

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.

*“The Gospel takes away our right forever, to discriminate between the deserving and the undeserving...”*

*~Dorothy Day*

**15<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Pentecost**

**September 5, 2021 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: Aria *H. Purcell*

**OPENING AND ANNOUNCEMENTS**

*Liturgist*

INTROIT: Jesus, Thou Joy of Loving Hearts # 510, verses 1 & 2

**CALL TO WORSHIP**

Liturgist: Listen! God is welcoming us to this time of worship.  
Young and old, rich and poor, all are welcomed.

**People: This is a place where all belong.  
This is a time when all are accountable to God.**

Liturgist: The Maker of all seeks our common good.  
The God of Mercy calls on us to be merciful.

**People: We are not judges over our sisters and brothers.  
We are called to love our neighbors as ourselves.**

Liturgist: Come to sing praises and put your trust in God.  
Come to prepare yourself to serve in Christ's name.

**People: We bring all our needs to God, our hope.  
We want to share faith and hope with others.**

**PRAYER OF CONFESSION**

*(in unison)*

O God, we confess that our good intentions have gone astray. We favor the people who are like us and honor those we deem to be important. We dishonor the poor, write off those with whom we disagree, excuse our self-serving behavior, and sow injustice on every hand. It is so much easier to give advice than to do good. We would rather point fingers at others who are unfair than to give up our own advantages. O God, we plead for your forgiveness and for a depth of faith that will make a difference in us and in our world. Amen.

## **ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS**

*(in unison)*

When we show mercy, we are able to accept God's mercy, which triumphs over judgment. God can turn our waywardness upside down and set us on the path of true community with those whom we have disdained or ignored. God opens our minds and hearts to hear and understand those who need our help. God empowers our response.

## **PASSING OF PEACE**

*Pastor*

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

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

**HYMN:** When I Survey the Wondrous Cross # 101

## **FIRST READING**

Mark 7:24-30

*Liturgist*

<sup>24</sup> From there he set out and went away to the region of Tyre. He entered a house and did not want anyone to know he was there. Yet he could not escape notice, <sup>25</sup> but a woman whose little daughter had an unclean spirit immediately heard about him, and she came and bowed down at his feet. <sup>26</sup> Now the woman was a Gentile, of Syrophenician origin. She begged him to cast the demon out of her daughter. <sup>27</sup> He said to her, "Let the children be fed first, for it is not fair to take the children's food and throw it to the dogs." <sup>28</sup> But she answered him, "Sir, even the dogs under the table eat the children's crumbs." <sup>29</sup> Then he said to her, "For saying that, you may go—the demon has left your daughter." <sup>30</sup> So she went home, found the child lying on the bed, and the demon gone.

## **SECOND READING**

Mark 7:31-37

*Pastor*

<sup>31</sup> Then he returned from the region of Tyre, and went by way of Sidon towards the Sea of Galilee, in the region of the Decapolis. <sup>32</sup> They brought to him a deaf man who had an impediment in his speech; and they begged him to lay his hand on him. <sup>33</sup> He took him aside in private, away from the crowd, and put his fingers into his ears, and he spat and touched his tongue. <sup>34</sup> Then looking up to heaven, he sighed and said to him, "Ephphatha," that is, "Be opened." <sup>35</sup> And

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immediately his ears were opened, his tongue was released, and he spoke plainly. <sup>36</sup> Then Jesus ordered them to tell no one; but the more he ordered them, the more zealously they proclaimed it. <sup>37</sup> They were astounded beyond measure, saying, "He has done everything well; he even makes the deaf to hear and the mute to speak."

Pastor: The Word of God, to all people of God.  
People: **Thanks be to God.**

## THE SERMON

*Pastor*

### **"The Deserving and Undeserving Miracle"**

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

## INVITATION TO THE LORD'S TABLE

*Follow Insert*

## STATEMENT OF FAITH

*(in unison)*

The Westminster Confession of Faith - The Larger Catechism (7.172, 7.173)

Liturgist: What is the visible church?

