

FIRST
PRESBYTERIAN
CHURCH
OF THE COVENANT

September 27, 2020

11:00 a.m., Facebook LIVE

www.Facebook.com/FirstCovenantErie/

Fall Series: “Becoming a Matthew 25 Church”

Welcome! Come, let us worship together—apart!

*“Worship” is a verb: Sing. Pray. Read aloud **bolded** responses. Share comments. Stand if you choose, where you see *.*

G A T H E R I N G

Ringing of the Bell Tower Carillon (10:45 a.m.) Montgomery Service

Gathering Music Selections from *Suite for Organ*, Georg Philip Teleman Leslie Weber

Welcome & Announcements Rev. Chris Weichman

Moment for Ministry Racial Justice Month Rev. Britney L. V. Knight

Call to Worship (*responsive, please read aloud the **bold print***) Montgomery Service

Listen, O people, tune your ears to hear God’s word.

We gather to proclaim our sacred story, to tell of God’s wondrous deeds.

Come, O people, into holy space to worship the Lord, our sustainer and guide.

Let us turn to God in prayer and praise.

*Hymn #264

At the Name of Jesus

(pages 5)

P R A Y I N G

Prayer of Confession (*responsive, please read aloud the **bold print***) Rachel Moldovan

Loving Lord, you desire that we have the same mind as Christ
and imitate his compassionate service.

But our minds are fixed on attitudes and ambitions that draw us away from you.

We labor for ourselves

and attend to the needs of a precious few
not considering how our time and talents could bless the world.

**We look up to the rich and famous and overlook the lowly
rather than affirming the dignity of all.**

Transform us, we pray.

**By your grace, give us the same mind and the same love as our Lord Jesus Christ,
and work within us until our actions bear witness to the faith our tongues confess.**

Assurance of Pardon Rachel Moldovan

The LORD is compassionate and gracious, slow to anger, abounding in love.

He will not always accuse, nor will he harbor his anger forever;

he does not treat us as our sins deserve or repay us according to our iniquities.

For as high as the heavens are above the earth, so great is his love for those who fear him;
as far as the east is from the west, so far has he removed our transgressions from us. -Psalm 103, 8-12

***Passing of the Peace** (*responsive, please read aloud the bold print*)

May the peace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you.

And also with you.

Share greetings of Christ's peace by submitting a comment on the Facebook livestream.

How will you live out the Peace of Christ you have shared, and was shared with you, in the coming week?

L I S T E N I N G

Reading *Exodus 17:1-7*

Seph Kumer

From the wilderness of Sin the whole congregation of the Israelites journeyed by stages, as the LORD commanded. They camped at Rephidim, but there was no water for the people to drink. ² The people quarreled with Moses, and said, "Give us water to drink." Moses said to them, "Why do you quarrel with me? Why do you test the LORD?" ³ But the people thirsted there for water; and the people complained against Moses and said, "Why did you bring us out of Egypt, to kill us and our children and livestock with thirst?" ⁴ So Moses cried out to the LORD, "What shall I do with this people? They are almost ready to stone me." ⁵ The LORD said to Moses, "Go on ahead of the people, and take some of the elders of Israel with you; take in your hand the staff with which you struck the Nile, and go. ⁶ I will be standing there in front of you on the rock at Horeb. Strike the rock, and water will come out of it, so that the people may drink." Moses did so, in the sight of the elders of Israel. ⁷ He called the place Massah and Meribah, because the Israelites quarreled and tested the LORD, saying, "Is the LORD among us or not?"

Children's Moment

Rev. Chris Weichman

Hymn #726

Will You Come and Follow Me / The Summons

(page 6)

Reading *Matthew 21:23-32*

Rev. Chris Weichman

²³ When he entered the temple, the chief priests and the elders of the people came to him as he was teaching, and said, "By what authority are you doing these things, and who gave you this authority?" ²⁴ Jesus said to them, "I will also ask you one question; if you tell me the answer, then I will also tell you by what authority I do these things. ²⁵ Did the baptism of John come from heaven, or was it of human origin?" And they argued with one another, "If we say, 'From heaven,' he will say to us, 'Why then did you not believe him?'" ²⁶ But if we say, 'Of human origin,' we are afraid of the crowd; for all regard John as a prophet." ²⁷ So they answered Jesus, "We do not know." And he said to them, "Neither will I tell you by what authority I am doing these things.

