



Laurel Presbyterian Church  
*Enter to Worship, Depart to Serve*

*Welcomes You!*

4th Sunday After Pentecost

June 21, 2026, 10:00 AM

Where Love is Known

PRELUDE

James Sudbury

RINGING OF THE HOUR

Janice Berger

WELCOME BELOVED ONES

The Rev. Dr. Ann D. Cherry

*GATHERING AROUND LOVE*

CHORAL CALL TO WORSHIP

James Sudbury

\*CALL TO WORSHIP

Rebecca Owen

Leader: As a shepherd seeks a lost sheep—

**People: God seeks us out when we are lost.**

Leader: Like a mother who searches for a lost child—

**People: God rejoices when we are “alive to God.”**

Leader: As a father receives a returning wanderlust son—

**People: God welcomes us home and lets the past be the past.**

Leader: Therefore, praise God that we are welcomed in Love, to live alive in God!

\*HYMN

*Savior, Like a Shepherd Lead Us*

No. 187

*RECEIVING LOVE*

CALL TO CONFESSION

The Rev. Dr. Ann D. Cherry

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

**Most loving God, we can scarcely comprehend the scope of your Love; we can hardly believe your amazing care for us. And yet, we often close ourselves off from your tender presence and act as if you are “dead to us.” We continue to live as if we were “not alive to you” and do not know “who you are” and “who you are in us.” Help us to**

let go of our mistaken identities and all the emotional freight of shame and guilt around our humanity. Have mercy on us when we substitute being alive to you with other things. Open our hearts so we might see ourselves and each other as you do—quirky humans who err but are “precious, honored and oh so loved.” Fill our hearts with gratitude for your grace so we might freely share this love with the world. Have mercy on us when we are don’t. For all these things we pray in the name of Jesus, who is, and was, and always will be, our Christ. Amen.

SILENT PRAYER OF CONFESSION. . . AMEN.

FORGIVENESS OF SIN

Leader: Cherished People of God: Hear the good news! We are made from cosmic material, and because we are, we can always return again and again to recover our truth in you.

People: **With great gratitude, we return ourselves to you to reclaim our identity as your Beloved Ones—trusting you to form us into your love-Led people.**

\*OUR RESPONSE

*Gloria Patri*

Hymn No. 581

\*PASSING OF THE PEACE

Leader: The peace of Christ be with you.

People: **And also with you.**

## *PROCLAIMING LOVE*

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

The Rev. Dr. Ann D. Cherry

SCRIPTURE

Matthew 10:24-31; 34-39 (The Message)

Leader: This is the Word of the Lord.

People: **Thanks be to God!**

MUSICAL DEVOTION

*Oh Come Sing to the Lord*

Laurel Choir

SCRIPTURE

Romans 6: 1-11 (The Message)

Leader: This is the Word of the Lord.

People: **Thanks be to God!**

SERMON

*“Alive to God “*

The Rev. Dr. Ann D. Cherry

## *RESPONDING IN LOVE*

\*HYMN

*Because You Live, O Christ*

No. 249

**I believe in God, the Father Almighty,  
 the Creator of heaven and earth,  
 And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord,  
 who was conceived of the Holy Spirit,  
 born of the Virgin Mary,  
 suffered under Pontius Pilate,  
 was crucified, died, and was buried.  
 He descended into hell.  
 The third day He arose again from the dead.  
 He ascended into heaven  
 and sitteth at the right hand of God the Father Almighty,  
 from whence He shall 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 life everlasting.**

### ***RECEIVING LOVE TO BE LOVE***

Leader: We pray that you would continue to invite us to know what it means to be "alive to you" and dead to sin. Remove the barriers to seeing ourselves as you do.

#### ***Silence.***

Leader: Lord in your mercy.

**All: Hear our prayers.**

Leader: We pray that you would soften our hearts so we might "be opened" to your Love.

#### **Silence**

Leader: Lord in your mercy.

**All: Hear our prayers.**

Leader: We pray that we might continue to encourage and call forth the wonder of speaking Laurel Love and growing deeper into your image as a beloved community of faith, especially when asked to be Christ to the other.

