**Springfield Presbyterian Church (USA)**

7300 Spout Hill Road, Sykesville, MD 21784 410-795-6152

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**April 28, 2024 - 10:30 am**

**WELCOME VISITORS!**

We're glad you are here! Cards at the ends of each pew are for you to fill out and drop in the Offering Plate. Please let us know you are visiting and join us for refreshments and fellowship following the service. The Sanctuary has an induction loop system to assist the hearing impaired. The system will also work on the telephone setting of hearing aids.

Springfield Presbyterian Church is rooted in the gospel of Jesus Christ, led by the Holy Spirit, and called to loving relationships through vibrant worship and service. Valuing all people, we are committed to developing disciples and fostering stewardship.

**PREPARATION FOR THE WORD**

(**\*** those who are able are invited to stand)

**PRELUDE**

**GATHERING OF THE PEOPLE**

The Lord be with you! **And also with you!** (Greetings and Announcements)

**LIGHTING THE CHRIST CANDLE**

Leader: Whenever we light this candle we proclaim:

**People: Christ is the Light of the world and the center of our lives.**

**CALL TO WORSHIP**

Leader: What is love?

**People: Love is the knock on the door, checking in on a neighbor.**

Leader: What is love?

**People: Love is seeing injustice, and standing up for change.**

Leader: What is love?

**People: Love is a movement, where one good action leads to another.**

Leader: What is love?

**People: Love is the hard work of loving those we disagree with, because we have a shared humanity.**

Leader: Who teaches us love?

**People: God, for God is love, our greatest example of the way we are called to live this life.**

Leader: What should we do next?

**People: Celebrate the Creator, with prayer and praise, as we worship love personified, love embodied, the great God of us all. Let us worship together!**

**\*HYMN***What Wondrous Love Is This* GTG #215

What wondrous love is this, O my soul, O my soul,
what wondrous love is this, O my soul!
What wondrous love is this that caused the Lord of bliss
to bear the dreadful curse for my soul, for my soul,
to bear the dreadful curse for my soul!

When I was sinking down, sinking down, sinking down,
when I was sinking down, sinking down,
when I was sinking down beneath God's righteous frown,
Christ laid aside his crown for my soul, for my soul,
Christ laid aside his crown for my soul!

To God and to the Lamb, I will sing, I will sing,
to God and to the Lamb, I will sing;
to God and to the Lamb who is the great I am,
while millions join the theme, I will sing, I will sing;
while millions join the theme, I will sing!

And when from death I’m free, I’ll sing on, I’ll sing on;
and when from death I’m free, I’ll sing on;
and when from death I’m free, I’ll sing and joyful be,
and through eternity, I’ll sing on, I’ll sing on;
and through eternity I’ll sing on.

**CALL TO CONFESSION**

Leader: Love is a beautiful word and a wonderful concept, meant to be lived out in new and radical ways in our life today. Yet, it’s so hard to do that work at times, because love requires energy, imagination, and intelligence. It leads us to places of vulnerability, of having to say ‘I love you’ first and risk not hearing the same back. Love is a daring act that we are called to do, but we have not always been successful. So, let us come before God, who is love, to lay down our sin so we may be enriched and enabled to do this good work. Let us pray:

**PRAYER OF CONFESSION**

**Generous and Loving God, you are love, and as we read your Word and listen to your Spirit, you guide us in how to live out your love tangibly in the world. Yet, we are moving too quick to listen, we are tired and frustrated by our own doubts of love, we are cynical that love can make a difference. We’ve lost sight of the power of love in this world, and we put all of our faults in your hands, to recreate and recraft us into new people.**

**Forgive us for the ways we have not shown love, to ourselves, to others, and to you, Almighty God. Amen.**

**SILENT PRAYERS OF CONFESSION**

**RESPONSE***Restore in Us, O God*  Tune #434 (v.3)

Bring us, O Christ, to share the fullness of your joy;

Baptize us in the risen life that death cannot destroy.

**WORDS OF ASSURANCE** *(Romans 8:34; 2 Corinthians 5:17)*

Leader: Hear the Good News! Who is in a position to condemn?

