

Clifton Presbyterian Church (PCUSA)
Loving God ~ Loving One Another ~ Loving the World

Breath Prayer

INHALE: Love in me *EXHALE:* Love in the world



Image by Iva Rajović on Unsplash

May 18, 2025
9:45 AM *Prayer and Care*
10:00 AM *Worship*

5th Sunday of Easter

WE GATHER TOGETHER TO WORSHIP GOD

*Words in **BOLD** indicate the congregation reading together. Words of the worship leader are in PLAIN type. An asterisk * indicates that the congregation may stand, as you wish.*

Gathering Song GtG 243

Be Not Afraid

Be not afraid; sing out for joy!

Christ is risen, alleluia!

Be not afraid; sing out for joy!

Christ is risen, alleluia!

Time of Prayer and Care

Prelude

***Call to Worship** *from Psalm 148*

One: Praise the Lord!

All: Praise the Lord from the heavens. Praise God from the heights!

One: Praise the Lord, you angels. Sing praise, you heavenly host!

All: Praise the Lord, O sun and moon. Join in song, O shining stars!

One: Praise the Lord, snow and rain. Blow loud, wind and storm!

All: Praise the Lord, O trees. Dance with joy, O birds!

One: Praise the Lord, women and men. Rejoice, children and rulers!

All: Praise the Lord, weak and strong. Sing for joy, timid and bold!

One: Let all creation praise God's name!

All: Praise the Lord!

***Presbyterian Hymnal 495 I Sing the Mighty Power of God** *vv 1, 3*

**I sing the mighty power of God
that made the mountains rise,
that spread the flowing seas abroad
and built the lofty skies.
I sing the wisdom that ordained
the sun to rule the day.
The moon shines full at God's command,
and all the stars obey.**

**There's not a plant or flower below
but makes thy glories known.
And clouds arise, and tempests blow,
by order from thy throne,
while all that borrows life from thee
is ever in thy care,
and everywhere that we can be,
thou, God, art present there.**

Prayer of Confession

One: The world often judges by outward appearances, but Jesus reveals to us a deeper reality. When we fail to live in the new way of love he commands, we distance ourselves from the truth and pretend to possess a righteousness that is only ours through Christ. In this new promise, and knowing God's steadfast love is trustworthy and true, let us confess our shortcomings together, seeking the Spirit's new workings within us. Let us pray.

All: Loving God, you call us to your merciful, gracious love, freely given without expectation or strings attached. While we are eager to experience your mercy and grace in our own lives, we are quick to make our extension of your mercy and grace conditional for others, holding court in our own hearts. We would rather show mercy to those we judge worthy, forgetting the new commandment to love as you have loved us. We would rather extend grace to those who will show us grace in return, missing the trustworthy and true nature of your boundless forgiveness. Forgive us, Redeeming God. And transform our hearts with your amazing grace and unconditional love so that our relationships and your world are transformed. Amen.

Assurance of God's Grace

One: Behold: The former things have passed away, and God's grace flows like a river of new life. Friends, hear the good news: through the grace of Jesus Christ, you are forgiven! You are made anew!

All: Alleluia! Amen.

Sing Glory GtG 582 *Glory to God, Whose Goodness Shines on Me*

**Glory to God, whose goodness shines on me,
and to the Son, whose grace has pardoned me,
and to the Spirit, whose love has set me free.**

As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be. Amen.

The Peace of Christ

One: Christ's work of reconciliation offers us forgiveness for our sins and the possibility of genuine fellowship and reconciliation in community. As God has given us peace through Christ, so let us share the peace of Christ with each other, and commit to living as peacemakers in this world. The peace of Christ be with you.

All: And also with you.

Those in the sanctuary are invited to greet those around you.

Those on zoom are invited to offer greetings in the chat.

Cornerstone for Kids

Elder Nikki Lehmann will lead the children (preschool – kindergarten, ages 3 – 6 years) through a spiritual journey of learning by listening, reading, and discussing bible stories as well as creating fun, hands-on crafts! The children will be excused from the worship service. Children are also always welcome to remain in worship.

Offering our Gifts to God

For those who would like to make a physical offering, the offering plates are available in the middle of the sanctuary. Donations can also be made online. www.cliftonpc.org

One: Just as God pours out new blessings without measure, let us, with hearts overflowing with gratitude for this divine generosity in our lives, offer ourselves and our resources for the ongoing ministry of Jesus Christ in this new creation being ushered in.

All: Generous God, receive the gifts that we offer to you. Do more with them than we can ask or imagine, furthering the holy work of your new kingdom in the name of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ who revealed to us the truth of your loving commands.

