

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.



Blessed are
those who have not
seen and yet believe.”

John 20:29

2nd Sunday of Easter

April 27, 2025 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: Dona Nobis Pacem Trad.

OPENING AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Liturgist

* INTROIT: Lord, I Lift Your Name on High # 2088 (*Sing the Faith*) - Sing twice

CALL TO WORSHIP

Liturgist: God is our strength and our salvation;
let everything that breathes praise our God!

**People: This is the day that God has made;
we will rejoice and be glad in it!**

Liturgist: Praise God for mighty deeds and extravagant love.
Praise God for loving care and answered prayer.

**People: We will give thanks this day, for God is good.
The steadfast love of God endures forever.**

Liturgist: Grace to you and peace from the one who is
and who was and who is to come.

**People: We are witnesses to the God who acts.
We are here to offer our worship and praise.**

* HYMN: Praise Ye the Lord, the Almighty # 482 (blue)

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

(in unison)

God of our ancestors, how easily we have made you a relic of the past. We act as if you were unreal, or at least irrelevant. By our inattention, we have rejected you and the one whom you sent to teach us. We are ruled by fears more than faith, by hostility more than peace, by a sense of failure more than feelings of accomplishment and victory. Forgive our misuse of the precious days you have

(continued on next page)

entrusted to us. Help us to see the signs of your presence and to witness with joy to our Leader and Savior, Jesus Christ. Amen.

ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS

(in unison)

We are loved. We are forgiven, freed from our sins by the sacrifice of Christ Jesus. New life is ours. Let us recount the deeds of our God and respond to the Holy Spirit with joy and thanksgiving. The steadfast love of God endures forever. Fill the sanctuary with joyous praise!

PASSING OF PEACE

Pastor

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

People: "...and also with you."

GLORIA PATRI: Glory Be to the Father # 579 (blue)

CHILDREN'S SERMON

Pastor

FIRST READING

John 20:19-31

Liturgist

¹⁹ When it was evening on that day, the first day of the week, and the doors of the house where the disciples had met were locked for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you." ²⁰ After he said this, he showed them his hands and his side. Then the disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord. ²¹ Jesus said to them again, "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you." ²² When he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit. ²³ If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained."

²⁴ But Thomas (who was called the Twin), one of the twelve, was not with them when Jesus came. ²⁵ So the other disciples told him, "We have seen the Lord." But he said to them, "Unless I see the mark of the nails in his hands, and put my finger in the mark of the nails and my hand in his side, I will not believe."

²⁶ A week later his disciples were again in the house, and Thomas was with them. Although the doors were shut, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you." ²⁷ Then he said to Thomas, "Put your finger here and

(continued on next page)

see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it in my side. Do not doubt but believe.”²⁸ Thomas answered him, “My Lord and my God!”²⁹ Jesus said to him, “Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have come to believe.”

³⁰ Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book.³¹ But these are written so that you may come to believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that through believing you may have life in his name.

SECOND READING

Acts 5:27-32

Pastor

²⁷ When they had brought them, they had them stand before the council. The high priest questioned them,²⁸ saying, “We gave you strict orders not to teach in this name, yet here you have filled Jerusalem with your teaching and you are determined to bring this man's blood on us.”²⁹ But Peter and the apostles answered, “We must obey God rather than any human authority.³⁰ The God of our ancestors raised up Jesus, whom you had killed by hanging him on a tree.

³¹ God exalted him at his right hand as Leader and Savior that he might give repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sins.³² And we are witnesses to these things, and so is the Holy Spirit whom God has given to those who obey him.”

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

People: **Thanks be to God.**

SERMON

“Ironic Grace and Inverted Power”

Pastor

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

* **HYMN:** We Walk by Faith # 2196 (*Sing the Faith*)

AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

(in unison)

From the Book of Order

We believe there is no condemnation
for those who are in Christ Jesus;

(continued on next page)

For we know that all things work together for good
for those who love God,
who are called according to God's purpose.
We are convinced that neither death, nor life,
nor angels, nor rulers,
nor things present, nor things to come,
nor power, nor height, nor depth,
nor anything else in all creation
will be able to separate us from the love of God
in Christ Jesus our Lord, Amen.

