

Welcome to *Amherst Presbyterian Church*. We are one of the visible churches for the invisible church that shall be gathered into one, under Christ, the head thereof; and is the spouse, the body, the fullness of Christ that fills all in all.

You are so welcome to our worship every Sunday.



image by Aya and Nicole Velasquez

PUT ON THE WHOLE ARMOR OF GOD

Ephesians 6:11

14th Sunday after Pentecost

August 25, 2024 at 10:30 AM

"This is the day that the Lord has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it." Psalm 118:24

AMHERST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
The Presbyterian Church in the USA
All Are Welcome

* We invite you to please stand, as you are able, for items preceded by an asterisk.

PRELUDE: Morning Hymn Sergisson

OPENING AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Liturgist

* INTROIT: Shout to the Lord # 2074 (*Sing the Faith*) - sing twice

CALL TO WORSHIP

Liturgist: With profound happiness, we welcome one another.
How good it is to approach the courts of our God!

**People: Happy are those who live in God's house!
Singing our praise to God fills us with joy.**

Liturgist: Here we welcome both friend and stranger.
All peoples of the earth are God's children.

**People: We greet one another by name in Jesus' name.
Together we extol the name of our God.**

Liturgist: Open your hearts to receive new strength.
Open your lives to renewed understandings.

**People: Surely God will equip us to face our world.
We will be ambassadors for God wherever we go.**

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

(in unison)

Alert us now, eternal Spirit, to your presence among us in this place. Together, we confess that we have been busy with so many things that we have often forgotten you. We have made little gods out of buildings and furnishings and programs. Sometimes our pet beliefs and interpretations have been all-consuming as we do battle to correct others and presume to defend you. We have forgotten that your love is stronger than any force on earth. Forgive our mistrust of its power, and draw us back into the company of disciples who are learning and growing in love. Amen.

ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS

(in unison)

Happy are those who daily find their strength in the living God, seeking to walk uprightly. Happy are those who trust in God, who sincerely and truthfully seek to serve where God needs them most. God redeems us, whatever our circumstances, lifting our spirits, even when our bodies are in chains. May we serve boldly as ambassadors for Jesus Christ.

PASSING OF PEACE

Pastor

Pastor: “The Peace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you...”

People: “....and also with you.”

* **HYMN:** Come, Thou Almighty King # 2 (purple)

FIRST READING

Psalm 34:15-22

Liturgist

- 15 The eyes of the Lord are on the righteous,
and his ears are open to their cry.
- 16 The face of the Lord is against evildoers,
to cut off the remembrance of them from the earth.
- 17 When the righteous cry for help, the Lord hears,
and rescues them from all their troubles.
- 18 The Lord is near to the brokenhearted,
and saves the crushed in spirit.
- 19 Many are the afflictions of the righteous,
but the Lord rescues them from them all.
- 20 He keeps all their bones;
not one of them will be broken.
- 21 Evil brings death to the wicked,
and those who hate the righteous will be condemned.
- 22 The Lord redeems the life of his servants;
none of those who take refuge in him will be condemned.

SECOND READING

Ephesians 6:10-20

Pastor

¹⁰ Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his power. ¹¹ Put on the whole armor of God, so that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the

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devil. ¹² For our struggle is not against enemies of blood and flesh, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers of this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places. ¹³ Therefore take up the whole armor of God, so that you may be able to withstand on that evil day, and having done everything, to stand firm. ¹⁴ Stand therefore, and fasten the belt of truth around your waist, and put on the breastplate of righteousness. ¹⁵ As shoes for your feet put on whatever will make you ready to proclaim the gospel of peace. ¹⁶ With all of these, take the shield of faith, with which you will be able to quench all the flaming arrows of the evil one. ¹⁷ Take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.

¹⁸ Pray in the Spirit at all times in every prayer and supplication. To that end keep alert and always persevere in supplication for all the saints. ¹⁹ Pray also for me, so that when I speak, a message may be given to me to make known with boldness the mystery of the gospel, ²⁰ for which I am an ambassador in chains. Pray that I may declare it boldly, as I must speak.