**People: Only Christ, and Christ died for us, Christ rose for us, Christ reigns in power for us, Christ prays for us.**

Leader: Anyone who is in Christ is a new creation.

**People: The old life has gone; a new life has begun.**

Leader: Know that you are forgiven and be at peace.

**People: Thanks be to God. Alleluia and Amen!**

**\* MUSICAL RESPONSE OF PRAISE** *We Are Forgiven* Tune #447

We are forgiven. We are forgiven. Thanks be to God. Thanks be to God.

We are forgiven. We are forgiven. Thanks be to God. Thanks be to God.

**\* THE PEACE** The peace of Christ be with you! **And also with you!**

 (You may greet those around you.)

**\* RESPONSE** *Here I Am, Lord*

 Here I am, Lord, Is it I, Lord? I have heard you calling in the night.

 I will go, Lord, if you lead me. I will hold your people in my heart.

**THE PROCLAMATION OF THE WORD**

**PRAYER OF ILLUMINATION**

Guide us, O God, by the power of your Word and Spirit, that in your light we may see light, in your truth find freedom, and in your will discover your peace,

through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

**FIRST SCRIPTURE LESSON**  *John 15:1-8* NT page 103

‘I am the true vine, and my Father is the vine-grower. 2He removes every branch in me that bears no fruit. Every branch that bears fruit he prunes to make it bear more fruit. 3You have already been cleansed by the word that I have spoken to you. 4Abide in me as I abide in you. Just as the branch cannot bear fruit by itself unless it abides in the vine, neither can you unless you abide in me. 5I am the vine, you are the branches. Those who abide in me and I in them bear much fruit, because apart from me you can do nothing. 6Whoever does not abide in me is thrown away like a branch and withers; such branches are gathered, thrown into the fire, and burned. 7If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask for whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. 8My Father is glorified by this, that you bear much fruit and become my disciples.

**SECOND SCRIPTURE LESSON** *1 John 4:7-21* NT page 226

7Beloved, let us love one another, because love is from God; everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. 8Whoever does not love does not know God, for God is love. 9God’s love was revealed among us in this way: God sent his only Son into the world so that we might live through him. 10In this is love, not that we loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the atoning sacrifice for our sins. 11Beloved, since God loved us so much, we also ought to love one another. 12No one has ever seen God; if we love one another, God lives in us, and his love is perfected in us. 13By this we know that we abide in him and he in us, because he has given us of his Spirit. 14And we have seen and do testify that the Father has sent his Son as the Savior of the world. 15God abides in those who confess that Jesus is the Son of God, and they abide in God. 16So we have known and believe the love that God has for us. God is love, and those who abide in love abide in God, and God abides in them. 17Love has been perfected among us in this: that we may have boldness on the day of judgement, because as he is, so are we in this world. 18There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear; for fear has to do with punishment, and whoever fears has not reached perfection in love. 19We love because he first loved us. 20Those who say, ‘I love God’, and hate their brothers or sisters, are liars; for those who do not love a brother or sister whom they have seen, cannot love God whom they have not seen. 21The commandment we have from him is this: those who love God must love their brothers and sisters also.

Leader: Hear what the Spirit is saying to the Church.

 **All: Thanks be to God.**

**SERMON** *What is Love?*Rev. Becca Price

**THE RESPONSE TO THE WORD**

**ANTHEM/REFLECTIVE MUSIC** *Love is the Touch* Siskin Green/John Bell

Love is the touch of intangible joy;
Love is the force that no fear can destroy;
Love is the goodness we gladly applaud:
God is where love is, for love is of God.

Love is the lilt in a lingering voice;
Love is the hope that can make us rejoice;
Love is the cure for the frightened and flawed:
God is where love is, for love is of God.

Love is the light in the tunnel of pain;
Love is the will to be whole once again;
Love is the trust of a friend on the road:
God is where love is, for love is of God.

Love is the Maker and Spirit and Son;
Love is the kingdom their will has begun;
Love is the path which the saints all have trod:
God is where love is, for love is of God.

