

THE FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
OF LANSING



...how often should
I forgive?
"Not **SEVEN** times,
but, I tell you,
**SEVENTY-
SEVEN**
times."

Matthew 18:21-22, NRSV

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(517) 482-0668 www.lansingfirstpres.com

Facebook - Lansing First Presbyterian

Church Office Hours (M-F) 8:00 a.m. - 12:00 & 1:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.

SERVICE FOR THE LORD'S DAY

September 17, 2023 10:00 a.m.

Sixteenth Sunday After Pentecost

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

In order to maintain our worship environment, please turn off your cell phones. Thank you.

PRELUDE Jesus Shall Reign Arr. Mitchell Eithun

Bells of First

CALL TO WORSHIP

Joe Ross

**LORD, you are full of compassion and mercy,
slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love;**

You will not always accuse us,
nor will you keep your anger forever.

**You have not dealt with us according to our sins,
nor repaid us according to our iniquities.**

For as the heavens are high above the earth,
so great is your steadfast love for those who fear you.

**As far as the east is from the west,
so far have you removed our transgressions from us.**

As a father has compassion for his children,
so you have compassion for those who fear you, O LORD.

++HYMN #234 [GTG] Come, You Faithful Raise the Strain

One of the many ancient hymns translated into English in the 19th century, this 8th-century Eastertide hymn was originally part of a longer Greek liturgical text. This tune was created for this text by a church organist (Arthur S. Sullivan), who later rose to fame as a composer of operas.

SERVICE OF RENEWAL

Call to Confession

Joe Ross

Unison Prayer of Confession

**God our Judge, we admit we have double standards.
We seek forgiveness for ourselves, but fail to forgive others.
We seek relief for ourselves, but fail to seek relief for others.
We seek leniency for ourselves,
but fail to show that mercy to others.**

**Forgive us, mighty God, and help us to forgive,
 showing others the same grace and mercy
 that you have generously shown to us.**

++indicates to stand in body or spirit

Assurance of Pardon

Joe Ross

People of God, hear and believe:
 God does not deal with us according to our sins,
 but according to God's own steadfast love for us.
**As far as the east is from the west,
 so far God removes our sins from us.
 Thanks be to God!**

++Response to Forgiveness 447[GTG] We are Forgiven

447 We Are Forgiven

Chords: G, Am, D7, Gsus, G, C, G, Am7, Dsus, D, G, Am, D7, Gsus, G, C, G, Am7, D, G

Lyrics:
 We are for - giv - en. We are for - giv - en. Thanks be to
 God. Thanks be to God. We are for - giv - en.
 We are for - giv - en. Thanks be to God. Thanks be to God.

++PASSING THE PEACE OF CHRIST

Joe Ross

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

Be still and know that I am God (three times)

CHILDREN'S MOMENT

Ms. Megan

MINUTE FOR MISSION

Steve Campbell

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

Joe Ross

Faithful God, how blessed are those
who hunger and thirst for righteousness.
Sanctify us by your Word and Spirit
so that we may glorify you
in the company of the faithful;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

OLD TESTAMENT LESSON

Genesis 50:15-21

Joe Ross

The Lord is our God, the Lord alone.
Listen to the word of the Lord.

¹⁵Realizing that their father was dead, Joseph's brothers said, "What if Joseph still bears a grudge against us and pays us back in full for all the wrong that we did to him?" ¹⁶So they approached Joseph, saying, "Your father gave this instruction before he died, ¹⁷'Say to Joseph: I beg you, forgive the crime of your brothers and the wrong they did in harming you.' Now therefore please forgive the crime of the servants of the God of your father." Joseph wept when they spoke to him. ¹⁸Then his brothers also wept, fell down before him, and said, "We are here as your slaves." ¹⁹But Joseph said to them, "Do not be afraid! Am I in the place of God? ²⁰Even though you intended to do harm to me, God intended it for good, in order to preserve a numerous people, as he is doing today. ²¹So have no fear; I myself will provide for you and your little ones." In this way he reassured them, speaking kindly to them.

Keep these words in your heart.
The Lord is our God, the Lord alone.
Thanks be to God.