Pastor: The Word of God, to all people of God.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

SERMON

“Fastening the Belt of Truth”

Pastor

MOMENT OF SILENT REFLECTION ~ *Please observe this time of silence.*

* **HYMN:** Standing on the Promises # 838 (purple)

AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

Philippians 2:5-11

(in unison)

⁵ Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus,
⁶ who, though he was in the form of God,
did not regard equality with God
as something to be exploited,
⁷ but emptied himself,
taking the form of a slave,
being born in human likeness.

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And being found in human form,
8 he humbled himself
and became obedient to the point of death—
even death on a cross.
9 Therefore God also highly exalted him
and gave him the name
that is above every name,
10 so that at the name of Jesus
every knee should bend,
in heaven and on earth and under the earth,
11 and every tongue should confess
that Jesus Christ is Lord,
to the glory of God the Father.

SHARING OF JOYS AND PRAYER REQUESTS

Pastor

THE LORD'S PRAYER (using debts/debtors)

(in unison)

OFFERTORY INVITATION

Liturgist

The church is not a private club that we maintain for our own benefit. It is a mission outpost, constantly enlisting us and our resources for the spreading of good news and the increase of God's reign of love. Our offerings are one measure of how seriously we take our call as ambassadors for Christ.

OFFERTORY: Our Hope, Our Life English Folk Tune

* **DOXOLOGY:** Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow # 606

* **OFFERTORY PRAYER**

(in unison)

May our giving add strength to the witness of your church as we humbly seek your truth and lovingly share it. Ready us to proclaim the gospel of peace in our homes, in our places of work and leisure, throughout our community and the world. Keep before your people the awesome mystery of faith. May its power

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overcome the cynicism of our skeptical, self-serving age, uniting us in disciplines that are freeing and discipleship that is amazingly fulfilling. Amen.

*** COMMISSION AND BLESSING**

Pastor: Take a prayerful spirit into your everyday world.
God will listen and respond to your prayers.

**People: We pray for all God's saints engaged in ministry.
All of us are ambassadors for Jesus Christ.**

Pastor: You have good news to share with a needy world.
God will open up to you the mystery of the gospel.

**People: We trust in God to lead and guide us in truth.
Happy is everyone who trusts in God.**

Pastor: Happy are those who look to God for strength.
All who dwell with God will go from strength to strength.

**People: God grants abundant life to humble doorkeepers.
We will do our part to extend God's reign.**

ALL: Amen.

*** HYMN: Go Now In Peace**

Go now in peace, never be afraid. God will go with you each hour of ev'ry day.
Go now in faith, steadfast, strong and true. Know He will guide you in all you do.
Go now in love, and show you believe. Reach out to others so all the world can see.
God will be there watching from above. Go now in peace, in faith, and in love.

POSTLUDE: Christ, the Sure Foundation Birchwood

Today's Worship Team

Ministers: The People and Rev. Amir Tawadrous
Music Director: Dr. Donna Lorenzo
Liturgist: Tom Potts
Vocalists: The APC Singers

APC CALENDAR AND ANNOUNCEMENTS — August 25, 2024

- Please plan to stay after the service today for a brief Congregational Meeting to vote on the officers presented by the Nominating Committee.
- It is an honor and privilege to serve the Lord and your church family by helping with communion. The sign-up sheet is on the bulletin board across from the nursery.
- If you or any families you know are in need of school supplies, please contact the church office or Pastor Amir.

Next week — ***Sunday, September 1***

9:30 AM - Bible Study

10:30 AM - Worship Service

12:00 PM - Deacons' Meeting

PLEASE KEEP IN YOUR PRAYERS

Our friends and family in care facilities and at home, including:

Tom & May Chou, Doreen Connolly, Joan Hambleton,
John Kelley Jr., Betty Knowl, Lois McMillan, Gail Trankle

Devotion of the Week

Let us read ***Ephesians 6:10–20***.

Questions for your meditation:

The author of Ephesians urges his readers to keep alert and persevere in prayer. What spiritual disciplines do our faith community practice together? How could those practices strengthen us for the work of shared ministry?

Which of the pieces of “armor” has God given you a particular gift for (truth, righteousness, peace, faith, etc.)? Are there muscles you need to stretch to put on the “whole armor of God?”

Amherst Presbyterian Church

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(scheduling your visit is recommended)

Church website: <https://amherstpreshurch.com>

Facebook: Amherst Presbyterian Church—closed group; ask to be invited