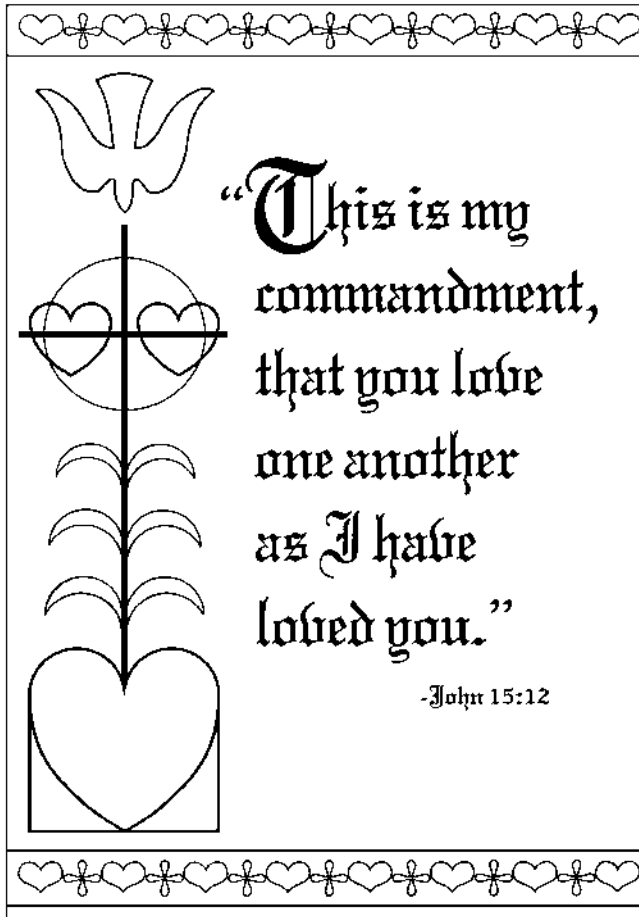


Welcome to *Amherst Presbyterian Church*. We are one of the visible churches for the invisible church that shall be gathered into one, under Christ, the head thereof; and is the spouse, the body, the fullness of Christ that fills all in all.

You are so welcome to our worship every Sunday.



6th Sunday of Easter

May 5, 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: I Will Lift Up Mine Eyes Schreiner

OPENING AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Liturgist

*** INTROIT:** Come Sing, O Church, in Joy! # 305 (purple) - verses 1 and 4

CALL TO WORSHIP

Liturgist: Come all who are born of God;
Abide in the love revealed in Jesus Christ.

People: **We come in response to the One who calls us friends.**
 We are here in obedience to Christ's command.

Liturgist: Remember God's steadfast love and faithfulness.
Let hands and voices echo God's praise.

People: **Let our lips pour out a joyful noise.**
 Let our hands reflect a serving Savior.

Liturgist: Sing a new song to God who does marvelous things.
Obey God's commandments which are not burdensome.

People: **We clap our hands and sing for joy.**
 We live by faith that conquers the world.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

(in unison)

Ever-present God, we confess to you our unloving thoughts and deeds. We live by standards that we bend and break in our own favor, while ignoring the commandments you have given. We find it hard to love everyone, for so many act in unloving ways. It is easier to treat people as things than to listen for their needs. We withhold ourselves rather than offer our lives, even for our friends. We hoard the gifts you entrust to us instead of letting them bear fruit for you. Cleanse us from these destructive ways, freeing us to love as you have loved us, we pray in Jesus' name. Amen.

ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS

(in unison)

Even now, God is giving us victory over the limitations we impose on ourselves. When we trust God's love, we can emerge from the shell of self-protection to celebrate the joy of friendship in Christ. We can dare to show love that is not dependent on others' responses. We can serve without the need for recognition. Praise God!

PASSING OF PEACE

Pastor

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

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

* **HYMN:** Will You Come and Follow Me (The Summons) # 726 (purple)

FIRST READING

Psalm 101

Liturgist

(please turn to page 552 of the Old Testament in your pew Bible)

APC SINGERS:

We Will Walk With the Lord

Swaziland Melody

SECOND READING

John 15:9-17

Pastor

⁹ As the Father has loved me, so I have loved you; abide in my love. ¹⁰ If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in his love. ¹¹ I have said these things to you so that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be complete.

¹² "This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you.

¹³ No one has greater love than this, to lay down one's life for one's friends.

¹⁴ You are my friends if you do what I command you. ¹⁵ I do not call you servants any longer, because the servant does not know what the master is doing; but I have called you friends, because I have made known to you everything that I have heard from my Father. ¹⁶ You did not choose me but I chose you. And I appointed you to go and bear fruit, fruit that will last, so that the Father will

(continued on next page)

give you whatever you ask him in my name. ¹⁷ I am giving you these commands so that you may love one another.