CHORAL ANTHEM

"Bless the Lord, O My Soul" by Mikail Ippolitov-Ivanov

*Bless thou the Lord, O my soul. Blessed art Thou, O Lord.
Bless thou the Lord, O my soul. Bless the Lord and forget not all His benefits.*

*Bless thou the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me bless His Holy name.
He is full of compassion and mercy, long suffering and great in goodness.
He will not always be chiding, nor keepeth He, His wrath forever.
Bless thou the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me bless His holy name.
O blessed art Thou, O Lord.*

GOSPEL LESSON Matthew 18:21-35

Pastor Bob Higle

The Lord is our God, the Lord alone.
Listen to the word of the Lord.

²¹Peter came and said to [Jesus], "Lord, if another member of the church sins against me, how often should I forgive? As many as seven times?" ²²Jesus said to him, "Not seven times, but, I tell you, seventy-seven times. ²³For this reason the kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who wished to settle accounts with his slaves. ²⁴When he began the reckoning, one who owed him ten thousand talents was brought to him; ²⁵and, as he could not pay, his lord ordered him to be sold, together with his wife and children and all his possessions, and payment to be made. ²⁶So the slave fell on his knees before him, saying, 'Have patience with me, and I will pay you everything.' ²⁷And out of pity for him, the lord of that slave released him and forgave him the debt. ²⁸But that same slave, as he went out, came upon one of his fellow slaves who owed him a hundred denarii; and seizing him by the throat, he said, 'Pay what you owe.' ²⁹Then his fellow slave fell down and pleaded with him, 'Have patience with me, and I will pay you.' ³⁰But he refused; then he went and threw him into prison until he would pay the debt. ³¹When his fellow slaves saw what had happened, they were greatly distressed, and they went and reported to their lord all that had taken place. ³²Then his lord summoned him and said to him, 'You wicked slave! I forgave you all that debt because you pleaded with me. ³³Should you not have had mercy on your fellow slave, as I had mercy on you?' ³⁴And in anger his lord handed him over to be tortured until he would pay his entire debt. ³⁵So my heavenly Father will also do to every one of you, if you do not forgive your brother or sister from your heart."

Keep these words in your heart.
The Lord is our God, the Lord alone.
Thanks be to God.

SERMON "70 x 70 = Impossible?"

Pastor Bob Higle

++HYMN **#188[GTG]** Jesus Loves Me!

Few songs of faith have supported people from trade to grave like this one. This great theologian Karl Barth said that its opening two lines were a summary of all that he had learned. The composer formed the refrain from those lines when creating this universally used tune.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Gwen Botting

The Lord be with you
And also with you.
Lift up your hearts.
We lift them up to the Lord.
Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
It is right to give our thanks and praise.

(Prayers continue)

Lord's Prayer (**unison**)

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.

AMEN #571 [GTG] Amen

571

Amen

Capo 5: (Am) (Em) (F) (Am) (D7) (Em7) (A)
Dm Am B^b Dm G7 Am7 D

A - men, a - men, a - men.

TEXT: Trad. liturgical text
MUSIC: Curt Oliver, 1997
Music © 1997 Curt Oliver

AMEN (Oliver)

PRESENTING OUR GIFTS

CHORAL ANTHEM "Come, Christians, Join to Sing" arr James R. Gillette

*Come, Christians join and sing Alleluia!
Loud praise to Christ our King; Alleluia!
Let all with heart and voice, before His throne rejoice;
Praise to His gracious choice, Alleluia!
Come, lift your hearts on high; Alleluia!
Let praises fill the sky, Alleluia!
He is our guide and friend; to us He'll condescend;
His love shall never end, Alleluia!
Praise yet our Christ again; Alleluia! Amen!
Life shall not end the strain; alleluia! Amen!
On heaven's blissful shore, His goodness we'll adore,
Singing forevermore: Alleluia! Amen!*

Offering

++ Doxology #717[GTG] "For the Life That You Have Given"

717 For the Life That You Have Given

For the life that you have giv - en, for the love in
Christ made known, with these fruits of time and la - bor, with these
gifts that are your own: here we of - fer, Lord, our prais - es;
heart and mind and strength we bring; give us grace to
love and serve you, liv - ing what we pray and sing.

The musical score is written in 4/4 time with a key signature of one flat (Bb). It consists of six systems, each with a vocal line (treble clef) and a piano accompaniment line (bass clef). The lyrics are placed between the vocal and piano lines.

