

THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN LEONIA

ORGANIZED 1899 AN INCLUSIVE COMMUNITY OF FAITH

September 16, 2018



**GOD IS CALLING US TO LET OUR LIGHT SHINE BEFORE OTHERS,
SO THAT THEY MAY SEE AND GLORIFY GOD. Matthew 5:16**

The Rev. Dr. Leah Fowler, Pastor
Renée Guerrero Harris, Organist/Choir Director
Patricia Major, Church Administrator

17nd Sunday after Pentecost
16th September 2018 10:30 a.m.

Preparing for Worship

Please silence cell phones. An asterisk (*) in the bulletin means please stand if you are able. **Speak in unison at the bold face areas.** Newer English speaker? English copies of the sermon are available from the ushers to help you follow along. LARGE-TYPE editions of the Hymnal are available from the ushers, as well as Chinese/English, Spanish/English, Korean/English and Japanese/English Bibles.

You may share joys and concerns to be shared during the Prayers of the People by filling out a blue prayer card and leaving it in the offering plate.

Nursery care is available in the room adjacent to the rear hallway. Kindergartners to fourth graders remain in worship through the children's sermon; they then may go to the activity period. Parents may also sit with restless children in the Tower room, which is located off the rear of the sanctuary. Children are welcome to remain for the entire service. Sunday School and Adult Classes meet from 9:30 to 10:15 am.

GATHERING MUSIC

GREETING

Rev. Dr. Leah Fowler

INTROIT: "I Heard the Voice of Jesus Say"

I heard the voice of Jesus say, "I am this dark world's light;
look unto me, your morn shall rise, and all your day be bright."

I looked to Jesus, and I found in him my star, my sun;
and in that light of life I'll walk till traveling days are done.

Gathering as God's People

*CALL TO WORSHIP

Jesus asks the disciples:

"Who do people say I am?"

They answer, "Some say John the Baptist; some say Elijah; and others say one of the prophets."

But Jesus presses them:

"Who do *you* say I am?"

Peter answers, "You are Christ—God's anointed one, God-with-us!"

Now Jesus pushes *us*:

"What about you? Here, in this moment, in this community, Who do you say I am?" Where do we find the wisdom to answer?

*INVOCATION

*OPENING HYMN #726 "Will You Come and Follow Me"

CALL TO CONFESSION

What are folks saying about us? Do they mention our kindness, or how hard we are on others; do they speak of our love, or about our selfishness? God invites us to follow Jesus and reflect him in our lives. Join me, as we confess how we have not done so, as we pray together, saying,

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

All we need to do is open our mouths, Teacher of hearts, to show that we give our tongues free rein.

We claim we love others, but speak bitter words to them. We think we are good and gracious people, but hurl epithets at those we do not like, or those we fear. We are quicker to speak of judgment for others, rather than being voices for justice.

But with your gracious mercy, Tender-hearted God, you can put out the wildfires of bitterness sparked by our words.

You can stop the words on the tips of our tongues and transform them into whispers of peace and love. You can open our ears so that we can hear all that your Teacher of grace and hope, Jesus the Messiah, has to share with us, in these moments and all those to come. Amen.

Time for silent meditation

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

Can we handle it – the good news; the fact that God's grace can transform us; that God can teach us new songs; that God can fill us with hope and joy?

It is hard to believe, which may be why it is hard to accept it. But God loves us, God has mercy on us, God is with us. Thanks be to God, we are forgiven! Amen.

SUNG RESPONSE #635 "Sing, Praise, and Bless the Lord"

(sing first half in English and second half in Latin)

Passing of the Peace

Listening for God's Word to Us

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

God of John, Elijah, and all the prophets, in Christ you came to lead us in the way of everlasting life. Set our minds on holy things so that we may have the courage to take up the cross and follow you; through Jesus the Messiah. Amen.

