

The First Church in Albany (Reformed Church in America)

Founded in 1642; Continuing in Ministry Today.

In response to God's unconditional love for all people made known to us in Jesus Christ, we are called to be a welcoming and affirming community. The First Church in Albany includes young and old, families, couples and singles, rich and poor, persons of various races, ethnicities, backgrounds, sexual orientation and gender identities, differing physical and mental abilities, believers and seekers. We welcome into the full life of the church all those whom God sends us. Centered in Christ, we commit ourselves to breaking down dividing walls and building a community where we are loved.

Sunday, October 15, 2023 10am Twentieth Sunday After Pentecost

Prelude Reflection *Haiku for today's worship*

In thoughts pure and bright,
Goodness blooms in my mind's eye,
Hope takes its sweet flight.

Prelude *Amazing Grace* | Robert Hobby

Tolling of Bell *bell tolled by children of First Church*

Welcome, Announcements, & Blessing

"The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all." **Amen.** 2 Corinthians 13:14

Call to Worship *for harvest time. Presbyterian Church in Canada*

Votum: Our help is in the name of the Lord who made heaven and earth.

Amen.

Leader: God of abundance,

People: God of fruitfulness,

Leader: God of generosity,

People: God of love beyond measure,

Leader: God of extravagance,

People: God of celebration,

Leader: God of goodness,

People: We gather, bringing the best that we can offer,

Leader: to give thanks for the good things you give us;

People: to share your generosity with others;

Leader: and to rejoice by feasting at your table on your Word.

***Opening Hymn:** *For the Fruit of All Creation*

Prayer of Confession *Based on the Book of Jonah*

Good and Gracious God, we yearn for peace, especially peace of mind. However, our worries, mental struggles, and negative fixations often disrupt our inner peace. Send your Holy Spirit to intercede for us, that we might not be anxious, but rather, continually pray and rejoice in you.

Amen.

Time of silence

Assurance of Pardon & Fulfillment of the Law *Based on Philippians 4*

In our sermon text today, the Apostle Paul gives encouragement to the Philippians:

“Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice! ... Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.”

***Passing the Peace**

Leader: The peace of Christ be with you.

People: And also with you.

Leader: Let us greet one another with a hand-sign of peace.



Children's Message & Blessing *Rejoicing at the Wedding Feast*

Prayer for Illumination

Holy Spirit, come. Illuminate your Word, so we might think about what is true, honorable, just, pure, pleasing, commendable, excellent, and worthy of praise, and in so doing come to know your peace. Amen.

Scripture Reading

Isaiah 25:1, 4, 6-9

O Lord, you are my God; I will exalt you; I will praise your name, for you have done wonderful things, plans formed of old, faithful and sure.

For you have been a refuge to the poor, a refuge to the needy in their distress, a shelter from the rainstorm and a shade from the heat.

On this mountain the Lord of hosts will make for all peoples a feast of rich food, a feast of well-aged wines, of rich food filled with marrow, of well-aged wines strained clear. And he will destroy on this mountain the shroud that is cast over all peoples, the covering that is spread over all nations; he will swallow up death forever.

Then the Lord God will wipe away the tears from all faces, and the disgrace of his people he will take away from all the earth, for the Lord has spoken. It will be said on that day, "See, this is our God; we have waited for him, so that he might save us. This is the Lord for whom we have waited; let us be glad and rejoice in his salvation."

Leader: The Word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

Sermon Text

Philippians 4:1-9

Therefore, my brothers and sisters, whom I love and long for, my joy and crown, stand firm in the Lord in this way, my beloved. I urge Euodia and I urge Syntyche to be of the same mind in the Lord. Yes, and I ask you also, my loyal companion, help these women, for they have struggled beside me in the work of the gospel, together with Clement and the rest of my coworkers, whose names are in the book of life.

Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice. Let your gentleness be known to everyone. The Lord is near. Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is pleasing, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence and if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things. As for the things that you have learned and received and heard and noticed in me, do them, and the God of peace will be with you. | Leader: The Word of the Lord. **People: Thanks be to God.**

Sermon

Think About These Things

A Prayer of Blessing on the Word

***Hymn of Response** *Precious Lord, Take My Hand* (repeat v.1 after v.2)

Prayer for Mental Health *Anabaptist Disabilities Network, Canada*

Lord, you are the great Healer. Today, we pray for those who live with mental illness. For those crippled by depression and anxious feelings,

bring healing, bring peace.

For those who suffer from the high and lows of severe mood swings,

bring healing, bring peace.

For those who are tormented by voices and hallucinations,

bring healing, bring peace.

For those who find it difficult to cope with tasks of daily living,

bring healing, bring peace.

For those who struggle with suicidal thoughts,

bring healing, bring peace.

God of great gifts, God of the harvest, thank you for the courage of those who live with mental illness. Thank you for the patience of family and friends who support them. Thank you for our health system and all who work to

bring healing, bring peace.

Give us wisdom and insight as a church, as a community, as a society, to be places that can **bring healing, bring peace. Amen.**

Tithes & Offerings: *If you would like to connect more with the life and mission of First Church, please fill out a Welcome Card found in your pew and place it in the offering as it goes by.*

Offertory *Salaam/Peace*

***Doxology**

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;

Praise God, all creatures here below;

Praise God above, ye heavenly hosts:

Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.

Prayers of the People

**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,

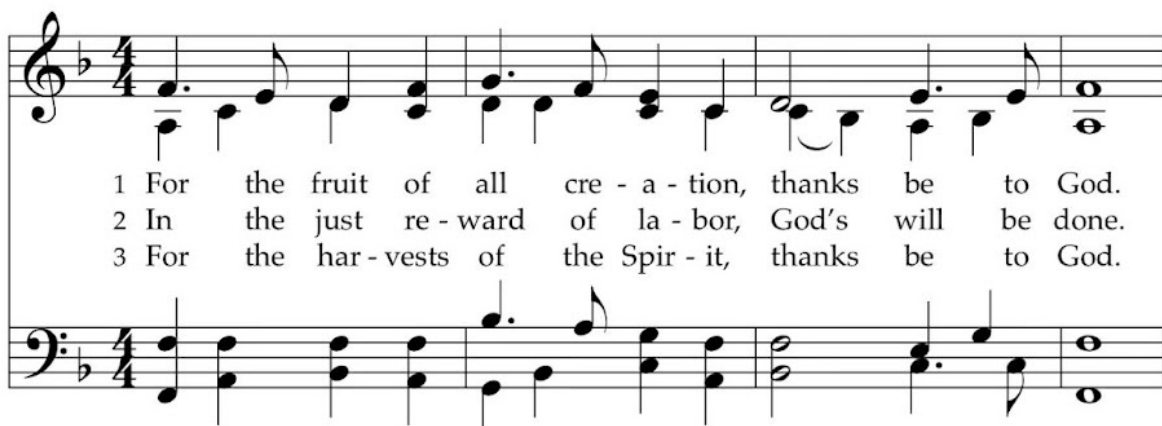
forever. Amen.

***Sending Hymn** *At The Lamb's High Feast We Sing*

***Charge & Blessing**

Postlude *A Litany of Joy* | Alfred V. Fedak

For the Fruit of All Creation 36




1 For the fruit of all cre - a - tion, thanks be to God.
 2 In the just re - ward of la - bor, God's will be done.
 3 For the har - vests of the Spir - it, thanks be to God.



For the gifts to ev - ery na - tion, thanks be to God.
 In the help we give our neigh - bor, God's will be done.
 For the good we all in - her - it, thanks be to God.



