

BETHEL MURDOCH PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

9602 Murdoch-Goshen Road, Loveland, OH 45140

October 15, 2023, 10:30 a.m.

**Celebrating 209 years of Faithful Service to Our God
The Twentieth Sunday after Pentecost**

We Enter Into God's Presence

WELCOME/ ANNOUNCEMENTS

PRELUDE

L: This is the day that the Lord has made

P: Let us rejoice and be glad in it!

THE PEACE

L: Since God has forgiven us in Christ, let us forgive one another.
The peace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all.

P: And also with you.

“SURELY THE PRESENCE”

Surely the presence of the LORD is in this place.

I can feel His mighty power and His grace.

I can hear the brush of angel's wings; I see glory on each face.

Surely the presence of the LORD is in this place.

CALL TO WORSHIP

L: God says” I will put my laws in their minds,

P: and write them on their hearts,

L: and I will be their God,

P: and they shall be my people.

OPENING PRAYER

Almighty God, in our baptism you adopted us for your own. Quicken, we pray, your Spirit within us, that we, being renewed both in body and mind, may worship you in sincerity and truth; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

HYMN: 33 “Praise the Lord, God's Glories Show”

1 Praise the Lord, God's glories show, Alleluia!

saints within God's courts below, Alleluia!

angels round His throne above, Alleluia!

all who see and share God's love. Alleluia!

2 Earth to heaven exalt the strains, Alleluia!
Send it, heaven, to earth again, Alleluia!
Age to age, God's mercies trace, Alleluia!
Praise God's providence and grace! Alleluia!

3 Strings and voices, hands and hearts, Alleluia!
in the concert, bear your parts, Alleluia!
All that breathes, your Lord adore, Alleluia!
singing praise forever more, Alleluia!

CALL TO CONFESSION:

Remember that our Lord Jesus can sympathize with us in our weaknesses, since in every respect he was tempted as we are, yet without sin. Let us then with boldness approach the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need. Let us confess our sin before God and one another as we pray together saying,

PRAYER OF CONFESSION:

Eternal God, our judge and redeemer, we confess that we have tried to hide from you, for we have done wrong. We have lived for ourselves, and apart from you. We have turned from our neighbors, and refused to bear the burdens of others. We have ignored the pain of the world, and passed by the hungry, the poor, and the oppressed. In your great mercy forgive our sins and free us from selfishness, that we may choose your will and obey your commandments; through Jesus Christ our Savior.

SILENT PRAYER OF CONFESSION

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

L: Hear the good news! The saying is sure and worthy of full acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners. He himself bore our sins in his body on the cross, that we might be dead to sin and alive to all that is good. I declare to you in the name of Jesus Christ, we are forgiven.

P: Thanks be to God! Amen.

***RESPONSE:**

“Gloria Patri”

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost;
As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end.
Amen, Amen.

We Hear God's Word

SPECIAL MUSIC: 482 "Sanctuary"

Lord prepare me to be a sanctuary,
Pure and holy, tried and true' with thanksgiving,
I'll be a living sanctuary for you.

NEW TESTAMENT LESSON: Philippians 4:1-9

Therefore, my brothers and sisters, you whom I love and long for, my joy and crown, stand firm in the Lord in this way, dear friends!

² I plead with Euodia and I plead with Syntyche to be of the same mind in the Lord. ³ Yes, and I ask you, my true companion, help these women since they have contended at my side in the cause of the gospel, along with Clement and the rest of my co-workers, whose names are in the book of life.

⁴ Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice! ⁵ Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near. ⁶ Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. ⁷ And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

⁸ Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things. ⁹ Whatever you have learned or received or heard from me or seen in me—put it into practice. And the God of peace will be with you.

PSALM: Psalm 106:1-6, 19-23

¹ Praise the LORD.^[a]

Give thanks to the LORD, for he is good;
his love endures forever.

² Who can proclaim the mighty acts of the LORD
or fully declare his praise?

³ Blessed are those who act justly,
who always do what is right.

⁴ Remember me, LORD, when you show favor to your people,
come to my aid when you save them,

⁵ that I may enjoy the prosperity of your chosen ones,
that I may share in the joy of your nation
and join your inheritance in giving praise.

⁶ We have sinned, even as our ancestors did;
we have done wrong and acted wickedly.

¹⁹ At Horeb they made a calf
and worshiped an idol cast from metal.

²⁰ They exchanged their glorious God
for an image of a bull, which eats grass.

²¹ They forgot the God who saved them,
who had done great things in Egypt,

²² miracles in the land of Ham
and awesome deeds by the Red Sea.

²³ So he said he would destroy them—
had not Moses, his chosen one,
stood in the breach before him
to keep his wrath from destroying them.