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

People: **Thanks be to God.**

SERMON **“*the* Command”** *Pastor*

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

* **HYMN:** Blessed Be the Tie That Binds # 306 (purple)

AFFIRMATION OF FAITH *(in unison)*

From the Belhar Confession

Liturgist: We believe in the triune God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, who gathers, protects and cares for the church through Word and Spirit. This, God has done since the beginning of the world and will do to the end.

People: **We believe that Christ’s work of reconciliation is made manifest in the Church, as the community of believers who have been reconciled with God and with one another; that unity is, therefore, both a gift and an obligation for the Church of Jesus Christ.**

Liturgist: We believe that this unity of the people of God must be manifested and be active in a variety of ways: in that we love one another, and that we experience, practice and pursue community with one another.

ALL: **We believe that the variety of spiritual gifts, opportunities, backgrounds, convictions, as well as the various languages and cultures, are by virtue of the reconciliation in Christ, opportunities for mutual service and enrichment within the one visible people of God. Jesus is Lord. Amen.**

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 are people whom God has blessed with many gifts. God has done marvelous things for us. How will we, who have been baptized by water and the Spirit, respond to God's generosity?

OFFERTORY: Come Live in the Light! Haas

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

* OFFERTORY PRAYER

(in unison)

Generous and loving God, we dedicate to your service the work of our hands, the earnings of our time and efforts, and our vision for the future. May faith sustain us as we offer our best to you in praise and thanksgiving and joyous dedication. We seek to work for the reign of your truth and extension of the friendship granted to us in Jesus Christ. Let our offering bear fruit in the lives of all who are helped by it. Amen.

* COMMISSION AND BLESSING

Pastor: Friends of Christ, carry God's love into the world.
You have been chosen and appointed to bear fruit.

People: **May the Holy Spirit inspire our words.**
May God's love in Christ empower our deeds.

Pastor: Sing of the victory of self-giving friendship.
Witness to the saving power of love.

(continued on next page)

People: **In Christ, we are no longer servants but friends.
 We are learning to love as we have been loved.**

Pastor: God judges the world with righteousness.
 Our efforts are accepted with steadfast faithfulness.

People: **We clap our hands with appreciation and joy.
 The law of love is reigning in our hearts.**

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: I Will Sing of the Mercies of the Lord Fillmore

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 — May 5, 2024

- The Deacons will meet in Fellowship Hall today at noon.
- The next Session meeting will be on Monday, May 13 at 7:00 PM, via Zoom.
- Please be sure to pick up your quarterly giving statement from the Narthex if you haven't done so already.
- We welcome all college and high school students who would like to help out at our church and earn community service hours. Contact the church office to learn what opportunities we have and to let us know of your availability, skills, and interests.
- Registration is now open for Camp Duffield's summer camps. Details are available on the Courtyard bulletin board, our newsletter and their website (campduffield.net).
- Special envelopes and flyers are available in the Narthex until May 19th for the PCUSA's Pentecost Special Offering. Your gifts nurture the faith of those who are the church to come by supporting programs for children, youth, and young adults.

Next week — **Sunday, May 12** — Worship Service at 10:30 AM

Devotion of the Week

Let us read **John 15:9-17**.

Questions for your meditation:

How do you “find your home” in Christ’s love? What “dwelling time” can you take this week?

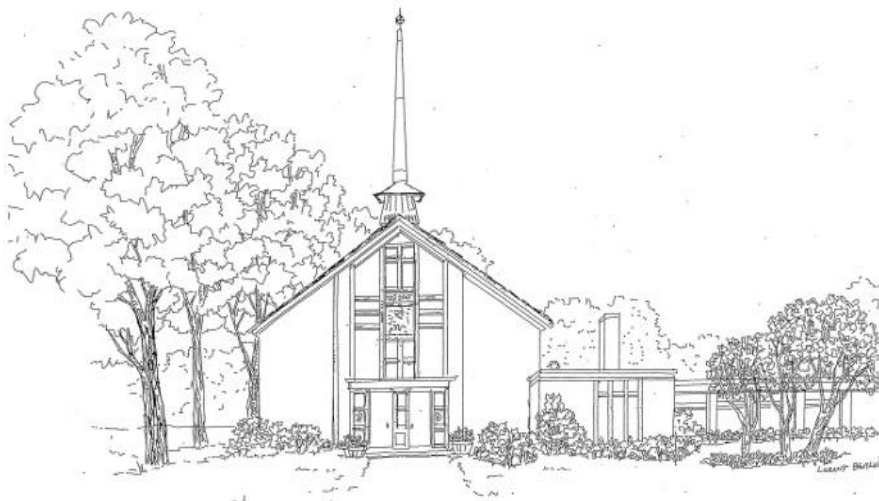
Most congregations describe themselves as loving. What specific examples can you lift up of members of our APC congregation following Christ’s commandment to love?

If the greatest love is “to lay down one’s life for one’s friends” (John 15:13), how do you see that happening in your church? How are love and generosity intertwined?

Amherst Presbyterian Church

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CONTACT INFORMATION

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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: <https://amherstpreshurch.com>

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