

Grace Presbyterian Church

September 17, 2023

9:30 am

VISION STATEMENT

We are an open and affirming congregation.

**We genuinely welcome people of all ages,
race, ethnicities, genders, sexual orientations,
beliefs,
and those who are cognitively
and or physically challenged.**

Our vision is to be a community of love and purpose,
**each one engaged in ministry,
seeking to know Christ, growing in discipleship,
and embodying God's love for the world.**



"To forgive from the heart"

Prayer Candles

Before Worship, you may offer a prayer and light a candle at the communion table.

We Gather

PRELUDE

WELCOME and ANNOUNCEMENTS

Call to Worship (based on Ps.103:1-5)

Let my whole being bless the Lord!

Let everything inside me bless his holy name!

Let my whole being bless the Lord

and never forget all God's good deeds:

how God forgives all our sins,

heals all our sickness,

saves our lives from the pit,

crowns us with faithful love and compassion,

and satisfies all the people with plenty of good things
renewing their spirit like soaring eagles.

*Hymn #619 "Praise My Soul the God of Heaven"

Call to Confession

Prayer of Confession

Merciful God, we confess we are not good at practicing mercy. We would rather cultivate anger than compassion. We would rather hold grudges than practice forgiveness. We would rather judge others than repent and turn to You. We would rather let ourselves off the hook and condemn

others for their actions. You are the Almighty One, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love. We know that You continue to call our names, to call us back to You, to show us the way, and to forgive us. We know that You sent Your Son Jesus Christ to lead us into the way of forgiveness, grace, and mercy. Your Son laid down his life for us, so that we might know that nothing could separate us from Your love, not even our own sins. Guide us into Your ways of forgiveness, mercy, love, and grace. In the name of Christ, who lives again for us, we pray. Amen. (Silence is kept for personal confession.)

Words of Assurance

People of God, hear the good news!
Our God is compassionate and merciful,
full of endless love.

**God does not treat us as our sins deserve,
or punish us as harshly.**

For as high as the heavens are above the earth,
so strong is God's love toward us.

**And as far as the east is from the west,
so far has God removed our sins from us.**

So be at peace: you are forgiven!

Thanks be to God!

Hymn #435 "There's a Wideness in God's Mercy" vs 1

We Reflect

Prayer of Illumination

God among us,
we gather in the name of your Son

to learn love for one another.
Turn our feet from evil paths,
our hands from shameful deeds,
our minds to your wisdom,
and our hearts to your grace. Amen.

Reading from Genesis 50:15-21

A time for Children and the Young in heart

Reading from The Gospel of Matthew 18:21-35

SERMON

Rev. Deborah Paton

*Hymn #445 "God, How Can We Forgive"

We Respond

MISSION STATEMENT

Our Mission is **to Know, Love, and Serve God**

Offertory Invitation

Musical Meditation

Prayer of Dedication

(Many thanks to all who contribute to the mission and ministry of this church in offering plates during worship and by electronic giving throughout the month).

Prayers of God's People (sharing of Joys and Concerns)

Lord, in your mercy/in thanksgiving, **Hear our prayer.**

The Lord's Prayer (inclusive, contemporary version)
Heavenly Father, heavenly Mother,
Holy and blessed is your true name.
We pray for your reign of peace to come,
We pray that your good will to be done,
Let heaven and earth become one.
Give us this day the bread we need,
Give bread to those who have none.
Let forgiveness flow like a river between us,
From each one to each one.
Lead us in your holy way
Beyond the evil of our days —
Come swiftly Mother, Father, come.
For yours is the power and the glory and the mercy:
Forever your name is All in One.

By Parker Palmer, modified by Pastor Debbie

We Are Sent

*Hymn #774 "There is Now a New Creation"

*Charge and Benediction

We praise you, God, for peace;
for your compassion and grace
that refuse to allow our worst selves
to define our relationship with you;
for your gift of forgiveness
and your call to forgive others,
May we always seek to follow your peace-making ways.

*Sharing the Peace of Christ

Peace be with you!

And also with you.

(We invite you to offer a sign of peace to those around you and as you gather for fellowship. We remind you to ask what folks feel comfortable with...a verbal greeting, a handshake or fist bump, etc. Do not assume.)

POSTLUDE

***Indicates, please stand in body or spirit.**

All songs not from Glory to God are used by permission of CCLI #1124594