²⁸ "What do you think? A man had two sons; he went to the first and said, 'Son, go and work in the vineyard today.' ²⁹ He answered, 'I will not'; but later he changed his mind and went. ³⁰ The father^[a] went to the second and said the same; and he answered, 'I go, sir'; but he did not go. ³¹ Which of the two did the will of his father?" They said, "The first." Jesus said to them, "Truly I tell you, the tax collectors and the prostitutes are going into the kingdom of God ahead of you. ³² For John came to you in the way of righteousness and you did not believe him, but the tax collectors and the prostitutes believed him; and even after you saw it, you did not change your minds and believe him.

Sermon

"Being a Matthew 25 Church: Faithful Following"

Rev. Chris Weichman

R E S P O N D I N G

Time of Reflection

Surely It Is God Who Saves Me, Jack Noble White

Leslie Weber

When do you find it most difficult to follow Jesus? Is it difficult because you find following hard, you fear what other may think, or you don't believe God is with you in the difficulty?

Feel free to share thoughts related to today's message in the Facebook LIVE comment section.

You may also enter brief prayer requests so that we can pray for and with one another.

Pastoral Prayer

Rev. Chris Weichman

God is Good...
All the Time...

All the Time!
God is Good!

The Lord's Prayer *(in unison)*

Rev. Chris Weichman

**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**

*Hymn #837

What a Fellowship, What a Joy Divine

(page 7)

Giving of Our Tithes & Offerings

We give out of gratitude to God for...

Rev. Chris Weichman

Give by clicking the blue "shop now" button above this livestream or use ways listed in the box below. Thank you.

*Doxology Hymn #609

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;
Praise God, all creatures high and low...Alleluia, Alleluia!
Praise God, in Jesus fully known;
Creator, Word, and Spirit one. Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!

"Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow" Text by Brian Wren, Music by Hal H. Hopson ©1989, ©1998 Hope Publishing Company CCLI License #11174474

Crop Walk Send-off

Rev. Jim Haas, retired—Wayside Presbyterian
Andrew Gifford, Church World Service
Kara Coleman and Mark Soliday, Erie News Now

Benediction

Rev. Chris Weichman

Postlude

Postlude on *Truro*, David Lasky

Leslie Weber

A gift to the Vicary Organ Fund in lieu of flowers was made today by Pat Bieber and Linda & John Majewski in memory of beloved husband, father and father-in-law Allen Bieber.

A gift to Sunday Supper Ministry in lieu of flowers was made today by the Woman's Club of Erie in appreciation of 90 years of the church being such good neighbors.

Worship service leaders, in order of appearance:

Leslie Weber, Organist/Choirmaster
Rev. Chris Weichman, Pastor/Head of Staff
Rev. Britney L. V. Knight, Associate Pastor
Seph Kumer, Director of Community Engagement
Rachel Moldovan, Campus Minister/Kirk House Director
Montgomery Service, Coordinator of Missional Music

What is happening this week? This month? When does your committee meet? The church calendar is LIVE and updated constantly. If you have a smart phone or a computer, you can check it out here: <http://tiny.cc/uhf7nz>

**GIVE
PLUS⁺**

3 Ways to give tithe or offering... **THANK YOU!**

1. Use the QR code at right.
2. Go to www.firstcovenanterie.org and click the *GIVE NOW* button at the bottom of the homepage.
3. Mail your check to:
First Presbyterian Church of the Covenant,
250 West 7th Street, Erie, PA 16501



INVITATION TO MINISTRY

You can still sponsor the CROP Walk team today! Walkers meet in the church parking lot at 1:00 p.m. for a 1.75 miles walk through the neighborhood surrounding the church. The CROP Walk raises funding to address global hunger and poverty. **Sponsor online here:** <https://www.crophungerwalk.org/eriepa> **SEND CHECKS made out to “CWS/CROP” with “FPCC Walk Team” or a specific sponsored walker’s name on memo line, to the church.** Some of this year’s registered walkers: Beth/Andrew Spriegel, Tim/Pat Tracy, Derek Sweet, Sheila Sweet, Bill Tauber, Jean Tauber, Chris Weichman, Seph Kumer, Karola Ranft, Pat Headley, Kristin Headley, Kia Howell, Claire Smith and Jesse Ntihemuka (both Kirk House), Marwa Obaid, Chris/Gail Detar. **THANK YOU!**

Parking Lot Pumpkin Fest is our next creative, physically-distant, masked, social gathering: **Sunday, October 11, 1:00 p.m.** Get crafty! Paint/carve a pumpkin, create a colorful dried corn door hanging, help decorate the 6th & 7th street church signs with corn stalks, etc. Enjoy some cider and a slice of Jackie Kemp Jones’ sweet potato pie! Eat lunch prior or bring your boxed lunch/snack, tv table and chair. Suggested donation of \$3 per person for all supplies. Fun for all ages! If rain, drive through at 1 p.m. for a pumpkin or corn cob kit, pie and cider to take home! Organized by the Hospitality and Faith Formation (CE) teams.

