

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.



3rd Sunday after Epiphany

January 21, 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: Allemande Bach

OPENING AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Liturgist

* **INTROIT:** Christ Beside Me # 2166 (*Sing the Faith*)

CALL TO WORSHIP

Liturgist: God is calling. Do you not hear?
You are being called by name, for a purpose.

**People: God, you have searched us and know us.
You discern our thoughts from far away.**

Liturgist: Do not confuse the siren calls of the world for God's call.
Do not confuse the values of this world for God's values.

**People: You know, O God, when we sit and when we stand.
You know when we lie down and where we go.**

Liturgist: Your words and your deeds are known to God.
You were known to God before you were born.

**People: Your knowledge of us is more than we can understand.
Your thoughts embrace us amid all you have created.**

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

(in unison)

O God, our lives are an open book to you. Help us to recognize in ourselves what you have seen there. Remove the distortions that keep us from acknowledging our sin. Awaken in us a sorrow over the wrong we have done and the good we have neglected. Create in us an earnest desire to change. O God, we are in touch with the pain we have caused and the pain within us. Because of your love and care, we can face and overcome the sins we here confess.
Amen.

ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS

(in unison)

God has heard your cries and felt your pain. Your struggles to know yourself are prompted by God's love. God leads the community of faith beyond what is lawful to what is holy. We are not our own; we are members of Christ. We are one in the Spirit. By God's grace, we are turning from self-serving ways to self-less ministries. Above all else, we who were bought with a price seek to honor and glorify God.

PASSING OF PEACE

Pastor

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

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

* **HYMN:** I, the Lord of Sea and Sky (Here I Am, Lord) # 69 (purple)

FIRST READING

Psalm 139:1-6

Liturgist

- 1 O Lord, you have searched me and known me.
- 2 You know when I sit down and when I rise up;
you discern my thoughts from far away.
- 3 You search out my path and my lying down,
and are acquainted with all my ways.
- 4 Even before a word is on my tongue,
O Lord, you know it completely.
- 5 You hem me in, behind and before,
and lay your hand upon me.
- 6 Such knowledge is too wonderful for me;
it is so high that I cannot attain it.

SECOND READING

Psalm 139:13-18

Pastor

- 13 For it was you who formed my inward parts;
you knit me together in my mother's womb.
- 14 I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made.
Wonderful are your works;

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- that I know very well.
- ¹⁵ My frame was not hidden from you,
when I was being made in secret,
intricately woven in the depths of the earth.
- ¹⁶ Your eyes beheld my unformed substance.
In your book were written
all the days that were formed for me,
when none of them as yet existed.
- ¹⁷ How weighty to me are your thoughts, O God!
How vast is the sum of them!
- ¹⁸ I try to count them—they are more than the sand;
I come to the end—I am still with you.

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

People: **Thanks be to God.**

SERMON

“Who knows you?”

Pastor

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

* **HYMN:** Lord, Speak to Me That I May Speak # 722 (purple)

AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

(in unison)

From a Brief Statement of Faith (27-51)

We trust in God, whom Jesus called Abba, Father. In sovereign love God created the world good and makes everyone equally in God's image, male and female, of every race and people, to live as one community. But we rebel against God; we hide from our Creator. Ignoring God's commandments, we violate the image of God in others and ourselves, accept lies as truth, exploit neighbor and nature, and threaten death to the planet entrusted to our care. We deserve God's condemnation. Yet God acts with justice and mercy to redeem creation. In everlasting love, the God of Abraham and Sarah chose a covenant people to bless all families of the earth. Hearing their cry, God delivered the children of

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Israel from the house of bondage. Loving us still, God makes us heirs with Christ of the covenant. Like a mother who will not forsake her nursing child, like a father who runs to welcome the prodigal home, God is faithful still.

SHARING OF JOYS AND PRAYER REQUESTS

Pastor

THE LORD'S PRAYER

(in unison)

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.

OFFERTORY INVITATION

Liturgist

We have been bought with a price. God has made a costly investment in humanity. For love's sake, God sent Christ among us. For love's sake, we make the offering of ourselves and our resources the high point of our worship.

OFFERTORY: Great Is Thy Faithfulness Chisholm

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

*** OFFERTORY PRAYER**

(in unison)

We have heard you calling us, loving God, in the cries of your children—cries for bread, for justice, for relief. We have seen you beckoning to us amid the corporate greed and social distortions of our day. We have felt the pain of sisters and brothers caught up in damaging relationships that violate your holy temple within them. We want to help, and we believe your church can be Christ's healing presence for them. Show us the way to be messengers of your gentle judgment and powerful good news. May our offerings be used for the transformation of church and society, individuals and groups. Amen.

*** COMMISSION AND BLESSING**

Pastor: May we leave this house of worship
emboldened by the Spirit.

**People: We are redeemed by God's Grace and
ready to follow Christ's call.**

Pastor: May the grace, hope, peace and love of the God the Creator,
Redeemer and Sustainer be with us now and always.

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: Song of Praise Arr.

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

APC CALENDAR AND ANNOUNCEMENTS — January 21, 2024

- Annual giving statements are available on the table in the Narthex.
- Please plan to attend and be a part of our **Annual Congregational Meeting** on **Sunday, January 28**. Committee chairs should email their annual reports to the church office no later than Friday, January 19.
- Ash Wednesday this year will be on February 14th. APC will host a pancake dinner that evening at 6:00 PM, followed by a service with our sister churches at 7:00 PM. Diners are asked to please bring their own place settings and RSVP to Jim Price at jdprice@buffalo.edu (to ensure we have enough pancakes for everyone). You may also bring your favorite toppings to share.

Next week — **Sunday, January 28**

10:30 AM - Worship Service

11:30 AM - Annual Meeting

Devotion of the Week

Let us read **Psalm 139:1-6, 13-18**.

Questions for your meditation:

Who knows you? Is there someone in your life who knows you better than you know yourself? If so, what does this “knowing” feel like? Is it a comfort? Or a challenge?

Do you take comfort in God’s knowledge of you? What does God know about you that you have a hard time accepting or acknowledging yourself?

Amherst Presbyterian Church

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CONTACT INFORMATION

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(scheduling your visit is recommended)

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

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