

First Presbyterian Church of New Canaan

25th Sunday in Ordinary Time • September 20, 2020 • 8 a.m. and 10 a.m.

178 OENOKKE RIDGE, NEW CANAAN, CT 06840 • 203-966-0002 • FPCNC.ORG

Creating a loving and just world by serving others.

THE GATHERING

Prelude

Prelude in D Major, BWV 532

J.S. Bach

Call to Worship

The Rev. Mary Marple Thies (8 am)

The Rev. R. Scott Herr (10 am)

Minister: O give thanks to the LORD, call on God's name and make known God's deeds among the peoples.

People: Sing to the LORD, sing praises and tell of all God's wonderful works.

Minister: Glory in God's holy name; let the hearts of those who seek the LORD rejoice.

People: Seek the LORD and God's strength and presence continually.

Minister: Remember the wonderful works, miracles and judgments God has accomplished!

All: Together, we will remember, sing praises and tell of God's wonderful works!

--Adapted from the Psalm of the day, 105:1-5

Prayer of the Day

Please join us in singing hymns at our outdoor service with masks on.

Hymn

There's a Wideness in God's Mercy

IN BABILONE

1 There's a wide - ness in God's mer - cy, like the wide - ness
2 For the love of God is broad - er than the mea - sures

of the sea. There's a kind - ness in God's jus - tice,
of the mind. And the heart of the E - ter - nal

which is more than lib - er - ty. There is no place where earth's
is most won - der - ful - ly kind. If our love were but more

sor - rows are more felt than up in heaven. There is no place
faith - ful, we would glad - ly trust God's Word, and our lives re -

where earth's fail - ings have such kind - ly judg - ment given.
flect thanks - giv - ing for the good - ness of our Lord.

Invitation to Confession

The Rev. Mary Marple Thies (8 am)
Julie Reeves (10 am)

Leader: Let us put aside the arrogance of our religion and have confidence in God.
(pause- because arrogance and religion takes a moment to put aside)

Confession of Sin (unison)

Almighty God, your ways are not our ways, and your thoughts are not our thoughts. We count on your mercy, yet expect you to mete out your judgment upon evil. We believe our service merits special favors from you, and we have forgotten the joy of doing justice, loving kindness, and walking humbly with you. Help us to learn again the depths of your grace and generosity. Forgive us for our arrogance and pride. Save us from the sins we try to hide...

(Silent Prayer of Confession)

Assurance of Forgiveness

Leader: The scriptures teach us that as we respond to God's call to repentance, we are embraced in the tender mercy and generous love of God. Whether you responded to God's call at the first opportunity, or whether you are responding for the first time now, receive God's lavish grace and forgiveness that is yours in Christ Jesus. Hear and live in the freedom of the good news:

People: **In Jesus Christ we are forgiven and made righteous. Amen.**

Passing of the Peace

Leader: May the peace of Christ be with you all.

People: **And also with you.**

(Please greet one another with a sign of the peace of Christ.)

THE WORD

Prayer For Illumination (unison)

(Peggy Jay 8 am)
Vivi Reeves (10 am)

Gracious God, give us humble, teachable, and obedient hearts, that we may learn continuously what you have revealed, and live as you direct us. Amen.

First Lesson - Philippians 1:21-30

²¹For to me, living is Christ and dying is gain. ²²If I am to live in the flesh, that means fruitful labor for me; and I do not know which I prefer. ²³I am hard pressed between the two: my desire is to depart and be with Christ, for that is far better; ²⁴but to remain in the flesh is more necessary for you. ²⁵Since I am convinced of this, I know that I will remain and continue with all of you for your progress and joy in faith, ²⁶so that I may share abundantly in your boasting in Christ Jesus when I come to you again. ²⁷Only, live your life in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that, whether I come and see you or am absent and hear about you, I will know that you are standing firm in one spirit, striving side by side with one mind for the faith of the gospel, ²⁸and are in no way intimidated by your opponents. For them this is evidence of their destruction, but of your salvation. And this is God's doing. ²⁹For he has graciously granted you the privilege not only of believing in Christ, but of suffering for him as well— ³⁰since you are having the same struggle that you saw I had and now hear that I still have.

