



July 2, 2023

11:15 am

+Stand as you are able

Bold type--everyone reads

Gathering

**Welcome and Announcements
Lighting of the Christ Candle
Centering Music**

+Call to Worship

We are from north and south.

We are from tiny apartments and expansive homes.

We are from this city and from others far away.

We are from big families and dinners made for one.

We are from stages of grief and stages of love.

We are from hot summers and cold winters.

We are from kitchens with passed down recipes,
and front porches with old, familiar swings.

We are from the dust of the earth and the stars of the sky.

We are from a lot of places, but today we are here.

Today we are together.

Holy God, gather us in. Amen.*

+Hymn *I Sing the Mighty Power of God #32*

Prayers of Confession and Forgiveness

If we were to call the prayer of confession by another name, I would call it a moment for truth telling—

A moment to pause, to reflect, to be honest about the places we want to grow

and the way we need God's help. Family of faith, there is power in honesty.

So pray with me. We worship a loving and gracious God.

When people heard that Jesus was from Nazareth,
they asked, "Can anything good come from Nazareth?"

We confess, God of beginnings, that we have asked the same question.

Can anything good come from that side of town? **From a school with poor test scores?**

From a criminal history? **From the opposite political party?**

From a history of addiction? **From a faith with doubt?**

From a church with faults?

Holy God, forgive us for doubting that you are in all things at all times. Open our eyes to see your goodness, not as something that resides here or there, but as the expansive grace that it is.

Can anything good come from there?

Yes. Always yes. Amen. (Moment of silent prayer)

Family of faith, if you ever ask yourself,

“Can anything good come from this messy and human life of mine?” Remember this: God is always whispering, “Yes.” You were created in the image of God. Your origin story is one of goodness and love from the very beginning. So hear and believe the good news of the gospel:

God is here. God is at work among us.

We are forgiven. Thanks be to God for a love like that. Amen.*

Response of Praise *Glory to God, Whose Goodness Shines on Me v.1 #582*
Passing of the Peace

Anthem

Hearing the Word

Prayer for Illumination

Holy God, I don't always know how to pray, but you find me anyway. I don't always know how to listen, but you are in my ears all the same. I don't always know how to believe, but you surround me with beauty and I find myself held together in love. Where I come from there are so many distractions. Where I come from there is so much noise.

Find me. Hold me. Be in these words. Help me hear. Amen.*

Scripture Reading Genesis 2:4b-14 In the day that the LORD God made the earth and the heavens, ⁵when no plant of the field was yet in the earth and no herb of the field had yet sprung up—for the LORD God had not caused it to rain upon the earth, and there was no one to till the ground; ⁶but a stream would rise from the earth, and water the whole face of the ground— ⁷then the LORD God formed man from the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and the man became a living being.

⁸And the LORD God planted a garden in Eden, in the east; and there he put the man whom he had formed. ⁹Out of the ground the LORD God made to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food, the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. ¹⁰A river flows out of Eden to water the garden, and from there it divides and becomes four branches. ¹¹The name of the first is Pishon; it is the one that flows around the whole land of Havilah, where there is gold; ¹²and the gold of that land is good; bdellium and onyx stone are there. ¹³The name of the second river is Gihon; it is the one that flows around the whole land of Cush. ¹⁴The name of the third river is Tigris, which flows east of Assyria. And the fourth river is the Euphrates.

Hymn *Breathe on Me, Breath of God #286*

Gospel Reading John 1:35-51 ³⁵The next day John again was standing with two of his disciples, ³⁶and as he watched Jesus walk by, he exclaimed, “Look, here is the Lamb of God!”

³⁷The two disciples heard him say this, and they followed Jesus. ³⁸When Jesus turned and saw them following, he said to them, “What are you looking for?” They said to him, “Rabbi” (which translated means Teacher), “where are you staying?” ³⁹He said to them, “Come and see.” They came and saw where he was staying, and they remained with him that day. It was about four o'clock in the afternoon. ⁴⁰One of the two who heard John speak and followed him was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother. ⁴¹He first found his brother Simon and said to him, “We have found the Messiah” (which is translated Anointed). ⁴²He brought Simon to Jesus, who looked at him and said, “You are Simon son of John. You are to be called Cephas” (which is translated Peter).

⁴³The next day Jesus decided to go to Galilee. He found Philip and said to him, “Follow me.” ⁴⁴Now Philip was from Bethsaida, the city of Andrew and Peter. ⁴⁵Philip found Nathanael and said to him, “We have found him about whom Moses in the law and also the prophets wrote, Jesus son of Joseph

from Nazareth.”⁴⁶Nathanael said to him, “Can anything good come out of Nazareth?” Philip said to him, “Come and see.”⁴⁷When Jesus saw Nathanael coming toward him, he said of him, “Here is truly an Israelite in whom there is no deceit!”⁴⁸Nathanael asked him, “Where did you get to know me?” Jesus answered, “I saw you under the fig tree before Philip called you.”⁴⁹Nathanael replied, “Rabbi, you are the Son of God! You are the King of Israel!”⁵⁰Jesus answered, “Do you believe because I told you that I saw you under the fig tree? You will see greater things than these.”⁵¹And he said to him, “Very truly, I tell you, you will see heaven opened and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man.”

