



METROCREST

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH



**Morning Worship
Seventeenth Sunday of Pentecost
September 17, 2023**

Welcome!

To all who are spiritually weary and seek rest;
To all who mourn and long for comfort;
To all who struggle and desire victory;
To all who sin and need a Savior;
To all who are strangers and want fellowship;
And to whoever will come –

*This church opens wide her doors and offers her welcome
in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ.*

God Calls Us To Worship

Welcome

Mission Moment

Call to Worship - Psalm 46:8-11

Leader: Come, behold the works of the LORD, how He has brought desolations on the earth.

Unison: He makes wars cease to the end of the earth; He breaks the bow and shatters the spear; He burns the chariots with fire.

Leader: "Be still, and know that I am God. I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth!"

Unison: The LORD of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our fortress.

We Respond To God's Call

Opening Hymn - "A Mighty Fortress is Our God"

Trinity Hymnal #92

A mighty fortress is our God,
A bulwark never failing;
Our helper He amid the flood,
Of mortal ills prevailing.
For still our ancient foe
Doth seek to work us woe;
His craft and power are great,
And armed with cruel hate,
On earth is not his equal.

Did we in our own strength confide,
Our striving would be losing,
Were not the right man on our side,
The man of God's own choosing;
Dost ask who that may be?
Christ Jesus it is He:
Lord Sabaoth His name,
From age to age the same,
And He must win the battle.

And though this world, with devils filled,
Should threaten to undo us,
We will not fear, for God hath willed
His truth to triumph through us.

The Prince of Darkness grim,
We tremble not for him;
His rage we can endure,
For lo! His doom is sure:
One little word shall fell him.

That Word above all earthly powers,
No thanks to them, abideth;
The Spirit and the gifts are ours
Through Him who with us sideth.
Let goods and kindred go –
This mortal life also.
The body they may kill;
God's truth abideth still.
His kingdom is forever.

Acknowledging God's Presence

Worship Theme - "Jesus Is the Son of God"

Theme Verses - Matthew 8:26

And when [Jesus] came to the other side, to the country of the Gadarenes, two demon-possessed men met Him, coming out of the tombs, so fierce that no one could pass that way. And behold, they cried out, "What have you to do with us, O Son of God? Have you come here to torment us before the time?"

Hymn - "Fairest Lord Jesus"

Trinity Hymnal #170

Fairest Lord Jesus, Ruler of all nature,
Son of God and Son of Man!
Thee will I cherish, Thee will I honor,
Thou, my soul's glory, joy, and crown.

Fair are the meadows, fair are the woodlands,
Robed in the blooming garb of spring;
Jesus is fairer, Jesus is purer,
Who makes the woeful heart to sing.

Fair is the sunshine, fair is the moonlight,
And all the twinkling, starry host;
Jesus shines brighter, Jesus shines purer
Than all the angels heav'n can boast.

Beautiful Savior! Lord of the nations!
Son of God and Son of Man!
Glory and honor, praise, adoration,
Now and forevermore be Thine.

We Confess Our Sins

Call to Confession

Let us humbly confess our sins to almighty God.

Prayer of Confession - Adapted from Psalm 51:1-17

Have mercy on us, O God, according to Your steadfast love; according to Your abundant mercy blot out our transgressions. Wash us thoroughly from our iniquity, and cleanse us from our sin! For we know our transgressions, and our sin is ever before us. Against You, You only, have we sinned and done what is evil in Your sight, so that You may be justified in Your words and blameless in Your judgment. Hide Your face from our sins, and blot out all our iniquities. Create in us a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within us. Cast us not away from Your presence, and take not Your Holy Spirit from us. Restore to us the joy of Your salvation, and uphold us with a willing spirit. For You will not delight in sacrifice, or we would give it; You will not be pleased with a burnt offering. Our sacrifice, O God, is a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart, O God, You will not despise. Amen.

Please take a moment for personal reflection and confession.

