

**September 17, 2023**  
**Sixteenth Sunday after Pentecost**  
**Chapel in the Woods**

**WELCOME**

**PRELUDES**

<i>The Power of Your Love</i>	Geoff Bullock, arr. by Jane Holstein
<i>Jesus, Name Above All Names</i>	Naida Hearn, arr. by John F. Wilson

**WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**PRAYER CONCERNS AND REQUESTS**

**CHORAL CALL TO WORSHIP #20**

*All Things Bright and Beautiful*      Royal Oak  
(refrain)

***All things bright and beautiful, all creatures great and small,  
all things wise and wonderful, the Lord God made them all.***

**CALL TO WORSHIP**

One: We observe this day as the Lord's Day,

**All: Giving thanks to God, who feeds the hungry and gives justice to the oppressed,**

One: Who forgives us and redeems us, and crowns us with steadfast love and mercy.

**All: Let us worship the One who is worthy of grateful praise!**

**\*OPENING SONG #14**      *For the Beauty of the Earth*      Dix  
(verse 1)

***For the beauty of the earth, for the glory of the skies, for the love which  
from our birth over and around us lies: Lord of all, to thee we raise this  
our hymn of grateful praise.***

(verse 2)

***For the wonder of each hour of the day and of the night, hill and vale,  
and tree and flower, sun and moon, and stars of light: Lord of all, to  
thee we raise this our hymn of grateful praise.***

(verse 4)

***For the joy of human love, brother, sister, parent, child, friends on earth,  
and friends above, for all gentle thoughts and mild: Lord of all, to thee  
we raise this our hymn of grateful praise.***

**CALL TO CONFESSION**

One: We are not here to pass judgment on each other: all of us have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God. Therefore, let us go before God as we offer our confession:

\*Please stand as you are able.

## UNISON PRAYER OF CONFESSION

**Creator and Redeemer God, we admit we have double standards. We seek forgiveness for ourselves, but fail to forgive others. We want grace for ourselves, but fail to search for relief for others. We seek leniency for ourselves, but fail to show that mercy to others. Forgive us, mighty God, and help us to forgive, showing others the same grace and mercy that you have generously shown to us.**

*(Moment of Silent Confession)*

## ASSURANCE OF PARDON

One: People of God, hear and believe: God does not deal with us according to our sins, but according to God's own steadfast love for us. As far as the east is from the west, this is how far God removes our sins from us.

**All: Thanks be to God! Amen.**

## \*SONG OF RESPONSE #695

*Change My Heart, O God*                      *Change My Heart*  
**Change my heart, O God; make it ever true. Change my heart,  
O God; may I be like you. You are the Potter; I am the clay.  
Mold me and make me; this is what I pray. Change my heart, O God;  
make it ever true. Change my heart, O God; may I be like you.**

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## \*SHARING THE PEACE OF CHRIST (from Romans 5:1-2)

One: We have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. <sup>2</sup>We have access by faith into this grace in which we stand through him. The peace of Christ be with you.

**All: And also with you.**

## WORD

## CHORAL PRAYER OF ILLUMINATION#458

*Thy Word Is a Lamp unto My Feet*                      *Thy Word*  
**Thy word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path.  
Thy word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path.**

Text by Amy Grant, 1984 / ©1984 Meadowgreen Music Company (admin. EMICMGPublishing.com)/Word Music / CCL #11043756

## FIRST SCRIPTURE READING *Psalm 24:1-7*

The earth is the LORD's and all that is in it, the world, and those who live in it, <sup>2</sup> for he has founded it on the seas and established it on the rivers. <sup>3</sup> Who shall ascend the hill of the LORD? And who shall stand in his holy place? <sup>4</sup> Those who have clean hands and pure hearts, who do not lift up their souls to what is false and do not swear deceitfully. <sup>5</sup> They will receive blessing from the LORD and vindication from the God of their salvation. <sup>6</sup> Such is the company of those who seek him, who seek the face of the God of Jacob. <sup>7</sup> Lift up your heads, O gates! and be lifted up, O ancient doors, that the King of glory may come in!