SHARING OF JOYS AND PRAYER REQUESTS

Pastor

THE LORD'S PRAYER (using debts/debtors)

(in unison)

OFFERTORY INVITATION

Liturgist

As the apostles filled Jerusalem with their teaching about Jesus, we are called to bring good news to the world. Our witness is in word and deed, in time and treasure. Give thanks in all things, for God is good. With our gifts we express thanks for God's steadfast love which endures forever.

OFFERTORY: Make Me An Instrument of Your Peace St. Francis of Assisi

* **DOXOLOGY:** Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow # 592 (blue)

* **OFFERTORY PRAYER**

(in unison)

For the breath of life, for eyes to see, for insight to believe, for courage to witness, we give thanks, gracious God. The signs of your presence are everywhere. Your glory and dominion are forever and ever. May this offering witness to your grace and peace. Grant your Spirit as a transforming power among us that inspires and enables our service. Amen.

* COMMISSION AND BLESSING

Pastor: Go out in the strength God provides.
Praise God's mighty deeds by the way you live.

**People: In loving obedience, we will witness to our faith.
We will give thanks each day for God's goodness.**

Pastor: The steadfast love of God goes with us everywhere.
The Holy Spirit empowers our worship and service.

**People: God is our strength and our might.
God answers our prayers with salvation.**

Pastor: Grace to you and peace from the one who is
and who was and who is to come.

**People: This day is a precious gift from God.
We will rejoice and be glad in it.**

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: He Lives Ackley

Today's Worship Team

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

PLEASE KEEP IN YOUR PRAYERS

Our friends and family in care facilities and at home, including:
May Chou, Andy Chou, Joan Hambleton, Betty Knowl, Lois McMillan, Gail Trankle

APC CALENDAR AND ANNOUNCEMENTS — April 27, 2025

- We have two exciting events for you this week! First will be a discussion group at BestCellar Book Bar on Wednesday, April 30th (see your bulletin insert for more details). Also this week, on Friday, May 2nd, join us in Fellowship Hall at 6:00 PM for our Potluck Dinner, featuring an informative presentation by Journey's End Refugee Services.
- The next APC Bible Study will be on Sunday, May 4, at 9:30 AM in Fellowship Hall.
- Our Deacons will meet on Sunday, May 4, at noon in Fellowship Hall.

Next week — ***Sunday, May 4***

9:30 AM - Bible Study

10:30 AM - Worship Service

12:00 PM - Deacons' Meeting

Devotion of the Week

Let us read ***John 20:19-31*** and ***Acts 5:27-32***.

Questions for your meditation:

Where do you find yourself in this story? Are you the frightened rule followers, there for Jesus' first visit, proud of how ready you were to receive peace? Are you Thomas, even more afraid, wondering if the whole thing is nonsense, showing up late and asking loud, hard questions? Are you one who has not seen? One who has wondered and fought to believe, wondering where God is asking for some kind of blessing amidst all the ambiguity? Given where you find yourself, how does this portrayal of Jesus land? How do you experience the blessing of Jesus in your particular role?

What rooms are you locked up hiding in? What if Jesus showed up there?

Jesus has grace—even particular gifts—for those who can't believe without seeing him again. What would happen if you prayed for what you think you need to believe, even if it doesn't feel like you could ever have it? What would happen if you asked big, doubting questions right to God's face? What if God showed up with love anyway?

Amherst Presbyterian Church

151 S. Youngs Road

Williamsville, NY 14221-7023



CONTACT INFORMATION

Office Phone: 716-633-4656 / **Email:** AmherstPC@verizon.net

Office hours: 9:00am—1:00pm, Monday, Wednesday, Friday

Rev. Amir's Cell: 773-961-6977 / **Email:** APCpastor@verizon.net

Rev. Amir's hours: 9:00am—12:30pm, Mon, Wed, Thurs, Fri, and by appointment
(scheduling your visit is recommended)

Church website: www.amherstpreshurch.com

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