Leader: This is the Word of the Lord.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

Second Lesson - Matthew 20:1-16

¹“For the kingdom of heaven is like a landowner who went out early in the morning to hire laborers for his vineyard. ²After agreeing with the laborers for the usual daily wage, he sent them into his vineyard. ³When he went out about nine o’clock, he saw others standing idle in the marketplace; ⁴and he said to them, ‘You also go into the vineyard, and I will pay you whatever is right.’ So they went. ⁵When he went out again about noon and about three o’clock, he did the same. ⁶And about five o’clock he went out and found others standing around; and he said to them, ‘Why are you standing here idle all day?’ ⁷They said to him, ‘Because no one has hired us.’ He said to them, ‘You also go into the vineyard.’ ⁸When evening came, the owner of the vineyard said to his manager, ‘Call the laborers and give them their pay, beginning with the last and then going to the first.’ ⁹When those hired about five o’clock came, each of them received the usual daily wage. ¹⁰Now when the first came, they thought they would receive more; but each of them also received the usual daily wage. ¹¹And when they received it, they grumbled against the landowner, ¹²saying, ‘These last worked only one hour, and you have made them equal to us who have borne the burden of the day and the scorching heat.’ ¹³But he replied to one of them, ‘Friend, I am doing you no wrong; did you not agree with me for the usual daily wage?’ ¹⁴Take what belongs to you and go; I choose to give to this last the same as I give to you. ¹⁵Am I not allowed to do what I choose with what belongs to me? Or are you envious because I am generous?’ ¹⁶So the last will be first, and the first will be last.”

Minister: Holy wisdom, holy word.

People: Thanks be to God.

Sermon

“Beloved Community: Learning Continuously”

The Rev. Dr. R. Scott Herr

RESPONDING TO THE WORD

Prayers of the People

The Rev. Mary Marple Thies (8 am)

The Rev. Scott Herr (10 am)

The Lord’s Prayer (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.

Presentation of Tithes, Offerings and Ourselves

(Peggy Jay 8 am)

Julie Reeves (10 am)

Acquaint now thyself with Him and be at peace;
Thereby good shall come unto thee.
Acquaint now thyself with Him and be at peace.

Exalt the Lord our God and worship at His holy hill,
For the Lord our God is holy.
O worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness.
Fear before Him all the earth.
Give unto the Lord the glory due unto His name.
Bring an offering, and come unto His courts.

Where-with shall I come before the Lord,
And bow myself before the most high God?
Shall I come before Him with burnt offerings?

He hath showed thee what is good
And what doth the Lord require of thee,
But to do justly, and to love mercy
And to walk humbly with thy God.

Acquaint now thyself with Him and be at peace;
Thereby good shall come unto thee.
Acquaint now thyself with Him and be at peace.

Prayer of Dedication

(Peggy Jay 8 am)
Julie Reeves (10 am)

SENDING

Hymn

Immortal, Invisible, God Only Wise

ST. DENIO



1 Im - mor - tal, in - vis - i - ble, God on - ly wise,
2 Un - rest - ing, un - hast - ing, and si - lent as light,
3 To all, life thou giv - est, to both great and small.
4 Thou reign - est in glo - ry; thou dwell - est in light.

in light in - ac - ces - si - ble hid from our eyes,
nor want - ing, nor wast - ing, thou rul - est in might:
In all life thou liv - est, the true life of all.
Thine an - gels a - dore thee, all veil - ing their sight.

most bless - ed, most glo - rious, the An - cient of Days,
thy jus - tice, like moun - tains high soar - ing a - bove;
We blos - som and flour - ish like leaves on the tree,
All praise we would ren - der; O help us to see

al - might - y, vic - to - rious, thy great name we praise.
thy clouds, which are foun - tains of good - ness and love.
then with - er and per - ish; but naught chang - eth thee.
'tis on - ly the splen - dor of light hid - eth thee!