Assurance of Pardon - 1 John 1:8-9

Leader: If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us; but if we confess our sins, God is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

Unison: **Thanks be to God.**

Hymn - "Son of God"

There is a place of sorrow and love,
The innocent Savior broken and bleeding for us.
The nails in His hands, thorns on His brow,
Rivers of mercy endlessly flowing down.

The Son of God high and lifted up,
The Father's love came pouring down for us.
He has overcome.

There is a place for all who would come,
His arms are open, our sins are washed white in His blood.
The lost and unworthy come find your home,
The broken and hurting, His love will never let go.

(Refrain)

The Son of God high and lifted up,
The Father's love came pouring down for us.
He has overcome.
The spotless Lamb for every sinner slain,
Our victory, our hope beyond the grave.
He has overcome.
He has overcome.

Now my song will ever be,
Of my Savior's love for me.
When at last His face I see,
With all the saints in glory. **(Refrain)**

We Profess Our Faith And Pray

Affirmation of Faith - Apostles' Creed

I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth. I believe in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord, Who was conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary. He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried; He descended to hell. The third day He rose again from the dead. He ascended to heaven and is seated at the right hand of God the Father almighty. From there 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.

Greeting

Hymn - "By Faith"

By faith we see the hand of God
In the light of creation's grand design,
In the lives of those who prove His faithfulness,
Who walk by faith and not by sight.

By faith our fathers roamed the earth
With the pow'r of His promise in their hearts,
Of a holy city built by God's own hand,
A place where peace and justice reign.

(Refrain)

We will stand as children of the promise,
We will fix our eyes on Him, our soul's reward,
Till the race is finished and the work is done,
We'll walk by faith and not by sight.

By faith the prophets saw a day
When the longed for Messiah would appear,
With the pow'r to break the chains of sin and death,
And rise triumphant from the grave.

By faith the church was called to go
In the pow'r of the Spirit to the lost,
To deliver captives and to preach good news,
In ev'ry corner of the earth. **(Refrain)**

By faith this mountain shall be moved
And the pow'r of the gospel shall prevail,
For we know in Christ all things are possible,
For all who call upon His Name. **(Refrain)**

Lord's Prayer

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be Your name. Your kingdom come, Your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory, forever. Amen.

Prayer of Intercession

We Receive God's Word

Reading God's Word - Matthew 8:28-34

Leader: The Word of the Lord.

Unison: Thanks be to God.

Understanding and Applying God's Word

Pastor Bill Lovell

"Jesus Is the Son of God"

Sermon Series - "The King & His Kingdom"

We Respond To God's Grace

Closing Hymn - "Abide with Me"

Abide with me; fast falls the eventide.
The darkness deepens; Lord with me abide.
When other helpers fail and comforts flee,
Help of the helpless, abide with me.

Thou on my head in early youth didst smile.
And, though rebellious and perverse, meanwhile,
Thou hast not left me, oft as I left Thee;
On to the close Lord, abide with me.

I need Thy presence every passing hour.
What but Thy grace can foil the tempter's power?
Who, like Thyself, my guide and stay can be?
Through cloud and sunshine, abide with me.

I fear no foe with Thee at hand to bless;
Ills have no weight; tears lose their bitterness.
Where is thy sting death? Where grave thy victory?
I triumph still – abide with me.

Hold Thou Thy cross before my closing eyes;
Shine through the gloom and point me to the skies.
Heav'n's morning breaks and earth's vain shadows flee;
In life, in death, Lord, abide with me.

God Sends Us Out With His Blessing

Closing Blessing - 1 Thessalonians 5:24

Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you completely, and may your whole spirit and soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. He who calls you is faithful; He will surely do it.