GOSPEL LESSON: Matthew 22:1-14

Jesus spoke to them again in parables, saying: ²“The kingdom of heaven is like a king who prepared a wedding banquet for his son. ³He sent his servants to those who had been invited to the banquet to tell them to come, but they refused to come.

⁴“Then he sent some more servants and said, ‘Tell those who have been invited that I have prepared my dinner: My oxen and fattened cattle have been butchered, and everything is ready. Come to the wedding banquet.’

⁵“But they paid no attention and went off—one to his field, another to his business. ⁶The rest seized his servants, mistreated them and killed them. ⁷The king was enraged. He sent his army and destroyed those murderers and burned their city.

⁸“Then he said to his servants, ‘The wedding banquet is ready, but those I invited did not deserve to come. ⁹So go to the street corners and invite to the banquet anyone you find.’ ¹⁰So the servants went out into the streets

and gathered all the people they could find, the bad as well as the good, and the wedding hall was filled with guests.

¹¹ “But when the king came in to see the guests, he noticed a man there who was not wearing wedding clothes. ¹² He asked, ‘How did you get in here without wedding clothes, friend?’ The man was speechless.

¹³ “Then the king told the attendants, ‘Tie him hand and foot, and throw him outside, into the darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.’

¹⁴ “For many are invited, but few are chosen.”

MESSAGE: *Rejoice! Do Not be Anxious, the Lord is Near!*

Rev. Dr. Deborah Uchtman

I wonder why it is that we have this vivid idea that everything in the beginning of the church that was built in the name of Jesus Christ was so perfect. We want to believe that everyone got along well with one another and that there was never any conflict or resistance to the teaching of the gospel. We have a romanticized view that everybody who was there at the start of the church would want to know Jesus with a deep and abiding love and to listen to the call that Christ put on their life.

Perhaps we have created this rosy picture because when we look at the world around us, it is hard to think that there has ever been such a time of dissention like we see today. While we each know that there have been difficult and divisive times throughout history, this time feels much more intense because we are experiencing it firsthand. It makes us anxious and afraid to see the unrest, the incivility of one person to another and the violence that seems to erupt all over the country. What once felt like happenings that only occurred in faraway places now has events like those occurring right outside our doors. So it makes sense that we really want the first churches to have been places where it was a kind of heaven on earth. But that is not reality and in today’s scripture Paul mentions conflict between two of the church’s most faithful members.

Human beings haven’t changed much over the years in the desire or the need to be the one who can say, “I told you so!” It certainly seems like we want to always be right. We want others to agree with us completely and when someone doesn’t agree with us, we go out of our way to put that

person in a bad light to our friends and neighbors. We want to tear them down and grind them into dust under our heel. It is at this place that Paul says loud and clear STOP! As Christians, we are not to tear one another down, rather we are to be of the same mind, finding our common ground and building one another up as we press on toward the goal of having a life of meaning through Jesus Christ.

Even in the face of conflict and dissention, Paul tells us to rejoice in the Lord always! That may seem to be a bit hard to hear, especially in today's world. It sure doesn't feel like there is much to rejoice about right now, does it? Instead of rejoicing, it feels like it is a time that we need to show our aggression that is driven by our anxiety and fear. Once again, Paul tells us to not let our anxiousness and fearfulness prevail, rather we are to be gentle to those around us as we root ourselves in the knowledge that the Lord is near to each one of us.

This is where some of us go off track. We lack that feeling of being grounded in Christ because we forget to share our hearts with God. We fail to take everything that makes us feel apprehensive to God through our petitions and prayers. We do not use the tools that we have been given. We try to convince ourselves that we can handle it on our own. We are sure that God is far too busy to be concerned with our worries and cares. And yet, Paul tells us we should be doing exactly that.

For Paul, it is when we utilize the practice of prayer and petition to share what is on our hearts with God that we can then feel the nearness of the Lord. When we feel that the Lord is near, we have reason to rejoice. When we rejoice, we are kinder and gentler with other people. When we act out of our gentleness, we find the peace of Christ has made a home in our hearts and calmed our minds, regardless of the turmoil around us.

So this week, I challenge you to think on these things. How can you rejoice in the Lord always? When have you felt the nearness of the Lord? In what ways are you sharing your prayers and petitions with God? When you do share your heart with God, do you see a gentleness that has not been present for a while? Do you feel the peace of Christ when you engage in these practices? Will you make these practices part of your everyday life?

May this time of exploration as you think on these things be an opportunity for growth as you continue to be faithful and obedient servants who follow Jesus Christ.

We Respond with Thanksgiving

***HYMN: 465 “What a Friend We Have in Jesus”**

1 What a friend we have in Jesus, all our sins and griefs to bear!
What a privilege to carry everything to God in prayer!
O what peace we often forfeit; O what needless pain we bear,
all because we do not carry everything to God in prayer!

