

**Today's Worship Leaders:**

**Dr. Lisa Bowens**

Associate Professor of New Testament, Princeton Theological Seminary

**Elder Mike Henry**

Valley Forge Presbyterian Church  
Outgoing Moderator, Commission on Financial Management

**Rev. Diane Jamison Fitch**

First Presbyterian Church in Springfield (Flourtown)

**Elder Bob Kenworthy**

Wallingford Presbyterian Church  
Outgoing Moderator, Committee on Nominations

**Elder Zandra Maffett**

Valley Forge Presbyterian Church  
Vice-Moderator, Presbytery of Philadelphia

**Rev. Ted Mingle**

Lower Providence Presbyterian Church  
Moderator, Presbytery of Philadelphia

**Rev. Joyce Shin**

Swarthmore Presbyterian Church  
Outgoing Moderator, Commission on Preparation for Ministry and Membership

**Rev. Dr. John Willingham**

Doylestown Presbyterian Church  
Outgoing Co-Moderator, Committee on Personnel

**Music Ministry:**

**John Sall**

Director of Music Ministries, Abington Presbyterian Church

*Many of today's worship leaders are rotating off of leadership positions on our Committees and Commissions. We offer our gratitude and thanksgiving for their faithful service to the presbytery and to the witness of Jesus Christ in our communities and the world.*



# Gratitude

“And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in the one body. And be thankful.” Colossians 3:15

The Presbytery of Philadelphia  
Service of Worship \* November 15, 2022  
First Presbyterian Church in Springfield  
Flourtown, Pennsylvania

Order of Worship

— We Gather Around the Word —

Prelude

“Praise Ye the Lord, the Almighty”  
J. G. Walther

\*Call to Worship

Elder Zandra Maffett

One: In gratitude for the amazing grace God has poured out continually upon the church,  
**Many: we give God our thanks and praise!**

One: In gratitude for the countless times God has healed the brokenhearted and uplifted the lowly,  
**Many: we give God our thanks and praise!**

One: In gratitude for the strength and courage God promises as we seek to be the hands and feet of Christ in the world,  
**Many: we give God our thanks and praise!**

One: In gratitude for the way God has personally seen us through the valley of the shadow of death,  
**Many: we give God our thanks and praise!**

One: In gratitude for God’s relentless hope that has the power to transform the cross and grave into a sign of love and forgiveness, and a vehicle for resurrection,  
**Many: we give God our thanks and praise!**

One: Let us worship God with joyful hearts!

\*Opening Prayer

O good and gracious God, in the midst of the world’s challenges, heartbreaks, and despair, we give you our praise and glory, for we know that you are the one who, in Jesus, transforms death and darkness into new beginnings. Out of the ashes, you have the capacity to raise up life and love. Today we offer you our gratitude, not as a platitude, but as those who have experienced the deep, true gift of resurrection. We praise you for never forgetting us, for calling our name when we are in the depths, and for the joy that comes when we follow your guidance. Please accept this worship as our thanksgiving for your endless faithfulness to your people. In Jesus’ name we pray. Amen.

\*Closing Song

“Lift Up Your Heads, Ye Mighty Gates”

1 Lift up your heads, ye might - y gates; be - hold the  
 2 Fling wide the por - tals of your heart; make it a  
 3 Re - deem - er, come! I o - pen wide my heart to

King of glo - ry waits; the King of kings is  
 tem - ple, set a - part from earth - ly use for  
 thee; here, Lord, a - bide. Let me thy in - ner

draw - ing near; the Sav - ior of the world is here.  
 heaven’s em - ploy, a - dorned with prayer and love and joy.  
 pres - ence feel; thy grace and love in me re - veal.

\*Charge and Blessing

Rev. Ted Mingle

\*Postlude

“Now Thank We All Our God”  
Siegfried Karg-Elert

\*All are invited to stand in body or spirit.

**Invitation to Gratitude and Reflections on God’s Blessings**

*Rev. Diane Jamison Fitch  
and Elder Bob Kenworthy*

One: Children of God; friends in Christ; co-recipients of the Holy Spirit—as we reflect upon the many blessings of our Almighty God, let us be grateful.

**Many: We acknowledge with humility the strength that our Triune God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit provides when we are weak.**

One: We acknowledge the hope God supplies in the midst of struggle;

**Many: the peace God affords even when we are in turmoil;**

One: the light God shines into every dark shadow.

**Many: the refuge of God’s welcome in the presence of our adversaries.**

One: Let us remember our blessings, and be thankful.

