in Worship: Organist Don Bruns, Elder and Commissioned Pastor Candidate Dr. Steve Chambers, Elder Sally Osoinach, the Rev. George Records, Elder Joyce Records, and the Rev. Dr. Fran Shelton

***Please stand as you are able.**