Silent Prayer & Reflection in the sanctuary. Sign up in advance to spend 25 minutes quietly praying (masked) or reflecting. 10, 10:30, 11, 11:30 time slots available. **Next opportunity: Sept. 29.** The church will provide a copy of the prayer chain and other reflection suggestions. Enter from main 6th street doors. office@firstcovenanterie.org

Fall Faith Formation How do you invite God to form your faith? Questions? britney.knight@firstcovenanterie.org

Children/Families– October 4 bell tower 2:00 p.m., **Oct. 11** Parking Lot Pumpkin Fest 1 p.m.

Youth– October 4 2 p.m. hand bells, 3 p.m. youth group bell tower, **Oct. 11** Parking Lot Pumpkin Fest 1 p.m.

Adults-

Women & the Word (Zoom) Tuesdays, 7 p.m. “Into the Light: Finding Hope Through Prayers of Lament”

Bible Study (Zoom) Wednesdays, 10:30 a.m., Pastor Britney

Bible Study Facebook LIVE Wednesdays, 12:00 noon, pastors lead. Studying Matthew 25 series texts.

Men’s Bible Study **October 1**, 7:30 a.m., Parables, Pastor Chris

Faith Discussion (Zoom) Sundays, 9:30 a.m. “Unbelievers: An Emotional History of Doubt”, Rob Baker

Music Ministry Opportunities Get creative during Covid. Contact: montgomery.service@firstcovenanterie.org

Virtual Congregational Singing - for anyone / all ages. Record your part in advance to create a “choir” together.

Join a virtual congregational singing of Jesus Loves Me. For directions and information contact Monty.

Deadline: October 12

Praise Band - smaller configurations of instrumentalists / singers

Kids / Youth - chimes / hand bells on Sundays (see Faith Formation above)

Vocal / Instrumental Solos - have a talent to share in worship? Offer your gifts!

Remote World Communion Sunday: October 4 Gather “bread” and “cup” next week for Facebook LIVE worship.

NEW Opportunity: October is Racial Justice Month To help us become a “Matthew 25 church”, join over 350 churches across the country Wednesday nights in October at 7:00 p.m. for a special Pittsburgh Seminary World Mission Initiative Conference- **Jesus Christ and the Dividing Wall: Race and God’s Mission.** Find it hard to talk about race? Not sure how faith and race are connected? Want to know more in order to do better as Christ’s faithful disciple? These provocative presentations are for all of us:

October 7: “Unlearning the Habits of Slaveholder Religion”

October 14: “Journey to Reconciliation”

October 21: “Where Do We Go from Here?”

October 28: “Keys for Allies to Use Their Superpowers:

The Role of Vulnerability and Compassion in Anti-Racism Effectiveness”

Presenters include the Rev. Dr. Brenda Salter McNeil, Jonathan Wilson-Hartgrove, and Dr. David Campt. Each session is a zoom webinar. Sign up with Pastor Britney and receive the zoom link. Watch for more details in the October Covenant Chimes church newsletter.

Peace & Global Witness Offering is one of our annual “special offerings”. You may make a contribution toward this timely offering **any Sunday in October.** Mark your check, made out to and mailed to First Covenant, with “Peace & Global Witness” on the memo line. All funds received are applied to peace and reconciliation efforts by the Presbyterian Church-USA. **25% of your contributions supports a local designee chosen by First Covenant’s mission team: the Erie Bluecoats.** These men and women from the city are present daily at middle and high schools at dismissal to mentor and encourage students, including disrupting potential conflicts. Bluecoats have also help with many other grassroots community-building and anti-violence efforts. Erie Bluecoats leader Daryl Craig has spoken at Covenant Connections on several occasions in recent years.