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Sermon Text

English Standard Version - Matthew 8:28-34

28 And when He came to the other side, to the country of the Gadarenes,[a] two demon-possessed[b] men met Him, coming out of the tombs, so fierce that no one could pass that way. 29 And behold, they cried out, "What have You to do with us, O Son of God? Have You come here to torment us before the time?" 30 Now a herd of many pigs was feeding at some distance from them. 31 And the demons begged Him, saying, "If You cast us out, send us away into the herd of pigs." 32 And He said to them, "Go." So they came out and went into the pigs, and behold, the whole herd rushed down the steep bank into the sea and drowned in the waters. 33 The herdsmen fled, and going into the city they told everything, especially what had happened to the demon-possessed men. 34 And behold, all the city came out to meet Jesus, and when they saw him, they begged Him to leave their region.

[a] Matthew 8:28 Some manuscripts *Gergesenes*; some *Gerasenes*

[b] Matthew 8:28 Greek *daimonizomai* (demonized); also verse 33; elsewhere rendered *oppressed by demons*

New International Version Matthew 8:28-34

28 When he arrived at the other side in the region of the Gadarenes,[a] two demon-possessed men coming from the tombs met him. They were so violent that no one could pass that way. 29 "What do you want with us, Son of God?" they shouted. "Have you come here to torture us before the appointed time?"

30 Some distance from them a large herd of pigs was feeding. 31 The demons begged Jesus, "If you drive us out, send us into the herd of pigs."

32 He said to them, "Go!" So they came out and went into the pigs, and the whole herd rushed down the steep bank into the lake and died in the water. 33 Those tending the pigs ran off, went into the town and reported all this, including what had happened to the demon-possessed men. 34 Then the whole town went out to meet Jesus. And when they saw him, they pleaded with him to leave their region.

[a] Matthew 8:28 Some manuscripts *Gergesenes*; other manuscripts *Gerasenes*

Sermon Notes

Matthew 8:28-34

Pastor Bill Lovell

"Jesus Is the Son of God"

Introduction

A Surprising Introduction (vv 28-32)

R.C. Sproul - *"One thing I could say for demons is that they have a sound theology."*

A Surprising Reaction (vv 33-34)

R.C. Sproul - *"Nothing terrifies a human being more than the presence of the holy."*

Church Life Notes

Today - September 17, 2023

1. **Seventeenth Sunday of Pentecost!** Pentecost is a season focused on discipleship. For the next several months, between now and Advent, we will be studying the Gospel of Matthew.
2. **Serving Today:** This morning's scheduled Liturgy Leader is Jay Marble. Our scheduled Prayer Leader is Paul Hartgrove.
3. **Life Change Sunday:** This month's Life Change collection will support The Gideons International, an association of Christian business and professional men and their wives dedicated to telling people about Jesus through service, sharing personal testimonies, and by providing Bibles and New Testaments.
4. **Mission Moment:** We are pleased to welcome Gideons' local director Steve Niermann who is scheduled to present a Mission Moment describing the Gideons' work.
5. **Giving Online:** To access our secure online giving portal, you may use the QR code on the back of the bulletin.
6. **MPC Youth Ministry:** Tonight, our large group meeting for middle and high school youth will meet from 6:00-8:00pm at the church. Tonight please join us for a special night of testimonies given by our leaders. **Cross Training will continue this Sunday.** If any youth are interested in singing or playing an instrument in youth group, please join us at the church at 5:15pm.

Upcoming Activities & Events

7. **MPC Sunday School for All Ages:** Please join us Sunday mornings between 9:00-10:00am.
 - **Children** - Pre-K - Grade 5 - Solid Bible teaching from the Children's Catechism, age appropriate and fun.
 - **Youth** - Grades 6-12 - Mature reflection on the Bible and the Westminster Shorter Catechism.
 - **Adult** - 10-week series on Jared Wilson's *The Gospel According to Satan: Eight Lies About God That Sound like the Truth*.
8. **Men's Book Group:** Please join us in person or via Zoom **on Tuesdays**, as we continue our study of ***Come and See***, by Jonathan Pennington. We've had our first organizational meeting, but it's not too late to join us! Using the engaging analogy of a road trip, he introduces three friends who each have distinct ways of navigating the Bible: Informational, Theological, and Transformational. For more info, and to RSVP ASAP, contact Paul Hartgrove - 972-816-2205 - paul.hartgrove@gmail.com; or Hayden Bernays - haydenbernays@gmail.com.

