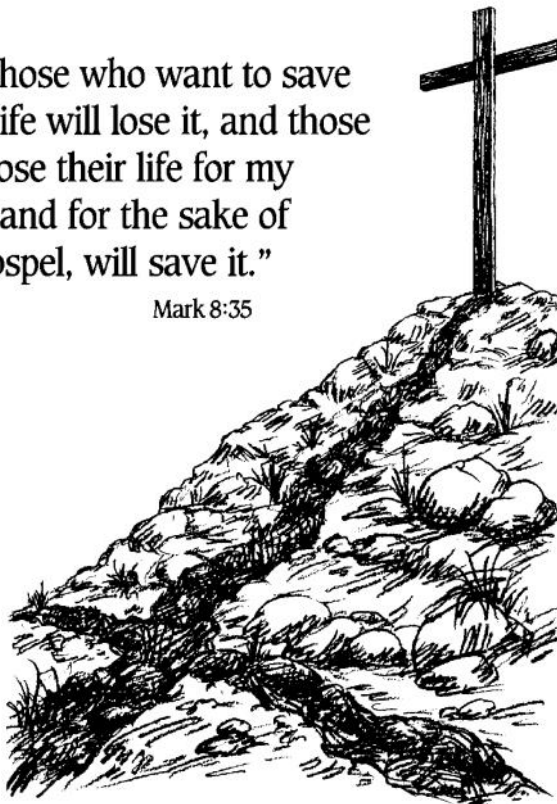


Welcome to *Amherst Presbyterian Church*. We are one of the visible churches for the invisible church that shall be gathered into one, under Christ, the head thereof; and is the spouse, the body, the fullness of Christ that fills all in all.

You are so welcome to our worship every Sunday.

“For those who want to save their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake, and for the sake of the gospel, will save it.”

Mark 8:35



2nd Sunday in Lent

February 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: What A Friend We Have in Jesus Scriven *Linda Stotsky, Flute*

OPENING AND ANNOUNCEMENTS *Liturgist*

* **INTROIT:** I Love You Lord # 2068 (*Sing the Faith*) - sing twice

CALL TO WORSHIP

Liturgist: We are invited to walk with God.

We are welcomed by God as people of the covenant.

People: **How awesome to stand in the presence of our Creator!**
 We bring our praise to glorify God.

Liturgist: God calls us by name and gives us new names.

We are summoned to faithfulness and fruitfulness.

People: **God not only speaks to us but also listens.**
 God hears our cries and meets our need.

Liturgist: Let the ends of the earth remember and turn to God.

Let the families of all nations worship the Creator.

People: **We will pay our vows to the One who calls us.**
 We praise the God of all nations and all peoples.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION *(in unison)*

God of our ancestors, we come to you, confessing that we have set our minds on human things. We have sought to gain the world—so many things to buy, so many things to do. Yet we are not satisfied. Life's meaning eludes us. Your ways seem out of date; your promises appear as the hopes and dreams of a past generation. But in our hearts we sense an eternal design which is for all generations, a way of life more satisfying than we have allowed ourselves to explore. O God, we confess our need for you.

ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS

(in unison)

God's face is not hidden from those who truly seek. God does not withhold love from us when we go our own way. When we open our eyes to see God's works, when we open our ears to hear God's word, when all our senses are alert to God's leading, we will realize how we have been blessed by an unseen hand, forgiven and restored to wholeness. God offers us the opportunity to live as ones in tune with the universe, filled with hope, upheld in love, dwelling in covenant.

PASSING OF PEACE

Pastor

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

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

* HYMN: The Summons # 2130 (*Sing the Faith*)

FIRST READING

Romans 4:13-25

Liturgist

¹³ For the promise that he would inherit the world did not come to Abraham or to his descendants through the law but through the righteousness of faith. ¹⁴ If it is the adherents of the law who are to be the heirs, faith is null and the promise is void. ¹⁵ For the law brings wrath; but where there is no law, neither is there violation.

¹⁶ For this reason it depends on faith, in order that the promise may rest on grace and be guaranteed to all his descendants, not only to the adherents of the law but also to those who share the faith of Abraham (for he is the father of all of us, ¹⁷ as it is written, "I have made you the father of many nations")—in the presence of the God in whom he believed, who gives life to the dead and calls into existence the things that do not exist. ¹⁸ Hoping against hope, he believed that he would become "the father of many nations," according to what was said, "So numerous shall your descendants be." ¹⁹ He did not weaken in faith when he considered his own body, which was already as good as dead (for he was about a hundred years old), or when he considered the barrenness of Sarah's womb.