At the Name of Jesus 264

Capo 5: (Am) (G) (Am) (C) (Am) (Dm) (Am)
 Dm C Dm F Dm Gm Dm

1 At the name of Je - sus ev - ery knee shall bow,
 2 Hum - bled for a sea - son to re - ceive a name
 3 Bore it up tri - um - phant, with its hu - man light,
 4 Chris - tians, this Lord Je - sus shall re - turn a - gain,

(C) (G) (Am) (C) (Dm)
 F C Dm F Gm

ev - ery tongue con - fess him King of glo - ry now;
 from the lips of sin - ners un - to whom he came,
 through all ranks of crea - tures, to the cen - tral height,
 with his Fa - ther's glo - ry o'er the earth to reign;

(G) (Em) (Am) (G) (D) (G)
 C Am Dm C G C

'tis the Fa - ther's plea - sure we should call him Lord,
 faith - ful - ly he bore it spot - less to the last,
 to the throne of God - head, to the Fa - ther's breast,
 for all wreaths of em - pire meet up - on his brow,

(Am) (G) (Em) (Dm) (C) (G) (Am)
 Dm C Am Gm F C Dm

who from the be - gin - ning was the might - y Word.
 brought it back vic - to - rious, when from death he passed;
 filled it with the glo - ry of that per - fect rest.
 and our hearts con - fess him King of glo - ry now.

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This may well be a hymn based on a hymn, for scholars say that the passage behind it (Philippians 2:5–11), though not in the style of Greek poetry, shows traits of a communal creedal statement capable of being sung. It is set here to one of the composer's most sonorous tunes.

726 Will You Come and Follow Me

The Summons

Capo 3: (D) (A7) (Bm) (Em7) (Asus) (A)
 F C7 Dm Gm7 Csus C

1 "Will you come and fol - low me if I but call your name?
 2 "Will you leave your-self be-hind if I but call your name?
 3 "Will you let the blind - ed see if I but call your name?
 4 "Will you love the 'you' you hide if I but call your name?
 5 Lord, your sum-mons ech - oes true when you but call my name.

(D) (A7) (Bm) (Em7) (G) (D)
 F C7 Dm Gm7 B^b F

Will you go where you don't know and nev - er be the same?
 Will you care for cruel and kind and nev - er be the same?
 Will you set the pris - oners free and nev - er be the same?
 Will you quell the fear in - side and nev - er be the same?
 Let me turn and fol - low you and nev - er be the same.

(Em7) (G) (F#m7) (G) (Asus) (A)
 Gm7 B^b Am7 B^b Csus C

Will you let my love be shown; will you let my name be known;
 Will you risk the hos - tile stare should your life at - tract or scare?
 Will you kiss the lep - er clean, and do such as this un - seen,
 Will you use the faith you've found to re-shape the world a - round,
 In your com - pa - ny I'll go where your love and foot-steps show.

(D) (A7) (Bm) (Em7) (G) (D)
 F C7 Dm Gm7 B^b F

will you let my life be grown in you and you in me?"
 Will you let me an - swer prayer in you and you in me?"
 and ad - mit to what I mean in you and you in me?"
 through my sight and touch and sound in you and you in me?"
 Thus I'll move and live and grow in you and you in me.

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The first four stanzas of this ballad-like hymn are understood to be in the voice of Christ, with the fifth reflecting the individual singer's response. Created for this traditional Scottish tune, the text was written to mark the conclusion of a youth volunteer's time of ministry.

What a Fellowship, What a Joy Divine 837

Leaning on the Everlasting Arms

1 What a fel-low-ship, what a joy di-vine, lean-ing on the ev-er-
 2 O how sweet to walk in this pil-grim way, lean-ing on the ev-er-
 3 What have I to dread, what have I to fear, lean-ing on the ev-er-

last-ing arms; what a bless-ed-ness, what a peace is mine,
 last-ing arms; O how bright the path grows from day to day,
 last-ing arms? I have bless-ed peace with my Lord so near,

Refrain

lean-ing on the ev-er-last-ing arms. Lean-ing, Lean-ing on Je-sus,

lean-ing, safe and se-cure from all a-larms; lean-ing on
 lean-ing on Je-sus, lean-ing on Je-sus,

lean-ing, lean-ing, lean-ing on the ev-er-last-ing arms.
 Je-sus, lean-ing on Je-sus,

The composer of the tune (and creator of the refrain) asked the author of the stanzas to write a hymn based on the latter part of Deuteronomy 33:27 (as worded in the King James Version): "Underneath are the everlasting arms." Their joint effort has proved very popular.