Sermon

Responding to the Word

Affirmation of Faith

We believe that goodness can come from the dirt, that faith can come from doubt, that minds can be changed, that justice can begin with us, and that something good *can* come from Nazareth. We believe all these things, because we believe that God is more expansive than we have words for— showing up in the corners of our world so often ignored and denied. We believe that from this place of holy surprise, God invites us forward— beckoning hope, bravery, and curiosity from each of us. “Come and see,” God says. We believe. Help our unbelief. Amen.*

Offering Prayer

Giver of all good gifts, accept our offerings of money, time and talents that we give in response to your generosity to us. Guide us in the way we share our resources and in the way we use the offerings, for the benefit of our community and the world. Amen.

Celebration of the Lord’s Supper

Joys and Concerns

Invitation to the Table

Jesus said to his disciples, “Come and see.” He didn’t reference check them before extending the invitation. He didn’t ask them a series of questions to prove themselves. He didn’t quiz them on temple attendance or Torah knowledge. There was no prerequisite to being invited, they just were. Friends, the same goes for you. Whether you have been coming to this Table for years, or if this is your first time—you are invited here. Whether you come with a faith that could move mountains, or a seedling-sized faith still growing with care—you are invited here. Whether you come from near or far, east or west—you are invited here. And whether you come confident in the knowledge that you were made by God, or if you are still seeking to trust that good news—you are invited here. All of you—your faith, your doubt, your hope, your fear—all of you is invited here.

Prayer of Thanksgiving

God of North, South, East, and West, I have been meaning to say...thank you. Thank you for scooping up the dirt and breathing life into it. Thank you for forming this body, this life, this world, these people. Thank you for drawing us in, for holding us up, and for weaving us together—even when it’s hard, *especially* when it’s hard.

If people ask, “Where are you from?” my mouth speaks of geography, but my soul always sings your name:

All sing: Holy, holy holy, is the Lord of hosts (2x)

The whole world is full of God’s glory (3x)

Holy is the Lord!

So today we come to you in prayer with gratitude overflowing—gratitude for the places we've been, for the people who've shaped us, and for the spaces we call home. But we also come to you with prayers on our hearts.

And so we ask you to scoop us up like you scooped up the dirt on that first day. Hold our hearts alongside our worries. Relieve us of this burden. Protect us in the palm of your hand, and draw us closer to one another as you do. God of creation, you have always been our first home, So hear our prayers for the spaces we call home today.

And as you do, we ask that you would be among us in this meal. Allow this bread and cup to remind us of your home for us. Allow this meal to fill us to the brim so that when we leave this space we carry bits of you with us. Allow this meal to nourish us in the way only you can. We are inviting you in. Come and see.

Now, with the confidence of children who believe without hesitation, we pray to you the prayer you taught us, saying*... *Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name. Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Save us from the time of trial, and deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and forever. Amen.*

Words of Institution

Communion of the People

Prayer after Communion

O God, send us out from our Lord's table to answer his summons into new life and to follow him with joy and gladness. Set our feet in his holy way, that our lives may be signs of his life and all we do may show forth his love. Amen.

Taking the Word into the World

+Song *I'm Gonna Live So God Can Use Me #700*

+Charge and Benediction

Family of faith, as you leave this place, may God grant you the curiosity to counter assumptions, the vulnerability to befriend, the bravery to speak your truth, the wisdom to listen, the strength to ask for help, the resiliency to choose love, even when it's hard, and the awareness of the Holy Spirit always beside you. In the name of the Great Connector—Love itself, go in peace.*

**Prayers by Rev. Sarah Are | A Sanctified Art LLC | sanctifiedart.org.*

Toll free conference call number (844) 855-4444, access code 654132#

Worship will also be connected through Facebook Live

COMMUNITY OF FAITH PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

JULY 2, 2023

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Scriptures for Sunday, July 9

Genesis 24:34–38, 42–49,
Psalm 45:10–17
or Song of Solomon 2:8–13
Romans 7:15–25a
Matthew 11:16–19, 25–30

In Our Thoughts & Prayers

Betty Murphy
Ruth Roeber
The McDermott family
Johanna Willis
The Kleier family
Jean Jennings' family
Emille Walden
Kelly Montana
Lynda Jaeger
Ron Carlin
Ella Grace Marksberry

Worship Services

Join us for in-person services at 710 Western Reserve Rd., Crescent Springs, KY. You can also worship with us online via Facebook Live, or by joining the conference call. Worship services begin at 11:15 am.

Liturgists Needed

Liturgists are needed to help lead worship. Please sign up on the sheet located on the welcome table. Thank you!

Treasurer Position Opening

The COF session is looking for a new Treasurer. The position of Treasurer is required by the Book of Order, and entails working with our accounting firm to pay bills, manage pledges and offerings, and report to session and the congregation regarding the finances of the congregation. Training will be provided. For further questions or a job description, please contact Rev. Sharon.

Supporting the Work of the Presbytery and the Denomination with Per Capita

Per Capita is a fundamental way in which all of us, as members of the nearly 10,000 congregations and mid councils of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) connect, participate and share in the work of the wider church. Per capita is the primary source of funding for the Presbytery, as well as the Synod and General Assembly, and is how Presbyterians mutually and equitably share the costs of coming together to discern the Spirit's leading for the future. It is how Presbyterians are trained to become better ruling elders, teaching elders and deacons, and ministers. It is how Presbyterians are helped to discern God's call in their lives. It has supported our ministries at COF through grants to CLASP, Medical Debt Relief, and for equipment purchases for our virtual church services. Please prayerfully consider donating the \$34 per capital apportionment set by the Presbytery, for each church member. *(Adapted from the Presbytery of Cincinnati's newsletter.)*