²⁰ No distrust made him waver concerning the promise of God, but he grew strong in his faith as he gave glory to God, ²¹ being fully convinced that God was able to do what he had promised. ²² Therefore his faith "was reckoned to him as

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righteousness.”²³ Now the words, “it was reckoned to him,” were written not for his sake alone,²⁴ but for ours also. It will be reckoned to us who believe in him who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead,²⁵ who was handed over to death for our trespasses and was raised for our justification.

SECOND READING

Mark 8:31-38

Pastor

³¹ Then he began to teach them that the Son of Man must undergo great suffering, and be rejected by the elders, the chief priests, and the scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again. ³² He said all this quite openly. And Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him. ³³ But turning and looking at his disciples, he rebuked Peter and said, “Get behind me, Satan! For you are setting your mind not on divine things but on human things.”

³⁴ He called the crowd with his disciples, and said to them, “If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. ³⁵ For those who want to save their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake, and for the sake of the gospel, will save it. ³⁶ For what will it profit them to gain the whole world and forfeit their life? ³⁷ Indeed, what can they give in return for their life? ³⁸ Those who are ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of them the Son of Man will also be ashamed when he comes in the glory of his Father with the holy angels.”

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

People: **Thanks be to God.**

SERMON

“Is faith something to market?”

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 a Brief Statement of Faith (1-26)

In life and in death we belong to God. 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.

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We trust in Jesus Christ, fully human, fully God. Jesus proclaimed the reign of God: preaching good news to the poor and release to the captives, teaching by word and deed and blessing the children, healing the sick and binding up the brokenhearted, eating with outcasts, forgiving sinners, and calling all to repent and believe the gospel. Unjustly condemned for blasphemy and sedition, Jesus was crucified, suffering the depths of human pain and giving his life for the sins of the world. God raised this Jesus from the dead, vindicating his sinless life, breaking the power of sin and evil, delivering us from death to life eternal.

SHARING OF JOYS AND PRAYER REQUESTS

Pastor

THE LORD'S PRAYER (using debts/debtors)

(in unison)

OFFERTORY INVITATION

Liturgist

Those who want to save their life will lose it, and those who lose themselves for Christ's sake and for the gospel will be saved. We are invited to give all we have and all we are to the realization of God's will among us. A portion of that we bring today as our offering.

OFFERTORY: Where No One Stands Alone Lister

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

* **OFFERTORY PRAYER** *(in unison)*

Glorious God, we dedicate these gifts as an expression of our faith. You alone know how much we share and how much we withhold. You know the extent of our trust and the depth of our commitment. May this act of giving draw us closer to you and extend a blessing to all who are helped through our sharing.
Amen.

* **COMMISSION AND BLESSING**

Pastor: Dare this week to follow where Jesus leads.

Dare to love the unlovable and care about others.

People: **We want to follow in the footsteps of Christ.**
We want the poor to eat and be satisfied.

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Pastor: Do not be ashamed to challenge the values of our culture.
Dare to question all that denies God's reign.

**People: We want to live with faith, hope, and love.
We want to extend God's rule to all people.**

Pastor: The promises of God are for you and for all.
God will make you exceedingly fruitful.

**People: We will trust the promises of God.
We go out to live as covenant people.**

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: Sing to the King Foote *Linda Stotsky*

Today's Worship Team

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

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 — February 25, 2024

- Please be sure to give your Easter Plant orders to Lois Potts by Sunday, March 17. There are many flowers to choose from this year; see the enclosed order/dedication form or Lois for details.
- “Lenten Challenge” - everyone is invited to consider who you would like to bring as a guest to our Easter Sunday service on March 31st. If you would like a paper or electronic letter of invitation from the church to provide to your guest, let the office know.
- You are cordially invited to Clarence Presbyterian Church on Sunday, March 3 at 4:00 PM as the choir of Westminster PC leads a special Evensong worship service. Evensong and Compline are services of evening worship that share roots in medieval traditions nearly a thousand years old. There will be a free-will offering to benefit Buffalo String Works, a non-profit whose mission is to ignite personal and community leadership through accessible, youth-centered music education.

Next week — ***Sunday, March 3***

9:30 AM - Bible Study

10:30 AM - Worship Service

12:00 PM - Deacons' Meeting

Devotion of the Week

Let us read ***Mark 8:31-38***.

Questions for your meditation:

When you hear the word “evangelism” or “spreading the gospel” what thoughts, ideas, feelings or images come to mind?

In what ways do you publicly share your Christian faith? In what situations do you hesitate to share your Christian faith?

How can our Church take up our cross and tell Jesus' story in our community, or among the general public?

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