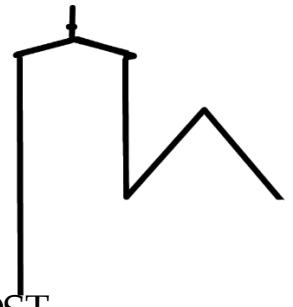


WESTMINSTER PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

1420 West Moss Avenue
Peoria, Illinois 61606



THE EIGHTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

26 September 2021

Ten O'clock

GRANT US, LORD, not to be anxious about earthy cares, but to love that which is above, and even now, while we live among transient things, to hold fast to those things that shall endure; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, forever and ever. Amen.

... from the Book of Common Worship, Presbyterian Church (USA)

GATHERING IN THE PRESENCE OF THE RISEN CHRIST

THE PREPARATION

Vater Unser im Himmelreich

Johann Sebastian Bach

WELCOME AND CONCERNS OF THE CHURCH FAMILY

*CALL TO WORSHIP

Rev. Clark-Jones

One: *We come abounding in thanksgiving:*

All: **For in Christ we find in all fullness, the holiness, the justice and the hope of God.**

One: *We come abounding in thanksgiving:*

All: **To feel God's life in us, flowing through our roots in Christ and establishing our faith.**

One: *We come abounding in thanksgiving:*

All: **To celebrate the mystery of God-with-us: Christ, who lives fully in us and in whom we fully live.**

One: *We come abounding in thanksgiving:*

All: **Let us welcome the One who was sent to make us alive in the fullness of God.**

*THE HYMN 420

God of Grace and God of Glory

Cwm Rhondda

1. God of grace and God of glory,
On thy people pour thy power;
Crown thine ancient church's story
Bring its bud to glorious flower.
Grant us wisdom, grant us courage
For the facing of this hour
For the facing of this hour.

2. Lo! the hosts of evil round us
Scorn thy Christ, assail thy ways!
From the fears that long have bound us
Free our hearts to faith and praise.
Grant us wisdom, grant us courage
For the living of these days,
For the living of these days!

3. Cure thy children's warring madness,
Bend our pride to thy control.
Shame our wanton, selfish gladness,
Rich in things and poor in soul.
Grant us wisdom, grant us courage,
Lest we miss thy kingdom's goal.
Lest we miss thy kingdom's goal.

4. Set our feet on lofty places,
Gird our lives that they may be
Armored with all Christ-like graces
Pledged to set all captives free.
Grant us wisdom, grant us courage,
That we fail not them nor Thee!
That we fail not them nor Thee!

5. Save us from weak resignation
To the evils we deplore,
Let the gift of thy salvation
Be our glory evermore
Grant us wisdom, grant us courage
Serving thee whom we adore.
Serving thee whom we adore!

Text: Harry Emerson Fosdick, 1930
Music: John Hughes, 1907

***CALL TO CONFESSION**

***PRAYER OF CONFESSION** (*praying together*)

GOD OF GRACE and God of glory, forgive us for the times when our own welfare has kept us from taking action that would carry out your will. Forgive us for the times we have expressed love with our lips, but have denied it by the way we live our lives. Forgive us for the times we were sure of your will, but only did what pleased us. Renew a right spirit within us. Lord, and free us to do your will.

***TIME OF SILENCE AND PERSONAL CONFESSION**

***KYRIE**

John Weaver

Lord, have mer - cy up - on us; Christ, have mer - cy up -
on us; Lord, have mer - cy up - on us.

***ASSURANCE OF PARDON**

*GLORIA PATRI

John Weaver

Glo - ry to the Fa - ther, and to the
Son, and to the Ho - ly Spir - it: as it was in the be -
gin - ning, is now, and will be for - ev - er.
A - men. A - - - men. A - - - men.

HEARING THE WORD

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

THE LESSONS FOR THE DAY

OLD TESTAMENT LESSON: Esther 7:1-6; 9-10; 9:20-22

So the king and Haman went in to feast with Queen Esther. ² On the second day, as they were drinking wine, the king again said to Esther, "What is your petition, Queen Esther? It shall be granted you. And what is your request? Even to the half of my kingdom, it shall be fulfilled." ³ Then Queen Esther answered, "If I have won your favor, O king, and if it pleases the king, let my life be given me – that is my petition – and the lives of my people – that is my request. ⁴ For we have been sold, I and my people, to be destroyed, to be killed, and to be annihilated. If we had been sold merely as slaves, men and women, I would have held my peace; but no enemy can compensate for this damage to the king." ⁵ Then King Ahasuerus said to Queen Esther, "Who is he, and where is he, who has presumed to do this?" ⁶ Esther said, "A foe and enemy, this wicked Haman!" Then Haman was terrified before the king and the queen.

⁹ Then Harbona, one of the eunuchs in attendance on the king, said, "Look, the very gallows that Haman has prepared for Mordecai, whose word saved the king, stands at Haman's house, fifty cubits high." And the king said, "Hang him on that." ¹⁰ So they hanged Haman on the gallows that he had prepared for Mordecai. Then the anger of the king abated.

