

First Presbyterian Church

Benton Harbor



“This is Who You Are and This is What You Do”

Ephesians 2:4-10 & Mark 6:34-44

Standing Tall on Morton Hill for over 130 Years

June 1, 2025 • Seventh Sunday in Easter

We Are Welcomed

Welcome

Opening Prayer

by Kathryn Schreiber, from *In the Big Love*

Prelude and Setting the Table for Worship

“The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overtake it.” John 1:5

We light the Christ Candle each week as a reminder that Christ – the One who shines brightly in the darkness – is ever-present with us, not only here in worship, but in our everyday life.

“...we were buried with him by baptism into death, so that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, so we also might walk in newness of life.” Romans 6:4

We pour water into the font each week as a reminder of our own baptism – that moment when we connected with God’s creative purpose, cleansing power, and redemptive promise.

We Are Gathered

The Call to Worship

One: God, who comes to us in Word and Spirit,
calls us to the table set for all who hunger.

**All: We hunger for grace and forgiveness;
we hunger for justice and peace.**

One: God knows and meets our deepest hungers
with bread which always satisfies.

**All: God knows and meets our thirst for righteousness
with drink which always quenches.**

One: Thanks be to God who blesses and feeds all human yearnings

All: and who does this through our feeble, simple hands!

Song of Praise *Please stand as you are able, in body or in spirit*

"Lord I Lift Your Name on High" words and music: Rick Founds

Lord, I lift your name on high
Lord, I love to sing your praises
I'm so glad you're in my life
I'm so glad you came to save us.

You came from heaven to earth
to show the way
from the earth to the cross
my debt to pay
from the cross to the grave
from the grave to the sky,
Lord I lift your name on high.

Call to Confession and Assurance of Forgiveness

from Isaiah 43:1-3 + Romans 12:9-18 + 1 John 1:9

One: Let love be genuine; hate what is evil; hold fast to what is good;
love one another with mutual affection; outdo one another in showing honor.

All: We didn't do any of that, God.

One: Do not lag in zeal; be ardent in spirit; serve the Lord. Rejoice in hope; be patient in affliction; persevere in prayer. Contribute to the needs of the saints; pursue hospitality to strangers.

All: We didn't do any of that, either.

One: Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse them. Rejoice with those who rejoice; weep with those who weep. Live in harmony with one another; do not be arrogant, but associate with the lowly; do not claim to be wiser than you are.

All: We didn't do any of that.

One: Do not repay anyone evil for evil, but take thought for what is noble in the sight of all. If it is possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all.

All: I know I didn't do that.

Song of Gratitude

"Glory to God, Whose Goodness Shines on Me" *Glory to God #582*

Passing of the Peace

We Hear God's Word

Scripture Reading Ephesians 2:4-10 *The Message*

Immense in mercy and with an incredible love, God embraced us. God took our sin-dead lives and made us alive in Christ. God did all this on their own, with no help from us! Then God picked us up and set us down in highest heaven in company with Jesus, our Messiah.

Now God has us where God wants us, with all the time in this world and the next to shower grace and kindness upon us in Christ Jesus. Saving is all God's idea, and all God's work. All we do is trust God enough to let God do it. It's God's gift from start to finish! We don't play the major role. If we did, we'd probably go around bragging that we'd done the whole thing! No, we neither make nor save ourselves. God does both the making and saving. God creates each of us by Christ Jesus to join him in the work he does, the good work he has gotten ready for us to do, work we had better be doing.

One: The Word of God for the People of God.

All: Thanks be to God!

Song of Preparation

"Open the Eyes of My Heart"

Glory to God #452

THE WORD

452 Open the Eyes of My Heart

The musical score is written for a single melodic line in treble clef, key of D major (two sharps), and 4/4 time. It consists of eight staves of music. The lyrics are written below the notes. Chord symbols are placed above the staff at various points. The score includes a repeat sign with first and second endings. The final staff ends with a double bar line.

D A/C#

O-pen the eyes of my heart, Lord. O-pen the eyes of my heart;

G/B G D

I want to see you; I want to see you;

1 2
Dsus D A Bm

to see you high and lift - ed up,

G A

shin-ing in the light of your glo - ry. Pour out your

Bm Em7 D/E A

pow-er and love as we sing "Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly."

D A/C#

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly. Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly.

Bm G Em/D D

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly, I want to see you.

