

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.



***Fourth Sunday after Epiphany***

**January 29, 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:** Andante Sostenuto by Rheinberger

**OPENING AND ANNOUNCEMENTS**

*Liturgist*

**\* INTROIT:** Open Our Eyes # 2086 (*Sing the Faith*) (sing twice)

**CALL TO WORSHIP**

Liturgist: Jesus taught: Blessed are the poor in spirit.  
He said that the realm of God is theirs.

**People: We read that those who mourn are blessed.**  
**Jesus said they will be comforted.**

Liturgist: The meek will inherit the earth.  
The merciful will obtain mercy.

**People: All who hunger and thirst for righteousness are blessed;**  
**Jesus said they will be filled.**

Liturgist: Blessed are the pure in heart and the peacemakers;  
They are God's children and will see God.

**People: Those persecuted and falsely accused are blessed.**  
**Even in the face of evil, we will rejoice.**

**PRAYER OF CONFESSION**

*(in unison)*

O God, we confess that we have accepted the world's wisdom as our guide.  
We have been impressed by the power of weapons and the importance of high positions. We measure worth by the number of possessions we command. We have been unkind in our speech and uncaring in our deeds. We have doubted the power of the cross to save. Turn us around, holy God, that we might be blessed. Amen.

## ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS

*(in unison)*

God destroys the wisdom of those who think themselves wise. God chooses the weak and foolish to shame those who think themselves strong and all-knowing. The God who forgives calls us to a life of kindness in word and deed, mercy toward both friend and foe, and justice in all our dealings. Thank God for setting before us standards that surpass our highest aspirations, along with the possibility for joyous fulfillment.

## PASSING OF PEACE

*Pastor*

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

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

\* HYMN: Be Thou My Vision # 339

## FIRST READING

Matthew 5:1-12

*Liturgist*

<sup>1</sup> When Jesus saw the crowds, he went up the mountain; and after he sat down, his disciples came to him. <sup>2</sup> Then he began to speak, and taught them, saying:

<sup>3</sup> "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

<sup>4</sup> "Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.

<sup>5</sup> "Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth.

<sup>6</sup> "Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.

<sup>7</sup> "Blessed are the merciful, for they will receive mercy.

<sup>8</sup> "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.

<sup>9</sup> "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.

<sup>10</sup> "Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

<sup>11</sup> "Blessed are you when people revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. <sup>12</sup> Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

## SECOND READING

1 Corinthians 1:18-31

*Pastor*

<sup>18</sup> For the message about the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. <sup>19</sup> For it is written,

“I will destroy the wisdom of the wise,  
and the discernment of the discerning I will thwart.”

<sup>20</sup> Where is the one who is wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the debater of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world? <sup>21</sup> For since, in the wisdom of God, the world did not know God through wisdom, God decided, through the foolishness of our proclamation, to save those who believe. <sup>22</sup> For Jews demand signs and Greeks desire wisdom, <sup>23</sup> but we proclaim Christ crucified, a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles, <sup>24</sup> but to those who are the called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. <sup>25</sup> For God's foolishness is wiser than human wisdom, and God's weakness is stronger than human strength.

<sup>26</sup> Consider your own call, brothers and sisters: not many of you were wise by human standards, not many were powerful, not many were of noble birth. <sup>27</sup> But God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise; God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong; <sup>28</sup> God chose what is low and despised in the world, things that are not, to reduce to nothing things that are, <sup>29</sup> so that no one might boast in the presence of God. <sup>30</sup> He is the source of your life in Christ Jesus, who became for us wisdom from God, and righteousness and sanctification and redemption, <sup>31</sup> in order that, as it is written, “Let the one who boasts, boast in the Lord.”

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

People: **Thanks be to God.**

## SERMON

**“The Wisdom of the World”**

*Pastor*

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

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

## STATEMENT OF FAITH

*From a Declaration of Faith*

*(in unison)*

God created human beings with a need for community and with freedom to enter into it by responding to their Maker with grateful obedience and to one another with love and helpfulness. We believe that we have been created to relate to God and each other in freedom and responsibility. We may misuse our freedom and deny our responsibility by trying to live without God and other people or against God and other people. Yet we are still bound to them for our life and well-being, and intended for free and responsible fellowship with them. Since every human being is made for communion with God and others, we must treat no one with contempt. We are to respect and love all other people and ourselves as well.

## SHARING OF JOYS AND PRAYER REQUESTS

*Pastor*

## THE LORD'S PRAYER

*(using debts/debtors)*

*(in unison)*

## OFFERTORY INVITATION

*Liturgist*

God is neither pleased with burnt offerings nor impressed by the size of our gifts. God wants our full commitment and devotion, of which our giving in these moments is only a symbol. God calls us to lives of mercy and peacemaking, for which our offering can make a beginning.

## OFFERTORY:

Just a Closer Walk With Thee *(Traditional African-American)*

## \* DOXOLOGY:

Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow # 592

## \* OFFERTORY PRAYER

*(in unison)*

We devote ourselves and these tokens of our thankfulness toward the realization of your reign among us, holy God. We pray for purity of heart as we hunger and thirst for righteousness and as we seek to be peacemakers. We rejoice in this opportunity to share in the extension of your realm. Bless us and our offering, we pray, in Jesus' name. Amen.

## **\* COMMISSION AND BLESSING**

Pastor: Walk blamelessly before God and do what is right.  
Speak the truth to all, from your heart.

**People: We will honor and fear God each day.  
May our words and deeds resist all evil.**

Pastor: Consider your call and live righteously.  
Know that God chooses you for a blessing.

**People: We delight in seeking to do God's will.  
We are awed that God appoints and blesses us.**

Pastor: Rejoice and be glad, for God offers rich rewards.  
From God you receive wisdom and true power.

**People: We are amazed at the responsibility God gives us.  
We rejoice in the blessings God promises.**

**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: Simple Gifts (*Shaker Folk Song*)**

### Today's Worship Team

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

## **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 29, 2023

- Our **Annual Congregational Meeting** will be **today** after the worship service. Please be a part of this important meeting to review the past year and plan for the new year.
- Annual Giving Statements for 2022 are on the table in the Narthex. Any remaining after today will be mailed.
- APC's Bible Study group will meet at 9:30 AM on Sunday, February 5.
- Note from Donna: This is an invitation to help us worship the Lord in our services. Here is an excellent opportunity for anyone regardless of talent, knowledge, ability, experience, or age. **All it takes is a willing heart.** There will be a meeting in the sanctuary after church on **Sunday, February 5**. Anyone who would like to sing or play an instrument is welcome—you don't need to read music and you won't need to sing or play alone. Please think about this. **You can make a difference.**
- The Deacons will meet on Sunday, February 5 at noon.
- The next APC Staff Meeting will be on Monday, February 6 at 10:00 AM at church.
- All Elders and Deacons are asked to please mark their calendars for Sunday, February 19. There will be a Joint Mission Meeting on that day after worship.

Next week — ***Sunday, February 5***

9:30 AM - Bible Study

10:30 AM - Worship Service

11:30 AM - Music In Worship Meeting

12:00 PM - Deacons' Meeting

### ***Devotion of the Week***

Let us read ***1 Corinthians 1:18-31*** and ***Matthew 5:1-12***.

#### **Questions for your meditation:**

What are some examples of “the wisdom of the world” that seem unwise when examined more closely? Who are some people who embody what it is to be blessed, according to the beatitudes?

# **Amherst Presbyterian Church**

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## **CONTACT INFORMATION**

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**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:** <https://amherstpreshurch.com>

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