

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.



How do you personally discern what “belongs to Caesar” and what “belongs to God?”

21st Sunday after Pentecost

October 22, 2023 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: Hymn of Faith Gluck

OPENING AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Liturgist

* **INTROIT:** He Is Exalted # 2070 (*Sing the Faith*) - sing twice

CALL TO WORSHIP

Liturgist: We are drawn to worship by a Reality unseen.
The One we call God is beyond human description.

People: **God is more than we can ever imagine.**
We sense God's presence as we meditate.

Liturgist: We gather in awe to bring our songs of praise.
The Creator of all things has given us life.

People: **We are amazed by the wonders around us.**
We feel God's presence as we sing together.

Liturgist: We are summoned by One who is just and merciful.
The Ruler of all worlds expects us to respond.

People: **How amazing that God chooses us as messengers.**
We know God is with us as we work for justice.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

(in unison)

Awesome God, how puny is our cleverness before the magnitude of your reality!
How fleeting are our days measured against the far reaches of eternity! Yet we
set our limited knowledge and restricted purposes against your will for us and
presume to direct our own affairs and those of the whole world. O God, we are
trapped in our pretensions. Turn us from our need for proof to extravagant
praise. Turn us inside out so our self-interest becomes concern for all your
neglected children. Suppress in us the sinful ways we find so difficult to manage
on our own, that we may joyously render to you all that is already yours. Amen.

ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS

(in unison)

When we allow God to touch us, our malice is melted down, our fears are defeated, our failures are forgiven. God raises us from death to new life, from helplessness to hope, from arrogant self-seeking to humble service. Enter into the joy of true worship!

PASSING OF PEACE

Pastor

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

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

* **HYMN:** Holy, Holy, Holy! Lord God Almighty! # 1 (purple)

FIRST READING

Exodus 33:12-23

Liturgist

¹² Moses said to the Lord, "See, you have said to me, 'Bring up this people'; but you have not let me know whom you will send with me. Yet you have said, 'I know you by name, and you have also found favor in my sight.'¹³ Now if I have found favor in your sight, show me your ways, so that I may know you and find favor in your sight. Consider too that this nation is your people."¹⁴ He said, "My presence will go with you, and I will give you rest."¹⁵ And he said to him, "If your presence will not go, do not carry us up from here."¹⁶ For how shall it be known that I have found favor in your sight, I and your people, unless you go with us? In this way, we shall be distinct, I and your people, from every people on the face of the earth."

¹⁷ The Lord said to Moses, "I will do the very thing that you have asked; for you have found favor in my sight, and I know you by name."¹⁸ Moses said, "Show me your glory, I pray."¹⁹ And he said, "I will make all my goodness pass before you, and will proclaim before you the name, 'The Lord'; and I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will show mercy on whom I will show mercy.

²⁰ But," he said, "you cannot see my face; for no one shall see me and live."

²¹ And the Lord continued, "See, there is a place by me where you shall stand on the rock;²² and while my glory passes by I will put you in a cleft of the rock, and I will cover you with my hand until I have passed by;²³ then I will take away my hand, and you shall see my back; but my face shall not be seen."

SECOND READING

Matthew 22:15-22

Pastor

¹⁵ Then the Pharisees went and plotted to entrap him in what he said. ¹⁶ So they sent their disciples to him, along with the Herodians, saying, "Teacher, we know that you are sincere, and teach the way of God in accordance with truth, and show deference to no one; for you do not regard people with partiality. ¹⁷ Tell us, then, what you think. Is it lawful to pay taxes to the emperor, or not?" ¹⁸ But Jesus, aware of their malice, said, "Why are you putting me to the test, you hypocrites? ¹⁹ Show me the coin used for the tax." And they brought him a denarius. ²⁰ Then he said to them, "Whose head is this, and whose title?" ²¹ They answered, "The emperor's." Then he said to them, "Give therefore to the emperor the things that are the emperor's, and to God the things that are God's." ²² When they heard this, they were amazed; and they left him and went away.