Scripture Reading Matthew 14:15-21*New Revised Standard Version Updated Edition*

When it was evening, the disciples came to him [Jesus] and said, "This is a deserted place, and the hour is now late; send the crowds away so that they may go into the villages and buy food for themselves." Jesus said to them, "They need not go away; you give them something to eat." They replied, "We have nothing here but five loaves and two fish." And he said, "Bring them here to me." Then he ordered the crowds to sit down on the grass. Taking the five loaves and the two fish, he looked up to heaven and blessed and broke the loaves and gave them to the disciples, and the disciples gave them to the crowds. And all ate and were filled, and they took up what was left over of the broken pieces, twelve baskets full. And those who ate were about five thousand men, besides women and children.

One: These words are trustworthy and true.

All: Thanks be to God!

Prayer for Illumination**Proclamation of the Word**

"This is Who You Are and This is What You Do"

Rev. Sheth LaRue

We Respond to God's Word

The Sacrament of Baptism

Scripture readings are from the First Nations Version: An Indigenous Translation of the New Testament

The Apostle's Creed

**I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the Virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried;
he descended to the dead.
On the third day he rose again;
he ascended into heaven,
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.**

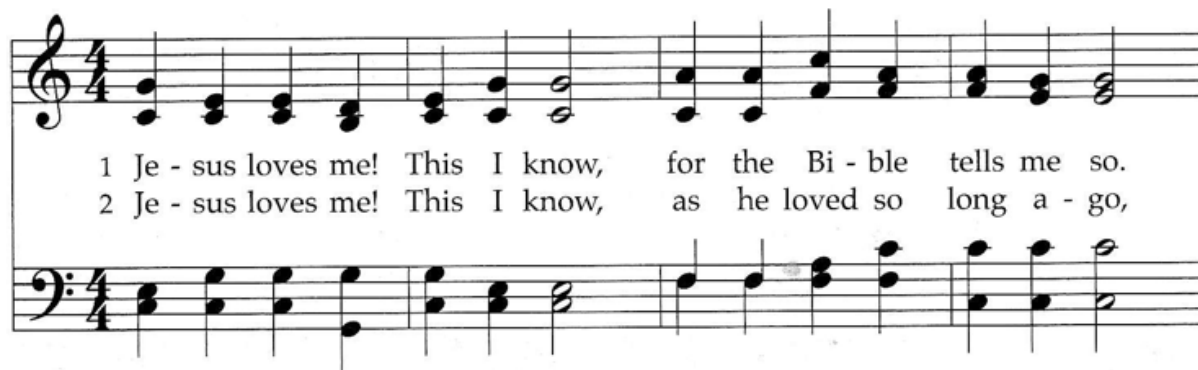
**I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen.**

Song of Baptism

"Jesus Loves Me" Glory to God #188

188

Jesus Loves Me!

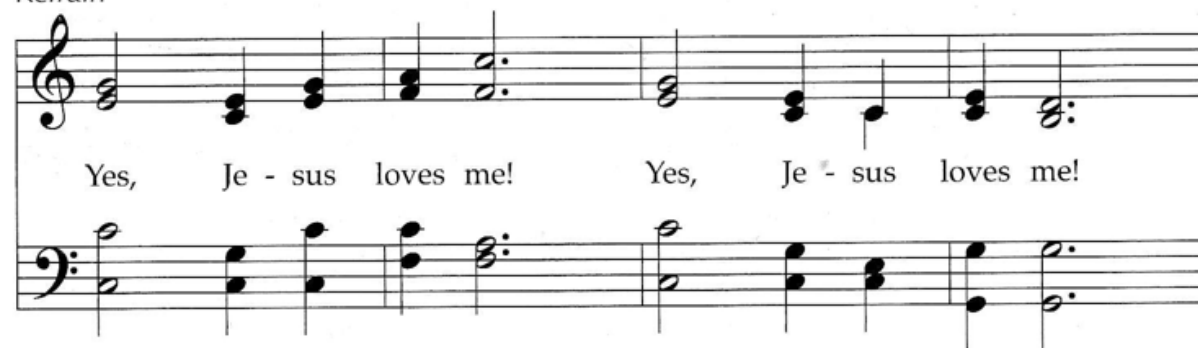


1 Je - sus loves me! This I know, for the Bi - ble tells me so.
2 Je - sus loves me! This I know, as he loved so long a - go,



Lit - tle ones to him be-long. They are weak, but he is strong.
tak - ing chil-dren on his knee, say - ing, "Let them come to me."