Prayer of Dedication

++HYMN

#356 [GTG]

Sing Praise to God, Whose Mighty Acts

This paraphrase of Psalm 9 affirms the ultimate triumph of God's justice, despite the atrocities and boasts of those who wield worldly power. Its resolute and confident tone is reinforced by a sturdy tune, among the most frequently reprinted ones in the 19th-century shape note books.

BENEDICTION

BLEST BE THE TIE 306[GTG]

*Blest be the tie that binds our hearts in Christian love:
The fellowship of kindred minds is like to that above.*

POSTLUDE

Sergei Kvitko

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MORE LIGHT
PRESBYTERIANS

INFORMATION FOR THE DAY

Participants in this morning's service:

Liturgist	Joe Ross
Organist/Pianist	Sergei Kvitko
Director of Music	Megan Higle
Dir. Church Life/Comm. Outreach	Prince Solace
Prayers of the People	Prince Solace
Preaching	Pastor Bob Higle

Concerns of the congregation:

In care facilities: Jean Dietrich (Story Point of Grand Ledge)
Dianne Rector (Rosewood Adult Foster Care- DeWitt)

CHANCEL FLOWERS TODAY are from Larry and Sharon Johnson. We are grateful for family.

HEARING ASSISTANCE (The devices have been checked to ensure their functioning.) **LARGE PRINT AND BRAILLE BULLETINS** (If you would like a Braille bulletin, please let the church office know ahead of time.) We also have **CUSHIONS** available if you find the pews uncomfortable! Please see one of the ushers if any of these aids to worship will enhance your participation in the service.

FLOWER CHART There are many dates available on the chart to celebrate special days in our church family. The new price is \$50. Simply sign up on the chart (in the office hall), indicate the occasion that you would like celebrated or honored (birthday, anniversary or memorial), write a check to the church and give it to Betsy, and we will order for you. If you would like to purchase or provide a silk arrangement for use when we don't have a fresh arrangement scheduled, please see Judy Whitman. Thank you! - Worship Committee.

"YOUR SUPPORT IS VITAL TO OUR MISSION! PLEASE SCAN THIS CODE WITH YOUR SMARTPHONE TO GIVE SECURELY ONLINE." Take a picture with your phone and it will take you to the website to make a donation.



THIS WEEK AT A GLANCE

Sunday, Sept. 17

10:00 a.m. Morning Worship – Sanctuary
11:15 a.m. Adult Forum
12:30 p.m. Victory in Jesus Ministries – Chapel

Monday, Sept. 18

9:00 a.m. GIL Class
10:00 a.m. Church staff meeting, library
5:30 p.m. Yoga – yoga room
6:00 p.m. Finance Committee – library
6:30 p.m. Handbell Choir rehearsal - sanctuary
5:00 p.m.-9 GIL

Tuesday, Sept. 19

8:00 a.m.-10 Mobile Farmers Market prep – kitchen
6:30 p.m. Glen Erin Pipe Band Rehearsal – Litten Hall
6:30 p.m. Capital City Chordsmen – Chapel

Wednesday, Sept. 20

9:00 a.m. GIL classes
10:30 a.m. Bible Study – library/Zoom
12:00 p.m. Baby Boomer and Beyond Lunch - parlor
4:30 p.m. Lansing Children's Choir rehearsal – chapel
5:30 p.m. Yoga – Yoga Room
7:00 p.m. Session meeting – GIL room

Thursday, Sept. 21

9:00 a.m. GIL classes
8:00 a.m.-10 Mobile Farmers Market prep – kitchen
7:00 p.m. Victory in Jesus Bible Study – Library
7:00 p.m. Chancel Choir Rehearsal – Choir room

Friday, Sept. 22

5:30 p.m. Yoga – Yoga Room

Saturday, Sept. 23

11:00 a.m.-1 p.m. Children's Choir Retreat
6:00 p.m. Performers call time - chapel
7:00 p.m. PeaceQuest Singout - chapel

Sunday, Sept. 24

10:00 a.m. Morning Worship – Sanctuary
11:15 a.m. Adult Forum – Litten Hall
12:30 p.m. Victory in Jesus Ministries Worship – Sanctuary
1:00 p.m.-5 Lansing Symphony Orchestra - chapel

CONGREGATIONAL LIFE

The Lansing/East Lansing AIDS Walk is returning on Sept. 30 for the first time since the COVID pandemic. The event promotes community involvement with a local vendor fair along with a two-mile walk to remember those we have lost to the epidemic as well as celebrate those who continue to live with HIV.