*Today we have built an Ebenezer, or “stone of help” on the communion table which is used to symbolize God’s faithfulness and assistance. Such structures have been built throughout the ages to offer praise and thanksgiving to God. We offer this today as a sign of our gratitude to God for each one of you, and all the ways you have helped the presbytery be faithful in its calling to spread the good news of Jesus Christ to our communities and the world. Each stone has a word of thanksgiving to share our gratitude to God for you.*

*We invite everyone forward to present their offerings and/or to take a stone from the Ebenezer. Please come forward by the center aisle and return to your seats by the side aisles.*

*Today’s offering will be collected to support The Welcome Church, our partnership with the Lutheran ELCA Synod that seeks to build community and care for those experiencing homelessness in Center City, Philadelphia.*

*If you choose to donate online, please visit [www.presbyphl.org/donation-opportunities](http://www.presbyphl.org/donation-opportunities).*

**Offertory**

*“The Old Hundredth”  
Johann Pachelbel*

**Prayer of Dedication**

**\*Opening Song**

**“Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing”**

1 Come, thou Fount of ev-ery bless-ing; tune my heart to sing thy grace;  
2 Here I raise my Eb - e - ne - zer; hith - er by thy help I'm come;  
3 O to grace how great a debt - or dai - ly I'm con-strained to be!

streams of mer - cy, nev - er ceas - ing, call for songs of loud - est praise.  
and I hope, by thy good plea - sure, safe - ly to ar - rive at home.  
Let that grace now, like a fet - ter, bind my wan - dering heart to thee.

Teach me some me - lo - dious son - net, sung by flam - ing tongues a - bove;  
Je - sus sought me when a strang - er, wan - dering from the fold of God;  
Prone to wan - der, Lord, I feel it, prone to leave the God I love;

praise the mount! I'm fixed up - on it, mount of God's un - chang - ing love!  
he, to res - cue me from dan - ger, in - ter - posed his pre - cious blood.  
here's my heart; O take and seal it; seal it for thy courts a - bove.

**Prayer of Confession** *(adapted from The Prayer of St. Francis)*

*Elder Mike Henry*

One: O God, forgive us for times when we have been instruments of animosity and division, rather than instruments of peace.

**Many: Forgive us for times when we have sown hatred instead of love, and injury instead of pardon.**

One: Forgive us for accepting error instead of insisting upon the truth; for encouraging doubt and despair instead of nurturing faith and hope.

**Many: We confess those moments of weakness where we have allowed darkness and sadness to overshadow your light and joy.**

One: O God we have focused first on being understood, consoled, pardoned, and loved,

**Many: rather than seeking to understand, console, pardon, and love one another.**

One: Remind us once again, God of all mercies:

**All: it is in giving that we receive; it is in pardoning that we are pardoned; it is in self-forgetting that we find; and it is in dying to ourselves that we are born to eternal life. Amen.**

**Assurance of Grace**

Friends in Christ, believe this good news: Jesus came into the world not to condemn the world, but in order that the world may be saved through him. Because of God's expansive love for us, we are not bound by our sin, but free to live a new life in Christ. Let us go with grace, seeking to be God's faithful people. Let us go with grace, working for God's reign of justice, love, and peace. Amen!

— *We Listen to the Word* —

**Prayer for Illumination**

*Rev. Dr. John Willingham*

**First Scripture Reading**—Psalm 46

<sup>1</sup> God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.

<sup>2</sup> Therefore we will not fear, though the earth should change, though the mountains shake in the heart of the sea;

<sup>3</sup> though its waters roar and foam, though the mountains tremble with its tumult.

<sup>4</sup> There is a river whose streams make glad the city of God, the holy habitation of the Most High.

<sup>5</sup> God is in the midst of the city; it shall not be moved; God will help it when the morning dawns.

<sup>6</sup> The nations are in an uproar, the kingdoms totter; God utters God's voice, the earth melts.

<sup>7</sup> The LORD of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge.

<sup>8</sup> Come, behold the works of the LORD; see what desolations God has brought on the earth.

<sup>9</sup> God makes wars cease to the end of the earth; God breaks the bow, and shatters the spear; God burns the shields with fire.

<sup>10</sup> 'Be still, and know that I am God!

I am exalted among the nations, I am exalted in the earth.'

<sup>11</sup> The LORD of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge.

**Second Scripture Reading**—Romans 8:31-39

31 What then are we to say about these things? If God is for us, who is against us? <sup>32</sup>God who did not withhold God's own Son, but gave him up for all of us, will God not with him also give us everything else? <sup>33</sup>Who will bring any charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies. <sup>34</sup>Who is to condemn? It is Christ Jesus, who died, yes, who was raised, who is at the right hand of God, who indeed intercedes for us. <sup>35</sup>Who will separate us from the love of Christ? Will hardship, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? <sup>36</sup>As it is written, 'For your sake we are being killed all day long; we are accounted as sheep to be slaughtered.'

<sup>37</sup>No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. <sup>38</sup>For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, <sup>39</sup>nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

**Sermon** "The Power and Persistence of Divine Presence"

*Dr. Lisa Bowens*

— *We Respond to the Word* —

**Musical Reflection**

*"All Hail the Power of Jesus' Name" (Meditation)*

*Tim Fields*

**Prayers of the People**

*Rev. Joyce Shin*

*As we are led in prayer, please respond to "O God, in your mercy," with the collective response, "Hear our prayer."*