WE HEAR THE WORD OF GOD

Prayer for Illumination *Open My Heart by Ana Hernández*
Open my heart, open my heart.
Open my heart, open my heart.

First Reading Psalm 90:1-2, 16-17 (NRSVUE)

- ¹ I will extol you, O LORD, for you have drawn me up
and did not let my foes rejoice over me.
- ² O LORD my God, I cried to you for help, and you have healed me.
- ³ O LORD, you brought up my soul from Sheol,
restored me to life from among those gone down to the Pit.^[a]
- ⁴ Sing praises to the LORD, O you his faithful ones,
and give thanks to his holy name.
- ⁵ For his anger is but for a moment; his favor is for a lifetime.
Weeping may linger for the night, but joy comes with the morning.

One: God be in our listening, God be in our understanding.

All: Amen.

Anthem

Second Reading John 21:15-19 (CEB)

¹⁵ When they finished eating, Jesus asked Simon Peter, “Simon son of John, do you love me more than these?”

Simon replied, “Yes, Lord, you know I love you.”

Jesus said to him, “Feed my lambs.” ¹⁶ Jesus asked a second time, “Simon son of John, do you love me?”

Simon replied, “Yes, Lord, you know I love you.”

Jesus said to him, "Take care of my sheep." ¹⁷ He asked a third time, "Simon son of John, do you love me?"

Peter was sad that Jesus asked him a third time, "Do you love me?" He replied, "Lord, you know everything; you know I love you."

Jesus said to him, "Feed my sheep. ¹⁸ I assure you that when you were younger you tied your own belt and walked around wherever you wanted. When you grow old, you will stretch out your hands and another will tie your belt and lead you where you don't want to go." ¹⁹ He said this to show the kind of death by which Peter would glorify God. After saying this, Jesus said to Peter, "Follow me."

One: For the Word of God in scripture, for the Word of God among us,
for the Word of God within us,

All: Thanks be to God.

Sermon

Creating Connection: How We Love

Diane Walton Hendricks

WE RESPOND TO GOD'S WORD

Affirmation of Faith

One: What can you answer when someone asks, "Who is Jesus?"

All: We believe Jesus is the unseen love of God made known; a kind friend who calls us by name and offers outstretched hands whenever there is need; gifting us with the Holy Spirit who never leaves us.

One: What can you answer when someone asks, "What is church?"

All: We believe the church is called to be a space of gentleness where you can breathe: like a clearing where you can hear the birds, feel the breeze, and smell the fresh air, away from pressure, commotion and noise. In this place of gentleness, we belong. In this place of gentleness, we can find courage to be vulnerable and honest with ourselves, God, and one another; we can offer our gifts in service of the common good; and be strengthened to bear this hope to the world.

One: What is our calling, as followers of Jesus, as church?

All: We believe that we are compelled to share this space of gentleness to those who are alone in the world. We will listen to the needs of those who live beyond the gentleness. We will honor what they share, and respond with love, trusting God to bring out what is good. This is gospel - good news.

Hymn of Response GtG 753 Make Me A Channel Of Your Peace *vv 1, 3, 4*

**Make me a channel of your peace.
Where there is hatred, let me bring your love.**

**Where there is injury, your pardon, Lord,
and where there's doubt, true faith in you.**

**O, Master, grant that I may never seek
so much to be consoled as to console,
to be understood as to understand,
to be loved as to love with all my soul.**

**Make me a channel of your peace.
It is in pardoning that we are pardoned,
in giving of ourselves that we receive,
and in dying that we're born to eternal life.**

Prayers of the People and Lord's Prayer

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.

WE ARE SENT TO THE WORLD

Minute for Ministries

Ringling of the Bell

Charge and Benediction

Benediction Response PH 535 Go With Us, Lord

**Go with us, Lord, and guide the way
through this and every coming day,
that in your Spirit strong and true
our lives may be our gift to you.**

Thank you for joining us for worship this morning. We can be reached at office@cliftonpc.org

Permission to podcast/stream the music in this service obtained from
One License #A- 721138 and CCLI License 20618208.

Thanks to those leading us in worship

Hosts: Peggy and Stewart Cranston

Deacon Note Taker: Barbara Brown

Liturgist: Jen Basham

Technical Team: Jim Wrightson

Mission Elder: Kimberly Davis

Sanctuary Flowers: Open

CPC STAFF

Rev. Dr. Diane Walton Hendricks, Pastor | John Kim, Music Director
Hannah Harris, Lead Vocalist | Debbie Kilpatrick, Office Administrator
Kate Trussell, Preschool Director | Rev. Dr. Lynn Stanton-Hoyle, Pastor Emerita

Clifton Presbyterian Church is a welcoming Christian community driven by compassion, generosity, resilience, and service to others.