Refrain



Yes, Je - sus loves me! Yes, Je - sus loves me!



Yes, Je - sus loves me! The Bi - ble tells me so.

The Offertory

As those who have been claimed and set free by Christ's grace, we respond with gratitude, offering him our lives, our spiritual gifts, and our material goods. The gifts we offer express our stewardship of creation, demonstrate our care for one another, support the ministries of the church, and provide for the needs of the poor. Offerings may be placed into any one of the plates in the sanctuary.

At this time children may use one of the baskets found on the front pew to collect quarters for our quarter tube offerings, collected for specific missions and ministries of this church.

Doxology and The Prayer of Dedication *Please stand as you are able, in body or in spirit*

**All: Praise God from whom all blessings flow
Praise Christ all creatures here below
Praise Holy Spirit evermore
Praise Triune God, whom we adore. Amen.**

Joys and Concerns & Prayers of the People

As a community, we believe in the importance of knowing what is happening in each other's lives. At this time we create space for people to share if they are celebrating good news or are carrying something too heavy. There will be times when what another person shares may trigger an emotional response in yourself. Invite God to speak to you through your discomfort, asking "What is this situation teaching me?"

As you prepare to share with the congregation, please do the following:

Please remember that we stream our services and store those videos on a number of platforms. Also remember that nothing is taken down from the internet.

Please be mindful of others' privacy. If you are talking about someone else, it may be more respectful to solicit prayer for "a medical concern" than to describe his or her situation in detail. Remember: the extra detail doesn't make our prayer more effective.

Please be careful to guard the reputation of your children and other members of your family.

*Please consider how to express yourself concisely before you speak. Brevity helps create the space for others to speak.**

** adapted from West Hills Friends: A Quaker Meeting in Portland, OR*

The Invitation to the Lord's Table

The opportunity to eat and drink at this table is not a right bestowed on the worthy, but a privilege given to the undeserving who come in faith, repentance, and love. All who choose to come to the table are free to eat and drink, regardless of their age or understanding. All we ask is that you prepare yourself to celebrate by trusting in Christ, even with doubt. Come and be assured of God's love and grace in Jesus Christ.

Song of Communion

"I'm Gonna Eat at the Welcome Table"

Glory to God #770

JUSTICE AND RECONCILIATION

770 I'm Gonna Eat at the Welcome Table

1 I'm gon-na eat at the wel-come ta - ble;
2 I'm gon-na eat and drink with my Je - sus;
3 I'm gon-na join with sis - ters, broth - ers;
4 Here all the world will find a wel - come;
5 We're gon-na feast on milk and hon - ey;

I'm gon-na eat at the wel-come ta - ble, Al - le - lu - ia.
I'm gon-na eat and drink with my Je - sus, Al - le - lu - ia.
I'm gon-na join with sis - ters, broth - ers, Al - le - lu - ia.
here all the world will find a wel-come, Al - le - lu - ia.
we're gon-na feast on milk and hon - ey, Al - le - lu - ia.

I'm gon-na eat at the wel-come ta - ble; I'm gon - na
I'm gon-na eat and drink with my Je - sus; I'm gon - na
I'm gon-na join with sis - ters, broth - ers; I'm gon - na
Here all the world will find a wel - come; here all the
We're gon-na feast on milk and hon - ey; we're gon - na

eat at the wel - come ta - ble, Al - le - lu - ia.
eat and drink with my Je - sus, Al - le - lu - ia.
join with sis - ters, broth - ers, Al - le - lu - ia.
world will find a wel - come, Al - le - lu - ia.
feast on milk and hon - ey, Al - le - lu - ia.

The image of a great feast showing God's welcome of all people was part of Jewish tradition (Isaiah 25:6-9) and underlies Jesus' parable of the Great Banquet (Luke 14:15-24). Such equality remains as unknown to many people today as it was to the slaves who created this spiritual.

TEXT: African American spiritual, alt.

MUSIC: African American spiritual; arr. Carl Diton, 1980, alt.
Music Arr. © 1930, ren. G. Schirmer, Inc.

WELCOME TABLE
Irregular

The Sacrament of Communion

One: The Lord be with you.