For the plow - ing, sow - ing, reap - ing, si - lent growth while we are
 In our world - wide task of car - ing for the hun - gry and de -
 For the won - ders that as - tound us, for the truths that still con -



sleep - ing, fu - ture needs in earth's safe - keep - ing, thanks be to God.
 spair - ing, in the har - vests we are shar - ing, God's will be done.
 found us, most of all that love has found us, thanks be to God.

834 Precious Lord, Take My Hand



1 Pre - cious Lord, take my hand; lead me on, help me
2 When my way grows drear, pre - cious Lord, lin - ger



stand; I am tired, I am weak, I am worn.
near; when my life is al - most gone,



Through the storm, through the night, lead me on to the
hear my cry, hear my call, hold my hand lest I



light; take my hand, pre - cious Lord, lead me home.
fall; take my hand, pre - cious Lord, lead me home.

Salaam/Peace

Instrumental introduction, interlude, and ending

Unison Am A/C#

1 Your peace with - in us, Lord, will stand, sur - pass - ing all we
2 When walk - ing we are led a - stray, your Spir - it in us
3 God's peace you of - fered us to live, a peace the world can

The image shows a musical score for a unison vocal part. The key signature has one sharp (F#), and the time signature is 4/4. The melody is written on a single staff. The lyrics are provided below the staff, with three verses. The first verse is 'Your peace within us, Lord, will stand, surpassing all we'. The second verse is 'When walking we are led astray, your Spirit in us'. The third verse is 'God's peace you offered us to live, a peace the world can'. The score includes a unison vocal line and a bass line. The unison vocal line starts on a G4 note, moves to A4, then B4, and continues with various intervals. The bass line starts on a G3 note, moves to F3, then E3, and continues with various intervals. The score is for a unison vocal part, with the key signature of one sharp (F#) and a time signature of 4/4. The lyrics are provided below the staff, with three verses. The first verse is 'Your peace within us, Lord, will stand, surpassing all we'. The second verse is 'When walking we are led astray, your Spirit in us'. The third verse is 'God's peace you offered us to live, a peace the world can'. The score includes a unison vocal line and a bass line. The unison vocal line starts on a G4 note, moves to A4, then B4, and continues with various intervals. The bass line starts on a G3 note, moves to F3, then E3, and continues with various intervals.

un - der - stand. E - ven when fears sur - round our land you
lights the way to bring us back and guard our days. You
nev - er give, and while your Spir - it in us lives, you

Bm7(♯5) E7 *Refrain* Am Em7

fill our lives with peace. Sa - laam, sa - laam, the
laam, sa - laam, the

peace of God to ev - ery race. Sa - ev - ery place.

At the Lamb's High Feast We Sing

D Asus A D A Em Asus A D

1 At the Lamb's high feast we sing praise to our vic - to - rious King,
 2 Where the pas - chal blood is poured death's dread an - gel sheathes the sword;
 3 Might - y vic - tim from the sky, hell's fierce powers be - neath you lie;
 4 Eas - ter tri - umph, Eas - ter joy, this a - lone can sin des - troy!

Asus A D A Em Asus A D

who has washed us in the tide flow - ing from his wound - ed side.
 Is - rael's hosts tri - um - phant go through the wave that drowns the foe.
 you have con - quered in the fight, you have brought us life and light.
 From sin's power, Lord, set us free, new - born souls in you to be.

A D Esus E A Em Bm F#sus F# Bm

Praise we Christ, whose love di - vine gives his sa - cred blood for wine,
 Praise we Christ, whose blood was shed, pas - chal vic - tim, pas - chal bread;
 Now no more can death ap - pall, now no more the grave en - thrall;
 Fa - ther, who the crown shall give; Sav - ior, by whose death we live;

D G Esus E A G Em Asus A D

gives his bod - y for the feast—Christ the vic - tim, Christ the priest.
 with sin - cer - i - ty and love eat we man - na from a - bove.
 you have o - pened par - a - dise, and your saints in you shall rise.
 Spir - it, guide through all our days: Three in One, your name we praise.