9. **Marriage Seminar:** MPC is planning a marriage seminar. As we put it together, we would like to know the particular topics you would like to see covered. Please join us for a pizza lunch planning session next Sunday, September 24, following the service, to discuss what topics and approaches are desired. RSVP today to Diane Kizziar at dianekizziar@gmail or via text at 972-213-5391.
10. **Acts 2:46 Suppers:** Members and regular attenders at MPC, aged 18 and above, are invited to participate in our next round of Acts 2:46 Suppers, scheduled for 2 nights, **Friday, September 22, and Saturday, September 23, at 6:00pm**, in host homes. **Today is the last day to sign up!**
11. **Church Prayer Meeting:** Please join us for corporate prayer on Sunday mornings from 8:00-8:30am in Room D-02.

News & Needs

12. **ESL:** Next Saturday, September 23 at 4:00pm, we will have an ESL volunteer meeting in Room D-03. The purpose of this meeting is to discuss the interview process, to gauge their level of English proficiency so that we can make wise curriculum choices. If we expand in the future to teaching multiple classes, we will need to ensure that they get sorted into the correct class. This meeting will also serve as an introduction to our ESL program, as I know some of you have not had the chance to attend our previous volunteer meetings. We will discuss the basics of what volunteers do and what opportunities are available, as well as answer any questions you may have.

High Fives & Thanks

13. **Congratulations to the Brewers:** Please join us in congratulating Teddy and Melissa Brewer as they welcome Scarlett Avery, born Saturday, September 9, at 12:16pm (7 lbs 12 ozs, 19 inches). Scarlett, mommy, daddy, and sisters are all doing well!

Prayer Requests

14. **For The World:**
 - **People of Morocco** - For God's mercy on those impacted by last weekend's devastating 6.8-earthquake near Marrakesh.
15. **For Our Church's Mission and Ministry:**
 - **Gideons International** - For God's blessing on their work witnessing to Christ and distributing God's Word.
16. **For One Another:**
 - **Health Issues** - For God's blessing on all those who are having health issues, including Carole Fowkes, Suzanne Larsen, Cherry Leslie, Ellen Perry, Larry Perry, Ron Revell, David Wamsley, Lori Winn, and Norm Winn; also for God's blessing on Madeleine Esmond, who is due in January.

Welcome to Metrocrest! Please click [here](#) to fill out our welcome card. We would love to know that you worshipped with us today and share more about our church.



How can we pray for you? MPC is a praying church! You can share your prayer requests with us by (1) using one of the cards found in the lobby; or (2) pointing your smartphone camera at this QR code to access a digital card. Please indicate whether your request is private or public. You may also request to pray with an Elder.

Do you want to make a donation? To fund MPC's mission and ministry, we depend on God's provision through you. If you'd like to make a donation this morning, you can do so by (1) placing it in the collection basket during the Offertory; or (2) pointing your smartphone camera at this QR code to access our secure online giving portal.



Thank you for your financial support! At MPC, we aim for financial transparency. Here's where we stand two months into the new fiscal year (July-June): Last week's giving - \$7,448; our weekly giving goal - \$7,885; our actual giving to-date - \$70,213; and our projected giving to-date - \$86,731. We know these are difficult times for everyone. Please be as generous as you can in your personal stewardship, and please pray for God's faithful provision.



Let's get connected! MPC uses an app called Realm to allow you to update your personal information, communicate with groups and teams, follow church announcements, look up members, manage online giving, and join events. To get started, contact us through the church office at info@metrocrestchurch.org!

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The Session (Elders)
John Fowler
Paul Hartgrove
Larry Perry

The Board of Deacons
Dalton Dallas
Will Grover