People: **The visible church is a society made up of all such as in all ages and places of the world do profess the true religion, and of their children.**

Liturgist: What are the special privileges of the visible church?

People: **The visible church hath the privilege of being under God's special care and government; of being protected and preserved in all ages, notwithstanding the opposition of all enemies; and of enjoying the communion of saints, the ordinary means of salvation, and offers of grace by Christ, to all members of it, in the ministry of the gospel, testifying that whosoever believes in him shall be saved, and excluding none that will come unto him.**

## 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.

**HYMN:** We Are God's People # 2220 (*Sing the Faith*)

## OFFERTORY INVITATION

*Liturgist*

Hear again the proverb: "Those who are generous are blessed, for they share their bread with the poor." What a joy we can know when our thankfulness exceeds our acquisitiveness, and our concern for others outweighs our greed! We are invited to share what we have received.

**OFFERTORY SOLO:** Jesus is Lord of All *W. Gaither*

**DOXOLOGY:** Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow # 592

## OFFERTORY PRAYER

*(in unison)*

We give because you have been generous to us, gracious God. We give because we need to give in order to realize your image within us. We give to feed the hungers of body and soul that are all around us and deep within. May the ministries of this church meet the needs of our members, our community, and our world. Help us to love our neighbors as ourselves. Amen.

## \* COMMISSION AND BLESSING

**Pastor:** We are commissioned as carriers of love.

The attention we give to others is contagious.

**People:** **We seek to honor all people by listening to them.**  
**We want to provide practical help to those in need.**

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Pastor: We are sent out to do good and to be merciful.  
Our trust is in God, who equips us to serve.

**People: We seek to minister impartially.  
Both friends and strangers are our concern.**

Pastor: Be strong, fear not, for God will save.  
Those who trust God will realize God's blessing.

**People: God has blessed us with a good name.  
We are heirs of God's dominion forever.**

**ALL: Amen.**

**POSTLUDE:** Standing on the Promises / Victory in Jesus Medley

Today's Worship Team

Ministers:	The People and Rev. Amir Tawadrous
Music Director:	Nancy Lorenzo-Deleys
Liturgist:	Tom Potts
Usher:	Roberta Jones

**Devotion of the Week**

Please re-read **Mark 7:24-37**.

**Questions for your meditation:**

Who are you reluctant to help because they don't fit into your category of "deserving"?

## **APC CALENDAR AND ANNOUNCEMENTS — September 5, 2021**

- Our current safety guidelines can be found on the back of your bulletin.
- Did you see the survey email we sent on 9/1? We are offering a choice of books, formats, and days/times for the **fall study course**. If you do not have email, please call the church during office hours to complete your survey by phone.
- The church office will be closed on **Monday, September 6**, in observance of the **Labor Day** holiday. Pastor Amir will be available by cell phone for pastoral care emergencies.
- On **Sunday, September 12** (next week), there will be a brief **Congregational Meeting** immediately following worship, so the Nominating Committee can present the new slate of officers.
- The **Deacons** will hold their first meeting of the fall on **Sunday, September 12** at **noon**, both in person and via Zoom.
- On **Monday, September 13**, the **Session** will hold their first meeting of the fall via Zoom at **7 PM**.

Next week — ***Sunday, September 12 at 10:30 AM***

In-Person and Online Worship Service, followed by a Congregational Meeting

### **PLEASE KEEP IN YOUR PRAYERS**

Our friends and family in care facilities and at home, including:  
Doreen Connolly, Joan Hambleton, John Kelley Jr., Betty Knowle,  
Lois McMillan, Mel Palmer, Gail Trankle

Please observe the following safety guidelines for in-person worship:

- ◇ The congregation is asked to please follow CDC guidelines for masks, based on their vaccination status and overall health.
- ◇ If you haven't done so already, please sign the attendance sheet in the Narthex



## **CONTACT INFORMATION**

**Office Phone:** 716-633-4656 / **Email:** AmherstPC@verizon.net

**Office hours:** 9:00am—1:00pm, Wednesday—Friday

Beginning September 12, **Office hours:** 9:00am—1:00pm, Mon, Wed, Fri

**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