## CHORAL ANTHEM

*He is the Everlasting God*

*Martin*

\*Please stand as you are able.

## SECOND SCRIPTURE READING

*Romans 12:9-21*

<sup>9</sup> Let love be genuine; hate what is evil; hold fast to what is good; <sup>10</sup> love one another with mutual affection; outdo one another in showing honor. <sup>11</sup> Do not lag in zeal; be ardent in spirit; serve the Lord. <sup>12</sup> Rejoice in hope; be patient in affliction; persevere in prayer. <sup>13</sup> Contribute to the needs of the saints; pursue hospitality to strangers.

<sup>14</sup> Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse them. <sup>15</sup> Rejoice with those who rejoice; weep with those who weep. <sup>16</sup> Live in harmony with one another; do not be arrogant, but associate with the lowly; do not claim to be wiser than you are. <sup>17</sup> Do not repay anyone evil for evil, but take thought for what is noble in the sight of all. <sup>18</sup> If it is possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all. <sup>19</sup> Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave room for the wrath of God, for it is written, "Vengeance is mine; I will repay, says the Lord." <sup>20</sup> Instead, "if your enemies are hungry, feed them; if they are thirsty, give them something to drink, for by doing this you will heap burning coals on their heads." <sup>21</sup> Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.

## SERMON

*"Holding Fast"*

*Rev. Dr. John Wahl*

## WITNESS

## INVITATION TO OFFERING

*We take this time to reflect and recognize all contributions of time, talent, and treasure. A basket is available for making monetary donations.*

**OFFERTORY**    *My Shepherd Will Supply My Need*                      *Timothy Shaw*

## PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING / PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

## THE LORD'S PRAYER

## \*SENDING SONG #74

*When God Restored Our Common Life*                      *Resignation*  
*(verse 1)*

***When God restored our common life, our hope, our liberty, at first it seemed a passing dream, a waking fantasy; a shock of joy swept over us, for we had wept so long; the seeds we watered once with tears sprang up into a song.***

*(verse 2)*

***We went forth weeping, sowing seeds in hard, unyielding soil; with laughing hearts we carry home the fruit of all our toil. We praise the One who gave the growth, with voices full and strong. The seeds we watered once with tears sprang up into a song.***

*(verse 3)*

***Great liberating God, we pray for all who are oppressed. May those who long for what is right with justice now be blest. We pray for those who mourn this day, and all who suffer wrong; may seeds they water now with tears spring up into a song.***

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\*Please stand as you are able.

**\*CHARGE AND BLESSING**

**\*BENEDICTION RESPONSE**      *Lead Me Lord*      *Becker*

**POSTLUDE**      *Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee*      *Ludwig van  
Beethoven, arr. by Becki Slagle Mayo*

\*Please stand as you are able.

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**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**September Listening Sessions**

We want to hear from you!! As part of our Thriving Congregations program, Valley will be hosting three listening sessions at the church in September. These are one-hour gatherings of six to eight people for the purpose of bringing people together to tell their stories, identify areas of commitment and concern, and discern identity through shared hopes, concerns, desires, dreams, and possibilities for action.

We encourage all members and friends of Valley to attend one of these gatherings. They will each be moderated (and notes will be taken) by members of the Thriving Congregations team. All the gatherings will take place in the church library. The dates and times are:

**Monday, September 18 – 7-8 p.m.**  
**Sunday, September 24 – noon-1 p.m.**

A sign-up sheet will be in the Narthex, or you can use the Sign-up Genius on the church website or in the September newsletter.

**Adult Choir**



The Adult Choir of Valley started their rehearsals on Thursday, September 14<sup>th</sup>, at 7 p.m. in the Choir Loft. Valley's Choir is a great organization to be a part of with fellowship, singing, sharing time together, social activities, and praising the Lord in song. Consider becoming a part of the Choir this year; it's time to share your talents.