Charge and Benediction

The Rev. Scott Herr

Ring of the Church Bell

Postlude

Fugue in D Major, BWV 532

J.S. Bach

CCLI #1120652
ONE LICENSE, License A-734274

Welcome! This morning, Rev. Scott Herr continues the *third* week in the *Four Week series* on “*Beloved Community*.” and explore through the lens of the lectionary texts the four aspects of the First Presbyterian Church Mission Statement: “Live Spiritually; Love Inclusively; Learn Continuously; Leave A Legacy.” Today’s texts to help us reflect on what it means to “learn continuously” are Philippians 1:21-30, and Matthew 20:1-16.

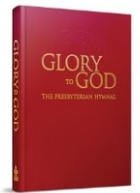
Would you like to be Lay Reader? We at First Presbyterian of New Canaan are always eager to share our talents and get to know one another better by participating in our services of worship. If you or your family would be willing to serve in the coming weeks please contact Jan Lucie: jlucie99@gmail.com or 309/331-3468.

Confirmation Class. Are you a student in the 8th grade or older and would like to explore the Christian faith and learn more about the teachings of Jesus that have turned the world upside down? We would like to organize an orientation and information meeting and BBQ, so please let us know of your interest by emailing Rev. Scott Herr at scott@fpcnc.org.



Your 2020 Pledges Are Still Needed! Just a friendly reminder that our church continues to operate, albeit in new and creative ways, to continue to serve our congregation during the COVID-19 pandemic. And so too, your pledges are still needed to sustain those operations, so please mail them to the attention of Jim Riehl, FPCNC, 178 Oenoke Ridge, New Canaan, CT, 06840.

Glory to God hymnals. If you would like to make a contribution towards new hymnals, please mail your check to FPCNC, 178 Oenoke Ridge, New Canaan, CT, 06840. We are asking \$30 for a hymnal that may be purchased in memory of a loved one, given in thanksgiving of, or for the Glory of God. You may purchase more than one if you like!



UPDATE! Concert Fundraiser for the Phil Ramone Orchestra for Children



Thank you to everyone who contributed to the Phil Ramone Orchestra for Children! The concert for Juneteenth for trombone and organ by Victoria Shields and trombonist, Burt Mason, has raised \$1915 in funds for this organization in need. The Phil Ramone Orchestra promotes music education for children in underserved neighborhoods in NYC. Because of our efforts, the orchestra will be able to resume their mission this fall. Thank you to everyone who contributed! If you haven’t contributed yet and would like to, you may make a donation on their website www.ramoneorchestra.org

Covid-19 Safety Procedures Fact Sheet for the 10 am Sunday Service.

We are so excited to regather as a church family this Sunday! The following are some facts that we hope you will consider as you decide whether or not to join us for the live service outside on the front lawn or online for a prerecorded service at our usual 10:00 hour.

Keeping our community healthy and safe is most important to us, so we are implementing the following safety procedures for Sunday's service:

- Just a couple of things for you to do in preparation to be in person:
 - We have updated the preregistration form to include the health form. This new form allows you to preregister, volunteer before, during or after the service, and fill out the Health, Travel, and Exposure form. Click here for the form: <https://fpcnc.breezechms.com/form/fdc313>), or call Tina at (203) 966-0002 M-F between the hours of 8:30 and 4:30.
 - Upon arrival on Sunday, if you have not preregistered, you will be asked to complete the *Mandatory Health, Travel, and Exposure Form*. To save time, we encourage you to download the form here: <http://fpcnc.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/fpcnc-covid-19-health-travel-and-exposure-formupdated-18sept.pdf> and complete it just prior to going to 10 am service. Please note, one form is sufficient for each household. Temperature checks will be completed upon your arrival.
- Sunday's worship service will be held outdoors on the lawn between the church and Oenoke Ridge. The church building will remain closed, which means there will be no restrooms available.
- Please arrive at least 10 minutes early so we can sign you in and perform the temperature checks.
- Masks are recommended to be worn for anyone over the age of 2, as *recommended* by the CDC (<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/daily-life-coping/children/protect-children.html>), but will be *required* for anyone age 6 and above. Think of wearing the masks as a way to show respect and care to those around you.
- Please bring your chair, blanket, and a pop-up tent. We will be requiring each family to sit together and be no closer than 6 feet from other families.
- For those who cannot easily transport chairs, we will have chairs available that are properly cleaned and placed 6 feet apart. Please let us know if we can reserve chairs for you and your family.
- Sadly, to ensure safety, only bottled water will be provided, but we invite you to pack a picnic.
- There will be some social time afterward the service to get to know Scott and Kim Herr (from a distance)!