All: And also with you.

One: Lift up your hearts.

All: We lift them to the Lord.

One: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

All: It is right to give our thanks and praise.

One: We give our thanks and praise to you, our glorious God...

All this is why we praise you, our living, loving God. With angels and archangels, and all the forgiven friends of Jesus, we praise you with this song:

**All: Holy, holy, holy Lord,
God of power and might.
Heaven and earth are full of your glory.
Hosanna in the highest.**

One: On the night before he died,
Jesus shared a meal with his best friends...

So we do remember our Savior, Jesus Christ,
who has done such wonderful things for us.
This is the marvelous mystery of faith:

**All: Christ has died.
Christ is risen.
Christ will come again.**

One: And now we pray that you, God, will send your Holy Spirit to make us holy and ready to receive this holy food, the body and blood of Christ. Fill us with power to do your work in the world. Give us energy for loving and blessing, befriending,

forgiving, and bringing the Good News of Jesus to your children wherever we go. Lord our God, we give you thanks and praise, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and our Lord, and with the Holy Spirit to help us sing your praises:

**All: Blessing and honor and glory and power
are yours for ever and ever. Amen.**

All are invited to approach and receive the elements this morning. As you do, please come down the center aisle, receive the elements, and return to your seats. After all have been served and seated, we will partake together. We have gluten-free crackers available upon request. If you are unable to come forward, please raise your hand and we will bring the elements to you.

The Lord's Prayer

All: 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 sins as we forgive those who sin against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

Song of Trust

"Amen" *Glory to God #600*

Announcements

We Are Sent by God

Song of Sending *Please stand as you are able, in body or in spirit*

"The Lord Now Sends Us Forth (Enviado soy de Dios)" *Glory to God #747*

747 The Lord Now Sends Us Forth

Enviado soy de Dios

The Lord now sends us forth with hands to serve and give, to
 En - via - do soy de Dios, mi ma - no lis - ta es - tá pa -



make of all the earth a bet - ter place to live.
 ra cons - truir con él un mun - do fra - ter - nal.



The an - gels are not sent in - to our world of pain to
 Los án - ge - les no son en - via - dos a cam - biar un



do what we were meant to do in Je - sus' name; that
 mun - do de do - lor por un mun - do me - jor; me



falls to you and me and all who are made free. Help
 ha to - ca - do a mí ha - cer - lo rea - li - dad. A -



us, O Lord, we pray, to do your will to - day.
 yú - da - me, Se - ñor, a ha - cer tu vo - lun - tad.

Charge and Benediction

Postlude

Prayer for the Week

Thomas Merton from *Thoughts in Solitude* (Abbey of Our Lady of Gethsemani, 1956)

My Lord God, I have no idea where I am going. I do not see the road ahead of me. I cannot know for certain where it will end. Nor do I really know myself, and the fact that I think that I am following Your will does not mean that I am actually doing so. But I believe that the desire to please You does in fact please You. And I hope I have that desire in all that I am doing. I hope that I will never do anything apart from that desire. And I know that if I do this You will lead me by the right road though I may know nothing about it. Therefore I will trust You always though I may seem to be lost and in the shadow of death. I will not fear, for You are ever with me, and you will never leave me to face my perils alone. Amen.

Coming Up

Tuesday, June 3rd

9am-4pm	Pastor Sheth's Office Hours
10am	Bible Study (The Gathering Space)
730pm	Pub Theology

Thursday, June 5th

All Day	VA Counseling (The Gathering Space)
6pm	Community Supper

Sunday, June 8th

10am	Worship @ FPC Benton Harbor
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Announcements

- **Meet our lovely Pub Theology group** at the Livery this Tuesday at 730 pm. Good discussion, great company, delicious food, refreshing drinks – what more could you want?
- **This is the final week to vote** for your favorite or most intriguing Old Testament story for our summer series: “The Stories Jesus Knew”. You can vote for your ten favorite stories by making your mark on the ballot in Goff Hall.
- **Do you know the church has a webpage?** Seriously! www.firstpresbh.org
 - Follow-up question: do you know anything about webpage design and would you be willing to sit down with some folks and talk about how we can make our page better? Talk with Pastor Sheth.
- **Pastor Sheth will be on vacation** June 2-8. If you have questions, concerns, prayer requests or pastoral care needs, please reach out to one of the church’s elders.