***Silence.***

Leader: Lord in your mercy.

**All: Hear our prayers.**

Leader: We pray that we might “be instruments of your peace” when the world is shattering before us—even into our own discomfort.

***Silence.***

Leader: Lord in your mercy.

**All: Hear our prayers.**

Leader: We pray that we might be surprised by “joy” even when we know so much suffering—even into our own suffering.

***Silence.***

Leader: Lord in your mercy.

**All: Hear our prayers.**

Leader: We pray that we might “be love” even when challenged by our most challenging neighbors—even into our most unlovable places.

***Silence.***

Leader: Lord in your mercy.

**All: Hear our prayers.**

Leader: We give you thanks for all the wonderful people who have stood as father figures for us, and we pray that you repair and heal, all the relationships that hurt us—reminding us that you are our forever parent.

***Silence.***

Leader: Lord in your mercy.

**All: Hear our prayers.**

Leader: We pray for all those who are recovering from surgeries, healing from cancer, addressing harsh realities, enduring medical challenges, gripping grief, isolation, uncertainty, unforgiving timelines, sleep deprivation, addiction, housing and food deserts, lack of resources for basic needs, and all the caregivers. We pray for those who are emotionally under the weather or feeling unloved—and we pray that you would hold us tenderly—surfacing tangible forms of comfort, while finding ways for us to be merciful.

***Silence.***

Leader: Lord in your mercy.

**All: Hear our prayers.**

Leader: For we dare to pray all these things in the name of our Lord, who taught us to pray:

**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; lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.**

***BEARING LOVE INTO THE WORLD***

*HYMN	<i>What a Friend We Have in Jesus</i>	No. 465
*THE CHARGE AND BLESSING		The Rev. Dr. Ann D. Cherry
*POSTLUDE		James Sudbury
*RECESSION AND GREETING		The Rev. Dr. Ann D. Cherry

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**\*Please feel free to stand and move during our worship service.**

**\*\*Please wait to greet each other until the minister have recessed down the aisle.**

**Gratitude to our Liturgist:** Thank you to Rebecca Owen for serving as our liturgist this week.

**Gratitude for the Steady Presence of Laurel Love:** Thank you to Carolyn Stinger for her copy editing, Billy Shepherd for tending to our church sign, Mary Scarce, Beverley Shepherd and Carolyn for our printing, Brenda MacRae, our website master, and Wayne Alvis, Tod Balsbaugh, Marshall Chamberlayne, Pete MacRae, Glenda Miller and Fran Tredway for tending to our building and grounds.

**All Are Welcome!** The signature gift of Laurel Love is our affection and love for God and for one another.

### **Romans 6: 1-11, *The Message***

6<sup>1-3</sup> So what do we do? Keep on sinning so God can keep on forgiving? I should hope not! If we've left the country where sin is sovereign, how can we still live in our old house there? Or didn't you realize we packed up and left there for good? That is what happened in baptism. When we went under the water, we left the old country of sin behind; when we came up out of the water, we entered into the new country of grace—a new life in a new land!

3-5 That's what baptism into the life of Jesus means. When we are lowered into the water, it is like the burial of Jesus; when we are raised up out of the water, it is like the resurrection of Jesus. Each of us is raised into a light-filled world by our Father so that we can see where we're going in our new grace-sovereign country.

6-11 Could it be any clearer? Our old way of life was nailed to the cross with Christ, a decisive end to that sin-miserable life—no longer captive to sin's demands! What we believe is this: If we get included in Christ's sin-conquering death, we also get included in his life-saving resurrection. We know that when Jesus was raised from the dead it was a signal of the end of death-as-the-end. Never again will death have the last word. When Jesus died, he took sin down with him, but alive he brings God down to us. From now on, think of it this way: Sin speaks a dead language that means nothing to you; God speaks your mother tongue, and you hang on every word. You are dead to sin and alive to God. That's what Jesus did.

## **Laurel Presbyterian Church**

The Rev. Dr. Ann D. Cherry, Minister

James A. Sudbury, Director of Music

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### **Where Love Is Known**

laurelpres.com

**“You are precious in my sight and honored and oh so loved.” Isaiah 43:4**