The walk begins at Edgewood United Church of Christ, 469 Hagadorn Road, East Lansing, MI. The walk begins at 11 a.m., but tables for registration and community engagement beginning at 9 a.m.

This event has proven crucial in raising funds to support programs and services provided by the Lansing Area AIDS Network. The goal is to raise \$25,000.

For questions about participating or donating, reach out to events@laanonline.org. Your sponsorship donation can be made on-line or by mailing a check, payable to LAAN to LAAN, ATTN: 2023 Walk. 913 W. Homes Rd. Ste. 115, Lansing MI 48910

School Supplies Collection. Lansing Riddle Elementary School has a teacher who is in need of supplies for his classroom. Wish List: **New or Used:** Pencils, pens, colored pencils, erasers, paper, journals, index card, folders **Sanitary Items** : Tissue, hand sanitizer, paper towel. Please place items in plastic tote box in the coat closet across from the church parlor.

Handbell choir rehearsals are Mondays, 6:30pm in the Sanctuary. All are welcome! Contact Darin Showalter for more information.

BIBLE STUDY happens Wednesdays at 10:30 AM, led by **Pastor Bob Higle**. We will meet each week in our library or by Zoom® as we explore readings from the Revised Common Lectionary. Each week will include readings from the Old Testament and readings from the Epistles (sometimes Acts) and Gospels. Here is a link to the Revised Common Lectionary: <https://lectionary.library.vanderbilt.edu/> In the event you want to join us, but are unable to do so in person, here is the **Zoom link to connect:** <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87896832001?pwd=V2lJWjUrN05sMkhIRGNVbVt3MHI6QT09>

A church wide email will be sent out Mondays prior outlining the readings. We will finalize our readings when we gather each Wednesday. All are welcome!

Are you handy with tools and willing to be called as a first line for church maintenance issues?

First Pres has always relied on capable members to help with things that need doing. With rising costs and budget issues, and because our new administrator isn't familiar with everyone who has helped in the past, we want to compile a list of people who are willing to be called first in case of minor building maintenance issues.

Many things come up that can't be readily addressed by our part-time custodian, but don't

need to be handled by a licensed contractor (things like loose trimwork, door latches or closers that need adjustment, minor lights and mechanical issues, etc.) More major issues will still be referred to licensed contractors as needed, but with contractors becoming more expensive and increasingly difficult to schedule, this is an opportunity for members who are handy to apply their talents in stewardship of our church. If you would like to be included on the list, please contact Betsy Calvert in the church office, or Bill Collins.

ADULT FORUM

(11:15-12:15 in Litten Hall downstairs or on zoom. Childcare provided).

Today, **SEPTEMBER 17**

WHAT SENSE CAN WE MAKE OF OUR POLITICS TODAY AND NEXT YEAR?

Even though we are a year and a couple of months out from the presidential election, many are scrambling to make sense of the current political scene. Everyone has a view, even if that is inattention, or confusion. What role will you play in the upcoming

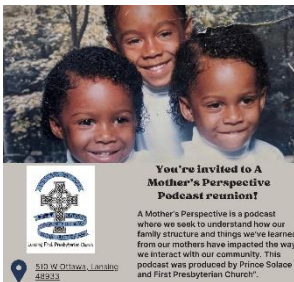
debate? How much will other Christians of various stripes help determine the outcome? Studies show, e.g., that the MAGA movement draws its strength from those who are less inclined to attend church or call themselves believers.

Charlie Herrick will lead a free-for-all discussion on how and why things are shaping up for both (or more than two?) parties in 2024. Come and add your voice!

SEPTEMBER 24

PODCAST REUNION – A MOTHER’S PERSPECTIVE

“A Mother’s Perspective” is a podcast where we seek to understand how our family structure and things we’ve learned from our mothers have impacted the way we interact with our community. In this session we will hear from members of our congregation and local community as they reflect on the influences of motherhood.



OCTOBER 1

WORLD COMMUNION SUNDAY.

It’s time for our traditional **potluck**. Plan to come and bring a dish from your heritage or a family favorite. (No Adult Forum)

OCTOBER 8 – OUR NEW WEBSITE will be revealed!