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

People: **Thanks be to God.**

SERMON

"Who/What is the alternative?"

Pastor

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

* **HYMN:** Jesus Shall Reign Where're the Sun # 265 (purple)

AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

(in unison)

(Responsive Reading from A Brief Statement of Faith)

Liturgist: In life and death we belong to God.

People: **Through the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit, we trust in the one triune God, the Holy One of Israel, whom alone we worship and serve.**

Liturgist: We trust in God, whom Jesus called Abba, Father.

People: **In sovereign love God created the world good, acts with justice and mercy to redeem creation, and makes us heirs with Christ of the covenant.**

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Liturgist: We trust in Jesus Christ, fully human, fully God.

People: **Jesus proclaimed the reign of God, was crucified, and raised from the dead, delivering us from death to life eternal.**

Liturgist: We trust in God the Holy Spirit, everywhere the giver and renewer of life.

People: **The Spirit justifies us by grace through faith, sets us free to accept ourselves and to love God and neighbor, and binds us together with all believers in the one body of Christ, the church.**

ALL: **In gratitude to God, empowered by the Spirit, we strive to serve Christ in our daily tasks and to live holy and joyful lives, even as we watch for God's new heaven and new earth, praying, "Come, Lord Jesus!"**

SHARING OF JOYS AND PRAYER REQUESTS

Pastor

THE LORD'S PRAYER (using debts/debtors)

(in unison)

OFFERTORY INVITATION

Liturgist

We are partners with one another in this land and beyond, seeking to share the benefits of God's creation with all God's children. We support government efforts to lessen the inequities among us, but through the church we address spiritual problems that feed the prejudices and false pride that result in injustice within God's world. We join our offerings with our personal efforts to do God's will.

OFFERTORY: Be Still My Soul Sibelius

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

* **OFFERTORY PRAYER**

(in unison)

O God, we sense that you are calling us to manage well all the things that belong to you. The empires of this world have no claim on the resources you have provided except as they are used for the common good. The offerings we re-

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ceive as a church are not for our private benefit or to buy services for ourselves. Thus we here dedicate the gifts you have provided in our money and our abilities and our time to extend a helping hand and joyous welcome to every people on the face of the earth. May our efforts find favor with you. Amen.

*** COMMISSION AND BLESSING**

Pastor: We have gathered in community to worship God.
Now our service of praise continues in the world.

**People: We have been equipped with the gospel message.
God empowers our outreach wherever we go.**

Pastor: God has forgiven and blessed us in this gathering.
Now we scatter to forgive and bless others.

**People: Here, the Holy Spirit has deepened our convictions.
Now God calls to let our faith be known in other places.**

Pastor: We serve a true and living God, everywhere present.
We are blessed to be God's own people.

**People: We will spend ourselves this week for God's children.
Then we will return to strengthen one another.**

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: Rondeau in F Lasky

Today's Worship Team

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

APC CALENDAR AND ANNOUNCEMENTS — October 22, 2023

- Today's flowers are from Lois Potts: "Happy Birthday Tom! Love, Mom"
- Pastor Amir will be out of the office October 23 - November 12 as he and Martha prepare for the arrival of their second child. Please contact the church office for pastoral care issues during this time.
- Quarterly giving statements for Jul.-Sept. are available on the table in the Narthex.
- Beginning on Sunday, November 26, we will resume offering traditional communion (communion kits will continue to be available in the Narthex). Please prayerfully consider the opportunity to participate in the setup, serving, and cleanup of the communion elements. A sign-up sheet is available on the Fellowship bulletin board.
- The APC Basket Raffle is just 3 weeks away, on Saturday, November 11. Basket items and completed baskets can be placed up in the sanctuary balcony.

Next week — ***Sunday, October 29*** — Worship Service at 10:30 AM

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 ***Matthew 22:15-22***.

Questions for your meditation:

How do you personally discern what "belongs to Caesar" and what "belongs to God?"

What "trick questions" pop up often in the life of our congregation? How have you noticed such questions affecting the fabric of our community?

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