²⁰ Mordecai recorded these things, and sent letters to all the Jews who were in all the provinces of King Ahasuerus, both near and far, ²¹ enjoining them that they

should keep the fourteenth day of the month Adar and also the fifteenth day of the same month, year by year, ²² as the days on which the Jews gained relief from their enemies, and as the month that had been turned for them from sorrow into gladness and from mourning into a holiday; that they should make them days of feasting and gladness, days for sending gifts of food to one another and presents to the poor.

***THE PSALTER:**

Psalm 124

Old 124th

1. Now Israel may say, and that in truth
If that the Lord had not our right maintained
If that the Lord had not with us remained
When cruel foes against us rose to strive.
We surely had been swallowed up alive.

2. Yea, when their wrath against us fiercely rose,
The swelling tide had o'er us spread its wave.
The raging stream had then become our grave,
The surging flood, in proudly swelling roll,
Most surely then had overwhelmed our soul.

3. Blest be the Lord, who made us not their prey;
As from the snare a bird escapeth free,
Their net is rent and so escaped are we;
Our only help is in God's holy name.
Who made the earth and all the heavenly frame.

Text: The Psalter, 1912

Music: The Genevan Psalter, 1551

EPISTLE: James 5:13-20

Are any among you suffering? They should pray. Are any cheerful? They should sing songs of praise. ¹⁴ Are any among you sick? They should call for the elders of the church and have them pray over them, anointing them with oil in the name of the Lord. ¹⁵ The prayer of faith will save the sick, and the Lord will raise them up; and anyone who has committed sins will be forgiven. ¹⁶ Therefore confess your sins to one another, and pray for one another, so that you may be healed. The prayer of the righteous is powerful and effective. ¹⁷ Elijah was a human being like us, and he prayed fervently that it might not rain, and for three years and six months it did not rain on the earth. ¹⁸ Then he prayed again, and the heaven gave rain and the earth yielded its harvest.

¹⁹ My brothers and sisters, if anyone among you wanders from the truth and is brought back by another, ²⁰ you should know that whoever brings back a sinner from wandering will save the sinner's soul from death and will cover a multitude of sins.

GOSPEL: Mark 9:38-50

John said to him, "Teacher, we saw someone casting out demons in your name, and we tried to stop him, because he was not following us." ³⁹ But Jesus said, "Do not stop him; for no one who does a deed of power in my name will be able soon afterward to speak evil of me. ⁴⁰ Whoever is not against us is for us. ⁴¹ For truly I tell you, whoever gives you a cup of water to drink because you bear the name of Christ will by no means lose the reward.

⁴² "If any of you put a stumbling block before one of these little ones who believe in me, it would be better for you if a great millstone were hung around your neck and you were thrown into the sea. ⁴³ If your hand causes you to stumble, cut it off; it is better for you to enter life maimed than to have two hands and to go to hell, to the unquenchable fire. ⁴⁵ And if your foot causes you to stumble, cut it off; it is better for you to enter life lame than to have two feet and to be thrown into hell. ⁴⁷ And if your eye causes you to stumble, tear it out; it is better for you to enter the kingdom of God with one eye than to have two eyes and to be thrown into hell, ⁴⁸ where their worm never dies, and the fire is never quenched.

⁴⁹ "For everyone will be salted with fire. ⁵⁰ Salt is good; but if salt has lost its saltiness, how can you season it? Have salt in yourselves, and be at peace with one another."

The Word of the Lord: Thanks be to God.

SERMON

The Rev. Denise M. Clark-Jones

RESPONDING TO THE WORD

*HYMN 419

How Clear Is Our Vocation, Lord

Repton

1. How clear is our vocation, Lord
When once we heed your call:
To live according to your word,
And daily learn, refreshed, restored,
That you are Lord of all
And will not let us fall.

2. But if, forgetful, we should find
Your yoke is hard to bear,
If worldly pressures fray the mind
And love itself cannot unwind
Its tangled skein of care;
Our inward life repair.

3. We mark your saints, how they became
In hindrances more sure
Whose joyful virtues put to shame
The casual way we wear your name,
And by our faults obscure
Your power to cleanse and cure.

4. In what you give us, Lord, to do,
Together or alone,
In old routines or ventures new,
May we not cease to look to you -
The cross you hung upon -
All you endeavored done

Text: Fred Pratt Green, 1981
Music: C. Hubert H. Parry, 188

*AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

(affirming responsively)

based on The Confession of Belhar

One: *We believe in the triune God – Father, Son and Holy Spirit*

All: **who gathers, protects, and cares for the church through Word and Spirit.**

One: *We believe in one holy, universal Christian church,*

All: **the communion of saints called from the entire human family.**

One: *We believe that Christ's work of reconciliation is made manifest in the church,*

All: **as the community of believers who have been reconciled with God and with one another.**

One: *We believe that this unity is both a gift and an obligation for the church of Jesus Christ.*

All: **one which the people of God must continually be built up to attain.**

One: *We believe that this unity must become visible so that the world may believe that hatred among people is sin, which Christ has already conquered. Anything that threatens this unity may have no place in the church and must be resisted.*

All: **Together we fight against all that may threaten or hinder this unity.**

One: *Together we celebrate our differences as opportunities for mutual service within the one visible people of God.*

All: **Together we love each other.**

PASSING OF THE PEACE

The peace of Christ be with you.

