



Laurel Presbyterian Church

Enter to Worship, Depart to Serve

Welcomes You!

7th Sunday After Pentecost

July 19, 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: We are here because we have heard the wonderful call of Jesus in our lives.

People: We are here to challenge and support one another to rise up and follow.

Leader: We are here because we want to be God's people.

People: We are here to be moved, changed, and made whole by the Spirit of the living God.

Leader: We are here because we have heard the wonderful call of Jesus in our lives.

People: So let us rejoice for this is the day that the Lord has made!

*HYMN

This Is The Day the Lord Hath Made

No. 681

RECEIVING LOVE

CALL TO CONFESSION

The Rev. Dr. Ann D. Cherry

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Unwavering God, whose mercy is bottomless and whose wisdom timeless, hear our prayers today, as we bring our lives before you. You love us steadfastly, but we have

trouble loving in return. You call us by name, but we have wax-filled ears. You reveal yourself to us through the ordinary, but our eyelids are heavy and our dreams soon forgotten. You lead us toward our neighbor, but we build walls around ourselves so we can't reach out. You hate evil, division and oppression of any kind, but we have become numb to it. Oh Living God, wake us up to love the world as you do. Forgive us for all the ways we don't see you, or turn down opportunities to be authentic, or for allowing fear to rob us from growing deeper roots together. Open our eyes to see ourselves as living stones that are markers for all the others present and to come. Have mercy on us when we don't. For all these things we pray in the name of Jesus, who is, and was, and always will be, our Christ, our Great Living Stone.

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, and place, in this world 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

Genesis 28: 10-19a (CEV)

Leader: This is the Word of the Lord.

People: **Thanks be to God!**

MUSICAL DEVOTION

James Sudbury, pianist, Aaron Volovick, soloist

SCRIPTURE

1 Peter 2: 4-7, 9-10 (NRSVue)

Leader: This is the Word of the Lord.

People: **Thanks be to God!**

SERMON

"This is Us: Sacred Living Stones"

The Rev. Dr. Ann D. Cherry

RESPONDING IN LOVE

*HYMN

All Creatures of Our God and King

No. 15

*PROFESSION OF FAITH

Philippians 2: 5-11

Rebecca Owen

We profess that Jesus, though he was in the form of God, did not regard equality with God as something to be exploited, but emptied himself, taking the form of a slave, being born in human likeness. And being found in human form, he humbled himself and became obedient to the point of death, even on a cross.

Therefore, God also highly exalted him and gave him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bend, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord!

*OUR RESPONSE

Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow

Hymn No. 606

SATURATED IN LOVE

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE AND THE LORD'S PRAYER

The Rev. Dr. Ann D. Cherry

Leader: We pray that you would remove our fears of intimacy with you so we might dialogue openly and freely about all the things that keep us up at night.

Silence

Leader: Lord in your mercy.

All: Hear our prayers.

Leader: We pray that you would help us to know that you are in this place and to choose to become living markers, living stones, for all the people here and to come.

Silence

Leader: Lord in your mercy.

All: Hear our prayers.

Leader: We pray that you would continue to invite us to be stunned that “welcoming each other is welcoming you.” We ask that you would remove the barriers to recognizing you in each other—as different as everyone might be from us and from our expectations.

Silence.

Leader: Lord in your mercy.

All: Hear our prayers.

Leader: We thank you for all that is lovely, gracious, and true.

Silence

Leader: Lord in your mercy.

All: Hear our prayers.

Leader: We pray that you would continue to call forth our joy of speaking “Laurel Love” in word and deed by softening our hearts so we have a heart for all that you do. We ask that you continue to grow us deeper and deeper into your image as a beloved community so we might live as Christ to one another and to your larger world.

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 shatterings.

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 for all those who are recovering from surgeries, healing from cancer, carrying all the burdens, 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 Great Living Stone, 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

All Glory, Laud and Honor

No. 196

*THE CHARGE AND BLESSING

The Rev. Dr. Ann D. Cherry

*POSTLUDE

James Sudbury

*RECESSION AND GREETING

The Rev. Dr. Ann D. Cherry

***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 today.

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 Searce, 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.

Genesis 28: 10-19a, Contemporary English Version

¹⁰ Jacob left the town of Beersheba and started out for Haran. ¹¹ At sunset he stopped for the night and went to sleep, resting his head on a large rock. ¹² In a dream he saw a ladder that reached from earth to heaven, and God's angels were going up and down on it.

¹³ The LORD was standing beside the ladder and said:

I am the LORD God who was worshiped by Abraham and Isaac. I will give to you and your family the land on which you are now sleeping. ¹⁴ Your descendants will spread over the earth in all directions and will become as numerous as the specks of dust. Your family will be a blessing to all people. ¹⁵ Wherever you go, I will watch over you, then later I will bring you back to this land. I won't leave you—I will do all I have promised.

¹⁶ Jacob woke up suddenly and thought, “The LORD is in this place, and I didn't even know it.”

¹⁷ Then Jacob became frightened and said, “What a *sacred* place! It must be the house of God and the gateway to heaven.”

¹⁸ When Jacob got up early the next morning, he took the rock that he had used for a pillow and stood it up as a place of worship. Then he poured olive oil on the rock to dedicate it to God, ¹⁹ and he named the place Bethel.

1 Peter 2: 4-7, 9-10, *New Revised Standard Version, updated edition*

⁴ Come to him, a living stone, though rejected by mortals yet chosen and precious in God's sight, and ⁵ like living stones let yourselves be built into a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. ⁶ For it stands in scripture:

“See, I am laying in Zion a stone,
a cornerstone chosen and precious,
and whoever believes in him will not be put to shame.”

⁷ This honor, then, is for you who believe, but for those who do not believe, “The stone that the builders rejected has become the very head of the corner,” ⁹ But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's own people, in order that you may proclaim the excellence of *the One* who called you out of darkness into *God's* marvelous light. ¹⁰ Once you were not a people, but now you are God's people; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.

Laurel Presbyterian Church

The Rev. Dr. Ann D. Cherry, Minister

James A. Sudbury, Director of Music

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Growing Deeper Together

laurelpres.com

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