2 Have we trials and temptations? Is there trouble anywhere?
We should never be discouraged; take it to the Lord in prayer!
Can we find a friend so faithful who will all our sorrows share?
Jesus knows our every weakness; take it to the Lord in prayer!

3 Are we weak and heavy laden, cumbered with a load of care?
Precious Savior, still our refuge; take it to the Lord in prayer!
Do thy friends despise, forsake thee? Take it to the Lord in prayer!
In his arms he'll take and shield thee; thou wilt find a solace there.

***AFFIRMATION OF FAITH**

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 again 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. (*The Apostles' Creed-Ecumenical*)

OFFERING (Please remember to mail your offering to Bethel Murdoch Presbyterian Church, 9602 Murdoch Goshen Road, Loveland, Ohio 45140)

DOXOLOGY

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow; Praise Him all creatures
Here below.

Praise Him above, ye heavenly host; Praise Father, Son, and Holy
Ghost. Amen.

JOYS & CONCERNS OF THE CONGREGATION – (Please send your joys and concerns to the church email and we will publish them in the weekly ENews)

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Almighty God, in Jesus Christ, you taught us to pray. Guide us by your Holy Spirit, that our prayers for others may serve your will and show your steadfast love.

God our creator, you made all things in your wisdom, and in your love you save us. We pray for the whole creation. Overthrow evil powers, right what is wrong, feed and satisfy those who thirst for justice, so that all your children may freely enjoy the earth you have made, and joyfully sing your praises.

Merciful God, you bear the pain of the world. Look with compassion on those who are sick in body, mind, or spirit. Cheer them by your word, and bring healing as a sign of your grace.

God of comfort, stand with those who sorrow that they may be sure that neither death nor life, nor things present nor things to come, shall separate them from your love.

God of all generations, we praise you for all your servants who, having been faithful to you on earth, now live with you in heaven. Keep us in fellowship with them, until we meet with all your children in the joy of your eternal kingdom.

Mighty God, whose Word we trust, whose Spirit enables us to pray: Accept our prayers and further those which will bring about your purpose for the earth; through Jesus Christ, the One who taught us to say as we pray,

THE 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 Out to Love and Serve

***HYMN: 363 “Rejoice, the Lord is King!”**

1 Rejoice, the Lord is King! Your Lord and King adore!
Rejoice, give thanks and sing, and triumph evermore.
Lift up your heart; lift up your voice! Rejoice, again I say, rejoice!

2 Our Savior, Jesus, reigns, the God of truth and love;
when he had purged our stains, he took his seat above.
Lift up your heart; lift up your voice! Rejoice, again I say, rejoice!

3 His kingdom cannot fail; he rules o'er earth and heaven;
the keys of death and hell are to our Jesus given.
Lift up your heart; lift up your voice! Rejoice, again I say, rejoice!

4 Rejoice in glorious hope! For Christ, the judge shall come
and gather all the saints to their eternal home.
Lift up your heart; lift up your voice! Rejoice, again I say, rejoice!

Charge and Benediction

Go out into the world in peace. Love the Lord your God with all your heart,
with all your soul, with all your mind; and love your neighbor as yourself.
And as you go out, know that you take with you the love of God, the grace
of Our Lord, Jesus Christ and the *awesome* power of the Holy Spirit.

Choral Amen

Postlude

Upcoming Events

Sunday, October 15, 4:30PM – Joint Church Picnic with Pleasant Plain Presbyterian Church at Oeder's Lake. Bring a potluck dish to share. PPPC will bring paper products and BMPC will provide drinks.

Saturday, November 4, 11am– Evans Funeral Home will provide a workshop on Thoughtful Decisions about how to prepare for end of life. This program is open to the public, however, as Evans will be providing materials and lunch, people will need to sign up in advance.

Sunday, November 5, 10:30am – Crossroads Hospice and Palliative Care Chaplain will be preaching the Word. Following the service, he will have materials and be available to answer questions you may have.

Wednesday, December 13, 11am – Christmas Cookie Baking. Come bake cookies with Patty Bradley, some for the Christmas Concert.

Saturday, December 16, 3pm – Christmas Concert and Cookies with the West Chester Symphony Orchestra String Quartet.



BETHEL MURDOCH
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Church Contact Information

9602 Murdoch-Goshen Road
Loveland, Ohio 45140

Church Phone: (513) 583-9676
Church Website: www.thebmpc.org
Church Email: thebmpc@gmail.com

STAFF: Church Secretary – Judi Ramey
Organist – James Bronstrup
Custodian – Larry Flynn
Rev. Dr. Deb Uchtman Email: deb.uchtman@earthlink.net
Rev. Dr. Deb Cell Phone: (513) 484-3804

We believe that our mission is to:

Bring people to Jesus.

Equipping them for ministry

Teach them to love God and others

Heal the brokenhearted in loving family community

Enjoy God and each other

Live worshipful lives