**PASTORAL PRAYER AND THE LORD’S PRAYER**

**PRESENTATION OF TITHES AND OFFERINGS**

 OFFERTORY

**\*** SONG OF THANKS  *Sing to God, with Joy and Gladness*Tune #657

Sing to God, with joy and gladness, hymns and psalms of gratitude;

With the voice of praise discover that to worship God is good.

God unites the scattered people, gathers those who wandered far,

Heals the hurt and broken spirits, tending every wound and scar.

 **\*** PRAYER OF DEDICATION

**\* HYMN** *Jesus Loves Me!* GTG #188

Jesus loves me! This I know, for the Bible tells me so.
Little ones to him belong. They are weak, but he is strong.

Yes, Jesus loves me! Yes, Jesus loves me!
Yes, Jesus loves me! The Bible tells me so.

Jesus loves me! This I know, as he loved so long ago,
Taking children on his knee, saying, "Let them come to me."

Yes, Jesus loves me! Yes, Jesus loves me!
Yes, Jesus loves me! The Bible tells me so.

**\* CHARGE AND BENEDICTION**

Leader: We go from this place, embodying the love of God. Let the first step begin with us,

**People: As we learn to love ourselves, with our quirks and all, embracing ourselves as beloved people.**

Leader: And from that place, let us continue,

**People: By loving our neighbors and treating all as beloved,**

Leader: And may we go, knowing the origin of love,

**People: God, the Creator of love itself, who loves us all, this day and always. Amen.**

**\* UNISON AMEN**

**POSTLUDE**

**Sunday May 5, 2024 Lectionary**

Acts 10:44-48; Psalm 98; 1 John 5:1-6; John 15:9-17

**Assisting in Worship: We appreciate those who serve:**

 Today 4/28 Next Week 5/5

Sunday Opener: Barbara Cornell Beth Oates

Ushers/Greeters: Steve & Donna Mazer Don Vasbinder

 Bob Rogers

Lay Leader: Christy Yeager Linda Black

Fellowship Host: Rebekah Schermer

**Happy Birthday!** May 3 – Don Vasbinder

**Announcements**

**ESCAPE Lunches:** Four times a year our church contributes 48 free lunches for ESCAPE to distribute at St Paul's in downtown Sykesville. Our next turn is Tuesday **April 30**. Join us at the Manse at 7 pm. Thank you to everyone involved in this outreach!

**Annual Plant Sale:** Each year we partner with Buppert's Farm for a Spring Plant Sale. If you show the flier on your phone at checkout, Buppert's will donate 10% of your purchase to our Church's local missions! Copies of the flier are available in the Narthex.

**Just a Note:** Pastor Becca will be out of the office for continuing education from May 3-12 and out of town from May 12-15.

***Today:***

 **Sunday April 28**

10:30 am Worship

 11:30 am Fellowship

***This Week:***

**Tuesday April 30**

7:00 pm ESCAPE Lunch Packing (Manse)

**Wednesday May 1**

6:15 – 7:15 pm Bell Choir Practice

 7:30 – 8:45 pm Adult Choir Practice

***Next Week:***

**Sunday May 5**

10:30 am Worship

 11:30 am Fellowship

 **Tuesday May 7**

6:15 – 7:15 pm Bell Choir Practice

 7:30 – 8:45 pm Adult Choir Practice

**Office Hours: Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday, 10 am – 3 pm**

**Springfield Presbyterian Church**

 10:30 am Worship (and Sunday School 1st & 3rd Sundays)

11:30 am Fellowship

**Website:** [*www.springfield-church.org*](http://www.springfield-church.org)**Church Office**: 410-795-6152

**Like us on Facebook:** www.facebook.com/SpringfieldPresbyterianChurch

**Pastor:** Rev. Becca Price

**Email:** springfieldpastor@gmail.com

**Clerk of Session:** Sharon Pappas

**Minister of Music/Accompanist:** Aaron Thacker

**Bell Choir Director:** Daria Dodonova

**Youth Group Coordinator:** Dylan Vasbinder

**Administrative Assistant:**Donna Mazer **Email:***spc.office@verizon.net*