A READING FROM THE HEBREW SCRIPTURES: Isaiah 50:4-9(page 680 or page 832)

A READING FROM THE GOSPELS: Mark 8:27-38 (page 43 or page 53)

The Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

CHILDREN'S SERMON

Rev. Dr. Leah Fowler

COMMISSIONING OF SUNDAY SCHOOL TEACHERS

SUNG RESPONSE #746 "Send Me Jesus" (*once in Zulu then 3 verses in English*)

SERMON

"Prophet and Gains"

Rev. Dr. Leah Fowler

Responding to God's Word

*AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

It is not true that this world and its inhabitants are doomed to die and be lost;
This is true: for God so loved the world that he gave his only Son so that everyone who believes in him shall not die, but have everlasting life.

It is not true that we must accept inhumanity and discrimination, hunger and poverty, death and destruction;

This is true: I have come that they may have life, and have it abundantly.

It is not true that violence and hatred shall have the last word, and that war and destruction have come to stay forever;

This is true: for to us a child is born, to us a son is given, in whom authority will rest, and whose name will be Prince of Peace.

It is not true that we are simply victims of the powers of evil that seek to rule the world; **This is true: To me is given authority in heaven and on earth, and lo, I am with you always, to the end of the world.**

It is not true that we have to wait for those who are specially gifted, who are the prophets of the church, before we can do anything;

This is true: I will pour out my Spirit on all people, and your sons and daughters shall prophesy, your young people shall see visions, and your old folk dream dreams.

It is not true that our dreams of liberation of humankind, our dreams of justice, of human dignity, of peace, are not meant for this earth and its history;

This is true: The hour comes, and it is now, that true worshippers shall worship God in Spirit and in truth.

A South African Statement of Faith, taken from the Iona Abbey Worship Book

*HYMN #453 "Open Your Ears, O Faithful People"

On the second verse, sing the refrain in Hebrew

THE WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Flowers today are in honor of all of our mothers, on the occasion of my mother's (Elsie Gismond Liccardo's) birthday, given by Susan and Pete Shanno.

SHARING OF OUR TITHES AND OFFERINGS

ANTHEM "Our Journey of Faith" (M. Hayes)

Take a look around you. What do you see?

A world in search of happiness and peace.

We have a vision, we know the way.

Come walk beside us in our journey of faith.

Build a bridge of hope. Make a path of understanding.

Plant a seed of truth. Watch it grow into something beautiful.

Choose the road of peace and justice.

Join the way of true compassion.

We are building bridge with every step we take.

Building bridge together in our journey of faith.

We are the future, the Church to be, shining God's light for all to see.
Our faith is solid, our love is strong, united in fellowship, united in song.

***DOXOLOGY**

Old Hundredth

**Praise God from whom all blessings flow;
Praise God all people here below;
Praise God above ye heavenly host;
Creator, Christ and Holy Ghost! Amen.**

***PRAYER OF DEDICATION**

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE AND THE LORD'S PRAYER

[You are welcome to say the Lord's Prayer (and any prayers) in your mother tongue.]

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.

Going Forth in Dedication and Service

***HYMN #753** "Make Me a Channel of Your Peace"

***THE CHARGE and BENEDICTION**

Our liturgist, Philip Wilson, and our reader, Jun Hee Han, are helping lead our worship this morning.

The art on the bulletin is called "Take Up Your Cross" by Carl Dixon, an African-American artist living in Texas.

USHERS: Llesli Gonzalez-Chand, Linda McGarry, Anne Stebbins

COUNTERS: Diane Borer, David Voreacos

GREETER: Susan Dindial FLOWERS: Susan Shanno NURSERY: Vicky Li

We welcome all visitors in the name of Jesus Christ. We invite you to sign the guest register in the entry room and to join us for coffee in the entry room following the service.