**SEE YOU ON THURSDAYS AT 7 PM!!!!!!!!!!**

**Thank you!!**



The Music Ministry of Valley would like to thank all of the many musicians who shared their musical talents with the congregation throughout the summer months. We are so blessed to have a variety of talents from soloists to instrumentalists, octets to duets, guitars, banjos, clarinets, saxophones, drums, xylophones, and keyboards.

Your time and willingness to do this is an offering that is shared with all of us here at Valley. As John F. Kennedy said, "We must find the time to stop and thank the people who make a difference in our lives". SO.....THANK YOU!!!

## Community Meal – Tuesday, September 19



### Community Meal

– the food or the love that goes into making it.

Continuing this month, we will be engaging in our community meal program: preparing dinners to be available for pick-up or delivery. These meals are our gift to the community: to anyone who is in need of the

**The menu for the September 19th meal is: Chicken cordon blue, roasted potatoes, green beans, rolls, tiramisu.**

If you are interested in helping, we will be cooking meals from 9:30-11:30 a.m.; assembling from 3-4 p.m.; and distributing / delivering from 4-5:30 p.m. Sign up on the church website or in the September newsletter.

## CFPCC Food Bank Needs

Please consider donating the following items to help stock the shelves at Chagrin Falls Park Community Center for a Fall Snack Pack program at the end of September:



**Any snack item, whether it be snack size or full size, such as chips, popcorn, pretzels, candy, apples, etc.**

CFPCC is receiving donations at your car. Someone will come out and retrieve donations.

## North Church

### **October Partnership Month**

North Presbyterian Church – which shares space with Lutheran Metropolitan Ministries at E. 45th and Superior Ave. – has long been a ministry partner with Valley. The first four Sundays in October, volunteers will help prepare and serve meals at North, joining them in worship and fellowship. This year, we are excited to share our partnership month with Christ Presbyterian Church in Chesterland – looking to have 2-4 volunteers from each church attend North on Sundays.

Valley will be preparing the main dish and sides for the first two Sundays; meeting in the church kitchen to prepare the meals.

**Friday, September 29 – 10 a.m.-noon**

**Saturday, October 7 – 10 a.m.-noon**

For Sundays, October 15 and 22, Christ Presbyterian will be providing the main course and sides; Valley will be responsible for deserts.

## Eagle Scout Project

Kenston Senior, Matthew Louis, has chosen to refurbish the south courtyard (outside the preschool classrooms) with new trellises, landscaping, and a picnic table for his Eagle Scout Project. If you would like to support the project financially, you can designate your offerings "Eagle Scout Project."

## Dougbe River School Gala

**Sunday, October 1, 2023**

**In-person – 5:00-8:00 p.m.**

**Online – 7:00-8:00 p.m.**

The Dougbe River Presbyterian School is a ministry partner of Valley Church and the Presbytery of the Western Reserve. Located in Liberia, it now has an enrollment of 240 students, a working farm, and the current construction of a girls' dormitory.

Using mission funds raised by Pass-It-On, the church has purchased a table for eight Valley members to attend the Gala, which includes appetizers, dinner, silent auction, and a program update about the school.

Banquet Center at St. Noel  
35200 Chardon Road  
Willoughby Hills, OH 44094

## Book Study - "Poverty, by America" by Matthew Desmond

This fall, Valley is focusing its mission efforts in the areas of poverty and homelessness. In addition to taking action, it is, also, important to learn more about some of the conditions and misconceptions about why poverty is so prevalent in such a prosperous nation.

As one way of better educating ourselves about poverty in the United States, you are invited to read Matthew Desmond's recent book, *Poverty, by America*.

Material from this book will be a focus of the October 1 sermon on World Communion Sunday and the Peace and Global Witness offering. Two discussion times for the book are planned:

**Tuesday, September 26 – 6:30–8:00 p.m.**

**Wednesday, September 27 – 10:00–11:30 a.m.**

The book is available from most national and local booksellers.

### **VALLEY PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH**

**www.valleypresbychurch.org**

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