And also with you.

THE GIFT OF MUSIC

Blessed Are All They That Fear the Lord
The Choir

Leo Sowerby

Blessed are all they that fear the Lord, and walk in his ways. For thou shalt eat the labors of thine hands: O well is thee, and happy shalt thou be. Thy wife shall be as the fruitful vine upon the walls of thine house; thy children like the olive branches round about thy table. Lo, thus shall the man be blessed that feareth the Lord. The Lord from out of Sion shall so bless thee, that thou shalt see Jerusalem in prosperity all thy life long. Yea, that thou shalt see thy children's children, and peace upon Israel. (Psalm 128)

SEALING THE WORD

INTERCESSIONS AND SUPPLICATIONS

(... In your mercy ... Lord hear our prayer)

THE LORD'S PRAYER *[praying together]*

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.

BEARING THE WORD INTO THE WORLD

*HYMN 447

Lead On, O King Eternal

Lancashire

1. Lead on, O King eternal
The day of march has come;
Henceforth in fields of conquest
Thy tents shall be our home.
Through days of preparation
Thy grace has made us strong,
And now, O King eternal,
We lift our battle song.

2. Lead on, O King eternal,
Till sin's fierce war shall cease,
And holiness shall whisper
The sweet amen of peace;
For not with swords' loud clashing,
Nor roll of stirring drums;
With deeds of love and mercy
The heavenly kingdom comes.

3. Lead on, O King eternal: We follow, not with fears;
For gladness breaks like morning Where'er thy face appears;
Thy cross is lifted o'er us; We journey in its light:
The crown awaits the conquest: Lead on, O God of might!

Text: Ernest W. Shurleff, 1888
Music: Henry Thomas Smart, 1835

*CHARGE AND BENEDICTION

*CHORAL BENEDICTION

May Christ Support Us

Norman Dello Joio

May Christ support us all the day long, 'til the shadows lengthen, and evening comes, and the weary world is hushed, and the fever of life is o'er, and our rest is won. Then in his mercy may he make us a safe lodging, and a holy rest, and peace at the last. Amen

*POSTLUDE

LEADING IN WORSHIP TODAY

The Rev. Denise M. Clark-Jones, *Pastor of Westminster Church*

Thomas Clark-Jones, *Organist-Choirmaster*

The Westminster Choir

Elder Larry Hicks, *Video Producer*

WELCOME TO WESTMINSTER CHURCH OF PEORIA. We are pleased to have you with us on this Eighteenth Sunday after Pentecost. We trust that this service will bring blessing and hope. We welcome those worshipping with us via the World Wide Web where we are live-streaming this service. Our thanks to Elder Larry Hicks who has made the live-streaming possible through his expertise in web design. If you miss the service at ten o'clock on Sunday morning, the recording of the worship will appear for the next several weeks on the WPC You Tube Channel.

THE SERVICE MUSIC usage and rights to live-stream this service are given through our license A-726060 issued by OneLicense.net (Chicago, Illinois).

THE GRETCHEN R. IBEN ARTS SERIES began the 2021-2022 season last Sunday afternoon with a performance by the Westminster Jazz Ensemble led by our own David Hoffman. The crowd was most enthusiastic as they enjoyed a number of David's tunes written for our Jazz Vesper Services over the past few years. A great time was had by all. NEXT in the Iben Series ... Thomas Clark-Jones presents music by César Franck, the brilliant organist-composer who defined the style of French organ music for the next fifty years. He introduced the idea of a symphonic approach to the organ and wrote the first of the great French Romantic Organ Symphonies. The program will include six works from charming to dramatic. The music gives the Westminster organ a chance to shine on a repertoire not originally conceived for it, but which expresses the drama and depth of Franck most convincingly. Come, Join us. Friday, October 15 at 7:30 pm.

THE WESTMINSTER CHOIR has graced our services for the past two Sundays. Although we are a smaller group than normal we hope you will enjoy the efforts by these fine musicians who make time to glorify God in our music. As the Covid pandemic dies down (hopefully, soon!) we will be seeing more and more of our members participate. If you would like to share your talents with the Choir, please see Tom Clark-Jones. We can set aside some music for you and would love to welcome you to our work and our fellowship.

*"Almighty God,
who hast given us grace at this time
with one accord
to make our common supplication unto thee,
and hast promised through thy well-beloved Son
that when two or three are gathered together in his Name
thou wilt be in the midst of them:
Fulfill now, O Lord,
the desires and petitions of thy servants
as may be best for us;
granting us in this world knowledge of thy truth,
and in the world to come life everlasting.
Amen."*

...A Prayer of St. Chrysostom, Bishop of Constantinople, 407 A.D.

OPEN HANDS, OPEN HEARTS, OPEN MINDS