Readings for Sunday September 23, 2018

Proverbs 31:10-31, Psalms 1

James 3:13-4:3, 7-8a, Mark 9:30-37

GREETER

Month of September: Susan Dindial

COUNTERS

September 23: Olivia Taylor, Fumio Ito September 30: Hyung Shim, Jonathan Phillips

October 7: Anne Stebbins, Pete Shanno October 14: Fumio Ito, David Voreacos

USHERS

September 23: Judy Nyirongo, Karen Peters, Jack Peters

September 30: Gretchen Harders, Lisa VanDeWeert, Jennifer Watson

October 7: Roberta Toolen, Fara Razavy, Wanangwa Nyirongo

October 14: Hyung Shim, Jeff, Im, Susan Dindial

SECOND READERS

September 23: Cynthia Callahan September 30: Vicky Li

October 7: Venge Nyirongo October 14: Susan Shanno

NURSERY

September 23: Nicole Lehnbeuter September 30: Linda McGarry

October 7: Judy Nyirongo October 14: Laura Gonzalez

COMMUNION SERVERS

October 7: Jonathan Phillips, Leah Puzzo

November 11: Nancy Salvati, Hyung Shim, Joe VanDeWeert, Betsy Voreacos, Pete Shanno

December 2: Anne Stebbins, Lisa VanDeWeert, David Voreacos, Jonathan Phillips, Susan Shanno

FLOWERS

September 23: Laura Gonzalez September 30: Mineko Hinto

October 7: Eulalia Cabrera October 28: Pete Shanno

CALENDAR FOR THE WEEK

After Worship Today:

Luncheon for Building Renovation Q&A

3:00 p.m. Japanese Language Service

Tuesday, 9/18/18

6:00 p.m. Rev Leah preaches at Presbyterian Meeting

Wednesday, 9/19/18

10:45 a.m. Bible Study

Thursday, 9/20/18

7:30 p.m. Al-Anon Meeting

10:00 a.m.-12noon ESL Registration

3:00 p.m. Japanese Children's Workshop

7:00 p.m.-8:00 p.m. ESL Registration

7:00 p.m. Bottles & Badges

Next Sunday, 9/23/18

9:30 a.m. Sunday School for all

10:30 a.m. Worship

Minute to Minute Speaker: Edafe Okporo

12:00 noon Book Signing: "Bed 26" Edafe Okporo

ANNOUNCEMENTS

TODAY! CONGREGATION LUNCH FOR BUILDING RENOVATION Q&A

We are making needed improvements to prevent further damage to our crumbling building, to meet code requirements, and to be more handicapped accessible. There will be a congregational lunch on Sept. 16 to encourage pledges for this project, and a congregational meeting on Sept. 30 to approve the costs and plan for payment for the project. An informational mailing was sent; please let Pastor Leah know if you haven't received it.

BIBLE STUDY The weekly Bible Study will start this Wednesday September 19 at 10:45 a.m.

EDAFE OKPORO Next Sunday we will be joined by Edade Okporo as a Minute to Minute speaker during worship and then for a book signing of his book, "Bed 26". Mr. Okporo has connected with our church through Eulalia Cabrera's work with First Friends; he will give a first-hand account of what life is like in a detention center and will give a personal face to our church's discussions on how we may advocate for undocumented immigrants in our community.

ESL CLASSES TO BEGIN English Conversation classes will begin for the fall semester starting October 1, 2018. Registration will be Thursday, September 20, 2018 AND Tuesday, September 25 from 10:00 a.m.-12noon and in the evening 7:00 p.m.-8:30 p.m. Please tell your family, friends and neighbors of the registration times. Classes are sponsored by Presbyterian Church in Leonia and Leonia Public Library and classes will be held at our Church until the week of October 8th, then move to Leonia Public Library from the week of October 15th except two classes. These classes stay in Church until the renovation begins.

COFFEE CANS FOR FLOWERS

Please help us bring joy and happiness to others by saving your coffee cans and other plastic quart containers (like the ones used for take-out soup from Chinese restaurants) to use for delivering the weekly flowers to others. Please bring in your washed and cleaned containers and give to Vicky Li or leave in the cupboard under the sink to the left of the refrigerator.

SUNDAY SCHOOL HAS STARTED

Classes for children are 9:30 Sundays in the 2nd floor of the Educational Wing, and Adult Classes are taught in the Tower Room. Many thanks to our teachers:

PreK-K: Judy Nyirongo, Vicky Li, Keyla Garcia, and Yukiko and Takeshi Aoki

1st-3rd: Suzanne Broffman and Tara Coleman

4th-6th: Lisa VanDeWeert and Molly Voreacos

Adults: MinBum (M.B.) Koo

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