A special note to our seniors: We live in ever-changing and serious times. Anyone over the age of 65 should think carefully about the wisdom of attending in-person. Anyone over 70 or 80 should seriously consider NOT attending. Of course, we want to be together with you, but because we love and care about you, we sure don't want you to take any unnecessary health risks.

The preferred way to attend Sunday services for seniors during this deadly pandemic is to watch the online virtual service at 8 am or a recording of the early service sometime after 9:30 am. This will allow you to "attend" Sunday service without personal health risks to you or your family. The service can be seen at this website: Events.Locallive.tv/worship/fpcnc

Finally, we know that information changes quickly, but we are trying to be responsible and err on the side of caution. We hope these protocols will help you to make the best decision for you and your family.

On behalf of the whole Sunday Morning planning team, we look forward to worshipping together, both in person and virtually. In the meantime, please stay safe and healthy.

In Christ,

Randy Ferguson, Serena Gillespie, and Scott Herr



Sunday School is Here!

While you are watching the live stream of Sunday's service, there is a Sunday School bulletin for your children to do when the family gathers to worship. Please visit our website: www.fpcnc@org. Look for the Sunday School links in the September 20 Sunday's Service blog. To download the children's bulletin, click on, *The Workers in the Vineyard*.

Please keep the following people in your hearts: *New Concerns:* family of Howard Greene; family of Anne Matteson Sisson, grandmother of Jack, Mary and Frances Sisson and mother of Frank Sisson; Dan McEvoy (recovering from back surgery). ***Continued concerns:*** Catherine Armstrong; Dan Bergfeld; Gloria Bridgman; John Edwards; Graham Harden; James Marcotte; William Musser; The Stricos family (friends of Joe and Diana Ruszkowski); Debbie Murphy Williams; Ronald Witt. The Abo Noktah family (our Syrian refugees): father Khaldoun, mother Khawla Alzob, daughters Hanin, Zain and Hayat, and sons Yaman and Ahmed.

New Canaan Food Pantry has re-opened. Non-perishable food items can be dropped off at St. Mark's, by the food pantry door on Mondays 8:30-10:30 AM. The items most needed are apple juice, coffee (regular, decaf, drip or instant), cereal (sweet and healthy), oatmeal, pancake mix, syrup, canned chicken, tuna, pasta sauce, vegetables, fruit, chili, soup, tortilla chips, salsa, crackers, salad dressing, applesauce, peanut butter, jelly, a packaged potato dish, rice (white or brown), toothpaste, toothbrushes, dish-washing detergent, laundry detergent, ketchup, mustard, white vinegar.



THIS WEEK at FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH of NEW CANAAN

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 20

- 8 a.m.** **Worship, via LocalLive**
Rev. Dr. R. Scott Herr
- 10 a.m.** **Worship Service on the front lawn**
Rev. Dr. R. Scott Herr
- 11 a.m.** **Virtual Coffee Hour, via zoom**
 Password is **Joy!**

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 22

- 10 a.m.** Leadership Team, via zoom

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 27

- 8 a.m.** **Worship Service, via LocalLive**
Rev. Dr. R. Scott Herr
- 10 a.m.** **Worship Service on the front lawn**
Rev. Dr. R. Scott Herr
- 11 a.m.** **Virtual Coffee Hour, via zoom**
 Password is **Joy!**

MINISTERS

The Entire Congregation

OUR PASTORS

The Rev. Dr. R. Scott Herr, Senior Pastor • The Rev. Mary Marple Thies, Parish Associate

USHERS

George Benington, Jim Ely, Sue Sherwood, Bob Spangler (10 am)

LAY READERS

Peggy Jay (8 am); Julie and Vivi Reeves (10 am)

OUR STAFF

Victoria Shields, Director of Music and Arts • Sherry Tate, Cherub Choir Director
 Jim Riehl, Interim Church Administrator • Tina St. Armand, Office Manager
 Edgar Torres, Day Sexton • Kate Stringfellow, Operations Manager